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Apuleius [Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis], *On the God of Socrates* (AD 140 – 170): TRANSLATION

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TRANSLATION

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(114) Plato divided the whole universe, as far as its chief living beings are concerned, (115) into three parts, and thought the gods to be the highest of them.¹ Make sure that you understand that 'highest', 'intermediate', and 'lowest' here refer not merely to separation in space, but also to relative rank within nature—(116) nature, which itself can also be classed not only in one way, or even two, but in many. Nevertheless, the more obvious starting-point was from the arrangement of space. For, just as their majesty demanded, Plato consecrated the heaven to the immortal gods, the 'heavenly' gods, that is, whom we can partly seize on by sight, and partly track through our understanding.

And indeed it is by sight that we see 'you, brightest lights of the firmament, who lead the gliding year across the heaven';² and not just those two outstanding heavenly bodies, the sun, the creator of the day, and the moon (117)—the moon, his rival, ornament of the night, whether horn-shaped, or half-seen, or swelling, or full, with her beacon's flames shifting. She is illuminated with a greater flood of light the further she passes from the sun, matching growth of distance and light, marking out the months by her own increases and matching decreases. Whether, as the Chaldaeans think,³ it is through her own discontinuous shining—being in one part capable of giving light and in another void of brightness—that she is able to change her appearance by manifold rotation of her variegated face; or whether she is wholly without her own illumination, but needs another's light, (118) and either stands like a mirror in the way of the sun's rays with opaque but smooth body, or takes them over when the sun is opposite and (to use the words of Lucretius) 'throws out from its body a light not her own',⁴

whichever of these views is true (a point which I will deal with

later⁵), **(119)** neither Greek nor barbarian⁶ would readily hesitate to call either the sun or the moon gods. Nor indeed is it just these that have been called gods, as I have said, but also the five stars

commonly called 'wandering'⁷ by the ignorant, **(120)** which nevertheless, with unbending, fixed, and sure course, eternally complete in divine changing patterns their supremely ordered trajectories.

These, with courses of various aspect but with an eternally single and even speed seem now to advance, now to retreat in an astonishing pattern of change, depending on the position, curvature, and relative distance of their orbits, well known to those who have observed the risings and settings of heavenly bodies.⁸ If you share Plato's view, then place the remaining stars too in this same class of visible gods. 'Arcturus and the rainy Hyades and the twin Triones'⁹ **(121)** and similarly the other gleaming gods, with which we see the dancing-band of the heaven garnished and garlanded in clear weather, nights embroidered with austere charm and severe grace, looking up at the multicoloured decorations with their astonishing splendour on the most perfect 'shield of the firmament'¹⁰ (as Ennius would have it).

There is another kind of god, which nature has denied to our sense of sight; yet none the less we contemplate this type too, examining it through our understanding, contemplating all the more sharply with the keen edge of the mind. Amongst their number are the famous twelve linked by the fitting of their names into two lines of Ennius:¹¹

Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars,
Mercury, Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, Apollo,

(122) and others of this kind, whose names at least have long been known to our ears, but whose powers have been conjectured by our minds, by means of their various functions observed through our experience of life in those areas which they respectively supervise.

But the mob of the ignorant which is uninitiated in philosophy, empty of reverence, deprived of true reason, poor in religious observance and incapable of truth, ill-treats the gods, either by over-meticulous worship or the most insolent scorn, being either overfearful in their superstition or overforceful in their contempt.

(123) For all the gods are placed at the lofty apex of heaven, far separated from the contagion of humanity. Most men venerate them, but in the wrong way; all men fear them, but with ignorance; a few deny them, but with impiety. These gods Plato thinks to be beings without body but with soul,¹² without beginning or end, age-long through both future and

past, removed by their own nature from the contagion of body, with an intellect perfected to the height of blessedness, virtuous not through participation in any good outside themselves but through their own essence, and with an easy, simple, free, and untrammelled access to all that concerns them.

But why should I now begin to speak of their father,¹³ **(124)** who is the master and source of all things, freed from all bonds of being acted upon or acting, tied by no need for interchange in exercising any function, since Plato, gifted with heavenly eloquence, his words matching the immortal gods, most frequently proclaims¹⁴ that this god alone, such is the amazing and ineffable excess of his majesty, cannot be comprehended, even to a limited extent, in any discourse, owing to the poverty of human speech; and that even for wise men, when, by vigour of mind they have removed themselves from the body as far as they can, the comprehension of this god is like a bright light fitfully flashing with the swiftest flicker in the deepest darkness, and that only from time to time?

(125) I will therefore dismiss this topic, in which no words have proved adequate for the magnitude of the matter, and not only in

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my own case, but for my master Plato too; I will sound a retreat before subjects which far exceed my poor capacity, and finally call my speech down from heaven to earth.¹⁵ There we humans are the chief type of living being, though the majority, through their neglect of true learning, have so perverted themselves by all their errors and rites of expiation, and so monstrously bestialized themselves by eating away at the natural gentleness of their race, and

so deeply dyed themselves in wickedness, **(126)** that no living being on earth can seem inferior to man. Our treatise, however, is concerned not with arguing about human failings, but the arrangement of nature as a whole. And so it is men, rejoicing in reason, powerful in speech, possessed of an immortal soul but of mortal limbs; of fickle and fearful mind, of sluggish and vulnerable body, of diverse characters and similar errors, of unrelenting audacity, of unremitting hope, of vain labour and fragile fortune; individually mortal, collectively everlasting as a race, **(127)** successively mutable through the provision of offspring, speedy in life span, slow in wisdom, swift to die, discontent to live—it is men who inhabit the earth.

You have then, for the moment, two sets of creatures: the gods, differing profoundly from men in the loftiness of their position, the perpetuity of their existence, and the perfection of their nature. The two have no close intercommunication, since such an interval of height separates the highest habitations from the lowest; since for the one realm life is everlasting and unwearying, while for the other it is fragile and a mere remnant; and since divine natures are raised up to bliss, while human natures are sent below to misery. What then?

Has creation employed no bond to link itself together, but rather allowed itself to be divided into a human and a divine part, becoming consequently discontinuous

and (as it were) disabled? **(128)** For, as that same Plato of ours says,¹⁶ no god mixes with men, and this indeed is a particular token of their lofty status that they are not polluted through any contact with us. One group of them is visible through our dim sight, as the heavenly bodies, whose sizes and colours are still a matter of dispute amongst men; but the rest are apprehended by the understanding alone, and that not easily. To wonder at this in

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the case of the eternal gods would be wholly inappropriate, since, even amongst men, he who has been raised up by the rich gift of fortune and carried as far as the tottering throne and precarious

platform of kingship **(129)** is similarly rare of access, living far removed from onlookers in the inner sanctum (as it were) of his high degree.¹⁷ For familiarity breeds contempt, while infrequency of access secures awe.¹⁸

'What then, speaker', someone might object,

am I to do following this heavenly but almost inhuman view you have stated? What, if humans are (as you say) absolutely driven to a far distance from the immortal gods and are thus exiled to this hell on earth, with the consequence that all communion with celestial divinities is denied them, and that none of the heavenly ones pays them visits, as one who tends sheep or horses or oxen visits his bleating or whinnying or lowing herds **(130)** to restrain the fierce, heal the sick and aid the needy among them? No god, you say, intervenes in human affairs: to whom, then, shall I direct my prayers? Whom shall I name in my vows? To whom shall I sacrifice my victims? Whom shall I call upon throughout my life as helper of the distressed, as supporter of the virtuous, as opposer of the vicious? Whom, finally, to take the most frequent case, shall I invoke to witness my oaths? Or shall I like Virgil's Ascanius 'swear by this head of mine, as my father used to before me'?¹⁹ But, Iulus, your father was able to use this kind of oath amongst the Trojans, since they were related to him in ancestry, and perhaps even amongst the Greeks, since they were encountered by him in battle; but if none of the Rutulians, so recently encountered, believes in that head of yours,

which god will give your guarantee? **(131)** Are your right hand and your spear your gods, as for Mezentius, fiercest of warriors? He honoured only the things with which he fought: 'this right hand, my god, and this spear, which I poise to throw'.²⁰ Away with such bloody gods, a right hand

exhausted with slaughter and a spear rusted with gore! Neither is fit to guarantee an oath, nor should oaths be made by them, when that honour belongs by right to the highest god: for the swearing of oaths is connected with swearing by Jupiter, as

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Ennius says.²¹ **(132)** What, then, do you think? Shall I swear by Jupiter the Stone, in the ancient Roman manner?²² For if Plato's view is true, that god never has communion with man, the stone will hear me more easily than Jupiter.

'I do not claim' (let Plato respond in my voice in defence of his view),

that the gods (says he), are so far separated, so far alienated from us, that I hold that not even our prayers reach them. For I have not removed them from concern for human affairs, merely from direct contact with them. However, there are certain intermediate divine powers, inter-jacently situated **(133)** between the highest heaven and the earth far below in the region of the *aer*,²³ powers through which our desires and our good services are passed to the gods.

These the Greeks have endowed with the name of *daimones*, bearers of prayers upwards and benefits downwards between the inhabitants of heaven and earth, who, moving to and fro, carry petitions from men and aid from the gods, acting between the two as a kind of go-between and bringer of blessings. And it is through these same powers, as Plato affirms in his *Symposium*,²⁴ that all messages are transmitted from above, and that the various wonders of magicians and all types of portent are controlled. Individuals amongst them are in charge of particular activities, **(134)** with each assigned his province—whether constructing dream visions, or marking prophetic entrails, or directing divinatory bird-flight, or teaching oracular bird-cry, or launching thunderbolts or inspiring seers, causing clouds to flash, or indeed every other activity through which we try to make out the future.²⁵ Our view should be that all these things are done by the will, power, and authority of the gods of heaven, but by the service, effort, and agency of the *daimones*.

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For it is their duty, their task and care, to ensure that dream-visions should threaten Hannibal with blindness, **(135)** that the inspection of entrails should predict danger of disaster for Flaminius, that augural signs should award the miracle of the whetstone to Attius Navius.²⁶ Likewise, they ensure that some should receive in advance the signs of future kingship—that Tarquinius Priscus should have his head covered by an

eagle, that Servius Tullius should be illumined by a flame from his head.²⁷ To sum up, all the predictions of the diviners, all the expiatory rites of the Etruscans, all the sacred precincts of the lightning-seers, all the prophetic verses of the Sibyls—all these are, as I have said, **(136)** the task of certain powers intermediate between god and man. For it would not be commensurate with the majesty of the heavenly gods that any of them should manufacture²⁸ Hannibal's dream, or shrivel²⁹ Flaminius' victim, or put wings on Attius' bird, **(137)** or put the Sibyl's oracles into verse,³⁰ or be willing to take off and put back the cap of Tarquinius, and set fire to Servius' head without burning it up. It is not the task of the gods above to descend to such things; this is the province of intermediate divinities, who move around in the regions of the *aer*, next to the earth and no less close to the heaven, just as the appropriate creatures move around in every part of creation—circling³¹ in the *aether*, walking on the earth.

For since there are four elements familiar to all, creation being separated out fourfold into its major parts; and since there are creatures who belong properly to earth, to water, and to fire **(138)** (if indeed Aristotle is right in holding that certain small creatures

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equipped with wings flutter about in burning furnaces and spend the whole of their existence in fire, arising and being extinguished with it³²); and since further (as has already been stated) so many groups of stars appear above in the *aether*, in the liquid flame of fire—why should nature allow only the fourth element of *aer*, sited in so large an intervening space, to be void of everything, to be empty of its own inhabitants? Why should not creatures come to be there too in the *aer*, just as fiery creatures arise in fire, flowing creatures in water, soily creatures on earth? For anyone who assigns the birds to the *aer* could be justly shown to be mistaken in his opinion, since no bird soars up beyond the top of Olympus. Though this mountain is commonly said to be the highest of all, **(139)** if you were to measure its height from the perpendicular, as the geometricians aver, the height of its summit does not reach 10 stades,³³ while the mass of the *aer* is without measure, stretching as far as the nearer orbit of the moon, the beginning of the upward extent of the *aether*. **(140)** What then of this mighty capacity of the *aer*, which lies between the lowest circling of the moon and the highest summit of Olympus? What indeed? Is it to be deprived of its own creatures, and is that part of creation to be dead and disabled? For even the birds themselves, if you take careful note, are more properly called creatures of the earth than creatures of the *aer*. For all their activity of life occurs on earth, on earth is their nourishment and rest; as for the *aer*, next to the earth, they merely beat through it in flight, and when the oarage of their wings is exhausted, it is earth that serves as their harbour.

But if reason plainly demands that the *aer* too should be understood to have its own creatures, it remains for us finally to give an account of their nature and character. Accordingly, they are in no sense earthy, for they would sink down owing to their weight; nor are they fiery, so that they are not dragged upwards by their heat. We must therefore compound an intermediate nature for them in accordance with their intermediate location, so that the character of the region's inhabitants is determined by the character of the region itself. Come then, let us shape in our minds and men-

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tally create a kind of bodily texture which is neither so heavy as to belong to the earth nor so light as to belong to the *aether*, **(141)** but which is somehow differentiated from both, or indeed a mixture of both, that is to say either entirely separated from the two elements or constrained by sharing in each: the easier idea, however, will be to hold that these creatures are derived from both elements rather than from neither. Let these bodies of *daemones*, then, have both a small degree of weight, to prevent them ascending to the heights above, and a little lightness, to prevent them being hurled down to the depths beneath.

In case you think I am inventing the incredible as the poets do, let me give you a prime example of this balanced intermediate

state. **(142)** We can see thick gatherings of clouds,³⁴ which are not far removed from this kind of subtle material texture. If they were as light as the elements which wholly lack mass, they would never become so weighed down as to descend below the mountain-line and garland the head of a lofty peak as though with a winding necklace, as we often observe that they do. Moreover, if they were naturally dense and consequently so heavy as to prevent any admixture of livelier lightness from lifting them up, they would surely fall with their own momentum and be dashed against the earth just like a lump of lead or a stone. Now indeed they hang in the sky and are mobile, steered here and there by the winds like ships in the ocean of the *aer*, changing gradually in their distance and proximity. However, if they become fertile with some moisture, they sink down as if to give birth to young. **(143)** And it is for this reason that the more moist clouds move at a lower level in a dark formation, with a more sluggish transit; but the drier ones have a loftier course,³⁵ and, when they are driven along like woollen fleeces,³⁶ move in a white formation and with a swifter flight. Can you not hear what Lucretius most eloquently says about thunder?

In the first place, the blue reaches of the sky are shaken by thunder,
For the reason that the heavenly clouds, flying up on high,
Clash together, with the winds fighting against them.³⁷

But if the clouds flit about on high, whose whole origin is from the earth and whose whole downflux is back to earth, what then would you think about the bodies of the *daemones*, (**144**) which are such a concretion of much finer texture?³⁸ For they are not massed together from those inferior dregs of mist or from damp fog, as is the nature of clouds, but are assembled from the purest, liquid, and clear element of the *aer* and are consequently not easily visible to any man, unless they vouchsafe a sight of themselves on the gods' instructions. This is because they have no earthy solidity which can occupy the field of our vision or is able to stand in the way of our eyes, none of the kind of solidity by which our line of sight would necessarily be caught and held; rather, the strands of their bodies are so loose-knit, lustrous, and fine-spun that all the rays of our gaze are let through by their loose texture, (**145**) thrown back by their lustre, and baffled by their fineness. Hence Minerva in Homer, who intervenes to restrain Achilles in the midst of the gatherings of the Greeks. If you can wait a little, I can express the Greek verse in Latin—but here we are, right away: Minerva, then, as I said, arrives at Juno's command to calm Achilles—'to him alone is she visible, none of the others spies her'.³⁹ Hence too Juturna in Virgil, who encounters her brother to bring him aid in the midst of thousands—'she mixes with the men but is seen by none'.⁴⁰ This is precisely what Plautus' soldier boasts about his shield, 'dazzling the gaze of the enemy'.⁴¹

Not to continue further with more of them, the poets have the habit, one not far from the truth, of presenting some of this group of what one might call *daemones*, who love or loathe certain humans, as gods (**146**)—some as bringing prosperity and elevation, others as bringing adversity and affliction; they accordingly

show them experiencing pity, indignation, anguish, and joy, undergoing every facet of human passion, and wavering with similar tossing of the heart and rocking of the mind on every tide of thought. All these commotions and tempests are in fact banished far from the serenity enjoyed by the gods of heaven.⁴² For all the heavenly ones enjoy a constant state of mind in eternal calm, a state which for them cannot be driven beyond its boundaries towards either pain or pleasure, or shifted by any factor from its perpetual path so as to render its condition suddenly changed; it cannot be shifted by external force (for nothing is more powerful than a god), nor by its own volition (for nothing is more perfect than a god). Moreover, how can any being seem to have reached perfection which then moves from a previous state to a different and better state, (**147**) especially as no one takes on a new enterprise of his own will except when he regrets his previous one? For such a change of condition cannot follow without implying the relative weakness of what preceded. For this reason, a god ought not to be

subject to the time-bound exercise of hatred or love, and therefore not be affected by anger or pity; he should not be depressed by anguish or elated by eagerness, but, being free from all the passions of the heart, he should never feel sorrow or joy or the sudden desire or lack of desire for anything.

But all these and the like properly match the middle state of the *daemones*. For they are placed between us and the gods not only in their physical location but also in the essence of their mind, having immortality in common with the gods above, and susceptibility to emotion in common with men below. For, just as we are, they can be subject to all types of mental calming and excitement, with the consequence that they are roused by anger, moved by pity, enticed by gifts, softened by prayers, irritated by insults, soothed by honours, **(148)** and are thoroughly changeable in all other matters in a similar way to ourselves. For, to encompass them by a definition, *daemones* are living beings in kind, rational creatures in mind, susceptible to emotion in spirit, in body composed of the *aer*, everlasting in time. Of these five points I have listed, the first three are shared with us, the fourth is their own, the last they have in

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common with the immortal gods; but they differ from them in their capacity to suffer.

It is not absurd in my view thus to label them (as I have done) as 'able to feel emotion', since they are susceptible to the same perturbations of spirit as ourselves. Hence, as a consequence of the different practices of religions and the various offerings of cults, we should believe that there are some divine beings of this class who take pleasure in the various sacrifices, ceremonies, and rites which take place by night or day, publicly or secretly, with comparative joy or sorrow; **(149)** just as the Egyptian deities generally delight in lamentations, the Greek largely in dances, the non-Greek in the clangour of the players of castanets, drums, and reed-pipes. Likewise, other elements too of sacred cult are greatly and variously different according to the region; the formations of processions, the silences of mystery-rites, the duties of priests, the observances of those sacrificing; similarly, the images and trappings of the gods, the precincts and precepts of temples, the bleedings and colourings of sacrificial victims. **(150)** All these are customary and established in accordance with the tradition of each place, just as we know, largely through dreams, visions, and oracles, that deities have often shown indignation if any element of their cult is omitted through human negligence or arrogance. A host of examples of this are available to me, but they are so well used and well known that no one can begin to list them without leaving out many more than he has included.

Accordingly, I shall abstain for the moment from taking up room in my speech with such matters, which, though they may not carry absolute conviction with everyone, nevertheless

have a wide recognition through all humanity. It would be better to discourse in Latin of the various species of *daemones* spoken of by the philosophers, so that you may gain a clearer and fuller knowledge concerning the 'sign' of Socrates and the divine power which was his friend.⁴³ For in a certain sense even the human mind itself, even while still located in the body, can be called a *daemon*:

Is it the gods who add this ardour to our minds, Euryalus—
Or does each man's dire desire become his god?⁴⁴

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Following this, the virtuous desire of the mind is also a good god. Hence some think, as has already been stated,⁴⁵ that happy men are called *eudaimones* in Greek, since they have a good *daemon*, that is a mind perfected in virtue. In our language, as I would translate it on my own account, if not perhaps accurately,

(151) you could call the *daemon* a 'Genius',⁴⁶ since that particular type of divinity, identical with the mind of each and every person, is (though itself immortal) nevertheless born in some sense together with a human being. Consequently, those well-known prayers in which men call upon their Genius and their knees⁴⁷ seem to me to give evidence of this coalescence and connection of ours, (152) embracing under these two names body and mind, the elements which make up our human conjunction and combination.

In a second sense, too, the species of *daemon* can be defined as a human mind which has served the campaigns of life and foresworn its body: I find that this is commonly referred to in the ancient Latin language as a *Lemur*.⁴⁸ And of these *Lemures*, the type which has as its assigned province the care of its descendants and holds possession of the house by means of its placated

and peaceful power, is called the *Lar familiaris*;⁴⁹ (153) while the type which from its bad behaviour in life is punished by having no fixed abode, and by a kind of exile of uncertain wandering, only a mild terror for virtuous humans, but harmful to the evil—that type most people call *Larvae*. When it is truly uncertain which sphere of operation belongs to any individual spirit and whether it is a *Lar* or a *Larva*, they call it by the name of *deus Manis*; the word 'god' is clearly an honorific addition. For it is only these of this class that they call gods, who, having directed their course of life by prudence and justice, are commonly worshipped for their divine qualities by men and endowed with shrines and rites, (154) as with Amphiaras in Boeotia, Mopsus in Africa, Osiris in

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Egypt, others in other parts of the world, Aesculapius everywhere.⁵⁰

But this, for Plato,⁵¹ is the complete classification only of those *daemones* which were once contained in a human body. There is also a higher and more august class of *daemones*, no less than these in number and much excelling them in importance, which are forever free of bodily bonds and fetters, and take care of fixed areas of authority. Of this class, Sleep and Love have very

different effects, (155) Love that of keeping people awake, Sleep that of sending them to slumber. Hence, in Plato's view, it is *daemones* from this abundant loftier type which are assigned to individual humans as witnesses and guardians in the conduct of their lives; they are, he says, such as never to be visible as present to anyone, but are judges not only of all our actions but even of all our thoughts. But when life is done and we must return whence we came, that same *daemon* who was given to us seizes hold of us and drags us off forthwith to trial, as if his prisoners, and there stands beside us in the trial of our case, refuting any lies we make and supporting any truths; and it is on his testimony that judgement is pronounced.

Accordingly, all of you who are listening to this divine judgement of Plato through myself as intermediary should take care to shape your minds in approaching any action or thought on the understanding that a person can have no secret before these guardians, whether inside or outside the mind. The consequence is that such a *daemon* participates in everything with close atten-

tion, (156) inspecting everything and understanding everything, and dwelling in the inmost sanctum of the human mind in the function of consciousness itself. This *daemon* I talk of is a personal guardian, an individual governor, an inspector in the household, a personal supervisor, an inner attorney, a continuous overseer, the one and only judge, an inseparable witness, a critic of the bad and commender of the good. If it is rightly acknowledged, recognized with attention, and served with reverence, just as it was served in

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justice and innocence by Socrates, it can provide a clear view forward when things are doubtful, warning in times of uncertainty, protection in peril, and aid in need; it is a being which can, by means of dreams, signs, or even perhaps by face-to-face encounter when the occasion demands, help you by sweeping away evil, promoting good, raising up lowliness, supporting weakness, elucidating obscurity, guiding success, and rectifying adversity.

(157) Accordingly, is it any wonder that Socrates, a man of prime perfection and judged wise even by the testimony of Apollo,⁵² recognized and revered this god within him, and that on that account this guardian of his (I could almost say his household *Lar* which shared his quarters) in every case where it was needed warded off what was undesirable, gave forewarning against what was hazardous, and offered advice in advance about what was

risky? This took place whenever the resources of wisdom were cut off⁵³ and Socrates needed not advice but a divine sign, so that where he hesitated through doubt, **(158)** he could stand firm through prophecy. For there are many cases, many indeed, about which even wise men have frequent recourse to soothsayers and oracles.

Do you not see so clearly in Homer, as in some mighty mirror, how these two things are separated out, with the functions of divination and wisdom allotted to different compartments?⁵⁴ For when the two pillars of the whole army were at odds, Agamemnon the powerful king and Achilles the mighty warrior, there was a need for a man commended for his eloquence and famous for his experience to calm⁵⁵ the arrogance of Atrides and pacify the ferocity of Pelides⁵⁶ and direct them by his authority, warn them by his examples, and soothe them by his speech—who at this point, at such a time, sprang into the middle to speak? It was of course the great orator of Pylos, of charming fluency,

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shrewd experience, and venerable years; all knew that his body was dull with age, but that his mind was vigorous with wisdom, and his words flowed with sweetness. Likewise, when, in dark and adverse circumstances, **(159)** a reconnaissance party was to be chosen to penetrate the enemy camp at dead of night,⁵⁷ was not Odysseus chosen with Diomedes—intelligence and assistance, as it were, brain and brawn, sense and the sword?

However, when the Greeks were idly blockaded at Aulis and were refusing their mission through dissatisfaction,⁵⁸ and the difficulty of the war, the ease of the journey, **(160)** the calmness of the sea, and the mildness of the winds had to be investigated through the markings of livers, the flight of birds, and the feeding of serpents, those twin peaks of Greek wisdom, Odysseus and Nestor, both stayed silent. It was Calchas, far pre-eminent in prophecy, **(161)** who examined the birds, the altars, and the tree, and at once by his divinatory skill turned the storms around, launched the fleet, and predicted their ten years of campaigning. It was just the same in the Trojan army. When the situation called for prophecy, that wise senate of theirs remained silent, neither Hicetaon nor Lampos nor Clytius⁵⁹ **(162)** dared to make any utterance, but all listened in silence to the joyless auguries of Helenus or the uncredited predictions of Cassandra.⁶⁰

In the same way, Socrates too, whenever an issue for discussion loomed which was alien to the resources of wisdom, was directed by the prophetic power of his *daemon*; indeed, by careful obedience to its promptings he made himself much more pleasing to his personal

deity.⁶¹ As for the fact that his *daemon* usually forbade only certain undertakings of his and never encouraged any of them, the reason for this has been more or less discussed already. (163) For Socrates, being a man of prime perfection, and ready

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for his own part for all duties proper to him, never needed any extra encouragement; but he did sometimes need a deterrent, when danger happened to arise for his enterprises, so that he could be warned and take precautions, and leave off his plans for the time being, to be more safely undertaken at a later time or enterprised by another route.

It was in such circumstances that he used to assert that he could hear a voice from a divine source (for so Plato tells us), just in case anyone should think that he was in the habit of taking omens from ordinary conversation.⁶² For it was even the case that, with no other witnesses and accompanied by Phaedrus alone (164) outside the city walls, he felt the presence of his messenger 'sign' under the shady shelter of a tree, saying that he should not cross the modest stream of the River Ilissus before placating by recantation the indignation of Love aroused by his criticism.⁶³ Add further that, if he were in the habit of merely observing omens, he would surely have sometimes also experienced some encouragement to positive action from them. We see this happen in practice to many, who feel excessive reverence for omens and are directed not by their own heart but by another's words, and creep through alley-ways gathering their wisdom from the chance utterances of others, (165) thinking, so to speak, not with their minds but with their ears.⁶⁴

Indeed, as things are, it is certain that soothsayers who interpret omens very often do nothing but hear a voice picked up by their own ears, and show no hesitation about the fact that it proceeds only from a human mouth. But Socrates claimed that he encountered not just a voice but 'a certain kind of voice';⁶⁵ you may understand from this addition that no common or human voice is meant. If that were so, there would be no point in saying 'a certain kind of voice' rather than just 'a voice' or 'someone's voice'—just as even that prostitute in Terence says: 'I seemed just

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now to hear the soldier's voice'.⁶⁶ (166) Anyone who claims to have heard 'a certain kind of voice' either has no idea of its origin or has some kind of doubt about it, or wants to show that it had some unusual and strange quality, just as Socrates always said about the voice from a divine source which came to him at critical moments.

Indeed, I think that he picked up the traces of his *daemon* not only with his ears, but also with his eyes: for he quite often proclaimed that it was not a voice but a divine sign which had appeared to him.⁶⁷ This sign might have been a visual form of the *daemon* itself,⁶⁸

which only Socrates could see, just as with Homer's Achilles and Minerva.⁶⁹ I believe that most of you would be slow to believe and thoroughly surprised at what I have just stated, namely that this form of the *daemon* was seen frequently by Socrates. But the followers of Pythagoras were usually quite astonished if anyone claimed **(167)** that he had never seen a *daemon*, Aristotle is, I believe, sufficient authority for this.⁷⁰ And if the chance to contemplate a divine representation can fall to anyone at all, why should it not be especially available to Socrates, made equal to any of the greatest divine powers by the worth of his wisdom? For nothing is more similar or more pleasing to god than a man of perfectly virtuous mind,⁷¹ who surpasses the rest of mankind by the same distance that separates him from the deathless deities.

Why, then, should not we too be roused by the example and mention of Socrates, and give ourselves over to desire to follow a philosophy like his, seeking after similar divine powers? But we are dragged down from this objective for some obscure reason; **(168)** there is nothing that astonishes me more than the fact that

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men do not cultivate their mind, though all desire to live as well as possible, all are aware that the mind is the sole source of life, and all know that there is no alternative to cultivating the mind in order to achieve the best existence. But if anyone wants to have sharp vision, it is the eyes, the means of sight, which must be given attention; if you want to run swiftly, it is the feet, the means of running; likewise, if you are very keen to box, you must exercise the arms, the means of boxing.⁷² **(169)** Similarly, for all the other parts of the body, each requires a care appropriate to its function. Since this is easily understood by all men, I find myself unable to give a sufficient account of why all men do not also cultivate their mind through the practice of reason, or wonder at this omission as the fact deserves.

This practice of living is equally necessary for all—not like the practice of painting or harp-playing, which any man of virtue would reject without the need for self-rebuke, shame, or blushing. I cannot play the pipes like Ismenias, but I am not ashamed that I am not a pipe-player; I cannot paint in colours like Apelles, but I am not ashamed not to be an image-maker;⁷³ likewise in the case of all the arts (not to go through them all) you may be ignorant without shame. But, if you will, try to say 'I cannot live well, as Socrates, as Plato, as Pythagoras lived, and I am not ashamed not to know how to live well'. **(170)** You will never dare to say this. But it is a prime source of wonder that men nevertheless neglect to learn the very things of which they least wish to appear ignorant, and simultaneously decry both knowledge and ignorance of the same art. Accordingly, mark off their items of daily expenditure; you would find much lavish outlay in their accounts, but nothing spent on themselves, that is, on the cultivation of their *daemon*, a cultivation which is nothing but a pledge of allegiance to philosophy.

Clearly, such people do build luxurious villas, richly ornament their houses, and assemble slave-households of massive number.

(171) But in all this, and in such an abundance of possessions,

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there is nothing to be ashamed of except the owner, and rightly so. For they pay careful attention to the riches they have amassed, but themselves go about in a squalid state, unlearned and uncultivated. Look then at the objects on which they have wasted their inheritance: you will find them to be most attractive, well constructed, and well decorated, villas built to rival cities, houses as ornamented as temples, slave-households of great number with their hair all curled, rich furnishings. All is abundance, all is opulence, all is ornament except the owner himself; he is like Tantalus, alone, poor, needy, and a beggar amid his own riches—

but it is not the legendary fleeting stream or deceptive waters (172) that he vainly attempts to catch at and thirsts after, but rather he hungers and thirsts for the stream of true happiness, of a favourably flowing life and of the great fortune of wisdom.⁷⁴

Such a man does not understand that the rich should be viewed just as horses are when we purchase them.⁷⁵ For when we buy a horse, we do not look at its cheek-pieces or inspect the polished parts of its harness or scrutinize the riches on its highly ornamented neck, to check if the many colours of its hanging collar-

pieces are made out of gold and silver and jewels, (173) or if the decorations set about its head and neck are full of artistry, if its bridle is engraved, if its saddle-cloth is richly dyed, or if its girths are gilded. Rather, we look at the horse itself in its bare state, with all these external coverings removed, considering only its physique and temperament, to see if it has a fine appearance and a vigorous turn of speed and the strength to carry a rider, and first of all, in the matter of its physique, to see if 'its head is long and thin, its belly is shallow, its flanks are fat, and its spirited breast

burgeons with sinews'.⁷⁶ (174) Then I look to see if a double ridge runs through its middle, for I want it to carry me not only swiftly but also comfortably.

Just so when considering human beings, too, do not value those extraneous aspects, but look within at the true person; scrutinize yourself as you would my admired Socrates, as a person without

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possessions. Extraneous aspects⁷⁷ I define as those which are engendered by one's parents and bestowed by fortune; I incorporate none of these into the grounds for praising my Socrates—no nobility of birth, no ancestry, no distantly stretching lineage, no invidious wealth. These, as I say, are extraneous. Porthaon's

son felt he had sufficient glory (**175**) in being such a man as would not bring shame to his grandson.⁷⁸ And so you can list all extraneous aspects in the same way. 'He is well born': it is his parents you praise. 'He is rich': I put no trust in fortune. Equally, I add the following. 'He is strong': he will be exhausted by sickness. 'He is speedy': in old age he will stand still. 'He is handsome': wait a little and he will not be. 'But he is educated in fine disciplines and is supremely learned, and wise as far as a man can be, and expert in the good': at last you get to praising the man himself. For this is not inherited from his father, nor dependent on chance, nor voted for a year, nor physically precarious, nor subject to change through ageing. All these qualities were possessed by my Socrates, and it was for that reason that he scorned to possess any others.

Accordingly, why are you⁷⁹ not roused in your turn to the study of philosophy? (**176**) Why are you not keen to make sure that, when people praise you, your fame contains nothing extraneous? Or that any one wishing to celebrate your nobility should praise you just as Accius praised Odysseus in his *Philoctetes*, at the beginning of that tragedy?⁸⁰

Man of fame, brought forth by a small country,
Powerful in a renowned name and a glorious heart,

(**177**) Counsellor of the Greek fleets,
Terrible revenger on the peoples of Troy,
Son of Laertes.

His father is mentioned last of all; but by then you have already heard all the praises of this great man. Nothing of that can be

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claimed for themselves by Laertes, Anticleia, or Arcisius,⁸¹ the whole ownership of this praise is personal to Odysseus.

Homer teaches you much the same about that same Odysseus; he presented wisdom (which he in the manner of the poets named

Minerva) (**178**) as that hero's constant companion.⁸² It was with this comrade that Odysseus underwent all his terrible dangers, and conquered all adversity. It was with this helper that he entered the cave of the Cyclops, and emerged; that he saw the Cattle of the Sun, and kept his hands from them; that he descended to the Underworld and came back. It was with this same companionship of wisdom that he sailed past Scylla and was not seized; that he was surrounded by Charybdis and was not trapped; that he drank Circe's potion and was not

metamorphosed; that he went to the land of the Lotus-Eaters and did not stay behind; that he heard the Sirens and did not go to them.

NOTES

- ¹ This tripartition belongs to the post-Platonic tradition rather than to Plato himself—cf. Bingenheimer (1993: 138).
- ² A citation of Virgil, *G.* 1.5–6. The speaker expects his audience to know its origin.
- ³ Greek and Latin writers since Aristotle used the term 'Chaldaeans' for astrologers in general, and it is unlikely to be a reference to a specific work; cf. e.g. Cicero, *De Divinatione* 2.85–91 on the 'Chaldaeans'.
- ⁴ A citation of Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 5.575. For Lucretius as an important model in the *De Deo Socratis* see Harrison (2000: 140 and 143).
- ⁵ On the problem raised by this cross-reference see Introduction above, p. 191.
- ⁶ 'Greek' picks up the previous references to Plato, while 'barbarian' (i.e. 'non-Greek' in Greek thought) looks back to 'Chaldaeans' at the beginning of the sentence; this dichotomy is not evidence that Apuleius is translating a Greek text, though he is doubtless using Greek models.
- ⁷ i.e. planets, 'planet' being derived from the Greek for 'wandering' (*planetes*).
- ⁸ The Latin phrasing of this phrase ('those who have observed ...') alludes to Catullus 66.2.
- ⁹ A citation of a line of Virgil describing constellations which occurs twice in the *Aeneid* (1.774, 3.516).
- ¹⁰ Ennius, *Trag.* 216 (Jocelyn). Apuleius' use of Ennius here and in the next section shows his archaizing tastes, fashionable in the 2nd cent. (see Introduction).
- ¹¹ Ennius, *Ann.* 240–1 (Skutsch).
- ¹² A doctrine not found in Plato but known in Middle Platonism by the time of Apuleius: cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* 10.
- ¹³ i.e. the supreme god, a strong Apuleian interest, e.g. in the *Apologia* (64.5–7), *De Mundo* (24.341–38.374), or *De Platone* (1.5.190–2).
- ¹⁴ In fact there is only one Platonic passage where this occurs (*Timaeus* 28 C).

¹⁵ This phrase ('call my speech down ...') is taken from Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 5.10.

¹⁶ Cf. Plato, *Symposium* 203 A.

¹⁷ This description of the monarch protected from the outside world recalls Apuleius' account of the Great King of Persia at *De Mundo* 26.346–9.

¹⁸ This appears to be the first occurrence of these now familiarly proverbial ideas.

¹⁹ A citation of *Aen.* 9.300. Ascanius, also called Iulus, is the son of Virgil's hero Aeneas in the *Aeneid*.

²⁰ A citation of *Aen.* 10.773. Mezentius is an impious opponent of Aeneas in the *Aeneid*, 'Rutulians' the common collective name for Aeneas' Italian opponents in the war in Latium.

²¹ The Latin text presents a pseudo-etymological wordplay between *ius iurandum*, 'swear an oath', and *Iovis iurandum*, 'swear by Jupiter'. The passage of Ennius alluded to here (a fragment from an unnamed play, 389 Warmington) is also quoted by Cicero, *De Officiis* 3.104, possibly Apuleius' direct source (though for his interest in Ennius see n. 10 above).

²² For Jupiter the Stone see Polybius 3.25.6–9; Gellius 1.21.4.

²³ The *aer* is the moister, thicker air nearer the earth, the *aether* the finer, more fiery higher air.

²⁴ Plato, *Symposium* 202 D.

²⁵ Apuleius here describes the traditional modes of divination at Rome; for more details see Harrison (2000: 152).

²⁶ The Hannibal story comes from Cicero, *De Divinatione* 1.48; the Flaminius story varies from that at Livy 21.63.13 and Silius Italicus 5.63–5 (those versions have Flaminius' sacrificial victim escaping, but here we seem to have a version, not known elsewhere, where the sacrifice is completed); the story of Att(i)us Navius (both forms of the name are known) is found at Cicero, *De Divinatione* 1.32. All three stories may have featured in the history of Coelius Antipater (2nd cent. BC).

²⁷ These two stories are both drawn from Livy's history of early Rome: Livy 1.34.8, 1.39.1.

²⁸ I here read *pingat*, 'manufacture' (a 17th-cent. conjecture) for the transmitted *pingat*, 'depict', printed in Moreschini's text.

²⁹ The reference seems to be to shrivelling the victim's liver, thus rendering it inauspicious when examined.

³⁰ The reference is to the Sibylline books at Rome, containing verse oracles and consulted at momentous times.

³¹ The reference is to the regular movement of the planets, here viewed as gods (hence 'creatures').

³² The reference is to Aristotle, *History of Animals* 5.19.

³³ About 2000 m.; in fact, the summit of Mt Olympus in Thessaly, the highest mountain in the Greek peninsula, is nearly 3000 m.

³⁴ This discussion of clouds owes much to Lucretius, expressly cited a little later on (cf. nn. 37, 38 below); see further Harrison (2000: 154–5).

³⁵ I here read *est*, 'is', a modern conjecture, for the transmitted *et*, 'and', read by Moreschini.

³⁶ This image is taken from Virgil, *G.* 1.397.

³⁷ Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 6.96–8.

³⁸ The description of the texture of the *daemones* in this passage again owes much to Lucretius—for the details see Harrison (2000: 154).

³⁹ The line trans. here is Homer, *Iliad* 1.198; the context is the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, where Achilles' murderous rage is calmed by the forceful intervention of Minerva (Athene), goddess of wisdom, a passage much allegorized in antiquity as the intervention of good sense.

⁴⁰ An understandable memory error; the context described here is Virgil, *Aen.* 12.468 ff., but the citation is of *Aen.* 1.440, a similar scene where Aeneas is concealed from sight by his divine mother Venus.

⁴¹ Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus* 4; the line is slightly adapted here rather than quoted literally. This quotation seems to illustrate the earlier point of the dazzling reflective powers of the *daemones*, not the current point of their invisibility.

⁴² The following description of divine serenity is in accordance with Platonic doctrine, cf. Beaujeu (1973: 226–7), but also echoes a famous passage of Epicurean theology in Lucretius (*De Rerum Natura* 2.646–51).

⁴³ This is the first allusion to the central subject of the *DDS*, suggesting perhaps that its opening has been lost; see Introduction.

⁴⁴ A citation of Virgil, *Aen.* 9.184–5; the second line of the quotation has in fact been lost in our transmitted text of the *DDS*, but must be restored since it contains the vital point for the argument here.

⁴⁵ There is no earlier reference to this topic in this *DDS*, another reason for supposing the loss of its opening—cf. n. 43 above and Introduction.

⁴⁶ The guardian spirit believed by the Romans to attach to each person at birth.

⁴⁷ This odd-looking archaic prayer-formula juxtaposes the two elements at least partly because they alliterate in Latin (*Genium et genus*), alliteration being a feature of archaic Latin prayer-language.

⁴⁸ A name given to the ghosts of the dead, often implying malevolence (unlike here).

⁴⁹ The Roman god of the home, usually represented by an image in a small shrine in the entrance-hall of houses.

⁵⁰ The African flavour of this list (apart from Amphiaraus, who became a god when swallowed up by an earthquake during the expedition of the Seven against Thebes—cf. Apollodorus, *Library* 3.6.7) suggests a Carthaginian audience (Aesculapius had a major cult at Carthage); cf. Introduction.

⁵¹ This passage follows Platonic sources closely (the *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, and *Republic*); for the details see Beaujeu (1973: 237–9).

⁵² A reference to the judgement of Apollo's Delphic oracle that Socrates was the wisest of men (Plato, *Apology* 21 A).

⁵³ I read *interceptis*, 'cut off', a 17th-cent. conjecture, for the transmitted *interfectis*, 'killed', read by Moreschini.

⁵⁴ The reference is to *Iliad* 1.249 ff., where Nestor, the aged and eloquent king of Pylos, attempts to make peace between the quarrelling Agamemnon and Achilles.

⁵⁵ I read *sedet*, an MS variant, for the majority reading *sed et*, 'but and', read by Moreschini.

⁵⁶ The patronymics of the two heroes just mentioned.

⁵⁷ The reference is to *Iliad* 10.218 ff.

⁵⁸ The reference is to events immediately preceding the Trojan War, where the Greek fleet was held up at Aulis; these are related at *Iliad* 2.303 ff.

⁵⁹ Priam's trusted counsellors, similarly listed together at *Iliad* 3.147 and 20.238. I read *Lampos* as the name of the second since the transmitted *Lampo*, read by Moreschini and all editors, is an unlikely name-form—see Harrison (2000: 162 n. 99).

⁶⁰ Helenus and Cassandra were both Trojan prophets, children of Priam; Helenus predicted defeat, while Cassandra was cursed by Apollo so that her (true) prophecies were never believed.

⁶¹ The account of the *daemon* of Socrates which follows in the next few paragraphs closely echoes Platonic sources, especially the *Phaedrus* (cf. n. 65 below) and the *Apology*.

⁶² This and the similar reference a few lines later allude to the ancient practice of kledomancy, i.e. attributing prophetic significance to apparently chance remarks; Plutarch, *De Genio Socratis* 12, makes clear that kledomancy was a common hostile interpretation of Socrates' claim to have contact with his *daemon*.

⁶³ This sentence refers to two famous passages of Plato's *Phaedrus*: its opening scenario (229 A ff.), and Socrates' 'recantation' of his attack on Love (243 A ff.).

⁶⁴ This recalls the traditional caricatures of the superstitious man in Theophrastus, *Characters* (16) and Plutarch, *On Superstition* (3).

⁶⁵ A trans. of Plato, *Phaedrus* 242 C. 2 *τινα φωνήν*.

⁶⁶ A citation of Terence, *Eunuchus* 454.

⁶⁷ Apuleius here departs from Plato and Plutarch, who both imply that the *daimonion* of Socrates was not visual (Plutarch, *De Genio Socratis* 20; Harrison (2000: 164)). His contemporary Maximus of Tyre (8.5) seems to countenance a visual interpretation, and this view may reflect discussion in 2nd-cent. Platonism, especially as Maximus uses the same comparison of Achilles and Minerva from Homer (8.5~*DDS* 145, 166).

⁶⁸ The Latin word used here for 'visual form', *species*, might suggest the well-known Platonic theory of 'Forms' or true realities underlying physical appearance, since *species* is used in that context by Cicero (*Orator* 101).

⁶⁹ Cf. 145 and n. 39 above.

⁷⁰ This view is also assigned to Aristotle by Clement of Alexandria—cf. Aristotle, fr. 193 (Rose).

⁷¹ This is another allusion to Aristotle's views, at *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.8 (1179^a).

⁷² These analogies plainly draw on Seneca, *Epistles* 80.3 and 78.16. Seneca is a strong influence on this final, protreptic part of the work (see Introduction above, p. 193).

⁷³ The virtuoso pipe-player (aulete) Ismenias lived in the 4th cent. BC (Plutarch, *Pericles* 1.5; Pliny, *NH* 37.8), as did the great Apelles, court-painter to Alexander the Great. The analogy of virtue with pipe-playing and painting belongs to the Platonic tradition—cf. Plato, *Philebus* 56 A, *Protagoras* 323 A, *Gorgias* 501 E and 503 E, [Plato], *Theages* 126 E.

⁷⁴ The comparison of the rich man with Tantalus, thirsting amongst abundant water, echoes Horace, *Satires* 1.1.68–70.

⁷⁵ The following comparison closely echoes Seneca, *Epistles* 80.9, already echoed at 168 (see n. 72 above).

⁷⁶ A citation of Virgil, *G.* 3.80–1; *G.* 3.86 is also echoed in the sentence about the 'double ridge'.

⁷⁷ 'Extraneous' (Latin *aliena*) trans. the Greek term *adiaphora*, used by the Stoics and others for matters to which the philosopher should be indifferent.

⁷⁸ Porthaon's son is Oeneus, father of the great Diomedes; this sentence, which has caused some difficulty, plainly paraphrases a line from a Roman tragedy, possibly Accius' *Diomedes* from the 2nd cent. BC—see Harrison (2000: 170 n. 134).

⁷⁹ Apuleius turns to the direct address and exhortation of his audience in the traditional manner of the 'diatribe' (ancient popular moralizing).

⁸⁰ Accius, fr. 195–9 (Dangel).

⁸¹ The father, mother, and paternal grandfather of Odysseus.

⁸² This and the following lines refer to well-known episodes from Homer's *Odyssey*. The incompleteness of the ending suggests that the original conclusion of the work was lost in transmission—see Introduction, p. 191 above.

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GENRE, SOURCES, DATING

On the God of Socrates (*De Deo Socratis*, here abbreviated as *DDS*) is the only one of the three extant philosophical books transmitted together under the name of Apuleius of which the authenticity is not disputed.¹ It is neither a tralatician doxographical treatise like the *De Platone*, nor a translation of a known Greek philosophical text like the *De Mundo*, but a popular philosophical lecture of the kind widespread in the Greek Second Sophistic, adapted for a Latin-speaking audience. Its evident direction towards such an audience and its allusions to matters of interest to Roman North Africa (for the details see below) suggest that it was delivered in that province, most likely in Carthage, which we know from the *Florida* was Apuleius' main sphere of operations. There is no indication of date in the work, but it seems most likely to belong to the 160s, the period of the *Florida*, with which it shares an audience and a high epideictic style.

Some works of this type in Greek are to be found in the so-called *Moralia* of Plutarch, for example the short declamation on superstition, *De Superstitione* (*Mor.* 164 E–171 E), or that on the Epicurean motto 'live unnoticed', *De Latenter Vivendo* (*Mor.* 1128 A–30 C),² both lively rhetorical treatments of philosophical commonplaces, presented in the first person rather than dialogue form and embellished with poetical quotations, elements central to Apuleius' own technique in the *De Deo Socratis*; Plutarch's contemporary Dio Chrysostom also produced a number of short works of a similar kind, for example his discourses on greed (*Or.* 17) or on retirement (*Or.* 20), and many of the sophistic discourses of which we have only sketchy reports must have been of this

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nature.³ Later, in the second half of the second century, a notable exponent of this type of writing is Maximus of Tyre. His forty-one *Dialexeis*, covering a wide range of issues in ethics, are brief philosophical sermons of a distinctly personal kind, shorter, less polished, and more informal than the *DDS*, but similarly lively, ornamented with tags from the poets, and

concerned with promoting the doctrines associated by the writer with Plato, which in second-century Middle Platonism included many views adapted from other philosophical schools.⁴

Two of Maximus's *Dialexeis* (8 and 9) in fact concern the same subject as Apuleius' work, the *daimonion* of Socrates. This is the personal divine voice or guardian recorded in the works of Plato and Xenophon as giving Socrates advice on crucial occasions,⁵ and was a favourite topic of writers of the Greek Second Sophistic; this is unsurprising given their interest in Plato's works and in the character of Socrates,⁶ and the general concern of intellectuals in the first few centuries AD with ideas about intermediate divine powers.⁷ Discussion of the *daimonion* of Socrates usually led on to the discussion of the associated class of *daimones* in general, beings commonly characterized as having a status somewhere between gods and men, and prominent in Plato and the early Academy.

Plutarch, already mentioned as a precursor in the field of the philosophical lecture, also composed a treatise on this same subject, commonly known as *De Genio Socratis* (*Mor.* 575 A–598 F). Here, in the form of a Platonic dialogue, Plutarch expounds ideas about the *daimonion*, without much interest in the larger question of *daimones*; this material is surrounded and indeed eventually overtaken by a melodramatic historical plot concerned with the liberation of Thebes from Spartan domination in 379 BC.⁸

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Plutarch's work shows that Socrates' *daimonion* was well established as a literary topic before Apuleius, but his treatment does not contribute much to the *DDS*, though it shares some basic elements of exposition of Platonic doctrine. Much closer to Apuleius' approach is that to be found in the linked *Dialexeis* 8 and 9 of Maximus, which move on from Socrates' *daimonion* to *daimones* in general (8.1–6 concern Socrates, 8.7–8 and 9 the general issue, without indeed returning to the question of Socrates), and make a number of points and arguments also to be found in Apuleius, including one striking verbal parallel at *Dial.* 8.1.

The clear similarities between Maximus and Apuleius raise the question of the date and sources of the *DDS*. The *Dialexeis* are usually dated to the reign of Commodus (AD 180–92), which suggests that they are later than the *DDS* unless that is a very late work of Apuleius; but Maximus seems to have been an exact contemporary of Apuleius who was born in the 120s AD and achieved literary reputation as early as the 150s, and some of the *Dialexeis* may well have been available earlier than 180.⁹ Though an Apuleian *DDS* from the 180s or 190s is by no means impossible, given our uncertainty about Apuleius' later career,¹⁰ it seems more likely (as already suggested) to belong some twenty years earlier with Apuleius' other datable epideictic performances in the *Florida*.

The original audience of the *DDS* was clearly Latin-speaking, since at one point the speaker says he will discourse in Latin for the clearer understanding of his addressees;¹¹ all the quotations with which it is liberally sprinkled are from Latin writers, and even a line from such a well-known Greek text as Homer is cited somewhat ostentatiously in Apuleius' own translation rather than in the original.¹² This, combined with a group at *DDS* 154 of honorific references to Africa, Egypt, and the god Aesculapius, particularly prominent in Carthage, strongly suggests that the *DDS* matches the *Florida* in being delivered to a Carthaginian audience in the 160s or 170s AD; its close affinities with the

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language and style of the *Florida* also indicate this—it too shows a highly ornamented epideictic style leavened with anecdotes and literary quotations. Thus, unless the Greek Maximus is using the Latin text of Apuleius, inherently unlikely given the traditional Greek subject-matter (there would no doubt be a ready array of Greek sources for easier use) and the general tendency of Greek sophists not to use Latin sources, the similarities between the two will be due to a common (Greek) source.

This is perhaps supported by the differences between the two works, which are most economically explained by the two authors' different use of the same material. As we have seen, Maximus moves from the specific case of Socrates to general *daimon*-theory, while Apuleius, as we shall see, does the opposite, with the case of Socrates mentioned for the first time at *DDS* 150 and first substantially discussed at 157, well over halfway through the work, which opens with Plato's general classification of beings. The striking verbal echo already mentioned also suggests mutual dependence on a common source. Maximus begins *Dialexis* 8 with the words:

You seem surprised that Socrates should have enjoyed the company of a benevolent prophetic *daimonion*, which was his constant companion and an all but inseparable element of his mind—even though he was a man pure in body and blessed with a virtuous soul, meticulous in the conduct of his life, a shrewd thinker, an eloquent speaker, pious towards the gods and holy in his dealings with men.

It is difficult to believe that this is not related to *DDS* 157: 'Accordingly, is it any wonder that Socrates, a man of prime perfection and judged wise even by the testimony of Apollo, recognized and revered this god within him ...?' The incredulous rhetorical questions and the stress on the great virtue of Socrates similarly expressed suggest a common origin; both authors are also raising an obvious problem, why the wise Socrates needed a *daimonion* in the first place, which is likely to have featured in previous writing on the subject. Both are also doing so at the start of their treatment of the *daimonion* in particular, Maximus at the beginning of his work, Apuleius halfway through. The most persuasive explanation is

that the two are both adopting a standard Greek introduction to the discussion of Socrates' *daimonion*.

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Thus, as so often, Apuleius takes up a traditional theme prominent in the contemporary writing of the Greek Second Sophistic and turns it into a Latin and Roman form for a Western audience. Though it is not impossible that it is a translation of a particular lost Greek work, it seems more likely to be an adaptation for a specific occasion of general Greek material.¹³ The didactic character of the *DDS* is clear; interesting here is the large number of allusions it makes to the work of Lucretius, whom Apuleius might well have seen as an illustrious predecessor in the didactic presentation of Greek philosophy to a Roman audience, though the philosophical works of Cicero and Seneca are also laid under contribution, no doubt for the same reason.¹⁴ Apuleius is also pursuing a topic which he as a writer finds intriguing; apart from *De Deo Socratis*, the issue of *daimones* exercises him in the *Apologia*, and is prominent in the *De Platone*.¹⁵ *Daimones* do not find a place in the worlds of Fronto and Gellius. They fit much more the colourful and exotic image of Apuleius and his notionally pious interest in esoteric religions, well documented in the *Apologia*, and of course his self-proclaimed character as a *philosophus Platonicus*, since *daimon*-theory had long been the accepted province of Platonism.

PROBLEMS OF TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION

The manuscripts of the philosophical works of Apuleius present us with five paragraphs as a preface to the *DDS*, sometimes known as the 'False Preface'. In my own view (though the question is hotly disputed), these paragraphs clearly belong to the *Florida*, and should be treated as further extracts from the end of that collection, having been wrongly placed at the head of the *DDS* through an incorrect division of manuscripts when the philosophical works

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of Apuleius were separated from the *Metamorphoses*, *Apologia*, and *Florida*.¹⁶ The text of these paragraphs of the 'False Preface' has already been printed separately in this translation, with an introduction which gives a summary of the main points in the controversy, to which the reader is referred for further discussion.¹⁷

If the so-called 'False Preface' is not part of the original *DDS*, as both modern editors believe, that work shows every sign of being acephalous. It begins abruptly with Plato's division of the world into various types of beings, with no introduction of the theme to the audience, no explanation of terms, and no indication at all of how all this fits into the general argument about the *daimonion* of Socrates. Such a brusque beginning and apparent lack of connection

with the title of the work (assuming that it *is* the original title¹⁸) is inappropriate for a sophistic writer such as Apuleius, whose concern for elaborately worked prefaces is clear in his other works, especially in the *Florida*, many of the items in which are clearly prefatory. It seems therefore as if the original preface has been lost, easy enough at the beginning of a work; the same may well have happened at the beginning of the disputed *De Platone*.¹⁹

The same conclusion is indicated by the very abrupt way in which the *daimonion* of Socrates is mentioned for the first time more than halfway through (150), introduced as if already mentioned as the subject of the work. Such a statement of the work's topic, as well as being shown in the title, would naturally have been made in a lost preface. This would also account for the apparently empty cross-reference at *DDS* 150,²⁰ a discussion of the term *eudaimon*; this would easily have fitted into an initial definition of what a *daimon* or *daimonion* was, a necessary preliminary for the non-Greek-speaking audience of the *DDS* and indeed to any discussion of the *daimonion* of Socrates. Such a definition of a *daimon* is indeed given in the extant text at *DDS* 133, but would naturally also be mentioned briefly at the outset; there is every reason why definition of terms should occur in a preface.

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It also seems likely that the work has lost not just its original preface but also its original conclusion; the ending of a work, like its beginning, is particularly apt to vanish in transmission. As it stands, the *DDS* draws to a close (176–8) with an examination of the figure of Ulysses as philosophical sage, a traditional topic,²¹ and actually ends strikingly but rather suddenly (178) with an impressively epigrammatic paragraph of balanced sentences on the subject of Ulysses' virtues. There is no attempt at a formal conclusion or a return to addressing the audience, the kind of overt closural markers which we find in the complete speeches in the *Florida* and would expect here.²² The most obvious interpretation, which I prefer, is that the work has broken off before its appointed close, though it is always possible that the extant ending is that originally intended, given that the final paragraph with its well-marked formal structure has some closural effect.

One final piece of evidence which has been used to argue for textual damage in the *DDS* is 118 ('a point which I will deal with later'), where Apuleius promises a future discussion of the nature of the moon which does not in fact appear in the extant work. However, the direction in which the *DDS* moves after this point more or less precludes the inclusion of this topic, even if the ending is lost, and such prospective assertions do not have the same veridical force as retrospective statements such as that at 150, since there is room for a change of mind or omission. Two possible explanations suggest themselves. The first is that Apuleius here seems to imitate the famous claim at Lucretius 5.155: 'this I will prove to you later in a long discourse', which promises a full treatment of the gods, not to be found in the extant *De Rerum Natura*: the apparent verbal links *postea* (~*posterius*) and *videro*

(~*probabo*) in Apuleius support this, as does the quotation from the same book of Lucretius (5.575) which occurs immediately before the Apuleian statement (*DDS* 118). In this case Apuleius' claim would allude to that of Lucretius, presumably in the full knowledge that the Lucretian promise was similarly unfulfilled. This would be a subtle literary allusion, perhaps oversubtle. The second explanation is more basic. 'Later' could refer not to the *DDS* but to a future discourse in which the speaker will deal with this topic, and if as already suggested the *DDS* is being delivered to Apuleius'

habitual audience at Carthage, this would make very good sense.²³ Whichever of these is the more plausible, Apuleius' promise must above all be considered in its rhetorical context, where its prime function is as a token of his learning: he is able and willing to discourse of the rival theories of the source of the moon's light, but he must get on with the business in hand, which is another topic—it is simply not important that he never returns to this interesting subject. Given this rhetorical aspect and the explanations just offered, the promise is not conclusive evidence that there is a lacuna in the text of the *DDS* somewhere after 118.

STRUCTURE OF THE WORK

I.	Gods and Men	114-32
	astral gods	114-20
	the non-astral gods	121-4
	man and his separation from the gods	125-32
II.	The Account of <i>Daimones</i>	132-56
	the function of <i>daimones</i>	132-7
	the location and physical substance of <i>daimones</i>	137-45
	<i>daimones</i> , emotions, and the higher gods	145-50
	types of <i>daimones</i>	150-6
III.	The <i>Daimonion</i> of Socrates	157-67
IV.	Following the Moral Example of Socrates	167-78

encouragement to virtue	167-9
and philosophy	
virtue as the only real	169-78
good	

As can be seen from this schema, the *DDS* clearly divides into four main parts: the initial classification of beings into gods and men, the former including *daimones* (114-32), the general account of *daimones* (132-56), the discussion of the *daimonion* of Socrates (157-67), and a concluding exhortation to follow the example of Socrates more generally in the practice of moral philosophy (168-78). This structure clearly shows that Apuleius' main interest is the general exposition of Platonic theory about *daimones*, and that the particular issue of Socrates' *daimonion*, which provides the

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title of the work but takes up less than a sixth of its space, is evidently subordinate. Here we should be cautious, since as Helm argues it is perfectly possible that a lost opening section of the work contained more material about Socrates.²⁴ But the extant arrangement is not unlike the treatment of the same topic in Maximus' *Diallexeis* 8 and 9, where Socrates' *daimonion* takes about a third of the space and *daimones* in general two-thirds, or even Plutarch's *De Genio Socratis*, where the issue of Socrates' *daimonion* eventually becomes subordinate to the historical setting (see 'Genre, Sources, Dating', above), though the work provides a more detailed discussion of the *daimonion* than either Apuleius or Maximus, and does not say much about *daimones* in general. Of course, the *daimonion* of Socrates was not an inexhaustible topic in itself, and the linking with it of a discussion of *daimones* in general was an obvious strategy, but Apuleius seems to concentrate disproportionately on the latter.

Also original to the Apuleian treatment is the final section, encouraging his audience to turn to self-contemplation and the good life of philosophy. In theme this is a standard protreptic to virtue, following a tradition which goes back to Plato's *Euthydemus*, Aristotle's lost *Protrepticus*, and Cicero's lost *Hortensius*;²⁵ its presentation is in diatribe mode, and strongly recalls the *Epistles* of Seneca. Its relation to the remainder of the subject-matter of *DDS* is somewhat tenuous; Apuleius makes the link by presenting Socrates as the exemplar of philosophical virtue which all are urged to follow (168), but the section has no concern with *daimon*-theory, being largely a tissue of general and familiar topics of popular ethics. As suggested in 'Problems of Textual Transmission', above, this final section may once have been followed by further material, whether more of the same or different in tone, since there is some possibility that an original ending has been lost.

A NOTE ON THE LATIN TEXT USED FOR THIS TRANSLATION

This translation is based on the most widely available modern text, Moreschini (1991). It uses the convenient and traditional

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page-numbers of Oudendorp's 1823 edition, found in all modern texts, to indicate its subsections (114–78). It translates different readings from Moreschini on five occasions, all marked in the footnotes (136, 143, 157, 158, 161).

Notes

* The material in this introduction is largely drawn from Harrison (2000: 136–73).

¹ Modern scholarly texts of the work are to be found in Beaujeu (1973, with notes) and Moreschini (1991); for further discussion see Harrison (2000: 136–73).

² Both to be found in useful annotated English trans. in Russell (1993).

³ e.g. the lost discourses of Favorinus, from the generation before Apuleius, on popular wisdom, prayer, old age, Socrates the lover, the philosophy of Homer, and the character of philosophers (fr. 6–23 (Barigazzi)).

⁴ On Maximus see the excellent trans. and nn. in Trapp (1997a), and the illuminating general account in Trapp (1997b).

⁵ Plato, *Euth.* 3 B, *Apol.* 31 D, 40 B, *Phaedrus* 242 B–C, [Plato], *Theages* 128 E, 151 A, Xenophon, *Mem.* 4.8.1–5, *Apol.* 4, *Symp.* 8.5.

⁶ For the *daimonion* of Socrates in the Second Sophistic cf. Trapp (1997a: 67–8); for literary interests in Plato in the period cf. e.g. Anderson (1993: 173).

⁷ See conveniently Beaujeu (1973: 195–201).

⁸ See the useful annotated trans. in Russell (1993).

⁹ See Trapp (1997a: pp. xi–xii).

¹⁰ See p. 6 in the General Introduction above.

¹¹ *DDS* 150: 'It would be better to discourse in Latin'; Bingenheimer (1993: 68–9) argues that the work must have had a bilingual audience for Apuleius to achieve just credit for his Latin version of a Greek doctrine, but this seems unconvincing.

¹² *DDS* 145 (tr. *Iliad* 1.198): 'If you can wait a little, I can express the Greek verse in Latin'.

¹³ For discussion of whether the *DDS* could be a trans. of a Greek work see Bingenheimer (1993: 74–6). The dichotomy 'Greek or barbarian' at 119 may look like good evidence of a text deriving from a Greek original, but in context 'Greek' refers to Plato, while 'non-Greek' picks up the reference to the Chaldaeans at 117.

¹⁴ See the parallels recorded in the running *index fontium* in Moreschini (1991), to which the nn. to this trans. add a few, and the more detailed account in Harrison (2000: 136–73).

¹⁵ For Apuleius' consistent interest in *daimones* see still the full discussion by Vallette (1908: 221–90).

¹⁶ For this view in more detail cf. Harrison (2000: 91–2).

¹⁷ See p. 177 above.

¹⁸ For a discussion of the title cf. Beaujeu (1973: 201–3), Harrison (2000: 142 n. 23).

¹⁹ Cf. Harrison (2000: 196).

²⁰ See the discussion in my introduction to the 'False Preface', p. 179 above.

²¹ Cf. Stanford (1963: 121–7).

²² e.g. *Flor.* 9.40, 16.48.

²³ Precisely the same point is made by Maximus, *Dial.* 8.7, tr. Trapp (1997a): 'This is a topic about which I must speak to you again on a subsequent occasion'.

²⁴ Helm (1900: 601–3).

²⁵ See conveniently Rutherford (1989: 23–4).