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# APULEIUS' METAMORPHOSES

*A Study in Roman Fiction*

Stefan Tilg

OXFORD

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UNIVERSITY PRESS

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## Preface

This is a literary study of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, the only fully extant Roman novel (barring the late antique *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri*) and a classic of world literature. Its general aim is to show how the *Metamorphoses* works as a piece of literature, to explore its poetics, and the way in which questions of production and reception are reflected in its text. The individual chapters provide a roughly linear reading of related key passages and issues, starting from Apuleius' Greek model and his prologue, and ending with his very last word. Along this trajectory, the book develops the idea of Apuleius as an ambitious writer led by the literary tradition, rhetoric, and Platonism. It is argued that he created what we could call a seriocomic 'philosophical novel' *avant la lettre*. A particular focus lies on the ways in which Apuleius draws attention to his achievement and introduces the Greek ass story to Roman literature. Thus, the book also sheds new light on the forms and the literary and intellectual potential of the ancient novel in the Roman world. Although a lot of ground is covered, the study remains accessible in terms of length and style. It is suitable for both classicists and general readers interested in classical antiquity and fiction. The argument does not require extensive background knowledge, and readers interested in more background are referred to the relevant literature. All Greek and Latin is translated.

According to my general interest in the poetics of the *Metamorphoses*, I concentrate on programmatic passages, junctures, structures, and literary techniques rather than on plot and characters as such. Key passages in this investigation include the prologue, the comments on inserted tales, the story of Cupid and Psyche, and the Isis book with its significant 'Romecoming' (to use a felicitous coinage of W. Keulen) at the end. But since the rationale of the *Metamorphoses* also depends on larger contexts of literary history and cultural practices, my study will span a variety of other topics, too: from the model of the *Metamorphoses*, the Greek ass story by Loukios of Patras, through the philosophy and career of Apuleius, to the manuscript transmission of his works. It will be seen how Apuleius, like other prose authors of the second century AD, adopts a number of

techniques from poetry and fuses literature, rhetoric, and philosophy into a new whole. By studying the make-up of this fusion, I also hope to contribute to a more thorough understanding of the *Metamorphoses* beyond the overworked and misleading antagonism 'serious v. comic', which has held interpretations of the work under its spell in recent decades.

There are natural limitations to my approach. Firstly, my focus on poetics, although open to related aspects e.g. from history, religion, and philosophy, excludes comprehensive discussion of any of them. Secondly, any interpretation of a complex literary work (and my approach is very much about interpretation) has to go beyond positivist evidence at some point and resort to conjecture. This is not a bad thing in itself. The question to be asked here should be whether a conjecture is plausible and worth arguing rather than whether it is 'just' a conjecture or can replace all other views. I do not intend to present the true and final reading of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. Sometimes I will have made my point if my view is only 'just as good' as a competing one. In Chapter 1, for instance, I argue that Apuleius research has relied for the last 100 years or so on a seeming fact which is really a hypothesis (that Apuleius' religious ending is his own addition). If my alternative hypothesis (that Apuleius found the religious ending in his Greek model) is only just as good, this will make a real difference; for future research dealing with this fundamental question would have to work with both hypotheses.

This book has grown slowly over the years. First drafts of individual passages and chapters were written in Bern, Oxford, Washington DC, Zurich, and Innsbruck, where I also revised and rewrote all the material I had produced. Several research institutions have made this book project possible: the Institut für Klassische Philologie of the University of Bern, where my interest in the ancient novel and Apuleius took shape; the Swiss National Science Foundation, which supported that interest with two successive scholarships, the latter one being specially dedicated to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*; Corpus Christi College in Oxford, which hosted me during my first Swiss scholarship (Fellowship for Advanced Researchers); The Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, where I continued my studies in the ancient novel; the Klassisch-Philologisches Seminar of the University of Zurich, which hosted me during my second Swiss scholarship (Ambizione); finally, the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Neo Latin Studies in Innsbruck, where I eventually found time to write up.

Special thanks are due to the team of the *Groningen Commentary* on book 11 of the *Metamorphoses*: Wytse Keulen, Friedemann Drews, Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser, Luca Graverini, Stephen Harrison, Danielle van Mal-Maeder, Lara Nicolini, Stelios Panayotakis, and Warren Smith. My own participation in this commentary project and my discussions with all team members have been inspiring, and my assertion at our first meeting that I would be writing the book ‘soon’ turned out to be a helpful reminder to get it written at last. Luca Graverini, Wytse Keulen, and, outside the Groningen team, Martin Korenjak, read a first draft of the book and provided helpful feedback. Patrick Hadley kindly revised my English.

S.T.

*Innsbruck,  
June 2014*





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## *Abbreviations*

Journals are abbreviated as in *L'Année philologique*; classical authors and texts as in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (OCD). Authors and texts not listed in *OCD* are not abbreviated.

AAGA	B. L. Hijmans and R. T. van der Paardt (eds), <i>Aspects of Apuleius' Golden Ass: A Collection of Original Papers</i> , Groningen 1978.
AAGA 2	M. Zimmerman et al. (eds), <i>Aspects of Apuleius' Golden Ass, Volume II: Cupid and Psyche</i> , Groningen 1998.
AAGA 3	W. Keulen and U. Egelhaaf-Gaiser (eds), <i>Aspects of Apuleius' Golden Ass, Volume III: The Isis-Book</i> , Leiden 2012.
GCA	Various authors, <i>Groningen Commentaries on Apuleius</i> , Groningen 1977 ff.
GCN	H. Hofmann (ed.), <i>Groningen Colloquia on the Novel</i> , 9 vols, Groningen 1988–98.
LIMC	H. C. Ackermann and J.-R. Gisler (eds), <i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> , 9 vols, Zurich 1981–99.
MPG	J. P. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca</i> , 161 vols, Paris 1857–66.
OCD	S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth, and E. Eidinow (eds), <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , 4th edn, Oxford 2012.
OLD	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , 2nd edn, Oxford 2012.
PIR <sup>2</sup>	E. Groag, A. Stein et al. (eds), <i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani Saeculi I, II, III</i> , 2nd edn, Berlin 1933 ff.
RE	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll (eds), <i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , 83 vols, Stuttgart 1890–1980.
TLG	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> < <a href="http://www.tlg.uci.edu/">http://www.tlg.uci.edu/</a> >
TLL	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> , Leipzig and Stuttgart 1900 ff.

## *Note to the Reader*

I use the new Oxford text of the *Metamorphoses* by M. Zimmerman (Zimmerman 2012a). Quotations from other works of Apuleius and other authors follow the usual leading editions, which I do not identify except when there is a particular textual issue involved. Translations from Apuleius are from Hanson 1989 for the *Metamorphoses* and from Harrison 2001 for the rhetorical works (Hunink's *Apology*; Hilton's *Florida*). Translations of Greek novels come from Reardon 1989 (Anderson's Xenophon of Ephesus; Morgan's Heliodorus). If not indicated otherwise, all other classical texts are translated according to the current Loeb editions. I always take the liberty to modify translations to reflect a different edition or to bring out a particular nuance without signalling this. As familiar from Groningen practice, the name of individual contributors to *GCA* is omitted and volumes are cited by year only; *GCN* is cited like a journal. Last but not least, I should like to acknowledge my debt to the digital tools without which few books in classics would be written today, the *TLG*, the Latin text collection of the Packard Humanities Institute (<http://latin.packhum.org>), and the Perseus project (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>).

## The Model: Religious *Metamorphoseis*?

### 1.1. APULEIUS' MODEL

Most ancient novels<sup>1</sup> are indebted to a large number of literary genres and individual texts. This is emphatically true for the brilliant and highly sophisticated *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius. Allusions to Greek and Latin literature abound in this work, and many strands of writing add layers to its form and content.<sup>2</sup> In contrast with other ancient novels,<sup>3</sup> however, we know beyond reasonable doubt that the *Metamorphoses* not only draws inspiration from a variety of preceding texts, but is, in its essential outlines, based on a particular previous narrative, the *Metamorphoseis* by the so-called 'Loukios of Patras'.<sup>4</sup> While this text is not transmitted to us, a Byzantine testimony and an extant short version allow certain conjectures about it, which also bear on any larger interpretation of Apuleius' novel. In this introductory chapter, I shall focus on this direct model for Apuleius' story and present new ideas about its hypothetical ending. I first characterize a

<sup>1</sup> Generally on the ancient novel see e.g. Schmeling 1996 and the introductions by Graverini, Keulen, and Barchiesi 2006, 147–57 and Holzberg 2006 (the English version of 1995, based on the first German edition of 1986, is outdated in some regards).

<sup>2</sup> For intertextuality in the *Metamorphoses* see e.g. the succinct survey of Harrison 2000, 222–5 and the dedicated studies of Finkelpearl 1998 and De Trane 2009; the various volumes of GCA provide countless examples throughout the work. Generally on intertextuality in the ancient novel see e.g. Morgan and Harrison 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Some scholars (e.g. Jensson 2004) argue also for a fairly close Greek model of Petronius' *Satyricon*, but this remains an—if intriguing—hypothesis. We do not have a model text on which we could base this claim.

<sup>4</sup> While I usually Latinize Greek names and titles of works, I keep the Greek forms of 'Loukios' and his *Metamorphoseis* to distinguish them from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and its protagonist, 'Lucius'.

number of general issues surrounding the Byzantine testimony, the short version, and the original ass story, which, like the short version but differing significantly from Apuleius' religious ending, is normally believed to end comically (§1.2). Picking up on this discussion, I then argue for the unduly neglected hypothesis that Apuleius' ending in fact is a more faithful reflection of the original story than what we see in the short version. I develop this argument on the basis of the Byzantine testimony and other Greek texts (§1.3). Finally, I pursue the argument on a different line by looking at some clues from Apuleius' life and work (§1.4). This chapter, then, has a double purpose: on the one hand, it introduces Apuleius' position with regard to the literary-historical context of the ass story; on the other hand, it shows how this context is constructed in scholarship and argues for a different construction of what has become almost a standard premise in our literary historical accounts. It may be useful to add right at the beginning that little of my later discussion in this book will in fact depend on the hypothesis of a religious ending of the Greek *Metamorphoseis*. I come back to it a number of times to consider different scenarios, but I never base anything exclusively on that hypothesis. Nor do I stop anywhere at a reference to the Greek model, but I always try to understand its significance to Apuleius' own literary ideas.

## 1.2. METAMORPHOSEIS—ONOS— METAMORPHOSES: THE MAIN ISSUES

As with most ancient fiction, we lack clear evidence for the date of the *Metamorphoseis*. A possible *terminus post quem* is provided by the fact that the very word *metamorphosis* (μεταμόρφωσις) is first attested in the Augustan period.<sup>5</sup> The *terminus ante quem* is Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and a shorter Greek adaptation of the story, which also seems to be dependent on the *Metamorphoseis*. Both can be placed in the decades between c. AD 150–180. It has been argued that these adaptations suggest a relatively recent model, whose

<sup>5</sup> Strabo, *Geographica* 1.2.11, pointing out some supernatural elements in the *Odyssey*; the reference to μεταμορφώσεις in this context is probably to Circe's transformation of Odysseus' men into pigs.

success would have prompted swift literary reactions.<sup>6</sup> Another kind of evidence, however, points to an earlier date: from the late first century AD onwards, numerous terracotta lamps show the copulation of an ass and a woman. This is a well-known motif from the ass-story (see, for instance, *Metamorphoses* 10.19–22), and a literary origin seems likely considering that some of the terracotta depictions show striking parallels in detail with the later adaptations of Apuleius and the author of the shorter Greek version.<sup>7</sup> It can be reasonably assumed that the *Metamorphoseis* contained a similar scene and that it inspired artists to produce corresponding depictions. If this is true, the *Metamorphoseis* would have been written before the late first century AD.<sup>8</sup>

The plot of the *Metamorphoseis* will have been similar to later versions of the story, including Apuleius' own: a young man comes to Thessaly in northern Greece, the proverbial land of magic and witchcraft in classical antiquity; he falls prey to his curiosity and is eager to try out some magic on himself; he wishes to be transformed into a bird, but accidentally ends up as an ass; in this shape, he suffers and sees many things from an ass's perspective; finally, he manages to eat roses, the antidote prompting his retransformation into a man.

The detailed plot of Loukios of Patras' narrative eludes us because its manuscript(s) did not survive the mediaeval period. We know of this original ass story only through a short account given by the Byzantine patriarch, Photius (ninth century AD) in his voluminous collection of summaries of Greek works, *Bibliotheca* (Βιβλιοθήκη). In summary 129, Photius says that he read 'various books' (λόγοι διάφοροι) of *Metamorphoseis* (Μεταμορφώσεις) by a certain Loukios of Patras, and he goes on to compare this work with the shorter Greek version of the story referred to above. Photius ascribes this short story to Lucian, a Syrian writing in Greek and a contemporary of Apuleius. It is in fact in the larger context of Lucian's works (the subject of the preceding summary 128) that Photius discusses Loukios of Patras. I quote Greek text and translation in full because Photius will be important for my further argument:<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> e.g. Schissel von Fleschenberg 1927, 1798–1802, at 1799.

<sup>7</sup> Bruneau 1965 and Stramaglia 2010, 180–3.

<sup>8</sup> Stramaglia 2010, 182.

<sup>9</sup> The translation follows Mason 1994, 1668 (with minor changes).



Ἀνεγνώσθη Λουκίου Πατρέως μεταμορφώσεων λόγοι διάφοροι. Ἔστι δὲ τὴν φράσιν σαφής τε καὶ καθαρὸς καὶ φίλος γλυκύτητος· φεύγων δὲ τὴν ἐν λόγοις καινοτομίαν, εἰς ὑπερβολὴν διώκει τὴν ἐν τοῖς διηγήμασι τερατείαν, καὶ ὡς ἂν τις εἴποι, ἄλλος ἐστὶ Λουκιανός. Οἱ δὲ γε πρότεροι αὐτοῦ δύο λόγοι μόνον οὐ μετεγράφησαν Λουκίῳ ἐκ τοῦ Λουκιανοῦ λόγου ὃς ἐπιγέγραπται ‘Λούκις ἢ Ὅνος’ ἢ ἐκ τῶν Λουκίου λόγων Λουκιανῶ. Ἔοικε δὲ μᾶλλον ὁ Λουκιανὸς μεταγράφωντι, ὅσον εἰκάζειν· τίς γὰρ χρόνῳ πρεσβύτερος, οὕτω ἔχομεν γινῶναι. Καὶ γὰρ ὥσπερ ἀπὸ πλάτους τῶν Λουκίου λόγων ὁ Λουκιανὸς ἀπολεπτύνας καὶ περιελὼν ὅσα μὴ ἐδόκει αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸν οἰκείον χρῆσιμα σκοπόν, αὐταῖς τε λέξεσι καὶ συντάξεσιν εἰς ἓνα τὰ λοιπὰ συναρμόσας λόγον, ‘Λούκις ἢ Ὅνος’ ἐπέγραψε τὸ ἐκείθεν ὑποσυληθέν. Γέμει δὲ ὁ ἑκατέρου λόγος πλασμάτων μὲν μυθικῶν, ἀρρητοποιΐας δὲ αἰσχροῦ. Πλὴν ὁ μὲν Λουκιανὸς σκώπτων καὶ διασύρων τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν, ὥσπερ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις, καὶ τοῦτον συνέταττεν. Ὁ δὲ Λούκιος σπουδάζων τε καὶ πιστὰς νομίζων τὰς ἐξ ἀνθρώπων εἰς ἀλλήλους μεταμορφώσεις τὰς τε ἐξ ἀλόγων εἰς ἀνθρώπους καὶ ἀνάπαυιν καὶ τὸν ἄλλον τῶν παλαιῶν μύθων ὕθλον καὶ φλῆναφον, γραφὴν παρέδιδου ταῦτα καὶ συνύφαινε.

Read: Several volumes of the *Metamorphoseis* of Loukios of Patras. He is clear and pure in expression and fond of sweetness of style. He avoids innovation in language, but pursues to excess the marvellous in his narratives. One might say he is another Lucian. The first two books were transcribed almost exactly by Loukios from the work of Lucian entitled *Loukis or the Ass*, or by Lucian from the work of Loukios. But it seems more likely that it was Lucian who did the transcribing, as far as one can guess, for we no longer can know which of the two was older. In fact Lucian, as it were, by smoothing out from the breadth of Loukios' narrative and by removing what did not seem to him useful for his own purpose, fit the rest together into one book with the same words and expressions and gave the title *Loukis or the Ass* to what he had stolen from it. In both authors the narrative is stuffed with mythical inventions and vile obscenity, except that Lucian works into his narrative the mockery of Greek superstition that he does in his other writing, while Loukios is serious and believes that changes of humans into others' forms and into animals and back again are real, and in the idle chatter and nonsense of the ancient myths, and put all of this into writing and wove it into his narrative.

Although expressing some uncertainty about the mutual dependence, Photius eventually concludes that Lucian epitomized the longer story of Loukios. Modern scholarship agrees with this conclusion, even if the attribution of the short story to Lucian (among whose works it is transmitted) has been doubted by many on the grounds of language

and originality (would Lucian really have epitomized another's work?). In referring to the shorter version it is therefore common to speak of 'Ps(eudo)-Lucian' or suppress the author's name altogether and rather say *Onos*, a shorthand for the title of the short story reported by Photius, Λούκιος<sup>10</sup> ἢ Ὀνος (*Loukios* or *The Ass*).<sup>11</sup> Another suspicious detail in Photius' report is the name and origin of the supposed author of the Greek *Metamorphoseis*, Loukios of Patras—identical to the name and origin of the protagonist of the *Onos*, who is equally called Loukios and comes from Patras. On the likely assumption that the same protagonist also appeared in the original ass story, it would seem that Photius, in search for the author of an anonymously transmitted text, extrapolated the author's name from the hero of the story. The fact that the hero narrates his story in the first person—as if the author talks about himself—could have facilitated this extrapolation. Those comparatively mild worries apart, there are two more striking issues in Photius' remarks which keep puzzling scholars.

Firstly, Photius refers to only the 'first two books' (πρώτοι . . . δύο λόγοι) of the *Metamorphoseis* and argues that they more or less correspond to the content of the *Onos*. This has prompted some scholars to think that, in fact, only the first two books of the Greek *Metamorphoseis* contained the ass story (as told in the *Onos*), while further books told different stories of transformation. B. E. Perry's objections<sup>12</sup> dealt a serious blow to this hypothesis, suggested as it was, among other things, by a false analogy with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and similar works. While Ovid relates short and mythological stories, the *Metamorphoseis* is a non-mythological narrative of considerable length. A series of such narratives would be an oddity in ancient literary history as we know it. Today, most scholars tend to think that the whole of the *Metamorphoseis* was taken up by the ass story. This belief is usually accompanied by an argument for some kind of laziness on Photius' part: either the patriarch did not remember that the *Metamorphoseis* comprised no more than two books, or—being familiar with the outlines of the story from his perusal

<sup>10</sup> In fact, the form provided by Photius is 'Loukis' (Λούκις), but this is an easy slip (see e.g. Rohde 1869, 2 n. 1).

<sup>11</sup> The modern standard discussion of Photius' account and the relations between the three ass stories of Loukios, Ps.-Lucian, and Apuleius is Mason 1994.

<sup>12</sup> Perry 1920, 21–31; the main points are conveniently summarized in Perry 1967, 215–16.

of the *Onos*—he did not care to read on and based his conclusions on an abbreviated reading of only the first two books of the *Metamorphoseis*.

Secondly, at the end of his account, Photius draws attention to a difference in ‘seriousness’ between the *Metamorphoseis* and the *Onos* (‘Lucian works into his narrative the mockery of Greek superstition... Loukios is serious and believes...’). This difference is difficult to understand if we take for granted (as it usually is) that the *Onos* is just an epitome of the *Metamorphoseis* and faithfully reflects its style and content. Here again, modern scholarship has questioned Photius’ reliability, and most scholars believe that the apparent difference is just perceived: influenced by the fact that Lucian was a famous mocker whose irony did not stop before the gods (in a more literal sense, δεισιδαιμονία, translated as ‘superstition’ above, can also mean ‘fear of the gods’), Photius would simply have been more willing to read some comedy into what he regarded as Lucian’s text than into the similar text of the unknown Loukios of Patras.

There is a tendency, then, to read Photius against Photius in both the question of the ‘first two books’ and the alleged difference in seriousness. This is not impossible considering that Photius often worked from memory and not everything he says can be taken at face value.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, Photius is our best source for the *Metamorphoseis* and taking his account more seriously is worth an effort. This brings me back to Apuleius, and more specifically to the last book of his *Metamorphoses*.

As all readers of this work will know, its final, eleventh, book is completely different from the ending of the ass story that we find in the *Onos*. The respective plots diverge at the point when a brutal spectacle is put on in the theatre (of Thessalonice in the *Onos*, of Corinth in the *Metamorphoses*) and Loukios/Lucius is supposed to copulate with a convicted murderess on stage. In the *Onos*, Loukios manages to find roses in the theatre just before the start of the performance. He is retransformed in front of a perplexed audience among which there is also the provincial governor. The governor turns out to be a friend of Lucius’ family and he acquits Lucius of any suspicion of magic. Before going home, however, Lucius returns once more to a matron who fell in love with him (or rather his natural

<sup>13</sup> On Photius’ technique of composing the *Bibliotheca* see e.g. Hägg 1975 and Treadgold 1980.

advantages as ass) before—in fact, it was she and the affair she was starting with the ass that inspired his owner to the spectacle of human–animal copulation put on in the theatre. Lucius hopes that, after his retransformation into a man, the matron would love him all the more, but the opposite happens: disappointed by his human ‘size’, the matron has him thrown onto the street. Lucius sleeps rough and returns home the next morning.

In Apuleius, Lucius does not find any roses in the theatre, but escapes from it to the beach of Cenchreae, one of the harbours of Corinth. There he falls asleep. When he wakes up again, the goddess Isis appears to him in the shape of the moon and comforts him. She predicts that with her help he will find a priest to give him the rescuing roses. No sooner said than done, Lucius recognizes the priest in a procession of Isiacs, eats the roses offered to him and is transformed back into a man. In profound gratitude, Lucius vows to dedicate the remainder of his life to Isis. Eventually, he is initiated into the joint cult of both her and her divine husband, Osiris.

### 1.3. A RELIGIOUS ENDING?

It is usually thought that the comic ending of the *Onos* reflects the original plot of the Greek *Metamorphoseis*, while the religious ending of Apuleius is an addition by the Roman writer. This idea is suggested by the fact that the *Onos* is the only extant ass story apart from Apuleius and looks like our best guess as to the plot of the original *Metamorphoseis*. But as far as the ending is concerned, this is just a convenient hypothesis, and there is nothing really compelling about it. Another, far too little considered, hypothesis would be that the more faithful reflection of the original ending of the ass story can be found in Apuleius, with the *Onos* being not *just* an epitome, or at least not an epitome of the *full* story of the *Metamorphoseis*. I am not saying that the evidence for a religious ending of the *Metamorphoseis* is conclusive, but as a working hypothesis it seems to me just as valid as the theory of a comic ending as seen in the *Onos*.

The idea of an original religious ending of the *Metamorphoseis* is not radically new, but considerations of it so far, besides from being mostly ignored in Apuleian scholarship, either labour a single, rather specific, aspect or just touch on the general possibility of a religious

ending. Since I have a slight preference for such an ending of the *Metamorphoseis*, I shall devote more space to the argument in its favour than is usually done and spell out a number of major points.<sup>14</sup>

I start with Photius' seemingly confused account. This account could make more sense against the background of a religious ending of the *Metamorphoseis*. When Photius says that the 'first two books' of the original story correspond to the story of the *Onos*, this may in fact imply a third, possibly religious, book which has no equivalent in the abbreviated version. Judging from Apuleius' ratio of 10:1 between 'comic' and 'serious' books, a ratio of 2:1 in his model seems improbable at first sight, but then we have to consider that the length of Apuleius' 'comic' part is largely due to a great number of inserted narratives, of which many were probably absent in the *Metamorphoseis*. Estimates of the latter's length (or rather the length of its comic part) range from c. 38 to 70 Teubner pages, up from 35 such pages in the *Onos*.<sup>15</sup> To make these figures compatible with other editions and texts it is perhaps best to replace them with word counts. Based on a TLG word count for the *Onos* of 9,802 words, the range for the *Metamorphoseis* would be 10,782 to 19,602 words (10 to 100 per cent more than the *Onos*). Now, Apuleius' book 11 has about 4,973 words.<sup>16</sup> If we speculatively attach that book to the reconstructed

<sup>14</sup> I first raised some arguments in support of a religious ending of the *Metamorphoseis* in Tilg 2012, 145–6. I do not here repeat these arguments because they now seem to me of lesser importance. For earlier considerations of some form of religious ending in the *Metamorphoseis* cf. Goldbacher 1872, 412–21; Reitzenstein 1906, 32–4; Sinko 1912, 147; Kerényi 1927, 160–73; Bohm 1972–3; Anderson 1976, 45–6; Schlam 1992, 24–5; van Mal-Maeder 1997, 111 and 116. Goldbacher, Reitzenstein, Sinko, Kerényi, and Schlam ponder a serious religious ending; Bohm, Anderson, and van Mal-Maeder a comic one. For the question of serious (which does not necessarily mean dead-serious) v. comic (which does not necessarily exclude religion) see Ch. 5.

<sup>15</sup> The lower estimate is Junghanns' (1932, 118) who thinks that the *Metamorphoseis* was just about 3–4 pages longer than the *Onos* (the textual basis is Jacobitz' Teubner edition, first published in 1852–3, in which the *Onos* has 35 pages; see Jacobitz 1852–3, II, 303–38). The upper estimate comes from van Thiel 1971–2, I, 153 who claims a comparatively large number of inserted stories found in Apuleius for the *Metamorphoseis* and argues for an original length of that work of about 70 Teubner pages (twice the length of the *Onos*). Kerényi's (1927, 151–205) argument that Apuleius more or less just translates a Greek model of the same length has not found any followers.

<sup>16</sup> Dowden 2004, 279–80. I use exact figures to make the argument as clear as possible, not to create the impression of scientific evidence. Obviously neither the author nor his audience would have counted words in a piece of longer prose fiction, and proportions in length would have been felt approximately rather than worked out exactly.