

Rhetorical Sleight-of-Hand in Apuleius' *Apology*

1. Major Characters in the *Apology*:

Judge: Claudius Maximus, proconsul of Africa Proconsularis in 158/9 CE

Defendant: Apuleius

Plaintiffs: Sicinius Aemilianus (Pudentilla's former brother-in-law), on behalf of his young nephew Sicinius Pudens (Pudentilla's youngest son; Apuleius' stepson)

Other parties:

Aemilia Pudentilla: Apuleius' wife

Sicinius Pontianus: Apuleius' school friend; eldest son of Pudentilla (deceased)

The Defense of Philosophy:

2. *Apol.* 1: I rejoice, most certainly, that the means and opportunity have fallen to me, with you as my judge, to purify philosophy in the minds of the ignorant and to prove my worth.

...gratulor medius fidius, quod mihi copia et facultas te iudice optigit purgandae apud imperitos philosophiae et probandi mei.

3. *Apol.* 3: For I am undertaking not only my own defense, but also in truth that of philosophy, whose greatness despises even the slightest criticism as though it were the greatest crime. And I do this because only a little while ago, Aemilianus' lawyers, with their mercenary loquacity, nattered on with many fabrications against me in particular, and others which are generally accustomed to be made against philosophers by the ignorant.

sustineo enim non modo meam, verum etiam philosophiae defensionem, cuia magnitudo vel minimam reprehensionem pro maximo crimine aspernatur, propter quod paulo prius patroni Aemiliani multa in me proprie conficta et alia communiter in philosophos sueta ab imperitis mercennaria loquacitate effutierunt.

4. *Apol.* 28: And I will not deny all these charges, whether they are true or false, but rather I will confess just as if they had been done, so that this entire crowd that has gathered from everywhere to listen may clearly understand that not only can nothing truly be said against philosophers, but also indeed that nothing can be falsely fabricated that they do not consider it better to defend through faith in their innocence, although it would be possible to deny these things.

atque ego omnia obiecta, seu vera seu falsa sunt, non negabo, sed perinde atque si facta sint fatebor, ut omnis ista multitudo, quae plurima undique ad audiendum convenit, aperte intellegat nihil in philosophos non modo vere dici, sed ne falso quidem posse confingi, quod non ex innocentiae fiducia, quamvis liceat negare, tamen potius habeant defendere.

Pudentilla's Letter:

5. *Apol.* 82: "Apuleius is a magician, and I have been bewitched by him, and I love him."

Ἀπολείος μάγος, καὶ ἐγὼ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ μεμάγευμαι καὶ ἐρῶ.

6. *Apol.* 83: “But now, since these malicious accusers of ours are misleading you, suddenly Apuleius has become a magician, and I have been bewitched by him, and I love him.”

νῦν δὲ ὡς κατήγοροι ἡμῶν κακοήθεις σε ἀναπείθουσιν, αἰφνίδιον ἐγένετο Ἀπολῆϊος μάγος, καὶ ἐγὼ ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ μεμάγευμαι καὶ ἐρῶ.

7. *Apol.* 84: You appealed to Pudentilla’s letter; with this letter, I win, and if you want to hear the very end as well, I will not begrudge it...: “I have neither been bewitched nor am I in love.”

ad litteras Pudentillae provocastis: his litteris vinco, quarum si vultis extremam quoque clausulam audire, non invidebo...: ἐγὼ οὔτε μεμάγευμαι οὔτ’ ἐρῶ.

8. The Peroratio (Apol. 103):

Moreover I will respond to those charges with no more than two words: “Gleaming teeth”: forgive cleanliness. “Examining mirrors”: philosopher must. “Writing poetry”: rightfully done. “Investigating fish”: Aristotle’s teaching. “Consecrating wood”: Plato’s recommendation. “Marrying wife”: legal obligation. “She’s older”: it happens. “Pursuing gain”: hear dowry, remember donation, read will.

ceterum ad haec, quae obiecistis, numera an binis verbis respondeam. ‘dentes splendidas’: ignosce munditiis. ‘specula inspicias’: debet philosophus. ‘versus facis’: licet fieri. ‘piscis exploras’: Aristoteles docet. ‘lignum consecras’: Plato suadet. ‘uxorem ducis’: leges iubent. ‘prior natu ista est’: solet fieri. ‘lucrum sectatus es’: dotalis accipe, donationem recordare, testamentum lege.

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