

Between *videre* and *videri*: Gaze, Narrator, and Narration in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*

In my paper I shall draw attention to the interplay between gaze and narration in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (cf. Slater 2003; 1998). I will focus on the interplay between Lucius' gaze which is always stimulated by his *curiositas*, and the way in which what he sees influences the narration itself. My main thesis is that in the *Metamorphoses*, not only the homodiegetic narrator Lucius is metamorphosed but also his gaze and, as I want to show, the narration itself (cf. Finkpearl 1998; Winkler 1985). I shall therefore focus on three different parts of Lucius' metamorphosis: from human into animal, and back into human (cf. Mal-Maeder 1997).

First, I will examine Lucius' gaze as being a human gaze. In the story of Risus' festival (book 3) gazing and narrating is of importance: First, because Lucius is accused in a show-trial in the theatre, and second because this story is the only story in the *Metamorphoses* where we get told the same event twice: Both Lucius in the trial, and Lucius as narrator of the *Metamorphoses* are telling us how they murdered three burglars. The way in which these two narrations of the same event differ, can tell us about how gazing and controlling the gaze has an impact on the narration.

Second, I will examine the adultery story in the book 9. Lucius is transformed into an ass and now he is able to pursue his visual *curiositas* very easily (freedom of gaze) (cf. Frangoulidis 2000). But in this story, he is at first bereaved of his ability to see – this also influences what he can narrate and gives us the opportunity to distinguish the different sense perceptions and their impact on the narration.

Finally, I shall focus on Lucius' re-metamorphosis (book 11). Lucius' gaze, however, is not the same as at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*. As a priest of Isis, Lucius loses control of his gaze, since in his dreams the goddess sends him visions, *i.e.* what she wants

him to see. By this means, the mode of gazing changes again substantially. Since now Lucius is able to foresee, *i.e.* his gaze has a strong temporal dimension which it did not have before.

As I aim to show, watching the *Metamorphoses*' narrator watching can provide us with a fresh insight in the *Metamorphoses*' poetics. With reference to the main-structure of the *Metamorphoses*, the protagonist's evolution is closely linked to the evolution of the narrator's gaze.

Bibliography

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