DEMONOLOGY IN THE *DE DEO SOCRATIS* AND IN OTHER WORKS OF APULEIUS OF MADAUROS. SOCRATES' DAIMONION

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ABSTRACT. The article discusses one of the most interesting and important topics in the philosophy of Middle Platonism, namely demonological issues, including the topic of the Socrates' daimonion, in the writings of Apuleius of Madauros, one of the most important representatives of this trend of philosophy from the 2nd century AD. The issue of the historical sources of Apuleius' demonology is also discussed. The author is of the opinion that the main source of Apuleius' demonology were the works of Plato, alongside some influences from the beliefs of the Romans.

KEYWORDS: Middle Platonism, Apuleius, demonology, theology, Socrates' daimonion.

Introduction

Demonology is a very interesting part of the philosophical doctrine of Middle Platonism. Apuleius of Madauros left the most complete picture of Middle Platonic demonology in his works.[1] Apuleius writes about demons in all his philosophical

[1] Apuleius of Madauros is the author of two literary works, the *Metamorphoses*, and the *Apologia* (*Apologia sive pro se ipso de magia liber*), and an anthology of his speeches collected under the title *Florida*. He is also the author of three Latin philosophical treatises: the *De Platone et eius dogmate*, *De mundo*, and *De deo Socratis*. Other philosophical writings that had been included in the canon of his works, namely the *Peri hermeneias* and *Asclepius sive dialogus Hermetis Trismegisti*, are regarded by modern scholars as inauthentic (cf. Barra 1966 127-188; Gersh 1986, 217-227; Harrison 2000, 10-14; Mantenero 1970, 63-111; Redfors 1960, 114-119; Regen 1977, 186-227; Regen 1971). Only M.W. Sullivan, B. Hijmans, and G. Sandy consider the *Peri hermeneias* to be the authentic work of Apuleius (cf.: Sullivan 1967, 9-14; Hijmans 1987, 408; Sandy 1996, 188, 223), and of the earlier scholars Meiss, Kawczyński, and Sinko (Meiss 1886, 2-8; Kawczyński 1900, 41-43; Sinko 1905, 39-42; see also:

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writings, most widely in the *De deo Socratis, and in De Platone et eius dogmate.* The *De deo Socratis*, the latest of his philosophical writings, is almost entirely devoted to theological and demonological problems. The focus of Apuleius' attention is, of course, as the title of the work suggests, the demon of Socrates. However, he considers all the problems associated with demonology. Socrates' daimonion in the title of the work was called god (*deus*), but in the text itself it is usually called a demon (*daemon*) and is treated as one of the demons (Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, XVI, 156 - XXI, 167).[2]

Gersh 1986, 329-287). According to Redfors, the problem of the authenticity of the *De Platone et eius dogmate* and *De mundo* cannot be resolved (Redfors 1960, 117). Harrison, however, is convinced „that *De Mundo* and the *De Platone* are genuine Apuleian works" (Harrison 2000, 179). Apuleius was also the author of a whole series of Greek and Latin writings on various topics and translations of Plato's dialogues, which have not survived (cf.: Harrison 2000, 14-36). Apuleius' philosophical writings were written in the second century AD, when philosophy was transforming, at least in some of its aspects, into theosophy. This is especially true of Middle Platonism. According to Boys-Stones, "Platonism, as it emerged at the end of the Hellenistic era, is distinguished by its 'religious' character; even that it might in some sense be considered as a religion" (Boys-Stones 2016, 317). This can also be seen in the philosophical writings of Apuleius (cf. Mantenero 1970, 63–111; Barra, Pannuti 1962-1963, 81–141). Mantenero noticed in the thought of Apuleius a sort of fusion of philosophy with magic and religion. Barra and Pannuti highlight the role of magic, and mystical experiences in the philosophy and life and philosophy of Apuleius. Moreschini writes that "the texts of the Middle Platonic philosophers are all pervaded by a pronounced mysticism, according to the spirit of the times in which they taught" (C. Moreschini, op. cit., 162; transl. K.P.) Some researchers of Apuleius's work, such as Regen, Dillon, and Harrison, see him as a sophist rather than a philosopher (Regen 1971, 108-110; Dillon 1996, 399; Harrison 2000, 38). Gerald Sandy, however, claim that "Apuleius *Philosophus* and Apuleius *sophisticus* are not mutually exclusive (Sandy 1997, 187). In any case, whether he was more of a philosopher or rhetorician, Apuleius' contribution to ancient demonology is invaluable. As Jeffrey Urlich writes: "Therefore, although from the standpoint of the history of philosophy our Madauran *Platonicus philosophus* makes no significant contributions or innovations of is own in Middle Platonic demonology, he remains vital for the reception of Platonism Late Antiquity and Early Christianity, especially when we consider how influential the *De deo Socratis* was on that other great North African rhetor, Augustine of Hippo" (Urlich 2023, 87). More about Apuleius' life and works see: Dillon 1997, 306-338; Fletcher 2014; Gersh 1986, vol. I, 215-328; Harrison 2000; Moreschini 1978; Sandy 1997.

[2] In chapter XVII, Socrates' daimonion is likened to his native Lara (Apuleius, *De deo,* XVII, 157).

De deo Socratis. Theology. Demons as a lower kind of gods

In the *De deo Socratis*, Apuleius incorporated his discourse on demons into his theology, to which he devoted much space in his book. Apuleius included demons in the environment of divine beings, admittedly of a lower kind, but still divine. He treats demons as a lower type of gods. He located them, both in the physical (spatial) and metaphysical sense, in the area between the world of gods and the world of people.

In the first words of his lecture in the *De deo Socratis*, Apuleius distinguished three types of living beings (he meant here, as it follows from his further arguments, living beings endowed with a soul): the highest, middle, and lowest. They form a kind of natural hierarchy, according to their metaphysical status and place in the universe. The highest places in the world are occupied, of course, by gods. They are also not the same in nature. Some of them are visible, others invisible:

> Plato omnem naturam rerum, quod eius ad animalia praecipua pertineat, trifariam divisit censuitque esse summos deos. Summum, medium et infimum fac intellegas non modo loci disclusione verum etiam naturae dignitate[3], quae et ipsa neque uno neque gemino modo sed pluribus cernitur. Nam proinde ut maiestas postulabat, diis inmortalibus caelum dicavit, quos quidem deos caelites partim visu usurpamus, alios intellectu vestigamus (Apuleius, *De deo,* I 116).[4]

The first gods are the stars visible in the sky (Apuleius, *De deo,* I 116 – II 121; IV 128). The invisible gods are pure spirits that we can only see with the eyes of the soul: Est aliud deorum genus, quod natura visibus nostris denegavit, nec non tamen in-

[3] Thus, the criterion of division here is the metaphysical perfection of these gods. Cf. Apuleius, *De Platone*, I, XI 203 - 204. This is about the division of beings in terms of their metaphysical tissue, that is, according to the primal elements that build their material: fire, air, water, and earth.

[4] See also: Apuleius, *De deo*, IV 128. Thus, Apuleius introduced the division of the gods into those known by the senses and those known only intellectually. The criterion of division here is, of course, the way in which we get to know the gods. Cf. Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate*, XI 204-20. The division of gods into visible and invisible is also adopted by other philosophers of Middle Platonism. Cf. Alcinous, *Didaskalikos*, 171, 14; Maximus of Tyre, *Dissertationes*, 8, 8; 9, 1-2; 11.

tellectu eos rimabundi contemplamur, acie mentis acrius contemplantes (Apuleius, *De deo*, II 121).[5] Among them are Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Mercurius, Jovis, Diana, Mars, Venus, Vulcanus, Apollo:

> Quorum in numero sunt illi duodecim (numero) situ nominum in duo versus ab Ennio coartati: Iuno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, Mercurius, Iovis, Neptunus, Vulcanus, Apollo ceterique id genus, quorum nomina quidem sunt nostris auribus iam diu cognita, potentiae vero animis coniectatae per varias utilitates in vita agenda animadversas in iis rebus, quibus eorum singuli currant (Apuleius, *De deo,* II 121–122).[6]

Speaking of the invisible gods who are the addressees of a particular religious cult, Apuleius vents his disapproval of religious superstition and impiety (Apuleius, *De deo*, III 122).[7] As he writes in chapter III of the *De deo Socratis*, most people, especially those who, having nothing to do with philosophy, have no real knowledge of the gods, and therefore some of them lose themselves in meaningless worship, and others do not believe in the existence of gods at all:

> Ceterum profana philosophiae turba inperitorum, vana sanctitudinis, priva verae rationis, inops religionis, inpos veritatis, scrupulosissimo culto, insolentissimo spretu deos neglegit, pars in superstitione, pars in contemptu timida vel tumida. Hoc namque

[5] Apuleius speaks of the invisible gods who are pure spirits. The highest of them is God – the creator of the universe. They are knowable only intellectually. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 40 D-E.

[6] See also: Cicero, *De natura deorum*, II 23, 60.

[7] In his critique of superstition, Apuleius is somewhat reminiscent of Plutarch of Chaeronea, though he is not as effusive as Plutarch who in his diatribe *On Superstition* sharply mocks all forms of religious superstition, which he considers much worse than atheism. As you can guess, the matter of superstition was quite important to the philosophers of middle Platonism, who, while they valued real piety, detested superstition, which, in their opinion, devastates people mentally and spiritually, and has nothing to do with true worship of the gods or with spirituality. Platonists such as Plutarch regarded superstition as a disease of the soul. They saw the causes of this disease in ignorance and ignorance in matters concerning the gods (Plutarch, *De superstitione*, 1). Plutarch believed true religiosity and piety consisted in purity of heart and moral nobility: "and we hold it to be meet to pray to the gods with the mouth straight and aright, and not to inspect the tongue laid upon the sacrificial offering to see that it be clean and straight, and, at the same time, by distorting and sullying one's own tongue with strange names and barbarous phrases, to disgrace and transgress the god-given ancestral dignity of our religion" (Plutarch, *De superstitione*, 3, transl. by F.C. Babbitt).

> cunctos deos in sublimi aetheris vertice locatos, ab humana contagione procul discretos plurimi sed non rite venerantur, omnes sed inscie metuunt, pauci sed impie diffitentur (Apuleius, *De deo*, III 122–123).

Continuing his lecture, Apuleius talks about the nature of the gods. First of all, as he previously wrote in the *De Platone et eius dogmate* (Apuleius, *De Platone*, V 190-191; XI 204), he emphasizes their incorporeal nature. The incorporeal nature (or spirituality) and transcendence of the gods is their essential feature. The gods live not only apart from people, but in a separate, ethereal (completely spiritual) world. The gods are thus incorporeal and eternal. They have neither a beginning nor an end to their existence. Their special quality, which results from their eternal and non-corporeal nature, is happiness. The gods are happy. The happiness of the gods is due to their incorporeal nature. Being wholly spiritual beings, they are devoid of flesh and therefore of sensuality that could weigh them down and drive them to evil (evil in the moral sense).[8] The gods are happy beings, so to speak, by their nature, and not just by some particular act of theirs (like people who have to work out their happiness). This is because they do not need to reach for any external goods to be happy. For everything they need for happiness they already have in them, as it were, by nature, and in an unlimited way:

> Quos deos Plato existimat naturas incorporalis, animalis, neque fine ullo neque exordio, sed prorsus ac retro aeviternas, a corporis contagione suapte natura remotas, ingenio ad summam beatitudinem perfecto, nullius extrarii boni participatione sed ex sese bonas et ad omnia conpetentia sibi promptu facili, simplici, libero, absoluto (Apuleius, *De deo*, III 123).

Apuleius concludes his theological arguments with a description of the supreme God, the creator of the universe. Apuleius calls him father. He is the creator and father of everything in the universe, including the gods. As the creator, he is free from any obligations. He has no obligations. His position, resulting from his nature, is special, not only in relation to people and bodily creatures, but also in relation to the other (lower) gods. God's uniqueness makes him unknowable by nature. It defies any attempt to describe or capture in words its being and its nature. God remains beyond the scope of any words and expressions. At the same time, as a person and the father of all creation, and therefore also of people, He

[8] According to the Platonists, corporeality and sensuality are a potential source of evil, but - it is worth adding - only a potential one, because according to them, evil is born in the soul, not in the body, and it is the soul that is responsible for the evil it commits.

allows us to enter into very intimate and personal relationships with him.[9] However, only true sages who have managed to separate themselves spiritually from their bodies have such an opportunity. When writing about this, Apuleius had illumination (theory of illumination) in mind:

> Quorum parentem, qui omnium rerum dominator atque auctor est, solutum ab omnibus nexibus patiendi aliquid gerendive, nulla vice ad alicuius rei munia obstrictum, cur ergo nunc dicere exordiar, cum Plato caelesti facundia praeditus, aequiperabilia diis inmortalibus disserens, frequentissime praedicet hunc solum maiestatis incredibili quadam nimietate et ineffabili non posse penuria sermonis humani quavis oratione vel modice conprehendi, vix sapientibus viris, cum se vigore animi, quantum licuit, a corpore removerunt, intellectum huius dei, id quoque interdum, velut in artissimis tenebris rapidissimo coruscamine lumen candidum intermicare? (Apuleius, *De deo,* III 123–124).

At the very bottom, so to speak, in the hierarchy of intelligent beings are people. Human beings cannot come into direct contact with the gods. Both physical space and metaphysical status separate them from the gods. The gods are eternal and perfect in nature, and therefore happy. People, on the other hand, are impermanent and completely random, and thus unhappy (made for poverty):

> Habetis interim bina animalia: deos ab hominibus plurimum differentis loci sublimitate, vitae perpetuitate, naturae perfectione, nullo inter se propinquo communicatu, cum et habitacula summa[10] ab infimis tanta intercapedo fastigii dispescat et vivacitas illic aeterna et indefecta sit, hic caduca et subsiciva, et ingenia illa ad beatitudinem[11] sublimata sint, haec ad miserias infimata (Apuleius, *De deo,* IV 127).

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[9] In the dialogue *De defectu oraculorum*, Plutarch ascribes to God the social virtues, and above all the virtue of love, the ability to love, which make him capable of social relations. It makes Him easier to enter into dynamic love relationships with other divine beings (from other worlds) and (as you can guess) with human beings. This love also explains God's loving relationships with people whose souls also belong to the divine sphere. Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 24, 423 D.

[10] Cf. Apuleius, *Apologia*, 64, 5. Here Apuleius, referring to *Phaedrus* (247 B), writes about this heavenly place, where Basileus, God, the Creator and Savior of the universe lives. A similar motif appears in his *De mundo* (XXXIII 362 i XXV 343). In the *De Platone*, the God acquires the term "celestial" (*caelestis*) which most likely also refers to his heavenly abode and emphasizes his transcendence. Also in the Pseudo-Apuleius *Asclepius*, the god resides in a place above the sky (*Asclepius,* XXVII (3-6)). See also: Plato, *Phaedrus*, 247 B-D.

[11] Cf. Platon, *Symposium*, 202 C.

Demons as intermediaries (*mediae potestates*) between men and gods

All of this keeps people separated from the gods and deprived of direct communication with the gods. This does not mean that they are completely deprived of the protection of the gods. The gap that separates the two worlds – gods and men – is filled by demons (cf. Apuleius, *De deo*, VI 132-134). According to Apuleius, they live in the air. The air is their natural environment. Apuleius calls demons "divine intermediate powers" (*divinae mediae potestates*), which are found between the highest ether and the lowest earth.[12] They mediate between people and gods. They are the ones who bring the prayers of people to the gods, and the favors of the gods to people.[13] They are directly responsible for various miracles of magicians, revelations, prophetic dreams, and all kinds of omens (Apuleius, *De deo*, VI 134).[14] In a word, they operate in various forms of religious worship:

> Ceterum sunt quaedam divinae mediae potestates inter summum aethera et infimas terras in isto intersitae aeris spatio, per quas et desideria nostra et merita ad eos commeant.[15] Hos Graeci nomine daemonas nuncupant, inter terricolas caelicolasque vectores hinc petitiones inde suppetias ceu quidam utri[u]sque interpretes et salutigeri.

[12] The Latin phrase "*mediae potestates*" can be found in other works of Apuleius: Apuleius, *De mundo*, XXVII 350; *De magia,* XLIII 498; *Florida*, X, 3. Cf. Habermehl 1996, 117-142.

[13] Apuleius, *De deo Socratis*, VI 133; Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate*, XI i XII; *De mundo*, XXVII 350 -351; *Florida*, X 41; *Apologia*, 43, 1-5; Pseudo-Apuleius, *Asclepius*, V; XXXVII - XXXVIII; XXXIII; See also: Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, VIII 15-21; Cf. Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 10-21; Alcinous, *Didaskalikos*, 171, 20.

[14] While writing about this, Apuleius refers to Plato's *Symposium*: Plato, *Symposium*, 202 E - 203 A. Plato presents this problem in a similar way in other dialogues. See, for example, Plato, *Meno*, 99D; *Phaedrus*, 244 A - 245 C; *Timaeus*, 71 E - 72 B; *Leges*, 772D; 914 A. So, there are demons behind all these divination techniques. They are the ones who decide how the appropriate omens will be arranged. They do so because of the duty imposed on them by the heavenly gods. Therefore, they are not guided by their own will, but, as it were, obey the orders of the gods. Nevertheless, they perform their duties very zealously. Plutarch writes similarly about this (Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 10-21). See also: Apuleius, *De Platone*, XII 206. Cf. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, VIII 15-21. Xenophon, *Commentarii*, IV 7, 10; Cicero, *De divinatione*, I 32, 70; 49, 110-111; 50, 113; 57, 129; II 48, 100; I 3, 5-6.

[15] Cf. Apuleius, *De Platone*, XI and XII; *De mundo*, XXVII 350-351; *Florida*, X 41; *Apologia*, 43, 2; *Asclepius*, V; XXXVII-XXXVIII; XXXIII. Similar views on demons are found in the works of other middle Platonists from the school of Gaius, Alcinous (*Didaskalikos*, 171, 20), Maxymus of Tyre (*Dissertationes*, 8, 6g; 8, 8a; 8, 8b; 9, 2b; 9, 2e; 9, 12d.). Demonology almost identical to that of Apuleius is contained in the works of Plutarch: *De faciae quae in orbe*

> Per hos eosdem, ut Plato in Symposio autumat, cuncta denuntiata et magorum varia miracula omnesque praesagiorum species reguntur.[16] Eorum quippe de numero praediti curant singuli [eorum], proinde ut est cuique tributa provincia, vel somniis conformandis vel extis fissiculandis vel praepetibus gubernandis vel ostinibus erudiendis vel vatibus inspirandis vel fulminibus iaculandis vel nubibus coruscandis ceterisque adeo, per quae futura dinoscimus.[17] Quae cuncta caelestium voluntate et numine et auctoritate, sed daemonum obsequio et opera et ministerio fieri arbitrandum est (Apuleius, *De deo,* VI 132–134).

The nature of demons

Demons, like gods and human beings, are intelligent beings. Some of these demons are friendly to people, others are hostile to them. Unlike gods, they are capable of experiencing various feelings and emotions:

> Ac ne ceteros longius persequar, ex hoc ferme daemonum numero poetae solent haudquaquam procul a veritate osores et amatores quorundam hominum deos fingere: hos prosperare et evehere, illos contra adversari et adfligere; igitur et misereri et indignari et angi et laetari omnemque humani animi faciem pati, simili motu cordis et salo mentis ad omnes cogitationum aestus fluctuare, quae omnes turbelae tempestatesque procul a deorum caelestium tranquillitate, exulant (Ibid. XII 145-146).

In this respect, demons are like people. They differ from them in that they are immortal, in which they resemble heavenly gods. Due to their similarity to both human beings and gods, demons can act as intermediaries between the world of gods and the world of people. Apuleius makes this very clear:

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lunae apparet, 30, 944 C-E, *De Iside et Osiride*, 369 a; *De genio Socratis*, 593 d. See also: Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, VIII 22 i 24. Cf. Harrison 2000, 137-140; 151-152; 151-161; Hunink 2003, 255-256; Mecci 2018, 56-75; Urlich 2023, 92-98; Gersh 1986, 228-238.

[16] Cf. Plato, *Simposium*, 202 E - 203 A. In other dialogues, Plato also similarly deals with this issue. Cf.: Platon, *Meno*, 99 C – D; *Phaedrus*, 244 A - 245 C. See also: Apuleius, *De Platone*, XII 206; Cf. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, VIII 16. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, IV 7, 10.; Cicero, *De divinatione*, I 32, 70; 49, 110-111; 50, 113; 57, 129; II 48, 100; I 3, 5-6.

[17] Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 71 E - 72 B; *Leges*, 772 D; 914 A. So there are demons behind all these divination techniques. They are the ones who decide how the appropriate omens will be arranged. They do it because of the duty imposed on them by the heavenly gods. Therefore, they do not follow their own will, but, as it were, carry out the order of the gods. Nevertheless, they perform their duties with great zeal. In the same spirit, Plutarch writes about it in his diatribes: Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 16.

> Sed et haec cuncta et id genus cetera daemonum mediocritati rite congruunt. Sunt enim inter nos ac deos ut loco regionis ita ingenio mentis intersiti, habentes communem cum superis inmortalitatem, cum inferis passionem. Nam proinde ut nos pati possunt omnia animorum placamenta vel incitamenta, ut et ira incitentur et misericordia flectantur et donis invitentur et precibus leniantur et contumeliis exasperentur et honoribus mulceantur aliisque omnibus ad similem nobis modum variant (Apuleius, *De deo.* XIII 147–148).

Demons, therefore, are beings with a rational soul. They are eternal. Their substance is air. Due to their aerial nature, they are generally invisible, unless they choose to show themselves to people. They fill the air space that stretches between the world of gods and the world of men. The air is their natural living environment. Here Apuleius develops the same theory that he had previously given in *De Platone et eius dogmate* (Apuleius, *De Platone*, I, XI 203-204; cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 39 E – 40 A). As in the previous work, he writes now that all four basic elements (elements) have their own living beings. Demons are precisely those beings that are air-natured and live in the air (Apuleius, *De deo*, VIII 137 – XI 145). Apuleius reiterates these characteristics of demons at the end of his discussion of the nature of demons:

> Quippe, ut fine conprehendam, daemones sunt genere animalia, ingenio rationabilia, animo passiva, corpore aeria, tempore aeterna. Ex his quinque, quae commemoravi, tria a principio eadem quae nobis sunt, quartum proprium, postremum commune cum diis inmortalibus habent, sed differunt ab his passione. Quae propterea passiva non absurde, ut arbitror, nominavi, quod sunt iisdem, quibus nos, turbationibus mentis obnoxii (Apuleius, *De deo,* XIII 148, 11–20).[18]

Human souls as demons

In keeping with Greek and Roman tradition, Apuleius teaches that human souls are demons. He includes both those that live in the human body (he calls them Geniuses) and those that exist outside the human body, that is, after leaving the bodies of dead people. The latter were called Lemurs by the Romans. Some of them play the role of guardians of family homes. The Romans called them family Lars. Others, called Larvae, are human souls condemned to eternal wandering for their crimes. They are the spirits that harass and scare people, especially the bad ones:

> Est et secundo significatus species daemonum animus humanus emeritis stipendiis vitae corpore suo abiurans. Hunc vetere Latina lingua reperio Lemurem dictitatum. Ex

[18] We can find similar demonological views in the writings of Plutarch. According to Plutarch, however, demons are mortal. Cf. Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 11, 415 C.

hisce ergo Lemuribus qui posterorum suorum curam sortitus placato et quieto numine domum possidet, Lar dicitur familiaris;[19] qui vero ob adversa vitae merita nullis (bonis) sedibus incerta vagatione ceu quodam exilio punitur, inane terriculamentum bonis hominibus, ceterum malis noxium, id genus plerique Larvas perhibent.[20] Cum vero incertum est, quae cuique eorum sortitio evenerit, utrum Lar sit an Larva, nomine Manem deum nuncupant: scilicet et honoris gratia dei vocabulum additum est;[21] quippe tantum eos deos appellant, qui ex eodem numero iuste ac prudenter curriculo vitae gubernato pro numine postea ab hominibus praediti fanis et caerimoniis vulgo advertuntur, ut in Boeotia Amphiaraus, in Africa Mopsus[22], in Aegypto Osiris, alius alibi gentium, Aesculapius ubique (Apuleius, *De deo,* XV 152 –154).[23]

Demons unrelated to the body. Socrates' daimonion

The demons bound to the human body are the lower species of demons. Apuleius points out that there are still demons much higher and nobler than them, which have never been bound to the body. Among them are such special demons as Dream, Love, which control the powers subordinate to them (Apuleius, *De deo*, XVI 154-155). They also include such demons as Socrates' daimonion (ibidem, XVI 156)[24]. The latter demons, like the daimon of Socrates, have a special task towards people. They play the role of their protectors and guardians. They are also direct witnesses of their lives. They are the ones who lead human souls (after death) before the tribunal of underground judges, as impartial witnesses.

The only proper form of demon worship, according to Apuleius, is a pure and just life, just like that of Socrates.

Of the two ancient traditions that speak of Socrates' daimonion — the tradition that goes back to Xenophon, according to which Socrates' daimonion issued both

[19] Cf. Seneca, *Epistulae*, 90, 28.

[20] Cf. Seneca, *Epistulae*, 24, 18; *De beneficiis*, IV 5, 3.

[21] In fact, demons are a separate class of beings, lower than gods. It is only to emphasize their status above that of people that they are called gods. Cf.: Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 10, 415 A; *De Iside et Osiride*, 25, 360 D – 26, 361 C.

[22] Cr. Cicero, *De divinatione*, I 40, 88; Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 45, 434 D.

[23] See also: Apuleius, *De Platone*, I, XII 206. Cf. Harrison 2000, 157-161. As Harrison noted, "this identification, like those which follow with Lemures, Lares, and Larvae, is clearly as old as the generation of Varro and Cicero" (Harrison 2000, 157).

[24] Cf. Plutarch, *De genio Socratis*, 10–12, 19–21; Maximus Tyrius, *Dissertationes*, 8, 1-6. See also: Szarmach 1985, 29-35.

prohibitions and commands, and the Platonic tradition, according to which Socrates' daimonion only forbade the commission of evil deeds — Apuleius favors the latter:

> Quod autem incepta Socratis quaepiam daemon ille ferme prohibitum ibat, numquam adhortatum, quodam modo ratio praedicta est. Enim Socrates, utpote vir adprime perfectus, ex sese ad omnia congruentia sibi officia promptus, nullo adhortatore umquam indigebat, at vero prohibitore nonnumquam, si quibus forte conatibus eius periculum suberat, ut monitus praecaveret, omitteret coepta inpraesentiarum, quae tutius vel postea capesseret vel alia via adoriretur. In huiuscemodi rebus (dixit) vocem quampiam divinitus exortam dicebat audire ita enim apud Platonem[25], ne quisquam arbitretur omina eum vulgo loquentium captitasse. Quippe etiam semotis arbitris uno cum Phaedro extra pomerium sub quodam arboris opaco umbraculo signum illud adnuntium sensit, ne prius transcendet Ilissi amnis modicum fluentum, quam increpitu(m) indignatum Amorem recinendo placasset[26]. Cum praeterea, si omina observitaret, aliquando eorum nonnulla etiam hortamenta haberet, ut videmus plerisque usu evenire, qui nimia ominum superstitione non suopte corde sed alterius verbo reguntur ac per angiporta reptantes consilia ex alienis vocibus conligunt et, ut ita dixerim, non animo sed auribus cogitant (Apuleius, *De deo,* XIX 162–163).[27]

Apuleius tries to find out what the nature of this Socrates' daimonion is and how he contacts Socrates. He notes that this manifests itself in the form of some inner "voice", but it is not a voice heard by hearing, but by the mind. In other words, the voice of the demon of Socrates was not a human voice or any other (Apuleius, *De deo,* XX 165–166). Apuleius suggests that it was not an auditory experience at all, but rather a visual one. The Demon of Socrates was supposed to take some visible form, visible only to Socrates, like the Homeric Athena, who appeared only to Achilles:

> Quid vero vocem <quampiam> dicat audisse, aut nescit unde ea exorta sit, aut in ipsa aliquid addubitat, aut eam quiddam insolitum et arcanum demonstrat habuisse, ita ut Socrates eam, quam sibi (ac) divinitus editam tempestive accidere dicebat. Quod equidem arbitror non modo auribus eum verum etiam oculis signa daemonis sui usurpasse.

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[25] Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 242 B-C.

[26] Ibid. 229 A-B.

[27] See also: Moreschini 1978, 19-27; Moreschini 1989, 269-280; Mecci 2018, 56-75. On Socrates' daimonion in Plato's dialogues, see the collection of testimonies: Fontana 2004, 127-152. See also: Bussanich 2013, 284-293; Chappell 2010, 44-50; Constantini 2021, 248-269; Fletcher 2014, 147-149; Miriello 2014, 7-38; Stępień 2004-2005, 243-245; Harrison 2000, 161-173; Mecci 2018, 69-75.

> Nam frequentius non praevocem sed signum divinum sibi oblatum prae se ferebat. Id signum potest et ipsius daemonis species fuisse, quam solus Socrates cerneret, ita ut Homericus Achilles Minervam. Credo plerosque vestrum hoc, quod commodum dixi, cunctantius credere et inpendio mirari formam daemonis Socrati visitatam (Apuleius, *De deo*, XX 166).

Talking about this, Apuleius strongly emphasizes that Socrates was most worthy of this kind of communing with the demon, because like no one else he became spiritually and morally like God – so he realized the crowning Platonic ethical ideal of the "likeness to God":

> Quod si cuivis potest evenire facultas contemplandi divinam effigiem, cur non adprime potuerit Socrati optingere, quem cuivis amplissimo numini sapientiae dignitas coaequarat? Nihil est enim deo similius et gratius quam vir animo perfecte bonus, qui hominibus ceteris antecellit, quam ipse a diis immortalibus distat (Apuleius, *De deo,* XX 167).[28]

Apuleius refers to Pythagoreans who were to be surprised when someone did not see the demon: At enim (secundum) Pythagoricos contra mirari oppido solitos, si quis se negaret umquam vidisse daemonem (Apuleius, *De deo,* XX 166–167).

Apuleius very clearly emphasized that the ideal of "likeness to god" – in a spiritual and moral sense – was the most important element of Socrates' philosophical and life program. For every man lives by his soul, and thus one should care about it first. All other things, especially material goods, are in total inessential additions which do not influence the spiritual state of a person, and thus and simultaneously his personal happiness (since it is dependent solely on the spiritual and moral condition of the persons' soul). Spiritual formation of the soul is essential. How deeply this belief was in the heart of Apuleius, it is enough to say that he devoted the last four chapters of his treatise to this, transforming him into a kind of diatribe (Apuleius, *De deo,* XXI–XXIV).[29]

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[28] Cf. Harrison 2000, 166-172; Mecci 2018, 65-69. As writes Mecci, "Gli dèi, però, concedono questo privilegio a un «uomo dall'animo perfetto (vir animo perfecte bonus), di tanto superiore a tutti gli altri uomini, quanto egli stesso è lontano dagli dèi immortali" (Mecci 2018, 69).

[29] See also: Fletcher 2014, 159-172; Harrison 2000, 165-172. As Harrison writes, „There is no mention of Socrates' *daimonion*, and only one mention of the term *daimon* (170), though the personal virtutes of Socrates are running link in the section (167, 169, 174, 175), and its central theme of cultivating one's own soul (i.e. *daimon*) provides a degree of continuity with what has gone before. … This final section begins by invoking in the mouth of

The nature of Socrates' daimonion

The issue of the nature of Socrates' daimonion is quite intriguing. Apuleius is not very consistent here. He claims that the "voice" received by Socrates cannot be a sensual auditory experience, but he does not present metaphysical arguments, although the issue calls for it, he presents linguistic and grammatical, and very doubtful and completely unconvincing arguments, showing off perhaps more with his literary erudition and interpretative ingenuity rather than scientific inquisitiveness (Apuleius, *De deo,* XX 165–166). Immediately afterwards, he proves that this "voice" is a visual experience, but also here his arguments are not metaphysical, but historical and literary, and - it seems - Apuleius himself does not take them too seriously.

Thus, it can be said that Apuleius does not give a metaphysical analysis of the phenomenon of Socrates' daimonion. Nevertheless, the information he provided earlier regarding the nature of demons and gods (in general) allows for such an analysis and one can be tempted. To begin with, it should be noted that relationships between different types of beings (such as people, demons, and gods) are possible, but only on the common plane of their nature. People can interact with each other on all levels of their nature; with demons and gods – only on the common planes of their natures. Demons share with people the sphere of passion and emotion (of course, only on the mental level) and the intellectual and spiritual sphere. Naturally, the spiritual sphere of people – according to Platonic degradation of nature – is poorer than the corresponding spiritual sphere of demons. Human spirituality is somewhat diminished by its location in the sensual structures of the body. Therefore, spiritual contacts with demons and gods, especially with the supreme God who is a pure spirit, are very limited. The spirituality of men, compared to that of the gods, is so limited that they more often fall into animality

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an interlocutor (another diatribic touch) the tree great figures of Middle Platonism – Socrates, Plato, and Pythagoras. Its topic is certainly relevant to Socrates, since the point is repeatedly made in Plato's *Apology* and elsewhere that Socrates was a poor man and pursued rather than wealth. Human unwillingness to spend time and effort on what really matters is stressed in a typically Roman image from doing daily accounts (170)" (Harrison 2000, 165-170); Mecci 2018, 65-71. According to Mecci, "Apuleio presenta Socrate come un caso paridigmatico all' interno della propria demonologia. La cornice più generale entro cui si muove questa descrizione del signum socratico è quella, tipicamente medioplatonica, del tema dell'assimilazione del sapiente a dio. Socrate, Pitagora e Platone sono uomini giusti e saggi, che, proprio grazie alla purezza delle loro vite, sono da considerarsi più vicini al divino e possono così costituire esempi da seguire. ... Socrate è considerato così come colui che ha vissuto mantenendo la sua anima giusta e pura e, per questo, viene aiutato e consigliato dal suo daemon nelle situazioni più difficili" (Mecci 2018, 65, 67).

than ascend to divinity (Apuleius, *De deo,* III 125 – IV 127). Nevertheless, spiritual contacts between people and divine beings are possible. They happen at the level of what is called poetic and prophetic inspiration or mystical initiation, or – as Plato wrote in the *Phaedrus* – erotic madness (cf. Plato, *Phaedrus,* 265 B; 244 A–B). Relations between people and demons are also possible on the level of passion. These, like the previous ones, occur in religious worships (Apuleius, *De deo,* XIV 148–150). Bodily contacts between people and demons (which are discussed especially in the Middle Ages) are, according to Platonic metaphysics, excluded because demons do not have the sensual body structure that people have. For obvious reasons, only purely spiritual relationships are possible with God Himself. One of them, probably the most important, is love which culminates in the ecstatic spiritual union of the human soul with God. Another type of spiritual relationship with God, this time cognitive, is the noetic experience of God in the act of illumination (Apuleius, *De deo,* III 124). A feature of both types of spiritual relationships is their transience and passivity – man is the side who experiences them. In addition, a feature of these spiritual experiences is their inability to translate into verbal language. In short, they cannot be verbalized in a rational way in a logical discourse. Logical discourse and spiritual experiences are two different spheres, mutually untranslatable. Similarly, it is difficult to express in language of logic the aesthetic, poetic, or musical experience.

The active party in spiritual relationships is always God or the demon. The active role of man in relation to spiritual experiences consists only in his spiritual and moral preparation of his soul for spiritual life, in other words – in practicing philosophy with Socrates' method. Of course, this is about refining the natural dispositions of the human soul. A philosophy cultivated in this way leads to a refinement of the natural dispositions of the human soul, above all moral and spiritual sensitivity, and thus makes it sensitive to the world of moral and spiritual values and opens it to the supernatural dimension of human existence.

The voice of Socrates in Apuleius' record looks like a spiritual phenomenon, some kind of mental experience. And it always concerns the ethical field, or more precisely – it warns against moral evil. In total, the Demon of Socrates behaves like a preconceived conscience of extraordinary tenderness. Socrates achieves what can be called a heroic degree of virtue. He is faithful to his principle of not doing evil. His soul is constantly focused on spiritual and moral values and thus he becomes like a god (Apuleius, *De deo,* XVII 157; XX 167). Socrates realized the Platonic ideal of "likeness to God". Apuleius emphasizes very strongly that it was the spiritual and moral level of Socrates that was the main reason that he heard (or otherwise perceived) the voice of his guardian demon The low spiritual and moral level of other people is responsible for the fact that they do not "hear" their guardian

demon, because although everyone has their guardian demon, only those who have reached a sufficiently high spiritual and moral level can "hear" it.

Thus, the demon of Socrates belongs to the ethical and spiritual order.[30] It is in the same order in the works of Plato (cf. Plato, *Apologia,* 40 A–B; 31 C–D; 27 A–D). However, Plato does not clearly present the nature of this demon. The demon of Socrates in Plato's view can be included among the guardian demons known from his eschatological myths but can also be interpreted as a mind-conscience. In the *Timaeus*, Plato suggests that the human mind, the highest part of the human soul, is its protective spirit (Cf. Plato, *Timaeus,* 90 A).[31]

De Platone et eius dogmate
Demons as *medioximos*

In Chapter 11 of book I of *De Platone et eius dogmate*, Apuleius presented the Middle Platonic theory of the celestial spheres that make up the whole universe, to process the teaching presented in the *Epinomis* and partly in Plato's *Timaeus* (Plato, *Epinomis*, 987 C; *Timeous*, 38 D). The universe in Apuleius' lecture is filled with eight celestial spheres. The highest of them are permanent stars. They occupy the place closest to God. Further on are the spheres of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Venus, the Sun and the Moon sphere closest to Earth (Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate*, I, XI 203, 1-15).

Parallel to the above is the division of the world into layers according to the primitive elements that occupy them, i.e. the four elements. And so the highest layer is occupied by fire, and the lowest by Earth. Indirect places are occupied by

[30] Cf. Mecci 2018, 56-72. As Mecci writes in relation to Middle Platonists in general, „Il medioplatonismo, nella sua interpretazione del pensiero di Socrate, manifesta una posizione teorica netta e chiara, nella misura in cui ne sottolinea l'aspetto dogmatico e quello religioso-teologico. Centrale in questo senso è il tema dell'assimilazione a dio (*homoiosis theo*), cioè la possibilità da parte del saggio di rendersi simile a dio, superando, nei limiti del possibile (*kata to dynaton*), la propria natura. Si può facilmente comprendere perciò come il demone socratico abbia destato l'interesse di molti medioplatonici, i quali vedevano nel demone un importante elemento a suffragio dell'interpretazione di Socrate come '*theios aner*' ('uomo divino'), che essi intendevano accreditare. A ben vedere, l'interesse è dettato anche dalla ripresa da parte di questi pensatori di elementi della religione tradizionale e quindi dalla conseguente assimilazione, o comunque dall'avvicinamento, del δαιμόνιον socratico al δαίμων della religione greca e alle consuete pratiche divinatorie" (Mecci 2018, 57-58). Cf. Friedländer 1964, 38; Bussanich 2013, 284--291.

[31] Cf. Bussanich 2013, 289, 291-293. Regarding how modern scholars interpret the phenomenon of Socrates' daimonion in the works of Plato, see: Bussanich 2013, 284-293.

water and air. The immovable earth globe lies in the middle of the universe. The closest to it, of the other elements, is water, followed by air. The farthest from earth is fire. Stars, attached to the spheres, are in constant motion. They are gods, and their essence is a substance created from fire:

> Exinde elementis omnia ac principiis occupari. Ignem ante alia superiorem esse, mox aeris locum, hinc aquae proximum et tunc globum terrae in medio situm, aequalem loco ac figura, inmobilem stare. Hos astrorum ignes sphaeris adfixos perpetuis atque indefessis cursibus labi, et hos animalis deos dicit esse; sphaerarum uero ingenium ex igni coalitum et fabricatum (Apuleius, *De Platone*, I, XI 203, 15-20).

Later in the lecture, Apuleius discusses the issue of four types of living beings, passing on slightly modified teachings of Plato contained in *Timaeus* (Plato, *Timaeus*, 39 E – 41 B). The principle of the division of living creatures into genera is the substance from which they are formed. One type of these beings is the Sun, Moon and other stars. The nature of these beings is fire. The next kind is air beings, whose nature is air, and they are demons. At the lowest level, mortal beings formed from the two lowest primary elements, i.e. from water and from the earth were seated:

> Iam ipsa animantium genera in quattuor species dividuntur, quarum una est ex natura ignis eiusmodi qualem solem ac lunam videmus ceterasque siderum stellas, alterum ex aeria qualitate hanc etiam daemonum dicit, tertium ex aqua terraque coalescere; et mortale genus corporum ex eo dividi terrenum atque Terrestre (Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate*, I, XI 203, 21 – 204, 4).

Apuleius modified the well-known motif from the Plato's *Timaeus* (39 E – 40 A) about the four races and four elements. For Plato placed not demons in the air environment, but simply birds, when Apuleius orders demons to live here. In the *Epinomis* (984 E), Pseudo-Plato talks about the five elements of the world and the creatures living in it. It was here that the demons found themselves in an air environment, as in Apuleius, except that the author of the *Epinomis* gave the demons a fifth element, apart from air, for their dwelling, namely the ether, which the philosopher from Madauros mentions only in the *De mundo* – here the ether constitutes the sphere of heaven (which in the *De Platone et eius dogmate*, and the *De deo Socratis* is made of fire). In addition, in the *Epinomis*, Pseudo-Plato mentions the demigods who are said to inhabit the water. Apuleius does not take up the latter motif in his writings. The fifth element introduced in the *Epinomis*, in addition to the already known four elements, is a bit mysterious. Although Plato writes in the *Phaedo* about the ethereal sky, even here it is not very clear what this ether is.

Plato's disciple Aristotle introduced ether as the fifth element into his physics (Aristotle, *De mundo*, II 392 B, III 393 A).

Apuleius discusses next the issue of gods in the aspect of their various types. The supreme and unique god is the worldly, incorporeal God, the creator of the world, called the Father and the Architect of the world. A lower type of gods are the stars and other deities inhabiting the sky (therefore called the inhabitants of that sky). The third and last type of gods are demons, those who – as Apuleius says – the Romans called "*medioximos*", because as to their nature, power and place they are the intermediate kind of living beings between people and the world of the gods:

> Deorum trinas nuncupat species, quarum est, prima unus et solus summus ille, ultramundanus, incorporeus, quem patrem et architectum huius divini orbis superius ostendimus; aliud genus est quale astra habent ceteraque numina, quos caelicolas nominamus; tertium habent, quos medioximos Romani veteres appellant, quod (est) sui ratione, sed et loco et potestate diis summis sunt minores, natura hominum profecto maiores (Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate*, I, XI 204, 7 – 205, 2).

In Chapter XII, these demons will be called Geniuses and Lars. They are people's guardian and interpreters, submitting their wishes and requests to the gods:

> Daemonas vero, quos Genios et Lares possumus nuncupare, ministros deorum arbitrantur custodesque hominum etinterpretes, si quid a diis velint (Apuleius, *De Platone.* I, XII 206, 13-15. Cf. Plato, *Symposium,* 202 E).

De mundo
Demons as potestates

Demonological themes can also be found in Apuleius' *De mundo*. The features of demons have here so-called "*potestates*":

> eas autem potestates per omnes partes mundi orbisque dispendat, quae sint penes solem ac lunam cunctumque caelum; horum enim cura salutem terrenorum omnium gubernari (Apuleius, *De mundo*, XXVII 350, 17-20).

God himself is called here the highest ruler of the world, and even his law: lex illa vergens ad aequitatis tenorem sit deus (Apuleius, *De mundo*, XXXVI 369, 5).

In the *De mundo* there is also talk of fate (Apuleius, *De mundo*, XXXVIII 372 – 374). Apuleius - after the Greek author - dresses his statement in a mythological robe that is well understood by the ancients. In philosophical understanding, fate is nothing but a manifestation of God's existence and activity in the world. It is

derived from the metaphysical structure of the world; it is a way of existence of this world and all things. It is a strict metaphysical order, which is implemented in a way through natural and ethical laws. The ethical order is also included in the metaphysical order. Therefore, he also has the attribute of permanence and necessity, except that the person to whom this order applies has the possibility of a kind of secession from these ethical rights, but then he must take into account the consequences that fall on him – ethical laws inevitably (they are fortified fate penalties). Apuleius - still behind the Greek precursor – gives this ethical fate two faces, referring to Plato, who in fact gives in *the Leges* the thought used in the *De mundo*. One face of fate is the expression of a punishing and implacable avenger of moral offenses. The second is the face of happiness that those who voluntarily submit to metaphysical ethical law gain:

> Deum vero ire per omnes terrasque tractusque maria caelumque profundum non frustra arbitrabitur, qui audiet Platonis haec verba: "deus namque, sicut vetus", inquit, "continet ratio, principia et fines et media rerum omnium penetrat atque inlustrat ac curru volucri superfertur; eundem deum ultrix Necessitas semper et ubique comitatur, eorum qui a sacra lege discesserint vindex futura; quam faciet ille mitificam, qui statim a tenero et ipsis incunabulis intellexit, extimuit eique se totum dedit atque permisit" (Apuleius, *De mundo*, XXXVIII 374. Cf. Plato, *Leg.* IV 716 A; 730 C).

Apologia and *Florida*

Apuleius also revealed his demonological views in the *Apologia* and *Florida*. In chapter 43 of the *Apologia*, he ascribes to Plato faith in the existence of demons, which he calls here divine forces occupying in the hierarchy of living creatures an intermediate place between gods and people. They are to direct the predictions and miracles of magicians (valued by Apuleius anyway):

> Quamquam Platoni credam, inter deos atque homines natura et loco medias divorum potestates intersitas, easque divinationes cunctas et magorum miracula gubernare (Apuleius, *Apologia*, 43, 2-3).[32]

In one of his speeches (*Florida*) he also mentions demons, calling them this time with invisible divine powers (*mediae deum potestates*) including Love. They can be known only by reason. They are inaccessible for the senses, because of their invisibility: Sunt et aliae mediae potestates, quas licet sentire, non datur cernere, ut Amoris ceterumque genus, quorum forma invisitata, vis cognita (Apuleius, *Florida*, X).

[32] Cf. Cf. Habermehl 1996, 117-142; Constantini 2021, 248-269.

In the *Apologia*, Apuleius mentions once again the demons in chapter 27, or rather one demon - the demon of Socrates (Apuleius, *Apologia*, 27, 3-4).

Historical Sources of Apuleius' Demonology

Apuleius' demonology has been a subject of study since the last century. Heinze, Vallete, Rathke devote a lot of attention to this problem.[33] Nowadays the topic is discussed by writers like Dillon, Moreschini, Portogalli, Regen, Habermehl, Harrison, Fletcher, Gersh, Hunink, Fontana, Mecci, Bussanich, Chappel, Constantini, Miriello, Sandy, Urlich.[34] Heinze took the position that in the *De deo Socratis* Apuleius was trying to faithfully recreate Plato's demonology, taking over to a large extent the interpretation of Xenocrates.[35] According to Vallete, Apuleius' demonology includes traditional and common Roman folk beliefs.[36] Harrison also notices it.[37] It can be assumed that Apuleius knew the folk beliefs, but nevertheless his ideas seem to have other motivations besides those mentioned by Vallete and Harrison. I suppose that they were Platonic.[38] Moreschini completely rejects Vallete's thesis.[39] However, it seems to be wrong. For Apuleius himself gave evidence – in the *Apologia* – that he succumbed to the religious influence of his time (cf. Apuleius, *Apologia,* 55, 8-9). This is even more likely that the demons play a major role in magic which, despite personal reservations, Apuleius most likely indulged himself with (Apuleius, *Apologia*, 43, 3-5).[40] Plato was far from magic, but he probably recognized some forms of psycho-somatic therapy associated with prayer (cf. Plato, *Charmides,* 155 E – 157 C). For Plato, the demon that acted as a guardian spirit

[33] Heinze 1892, 78–124; Vallette 1908, 208; Rathke 1911, 12–34.

[34] Bussanich 2013, 276-300; Chappell 2010, 44-50; Constantini 2021, 248-269; Dillon 1996, 317-320; Gersh 1986, 228-237; Moreschini 1965, 30–46; Moreschini 1978, 19–49; Moreschini 1989, 269-280; Portogalli 1963, 227–241; Regen71971, 1-22; 24-27; Habermehl 1996; Harrison 2000, 136-173; Fontana 2004, 127-1; Fletcher 2014, 105-110; Mecci 2018, 56-75; Hunink 2003; 251-260; Sandy 1997, 191-211; Stępień 2004-2005, 242-251; Miriello 2013-2014; Urlich 2023, 87-108.

[35] Heinze 1892, 78–124. See also: Harrison 2000, 140

[36] Vallette 1908, 208, 261-263.

[37] R. Harrison, op. cit., pp. 157-158. See also: Gersh 1986, 235-236; Urlich 2023, 92-98.

[38] Cf. Gersh 1986, 228-236.

[39] Moreschini 1978, 21-22.

[40] Cf. Constantini 2021, 248-269. As Constantini noted, Apuleius describes here two types of divinatory rituals in which the child is used as a medium: divination rituals in which the demonic soul of the medium abandons the body, and then talks about what has been considered while living in the extra-corporal realm; and rituals in which the medium is temporarily possessed by the demonic being, providing an oracle.

of man was most likely human reason. This is indicated by the *Timaeus*, in which Plato speaks of the genius of a man located at the top of his head (Plato, *Timaeus,* 90 A). Rathke explains the genesis of Apuleius' demonology in a different way. He rejects the hypothesis of Heinze about its Xenocratic origin and proposes that the theory of demons given by Apuleius has its roots in Stoic teachings (with Academic influences).[41] Stoic philosophy talks about demons who take care of people and watch over human affairs, and about heroes, that is the souls of people who lived their earthly lives honestly. Stoic philosophy speaks of demons who look after people and watch over human affairs, and heroes, that is the souls of people who have lived their earthly lives fairly (cf. Diogenes Laertios, VII 151). Stoic theories, as it is not difficult to see, contain elements of both folk beliefs and Platonic demonological concepts. Probably this kind of views were quite common. Apuleius himself refers to the beliefs of the Romans (Apuleius, *De Platone*, I, XI 204; *De deo Socratis*, XV 152, 153).

Modern researchers are abandoning the old tendency to literal search for sources of Apuleius' demonology in literature. It seems to be understandable. After all, the human mind, and even more so the philosopher's, often exceeds the scope of literature, and can even significantly distance itself from reality. Moreschini placed the issue of Apuleius' demonology together with all his philosophy on the broad scheme of the philosophy of Middle Platonism.[42]

Moreover, we know that similar views on demons are presented by Plutarch of Chaeronea in his works (cf. Plutarch, *De genio Socratis*, 10–12, 19–21; *De defectu oraculorum*, 10-21, 38*; De Iside et Osiride, 25-26, 30, 47*), *and Maximus of Tyre* (*cf.* Maximus of Tyre, *Dissertationes*, 8; 9).[43] Plutarch's demonological theories (as well as the spirituality of his philosophy) bring him closer to Apuleius.[44]

Moreschini (as before Rathke) noted numerous similarities between the demonology of Apuleius and Philo of Alexandria.[45] Philo, like Apuleius, writes about human demons. According to him, the demons inhabit the air. They are servants

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[41] Rathke 1911, 12–34.

[42] Cf. Moreschini, 1965, 55; Moreschini 1978, 26; Moreschini 1989, 269-280.

[43] Cf.: Bussanich 2013, 288-293; Fletcher 2014, 147-149; Hunink 2003, 251-260; Mecci 2018, 56-75; Moreschini 1989, 269-280; Sandy 1997, 199-201, 204, 207-210. See also: Trapp 2007, 467-482.

[44] On this basis, another Italian scholar, Portogalli formulated the thesis that the philosopher from Madauros should be associated with Plutarch rather than with Alcinous (cf. Portogalli 1963, 228). Vincent Hunink is of a different opinion. Hunink emphasizes differences rather than general parallels in the image of demons, especially in the image of Socrates' daimonion, in the writings of Plutarch and Apuleius (Hunink 2003, 255-256).

[45] Cf. Moreschini 1978, 26. See also Rathke 1911, 30–45.

and angels of the God, the Father. Moreschini believes that it is possible to draw a line of development of the demonological doctrine of Apuleius from Xenocrates of Chalcedon to the Antonine era. As with Middle Platonic physics and ethics, as with demonology, according to this scholar, this line is interrupted in places by Stoic elements.

Demons in Plato's Dialogues

In my opinion, the historical sources of the theory of demons presented in the works of Apuleius of Madauros seem to be Platonic. Plato raised the issue of demons in many places of his dialogues, especially in the *Apologia*, *Symposium*, *Cratylus*, *Phaedo*, *Respublica*, *Timaeus, Theaetetus*, *Leges* and *Theages*.[46]

Plato in the *Symposium* calls demons the intermediate divine beings between gods and people. They are to act as interpreters and messengers travelling between the world of gods and people. Without their mediation, no relationship between gods and people would be possible. They are the bearers of all religious acts on the part of people, and on the other hand they are the ones who proclaim God's judgments, graces, and various prophecies (Plato, *Symposium*, 201 A – 204 E). Eros is

[46] The *Theages* is probably spurious, but as writes Bussanich, "its author *was clearly familiar with Plato's writings, as verbal and thematic borrowings from the Apology and Theaetetus attest"* (Bussanich 2013, 286). It is noteworthy that the very term "demon" was previously used by Homer (cf. Homer, *Iliad*, I 222: VI 115). Homer used it meaning "gods". It was Hesiod who distinguished demons from gods (cf. Hesiod, *Opera et Dies*, 109-122; 252-255). Demons at his works are the souls of people from the golden age. Things are different in Plato's dialogues. Here, as we know, the demon can even be Love and Dream. The theme of demons can also be found in the philosophy of Empedocles, who claimed himself to be one of the fallen demons (Empedocles B 112; B 120-124; B 139; B 146; on the demonology of Empedocles, see too: Plutarch, *De defectu oraculorum*, 16, 17). Diogenes Laertios attributes belief in demons to Pythagoreans too. They were supposed to send onto people and animals ominous sings and dreams. All prayers as well as sacrificial purifications are referred to them (Diogenes Laertios, VIII 32). In the Greek religion, demons also had their place. Taking an intermediate place between gods and people in the hierarchy of beings, they were classified as supernatural forces in some way connected with destiny. Sometimes they took the form of bad or good human geniuses, and even geniuses of the entire nation. Two types of demons were believed: heavenly demons who were at the service of Zeus (according to Hesiod, there were to be thirty thousand of them, and they came from the golden race) (Hesiod, *Opera et Dies*, 122, 252), and earthly demons with an unspecified range of their influence (according to Hesiod, they were from the human silver race) (ibidem, 127-142). In addition to demons, heroes were worshiped in Greece. According to Hesiod, the heroes come from the bronze generation of people (ibidem, 143-159).

one such demon. In *Phaedrus*, Plato attributes to him the agency of the most powerful demonic madness that can engulf a man, namely love which is nothing but Eros's madness (Plato, *Phaedrus,* 265 B; 244 A – 245 B). The perpetrators of the other madness are Apollo, Dionysus, and the Muses. Apollon is ascribed to prophetic madness, Dionysus – mystical, and Muse – poetic (Ibid.). Plato was especially fond of eschatological myths. He dressed his eschatological theories in mythical robes. In this way, myths became carriers of certain philosophical messages, often understood only by the initiated. He placed two such myths in the *Phaedo*. In one of them he talks about souls who after death go to "that world". The soul of a philosopher who lived apart from bodily affairs, dealing only with spiritual matters, flies away to the world of the gods. The souls of sensual and dissolute people roam the cemeteries as shadows and demons until they merge with a body again (Plato, *Phaedo,* 80 C – 81 E). In the second myth, he tells the story that the soul of a deceased man is led by his guardian spirit to the court of Hades where it receives a sentence condemning it to a fate adequate to its life on Earth (Plato, *Phaedo*, 107 C – 115 E). In the last myth in the *Phaedo*, Plato mentioned the demon as a guardian deity of man, accompanying the soul also after his death. Plato also spoke about this protective spirit in the *Apologia* (Plato, *Apologia,* 31 D). The demon in question warned Socrates against committing any evil that was the real and only disaster that could affect the philosopher. For Socrates, and in general for a philosopher practicing philosophy in the Socratic formula, a real misfortune could only be what would stain his soul, that is, his own unethical behavior, and this is what his guardian spirit warned Socrates against. Plato teaches about the existence of such guardian spirits as Socrates also in the *Timaeus*. Here he says that God gave every man a protective genius which is the highest, rational part of the human soul (Plato, *Timaeus,* 90 A). In the *Cratylus*, he calls demons the souls of deceased people who were distinguished by goodness during their lifetime (Plato, *Cratylus,* 397 D). The teaching of the visible and invisible gods was given by Plato in the *Leges*, in which he also mentions demons (Plato, *Leges,* 821 B; 886 A – 888 D; 889 B; 740 B; 717 B). Similar thoughts are found in the *Politicus* where he placed the myth of the Cronus era. Here he talks about the deities who, on behalf of God supreme, look after particular parts of the world and about guardian spirits (Plato, *Politicus*, 271 D; 272 D). Plato expressed the tales about demons and gods in the form of a myth, a fairy tale. Therefore, they cannot be understood literally, especially since the author himself warned against this (cf. Plato, *Gorgias,* 523 A; *Phaedrus,* 265 D; 229 C–E; 252 C). Probably, however, certain content carried by these myths was of greater value to Plato than the form he used to express them. It can be expected that he took the study of heavenly bodies as gods and the science of demons seriously. On the other hand, he severely condemned sowers of superstition and deceivers who enslaved

people (Plato, *Leges,* 909 B, *Respublica,* 364 B – D). In the *Epinomis* there is an interesting theory about the five elements of the world and the corresponding living beings. Gods were assigned to fire. Air and ether are to be inhabited by invisible demons, and Earth – its natural inhabitants. According to the *Epinomis*, some demigods also live in water. They sometimes hide from people and become invisible, and sometimes they show themselves to them in almost all their glory (Pseudo-Plato, *Epinomis,* 984 E, 985 C). Their role is described here as well as in the *Symposium*. The fifth element introduced here, which is the ether, gives the impression of a foreign Platonic theory of the four elements. However, it must be considered that this is a mythical message, just like the myth of the heavenly land located in the etheric sky, which Plato writes about in the *Phaedo* (Plato, *Phaedo,* 109 B). The myth also mentions ether. Ether as the fifth element of matter would find its place in Aristotle's physics (Plato, *Phaedo,* 109 B). Regardless of the above observations about the ether, it can be stated that the theory presented in the *Epinomis* is very similar to the teaching of Apuleius about four types of living beings (cf. Apuleius, *De Platone,* XII 204; *De deo,* VIII 138 – IX 142).

Plato's demonology was undertaken by his student Xenocrates of Chalcedon whose messages are dominated by the concept of demons as human souls which after disconnecting from the body continue repenting for evil committed in life. After this expiation, the demon souls would go to heaven, where they would be given access to watch ideas.[47] The group of demons singled out by Apuleius in the *De deo Socratis* who had contact with the body suggests its affinity with the concept of Xenocrates. No mention is made of such demons in the *De Platone et eius dogmate*.

Conclusion

Apuleius' demonology has clear links to Plato's demonology. Demons according to both thinkers bridge the gap between the world of gods and people. The gap in question exists both on the metaphysical and physical plane. On the metaphysical plane, it already results from the different (metaphysical) natures possessed by these beings. On the physical plane, this gap is related to the space between the two worlds that neither human nor divine creatures can overcome. Despite this gap, there is agreement between the two worlds. After all, various prayers reach the gods, as well as sacrifices made by them. This is because of demons. They communicate these two worlds with each other. They can fulfil this role thanks to their double, divine-human nature. Through them, any divine-human contact is realized, regardless of whether the initiative comes from a man or a god. They are the

[47] Cf. Wojtczak 1980, 69–71.

guardian spirits already mentioned; they speak through prophets; they declare the will of the gods, etc. The world of demons is the part of the universe that connects, in a way, the perfect world of the gods with the imperfect world of people. The existence of demons evokes a sense of security in man that creates faith in these protective divine beings. The fact of the existence of various relationships between gods and people is for Apuleius a clear testimony to the existence of demons as a kind of divine-human intermediaries. The status of demons as intermediaries between gods and people is also revealed when Apuleius discusses the issue of basic metaphysical elements and their living entities. Returning to Apuleius' theory of demons, associated with the study of four elements, it should be noted that he departed somewhat from the concept of Plato expressed in the *Timaeus,* in which the air sphere was assigned not to demons but birds (cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 40 A). Apuleius also modified the last group of living creatures combining in it aquatic and terrestrial creatures. It can be assumed that the justification for this change was found in the *Epinomis*, where demons are assigned to the air element. It is interesting that Apuleius did not take up the thread of water demigods existing in the *Epinomis*. It is possible that this work was not a direct source of his demonological views. He probably educated not only on the writings of Plato himself, but also on the tradition of Xenocrates. It is worth noting that in Chapter 11 of the *De Platone et eius dogmate*, Apuleius twice distinguishes demons from other living beings. Once he does it based on elemental theory; the second time on the theological plane. In the latter case, he alludes to the beliefs of the Romans, identifying demons with intermediaries (Apuleius, *De Platone,* I, XI 204). In Chapter XII he would name them Lars and Geniuses and present them as "servants" of the gods. An important element of demon theory is the thesis of their dual, divine-human nature. They share immortality with the gods, and their passions with people. He writes about the latter in the *De deo Socratis*. In the *De Platone et eius dogmate*, he merely states that demons, in terms of place and nature, are smaller than gods and larger than men.

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