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Review of Frank Regen, *Apuleius philosophus Platonicus. Untersuchungen zur Apologie (De magia) und zu De mundo*

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This work examines the demonology of the Apology, De Mundo, De Deo Socratis, Florida, and De Dogmate Platonis in various aspects, noting places where De Mundo transmutes the meaning of its Greek model, the Peri Kosmou. These changes in meaning Dr. Regen shows to be systematic; they align the Latin version with Plato’s Symposium in places, and with Apuleius’ principles generally. Some changes may be illusory: does “rex omnium et pater” differ enough from ho panton hegemon kai genetor that conclusions can be drawn from the difference? Most changes, though, are more substantive. The sum is a useful study, and a cohesive argument for De Mundo as a genuine work of Apuleius.

If the book has a flaw, it is insufficient respect for Apuleius’ intelligence and learning. Regen does conclude that Apuleius knew Plato directly (“wenigstens zum Teil”), but where he attempts to fault Apuleius’ knowledge of Plato, he seems to demonstrate instead that Apuleius has read more widely in Plato than Regen assumes. He deals extensively with the words “potestates” and “natura et loco” in Apuleius’ reference to Symp. 202E (“inter deos atque homines natura et loco medias quasdam divorum potestates intersitas,” Apol. 43.2). Regen first claims the potestas is not permitted by the original (Daimon megas, dai-moniou), and having offered passages going from Hesiod to Clemens where daimon is understood as Seele (psyche, animus), he further concludes: Eine potestas im Sinne des dynamisbegriffs aber kann Apuleius wohl kaum aus Platon übernommen oder entwickelt haben ... (p. 18). But if understanding of daimon is used as a litmus of Platonism, logic (lack of which Regen often ascribes to Apuleius) demands that the defining passages come from Plato. Plato is of course aware of the Hesiodic version, souls of Golden Age men made daimones epichthonioi (Works and Days 97–112). But a distinctly higher order is clearly and consistently presented in Symp. 202E, Laws 713D–E, and Statesman 271D, 272E. These daimons are gods viceregent, with local jurisdictions. The type has been identified with the gennetoi theoi of the Timaeus. Daimon as soul does not even fit 202E, the passage Regen examines. Eros, the example described there, is nobody’s ghost.

The daimonic class has dynamis, functions, with the power and authority to perform them in 202E. Is not then potestas legitimate metonymy? Regen would have preferred vis (18n), but vis was the legal term for assault. As for the words “natura et loco,” Laws 713D, Statesman 271D, 272E seem to make it superfluous to go outside of Plato to account for them.