

Thomas Taylor's observations on some aspects of the Golden Ass

From Taylor's Introduction

The *Metamorphosis* is the most celebrated of all the works of Apuleius. A great part of this fable may be said to be a paraphrase of the Ass of Lucian, which was originally derived from a work of Lucius Patrensis, who wrote in Greek, and was of Patræ, a city of Achaia. The most important parts however of the *Metamorphosis*, viz. the fable of Cupid and Psyche, and the eleventh book, in which Apuleius gives an account of his being initiated in the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, are not derived from any sources with which we are at present acquainted. I call these the most important parts, because in the former, as it appears to me, the very ancient dogma of the pre-existence of the human soul, its lapse from the intelligible world to the earth, and its return from thence to its pristine state of felicity, are most accurately and beautifully adumbrated. This I have endeavoured to prove in the notes which accompany the translation of this fable. And as to the eleventh book, though the whole of the *Metamorphosis* is replete with elegance and erudition, yet this book excels all the rest, in consequence of containing many important historical particulars, and many which are derived from the arcana of Egyptian philosophy and religion. What he says about his initiation into the mysteries in particular, is uncommonly interesting and novel.

Dr Warburton formed an opinion of the design of the *Metamorphosis*, which, in one part of it at least, appears to me to be singularly ridiculous and absurd; viz. that the author's main purpose was to commend Pagan religion as the only cure for all vice whatsoever; and to ridicule the Christian religion. There may be some truth in the former part of this assertion; but it is wholly incredible, that at a period when the Christian religion was *openly* derided and execrated by all the Heathens, Apuleius should have written a work one part of the intention of which was to ridicule *latently* that which, *without any concealment*, and with the sanction of the existing government, was generally despised. One passage indeed occurs in which he speaks *contemptuously* of the Christians; but then his meaning is so far from being latent, that it must be obvious to every one. The passage I allude to is the following in book the ninth, in which Apuleius, speaking of the nefarious wife of a baker, says of her: "Then despising and trampling on the divine powers, instead of the *true religion*, counterfeiting a nefarious opinion of God, whom she asserted to be the only deity; devising also vain observances, and deceiving all men, and likewise her miserable husband, she enslaved her body to morning draughts of pure wine, and to continual adultery." In the tenth book also, he denominates a most execrable character *cruciarus*, which according to Plautus signifies *discipulus crucis*, a *disciple of the cross*; and perhaps in thus denominating this murderer, he intended to signify that he was a Christian; but there are no other parts of this work in which there is a shadow of probability that Apuleius had the Christian religion in view; except it should be said that he alludes to it, when in the eleventh book he calls the heathen the *most pure, magnificent, and eternal religion*.

What then was the real design of Apuleius in composing this work? Shall we say, with Macrobius, that Apuleius sometimes diverted himself with the tales of love, and that this is a kind of fable which professes only to please the ear, and which wisdom banishes from her temple to the cradles of nurses? This, however, is by no means consistent with that dignity and elevation of mind which are essential to the character of a Platonic philosopher. Is it not therefore most probable that the intention of the author in this work was to show that the man who gives himself to a voluptuous life, becomes a beast, and that it is only by becoming virtuous and religious, that he can divest himself of the brutal nature, and be again a man? For this is *the rose* by eating which Apuleius was restored to the human, and cast off the brutal form; and, like the moly of Hermes, preserved him in future from the dire enchantments of Circe, the Goddess of Sense. This, as it appears to me, is the only design by which our author can be justified in composing the pleasing tales with which this work is replete. Indeed, unless this is admitted to have been the design of Apuleius, he cannot in certain passages be defended from the charge of lewdness; but on

the supposition that these tales were devised to show the folly and danger of lasciviousness, and that the man who indulges in it brutalizes his nature, the detail of those circumstances through which he became an ass, are not to be considered in the light of a lascivious description, because they were not written with a libidinous intention; for every work is characterized by its ultimate design.² Hence, what Iamblichus (*De Mysteriis*, Sect. i cap. xi) says respecting the consecration of the phalli among the ancients in the spring, and the obscene language which was then employed, may be said in defence of these passages in the *Metamorphoses*: viz. "The powers of the human passions that are in us, when they are entirely restrained, become more vehement; but when they are called forth into energy, gradually and commensurately, they rejoice in being moderately gratified, are satisfied; and from hence, becoming purified, they are rendered tractable, and are vanquished without violence. On this account, in comedy and tragedy, by surveying the passions of others, we stop our own passions, cause them to be more moderate, and are purified from them. *In sacred ceremonies, likewise, by certain spectacles and auditions of things base, we become liberated from the injury which happens from the works effected by them.* Things of this kind, therefore, are introduced for the sake of our soul, and of the diminution of the evils which adhere to it through generation, and of a solution and liberation from its bonds. On this account, also, they are very properly called by Heraclitus *remedies*, as healing things of a dreadful nature, and saving souls from the calamities with which the realms of generation are replete."

Note on the tale of Cupid and Psyche

The following beautiful fable, which was designed to represent the lapse of the human soul from the intelligible world to the earth, was certainly not invented by Apuleius; for, as will appear in the course of the Introduction, it is evidently alluded to by Synesius, in his book *On Dreams*, and obscurely by Plato and Plotinus. It is clear, therefore, that Plato could not derive his allusion from Apuleius; and as to Plotinus and Synesius, those who are at all acquainted with the writings of the Greek philosophers, well know that they never borrowed from Latin authors, from a just conviction that they had the sources of perfection among themselves.

I have said that this fable represented the lapse of the human soul; of the truth of this the philosophical reader will be convinced by the following observations: In the first place, the gods, as I have elsewhere shown, are super-essential natures, from their profound union with the first cause, who is super-essential without any addition. But though the gods, through their summits or unities, transcend essence, yet their unities are participated either by intellect alone, or by intellect and soul, or by intellect, soul, and body; from which participations the various orders of the gods are deduced. When, therefore, intellect, soul, and body are in conjunction suspended from this super-essential unity, which is the centre flower or blossom of a divine nature, then the god from whom they are suspended is called a mundane god. In the next place, the common parents of the human soul are the intellect and soul of the world; but its proximate parents are the intellect and soul of the particular star about which it was originally distributed, and from which it first descends. In the third place, those powers of every mundane god, which are participated by the body suspended from his nature, are called mundane; but those which are participated by his intellect, are called supermundane; and the soul, while subsisting in union with these super-mundane powers, is said to be in the intelligible world; but when she wholly directs her attention to the mundane powers of her god, she is said to descend from the intelligible world, even while subsisting in the Heavens.

Thus much being premised, let us proceed to the explanation of the fable: Psyche, then, or soul, is described as transcendentally beautiful; and this indeed is true of every human soul, before it profoundly merges itself in the defiling folds of dark matter. In the next place, when Psyche is represented as descending from the summit of a lofty mountain into a beautiful valley, this signifies the descent of the soul from the intelligible world into a mundane condition of being, but yet without abandoning its

establishment in the Heavens. Hence the palace which Psyche beholds in the valley is, with great propriety, said to be "a royal house, which was not raised by human, but by divine, hands and art." The gems, too, on which Psyche is said to have trod in every part of this palace, are evidently symbolical of the stars. Of this mundane, yet celestial, condition of being, the incorporeal voices which attend upon Psyche are likewise symbolical: for outward discourse is the last image of intellectual energy, according to which the soul alone operates in the intelligible world. As voices, therefore, they signify an establishment subordinate to that which is intelligible, but so far as denudated of body, they also signify a condition of being superior to a terrene allotment.

Psyche, in this delightful situation, is married to an invisible being, whom she alone recognizes by her ears and hands. This invisible husband proves afterwards to be Love; that is to say, the soul, while established in the Heavens, is united with pure *desire*, (for *Love* is the same with *desire*) or, in other words, is not fascinated with outward form. But in this beautiful palace she is attacked by the machinations of her two sisters, who endeavour to persuade her to explore the form of her unknown husband. The sisters, therefore, signify imagination and nature; just in the same manner as reason is signified by Psyche.¹ Their stratagems at length take effect, and Psyche beholds and falls in love with Love; that is to say, the rational part, through the incentives of phantasy and the vegetable power, becomes united with impure or terrene desire; for vision is symbolical of union between the perceiver and thing perceived. In consequence of this illicit perception Cupid, or *pure desire*, flies away, and Psyche, or soul, is precipitated to earth. It is remarkable that Psyche, after falling to the ground, is represented as having "*a stumbling and often reeling gait*;" for Plato, in the *Phædo*, says, that the soul is drawn into body with a *staggering* motion.

After this commence the wanderings of Psyche, or soul, in search of Love, or pure desire, from whose embraces she is unhappily torn away. In the course of her journey she arrives at the temples of Ceres and Juno, whose aid she suppliantly implores. Her conduct, indeed, in this respect is highly becoming; for Ceres comprehends in her essence Juno, who is the fountain of souls; and the safety of the soul arises from converting herself to the divine sources of her being.

In the next place Venus is represented desiring Mercury to proclaim Psyche through all lands, as one of her female slaves that has fled from her service. It is likewise said that she gave him a small volume, in which the name of Psyche was written, and every other particular respecting her. Now I think it cannot be doubted but that Synesius alludes to this part of the fable in the following passage from his admirable book *On Dreams*: "When the soul descends spontaneously to its former life, with mercenary views, it receives servitude as the reward of its mercenary labours. But this is the design of descent, that the soul may accomplish a certain servitude to the nature of the universe, prescribed by the laws of Adrastia, or inevitable fate. Hence when the soul is fascinated with material endowments, she is similarly affected to those who, though free born, are, for a certain time, hired by wages to employments, and in this condition captivated with the beauty of some female servant, determine to act in a menial capacity under the

¹ In the later footnote the remainder of this paragraph reads as follows: The sisters, therefore, signify those two powers of the irrational part of the soul, *anger* and *desire*, the latter of which powers is well defined by the Pythagoreans to be a certain tendency, impulse, and appetite of the soul, in order to be filled with something, or to enjoy something present, or to be disposed according to some sensitive energy; just as *reason* or the rational soul is signified by Psyche. The stratagems of these sisters at length take effect, and Psyche beholds and falls in love with Love; that is to say, the rational part, through the incentives of anger and desire, becomes enamoured of, and captivated with, outward form; in consequence of which Cupid, or intellectual love, flies away, and Psyche, or the rational soul, is precipitated to earth. It is remarkable that Psyche, after falling to the ground, is represented as having "*a stumbling and often reeling gait*;" for Plato in the *Phædo* says, that the soul is drawn into body with a *staggering* motion.

master of their beloved object. Thus, in a similar manner, when we are profoundly delighted with external and corporeal goods, we confess that the nature of matter is beautiful, who marks our assent in her secret book; *and if, considering ourselves as free, we at any time determine to depart, she proclaims us deserters, endeavours to bring us back, and openly presenting her mystic volume to the view, apprehends us as fugitives from our mistress.* Then, indeed, the soul particularly requires fortitude and divine assistance, as it is no trifling contest to abrogate the confession and compact which she made. Besides, in this case force will be employed; for the material inflictors of punishments will then be roused to revenge by the decrees of fate against the rebels to her laws."

Venus, however, must not be considered here as the nature of matter; for though she is not the celestial Venus, but the offspring of Dione, yet she is that divine power which governs all the co-ordinations in the celestial world and the earth, binds them to each other, and perfects their generative progressions through a kindred conjunction. As the celestial Venus, therefore, separates the pure soul from generation, so she that proceeds from Dione binds the impure soul, as her legitimate slave, to a corporeal life.

After this follows an account of the difficult tasks which Psyche is obliged to execute by the commands of Venus; all which are images of the mighty toils and anxious cares which the soul must necessarily endure after her lapse, in order to atone for her guilt, and recover her ancient residence in the intelligible world. In accomplishing the last of these labours she is represented as forced to descend even to the dark regions of Hades;² by which it is evident that Psyche is the image of a soul that descends to the very extremity of things, or that makes the most extended progression before it returns. But Psyche, in returning from Hades, is oppressed with a profound sleep, through indiscreetly opening the box given her by Proserpine, in which she expected to find a portion of divine beauty, but met with nothing but an infernal Stygian sleep. This obscurely signifies that the soul, by considering a corporeal life as truly beautiful, passes into a profoundly dormant state: and it appears to me that both Plato and Plotinus allude to this part of our fable in the following passages, for the originals of which I refer the reader to my *Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, p. 62 [TTS vol. VII]. In the first place, then, Plato, in the seventh book of his *Republic*, observes, that "He who is not able, by the exercise of his reason, to define the idea of *the good* separating it from all other objects, and piercing, as in a battle, through every kind of argument: endeavouring to confute, not according to opinion, but according to essence, and proceeding through all the dialectical energies with an unshaken reason, is in the present life sunk in sleep, and conversant with the delusions of dreams; and that before he is roused to a vigilant state, *he will descend to Hades, and be overwhelmed with a sleep perfectly profound.*" And Plotinus, in *Ennead* 1. lib. 8 p 97, says, "The death of the soul is, while merged, or baptized, as it were, in the present body, to descend into matter, and be filled with its impurity, and after departing from this body, to lie absorbed in its filth till it returns to a superior condition, and elevates its eye from the overwhelming mire. For *to be plunged into matter is to descend to Hades, and fall asleep.*"

Cupid, however, or pure desire,³ at length recovering his pristine vigour, rouses Psyche, or soul, from her deadly lethargy. In consequence of this, having accomplished her destined toils, she ascends to her native heaven, becomes lawfully united with Cupid, (for while descending her union might be called illegitimate) lives the life of the immortals; and the natural result of this union with pure desire is

² In the original footnote the remainder of this sentence is as follows: . . . which indicates that the soul, through being enslaved to a corporeal life, becomes situated in obscurity, and is deprived of the light of day, *i.e.* of the splendour of truth and reality; agreeably to which Empedocles sings,

"I fled from deity and heavenly light,
To serve mad discord in the realms of night."

³ In the original *intellectual love*.

pleasure or delight. And thus much for an explanation of the fable of Cupid and Psyche. For farther particulars respecting the lapse of the soul, see my Introduction to, and Translation of, Plotinus on the Descent of the Soul, and my Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries.

I only add, that the Paraphrase on the Speech of Diotima, the Hymns, some of which are illustrative of the Speech, and the other pieces of poetry, are added at the request of a gentleman, whose thirst after knowledge, endeavours to promote it, elegant taste, and friendship for the author, demand a panegyric executed in a more masterly manner at least, though not with greater sincerity, than by the following lines:

While some, the vilest of a puffing age,
 With fulsome adulation stain the page,
 And time's irrevocable moments waste
 In base compliance with degenerate taste,
 Rise honest muse; and to thy lib'ral lyre
 Symphonious sing what friendship shall inspire.
 Say, shall the wretch, to gain devoted, claim
 A place conspicuous 'midst the sons of fame;
 For ill-got wealth with dying accents giv'n,
 To bribe the vengeance of impartial Heav'n?
 And shall not *he* who, 'midst the din of trade,
 Has homage at the Muse's altars paid;
 Astonish'd view'd the depth of Plato's thought,
 And strove to spread the truths sublime he taught -
 Attention gain, and gratitude inspire,
 And with his worth excite the poet's fire?
 Yes, PHRONIMUS, my muse, in lib'ral lays,
 This friendly tribute to thy merit pays;
 And ardent hopes that ages yet unborn
 May see well pleas'd thy name her works adorn!

Note on Lucius' address to the Queen of Heaven

The Moon, being the last of the celestial divinities, receives in herself, according to the Orphic theology, processions from all the orders of Gods superior to, and also contains in herself causally all the divinities inferior to her. Hence, from what is asserted here, and farther on, this Goddess is celebrated as containing all the female deities, just as Osiris contains all those of a male characteristic. In short, according to this theology, each of the Gods is in all, and all are in each, being ineffably united to each other and the highest God, because, each being a superessential unity, their conjunction with each other is a union of unities. And hence it is by no means wonderful that each is celebrated as all. But another and a still more appropriate cause may be assigned of Moon being called by the appellations of so many female deities, which is this, that, according to the Orphic theology, each of the planets is fixed in a luminous ethereal sphere called an *ολοτης*, or *wholeness*,⁴ because it is a part with a *total* subsistence, and is analogous to the sphere of the fixed stars. In consequence of this analogy, each of these planetary spheres contains a multitude of Gods, who are the satellites of the leading divinity of the sphere, and subsist conformably to his characteristics. This doctrine, which, as I have elsewhere observed, is one of the grand keys to the

⁴ Each of these spheres is called a *wholeness*, because it contains a multitude of *partial* animals coordinate with it.

mythology and theology of the ancients, is not clearly delivered by any other ancient writer than Proclus, and has not, I believe, been noticed by any other modern author than myself. But the following are the passages in which this theory is unfolded by Proclus, in his admirable commentaries on the *Timæus* of Plato. "In each of the celestial spheres, the whole sphere has the relation of a monad, but the cosmocrators [or planets], are the leaders of the multitude in each. For in each a number analogous to the choir of the fixed stars, subsists with appropriate circulations." (See vol. ii book iv, p. 270, of my translation of that work.) And in another part of the same book (p. 280), "There are other divine animals following the circulations of the planets, the leaders of which are the seven planets; all which Plato comprehends in what is here said. For these also revolve and have a wandering of such a kind as that which he a little before mentioned of the seven planets. For they revolve in conjunction with and make their apocatastases together with their principals, just as the fixed stars are governed by the whole circulation [of the inerratic sphere]." And still more fully in p. 281; "Each of the planets is a whole world, comprehending in itself many divine genera invisible to us. Of all these, however, the visible star has the government. And in this the fixed stars differ from those in the planetary spheres, that the former have one monad [*viz.* the inerratic sphere], which is the wholeness of them; but that in each of the latter there are invisible stars, which revolve together with their spheres; so that in each there is both the wholeness, and a leader, which is allotted an exempt transcendency. For the planets being secondary to the fixed stars, require a twofold prefecture, the one more total, but the other more partial. But that in each of these there is a multitude coordinate with each, you may infer from the extremes. For if the inerratic sphere has a multitude coordinate with itself, and earth is the wholeness of terrestrial, in the same manner as the inerratic sphere is of celestial animals, it is necessary that each intermediate wholeness should entirely possess certain partial animals coordinate with itself: through which, also, they are said to be wholenesses. The intermediate natures, however, are concealed from our sense, the extremes being manifest; one of them through its transcendently luminous essence, and the other through its alliance to us. If, likewise, partial souls [such as ours], are disseminated about them, some about the sun, others about the moon, and others about each of the rest, and prior to souls, dæmons give completion to the herds of which they are the leaders, it is evidently well said, that each of the spheres is a world; theologians also teaching us these things when they say that there are Gods in each prior to dæmons, some of which are under the government of others. Thus, for instance, they assert concerning our mistress the Moon, that the Goddess Hecate is contained in her, and also Diana. Thus, too, in speaking of the sovereign Sun, and the Gods that are there, they celebrate Bacchus as being there,

The Sun's assessor, who with watchful eye surveys
The sacred pole.

They likewise celebrate the Jupiter who is there, Osiris, the solar Pan, and *others of which the books of theologians and theurgists* are full; from all which it is evident, that each of the planets is truly said to be the leader of many Gods, who give completion to its peculiar circulation."

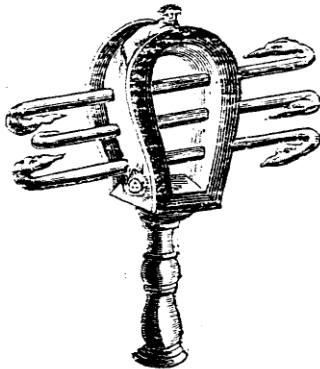
From this extraordinary passage (as I have observed in a note on it in my Proclus, p. 282), we may perceive at one view why the Sun in the Orphic Hymns is called Jupiter, why Apollo is called Pan, and Bacchus the Sun; why the Moon seems to be the same with Rhea, Ceres, Proserpine, Juno, Venus, &c. and in short, why any one divinity is celebrated with the names and epithets of so many of the rest. For from this sublime theory it follows that every sphere contains a Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, Vesta, Minerva, Mars, Ceres, Juno, Diana, Mercury, Venus, Apollo, and in short every deity, each sphere at the same time conferring on these Gods the peculiar characteristic of its nature; so that, for instance, in the Sun they all possess a solar property, in the Moon a lunar one, and so of the rest. From this theory, too, we may perceive the truth of that divine saying of the ancients, that all things are full of Gods; for more particular orders proceed from such as are more general, the mundane from the supermundane, and the sublunary from the celestial; while earth becomes the general receptacle of the illuminations of all the Gods. "Hence," as Proclus shortly after observes, "there is a terrestrial Ceres, Vesta, and Isis, as likewise a

terrestrial Jupiter and a terrestrial Hermes, established about the one divinity of the earth, just as a multitude of celestial Gods proceeds about the one divinity of the heavens. For there are progressions of all the celestial Gods into the Earth: and Earth contains all things, in an earthly manner, which Heaven comprehends celestially. Hence, we speak of a terrestrial Bacchus and a terrestrial Apollo, who bestows the all-various streams of water with which the earth abounds, and openings prophetic of futurity." And if to all this we only add, that all the other mundane Gods subsist in the twelve above-mentioned, and in short, all the mundane in the supermundane Gods, and that the first triad of these is *demiurgic* or *fabricative*, viz. Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan; the second, Vesta, Minerva, Mars, *defensive*; the third, Ceres, Juno, Diana, *vivific*; and the fourth, Mercury, Venus, Apollo, *elevating* and *harmonic*; I say, if we unite this with the preceding theory, there is nothing in the ancient theology that will not appear admirably sublime and beautifully connected, accurate in all its parts, scientific and divine.

The Delphin editor, having no conception of this theory, and being unable to assign the reason why the Moon is here said to be *Deorum Dearumque facies uniformis*, thinks with Elmenhorstius, that the word *Deorum* should be obliterated.

Notes on the eleventh book – the sistrum of Isis, and living statues.

(line 11.4) This *rattle* (in the original *crepitaculum*) of Isis, is the same with the celebrated *sistrum* of that Goddess, as is evident from what is asserted of the latter by Martial, Propertius, and Plutarch; and was of this form -



The following is a translation of what Plutarch says concerning this *sistrum* in his treatise of Isis and Osiris, and is remarkably interesting both to the antiquarian and philosopher: "The sistrum likewise indicates that it is necessary that beings should be agitated, and never cease to rest from their local motion, but should be excited and shaken, when they become drowsy and marcid. For they say that Typhon is deterred and repelled by the sistra; manifesting by this, that as corruption binds and stops [the course of things], so generation again resolves nature, and excites it through motion. But as the upper part of the sistrum is convex, so the concavity of it comprehends the four things that are agitated. For the generable and corruptible portion of the world is comprehended indeed by the lunar sphere; but all things are moved and changed in this sphere,

through the four elements of fire and earth, water and air. And on the summit of the concavity of the sistrum they carved a cat having a human face; and on the under part, below the rattling rods, they placed on one side the face of Isis, and on the other that of Nephthys, obscurely signifying by these faces generation and death [or corruption]: for these are the mutations and motions of the elements. But by the cat they indicated the moon, on account of the diversity of colours, operation by night, and fecundity of this animal. For it is said, that she brings forth one, afterwards two, three, four, and five kittens, and so adds till she has brought forth seven; so that she brings forth twenty-eight in all, which is the number of the illuminations of the moon. This, therefore, is perhaps more mythologically asserted. The pupils, however, in the eyes of the cat, are seen to become full and to be dilated when the moon is full, and to be diminished and deprived of light during the decrease of this star."

In this extract, Baxter, in his translation, makes the rods of the sistrum to be four. For he translates *υπο τα σειομενα*, "below the four jingling things," which I have translated, *below the rattling rods*. The sistrum, however, according to all the representations of it that are extant, contained but three rods. Baxter was doubtless led thus to translate *τα σειομενα*, because Plutarch had observed a little before that "*the concavity of the sistrum comprehends the four things that are agitated*," i.e. the four elements. But as there is no sphere of fire, as there is of each of the other elements; for sublunary fire is an efflux of the celestial fire,

and subsists in the cavities of the other elements; hence, the three rods indicate the three elements air, water, and earth, and the concavity of the arch of the sistrum will represent the summit of the air, which imitates the purity of the vivific and unburning fire of the heavens. For true fire is in the heavens; but of sublunary fire the purest is ether, and the most gross is in the interior parts of the earth. See book iv of my translation of Proclus, on the *Timæus* of Plato.

(line 11.17) These *breathing resemblances* were statues of the Gods, fabricated by *telestæ*, or *mystic operators*, so as to become animated, illuminated by divinity, and capable of delivering oracles. These statues are alluded to by Proclus, on the *Timæus* and *Cratylus* of Plato, and by Iamblichus, and the author of the Asclepian Dialogue; but are very explicitly mentioned by Hermias, in his Scholia on the *Phædrus*, p. 104, as follows: "But how are statues said to have an enthusiastic energy? May we not say, that a statue, being inanimate, does not itself energize about divinity; but the telestic art, purifying the matter of which the statue consists, and placing round it certain characters and symbols, in the first place renders it, through these means, animated, and causes it to receive a certain life from the world; and, in the next place, after this, it prepares the statue to be illuminated by a divine nature, through which it always delivers oracles, as long as it is properly adapted. For the statue, when it has been rendered perfect by the telestic art, remains afterwards [endued with a prophetic power], till it becomes entirely unadapted to divine illumination; but the mortal who receives the inspiring influence of the Gods, receives it only at certain times, and not always. But the cause of this is, that the soul, when filled with deity, energizes about it. Hence, in consequence of energizing above its own power, it becomes weary. For it would be a God, and similar to the souls of the stars, if it did not become weary. But the statue, conformably to its participations, remains illuminated. Hence the inaptitude of it entirely proceeds into privation, unless it is again, *de novo*, perfected and reanimated by the mystic operator."

Conformably to this, Proclus also, in *Tim.* pp. 239 and 240, says: "And again, from this it is evident that Plato establishes the Demiurgus conformably to the most consummate of the *telestæ*: for he exhibits him as the statuary of the world, just as before he represented him the maker of divine names, and the enunciator of divine characters, through which he gave perfection to the soul. For these things are effected by those who are *telestæ* in reality, who give completion to statues, through characters and vital names, and render them living and moving." It must be observed, that these *telestæ* were initiators into the mysteries, and were *theurgists*, or capable of performing divine operations.

And again, in his Scholia on the *Cratylus*, [TTS vol. XIII, p.552]: "And as the telestic art, through certain symbols and arcane signatures, assimilates statues to the Gods, and makes them adapted to the reception of divine illuminations, so the legislative art, according to the same assimilative power, gives subsistence to names, as the statues or images of things." The excellent Sallust, in his treatise *On the Gods and the World*, informs us, that these characters which were placed round statues were *imitations of supernal ineffable powers*, οἱ δὲ χαρακτηριστὰς ἀρρητοῦς ἀνω δυνάμεις μιμνῶνται.

Iamblichus also, in a treatise, *περὶ ἀγαλμάτων*, on Statues, which is unfortunately lost, but is mention by Photius, in *Biblioth.* p. 554, and which Philoponus attempted to confute, shows, "that statues are divine, and full of divine participation. And this he demonstrates to be the case, not only of such statues as are fashioned by the hands of men, by an occult art, and which are denominated *diopetes* (*i.e.* descended from Jupiter, or from heaven), through the immanifestness of the art by which they were made, for these are of a celestial nature, but also of such as are fashioned by artists in common, for money."

And, in the last place, in the Asclepian Dialogue, which is attributed to Hermes Trismegestus, and is only extant in a Latin translation, ascribed to Apuleius, it is clearly asserted, that the Egyptians evocated the souls of demons, or angels, and inserted them in sacred images; and that it was through these souls alone that idols possessed the power of being beneficent or malefic. These sacred statues are likewise alluded to in other parts of this work of Hermes.