Hagiographic Geography: Travel and Allegory in the Life of Apollonius of Tyana

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HAGIOGRAPHIC GEOGRAPHY: TRAVEL AND ALLEGORY IN THE *LIFE OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA**

IN this paper I shall explore the motif of travel in the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, composed by Philostratus in the first half of the third century AD and published after 217.[1] This text, apart from its novelistic, hagiographic and apologetic features, is an exemplary portrait of an ideal life. One aspect of its appeal (rather ignored in modern scholars' keenness to assess its veracity and the extent of Philostratus' elaboration) is the metaphorical nature of much of the work's content—designed to create an ideal literary image of the Greek philosopher in the Roman empire. I examine the theme of travel (with its deep debts to ancient ethnography, pilgrimage writing and the novel) as a masterly rhetorical device on the part of Philostratus by which to establish and demonstrate the superiority of Apollonius.

Travel allows Apollonius to confront and overcome every kind of danger and every known spiritual tradition not only as an intellectual process (such as reading in a library) but as an experiential journey. Travel represents the expanse of Apollonius' knowledge not simply as a collection of facts or information (the literary and encyclopaedic model provided by such figures as the Elder Pliny) but rather as a collection of places and personal experiences. Above all, the theme of travel unites the disparate Greek and Roman discourses of pilgrimage, geography and imperialism to create and to propagate the image of a holy man particularly suited to the problems of the Roman empire in the third century AD.

I. DISCOURSES OF TRAVEL

Travel plays a central role in the *Life of Apollonius*. Not only does the sage visit the boundaries of the known world—going to India, Ethiopia and Western Spain, but he is also shown travelling extensively within the more familiar ambience of the Roman empire, especially to sites of sacred significance, and to Rome. Since the fundamental article by Eduard Meyer, published in 1917,[2] the critical discussion of Apollonius' travels has—like everything else in Philostratus' biography—revolved around 'the question how far and with what intent Philostratus was perpetrating a work of fiction'.[3] Ewen Bowie, for example, in a highly authoritative treatment, ends up 'tentatively' supporting the view that, despite Philostratus' repeated emphasis

* This paper is dedicated to Maia Cecilia Elsner, who was conceived around the time I began to work intensively on Apollonius of Tyana and who was born one day before I was due to deliver the finished article at the Triennial Meeting of the Joint Committee of the Greek and Roman Societies in Oxford, July, 1995 (at the invitation of Edith Hall and Greg Woolf). In the event, I am most grateful to Helen Morales, who agreed to read the paper in its author's absence and was, my friends tell me, much better at impersonating me than I am! My particular thanks are due to the Editor, Helen Morales, Joan Pau Rubiès, Greg Woolf and two very helpful anonymous referees for their comments on earlier drafts.

[1] E.L. Bowie suggests a date between 222 and 235 AD in 'Apollonius of Tyana: fiction and reallty', *ANRW* ii.16.2 (1978) 1652-99, p. 1670.

[2] E. Meyer, 'Apollonios von Tyana und die Biographie des Philostratos', *Hermes* lii (1917) 371-424.

[3] I quote Bowie (n.1) 1653. This approach, of course, responds to an earlier tradition of straightforward belief in the veracity of Philostratus' account (on Apollonius' journeys, see for instance G.R.S. Mead, *Apollonius of Tyana: The philosopher-reformer of the first century AD*, [London 1901] 75). One over-enthusiastic exception to the fictional consensus is F. Grosso, 'La "Vita di Apollonio di Tiana" come fonte storica', *Acme* vii (1954) 333-52, whom Bowie sets out in part to refute; for the most recent review of the question, see J.A. Francis, *Subversive virtue: asceticism and authority in the second-century pagan world* (University Park 1995) 83-9. For a recent discussion of issues of authorship, see J.J. Flinterman, *Power, paideia and Pythagoreanism: Greek identity, conceptions of the relationship between philosophers and monarchs and political ideas in Philostratus' Life of Apollonius* (Amsterdam 1995) 5-28.

on sanctuary-visiting, the real 'Apollonius had no particular interest in shrines'.[4] Likewise, the travels to more distant lands 'best suit fiction by Philostratus', although 'their romantic vision has naturally attracted repeated vindication'.[5] This view has become the standard one, with the travels being seen as a trope of Second Sophistic rhetoric: 'Apollonius' travels reflect the canonic sites of "rhetorical" geography: Arabia, Babylon, India, Asia Minor, Athens, Sparta, Rome, Gades, Libya, Egypt'.[6]

I have no wish to challenge this consensus. Nonetheless, the modernist attack on Philostratus for mendacity (or at least for fiction) is as unjustified as that of Christian theologians on Apollonius' 'false' miracles.[7] Both travels and miracles are instances of *thaumata*, the kinds of wonders which one would normally associate with a late antique holy man.[8] By accepting the Philostratean portrait of Apollonius as a rhetorically sophisticated, indeed a highly conventional, hagiography, whose intention is to present its hero as outdoing 'every philosopher or holy man in every known genre: Apollonius was to be the superman's superman',[9] I would like to move the discussion of Apollonius' travels towards issues of representation. It is crucial to recognise that Philostratus was not purveying facts, but writing a myth-historical justification of a figure who came to be regarded, in the words of the fourth-century pagan historian Eunapius, as 'not merely a philosopher but a demi-god, half man, half god' (οὐκέτι φιλόσοφος· ἀλλ' ἦν τι θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπου μέσον, *Vit. Phil.* 454),[10] whose life became the subject of discussion and retelling among Christian bishops in the fifth

[4] Bowie (n.1) 1689.

[5] *Ibid.* 1692. On the novelistic elements of Philostratus' biography, see B.P. Reardon, *Courants littéraires grecs des IIe et IIIe siècles après J-C* (Paris 1971) 189-90; T. Hägg, *The novel in antiquity* (Oxford 1983) 115-7; B.P. Reardon, *The form of Greek romance* (Princeton 1991) 147-8; esp. E.L. Bowie, 'Philostratus: writer of fiction', in J.R. Morgan and R. Stoneman (eds.), *Greek fiction: the Greek novel in context* (London 1994) 181-99, esp. 187-96; and G. Anderson, 'Philostratus on Apollonius of Tyana: the unpredictable on the unfathomable', in G. Schmeling (ed.), *The novel in the ancient world* (Leiden 1996) 613-8.

[6] G. Anderson, *Philostratus: Biography and belles lettres in the third century AD* (London 1986) 129. See also M. Dzielska, *Apollonius of Tyana in legend and history* (Rome 1986) 186, and E. Koskenniemi, *Die Philostrateische Apollonios* (Helsinki 1991) (Commemorationes Humanorum Litterarum 94) 58-69.

[7] The attack on false miracles, with Apollonius seen as a magician, goes back to Eusebius' polemical *Contra Hieroclem,* written in the fourth century, see T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass. 1981) 164-7 and Dzielska (n.6) 153-92; for a modern version, see John Henry Newman, *The Life of Apollonius Tyanaeus* in S. Hinds, *History of the Christian church: 1st division. The rise and progress of Christianity: a dissertation on miracles* (London 1850) 337-97 and the discussion of Dzielska (n.6) 193-212. Recent discussions of the miracles in the *VA* are C. Padilla, *Los milagros de la 'Vida de Apollonio de Tiana': Morfología del relato de milagro y generos afines* (Cordoba 1991) (Estudios de Filologia Neotestamenta 4), and Francis (n.3) 118-26.

[8] For the significance of *thaumata* in the economy of holiness in late antique Palestine, see J. Binns, *Ascetics and ambassadors of Christ* (Oxford 1994) 218-44. Generally on holy men and biography, see P. Cox, *Biography in late antiquity: a quest for the holy man* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983). Still useful for context is R. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* (Leipzig 1906), esp. 39-54 on *VA*. Specifically on Apollonius as a late antique itinerant miracle worker, see M. Smith, *Jesus the magician* (New York 1978) 84-91 and 94-140; for a systematic comparison of Jesus and Apollonius, see H.C. Kee, *Medicine, miracle and magic in New Testament times* (Cambridge 1986) 84-6, E. Koskenniemi, *Apollonios von Tyana in der neutestamentlichen Exegese* (Tübingen 1994) and esp. Francis (n.3) 83-129 on Apollonius as 'the rehabilitated ascetic' in the context of first-second century paganism.

[9] Anderson (n.6) 136. On the nature of the text, see further S. Swain, *Hellenism and empire: Language, classicism and power in the Greek world AD 50-250* (Oxford 1996) 81-95.

[10] Eunapius goes so far as to remark that Philostratus' life should have been called 'The Visit of God to Mankind' ('Επιδημίαν ἐς ἀνθρώπους θεοῦ, *Vit. Phil.* 454). Compare Apollonius' inclusion in Ammianus Marcellinus' fourth-century list of men whose guardian spirits attended them (*RG* xxi 14.5). This list is interesting; it consists of three groups of three: first three early/mythical holy men (Pythagoras, Socrates and Numa Pompilius, Romulus' successor as king of Rome), then three statesmen from the past (Scipio Africanus, Marius and Augustus), and finally three recent/mythical holy men (Hermes Trismegistus, Apollonius and Plotinus). For an interesting confrontation with the spirit of the divine Apollonius, see *Hist. Aug., Aurelian* 24.2-9.

century,[11] and whose shrine at Tyana remained an object of veneration even for the earliest fourth-century Christian pilgrim whose travel-narrative has survived, the Bordeaux Pilgrim of 333 AD (*It. Burd.* 578.1).[12]

The question is not whether Philostratus is making it up (he is), but rather to explore the literary and rhetorical place of the travels within Philostratus' portrait of sanctity in Graeco-Roman imperial culture through the person of Apollonius.[13] To understand Philostratus' rhetorical uses of ethnography will not, to be sure, take us any closer to the real Apollonius of Tyana, who was in any case long deceased by the time Philostratus' *Life* was written. But it may help to cast some light on the interesting question of the allegorism with which holiness was conceived by pagan Graeco-Roman culture in the third century AD.[14] In the case of the *VA*, by 'allegorism' I mean the ways in which the travels reinforce—by both a spatial and an experiential analogy—the spiritual journey of Apollonius as a paradigmatic holy man. Since the notion of a holy land and the special sanctification of particular places outside the holy land (such as martyria, collections of relics and saints' tombs) are essential to the Christian construction of holiness in the fourth century and after,[15] there is much value in examining the relatively under-explored theme of a pre-Christian sacred geography in Graeco-Roman polytheism.[16]

The theme of travel is exploited in a number of ways by Philostratus. He uses it to establish the credentials of his holy man in a world of sophists, wise men and teachers, part of whose identity was defined by travel (not least as they are presented in Philostratus' own *Lives of the Sophists*).[17] Moreover, the lessons and lore learnt from such travel are regularly employed to demonstrate Apollonius' authority. For instance, he reproves the naked sages of Egypt in part on the basis of his experiences with the Brahmans of India (vi 11, 14). Such rhetorical uses of travel belong to the armoury of regular strategies for epideictic orators and sophists in proving themselves before new audiences.[18]

[11] See Sidonius Apollinaris (bishop of Clermont in Gaul, *c.* 470 AD), *epist.* 8.3.1, where Sidonius mentions not only a Latin translation of Philostratus by Nicomachus Flavianus but also versions made from this by himself and by Tascius Victorianus. He sends his own 'wild precipitate barbarian rendering' to his correspondent Leo, a jurist and official in Narbonne. See D. Potter, *Prophets and emperors: human and divine authority from Augustus to Theodosius* (Cambridge M.A. 1994) 34 and R. Van Dam, *Leadership and community in late antique Gaul* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1985) 173.

[12] In this context, it is worth noting the talismans and amulets of Apollonius which appeared through the fourth century, see Dzielska (n.6) 68, 99-101, 172; see also W. Speyer, 'Zum Bild des Apollonios von Tyana bei Heiden und Christen', *JbAC* xvii (1974) 47-63.

[13] On the theme of holy men as travellers, see G. Anderson, *Sage, saint and sophist: Holy men and their associates in the early Roman empire* (London 1994) 167-77. On Apollonius' travels, see *id.* (n.6) 199-226.

[14] For allegorism in ancient spiritual guides, see R. Valantasis, *Spiritual guides of the third century: a semiotic study of the guide-disciple relationship in Christianity, neoplatonism, hermeticism and gnosticism* (Minneapolis 1991) (Harvard Dissertations in Religion 27) 6-11, and on books as spiritual guides (focusing on Porphyry's *Vit. Plot.*) 35-61.

[15] On the Holy Land, see especially R.L. Wilken, *The land called holy: Palestine in Christian history and thought* (New Haven and London 1992); on the Christian sanctification of place through saints, martyrs and relics, see R.A. Markus, *The end of ancient Christianity* (Cambridge 1990) 139-56. For an incisive review of the issue with further bibliography, see R.A. Markus, 'How on earth could places become holy? Origins of the Christian idea of holy places', *Journal of early Christian studies* ii (1994) 257-71.

[16] One exception which attempts to compare the orchestration of pagan and Christian sacred topography, is S. MacCormack, 'Loca sancta: The organization of sacred topography in late antiquity' in R. Ousterhout (ed.), *The blessings of pilgrimage* (Urbana and Chicago 1990) (Illinois Byzantine Studies 1), 7-40.

[17] The context is discussed by Anderson (n. 6) 14-31, (n.13) 167-77 and in *The Second Sophistic: a cultural phenomenon in the Roman empire* (London 1993) 28-30.

[18] For this strategy of the travelling sophist as cultural authority who displays his mastery by means of accounts of distant places or peoples, *cf.* Lucian, *Philopseudes* 33-8; Dio Chr. *Or.* xxxvi (esp. the 'Magian myth' xxxvi 39-61); Ael. Arist. *Or.* xxvi 15-57.

Here I shall focus on two discourses of travel used for symbolic purposes by Philostratus in creating his portrait of Apollonius. We may describe the first as pilgrimage—the visiting of temples, hero-shrines, oracular and healing sites in the manner of other known travellers of the Second Sophistic such as Pausanias, Lucian and Aelius Aristides. This was primarily a *local* tradition in which the pilgrim visited groups of sacred places in a particular area (such as the Greece of Pausanias or the Syria of Lucian's *De Dea Syria*) or frequented shrines related to each other through a particular function (such as those which specialised in dream interpretation or healing) or through attachment to a particular deity (like Asclepius, of whom Aristides was a devotee).[19] The second, rather broader, geographic discourse is that of the traveller's tale, the ethnographic report of marvels from the ends of the earth and the boundaries of the known. This latter tradition, with its scholarly roots in Herodotean autopsy and pseudo-autopsy as well as in hellenistic ethnographic compilations,[20] had a significant metaphorical place in ancient rhetoric and literature since Homer and Aeschylus.[21] I shall address each in turn.

i. *Apollonius as Pilgrim*

In the course of Book iv of the *VA*, Philostratus represents his sage as a visitor to the temples and hero-sanctuaries of Asia Minor and the islands. After leaving the temple of Asclepius at Pergamon, Apollonius visits the tombs of the Achaeans (iv 11), who turn out to be a series of mainly Homeric heroes—Ajax (iv 13), Palamedes (whose fallen statue Apollonius restores and to whom he dedicates a shrine, iv 13), Orpheus at Lesbos (iv 14) and Achilles (iv 11, with whose ghost he conducts an interview, iv 16). Later in the same book, he not only visits the tomb of Leonidas the Spartan ('the loftiest spot of all', τὸ ὑψηλότατον τοῦτο iv 23) and is invited to share 'the hospitality of the shrine of Zeus' at Sparta (iv 31), but also makes his way to 'all the Greek shrines, namely that of Dodona and the Pythian temple, and the one at Abae, and he betook himself to those of Amphiaraus and of Trophonius, and he went up to the shrine of the Muses on Mount Helicon' (ἐπεφοίτησε δὲ καὶ τοῖς Ἑλληνικοῖς ἱεροῖς πᾶσι τῷ τε Δωδωναίῳ καὶ τῷ Πυθικῷ καὶ τῷ ἐν Ἀβαῖς, ἐς Ἀμφιάρεώ τε καὶ Τροφωνίου ἐβάδισε καὶ ἐς τὸ Μουσεῖον τὸ ἐν Ἑλικῶνι ἀνέβη. iv 24). This pattern of travel, similar to the journey of Pausanias not only in the sacred emphasis but also in the particular interest in Homeric relics,[22] represents the sage's confrontation with the land of Greece and its people through a sacred journey to the holy sites of Greece. The trope is repeated outside Greece proper. In Crete 'he longed to visit Ida. He accordingly climbed up, and after visiting the sacred sites he passed on to the shrine of Leben.' (προῄει ... πόθῳ τῆς Ἴδης.

[19] On pilgrimage in the Graeco-Roman world, see B. Kötting, *Peregrinatio Religiosa: Wallfahrten in der Antike und das Pilgerwesen in den alten Kirche* (Regensberg and Munster 1950) 12-79; R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman empire* (New Haven and London 1981) 18-34; R. Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (London 1986) 27-261; J.-M. André and M.-F. Baslez, *Voyager dans l' antiquité* (Paris 1994) 247-81; S. Coleman and J. Elsner, *Pilgrimage past and present: sacred travel and sacred space in the world religions* (London 1995) 10-29.

[20] See for instance J.S. Romm, *The edges of the earth in ancient thought* (Princeton, 1992) and G.W. Bowersock, *Fiction as history: Nero to Julian* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1994) 29-53. On geography in ancient natural history, see R. French, *Ancient natural history* (London 1994) 114-48.

[21] On Roman poetry see R. Thomas, *Lands and peoples in Roman poetry: the ethnographic tradition* (Cambridge 1982) (*PCPS* suppl. 7); on Roman rhetoric see A. Vasaly, *Representation: images of the world in Ciceronian oratory* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1993); on geography in the Greek tragedians, see A. Bernand, *La carte du tragique: la géographie dans la tragédie grecque* (Paris 1985); on geography and ethnography in Homer, see H. Thomas and F.H. Stubbings, ' Lands and peoples in Homer', in A.J.B. Wace and F.H. Stubbings (eds.), *A companion to Homer* (London 1962) 283-310.

[22] On Pausanias as pilgrim, see J. Elsner, *Art and the Roman viewer: the transformation of art from the pagan world to Christianity* (Cambridge 1995) 125-55 and on Pausanias and Homer, see *ibid.* 316-7 (n.30).

ἀνελθὼν οὖν καὶ τοῖς θεολογουμένοις ἐντυχών, ἐπορεύθη καὶ ἐς τὸ ἱερὸν τὸ Λεβηναῖον. iv 34).[23] In Egypt, Apollonius and his party go to every sanctuary (v 43).[24]

The relevant question in response to this orgy of temple visiting is not whether the real Apollonius behaved like this (and it would be hardly surprising had he done so), but what Philostratus' audience would have made of the trope. They would surely have expected such activity from a holy man. Travel both within the confines of the Roman empire and beyond its reaches (whether as fact or as aspiration) occurs in other third- and fourth-century lives of holy men.[25] We have numerous texts from travellers and others in the Second Sophistic in which piety is expressed as pilgrimage in the form of temple-visiting. Most notably, Pausanias' *Description of Greece* offers more sanctuary-visiting described from personal observation than any other ancient text, and Lucian's first-person account of the temple of the Syrian goddess at Hirê opens with a survey of great pilgrimage sites in the Levant (*De Dea Syria* 1-8).

Ancient pilgrimage, which combined religious with antiquarian and often remarkably scholarly interests in peculiarities of ritual or mythology,[26] was closely related to the kinds of 'tourism' which took both Aelius Aristides (in *Oratio* xxxvi, 'the Egyptian Discourse') and Philostratus' Apollonius (vi 22-26) in search of the sources of the Nile, or to the travels—partly pious, partly erudite, partly official—embodied by the characters Demetrius and Cleombrotus in Plutarch's dialogue *De Defectu Oraculorum* (410 a-c).[27] Such travel—like pilgrimage in any cultural context—clearly stemmed from a multitude of motivations and causes. In the case of some devotees, the depth of religious conviction was little short of what one finds in the more fervent Christian pilgrims of the Middle Ages: for instance Aelius Aristides' passionate commitment to Asclepius was born of a history of divine visions and the deeply held conviction that he would eventually find a cure for his many physical ailments.[28] Other pilgrims, with an irrepressible thirst for the miraculous and an equal keenness to impress others with their wonderful experiences, may rather have resembled the liar Eucrates, so magnificently and cruelly sketched by Lucian (*Philopseudes* 33-8). The imperial model for pilgrimage as an institution was to be found in the very public travels of the emperors in the second and third centuries which often emphasised the visiting of sacred sanctuaries, for instance Hadrian (*Hist. Aug., V.Hadr.* 13-14.7) and Septimius Severus (*Hist. Aug., V.Sev.* 3.4-7, 17.4), whose empress Julia Domna is presented as having commissioned Philostratus to write the *Life of Apollonius* (*VA* i 3).[29]

Philostratus' use of pilgrimage goes beyond merely establishing his hero's piety. He transforms the trope to turn Apollonius from being a pilgrim into a prophet. His sage not only

[23] I use (and sometimes adapt) the Loeb translation of the *VA* by E. C. Conybeare.

[24] On the trope in general in the *VA*, see Bowie (n.1) 1688-9.

[25] For instance Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 3 (the failed attempt to visit Babylon and India); Porphyry, *Vit. Pythag.* 17-18, 21 (travels in Crete, Italy, Sicily); Iamblichus, *De Vit. Pythag.* 2-4 (travels to Egypt and Babylon).

[26] For the scholarly-antiquarian interest in myth in Graeco-Roman antiquity, see P. Veyne, *Did the Greeks believe in their myths?* (Chicago and London, 1988); for ritual (looking at Pausanias and Lucian), see J. Elsner, 'Image and ritual: reflections on the religious appreciation of Classical art', *CQ* 46 (1996) 515-31.

[27] On travel in the high Roman empire, see (still) L. Friedländer, *Darstellungen aus der Sittengeschichte Röms* i (Leipzig 1921-3) 318-490, L. Casson, *Travel in the ancient world* (London 1974) 229-329 and E.D. Hunt, 'Travel, tourism and piety in the Roman empire', *Echos du monde classique* 28 (1984) 391-417.

[28] On Aelius Aristides, see Lane Fox (n.19) 160-63 and P. Cox Miller, *Dreams in late antiquity: studies in the imagination of a culture* (Princeton 1994) 106-23 (generally on dreams and therapy), 184-204 (specifically on Aristides).

[29] For imperial travel, see F. Millar, *The emperor in the Roman world* (London 1977) 28-40 and H. Halfmann, *Itinera Principum: Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im römischen Reich* (Stuttgart 1986) 143-56. On the continuity of this model of activity into early Christian culture, see K. Holum, 'Hadrian and St Helena: Imperial travel and the origins of Christian holy land pilgrimage' in Ousterhout (n.16) 61-81.

visits all the sites like a Lucian or a Pausanias, but he corrects the rites and lectures the priests.[30] He comes, in other words, not as a suppliant but as a master, not as a client but as an expert. Here he resembles that other supreme saintly traveller of the first century AD, the Apostle Paul, whose journeys in the eastern Mediterranean and to Rome are chronicled in the *Acts of the Apostles*. A few examples will suffice. At iii 58 Apollonius visits the shrine of Aphrodite at Paphos and 'gave the priests much instruction with regard to the ritual of the temple' (τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον καὶ πολλὰ τοὺς ἱερέας ἐς τὴν ὁσίαν τοῦ ἱεροῦ διδαξάμενον). At iv 19-21 he instructs the Athenians in religion and ritual (Philostratus agreeing at iv 19 with Pausanias i 24.3 that the Athenians were unusually devoted to matters of religion).[31] At iv 24, Apollonius 'corrected the rites' at all the Greek shrines he visited (φοιτῶντι δὲ ἐς τὰ ἱερὰ καὶ διορθουμένῳ αὐτά); by iv 40-1 his religious reforms are accepted in Rome as well as Greece; at v 25-6 he attempts to correct the religious practices of the Alexandrians, and at vi 5 and 11 he is putting right the errors of the gymnosophists in Egypt. In effect, Apollonius' visits to the sacred sites of the Roman empire are accompanied not only by careful investigation of ritual (paralleled for instance by Pausanias)[32] but also by a systematic attempt to improve religion through instruction.[33]

This transformation of the pilgrimage trope prepares the ground for a second hagiographic twist: Philostratus turns Apollonius from a pilgrim to an object of pilgrimage. As early as i. 8, the young ascetic is a source of wonder to the inhabitants of Aegae. At v 24, the citizens of Alexandria 'gazed upon him as if he were a god' (προϊόντα γέ τοι ἀπὸ τῆς νεὼς ἐς τὸ ἄστυ θεῷ ἴσα ἀπέβλεπον).[34] By viii 15, after Apollonius' miraculous disappearance from Domitian's prosecution in Rome (viii 5, 8-11), he is a sacred goal in his own right:

> ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἥκειν ἐπιστεύθη, οὐδ' ἐπ' Ὀλυμπιάδα οὐδεμίαν μετέωρος οὕτω ξυνῄει ἡ Ἑλλάς, ὡς ἐπ' ἐκεῖνον τότε, Ἦλις μὲν καὶ Σπάρτη αὐτόθεν, Κόρινθος δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν τοῦ Ἰσθμοῦ ὁρίων, Ἀθηναῖοι δέ, εἰ καὶ Πελοποννήσου ἔξω ...
>
> When the rumour of his arrival was confirmed, they all flocked to see him from the whole of Greece, and never did any such crowd flock to any Olympic festival as then. People came straight from Elis and Sparta, and from Corinth away at the limits of the Isthmus; and the Athenians too, although they were outside the Peloponnese...

This list of the Greek states, which is expanded as the discussion continues to include Pisa, Megara, Boeotia, Argos, Phocis, Thessaly and even 'a number of people arrived from Italy' (πολλῶν δ' ἐξ Ἰταλίας ἡκόντων), presents Apollonius as a focus for the sacred topography of the Greek world which he had previously visited as pilgrim. In terms of the structure of the Philostratean narrative, the charismatic figure who had journeyed within and beyond the borders of the known world in search of wisdom, who had miraculously escaped death at the hands of

[30] On Apollonius as religious expert, see Francis (n.3) 108-12.

[31] Compare *Acts of the Apostles* 17.16-34 for Paul's discussions in Athens with 'devout persons' in a 'city given wholly to idolatry' and for his attempt to correct the forms of pagan worship.

[32] See Elsner (n.26) 520-28.

[33] For further instances and discussion, see Bowie (n.1) 1688.

[34] Here there are parallels both with the heroines of the novels and with the saint as hero (Paul) in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Callirhoe, heroine of Chariton's novel, for instance, turns from being a traveller in distant lands, into becoming an attraction for huge crowds who throng to see her as if she were a goddess: see esp. Chariton 5.3, where the Persians prostrate themselves before the epiphany of Callirhoe's beauty. For Callirhoe as object of the gaze, see B. Egger, 'Looking at Chariton's Callirhoe', in Morgan and Stoneman (n.5) 31-48, esp. 36-43 and for Callirhoe as a statue, see R. Hunter, 'History and historicity in Chariton', *ANRW* ii 34.2 (1994) 1055-86, esp. 1073-8. On St Paul as focus of vision in *Acts*, see W.M. Ramsay, *St Paul the traveller and the Roman citizen* (London 1942) 22 and R.I. Pervo, *Profit with delight: the literary genre of the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia 1987) 52.

a tyrant, returns to his native Greece as a demi-god:

> διέκειτο μὲν ἡ Ἑλλὰς οὐ πόρρω τοῦ προσκυνεῖν αὐτόν, θεῖον ἡγούμενοι ἄνδρα δι' αὐτὸ μάλιστα τὸ μηδ' ἐς κόμπον μηδένα ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν καθίστασθαι.
>
> The attitude of Hellas towards him came near to that of actual worship; the main reason why they thought him divine being that he never made the least parade about the matter. (viii 15)

The divinity of Apollonius in this late phase of his career leads to Olympian Zeus giving him money (viii 17) and the prophetic god Trophonius being so delighted at his visit that, despite the opposition of his priests who believed the sage 'a wizard' (γόης), he kept Apollonius in his oracular cave for seven days and gave him the present of a volume of Pythagoras (viii 19). This book, itself a sacred relic which passed into the possession of the emperor Hadrian, was preserved, so Philostratus tells us, at Antium in Italy (viii 20). The narrative of increasing divinity concludes with the multiple tales of Apollonius' death (whether from old age, or by disappearing into a temple of Athene at Lindos, or through a full-scale assumption into heaven in Crete, viii 30). While Philostratus knows of 'no tomb or cenotaph of the sage ...although I have traversed most of the earth' (τάφῳ μὲν οὖν ἢ ψευδοταφίῳ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς οὐδαμοῦ προστυχὼν οἶδα, καίτοι τῆς γῆς, ὁπόση ἐστίν, ἐπελθὼν πλείστην...), he ends his account by mentioning Apollonius' signal shrine at Tyana (viii 31), presumably the temple marking the site of his birth (i 5). Here, Philostratus himself appears in the guise of a pilgrim in search of the holy man—an apposite ending to the *VA* and a testament to the text's attempt as a whole to incite the reader (even the author) to the philosophic life.

If the act of writing about pilgrimage is a surrogate form or repetition of the ritual,[35] then likewise the act of reading about Apollonius' travels as a pilgrim had the effect of turning Philostratus' readers into surrogate pilgrims. They are inevitably fellow travellers with Apollonius, witnesses of his sacred journeys—through his companion Damis, on whose first-hand account Philostratus purports to have based his *Life* (i 3). But readers are also pilgrims to Apollonius: in reading about his journeys we receive his spiritual instruction and are constantly confronted with his example. One of the most powerful rhetorical effects of Philostratean hagiography is to use the theme of pilgrimage in order to construct not only those whom Apollonius confronts within the text, but also the author and the reader as potential disciples of the holy man whom the text presents as becoming a god.

ii. *Philostratean Ethnography: The Traveller's Tale as Metaphor*

The *VA*—like many an ancient novel—is cluttered with the topoi of ethnography:[36] natural *thaumata* of all kinds,[37] a veritable zoo of exotic animals (actual and fantastic),[38] a highly

[35] M. Harbsmeier, 'Elementary structures of otherness', in J. Céard and J.-C. Margolin (eds.), *Voyager à la Renaissance* (Paris 1987) 337-55, esp. 337.

[36] The fundamental discussion is still H. Rommel, *Die naturwissenschaftlich-paradoxographischen Exkurse bei Philostratos, Heliodoros und Achilles Tatios* (Stuttgart 1923) esp. 1-59 on the *VA*. See also now H.L. Morales, 'The taming of the view: natural curiosities in *Leukippe and Kleitophon*' in H. Hofmann (ed.), *Groningen colloquia on the novel* vi (Groningen 1995) 39-50.

[37] For instance: iii 3 (the piebald woman), iii 4 (the cinnamon and pepper trees), iii 14 (the well of purification, the jars of the winds and the rain), iii 15 (the levitation of the Indian sages), v 3 (dawn and dusk in Gadeira), v 16-17 (the myth of Etna and exporation of the volcano).

[38] For example: ii 2 (leopards), ii 6, 11-12 and 14-15 (elephants), iii 1 (fiery worm), iii 2 (unicorn), iii 6-8 (dragons), iii 48 (griffins), iii 49 (the phoenix), iii 50 (ostriches, wild bulls, apes, asses, lions, dog-like apes 'as big as small men'), vi 1 (crocodile and hippopotamus), vi 24 (leopards, stags, gazelles, ostriches, asses, wild bulls, ox-goats, lions).

imaginative geography of weird lands and wonderful sites,[39] a virtual museum of strange objects, relics and fabulous works of art,[40] an anthropology of unusual peoples and their habits.[41] In short, large sections of the *VA* are mainly constructed from a whole gamut of travellers' tales repeated, occasionally contested,[42] and frequently endorsed.[43] This discourse draws on centuries of ancient geographical and ethnographic writing,[44] with a frequent appeal to autopsy on the part of Apollonius, and sometimes even Philostratus, as a device to bolster the authority of the text, on the model of Herodotus.[45] As Philostratus himself points out, the issue here is not one of fiction and belief; he writes:

> ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ ὅδε ὁ λόγος ἀναγέγραπται τῷ Δάμιδι, σπουδασθεὶς ἐκεῖ περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰνδοῖς μυθολογουμένων θηρίων τε καὶ πηγῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων, μηδ' ἐμοὶ παραλειπέσθω, καὶ γὰρ κέρδος ἂν εἴη μήτε πιστεύειν, μήτε ἀπιστεῖν πᾶσιν.
>
> I must not leave out the conversation recorded by Damis with regard to the fabled (μυθολογουμένων) animals, fountains and men encountered in India; for there would be much to be gained in neither believing nor disbelieving everything (iii 45)

It has recently been suggested that this authorial side-stepping of empirical veracity is a hint to the reader to take Apollonian geography *allegorically*.[46] Philostratus uses the travels as a reflection of Apollonius' spiritual progress. Here the very range of ethnographic topoi experienced by the sage suggests the depth and universality of wisdom which he has mastered and with which he is equipped to teach. Philostratus represents his sage visiting the extreme ends of the known world in all directions: north, to the Caucasus (ii 2), east beyond Babylon (i 21-ii 1) to India (ii 17-iii 50), south to Egypt and Ethiopia (v 43-vi 28), and west to Spain and the pillars of Heracles (iv 47-v 10). While the journey to India takes Apollonius to self-

[39] Lands: for instance, iii 53 (Biblus), iii 54 (the bronze land of the Oreitai), iii 55 (the Ichthyophagoi), iii 56 (Balara and the Nereid). Rivers: for instance, ii 18, iii 53, vi 1 (Indus and Nile), iii 1 and 52 (Hyphaspis), iii 5 (Ganges), vi 23 and 26 (the cataracts of the Nile). For a brief history of wonders of the east in ancient geographic writing, see Romm (n.20) 82-120, for those of the west, see *ibid.* 121-71.

[40] Strange objects and relics: ii 13 (elephant tusks), iii 46 (the Pantarbe stone), v 5 (the trees of Geryon and pilgrimage relics in Gadeira including the golden olive of Pygmalion and the Girdle of Teucer of Telamon); works of art in exotic places: i 25 (the art works of Babylon), ii 8-9 (the shrine of Dionysus at Nysa), ii 20-2 (the temple at Taxila), iii 14 (Greek statues in India), v 4 (Hellenic culture at Gadeira), v 21 (the Colossus of Rhodes).

[41] For instance, i 24 (Eretrians), i 31 (horse sacrifice in Babylon), ii 4 (men four and five cubits high, a hobgoblin), ii 20 (Indian dress), iii 47 (pygmies), iii 57 (pearl-fishers), vi 25 (nomad tribes of Ethiopia including Nasamones, man-eaters, pygmies and shadow-footed people). For a discussion of the tropes of such ethnography, see Romm (n.20) 45-81.

[42] As Apollonius says in response to an enquiry about the mythical martichora, 'there are tall stories current which I cannot believe' (λέγεται μεγάλα καὶ ἄπιστα, iii 45).

[43] For example iii 53 ('the stories of Orthagoras about the sea called Erythra ... we must consider to be sound and based on local observations of the heavens': ἃ δὲ Ὀρθαγόρᾳ περὶ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς εἴρηται ... καὶ χρὴ πιστεύειν ὑγιῶς τε καὶ κατὰ τὸν ἐκεῖ οὐρανὸν εἰρῆσθαι ταῦτα), v 2 ('I myself have seen among the Celts the ocean tides just as they are described, and ... I have come to the conclusion that Apollonius deduced the real truth': τὰς δὲ τοῦ Ὠκεανοῦ τροπὰς καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν περὶ Κελτοὺς εἶδον, ὁποῖαι λέγονται ... δοκῶ μοι τὸν Ἀπολλώνιον ἐπεσκέφθαι τὸ ὄν), vi 16 (the tales of Nilus' father confirming the truth of Apollonius' view of the Indian sages).

[44] On ancient ethnography, see K. Müller, *Geschichte der antike Ethnographie und ethnologische Theoriebilding von den Anfängen bis auf die byzantinischen Historiographen*, 2 vols. (Wiesbaden 1972-80).

[45] On travel writing and autopsy with special reference to Herodotus, see A.K. Armayor, *Herodotus' autopsy of the Fayoum* (Amsterdam 1985); F. Hartog, *The mirror of Herodotus: the representation of the other in the writing of history* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1988) 260-309; D. Fehling, *Herodotus and his sources: citation, invention and narrative art* (Leeds 1989) 100-4, 115-7, 240-3.

[46] See the brief but incisive discussion of Romm (n.20) 116-9, which deals only with aspects of the Indian travels.

knowledge and full philosophic maturity, the trip to Egypt (his last great voyage to the limits of the world) is the occasion for his demonstration of mastery. The parallelism of these trips is repeatedly emphasised through geographic features, such as the comparisons of the Indus and the Nile (ii 18, vi 1), or of the (philosophically inclined) peoples who dwell by these rivers at the ends of the earth:

> τὸν θεὸν οἶδα κέρατα τῆς γῆς ξυμπάσης Αἰθίσπάς τε καὶ Ἰνδοὺς ἀποφαίνοντα μελαίνοντά τε τοὺς μὲν ἀρχομένου ἡλίου, τοὺς δὲ λήγοντος...
>
> God has set the Ethiopian and the Indian at the two extremes or horns of the entire earth, making black the latter who dwell where the sun rises no less than the former who dwell where it sets (ii 18).[47]

From book i, Apollonius' travels are not merely described but are used to evoke abstract and personal qualities: for example 'the courage (ἀνδρεία) he showed in travelling through races of barbarians and robbers not at that time subject to the Romans' and 'the cleverness (σοφία) with which after the manner of the Arabs he managed to understand the language of the animals' (i 20: οὐ μὴν ὡς δυοῖν γε ἀμελῆσαι τούτοιν, τῆς τε ἀνδρείας, ᾗ χρώμενος ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος διεπορεύθη βάρβαρα ἔθνη καὶ λῃστρικά, οὐδ' ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίοις πω ὄντα, τῆς τε σοφίας ᾗ τὸν Ἀράβιον τρόπον ἐς ξύνεσιν τῆς τῶν ζῴων φωνῆς ἦλθεν). When challenged on the borders of Babylon, Apollonius presents his credentials for the universality of his future message, replying

> ἐμή, ἔφη, πᾶσα ἡ γῆ καὶ ἀνεῖταί μοι δι' αὐτῆς πορεύεσθαι.
> All the earth is mine, and I have a right to go all over and through it. (i 21)

The end of this great trip east will allow him to salute his Indian teachers by proclaiming, 'you have made it mine even to travel through the heavens' (iii 51: δεδώκατε καὶ διὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πορεύεσθαι), extending the metaphor beyond merely worldly geography into a metaphysical topography of sainthood.

The journey east is thus presented as a path of training which will set Apollonius up for his later ministry as holy man to the Roman Empire. As this journey opens, it demonstrates Apollonius' special nature—his knowledge of all languages (i 19), his learning of the language of the birds and animals (i 20)—as well as bringing him to his close (fictional?) disciple, Damis, whose purported biography of Apollonius served as the basis of Philostratus' account (i 19).[48] The trip eastwards develops an insistent parallelism of Apollonius with Heracles, Dionysus and Alexander, in which the sage finally outdoes the conqueror in penetrating the east.[49] This journey 'never till now accomplished by any of the inhabitants of my country' (iii 16: ἥκειν με ὁδόν, ἣν μήπω τις τῶν ὅθεν περ ἐγὼ ἀνθρώπων) brings Apollonius at last to the

[47] Compare iii 20, where we find the Ethiopians originally came from India; also vi 11 and viii 7.4 where Ethiopian philosophy is found to be derived from Indian.

[48] On Apollonius in India, see e.g. J.W. Sedlar, *India and the Greek world* (Totowa, N.J. 1980) 190-98.

[49] At several points Apollonius comes across landmarks or objects associated with Alexander (ii 10, the rock called Aornus; ii 12, the elephant of Porus; ii 20, the temple reliefs at Taxila; iii 53, Patala where Alexander's fleet had come). However, the sage consistently surpasses the conqueror (ii 8, he visits the shrine of Dionysus at Mt Nysa, to which Alexander failed to go, ii 9; ii 42-3, he travels beyond the triumphal arch of Alexander and the brass column indicating the furthest point of Alexander's travels, elegantly set in the ultimate chapter of Book ii; iii 12, he reaches the Brahmans, whom not only Alexander failed to visit or conquer but also Heracles and Dionysus, ii 33). See Anderson (n.6) 203, 216, 220. Apollonius' competition is both with the 'historical' Alexander (for example that of Arrian) and with the 'mythical' Alexander of Philostratus' own era, the hero of those elaborate fictions which have come to be known as the *Alexander Romance*. For the theme of travel in the latter, see W.J. Aerts, 'Alexander the Great and ancient travel stories' in Z. von Martels (ed.), *Travel fact and travel fiction: studies on fiction, literary tradition, scholarly discovery and observation in travel writing* (Leiden 1994) 30-8. One significant difference between Alexander and Apollonius of course, as heroes of travel fiction, is that the latter's conquests are spiritual.

Brahmans, 'men who are unfeignedly wise' (iii 12: ἄνδρας σοφοὺς ἀτεχνῶς). His process of initiation through travel to a sacred goal, set topographically beyond the reaches of the known, brings Apollonius into a world of levitation (iii 15, 17), prescience (iii 16) and self-knowledge (τὸ ἑαυτὸν γνῶναι iii 18). In the company of the Brahmans, he remembers a previous life (iii 23) and performs a number of healing miracles (iii 38-9). He leaves his teachers with his sacred future already foretold, 'that he would be esteemed a god by many, not merely after his death but when he was still alive' (iii 50: θεὸν τοῖς πολλοῖς εἶναι δόξειν οὐ τεθνεῶτα μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ζῶντα).

On his return from India, Apollonius' mature career of religious reform begins in Greece. While his trip to the Brahmans was in search of wisdom, his travels to the other extremes of the world—to Spain and Ethiopia—are the demonstration of the universal applicability of his wisdom. He has nothing to learn anymore, but he can teach even the priests and philosophers, like the Alexandrian priest who asks 'who is so clever that he can make corrections to the rites of the Egyptians?' (καὶ τὶς οὕτω δεινός, ὡς διορθοῦσθαι τὰ Αἰγυπτίων) and is told 'anyone with a little wisdom, if only he comes from India' (v 25: πᾶς σοφός, ἢν ἀπ' Ἰνδῶν ἥκῃ). This theme culminates in his debate with the Egyptian gymnosophists, whose errors he puts right (vi 5) and whom he tells, vi 11:

> οὔτε γὰρ ξυμβούλους ὑμᾶς βίου ποιησόμενος ἥκω, πάλαι γε ᾑρημένος τὸν ἐμαυτῷ δόξαντα, πρεσβύτατός τε ὑμῶν πλὴν Θεσπεσίωνος ἀφιγμένος αὐτὸς ἂν μᾶλλον εἰκότως ξυνεβούλευον ὑμῖν σοφίας αἵρεσιν ...
>
> I have not come here to ask your advice about how to live, insomuch as I long ago made choice of the life which seemed best to myself; and as I am older than any of you, except Thespesion, I myself am better qualified, to advise you how to choose wisdom...

In all these travels, the breadth of Apollonius' autopsy, his external knowledge of the world in its greatest extent, is an analogy for the extent of his wisdom. That wisdom lies in self-knowledge (as he learnt from the Indian sages, iii 18: ἡμεῖς πάντα γιγνώσκομεν, ἐπειδὴ πρώτους ἑαυτοὺς γιγνώσκομεν, οὐ γὰρ ἂν προσέλθοι τις ἡμῶν τῇ φιλοσοφίᾳ ταύτῃ μὴ πρῶτον εἰδὼς ἑαυτόν), in being 'ever true to myself' wherever he happens to be (vii 7.3: ἐμαυτῷ ὅμοιος). As Philostratus writes when commenting on the further journeys of Apollonius (vi 35):

> χαλεποῦ γὰρ τοῦ γνῶναι ἑαυτὸν δοκοῦντος, χαλεπώτερον ἔγωγε ἡγοῦμαι τὸ μεῖναι τὸν σοφὸν ἑαυτῷ ὅμοιον, οὐδὲ γὰρ τοὺς πονηρῶς φύντας ἐς τὸ λῷον μεταστήσει, μὴ πρότερον ἐξασκήσας τὸ μὴ αὐτὸς μεθίστασθαι.
>
> Hard as it is to know oneself, I myself consider it still harder for the sage to remain always himself; for he cannot ever reform evil natures and improve them, unless he has first trained himself never to alter in his own person.

Yet while the text insists on the self-sufficiency and unchangeability of its hero's wisdom despite travel, the divine nature of that wisdom is occasionally expressed metaphorically *as* travel. At iv 7, for example, 'men who visit all regions of the earth' are compared to the travelling Homeric Zeus 'who is represented by Homer under many shapes, and is a more wonderful creation than the image made of ivory' by Phidias (τοὺς δὲ ἄνδρας ἐπὶ πάντα ἥκοντας μηδὲν ἀπεοικέναι τοῦ Ὁμηρείου Διός, ὃς ἐν πολλαῖς ἰδέαις Ὁμήρῳ πεποίηται θαυμασιώτερον ξυγκείμενος τοῦ ἐλεφαντίνου). With the static Zeus of Phidias, Apollonius compares a city beautifully adorned by its proud but implicitly stay-at-home citizens (iv 7).

Ultimately, what matters in the Philostratean use of the tropes of ancient ethnography is not accuracy or fact but the necessary symbolism whereby the whole earth as far as its boundaries

is in the orbit of his holy man's personal experience and knowledge. Moreover, the universal applicability of Apollonius' teaching is mirrored in the universal acclamation he receives throughout his travels as a man of divine wisdom.[50] There is, in effect, a linkage between geography and philosophy. As Apollonius tells the gymnosophists in a rather rhetorical flourish, vi 22:

> ἐμοί, εἶπεν ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος, ἡ δεῦρο ὁδὸς ὑμῶν τε ἕνεκα καὶ τῶν τοῦ Νείλου πηγῶν ἐγένετο, ἃς μέχρι μὲν Αἰγύπτου προελθόντι ξυγγνώμη ἀγνοῆσαι, προχωρήσαντι δὲ ἐπ' Αἰθιοπίαν, ὃν ἐγὼ τρόπον, κἂν ὄνειδος φέροι τὸ παρελθεῖν αὐτὰς καὶ μὴ ἀρύσασθαί τινας αὐτῶν λόγους
>
> For myself, I have come all this way to see yourselves and visit the springs of the Nile; for a person who only comes as far as Egypt may be excused if he ignores the latter, but if he advances as far as Ethiopia, as I have done, he will rightly be reproached if he neglects to visit them, and to draw as it were from their well-springs some arguments of his own.

The connection of journeying afar and philosophical discovery prepares the symbolic implication of travel and godhead. It is this parallel—taking Apollonius beyond mere philosophizing and into divinity—which Philostratus insists upon when he makes his sage say in Rome (iv 40):

> οὐδὲ οἱ θεοί, ἔφη, πάντα τὸν χρόνον ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ οἰκοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ πορεύονται μὲν ἐς Αἰθιοπίαν, πορεύονται δὲ ἐς Ὄλυμπόν τε καὶ Ἄθω, καὶ οἶμαι ἄτοπον τοὺς μὲν θεοὺς τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔθνη περινοστεῖν πάντα, τοὺς δὲ ἀνθρώπους μὴ τοῖς θεοῖς ἐπιφοιτᾶν πᾶσι.
>
> Neither do the gods live all their time in heaven, but they take journeys to Ethiopia, as also to Olympus and Athos, and I think it a pity that the gods should go roaming about all the nations of men, and yet that men should not be allowed to visit all the gods alike.

Here the text brings together the two discourses of travel we have been exploring. Like a god, being a very god-like man, Apollonius has roamed around all the nations of men (further yet than others have gone, iii 16). And just as a god visits mankind, so Apollonius—that most divine of men—has made his pilgrimage to the abodes of the gods (iv 40; viii 15,17,19). Both as the god-like traveller and as the ideal pilgrim (the pilgrim turned prophet, the pilgrim turned object of pilgrimage), Apollonius is affirmed repeatedly and incrementally as divine.

II. From Periphery to Centre

Philostratean ethnography emphasises the outer reaches of the Roman empire: it is constructed as a wonder-filled circumference to the inescapable centre, Rome itself.[51] In Book vii, Apollonius decides to forestall arrest in Asia by Domitian's henchmen, and comes to Italy of his own accord (vii 10). He meets his old acquaintance Demetrius the Cynic outside Rome in a classic philosopher's *locus amoenus*, 'the villa in which Cicero lived of old ... There they sat down under a plane tree where the grasshoppers were chirping to the soft music of the summer's breeze' (vii 11: τὸ Κικέρωνος τοῦ παλαιοῦ χωρίον ... ἱζησάντων δὲ ὑπὸ πλατάνῳ οἱ μὲν τέττιγες ὑποψαλλούσης αὐτοὺς τῆς αὔρας ἐν ᾠδαῖς ἦσαν, *cf.* Plato, *Phaedrus* 230 bc). Here Demetrius tells Apollonius of the tyrant's persecution of philosophers and of the charges against Apollonius himself. Demetrius (playing the part of Crito to Apollonius' Socrates, see Plato, *Crito* 45b-46a) urges the sage to flee (vii 12):

[50] See Kee (n.8) 85.

[51] On Apollonius' relations to Rome and its emperors, see Francis (n.3) 115-8, 184-5, and Flinterman (n.3) 128-230, esp. 162-93, with earlier bibliography.

ἡ σωτηρία δέ σοι παρὰ πόδα· τῶν γὰρ νεῶν τούτων, πολλαὶ δ', ὡς ὁρᾷς, εἰσίν, αἱ μὲν ἐς Λιβύην ἀφήσουσιν, αἱ δ' ἐς Αἴγυπτον, αἱ δ' ἐς Φοινίκην καὶ Κύπρον, αἱ δ' εὐθὺ Σαρδοῦς, αἱ δ' ὑπὲρ Σαρδώ.

Your life lies within your reach; for here are ships, you see how many there are, some about to sail for Libya, others for Egypt, others for Phoenicia and Cyprus, others direct to Sardinia, others still for places beyond Sardinia.

The periphery of the empire, and the world beyond its borders, are represented as potential refuge from the tyranny of the centre, where—as Philostratus puts it—'philosophy was reduced to cowering in a corner, to such an extent that some of its votaries disguised themselves by changing their dress and ran away to take refuge among the western Celts, while others fled to the deserts of Libya and Scythia' (vii 4: φιλοσοφία δὲ οὕτω τι ἔπτηξεν, ὡς ἀποβαλόντες τὸ σχῆμα οἱ μὲν ἀποδρᾶναι σφῶν ἐς Κελτῶν ἐσπέραν, οἱ δὲ ἐς τὰ ἔρημα Λιβύης τε καὶ Σκυθίας). In the Domitianic dark age, even the philosopher-consul Telesinus, the hero of an earlier episode of Apollonian philosophizing in Nero's Rome (iv 40, 43), 'preferred exile as a philosopher to remaining in Rome as a consul' (vii 11: ἀσπασάμενος μᾶλλον τὸ φεύγειν ὡς φιλόσοφος ἢ τὸ ὡς ὕπατος μένειν).[52] Yet the lure of the periphery, of travel as escape rather than self-development, must be firmly rejected. 'And supposing ... I do manage to run away from the crisis,' Apollonius asks, 'what can save me, no matter where I go on all the earth, from the brand of infamy?' (vii 14: ποῖ με τῆς γῆς ἐάσει καθαρὸν δόξαι;). On the contrary:

δοκεῖ μοι ὁ σοφὸς ἑαυτὸν γιγνώσκων καὶ παραστάτην ἔχων τὸν ἑαυτοῦ νοῦν μήτ' ἂν πτῆξαί τι ὧν οἱ πολλοί ...

I hold that the sage who knows himself, and has his own conscience as his perpetual companion, will never cower before things that scare the many ... (vii 14).

This means that the philosopher must confront his fate by entering the city and meeting the tyrant himself (*cf.* vii 19).

Implicitly, Apollonius' slow conquest of the far-away only comes to its fruition in his conquest of the centre. To escape from the challenge of the centre, the rotten tyrannical core of the empire in the Philostratean account, would be to betray the sage's long philosophical training consolidated at the far point of his travels, in India. It would also involve going away from 'any land which the Romans rule' (ὁπόσης Ῥωμαῖοι ἄρχουσι) to the philosophers and the countries which lie in Apollonius' *past*, Ethiopia, Babylon, India (vii 14). Like St Paul's journey to Rome, which is the culmination not only of all his travels but also of the whole book of the *Acts* (see esp. *Acts* 21-8),[53] the trip to Rome in Book vii is the acme of all Apollonius' travels. Apollonius' supreme philosophical test as holy man to the Roman world lies in his confrontation with the tyrant Domitian at the centre of the Roman world.

The meeting with Domitian in Rome is in fact the culmination of a series of encounters with different emperors which mark Apollonius' saintly progress in the *Life*. At iv 35, the emperor Nero too was 'opposed to philosophy' (Νέρων οὐ ξυνεχώρει φιλοσοφεῖν), and when Apollonius approached Rome at that time he was urged to flee by Philolaus (iv 36), a rhetorician whose arguments so scared the majority of Apollonius' then followers that they 'ran away from Nero and philosophy, both at once, and took to their heels' (iv 37: Νέρωνά τε καὶ

[52] For a parallel to this theme, see Agricola in Tacitus' biography, who is most free of Domitian's tyranny in Rome when imposing Roman dominion on the northern edges of the earth. For Britain as the world's end where slavery is not (yet) known, see Tacitus, *Agricola* 30-4.

[53] On Paul's trip to Rome as the 'glorification of the faith, the exaltation of its leading exponent, and narration of high adventure', see Pervo (n.34) 51-4 (quote p.53).

φιλοσοφίαν ἀποδράντες φυγῇ ᾤχοντο). This episode prefigures the sage's later entry into Rome under Domitian, but Apollonius never in fact meets Nero (who goes to Greece, iv 47) although he does have confrontations with the consul Telesinus (iv 40) and with the Praetorian Prefect Tigellinus (iv 43-4), causes a religious revival (iv 41), works miracles (iv 45) and corresponds with the imprisoned philosopher Musonius (iv 46).[54]

Between his two journeys to Rome under the tyrants, Apollonius meets Vespasian in Alexandria (v 27-38) and Titus in Antioch (vi 29-32), in both cases when they are about to enter the imperial purple but before either is sole ruler of the empire. It is revealing that Apollonius' conversations with the two non-tyrants take place *outside* Rome and concern instruction (from him to them) on the nature of good government on the eve of them taking office. The confrontation with Domitian, by contrast, is Apollonius' only meeting with the emperor as sole autocrat. It occurs (after a philosophical interview with the consul Aelian, vii 17-20, and a deal of philosophizing in prison, vii 22-28) in the city of Rome itself and as much at the behest of Apollonius who 'had come to Rome to risk his life for men' (vii 31: ἥκειν ὑπὲρ ἀνδρῶν κινδυνεύσοντα) as at that of the emperor who wished to arrest him.

The battle with Domitian culminates in a set-piece scene in the law court where Apollonius is acquitted of the charges against him and vanishes miraculously from the court (viii 5). Philostratus follows this episode with the long speech of apology which he says Apollonius would have given had he been allowed to (viii 6-7). The 'godlike' (δαιμόνιον) event of the sage's disappearance (viii 8) in which Apollonius reduces the despot to being 'a plaything of his philosophy' (viii 10: παίγνιον τῆς ἑαυτοῦ φιλοσοφίας) marks not only his supreme miracle but also his triumph over evil, over the centre as well as the periphery, over the emperor in Rome. Shortly afterwards Apollonius arrives in Olympia with Damis only to be lauded instantly as a goal of pilgrimage and to be worshipped as a divine being (viii 15). And later, in Ephesus, he witnesses the murder of Domitian in a vision at midday, at the very moment when the act is taking place in Rome (viii 15-16). After this series of events, Apollonius' interactions with the imperial establishment are over: he refuses Nerva's invitation to Rome and sends Damis in his stead (viii 27-8).

While the travels stand as a metaphorical portrait of Apollonius' education in and extent of holiness, and the theme of pilgrimage marks his move from pious philosopher to religious reformer to divine being, the crescendo of imperial confrontations measure the stature of the sage's spiritual power against that of the emperor's temporal might. As the extent of his travels signals the universal applicability of his message, so Apollonius' imperial relations and especially his triumph over Domitian hints at the universal significance of his philosophy not only for those within Roman dominion, but implicitly for the author and readers as well. The spiritual victory in Rome, at the centre of the empire, is the sage's claim to sacred conquest of the empire as a whole. The final demonstration of Apollonius' superiority over imperial power is that he can, at the end of his life, simply *ignore* an imperial summons from Nerva (viii 27).

III. Conclusions

In an important article on the pagan holy man in late antiquity, Garth Fowden emphasises the gradual drift of the pagan sage to social marginality.[55] While this was very likely the case in the fourth century and after (when paganism was in any case institutionally marginalised in

[54] For discussion of Apollonius in Rome under Nero, see J.-M. André, 'Apollonios et la Rome de Néron' in M.-F. Baslez, P. Hoffmann, M. Trédé (eds.), *Le monde du roman grec* (Paris 1992) 113-24.

[55] G. Fowden, 'The pagan holy man in late antique society', *JHS* 102 (1982) 33-59, esp. 51-4.

the wake of imperial support for Christianity), it is hard to square such a picture with the ideology of pagan holiness so carefully and creatively crafted by Philostratus. On the contrary, the Philostratean portrait of Apollonius—as traveller, as serial temple-visitor, as religious reformer, as interrogator of emperors and as sacred superstar in Rome as well as Olympia—points to a religious ideology which combined high levels of Second Sophistic culture and cosmopolitan experience with the saintly abstinence and wisdom of a neo-Pythagorean sage.[56] Philostratus, writing for the court of Septimius Severus and Julia Domna, firmly puts religious revival and the place of the holy man at the very centre of his work.[57] Of course, the *VA* is as much a programme designed to form opinion as it is a reflection of normative attitudes, but (as a text written to be received by the third-century elite) its assumptions were hardly beyond the pale. Moreover, it is the very 'fictional' aspects of the work—especially the travels, the learned ethnography, the personal interviews with kings, emperors and consuls—which serve most effectively and systematically to transfigure Apollonius from itinerant magician to universal philosopher, from local wonder-worker to divine sage.

Morton Smith remarks, in the course of his interesting comparison of the literary portraits of Apollonius and Jesus, that the adult ministry of Apollonius is 'presented as a series of anecdotes connected merely by a geographic frame (references to his travelling and the places where this or that happened)'.[58] I hope I have shown that the geographic frame is more than a 'mere' narrative device—that it is an essential strategy of the argument which propels the sage into divinity.[59] Here the parallel is less with Jesus than (strikingly) with St Paul in the last third of *Acts*.[60] In the case of Paul too, travel—including visits to the cardinal centres of ancient religion, like Athens, as well as to the sites of the new Christian cult which he propagates—establishes a hagiographic superiority which culminates in a triumphant journey to Rome, where the Apostle teaches unmolested for two years with no hint of his impending martyrdom (*Acts* 28.30-1).[61] While geography is indeed a principal means of encapsulating Apollonius' acts, it is also—as it reaches outside the empire, within the empire and into even Rome itself—a way of defining Apollonian holiness. By contrast with the intensely place-specific sacred geography of fourth and fifth century Christianity (which focused its attention on the loci of scriptural events, on martyria and on the special sites where relics came to be situated), the hagiographic world of Apollonius has few actual locations particular to him, apart from the shrine at Tyana with which Philostratus both begins and ends his *Life*, i 5 and viii 31 (no site of his tomb, no clear narrative or even place of his death, for instance). Instead, it reinforces the established topographic tropes of pagan antiquity—distant ethnography, the pilgrim temples of Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt, the capital city—with the reforming and miraculous charisma of a holy man who is presented as offering not a radical break with tradition (as did Christianity) but renewal from within.

The hagiographic geography evoked by Philostratus is remarkable in two ways. First, it maps the sacred world firmly onto that of the Roman empire, centering itself upon the city of Rome. While the dangerous, unromanized and rarely traversed boundaries of that world are

[56] Further on the 'holy man in a sophist's world', see Anderson (n.6) 121-33. On Apollonius as an ascetic, see Francis (n.3) 98-107 (esp. p. 105 for parallels with Pythagoras).

[57] So Francis (n.3) 129: 'By raising the "wondrous" Apollonius from local legend to artistic literature, Philostratus raised the ascetic from being a threat to culture and society to being its paragon and exemplar'.

[58] Smith (n.8) 86.

[59] *Cf.* Kee (n.8) 85.

[60] For further parallels between Paul and Apollonius, see Pervo (n.34) 47, 81.

[61] On Paul as traveller, see Ramsay (n.34) and Pervo (n.34) 50-7; on some aspects of centre and periphery in early Christian geography, see R.M.Grant, 'Early Christian geography', *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992) 105-11.

where true philosophy is still to be found, the relevance of India and Egypt (indeed of philosophy and holiness themselves) are only to be measured in terms of their effect on Graeco-Roman religion at its twin centres—the hallowed sanctuaries and festivals of Greece, and the city of Rome. The universalism of this picture is unusual and anticipates the universalist ideology of the later Church (it may even owe something to the Pauline parallel).[62] Second, and this is surely a particular axe ground by Philostratus himself as inventor of the 'Second Sophistic' (*VS* 481),[63] the *Life of Apollonius* makes a sustained case for the triumphant sacred power of the *Greek* world in the *present* day of the Roman empire.[64] That is to say, the Philostratean strategy is to present, in the context of the third-century imperial court, a religious revival in the late first-century Roman world as initiated by a contemporary Greek spiritual master coming from the living Pythagorean tradition (see esp. the opening of the *VA*, i 1-2) and imbued with all the wisdom of the east.

The case for 'Greece' made by Philostratus goes beyond the deep nostalgia for the Greek past in the face of the Roman present, such as is found in many Second Sophistic authors like Pausanias or Plutarch.[65] On the contrary, Philostratus presents us with a living continuation of the sacred culture and identity of ancient Greece through the sacred character of Apollonius who surpasses all holy men past and present, and whose travels take him, take his Greece, further than any countryman of his has yet journeyed, beyond Achaea, and through the whole empire. In other words, Philostratus goes beyond the tacit resistance to Roman rule which Greek writers tend to display,[66] and preaches a none-too-distant Greek-inspired sacred revival. Far from languishing in the provincial ruins of former grandeur, the Philostratean sacred Greece of Apollonius is depicted as conquering not only its Roman master but also its ethnographic 'others' from Babylon to Egypt, as well as attaining to the pinnacle of wisdom represented by India.

A good example of the Philostratean partiality for Greece comes when the author justifies

[62] The univeralism of Philostratus' Apollonius, although it questions Fowden's thesis of the marginality of the pagan holy man, tends to support his recent suggestion that late Roman polytheism was moving towards cultural universalism; see G. Fowden, *Empire to commonwealth: consequences of monotheism in late antiquity* (Princeton 1993) 37-60.

[63] On the Second Sophistic, see G.W. Bowersock, *Greek sophists in the Roman empire* (Oxford 1969); *id.* (ed.) *Approaches to the Second Sophistic* (University Park 1974); E.L. Bowie, 'The importance of sophists', *YCS* 27 (1982) 29-59; Anderson (n.17); P. Brunt, 'The bubble of the Second Sophistic', *BICS* 39 (1994) 25-52; and Swain (n.9). With the exception of Anderson and Swain, these discussions (especially the reductive view of Brunt) overestimate the rhetorical elements in the Second Sophistic (following Philostratus' own over-narrow definition in *VS* where he writes largely of rhetoricians) at the expense of the revival of scholarly or antiquarian *Wissenschaft* in writers like Galen, Pausanias or Artemidorus and the strong religious interest not only in Philostratus' *VA* but also in much of Plutarch, Pausanias and Lucian (both the pious *De Dea Syria* and the sceptical *Alexander* and *Peregrinus*). On the polymathy of the Second Sophistic, see M.W. Gleason, *Making men: Sophists and self-presentation in Rome* (Princeton 1995) xvii-xxvi, 131-2.

[64] *Cf.* Bowie's remark (E.L. Bowie, 'The Greeks and their past in the Second Sophistic' in M.I. Finley (ed.), *Studies in ancient society* (London 1974) 166-209) that it is Philostratus in both *VS* and *VA* who, of all Second Sophistic writers, comes closest to writing 'political and cultural history of the recent past' (p. 182). On 'Greek self-awareness', even 'superiority' in the *VA*, see Flinterman (n .3) 89-127 (esp. 117-127 on 'Greek self-awareness and Roman rule'), and on the hellenism of Apollonius as a form of authority, see Francis (n.3) 114.

[65] Generally for Greece under the Roman empire, see S.E. Alcock, *Graecia capta: the landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge 1993). On attitudes to the past, see esp. Bowie (n.64) and Swain (n.9). For Pausanias, see Elsner (n.22) 140-44; *id.* 'From the pyramids to Pausanias and Piglet: monuments, travel and writing', in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne (eds.), *Art and text in ancient Greek culture* (Cambridge 1994) 224-53, esp. 244-52 on the present as a landscape of ruins; Swain (n.9) 330-56; K. Arafat, *Pausanias' Greece. Ancient artists and Roman rulers* (Cambridge 1996) esp. 43-79; and S.E. Alcock, 'Landscapes of memory and the authority of Pausanias', in *Pausanias historien, Entretiens Fondation Hardt* xli (Geneva 1996) 241-67. For Plutarch and the Greek past, see Swain (n.9) 135-86, with further bibliography.

[66] For a subtle account of complex attitudes, see G. Woolf, 'Becoming Roman, staying Greek: culture, identity and the civilizing process in the Roman east', *PCPS* 40 (1994) 116-43.

why Apollonius never again met the 'good' emperor Vespasian after their warm encounter in Egypt. 'The fact is', Philostratus writes, 'Nero restored the liberties of Hellas with a wisdom and moderation quite alien to his character; and the cities regained their Doric and Attic characteristics, and a general rejuvenescence accompanied the institution among them of a peace and harmony which not even ancient Hellas ever enjoyed' (v 41: Νέρων ἐλευθέραν ἀφῆκε τὴν Ἑλλάδα σωφρονέστερόν τι ἑαυτοῦ γνούς, καὶ ἐπανῆλθον αἱ πόλεις ἐς ἦθη Δωρικὰ καὶ Ἀττικά, πάντα τε ἀνήβησε ξὺν ὁμονοίᾳ τῶν πόλεων, ὃ μηδὲ πάλαι ἡ Ἑλλὰς εἶχεν). Vespasian's 'extreme severity' (ἐπὶ τοσόνδε ὀργῆς) and 'harshness' (πικρότερα τοῦ τῆς Βασιλείας ἤθους) in depriving Greece of its freedom is given as the reason for Apollonius' boycott of the emperor, to whom he pens the following epistle:

> ἐδουλώσω τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ὥς φασί, καὶ πλέον μὲν οἴει τι ἔχειν Ξέρξου, λέληθας δὲ ἔλαττον ἔχων Νέρωνος· Νέρων γὰρ ἔχων αὐτὸ παρῃτήσατο.
>
> You have, they say, enslaved Hellas, and you imagine you have excelled Xerxes. You are mistaken. You have only fallen below Nero. For the latter held our liberties in his hand and respected them. (v 41).

While the *VA* in general uses Apollonius as the embodiment of a hellenic religious revival exported through his person throughout the whole empire, particular historical events require a vigorous defence of Greek interests and identity despite the larger Philostratean project. In this sense, Philostratus' sacred geography, although always tending towards a universalizing spread of hellenic wisdom, remains ultimately and politically very Greek.

The geography of the *VA* offers us an interesting window into the religious transformation of the third century which was to pave the way for the still more overt religious revolution of the fourth. On the level of asceticism, it has been argued that Philostratus makes exemplary a sacred way of life which had been suspect and subversive in earlier Roman culture:[67] the Christian holy men of the fourth century would be the heirs of this paradigmatic tendency. On the level of travel literature, more than any other ancient writer except the novelists, Philostratus transformed the tropes of actual travel into a rhetorical symbolism which constantly reinforces the special nature of his subject. This consistently metaphorical portrayal of the world's topographies and ethnography—with its sight-lines always tending towards the sacred—anticipates not only what would become the actual practice and literary tradition of Christian pilgrimage (both of which chose to allegorise the pilgrim's journey into sacred quest) but also the universalising sacred geography of Christendom as exemplified by later writers like Cosmas Indicopleustes. Where Philostratus differs strongly from his Christian inheritance is in his essentially empire-wide picture of a sacred world; by contrast, Christianity would emphasise a series of specifically and specially holy spots sanctified by scriptural or historical events (such as maytyrdoms) or by relics. He offers a generalised paradigm of holiness through his holy man and a generalised picture of the familiar Roman world of literary and ethnographic cliché in which holiness is made possible. What he does not offer is any form of mediation with the divine world through his holy man's remains. Mediation through the tangible link or relic, miraculously incarnate with a holy man's charisma, was a Christian innovation.[68]

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[67] See Francis (n.3) 126-9.

[68] *Cf.* P. Brown, *The cult of the saints: its rise and function in Latin Christianity* (London 1981) 78-9, 88-94, and Markus (1990, n.15) 142-50.