

Then after more discussion, several sick are suddenly brought in to be healed. The contrived character of the whole outline should not escape our notice: (1) a series of debates concerning familiar themes of philosophy is interrupted by (2) a comic-serious dramatic confrontation with the visiting king (pointing forward to the deadly serious final clash with Domitian). This is followed by (3) a sumptuous, rather unphilosophical feast, (4) two more philosophical arguments, then (5) a cluster of healing accounts, followed by (6) more philosophical and natural-history discussions. After all this, Philostratus says in a final summarizing statement, "In such communion with the sages Apollonios passed four months there in discussion" (III.50). These are the healing stories.

III.38. In the midst of these words, the messenger of the sages appeared bringing in Indians needing help. And he led up a little woman pleading for her boy whom she said was sixteen years old and who had been possessed by a demon for the past two years, and she said that the character of the demon was that of a deceiver and a liar. When one of the sages asked why she said these things, she replied, "Because my boy is most beautiful, the demon has fallen in love with him and does not let him be in his right mind, or permit him to walk to school or to archery class or stay at home, but drives him out into deserted regions. And the boy does not have his own voice but speaks in a deep and hollow voice, like a man. And he looks at you with other eyes than his own. I constantly weep because of these things and beat myself and chastise my son as much as is fair, but he does not recognize me. When I decided to come here—I decided to a year ago—the demon confessed himself using the child as a mouthpiece, and—would you believe it?—began telling me that he was the ghost of a man who died once in a battle, dying while loving his wife, but that she outraged their marriage by taking another after he had been dead only three days. And so, because of this he hated the love of women and changed over to this boy. But he promised, if I would not tell you about him, to give my child many good and wonderful things. I was really persuaded by these promises, but he has put me off for so long now, taking over my whole house, it's obvious he intends to do nothing reasonable or true."

Then the sage asked again if the boy were nearby, but she said he wasn't, although she had tried all sorts of things to bring him, "but the demon threatened to hurl me over steep banks and into pits and to kill my son if I brought him here for judgment, so I left him at home." "Be of good cheer," said the sage, "for he will not kill him after he has read these." And pulling out a certain letter from his robe he gave it to the woman, and indeed, the letter was addressed to that very ghost and filled with the most terrifying threats.

III.39. And someone limping also came up, who was already thirty years old, a mighty hunter of lions. Once a lion sprang and landed upon his back

and he twisted his leg. But after they stroked his hip with their hands, the youth went away walking perfectly.

And someone who was flowing pus from his eyes went away completely cured of his disease, and another man who had a paralyzed hand departed with its strength returned.

The husband of a certain woman who had had seven painful pregnancies begged their aid in easing her birthgiving, and she was healed in the following way: they commanded the husband, when his wife was about to give birth, to carry a live rabbit under his shirt into the room where she was giving birth and, walking around her to release the rabbit at the same moment when she strained to push the baby out. Then the baby would easily come out, only they warned that the whole womb would be expelled together with the baby unless he shooed the rabbit outside the door immediately.

Philostratus concludes these stories by saying, "and the men were astonished at the manifold wisdom" of the sages. They resume their philosophical discussion, this time focusing chiefly on the art of predicting the future. Iarchus, the chief sage, assures Apollonios, "Those who delight in predicting, my friend, become divine from it and contribute to the salvation of mankind" (*pros sōtērian anthrōpōn*) (III.42).

There is a comical moment when Iarchus playfully asks Damis whether Apollonios' gift of foretelling the future has rubbed off on him a little after all this time. But Damis' answer is quite revealing. "It is not so much foretelling I am after," says Damis. Rather, since he is an Assyrian by birth, he hopes that by associating constantly with Apollonios and imitating everything he does, to learn Greek manners and philosophy and, in short, "mix freely with Greeks and with his help become a Greek" (III.43) [italics added]. There could not be any clearer evidence that Apollonios' gospel was in fact Greek culture and philosophy.

Finally Apollonios asks the sages about the fabulous animals living in India. That is, Philostratus is ready to interject some more of his "travelogue" material, and so he has Iarchus relate strange and marvelous accounts of huge man-eating porcupines, giant birds that quarry gold with their beaks, the immortal phoenix which sets fire to its own nest and then sings a funeral dirge to itself, only to come to life again as a worm, and so on.

When the time for parting came, after four months of such discussions, the sages embrace Apollonios and solemnly assure him that he "will seem to be a God to many not only after he is dead but even while living" (III.50).

He heads southwest toward the coast and boards a ship bound for Babylon. Philostratus relates bits and pieces of geographical and mythological lore as Apollonios sails along "the Red Sea" (= Persian Gulf) and then up the Euphrates River until he finally reaches Babylon. From there he retraces his steps to Ionia and Ephesus.

IV.1. Now when they saw Apollonios in Ionia entering Ephesus, even the artisans would not remain at their trades but followed him instead, some being

astonished at his wisdom, others at his appearance, others his way of living, others his manner, others at everything at once. Oracles also circulated about him, some from the shrine at Colophon which announced that he shared its own wisdom, was absolutely wise and so on, others from Didyma, others from the temple at Pergamum, for God was commanding many in need of better health to come to Apollonios, for this was both what he wished and pleasing to the Fates.

Deputations also were coming to him from the cities considering him their guest and seeking counsel about life and the dedications of altars and images. Each of these he told the right thing to do by letters or by coming to speak to them.

Apollonios comes to Ephesus and immediately realizes that a terrible calamity is about to strike the city. But its inhabitants are so frivolous and careless, they do not listen to his warnings. So he departs on a tour of Ionia intending to return when they are more receptive. He arrives in Smyrna where he gives a series of discourses on harmony within cities, of which the following *parable* is a part.

IV.9. As he was talking he saw a ship with three masts sailing away and the sailors on it doing different things in order to make it function properly. Turning around to those standing there, he said, "Do you see the crew of that ship? Some who are oarsmen are in tugboats, while others are pulling up and fastening the anchors, while others spread the sails out for the wind, and still others are watching from bow and stern. Now if any one of them left his post or did his nautical task ignorantly, they would sail badly and would themselves seem to be stormy weather. But if they compete with each other and strive to appear better than each other, then this ship will proceed excellently and their voyage will be entirely pleasant and peaceful and Poseidon the Protector will seem to be watching over them."

IV.10. With such words as these he restored harmony to the city of Smyrna. But when the plague struck the Ephesians and nothing could control it, they sent a delegation to Apollonios, asking him to become the healer of their suffering. He, thinking it unnecessary to be delayed by using the road, said, "Let us go," and was instantly in Ephesus—something Pythagoras also did, I believe, when he was once in Thurii and Metapontum at the same time.

Then, calling the Ephesians together, he said, "Be of good cheer, for today I will stop this plague," and so saying he led the whole body to the theater, where they later set up the statue of the Averting God Herakles in memory of the event about to happen. There they found an old man who seemed blind, craftily blinking his eyes, and carrying a sack with a piece of bread in it, wearing rags, and his face was very dirty. Standing the Ephesians around him, he said, "Gather as many stones as you can and throw them at this

enemy of the Gods." But the Ephesians were amazed at what he said, and thought it a terrible thing to kill a stranger as wretched as this, for he of course was beseeching them and begging for mercy. But Apollonios vehemently urged the Ephesians to throw their stones and not to let him escape. And when some used their slings on him, he who seemed before to be blinking as if blind, suddenly glared around showing eyes full of fire. The Ephesians then realized it was a demon and showered him with their stones so that they heaped up a large pile on top of him. After a short wait, Apollonios ordered the stones removed and the beast which they had killed to be recognized. When it was uncovered of what had been thrown at it, it had disappeared! Instead the form of a dog was seen similar to those from Molossos, as big as the biggest lion in size, crushed under the stones. It had vomited foam like a mad dog. And so they erected the statue of the Averting God, that is of Herakles, over the place where the apparition was stoned.

"Having had enough of the Ionians," says Philostratus, Apollonios "set out for Hellas"—the Greek territory on the other side of the Aegean. On the way, Philostratus capitalizes on the popular interest in Homer's *Iliad*, by having Apollonios stop at the grave of Achilles and call up his ghost one midnight. When Achilles appears, he grows and grows until he is over twenty-five feet tall. Nothing daunted, Apollonios greets him in a friendly way and Achilles on his part seems glad to have someone to converse with at long last. In return for Apollonios' promise to have the customary offerings at his grave restored, Achilles agrees to answer any five questions about the Trojan War. These turn out to be cocktail-circuit bonbons, such as, was Polyxena, supposedly the lover of Achilles though never mentioned by Homer, really sacrificed to Achilles on top of his grave? And was Helen really abducted to Troy, i.e., wasn't the whole story simply invented out of whole cloth by Homer? And so on.

When he arrives at Athens, he is once again immediately recognized and acclaimed by one and all. The only sour note is a refusal by the chief priest of the mystery at Eleusis to initiate Apollonios during a current festival, on the grounds that he was a sorcerer and an associate of foul demons (perhaps word had come to him of Apollonios' conjuring up of the ghost of Achilles). Apollonios of course puts the priest down, to the delight of the crowd. On another occasion he is lecturing the crowd on the proper way to pour out libations to the Gods, when he is interrupted by a heckler—only Apollonios immediately perceives a deeper danger, i.e., the heckler is possessed by a demon.

IV.20. And when he told them to have handles on the cup and to pour over the handles—this being a purer part of the cup since no one's mouth touches that part—a young boy began laughing raucously, scattering his discourse to the winds. Apollonios stopped and, looking up at him, said, "It is not you that does this arrogant thing but the demon who drives you unwittingly," for unknown to everyone the youth was actually possessed by a demon, for he used to laugh at things no one else did and would fall to weeping for no

reason and would talk and sing to himself. Most people thought it was the jumpiness of youth which brought him to do such things and at this point he really seemed carried away by drunkenness. But it was actually a demon which spoke through him.

Now as Apollonios was staring at him the phantom in the boy let out horrible cries of fear and rage, sounding just like someone being burned alive or stretched on the rack, and then he began to promise that he would leave the young boy and never possess anyone else among men. But Apollonios spoke to him angrily such as a master might to a cunning and shameless slave and he commanded him to come out of him, giving definite proof of it. "I will knock down that statue there," it said, pointing toward one of those around the Porch of the King. And when the statue tottered and then fell over, who can describe the shout of amazement that went up and how everyone clapped their hands from astonishment! But the young boy opened his eyes as if from sleep and looked at the rays of the sun. Now all those observing these events revered the boy for he no longer appeared to be as coarse as he had been, nor did he look disorderly, but he had come back to his own nature just as if he had drunk some medicine. He threw aside his fancy soft clothes and, stripping off the rest of his luxuriousness, came to love poverty and a threadbare cloak and the customs of Apollonios.

Next Apollonios goes to Athens where he bitterly chastises the Athenians because of their lust for bloody gladiatorial shows. One is reminded of similar threats uttered by the Jewish prophets.

IV.22. He censured the Athenians for something else also. They would gather in the theater of Dionysos below the Acropolis and watch men butcher each other, enjoying it more than they do in Corinth today. For they would buy men for high prices, namely those who had committed crimes such as adultery or fornication or burglary or purse snatching or kidnapping, people who had received the death sentence, and, arming them, would command them to attack each other. Apollonios rebuked these practices and once when he was invited to the city assembly of the Athenians, he told them that he would not think of entering such a filthy place, filled as it was with the defilement of blood. Another time he said in a letter to them that it was amazing that "Athena had not already abandoned the Acropolis because of the blood you pour out there. For it seems to me that before long when you celebrate the sacred Pan-Athenian Festival, you will no longer use bulls but sacrifice hundreds of men to the Goddess. And you, Dionysos, will you continue to come to your theater now that it is filled with blood and gore? Do the sages of Athens perform religious ceremonies to you there? Go somewhere else, Dionysos! You are too pure for that!"

Apollonios then goes around to the Greek temples of Dodona, Delphi, and others, correcting their practices. In Corinth he frees a young man from the clutches of a vampire masquerading as a beautiful young woman who was fattening him up for the kill.

Eventually he goes to Crete to worship on Mount Ida and from there he goes to Rome. Having landed in Italy, he receives word that Nero is terrorizing Rome, making a special target of philosophers. The famous Stoic philosopher Musonius "second only to Apollonios" (IV.35) was already in prison. This news comes as a shock to many of the cowardly followers in Apollonios' train, and, as Damis observes, most of them found pretexts to turn back, thus "running away from both Nero and philosophy" (IV.37). But the eight remaining are ready to stick it out, "being unified by the encouragement of Apollonios, they desired both to die on behalf of philosophy and to appear better than those who had run away" (IV.38).

After he arrived in Rome, Apollonios' scorn at Nero's shameless posturing as a popular singer reaches the attention of the police and he is arrested and brought up for trial. However, he gets off because, for some mysterious reason, the scroll upon which the grounds for his arrest had been written is suddenly found to be blank. Apollonios is clearly superior to his foes and they are now afraid to attack someone with such mysterious powers. Not much later, he performs another even more miraculous feat.

IV.45. Here also is a miracle (*thauma*) of Apollonios. A young girl seemed to have died in the very hour of her marriage and the bridegroom was following the bier weeping over his unfulfilled marriage. Rome mourned also, for it happened that the dead girl was from one of the best families. Apollonios, happening to be present where they were mourning, said, "Put down the bier, for I will end your weeping for this girl," and at the same time he asked what her name was. The bystanders thought that he was going to give a speech like those which people give at burials to heighten everyone's sorrow. But he didn't; instead he touched her and saying something no one could hear, awakened the girl who seemed dead. And the girl spoke and went back to her father's house, just like Alcestis who was brought back to her life by Herakles. And when the relatives of the girl offered Apollonios 150,000 silver pieces as a reward, he replied that he would return it to the child as a gift for her dowry.

Now whether he found a spark of life in her which had escaped the notice of the doctors—for it is said her breath could be seen above her face as it rained—or whether, her life actually being completely extinguished, she grew warm again and received it back, no one knows. A grasp of this mystery has not been gained either by me or by those who chanced to be there.

Nero soon prohibits all philosophical activity throughout the city, and Apollonios decides to leave such an inhospitable locale and visit the "pillars of Hercules" at the western end of the Mediterranean Sea, i.e., the Straits of Gibraltar.

Summary

After passing several months in the region of Gibraltar, Apollonios and Damis voyage to Sicily and thence back to Greece. Once again he spends the next months touring Greece, reproving and correcting the priests in the various temples. Then, in the spring, he sets off for Egypt. As before, while Apollonios and Damis travel along, Philostratus uses this "travel" setting to provide Apollonios with little speeches or tirades on a number of conventional subjects, such as the folly of bloody sacrifices, the futility of greed, horse racing, and so forth.

He meets Vespasian in Egypt (it is the winter of 69)—after refusing to see him in Judaea, "a country which those who dwell in it have polluted as much by what they do as what is done to them"—and assures him he should seek to be the next emperor. There then follows a lengthy debate on the popular question of how a sovereign ought to rule. Of course, Philostratus' speeches, put in the mouth of Apollonios, as well as speeches for the opposition, given to a rival, named Euphrates, contain nothing original or remarkable—in fact the way Apollonios is portrayed unabashedly playing up to Vespasian's ambitious desire for power is rather shocking. However, as we will see later, Philostratus has a very good reason for it.

Of interest to us, however, is another appearance of second-century Roman anti-Jewish hatred similar to the comment of Apollonios just mentioned. In the course of his argument Euphrates says—and the others readily agree—that Vespasian would have done better to use his army to invade Rome and depose Nero instead of wasting it in suppressing the Jewish rebellion. For the Jews, says Euphrates,

"have long since stood aloof, not only from Romans but from all men, they who seek an 'unspotted life'—to whom no fellowship with men at table or in libations or in prayers or sacrifices is welcome. Let them remove themselves from us farther than Susa or Bactria or the Indians beyond! There was certainly no good reason to punish this standoffish nation, whom it were better never to have taken over in the first place" (v. 33).

This statement is significant as it documents the growth of the first stages of popular Roman anti-Semitism. This new phenomenon seems to have been provoked partly by Jewish exclusivism, as is clear from Euphrates' specific reasons why Gentiles resented this stubbornly aloof nation. With the rise of Christianity, however, a whole new religious dimension is added. But it is clear that there was already present a growing international hostility toward the Jews, triggered by the rebellion of A.D. 67-70 and A.D. 132-135, upon which Christianity could capitalize—as we can see it did in such virulently anti-Semitic writings as the Gospel of Peter and the Acts of Pilate.

Book V

Following the conference with Vespasian, Apollonios and his followers depart for upper Egypt and the famous naked sages living in the desert.

Summary

Book VI

At this point, a geographical comment by Philostratus provides us with a fascinating glimpse of the way in which an educated Roman thought of "the world":

"Ethiopia is the western end of everything under the sun just as India lies on the eastern and is bounded (on the south) by Egypt at Meroë and touching an unknown region of Libya, comes to an end at the sea which the poets call 'Ocean,' thus naming what goes around the entire mass of dry land" (VI. 1).

It is a flat, roughly circular Earth having a rim of water ("Ocean") and three or four inland seas, lying beneath the curved bowl of Heaven to which were fastened sun, moon, and stars. Of lower Africa, or northern Europe, or central and eastern Asia, much less the Pacific and the New World, there is no awareness.

When Apollonios and Damis reach the territory where the Egyptian sages live, they find an unfriendly reception. It seems a stranger had come just before to warn that the Apollonios who would soon visit them is a sorcerer and an evil man. In this way Philostratus begins to weave into the plot the theme which will reach a mighty crescendo in the final act when Apollonios, betrayed by this same stranger (it is actually the jealous philosopher Euphrates), at last must answer to charges of sorcery and treason before the Emperor Domitian himself.

This Euphrates, whom Apollonios bests in the debate on kingship with Vespasian mentioned above, was in fact one of the most famous philosophers in the first century. However, he is portrayed by Philostratus as a sinister, evil person. This suggests that Philostratus is not trying to give an unbiased portrayal of this conflict, but instead heightening their enmity to give his plot more excitement—just like the little erotic touches inserted here and there to spice up the story (e.g., the beautiful young boys Apollonios keeps meeting and virtuously refraining from seducing, although they are completely under his power). Details like these may have heightened his readers' interest in the story.

But we have gotten ahead of the plot. When the identity of the malicious stranger is revealed, Apollonios gives a lengthy defense of his way of life to the Egyptian sages. This is followed by several debates, one of which expresses the popular Greco-Roman scorn at the animal Gods of the Egyptians. Other

typical discussions touch on the nature of the soul, the nature of justice and the structure of the cosmos.

But the visit is not a happy one and, before long, Apollonios and Damis and the rest decide to search for the fabled sources of the Nile, another popular bit of geographical lore. Proceeding upstream, says Philostratus, they finally came to the first of several huge, roaring cataracts or waterfalls. Then they pass two more, and with each one, the noise and confusion become more deafening and terrifying. Finally they find themselves in an incredibly dense, mountainous region, with giant geysers of water gushing forth out of the sides of sheer cliffs all around them. Fearing permanent deafness and nearly paralyzed with terror, because of the horrible demons which lurked all around (for all the demons and devils in the world gathered here, says Philostratus), they hastily retrace their steps.

After briefly recounting episodes in their stay among some "Ethiopian" villages, Philostratus abruptly drops the thread of the Egyptian journey and, using a common Hellenistic literary gimmick to speed up the passage of time and shift the scene of action, suddenly describes the contents of some letters that passed between Titus, Vespasian's son, and Apollonios (cf. 1 Macc. 12, 14).

Using this change of subject as a springboard, Philostratus then jumps the story forward several years to an occasion when Titus and Apollonios meet each other in Tarsus, describing what they said to each other on that occasion. Before long Egypt and Ethiopia are forgotten and Philostratus, in rough summary fashion, fills the rest of Book VI with disconnected anecdotes of Apollonios' activities when he is back in the region of his boyhood—Cilicia. The main thing Philostratus wants to do is to hurry time along, i.e., both to introduce and get rid of the Emperor Titus, so that his wicked younger brother Domitian can then be brought onto the stage—and everything set up for the final clash between him and Apollonios that occupies so much of Books VII and VIII, which conclude Philostratus' tale.

Summary

Book VII

Book VII, which might be titled "The Martyrdom of Philosophers," contains Philostratus' efforts to set Apollonios' clash with the ruthless Emperor Domitian in the best possible light. First, Philostratus lists other examples where philosophers have faced death at the hands of a tyrant, e.g., Zeno, Plato, Diogenes, Crates. Then he finds fault with each one in such a way as to show that, not only was Apollonios' bravery, wit, and power superior to theirs, but he also confronted a tyrant who ruled the whole world, not just some petty island king or ruler of an obscure country.

Next Philostratus takes pains to show that Apollonios came to this clash quite voluntarily; he was not dragged thither by Domitian's superior might. Thus, when Domitian decides to arrest Apollonios (who is in Asia at the time), Philostratus says Apollonios knew of it by his powers of foresight, and immediately began his trip to Italy before the orders for his arrest had even reached the provincial governor of Asia.

Then Philostratus heightens the dramatic tension by emphasizing the base cowardice of even the closest of Apollonios' disciples. Meeting him when he arrives in Italy, they all try to dissuade him from throwing his life away. This, of course, provides "Apollonios" (= Philostratus) with several occasions to deliver ringing speeches on the duty of the philosopher to die unafraid for the sake of liberty, rather than cravenly preserve his freedom while tyranny makes slaves of everyone.

There is a curious ambiguity in Philostratus' portrait of Apollonios, however. On the one hand he is shown unceasingly pressing forward into danger, speaking of the need for bravery in the true philosopher, his patience under tribulation, his manliness, and the like. But on the other hand, there are places where Philostratus makes it equally clear that Apollonios is not really in any danger, either from the Emperor Domitian or anyone else. For example, on one occasion Apollonios says

"I myself know more than mere men do, for I know all things . . . and that I have not come to Rome on behalf of the foolish will become perfectly clear; for I myself am in no danger with respect to my own body nor will I be killed by this tyrant . . ." (VII. 14) [italics added].

If this be true, what is the point of resounding phrases such as "it is especially fitting for the wise to die for the sake of the things they practice" (VII.14) and "death on behalf of friends . . . (is) the most divine of things human" (VII.14)? How can Philostratus have Apollonios say later on to an agent of Domitian's: "It will be enough for me to leave, having saved myself and my friends, on behalf of whom I am here in danger" (VII.38)? Either Apollonios is in danger or he isn't!

Well, as the outcome will show, he was not in any danger at all. But, then, what is the point of all these fine speeches about risking death at the hands of tyranny? Apparently, that is all they are—fine speeches; rather the rhetorical product of an author primarily concerned with their immediate effect, but who had not thought out their place in his story as a whole. For if all Apollonios' friends had had the same powers he did (such as being able to remove iron shackles at will), then obviously none of them would have been afraid of Domitian either.

Thus, when Philostratus describes Apollonios being led through the streets of Rome under heavy guard from the palace to the palace for trial, and how

"everyone turned to see Apollonios, his appearance attracting admiration, for he seemed so god-like that those standing about were astonished, while his having come to risk danger on behalf of men made those who formerly slandered him now friendly" (VII.31), at this point it becomes clear that Philostratus' vanity and facile ability to conjure up a touching scene with his pen, regardless of its inconsistency with the rest of the story, has gotten quite out of control.

Summary

In any case, the grand climax to Philostratus' story is at hand. The final test has come; the vindication or collapse of everything Apollonios has trained for and practiced all his life will now be revealed. Either he will "be true to himself" now, in the moment of supreme crisis, or all will brand him a coward and a traitor to philosophy.

There is a preliminary hearing at which the Emperor Domitian becomes enraged when Apollonios will not buckle under his threats. This is followed by a period of solitary confinement and the shaving off of his hair, intended to soften Apollonios up. During this time, various soldiers or spies, secretly sent from Domitian, harass Apollonios in the midst of his seeming helplessness. But Apollonios withstands it all, seeing through all the stratagems to intimidate him.

Finally the day of the public trial dawns. The audience hall is jammed with people as the procedure begins. There is a brief preliminary skirmish with some minor official (a skillful touch to delay the action, thus heightening the suspense), and then his old enemy, the philosopher Euphrates, who is now his chief accuser, loudly demands that Apollonios stop ignoring the king and give his full attention to the "God of all mankind." Thereupon, Apollonios who had been insultingly standing with his back to the emperor, ostentatiously looks up towards the ceiling (i.e., towards Zeus). This bold affront so enrages Euphrates that he begs the king to get on with the accusations so that they could end the trial and begin the torture Apollonios so clearly deserves.

Domitian accordingly reads out the first charge: Apollonios dresses differently than everyone else. He does not wish to bother the animals to get wool or skin, Apollonios replies skillfully. Then Domitian reads the second charge: Why do men consider Apollonios equal with the Gods? This, declares Apollonios, is simply because they see in him a good man (lifting a line from the Indian sages). Third, how could he predict the plague that struck Ephesus if he were not a sorcerer? Apollonios explains that his light diet enables him to sense harmful pestilences in the air before other men do.

Finally, the accusation of sedition comes up. Domitian asks whether Apollonios had plotted to help Nerva overthrow the government, and to this end had he not sacrificed a young boy and examined his entrails for the signs of a favorable omen for the plot? What of that? Apollonios scornfully rejects the whole accusation as a blatant lie, and dares anyone to come forward with proof that he did any of these things. The gallery unexpectedly applauds loudly and—wonder of wonders—the emperor seems to be impressed himself! But suddenly, something totally unexpected happens. (*End of summaries.*)

VIII.5. When Apollonios had said these things, the crowd indicated its approval more loudly than was customary in the court of the king. Thereupon, Domitian, considering those present to have borne witness together in Apollonios' favor, and being somewhat influenced himself by his answers—for when questioned he seemed to have given logical answers—declared, "I acquit you of these charges! But, you must stay here so that we may meet you privately." But Apollonios took courage and said, "I thank you, O King, but because of these sinful courtiers here, the cities are being destroyed, the islands are full of fugitives, the mainland full of weeping, your soldiers are cowardly, and the Senate is suspicious. Give me my freedom, if you will, but if not, then send someone to imprison my body, for it is impossible to imprison my soul! Indeed, you will not even take my body, 'for you cannot kill me since I am not a mortal man,' " and, saying this, *he vanished from the courtroom!*—which was a smart thing to do at the time, for it was obvious that the tyrant was not going to question Apollonios sincerely but just detain him by various pretexts. For he boasted later in not having killed the sage. But Apollonios did not want to be dragged into further confinement, and anyway he considered it more effective if the king were not ignorant of his real nature, that he could never be taken captive involuntarily!

And so, Apollonios suddenly appears out of the blue to Damis and a friend in a small town by the sea, where he had sent Damis several days before the trial.

At this point, however, Philostratus breaks the narrative in order to present a very long speech that he claims Apollonios had composed to give before the king—but, due to his sudden departure, he didn't have an opportunity. So Philostratus gives it for Apollonios in its entirety (it runs to more than 800 lines!).

It is clearly intended to be Apollonios' final *testament*, summarizing and defending his whole life's work. (In fact, this may be what Philostratus is referring to above, at the end of I.3.) Its artificiality can scarcely be doubted. Otherwise, what is the meaning of Apollonios' earlier word to Damis that he was not going to prepare just such an oration in defense of his life, but speak extemporaneously (VIII.30)? Philostratos, following the time-honored methods of Hellenistic historiography, has here simply fabricated the speech Apollonios *ought* to have given on this momentous occasion—with all the rhetorical skill he can muster.

In fact it is a skillful forensic declamation taking up each of the four accusations and completely demolishing them. Of particular interest, therefore, is a passage in the section dealing with Apollonios' (= Philostratus) rebuttal of the accusation of sorcery: i.e., why do men worship him as a God? As part of the reply, Apollonios (= Philostratus) sets forth very explicitly what sort of being he (= Philostratus) thought Apollonios was. In other words, here we have Apollonios (= Philostratus) state the abstract concept itself of "divine man" which actually underlies this whole writing from beginning to end.

Philostratus starts off the passage by having Apollonios compare the Egyptian sages' view of God with that of the Indian sages.

VIII.7.7. As for the Indians and the Egyptians, the Egyptians condemn the Indians for various things and find fault with their teachings about conduct, but as for the explanation which is given about the Creator of all things, in this they more or less agree with them, because, in fact, the Indians taught it to them. This explanation of the origin and existence of all things recognizes God as Creator, the cause of this creating being his yearning for the good. Since these things are interrelated, moreover, I go on to say that those who are good among men have something of God in them. Now of course it is thought that the order (*kosmos*) which is dependent upon God the Creator includes all things in Heaven, in the sea, and on the land, in which there is equal participation by men—but according to Fortune. Then there is also another order (*kosmos*) dependent upon the good man which does not transgress the limits of wisdom; and you yourself, O King, say that it needs a man formed like a God (*theō eikasmēnos*).

And what is the character of this order? Well, anyone can see that all around us there are deranged souls insanely grabbing for every passing fad, our laws obsolete to them, having no common sense, their piety toward the Gods sheer disgrace, loving idle chatter and luxury from which springs wicked laziness as the advisor of their every act. Other drunken souls rush in all directions at once, nothing restraining their frenzy even if they should take every pill thought to bring sleep.

Therefore, what is needed is a man who will care to instill order in their souls—a God sent to mankind by Wisdom. Such a man as this is able to urge and to lead people away from the passions by which they are so violently carried off in their everyday behavior, as well as from their desire for material possessions, because of which they will tell you they have nothing as long as they can't hold their mouths open under the stream of wealth pouring down. However, to curb them from committing murder is perhaps not impossible for such a man, although to wash away the guilt of a murder once committed is not possible, either for me or for the God who is Creator of All.

In view of the likelihood that this entire speech has been created by Philostratus himself, this brief description of a "God-man sent to the world by Wisdom"

is all the more significant as indicating precisely what Philostratus wanted to convey to his audience about Apollonios. And, even more important, it corresponds exactly to the savior concept enunciated by the Christian church father Eusebius, quoted in the Introduction (pp. 12-14), as well as Philo's conception of Moses (see pp. 247-49). This is clear evidence that, beneath the cultural and religious variations, there was a widely shared concept of the Savior God, appearing among men for a time to heal and save.

In fact, Apollonios (= Philostratus) goes on to say this explicitly a few lines later: "I do all things for the salvation of men" (VIII. 7.10). Just before this passage, "Apollonios" explains why the cities he has visited think that he is a God, and it forms a good summary of his whole "mission" on behalf of the salvation of men: "Indeed, I have been worthy of much honor in each of the cities which needed me, performing such things as healing the sick, making more holy those being initiated into the Mysteries or offering sacrifice, rooting out pride, and strengthening their laws" (VIII.7.7).

After giving his version of Apollonios' self-defense at his trial (shades of Socrates!), Philostratus tells how he suddenly appears to Damis in Dicaearchia, the small town on the seacoast where the other was waiting for him. So Apollonios emerges from the hour of peril unscathed. Indeed, says Philostratus, he made "the tyrant a plaything by his philosophy" (VIII.10). Where is all the talk of danger and risk now?

Damis is naturally startled to see him and asks if he is a ghost. "Apollonios put out his hand saying, 'Touch me and if I escape you I am a ghost come from Persephone's realm'" (VIII.12). Damis is overjoyed to see it is really his master, though completely mystified how he came from Rome so quickly.

Apollonios decides to leave Italy that same day for Greece, and so they set sail for Sicily and thence to the Peloponnese. Upon arrival they settle in the temple of Zeus at Olympia. Instantly word gets around that Apollonios is not at Rome in prison, or dead, but has just arrived at Olympia. At this, "the whole of Greece came together to see him as never before for any Olympic festival" (VIII. 15). The question on everyone's lips was, how had he gotten away from Domitian? Apollonios would only say that "he had given his defense and was saved." But when several Italians arrive, they tell the whole story of what happened in the courtroom. "At this Greece was moved to near worship of him, believing him to be a *divine man* (*theios anēr*) for this reason above all—that he did not indulge in loud boasting about any of his deeds" (VIII. 15, italics added. Cf. Letter 48: "even the Gods have spoken of me as a divine man [*theios anēr*]; Epistles of Apollonios).

After forty days of discussions and debates at Olympia, Apollonios proclaims to all that he will now depart and "converse with you in each of your cities, in the festivals, the religious processions, Mysteries, sacrifices, libations—for they have need of a knowledgeable man" (VIII. 19). He then visits a shrine of Apollo where, after staying in its sacred cave seven days (longer than anyone ever had before), he emerges with an authentic book of the teachings of Pythagoras, which, Philostratus adds, is preserved to this day at Antium in the palace of Hadrian.

A large band of disciples now follow Apollonios everywhere. The Greeks call them "Apollonians," and Philostratus describes one of his sermons to them, an attack on lawyers who are willing to argue any case before the judges for money, calling them "people who welcome enmity; indeed their vocation is the same thing as selling hatred" (VIII.22).

After two years, Apollonios sails for Ionia, and while staying in Ephesus, he suddenly sees a vision—while giving a lecture—of the assassination of Domitian taking place in Rome at that very moment. No one is willing to credit Apollonios' vision, although they would like to. But before long envoys come with the news that the Emperor Domitian has in fact been murdered and Nerva is now on the throne. A sudden wave of awe sweeps the city at Apollonios' prevision. The Emperor Nerva then sends for Apollonios to come assist him in ruling the empire, but Apollonios refuses (for the curious reason that he knew Nerva would die in less than two years!). Sending Damis to Nerva with his letter of apology, Apollonios himself "dies" not long after. Of the circumstances surrounding Apollonios' passing, Damis preserves no mention (because he was in Rome), but Philostratus says he has found three other accounts of it and he relates all three.

VIII.30. Some say he died in Ephesus while being served by two slave women, the two male slaves I mentioned at the beginning having died already. He freed one of them but not the other, having a reason in mind, for Apollonios said, "If you serve her you will benefit from her, for it will be the beginning of a good thing for you." Thus, after he died one served the other until one day, on a whim, the latter sold her to a merchant and then someone else bought her from him even though she was not goodlooking. But he was in love with her and being quite wealthy he both made her his wife and inscribed in the public archives the children he had by her.

But others say he died in Lindos; that is, they say he entered the temple of Athena and just disappeared once he got inside. But those who live in Crete say he died in a more remarkable way than the way the people of Lindos tell.

For they say that Apollonios lived in Crete, an object of greater veneration than ever before and that one day he came to the temple of Dictynna (Artemis) at a deserted hour. Dogs are kept there as a guard for the temple, keeping watch over the riches inside it and the Cretans consider them as fierce as bears or other wild beasts. But when he comes up, they do not bark but come up to him wagging their tails, something they would not do even to those very familiar to them. The temple attendants thereupon arrest and bind Apollonios on the grounds of being a wizard (*goēs*) and a thief, claiming he had thrown the dogs something to soothe them. But around the middle of the night he freed himself and after calling to the men who had tied him up so as not to be unobserved he ran up to the gates of the temple, which immediately opened by some unseen power, and when he had gone inside, the gates closed

together again as they were shut originally. Then the voices of young women singing came forth from inside the temple and the song was "Come from earth, come to Heaven, come."

By the time the temple attendants get the locked door open again, Apollonios has disappeared; i.e., he is in Heaven. One is reminded of the "Empty Tomb" story in the gospels; it also is a "translation" account. To prove that he is not dead, Philostratus finishes his biography with a story of a doubting disciple who refused to believe that Apollonios really was still alive. One day Apollonios appears to him, and removes all of his doubts.

VIII.31. This young man would never agree to the immortality of the soul. "I, my friends, am completing the tenth month of praying to Apollonios to reveal to me the nature of the soul. But he is so completely dead that he has not even responded to my begging, nor persuaded me that he is not dead." Such were the things he said then, but on the fifth day after that they were busy with these things and he suddenly fell into a deep sleep right where he had been talking. Now the rest of the youths studying with him were reading books and busily incising geometric shapes on the earth when he as if insane suddenly leaped to his feet, still seeming to be asleep, the perspiration running off him, and cried out, "I believe you!"

When those present asked him what was wrong, he said, "Do you not see Apollonios the Wise, how he stands here among us listening to the argument and singing wonderful verses concerning the soul?"

"Where is he?" they said, "for he has not appeared to us even though we wish this more than to have all mortal wealth!"

But the youth replied, "It seems he came to discuss with me alone concerning the things which I would not believe. Hear therefore what things he prophesied about the doctrine (*logos*):

"The immortal soul is not at thy disposal but belongs to divine Providence.

Thus, when thy body dies,

Like a swift horse freed from its bonds,

The soul leaps lightly forth

Mingling with the gentle air,

Shunning its harsh and dreary servitude.

As for thee, what benefit to know this now?

When thou art no more,

Then thou wilt know this well enough.

So why learn of such things among the living?"

Now this clear teaching of Apollonios on the mysteries of the soul was given as an oracle in order that we might be encouraged and know our own natures as we go to the place the Fates assign us.

I do not remember finding a tomb or epitaph of Apollonios anywhere even though I have traveled over most of the earth hearing everywhere at Tyana stories (*logoi daimonioti*) about him. There is, however, a temple at Tyana built at the emperor's expense, since even emperors considered him worthy of the honors they themselves received.

For Caracalla's dedication of a shrine to Apollonios at Tyana, see Cassius Dio LXXVII 18.4.

Poimandres The Hermetic Tractates

Introduction: This writing comes from a large, heterogeneous collection of writings known as the *Corpus Hermeticum*, so-called because some of them have to do in one way or another with the God Hermes. The meaning of the title of this writing is uncertain. The two most commonly accepted interpretations are: (1) the title is Greek and may mean, "shepherd of man" or "shepherd"; (2) the title derives from the Coptic (*p.eime.n.re*) and means "the knowledge of the Sun-God (*Ra*)."¹ The second alternative better fits the document's contents. The author is unknown and opinions differ as to the date of the writing. But the second century A.D. is a likely date.

Part of the reason for the uncertainty as to *Poimandres'* date is the puzzling character of the writing itself. Although the author clearly relies on the Jewish creation account in Genesis, chs. 1-2, the writing as a whole comes from a very different context. Is *Poimandres* a Greco-Egyptian mystical revelation of the creation of the world, which dips from time to time into the narrative of Genesis? Or is it a product of esoteric Jewish mysticism, well assimilated to mystical traditions of other religions? In either case, *Poimandres* is an excellent example of the religious syncretism that flourished during the Greco-Roman age, that is, the process in which religious traditions mix and appropriate symbols from other traditions.

Poimandres gives expression to a profound pessimism regarding life, a deep rejection of the tangible world. Human beings are not at home in this world; they are "strangers in a strange land." They are "in the world" only because they have somehow gotten themselves subjected to a terrible demonic Power which rules the physical universe.

The corollary to this deep disenchantment with the world is the view that authentic human existence may only be restored by enlightenment, enlightenment in the form of secret, saving knowledge (*gnosis*). This knowledge brings to a few elect humans the realization of their predicament in the world and the message that they really do not belong here, but are destined to return to the heavenly realm from whence they came. In short, humans are presented in *Poimandres* as heavenly souls entrapped in this evil and unredeemable creation.

So humans are dual creatures; they are divine, immortal souls which have somehow gotten ensnared in filthy physical bodies. *Gnosis* frees the divine element from the trap of the body, so that the souls may ascend through the heavenly spheres back to their true heavenly abode.