# NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE ECBASIS CAPTIVI

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In the history of medieval literature the beast-epic appears to occupy a strange, rather uncomfortable position. **Le Roman de Renart**, at least in the form given it by Pierre de Saint Cloud and his followers in Dutch and German, seems to have been accepted by most scholars as an epic to judge from the titles of several recent books[1], although this belief is not universal. J.-C. Payen sees it as something not conforming to the normal literary genres, and certainly not to epic: 'malgré son titre, Le Roman de Renart n'est pas ce que nous appelons un roman ni un ensemble de romans, mais un corpus d'un genre tout à fait particulier''.[2] One might consider the collection of stories to be similar to the ancient Greek ones referred to as cyclic epic were it not for the presence of the Latin **Ysengrimus**, which, representing the beginning of the genre for many scholars, appears to have a more coherent structure than one might expect from a collection of different episodes. But even the **Ysengrimus** does not allow of any easy, solid definition. To call it epic because it contains an epic theme—the hatred of one individual (fox) for another (wolf)—is probably to apply over-sophisticated criteria to a medieval text whose author and audience were unaware of Aristotle's definition of epic and Homer's Iliad. It might be more profitable to see it as the tragic fall of an individuai, a sort of Alexander the Great, burlesqued by the presence of animal protagonists and spiced with satire on contemporary people and events, that is to say, a widening of the horizons of the epic genre.[3] However, it still remains episodic, and the feeling of a ''a whole collection of fables''[4] put together is strengthened by references to contemporary people (Walter of Egmond and Baldwin of Lisborn), so that both types of fables discussed by Isidore of Seville, the **Aesopica** and the **Lybistica,**[5] are present in the **Ysengrimus.** The work has a richness that is largely undiscovered, and as yet the ''dominant'' feature of its composition has not been discerned and agreed upon for a satisfactory genre classification to be made.[6] Perhaps Jill Mann's forthcoming work will enable scholars to see the **Ysengrimus** more clearly, though it must be admitted that recent editions, translations or studies of the **Ecbasis Captivi** have had little effect in advancing our conception and understanding of its nature.[7] Thus the position of the **Ecbasis** in the history of medieval literature is even more obscure than that of **Le Roman de Renart** or the **Ysengrimus,** especially as its points of contact with Renart and Ysengrim are few and far between, precluding even some relative position in the Latin versus vernacular origins arguments. Nevertheless, with good reason it has been called the earliest beast-epic or at least the forerunner of the beast-epic genre.[8] Its sheer length and complexity, together with its possible autobiographical contents, make it more than a fable. Moreover, the satire involved is far more personal than the generalised satire of fables. As such, it is extremely interesting from the narrative point of view, and it is this narrative style that I want to discuss in this paper. As can be seen from Knapp's synthesis of **Ecbasis** studies, most of the scholars have dedicated themselves to the identification of the author, the dating of the poem, the identifcation of the people who are the butts of the author's satire. Though this is admirable, and best done by scholars in situ with knowledge of the area and access to all the documents required, I hope I will not appear churlish in citing the opinions of two scholars, one writing about the **Ecbasis,** the other the **Ysengrimus.** Firstly, Bossuat remarks: ''les allusions qui devaient être intelligibles aux contemporains de l'auteur, vivant dans le même milieu, nous échappent à peu près complètement''.[9] One might add that even if we knew the identity of each person hiding in his animal skin, it would not help us particularly, because we neither know enough about the people of that time for the possible extra details provided by the **Ecbasis** to be of much use, nor, more importantly, do we know those people personally, for personal satire is ephemeral and can be appreciated only from a literary point of view once the people involved have died. As long as the reader has enough background knowledge of a general nature he is equipped to read the work, and it does seem that scholars have demonstrated that the work is a satirical view of monks and monastic life in the area that is now Eastern France and Western Germany, with Metz, Toul, Verdun and Trier involved, in the middle of the eleventh century.[10] Secondly, Jill Mann, discussing the **Ysengrimus,** remarks on the dangers of trying to identify the humans hidden behind the animal masks if one is not able to understand the literary aims of the author: ''the difficulties of the **Ysengrimus,** being difficulties of structure and tone, can only be resolved by means of an intensive scrutiny of the poem itself, and external information cannot even be placed in relation to the poem before this scrutiny has been made''.[11] Hence my attempt to see the **Ecbasis** in literary terms.

The first thing that strikes the reader is the prologue. If the **Ecbasis** were simply a fable we might expect a short prologue in the fashion of Phaedrus or

Avianus, apologising for the fiction but stressing its useful purposes. We do indeed get the ancient writers' feelings expressed, but in a sixty-eight line prologue containing details of the author's life and situation—autobiographical details totally unexpected in a fable, or even in an epic. It might be argued that autobiographical details are out of place in an epic, but one would do well to heed Starobinski's remark: "les conditions de l'autobiographie ne fournissent qu'un cadre assez large, à l'intérieur duquel pourront s'exercer et se manifester une grande variété de 'styles' particuliers"[12], as well as Jauss's on genres: "les genres sont analogues aux langues historiques...dont on estime qu'elles ne peuvent être définies, mais uniquement examinées d'un point de vue synchronique ou historique".[13] The autobiography is not, however, restricted to the prologue; it is carried over into the main body of the text e.g. **vitula** (66—in prologue): **vitulus** (71—start of main text). There is also the unintentional **me** for **eum** or **illum** (191) which shows that even if the author was writing in the third person he was actually thinking in the first person. The importance of this fact has not been seen in relation to the **Ecbasis,** because autobiographies can be factual or fictional, though obviously even fictional autobiographies have some points of contact with facts belonging to the life of the author. In the case of fictional autobiographies, therefore, a tantalising ambiguity or ambivalence can arise where the reader is unable to make up his mind whether a particular incident he is reading about is meant to be believed or not. In the case of an eleventh-century satire directed against fellow monks and church dignitaries of the diocese the ambiguity can be even more intriguing when the listerners/readers cannot be sure whether or not any person is hidden behind the mask of any animal. In the **Ecbasis** some animals play such a small, insignificant role that it is difficult to imagine that one should be trying to discover the human identity involved.[14] In an excellent work on fictional autobiographies, **Studies in the Narrative Technique of the First-Person Novel**[15], Romberg has studied the tricks that authors of this genre devise to mystify the reader and keep him guessing, switching from protestations of truth to acknowledgement of fiction, explaining certain apparent contradictions or minor occurrences difficult for the reader to accept while glossing over major implausibilities. Application of Romberg's observations to the **Ecbasis** may well help to counter Raby's dismissive criticism of the text as a work of "laboured verses" and "annoying obscurity",[16] even if it cannot show the work to be a hitherto unnoticed masterpiece of the narrative art.

After a seemingly straightforward opening sixteen lines,[17] the author remarks that some people will cross out (destroy?) his verses **si me depingere quiddam/audierint falsi** (17-18) and that they **certabunt legibus equi** (18). Were it not for these last three words one might interpret **quiddam falsi** as simply referring to the use of animals (cf. Phaedrus and Avianus) or possibly the well-known **figmenta poetarum** as opposed to the truth of prose. But **certabunt legibus equi** suggests that his listeners may be able to recognise some of the fiction and counter it or at least refuse to be misled. The author then goes on (22-26) to cast doubts on his own abilities both as regards technical competence and inspiration. Critics disagree on his technical competence. Zeydel finds him incompetent while Ehrismann does not, though it must be admitted that Zeydel's examples are unconvincing.[18] The author can be excused his ignorance of Greek and many of the Latin words are rare, thus their quantities may have been unverifiable at that time and in that place. Furthermore, as Strecker indicates, he was sometimes following medieval practice, which surely cannot be regarded as wrong for that period. Another point to consider is the possibility that his quantities reflect spoken use, in which case a comparison with strict classical usage would be anachronistic. The incorrect tense usage is more ambiguous, however. Although some tense uses are incorrect (Strecker pp. 52-53), and may be so owing to **metri causa** (Zeydel p. 103), these are not of the sort suggested by the author: **tempora temporibus eque coniungere cecus** (24). It is not his lack of knowledge of sequence of tenses in subordinate clauses that is evident in the text, rather his indiscriminate use of the present and past tenses, and it is difficult to believe that he did not realise that e.g. **ingemuit** and **traxit** (81) were past tenses in the middle of present **absunt** (80) and **invocat** (82). Thus we may simply be in the presence of a modesty topos, as might also be inferred from the adjective **indoctum** (31), for, as Strecker's list of the author's sources shows (pp. 46-51), he had read an impressive number of authors, and his use of one of these, Horace, was quite outstanding for the Middle Ages. Furthermore, **territus hisce minis meditor desistere ceptis** (34) suggests yet another topos, that of inability to write—a suggestion that is plainly false as he had every intention of writing his story. But the reason for his inability is not, in fact, technical incompetence, it is lack of inspiration. In this context the remark is strangely ambivalent because a Christian writer would be expected to do like Prudentius in his epic **Psychomachia**, that is, pray to God for inspiration. Our author seems to suggest that one needs the pagan muses to give one inspiration, and adds insult to injury by pointing out that they are to be found **per campos, silvas, fluvios** (27), not in monasteries. In view of one of the themes of his narrative—leaving the monastery to live in the outside world—this statement will be recalled later by the audience who will be tempted to connect it to the theme. In other words, the author may be creating the echo in order to mislead or induce confusion. There then follows (34-40) another statement to trouble the audience: in

the past writers wrote only about what they had actually witnessed, but he is breaking this convention and writing a fable. Now the first half of this statement is demonstrably false as the author uses Ovid's **Metamorphoses**, for example, which no-one would have considered as **res gestae** (39). The second half is no less false since, although the audience does not yet know it, he is going to write something autobiographical. Furthermore, he appears to contradict the first half of his statement by saying that he is going to write a fable, since the word would immediately make his audience think of the long line of ancient fable-writers. Another twist is given to the statement by the use of the adjective **rara** to describe the **fabella.** To translate this as 'mere', as Zeydel does, is to do injury to the Latin: **rara** surely means 'rare', that is, the author is trying to do something uncommon, a sentiment justified by his form of narrative frame enclosing another narrative **(Aussenfabel** and **Innenfabel)** as well as his use of animals to represent not types of human beings but individuals.[19] This second feature, of which the audience is as yet unaware, seems to be contradicted, or at least made ambiguous, by the expression **menosam profero cartam** (40) which he then qualifies by stating the value of its contents, **sunt tamen utilia que multa notantur in illa** (41). He then proceeds to discredit this value by suggesting **si recitas totam, panis mercabere tortam** (42), that is, it is not the content that will prove beneficial but the mere fact of having recited it from beginning to end. It is as though a lump of sugar were being given to an animal in the circus after it had performed its trick, or perhaps more satirically (and closer to eleventh-century reality?) that what counted was being able to recite the Bible, prayers, etc., not necessarily changing one's ways in order to live according to the precepts of religious literature.

After remarking on the desirability of different people doing different things in life he goes on to answer any hypothetical questions about his motives for writing this unusual work, and unless **sub specie certi** (47) means no more than **certe**, he seems to envisage that some truths will strike home and cause his audience to enquire why he had written thus. However, his "explanation" is surely meant to trivialise the monk's activities and parody the Christian message of everyone contributing what he can. Everyone was being useful except himself, shut up in the prison of his monastery. Here (58-64), in a passage that has, I think, gone unrecognised up to now, he sees himself as a Boethius-figure. Whereas Boethius had sat in a secular prison trying to console himself for the loss of his earlier secular prestige by the use of poetry as medicine, our author sits in a monastic prison bemoaning the loss of his earlier secular consolations, **imperiosa solamina** (63) but unable to utter his thoughts. He is like a calf tied to a stake (he has already (5) likened himself to an ass), he is tied by the reins of the fathers (Church Fathers or leather thongs of his ancestors or both?), and will tell the calf's story **non simplo stamine** (68).[20] Does **non simplo stamine** refer to the outer and inner fables or to the allegory or to both? Or does it even refer to the ambiguity which I have suggested is present in the prologue and is to be carried through into the narrative?

The picture that has emerged from a close reading of the prologue is either one of half-formed and ill-expressed ideas, full of contradictions and infelicities, or else a tantalising texture of hints, facts and false leads presented by a man who sees himself now as Augustine, now an ass, now Boethius. That it is more likely to be the latter is borne out by Romberg's study of the first-person narrative style. Though I would not wish to suggest that our author had read Apuleius' **The Golden Ass,** despite the earlier reference to an ass, nevertheless Apuleius' prologue shows some of the features mentioned above. Firstly there is the doubt about whether the Lucius of the prologue and the Lucius of the narrative are identical or even whether either of these is Lucius Apuleius.[21] Secondly there is doubt about what he actually means about the nature of his narrative.[22] Thirdly there is the misleading statement about his linguistic abilities.[23] Furthermore, the ambiguity of the narrative proper is such that scholars diverge widely on how to interpret the work, ranging from views like that of Heisermann's pure entertainment to Walsh's religious conversion.[24]

That the **Ecbasis** is a complicated, difficult text is a sentiment expressed by virtually all scholars, whatever reasons they advance for it. It may be its author's insistence on using the **cento** technique, or else the leonine rhyme that constricts his Latin. It may be his general incompetence and lack of intelligence. Perhaps it is his attempt to write an allegory, or else his desire to conflate various literary genres. To all these possible explanations I would like to add another, that he does not always want to be "understood", that is, like writers of first-person narratives, he wants to mislead at times or be ambiguous, whether it be from a purely literary point of view or else from prudence in case certain victims might take umbrage if there was absolutely no doubt that they were being attacked.

The problems start in the beginning of the narrative; there is no respite or lull after the prologue's difficulties. "In the year of our Lord 812, in the month of April, there occurred a full moon at Easter." (69-70). That the author should want to give his narrative a fictitious date is quite understandable, but why the reference to the Easter full moon? A reference to Easter would be sufficient to recall the Easter period at which the **Ecbasis** was probably recited. Again, one of the features of fiction, particularly associated with folklore, is the use of exact detail to convince the reader/listener of the truth of

the fiction.[25] Next we learn that "there lived a calf, brought up in the Vosges, as can be read in the preceding lines." (71-72), which refers us back to the prologue. But in the prologue the author told us he was "like the calf" **(illi consimilis)**; now he seems to be saying that he is that calf (a meaning to be unintentionally confirmed by the **me** at line 191). Moreover, the calf is one year old! This cannot refer to the author **qua** child, but might apply to himself as a monk of one year's standing. Or else it just means that he was young and inexperienced. He sees all the animals being led out to pastures while he remains tied up at home without the companionship of his mother. Now if the calf is a monk then he would not have had the companionship of his real mother in the previous year in the monastery. If, **per tropologiam** we interpret the mother as the Church, then why is the Church going out into the world with the other animals (lay brothers?) and not remaining in the monastery with the **religiosi?** Why cannot he get his mother's milk in the monastery? He escapes, plays with the other animals until he gets tired of the games, whereupon he seeks the **silve tutamina** (96). How are we to take this? That the wood might seem a safe place for a fugitive to hide we can accept, but woods were particularly dangerous, especially for young calves/boys. And indeed, danger does appear in the guise of a **forstrarius** (97), surely a secular official.[26] At least that must be the first meaning to come to the audience, but then the knowledge that he sang a **hymnum/moris ut est monachis longo de calle reversis** (97-98) sows doubts in the mind. The fact that the forester then gives thanks to God for sending him his next meal opens up the way to several interpretations, e.g. a) he is a secular official ready to harm a monk; b) he is a hypocritical monk ready to harm another; c) he is a particular monk known to the audience being made fun of; d) **per tropologiam** he is the devil intent on snaring the soul of a human. There may well be other possibilities. The forester takes him home to a smelly remote cave and we discover that the forester is a wolf (i.e. the devil), so the number of possible interpretations is still as great. The wolf speaks **cuncta pietate** (107) which seems more suitable to a religious man, though obviously one must be on the look out for irony, and asks **qua nos ratione revisas?**, which I take to mean "Why do you visit us again?" (108)[27] This question seems more appropriate to a monk returning to the secular world. However, the wolf's ensuing remarks about having abstained from meat for three months seems a monkish exaggeration of giving up meat for Lent. If the audience is now having difficulty identifying the world of the forester, it is further non-plussed by the calf/monk's prayer to Jupiter in an aside (119), asking for a veil to be drawn over his sins (he is not asking for forgiveness or absolution), and in good Roman style he goes on to offer to sacrifice an animal to the gods if he escapes from this predicament! Aloud, to the wolf/forester/devil he explains that he was a pupil in the school at Toul who has run away from his teacher. He now asks the wolf for forgiveness! At this the audience is possibly thinking that the wolf represents the abbot and the calf's apostrophizing him as **magnorum maxime regum** (130) looks like an ironic statement about how an abbot saw his importance, as it seems inappropriate for a forester in the real world or a wolf in the animal world. The ensuing banquet sounds like a parody of an abbot's eating habits and the reference to the wolf as **magister** (181) confirms the identification (though the **magister** at Toul is probably not the **magister** in question here). The wolf appears to have been an abbot for nearly eight years (an allusion to an abbot known to the audience?) but his hedgehog henchman is totally secular. Nevertheless, the reading of the **Reparatio Lapsi** at table, the saying of prayers, the calf's plea to God to release him from this Hell so that he can see his parents again (224-25) make us think that the wolf's lair represents Hell represents monastery, so that he is praying to leave the monastery. We are unsure if his escape is from the secular world to the monastery, from one monastery to another, or from the monastery to the secular world...

I could go on, but enough is enough. I have presented the different, intriguing or contradictory elements in the order of the narrative and have not attempted to make a synthesis because that is how the audience at the **recitatio** would have heard them. The author is teasing his listeners and will go on teasing them to the end. And in case they feel that they have the answers to the enigmas the author has inserted an inner fable into the narrative. Now an inner fable should give some help towards the interpretation of the outer narrative. For example, in the **Ruodlieb** the story of the young man with the old wife can be seen as a model for Ruodlieb himself to note and to change the tenor of his life accordingly; we, the readers, can deduce from it what is wrong with the hero's way of life and what the end of the story is likely to be.[28] Similar claims have also been made for the inner fable of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius' **The Golden Ass,**[29] but Apuleius undermines the fable's supposed message by having it told by a drunken old woman. Furthermore, Apuleius includes many other features in the fable that clash with any serious message either it or the main ass-narrative is supposed to convey. I would argue that the author of the **Ecbasis** appears to undermine the message of the inner fable in a similar way, but not so comprehensively as Apuleius. The Germanic epic "animal"-dream in the part of the outer fable preceding the inner fable (227-50), together with the accompanying qualification that the dream took place after midnight **quando sunt somnia vera** (227), would have led the audience to believe that the wolf would be killed to the joy of the fox,[30] though the presence of insects as opposed

to the more epic boars and bears might have made them wonder whether they were not being led up the garden path. The inner fable has the fox happy at the death of the wolf, and since that wolf was the **proavus** of the outer fable wolf, the audience might think the message was correct and that therefore the outer fable would end in a similar manner. But the inner fable contains some details that cause nagging doubts to arise in an audience. For a start, the wolf of the outer fable breaks into the inner fable (1010) which he is narrating, so that the chronological "truth" is shattered. He is supposedly telling a story that happened a long time previously to one of his ancestors but his own presence in the story invalidates its message. Further doubts are raised by the coincidence of the Easter setting, the preposterous pilgrimage story told by the fox, the fox's dubious morality while strictly observing monastic rules, the Malchus story which seems to be a reflection of the calf's story in the outer fable, creating a story within a story within a story, the Chinese-box method often used in first-person narratives.[31] Even the "serious" passage (831-914), beginning **nunc tamen amoto queramus seria ludo,** in which the nightingale sings of the sufferings of Christ, is deflated by the panther's remark **Verum, si possem, quod dicis, credere vellem/sed pectus lubricum quoniam geris, improbo fictum.** (915-16). From these details the audience might be dubious about accepting the truth of the inner fable's message and of the dream in the first part of the outer fable. But the **Ecbasis** author has a surprise for his audience: he plays the end straight. The wolf is killed and the calf returns to the stable in the village. However, the audience still cannot be sure what the stable actually represents.

There are, of course, many other puzzles and seeming contradictions in the work that I have neither mentioned nor discussed, but which need to be explored from a literary angle in any future commentary on the text. I hope, however, that this essay has shown that the author possessed a degree of sophistication that enabled him to keep the audience guessing as to his motives, the interpretation of the work as a whole, and the interpretation of various of its constituent parts. Granted some of the confusion arises from his technical shortcomings in Latin verse; granted some arises from his desire to write an allegorical work (it is always difficult to make a story work on both the literal and the allegorical levels. It may even be that he tried a third, anagogical level.). But some of the problems arise from a more positive literary experiment of ambitious proportions. He wanted to write an epic that was different. It might be allegorical, like Prudentius' **Psychomachia,** but unlike that poem it deals with real people, not abstract personifications of virtues and vices. The real people are hidden in animal skins, their identities veiled so that another unusual element, that of satire, can be introduced. The fable genre has been adapted by the use of outer and inner fable to give length and body. Moreover, as I have tried to show, the author has added techniques of the first-person novel to bring to the epic a degree of playfulness and ambiguity it previously lacked. If it appears to be too big a claim for a text of this period and provenance, it should be remembered that it is not an isolated example of quality. It should be seen in the context of several experiments in Latin from the German-speaking world at the time which embrace different literary genres. There are Hrotsvitha's dramas, Sextus Amarcius' satires, the story of Lantfrid and Cobbo adapted to sequence form in the Cambridge Songs, the mock-heroic **Waltharius** and the first courtly novel or romance, the **Ruodlieb.**

**NOTES**

[1] E.g. F.P. Knapp, **Das lateinische Tierepos,** Darmstadt 1979; **Epopée animale, fable et fabliau,** ed. N. van de Boogaard and J. de Caluwé, 1978 (= **Marche Romane,** 28, 3-4); **Aspects of the Medieval Animal Epic,** ed. E. Rombauts and A. Welkenhuysen, Louvain-The Hague 1975 (Mediaevalia Lovaniensia, I, III).

[2] J.-C. Payen, **Le Roman,** Turnhout 1975 (Typologie des Sources).

[3] Cf. H.R. Jauss, 'Litérature médiévale et théorie des genres', **Poétique,** 1, 1970, 79-101, esp. 88-91.

[4] F.J.E. Raby, **Secular Latin Poetry,** 2 vols, Oxford 1957², II, 151-52.

[5] Isidore of Seville, **Etymologiae,** I, xl (De Fabula).

[6] Jauss, 'Littérature médiévale', 83.

[7] Even Knapp's synthesis of scholars' positions has been attacked by M. Billerbeck in a review in **Latomus,** 40, 1981, 157-58. For a shorter view of **Ecbasis** studies cf. U. Kindermann's article, **Ecbasis Captivi** in **Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon,** Band 2, Lieferung 1/2, cols 315-21. Jill Mann's article on the **Ysengrimus** bodes well, however. Cf. note 11.

[8] E.g. R. Bossuat, **Le Roman de Renard,** Paris 1967, p. 65.

[9] Bossuat, p. 67.

[10] Knapp, p.1. The view that it was written in the tenth century seems to have lost ground.

[11] J. Mann, 'Luditur illusor', **Neophilologus,** 61, 1977, 495-509 (495).

[12] J. Starobinski, 'Le style de l'autobiographie', **Poétique,** 1, 1970, 257-65 (257).

[13] Jauss, 'Littérature médiévale', 82; yet in his work **Untersuchungen zur mittelalterlichen Tierdichtung,** Tübingen 1959, he argues against its epic nature. Cf. E. Zeydel's summary of the contrary arguments in his edition, **Ecbasis Captivi,** Chapel Hill 1966, p. 12. I have used Zeydel's text for the quotations in this article. Though it rightly received strong criticism, none of the remarks of reviewers affect passages quoted here.

[14] Cf. van Geertsom's attempts, discussed by D. Yates, 'Isengrimus à clef', in **Proceedings of the Third International Beast Epic, Fable and Fabliau Colloquium,** ed. J. Goossens and T. Sodmann, Cologne-Vienna 1981, pp. 517-36.

[15] B. Romberg, **Studies in the Narrative Technique of the First-Person Novel,** Stockholm 1977.

[16] Raby, I, 269-70.

[17] I.e. we do not know if the picture of himself is accurate though his fellow monks would be in a position to judge the veracity of the remarks. Their reactions to what follows would be conditioned by their interpretation of that picture. It is probable, however, that he sees himself as an Augustine-figure here, looking back on his childhood and remarking on his liking for trivia rather than listening to his teachers, e.g. Confessions I, 8, 13; I, 9, 15; I, 10, 16; I, 12, 19. It would be unlikely for anyone writing about himself to ignore the one example of autobiography available to him, unless that someone were Peter Abelard!

[18] Zeydel, p. 103. Cf. K. Strecker's list of infelicities, pp. 52-53 of his ed. **Ecbasis cuiusdam captivi per tropologiam**, Hanover 1935.

[19] Cf. H.R. Jauss, 'The alterity and modernity of medieval literature', **New Literary History**, 10, 1979, 181-227, esp. 199-202, section VII, 'Animal poetry as a threshold of individuation'.

[20] Cf. Boethius, **De Philosophiae Consolatione**, ed. K. Büchner, Heidelberg 1960, I prose 1: **..fletibusque meis verba dictantes... tam imperiosae auctoritatis;** I prose 2: **sed medicinae tempus est... cumque me non modo tacitum sed elinguem prorsus mutumque vidisset...;** I prose 5: **validiora remedia contingunt. Itaque lenioribus paulisper utemur.** Strecker does not cite this passage but gives (p. 50) other examples of borrowing from the **De Phil. Con.**

[21] The Lucius of the prologue comes from Greece, the Lucius of the fable from Madaura in North Africa. Whether either of these is the author of the work is open to question. Even if the three were essentially one, it would be salutary to remember Romberg's statement (p. 9) about Dante and Chaucer not being identical outside the fiction and within the fiction.

[22] **...sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram...modo si papyrum Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreveris inspicere.** And what is the precise meaning of **Graecanicam fabulam?** I have used the ed. of S. Gaselee, London 1915 (Loeb).

[23] **...ibi linguam Attidem primis pueritiae stipendiis merui. mox in urbe Latia advena studiorum, Quiritium indigenam aerumnabili labore, nullo magistro praeeunte, agressus excolui. En ecce praefamur veniam si quid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero.** It is untrue for him to say that he has never mastered Latin, having been brought up as a Greek.

[24] A. Heisermann, **The Novel before the Novel**, Chicago 1977, esp. ch. 8, Antonine Comedy: "I honour it as a comedy of the marvelous" (p. 145) and "The Golden Ass is pure comedy" (p. 167). Heisermann points out (p. 145) that for centuries it has been regarded as a religious work in honour of Isis. P.G. Walsh, **The Roman Novel**, Cambridge 1970, is one who believes utterly in the religious interpretation.

[25] Cf. Romberg, p. 83. Vinay's suggestion that the work was written between 812 and 836 and refers to the Franco-German struggle for Lorraine has not been accepted by any scholar, to the best of my knowledge. G. Vinay, 'Contributo alla interpretazione della **Ecbasis Captivi**', **Convivium**, 18, 1949, 234-52.

[26] Zeydel (p. 103) calls him a monastic official, and adds "The monastery as the scene of action is adhered to throughout." How he can reconcile that view with the events of the outer fable is difficult to understand. Cf. Knapp (p. 29) who asks "Doch worauf bezieht sich dieses 'Hinausgehen'? Auf den Stall (alias Kloster) oder die Wolfshöhle? Eine sichere Entscheidung ist nicht möglich." And Knapp thinks one can identify which is the monastery. Vinay sees the whole action taking place in court with no question of any monastic world!

[27] Zeydel translates simply "visit."

[28] As Zeydel points out (p. 12, footnote 2), "the moral of both fables is: 'The biter will be bitten'", quoting line 767 **Decidit in laqueum, quem fraude tetenderat, ipsum.** Cf. **Ysengrimus**, I, 69 **luditur illusor** and Jill Mann's article, note 11.

[29] Cf. Walsh.

[30] Cf. dreams in **Waltharius**, 621-27; **Ruodlieb**, Fragment XVII, 85-127; **Nibelungenlied**, transl. A. Hatto, Harmondsworth 1965, p. 124.

[31] Romberg, pp. 64-65, e.g. Apuleius, **The Golden Ass.**