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APULEIUS' VENUS AND SPEECH CHARACTERIZATION

Being one of the main characters of Apuleius' story, Venus has long attracted the attention of numerous scholars, and it seems there is always more to uncover. The image of Venus is crucial for the story of Cupid and Psyche: not only is she a very vivid and memorable character, but she is also the driving force behind the plot.

As the main antagonist she is opposed to Psyche from the early beginning: Venus is the first name mentioned in the story, even though it is used to compare Psyche with the goddess of love and beauty or, more specifically, to stress the sense of awe inspired by both of them: *ut ipsam prorsus deam Venerem <venerabantur>* (*Met*. 4. 28. 3).[1] Being attracted to Psyche, people forget about venerating the real goddess. Venus delivers an ireful speech about the girl's shamelessness (the first example of direct discourse in the story of Cupid and Psyche) and asks Cupid to make her fall in love with the worst mortal of all. At this point, the reader knows all three main characters, but Venus is the one who is described most thoroughly: we see her reasoning, the way she talks and acts (*capite quassanti, gemens ac fremens indignatione*). Psyche and Cupid have only been mentioned briefly and serve as a cause for Venus' rage and means to soothe it.

Venus quits the stage and does not appear till the end of Book V, where a seagull, the goddess' servant, tells her that her son suffers from the wound inflicted by Psyche. Venus does not care about her son's well-being but is enraged by Cupid's misbehavior. The goddess employs Mercury's assistance to find Psyche and gives her impossible tasks, including the descent into the underworld – a sure way to get rid of the girl for good. Cupid helps his beloved and persuades Jupiter to solve their

[1] There can be little doubt that either *venerabantur* or the historic infinitive of non-deponent *venerare* should be supplemented in the text, as most editors agree (Zimmerman *et al*. 2004, 45). *Venus* and *venerari* share the same root, and instances of this figura etymologica are found already in Plautus, one of the favorite sources of Apuleius (Nicolini 2011, 49–50).

problems; Jupiter assures Venus that she does not have to worry about her association with the mortal and makes Psyche a goddess. Venus does not answer and remains mute for the rest of the story, but we should assume her rage ceased, and the end of her anger marks the end of the story.

It is evident that the position of Venus' first speech is textually prominent: she is the first character to talk, and her long and furious oration sets the main conflict and promises an interesting unravelling of the plot. Venus comes back at the end of Book V with another extended speech, after which she is the last person to leave the scene. She does not particularly stand out in Book VI, even though she appears more often there. At the end of the story she is mentioned among other gods and goddesses celebrating Cupid and Psyche's wedding.[2]

It has long been noted that Apuleius pays a lot of attention to the stylistic shaping of the text: from the elaborate choice of words to careful composition. Since Venus is one of the main characters and the importance of her words is stressed by a meaningful textual position, it is tempting to trace how Venus' way of speaking is different from other characters'. A character's voice can be a very important tool for creating a vivid and believable image. It may consist of typical words and phrases, mannerisms, a vocabulary of particular stylistic coloring, syntactic nuances. As Sarah Parker observes,[3] Apuleius does not provide explicit characterization for Venus: her story and her attributes are well-known to the public, and Apuleius is not interested in restating the obvious. The author gives plenty of implicit characteristics for the goddess which create a character that can be easily described: jealous, emotional, self-centered, cruel, and vindictive. These are the traits that we figure out based on her behavior, her actions, and the content of her speeches. The way Venus talks is much less straightforward and thus needs to be discussed.

For us (as non-native Latin speakers) character's voice is particularly hard to grasp. Still, it has long been known that some characters from the Latin literature do stand out by their special manner of speech. The

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[2] The textually prominent positions of Venus' speeches in Books IV and V were already pointed out by Sarah Parker in her work dedicated to Apuleius' techniques of description in *Cupid and Psyche* (Parker 1999, 173 and 194–195). She explains the decrease of Venus' prominence and significance by the fact that Psyche's meeting the goddess shifts the focus of the story to the girl's ability to complete the tasks. From this point, the plot is mainly driven not by Venus' rage (though Venus is still indignant at Psyche), but by Psyche's challenge. S. Parker (*ibid*., 201–202) also highlights that Apuleius carefully selected the words describing Venus and her actions (a great deal of them are emotionally loaded and are important for grasping Venus' state). Unfortunately, she does not pay attention to the stylistic nuances in her analysis.

[3] Parker 1999, 173.

first work that comes to mind is *the Feast of Trimalchio*. Trimalchio's pretentious speech is different from his guests' speeches: while their Latin seems crude and vulgar, Trimalchio is intentionally trying (and still failing) to show grandeur in the way he speaks. Though he makes the same mistakes (like vulgarisms and incorrect grammatical structures), his speech is also characterized by hypercorrection.[4] Petronius represents the low-class speech more accurately and consistently than Plautus, and the voice of slaves and freedmen in *the Feast of Trimalchio* has long been a favourite topic for scholars.[5] The difference between the narrator's and characters' voices clearly shows that their Latinity depends on their social and/or geographical background, as well as other factors, like education and the will to seem more learned than the character actually is.[6] Petronius was not the first Latin author to distinguish the characters' speeches. Though Plautus' works do resemble the everyday conversations of slaves, a more 'personal' approach can be observed in Cicero's *De oratore*. Cicero attempted to represent speeches of Crassus and Antonius regarding their word choice, sentences' length and structure, and even rhythmic patterns.[7] Overall, speech characterization is a long-familiar but quite rare phenomenon in the Latin literature. As J. N. Adams puts it, such prominent usages are occasional and of a miscellaneous character,[8] but a careful investigation can lead to trustworthy results in portrayed speech analysis of a certain social group (like the freedmen in Petronius). This is possible mainly because we can compare freedmen's speeches with the language of the narrator and other characters within the same book. Can something similar be observed in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*?

Even though the exact date of the composition of the novel is unknown, Apuleius certainly wrote the *Metamorphoses* long after Plautus and

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[4] Boyce 1991, 98–101. Trimalchio is not the only character of the *Satyricon* whose speech can be pointed out as highly artificial and intentionally literary. Peter George names the same traits regarding the figure of Giton: George 1966, 339–342.

[5] A comprehensive list of works on the topic can be found in Schmeling 2011, XXV–XXX.

[6] Age can influence the way a character talks as well. It has been noted that elderly characters in comedy use archaic forms more often: Karakasis 2005, 60–61. Cicero's Crassus also points out that his wife's mother speaks in a way which resembles Plautus and Naevius (*De orat*. 3. 12. 45): from his point of view, women preserve the ancient language more easily as they do not spend much time in conversation with others. Besides, the state of inebriation can be emphasized by the character's speech: Abbott 1907, 49–50.

[7] Mankin 2011, 41–48; Albrecht 2003, 92–94.

[8] Adams 2013, 17.

some time after Petronius. Both authors are often compared to Apuleius: he undoubtedly read Plautus' plays and used them as a source for the vocabulary, and the *Metamorphoses* is the second known Latin novel after the *Satyricon*. Moreover, both novels are influenced by the genre of the Milesian tale, although it is problematic to determine its influence in terms of language and style. As Plautus and, to a greater extent, Petronius tried to frame their characters' speeches in a distinguished way, it would be tempting to see something similar in Apuleius. His characters do indeed use some words and expressions which are consistent with their social role: a soldier vernacularly puts *ubi* for *quo*, when he asks a gardener, where he is going with the ass (*ubi ducis asinum istum? Met*. 9. 39. 4);[9] an oracle uses archaic and elevated nominative *Iovis* (*tremit ipse Iovis*, *Met*. 4. 33. 2); speeches of the slave girl Photis are full of diminutives, which are peculiar to colloquial language (*miselle*, *foculo*, *igniculus*, *lectulum* – all in one phrase, *Met*. 2. 7. 7). The problem is that Apuleius uses such words throughout the novel at random. When we first meet Photis, she makes short and somewhat blunt remarks (*Met*. 1. 22. 2–5), but this style is not consistent with her later speeches (see, for example, *Met*. 2. 17. 3). Lucius uses all kinds of stylistically colored words irrespectively of the context. Many scholars have noted that the story of Cupid and Psyche is put into the mouth of a drunken old woman, but the language of the story is in fact rich, detailed, and poetic (not much different from the rest of the novel).[10] Apuleius writes that Psyche is struggling with words and stutters (*tertiata verba semihianti voce substrepens*, *Met*. 5. 18. 5), but she delivers a perfectly articulate and balanced speech.[11] All things considered, it seems that Apuleius did not intend to grant his characters a special manner of speech.

Plautus is not the only source of influence for Apuleius. One of his favorite writers was Virgil, a poet attractive for many archaizing authors despite his rather balanced style lacking an inclination for archaism.[12] It is hard to overestimate Virgil's influence on the posterior literature,

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[9] Callebat 1968, 196; Adams 2013, 333.

[10] Kenney 1990, 22–24; George 1966, 343. Nevertheless, some scholars find that the personality of the *anus* affects the description of the events and characters to some degree: van Mal-Maeder – Zimmerman 1998, 84–93; van Mal-Maeder 2015, 148–151.

[11] Zimmerman *et al*. 2004, 246 also provides an illustration of independence of Psyche's speeches from her emotions in *Met*. 5. 13, where she "*suscipit… singultu lacrimoso sermonem incertans*", but the following speech is clear.

[12] On Apuleius' use of Virgil's motifs see Frangoulidis 1990, Finkelpearl 1998, Harrison 2013.

and Apuleius for sure turned to Virgil's legacy while working on the *Metamorphoses* and the story of Cupid and Psyche in particular. Aside from several Virgilian reminiscences, we can clearly see Juno from the *Aeneid* in Apuleius' Venus.[13] The similarities are numerous: both stories begin with the goddesses' monologues expressing resentment, they wreak their anger on the mortal protagonist, they both discontentedly refer to the Judgement of Paris, both are concerned about their cult, both employ Cupid to help with their plan and seek assistance from other gods (Aeolus and Allecto in Virgil, Mercury in Apuleius), both goddesses' anger drives the plot, in the end their plans collapse, and Jupiter persuades them to give up. Even though the images of the goddesses are so similar, the words in their opening speeches are quite different, granted the difference of genres. As expected, we find several poetic words in Juno's soliloquy (*furias*, *rates, aequora*: Verg. *Aen*. 1. 37–49), while Apuleius' Venus uses more formal expressions (*partiario maiestate honore tractor, communi numinis piamento, vicariae venerationis incertum, inlicitiae formonsitatis*: Apul. *Met*. 4. 30. 1–5). Throughout the whole story, Venus is very concerned with legalities, which is clearly shown from the early beginning. As L. R. Palmer observes, religious and legal language carefully preserves archaic forms, which is in line with several words in the novel (for example, *ariolor* in *Met*. 2. 7. 2, *primigenius* in *Met*. 11. 5. 2, *succidaneus in Met*. 8. 26. 3), including the adjective *partiarius*, used by Venus (before Apuleius only attested in Cato). Venus finishes her speech with a menacing archaism *faxo*, which has the same solemn and sinister tone in the *Aeneid* (when Turnus revives his army's spirits and promises to show all their might to the Troians in *Aen*. 9. 154 and when Aeneas is going to kill Turnus in *Aen*. 12. 316–317). Virgil also seems to use archaisms speaking of gods and translating their message to give their voices more grandeur.[14] It is important to remember that archaic vocabulary was considered peculiar to poetic genres (Cic. *De orat*. 3. 38. 153), so there was a tradition to use archaic words for embellishment. Virgil quite often makes use of the archaic plural in *-um* and *-ai* and does not shy away from such words as *infit* and *quianam* which were avoided in prose. Apuleius' love for archaism, on the other hand, cannot be explained by specific genre traits. As is commonly known, Apuleius enjoys a variety of different

[13] Tatum 1979, 49–50; Finkelpearl 1990, 345; Kenney 1990, 121; Parker 1999, 182–194; Elford 2011, 108–117; Brant 2016, 103–104.

[14] Examples can be found in Marouzeau 1946, 180; Palmer 1954, 112–113; Kashima 2017, 9.

stylistically colored words, and some scholars attempted to link them to the context in some cases.[15]

Apuleius' Venus does not say a lot of archaic words. Aside from already mentioned *partiarius* and *faxo*, she asks Cupid to punish Psyche *severiter*[16] (*Met*. 4. 31. 2, before Apuleius this adverb was attested only in a fragment of Titinius), tells Mercury that she needs to put out a search for Psyche *publicitus* (6. 7. 3, an adverb used by many archaic poets and fallen back into use after Gellius) and promises Psyche that she will treat her *ut bonam nurum condecet* (6. 9. 2, a verb used by comic writers before Apuleius). Besides, she uses the archaic ablative *qui* in *Met*. 6. 7. 4 and calls her servant *Tristities* (6. 9. 2, a rare form with archaic flavor). One can also mention the archaic future forms of the imperatives *esto* (6. 9. 2), *approbato* (6. 10. 3), *dicito* (6. 16. 4), and *redito* (6. 16. 5). These forms usually occur in legal and technical contexts, as well as in comedy.[17] In the story of Cupid and Psyche, future imperatives are used by gods (Cupid, Jupiter, mostly Venus) and the talking tower. Venus' actions are also occasionally described with words which give an archaic touch: she speaks to her son *boans*[18] (5. 29. 1), after her conversation with Juno and Ceres she leaves *alterorsus*[19] (5. 31. 7), talks with Mercury *petitu*[20] *superbo* (6. 7. 1, before Gellius and Apuleius this noun was attested only in Lucretius, though with a different meaning, 'moving forward'), after Psyche's first trial she *cubitum facessit* (6. 11. 2, an archaic verb frequently used by Apuleius in the novel). When she comes back and addresses Psyche, Apuleius uses the verb *infit* (6. 11. 4), a poetic word with archaic color. Juno and Ceres describe Venus as *cordata mulier* (5. 31. 5), mocking her with this distinctly Ennian adjective. In the end of

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[15] For example, L. Callebat describes several instances when Apuleian archaic words are used as elements of literary parody and as a means to develop comedic themes (Callebat 1965, 346–361). The latter was also explored by R. May (May 2007, 39–43).

[16] An attractive conjecture by Brantius instead of F's reading *reverenter*. Both options make good sense and are accepted by various editors.

[17] Hofmann–Szantyr 1972, 340–341; Callebat 1968, 502–503.

[18] *Boare* is a poetic word attested since Ennius, Pacuvius, and Plautus. Apuleius uses it 3 times in his novel (5. 29. 1; 7. 3. 4; 9. 20. 4), always in mockery.

[19] The adverb *alterorsus* (emendation of a *vir doctus* in edition by F. van Oudendorp in place of F' *alte rursus*) is attested only in Apuleius (here and in *Met*. 9. 28. 1). However, a similar adverb *altrovorsum* is attested in Plautus' *Casina* (555). *TLL* gives these two words together and does not list any other instances, so it is likely that Apuleius' *alterorsus* must have had a Plautine flavor.

[20] The noun probably belongs to legal language (Apuleius used it in court, see *Apol*. 45. 1; 48. 11), it is also frequent in inscriptions.

the story all gods are celebrating, and Venus organizes the entertainment to her own taste (*scaena sibi sic concinnata*, 6. 24. 3), so Muses sing and Satyr with Paniscus provide the music. *Concinnare* (a favorite word of Plautus and Apuleius) is a relatively rare verb and can be considered archaic (although it existed in all periods of Latin literature, it was avoided by classical writers).[21]

As demonstrated, we can see a variety of archaic words either used by Venus or describing her and her actions. That being said, it is essential to remember that archaisms are dispersed throughout the whole novel, and their number in this particular case does not play a major role. The important part is the surprise effect. It was already mentioned by ancient authors that an unexpected word can have a great influence on the readers. Fronto, one of the main figures of the archaizing movement, complained about the lack of archaisms in Cicero's writings for the very reason that one could not find many *insperata atque inopinata verba* (Fronto, *Ep. ad M. Caesarem* 4. 3). Quintilian also mentions the effect of novelty produced by such words (*Inst*. 1. 6. 39). In the archaists' time, poets like Ennius and Lucretius were studied precisely to snatch unique and striking words from their writings.[22] Apuleius relies too heavily on this effect, so the constant changing of different stylistically colored words obliterates it completely. That makes it even more valuable when an archaic word is indeed unexpected. This is the case with Venus' soliloquy at the beginning of the story of Cupid and Psyche. Apuleius starts by describing the faraway kingdom and the beauty of Psyche. Although the introduction to the story does not lack words and forms unusual for prose (e. g. a poetic ending of *habuere* and a rare adverb with a legal tinge *idonee* in 4. 28. 1), there is no word that is specifically archaic.[23] Then Venus enters the stage. She soliloquizes in elevated style; her first sentence is undeniably Lucretian: *en rerum naturae prisca parens, en elementorum origo initialis, en orbis totius alma Venus, quae cum mortali puella partiario maiestatis honore*

[21] Zimmerman *et al*. 2004, 551.

[22] Zimmerman 2006, 318.

[23] To determine whether a word is archaic or not, is a problem of its own. More precisely put, at the beginning of the story we cannot find a word which was attested in the writings of archaic authors and avoided by classical ones. Understandably, nothing certain can be said about those words which are first attested in Apuleius, as it is possible that they are not neologisms, but words from the archaic or colloquial language, and every word should be regarded individually. At the start of the story of Cupid and Psyche (before Venus' first appearance), there are only two such words: *sufficienter* (4. 28. 2) and *incoronatus* (4. 29. 3). *Sufficienter* is also attested in Ulpian and some Christian authors, *incoronatus* is a hapax.

tractor.[24] The solemn effect is enhanced by legal wording and first archaisms in the story.[25] Both manner and matter of the speech show that this is one of the crucial episodes in the story. An even more prominent example can be found in Book VI. When all gods assemble in the theatre to discuss the events of the story, Jupiter delivers a speech about his intention to marry Cupid and Psyche (*Met*. 6. 23). His speech towards the assembly takes up 8 lines, where Jupiter does not make use of a single archaism. After that, he delivers 3 lines directly to Venus, and they definitely have an archaic flavor (6. 2. 4):

> Et ad Venerem conlata facie, 'Nec tu', inquit 'filia, quicquam contristere, nec *prosapiae* tantae tuae *statu*que de matrimonio mortali metuas. Iam *faxo* nuptias non impares, sed legitimas et *iure* civili *congruas*'.
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> And then he said to Venus, facing her: 'And you, my daughter, do not be sad at all and have no fear for your great lineage and status on the ground of a marriage with a mortal. I will now make this marriage not unequal but legal and corresponding to civil law'.

Apuleius uses here one of his favorite words, *prosapia*, which was considered inappropriate for literary use by Quintilian, as a word too old and forgotten by readers (*Inst*. 1. 6. 40, see also Cic. *Tim*. 39). Moreover, we can see two archaic datives *statu* and *iure* in this part of Jupiter's speech, as well as an adjective *congruus*, before Apuleius attested only in Plautus. As for the form *faxo*, this archaism occurs three times in the story of Cupid and Psyche: twice in Venus' speeches (4. 30. 3; 5. 30. 2) and here, in Jupiter's address to her.

Jupiter's speech is the resolution of the story; it is noteworthy that the last lines concerning Venus' anger come from his mouth, not hers. Thanks to the archaic coloring these two sentences stand out in comparison to the rest of Jupiter's speech. As mentioned previously, Venus' soliloquy at the beginning of the story of Cupid and Psyche also takes a prominent position. It sets the main conflict, and Venus' way of speaking is notable for the first archaisms in the story. These things considered, it is tempting to conclude that the readers of the novel must have singled out Venus' voice from other characters'.[26]

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[24] Kenney 1990, 121; Zimmermann *et al*. 2004, 57–58; Zimmermann 2006, 329–332; Elford 2011, 99–100.

[25] Venus' language demonstrates that she possesses "old-fashioned morality": Kenney 1990, 121; Elford 2011, 128.

[26] J. Elford points out that Venus' most frequent action in the narrative is talking: Elford 2011, 133–136.

The elements of parody have long been noticed in Apuleius' novel, from the genre traits[27] to particular words.[28] In the story of Cupid and Psyche, Venus is an outstanding character in terms of parody: from the very beginning, she paints herself as a mighty goddess, *orbis totius alma Venus*, when in reality she experiences human emotions, is unable to control even her son's actions and often needs help from others. She is the goddess of love, but she opposes Cupid's relationship with Psyche and is mostly concerned with her own authority. As J. Elford puts it, she is "a sort of anti-Venus".[29] In this context, her archaic speech with legal terms is a perfect foil for her petty behavior. Relying on elevated vocabulary,[30] Venus tries to keep up a façade of a respected goddess, so even Jupiter himself needs to address her accordingly. In part, Venus' outstanding voice can be explained by tradition (in Virgil gods also archaize):[31] gods speak no ordinary human language; they should likely speak in a more archaic way since they have been around much longer than humans. Still, no other god in the *Metamorphoses* invites attention through their speech in that manner. Furthermore, no other god in the novel is so concerned with their age. Although Venus is immortal, she is quite emotional about becoming a grandmother. Venus is jealous of Psyche partially because of her rival's youth, which is counterintuitive, as Venus does not age and is capable of bearing a child (*Met*. 5. 29. 4–5). Venus herself is not old, but her words for sure are.[32]

There is no speech characterization in the *Metamorphoses per se*. Even though the peculiarities of Venus' voice are notable, they are not consistent, let alone unique. Still, the readers of the novel must have noted Venus' penchant for archaisms – a detail, which completes this vivid character and makes her carps even pettier.

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[27] For example, on Apuleius' relation to epic see Finkelpearl 1998, 36–55; Harrison 2013, 265–270, also Westerbrink 1978, 63–73.

[28] Callebat 1965, 352–357 gives numerous examples of instances, where archaic vocabulary provides an element of parody.

[29] Elford 2011, 146–147.

[30] Note the epic formula *sic effata* in 4. 31. 4 and 5. 31. 1, used specifically about angry Venus.

[31] Palmer 1954, 112–113.

[32] As E. Karakasis observes, elderly characters in Terence's plays tend to use more archaisms: Karakasis 2005, 60–61, 99, 119.

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The article explores the character of Venus in Apuleius' story of Cupid and Psyche, as well as the lexical tools used for describing her actions and conveying her speech. Venus is one of the main characters; her speeches take prominent positions in the story and require special attention. Although the phenomenon of speech characterization in Latin literature is occasional, it may be assumed that the character of Venus is distinguished by archaic vocabulary. We see a variety of words with archaic tint either used by Venus or in relation to her, but the effect of surprise and novelty produced by these words is much more significant than their number. This effect is notable in Venus' soliloquy at the beginning of the story (*Met*. 4. 30) and Jupiter's address to her at the end of it (*Met*. 6. 23). Even though Apuleius' characters do not have consistent voice characteristics and the archaic words are mostly spread out randomly throughout the novel, it appears that archaic vocabulary is important for the figure of Venus. The elevated language with archaic and legal touches stands in contrast to her emotional and petty behavior, improper for a powerful goddess, which enhances the effect of parody.

Статья посвящена образу Венеры в сказке об Амуре и Психее Апулея, а также лексическим средствам, с помощью которых описываются ее действия и речь. Венера – один из главных героев сказки, и ее речи заслуживают особого внимания, так как занимают важное положение в структуре повествования. Несмотря на то, что в латинской литературе явление речевой характеристики персонажей встречается редко, можно утверждать, что образ Венеры выделяется склонностью к архаической лексике. Речь самой Венеры, ее описания, а также речи персонажей, обращающихся к ней, обнаруживают множество слов с архаической окраской, однако в данном случае важно не их количество, а эффект неожиданности и новизны, который они обеспечивают. Этот эффект особенно заметен в связи с монологом Венеры

в начале истории (*Met*. 4. 30) и речью Юпитера в ее конце (*Met*. 6. 23). Хотя Апулей не наделяет своих персонажей выраженными речевыми характеристиками и пользуется архаическими словами в основном беспорядочно, для образа Венеры, по-видимому, архаическая лексика имеет большое значение. Употребление Венерой возвышенных слов с архаическим оттенком и юридических терминов резко контрастирует с ее импульсивным и мелочным поведением, недостойным могущественной богини, за счет чего обеспечивается эффект пародии.

CONSPECTUS

Статьи сопровождаются резюме на русском и английском языке
Summary in Russian and English