

Psyche's Metamorphosis:
An Exploration of Changes in Role and Character

By

Lisa Halim

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Classics

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	III
Acknowledgments.....	IV
Dedication.....	V
Introduction.....	1
Chapter I: Techniques and Approaches.....	9
Introduction.....	9
Propp.....	9
Campbell.....	13
ATU.....	16
Psychological Elements.....	23
Artistic Tradition.....	24
Philosophical Elements.....	26
Societal Norms.....	27
Intratextual Details.....	28
Discussion.....	32
Chapter II: Psyche’s Moments of Role Reversal within the Tale.....	34
Introduction.....	34
Section One: <i>Metamorphoses</i> 4.28-4.35.....	34
Section Two: <i>Metamorphoses</i> 5.1-5.24.....	40
Section Three: <i>Metamorphoses</i> 5.25-6.24.....	44
Discussion.....	52
Chapter Three: Application of Techniques and Approaches to the Tale.....	53

Introduction.....	53
Propp.....	56
Campbell.....	60
ATU.....	64
Psychological Elements.....	67
Artistic Tradition.....	71
Philosophy.....	76
Societal Norms.....	82
Intratextual Details.....	91
Discussion.....	96
Conclusion.....	99
Works Cited.....	103
List of Tables	
Propp.....	12
Campbell.....	16

Abstract

This thesis explores Psyche's moments of role reversal and character change in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and how she acts as a catalyst for Cupid and Venus's changes. The thesis uses different approaches to analyse how Apuleius facilitates these changes based on the premise that Apuleius draws on many strands to weave his tale. The first chapter outlines the approaches used which range from those rooted in narratology, based on Propp and Campbell, to those which respond to philosophy, and societal norms. The second chapter catalogues Psyche's changes, for example, she becomes a sacrificial maiden, slave, a hero, and finally a divine wife. Chapter three analyses the changes and role reversals from chapter two using the approaches outlined in chapter one. Most importantly, it is observed from the analysis that there is correspondence between the importance of a change and how many levels are at work at that point in the narrative.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Robert Nau. Thank you for all your patience, encouragement, guidance, and your understanding. I would also like to thank my advisory committee, Dr. Mark Joyal and Dr. Jane Cahill, for all the advice and insight you gave me.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. To my loving husband, Brijesh, and my parents, Anita and Ramli; thank you for your support, encouragement, and love.

I dedicate this work to my loving grandparents

Mavis and Cecil Hamilton

Introduction

Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, also known as *The Golden Ass*, presents the reader many avenues of study, but the pendant story of Cupid and Psyche (hereafter referred to as the Tale) especially has many intriguing details. One interesting area of study, which has also received little scholarly attention, is the theme of role reversal, specifically Psyche's. Not only does Psyche undergo changes but she is also a catalyst for changes in Cupid and Venus. This thesis will explore role reversal in Psyche's character, as well as the affect that she has on Cupid and Venus. It will conclude that the changes in Psyche's character arise from at least one, but often more than one, influence, including for example, traditional tales, philosophical thought, and the artistic tradition.

This thesis comprises three chapters. Chapter one introduces both the relevant narratological techniques and other approaches that are used to analyse the Tale. Chapter two explores the important and interesting changes that occur within the Tale. Chapter three applies the approaches from the first chapter to the moments of change mentioned in chapter two and concludes by highlighting how changes are sometimes driven by single or multiple approaches often paralleling how important Psyche's changes are at that moment in the plot of the Tale.

Chapter one explores the major approaches that are used to understand the characters' changes. First, Vladimir Propp provides a narratological method of analysis of the characters through their functions within the Tale. Propp's designations and functions show that role reversal and character changes reflect the functions that characters perform in folktales, especially the wondertale. Second, Joseph Campbell's stages of the hero's journey are used to show that Psyche's path is similar to the path

male heroes take in myth. Third, the Aarne–Thompson–Uther (ATU) classification of fairy tales, categorises fairy tales on the basis of themes. By using the tales found within the same category as the Tale as well as other tales that do not share the same categorisation or even those that are not within the classification system itself, we can analyse the Tale for parallels to traditional stories. Psyche’s actions, though they may seem out of character, actually demonstrate typical actions that heroines of fairy tales perform. The fourth section covers the psychological aspects of the characters. The Tale covers a period of time in which all the major characters mature into new roles: Psyche goes from a naïve and simple minded girl who is too curious for her own good to a heroic figure who attains a marriage to Cupid, immortality, and a child. Cupid goes from an immature son, who is too close to his mother, to a loving, accepting, and responsible husband. Venus, who had anxieties concerning her beauty and relationship with Cupid, is forced to accept the reality that she is not the *pater familias*, that she has lost her son, and that she is a grandmother. Psyche acts as a catalyst for their changes, from Cupid’s maturation to Venus’s acceptance of their union. The fifth section, *The Artistic Tradition*, has several examples of Cupid, Psyche, and Venus in various scenes that Apuleius evokes at moments where characters change. In both the Tale and artistic representations we find Cupid and Psyche as lovers, as torturing each other, as slaves, and as representing philosophical ideas. The sixth section focuses on the philosophical thought that is found within the Tale. Psyche and Cupid each undergo role reversals representative of Platonic thinking regarding love. The next section focuses on societal norms that are found within the Tale. During the Tale, Psyche’s status changes several times; the changes match those found in reality, such as those that occur with marriage and slavery. Some of her

character changes reflect the stages of maturation into a young woman. Lastly, intratextual details show that Apuleius intends to keep Psyche's journey and changes parallel to Lucius's. For example, if Lucius undergoes major changes we can expect to see those in Psyche. Both characters share characteristics that place them in similar situations.

Chapter two focuses on Psyche's major character changes and role reversals, and provides the data which we can analyse in chapter three using the approaches that were discussed in chapter one. The first section (*Metamorphoses* 4.28-4.35) focuses on the changes that Psyche undergoes from her introduction in the Tale to when she is abandoned on the mountain-top to await, as she assumes, her death. The second section (*Metamorphoses* 5.1-5.24) focuses on Psyche's role changes from when she is saved and taken to her new home to her abandonment by Cupid. The final section (*Metamorphoses* 5.25-6.24) analyses her changes from her abandonment to her role as Cupid's immortal wife. This final section is particularly important because it contains all the struggles that Psyche undertakes to reunite with Cupid as well as most of the changes that Psyche undergoes. Venus's and Cupid's moments of change and reversals will also be discussed in the final section, since Psyche is also a catalyst for their changes.

Chapter three applies the approaches to the data gathered in the previous chapter. First, Propp is used to explain the changes in Psyche by examining her functions as the hero of a folktale. Next, Campbell is considered in relation to Psyche's role reversal in terms of the hero and the typical hero's journey. The ATU has tales that provide a point of comparison between Psyche and other heroines. For example, some of Psyche's actions seem out of character for her, but when compared to other heroines of fairy tales,

her actions are revealed as similar and quite typical. In the section on Psychology, Apuleius provides characters who mature as they pass from one role to another. With this section we can explore the role that Psyche plays as a catalyst for Venus's and Cupid's behaviour and role changes. Venus and Cupid display fear and anxieties; Venus displays anxieties similar to characters of myth who fear losing their power; Cupid, fear of his mother and growing up. Under Psyche's influence, Venus changes roles from a controlling father-figure and unrivalled love and mother of Cupid to a grandmother and mother-in-law, while Cupid undergoes change as he matures to a responsible husband. Chapter three shows too that, at times, Apuleius cleverly aligns his characters with familiar artistic depictions of Cupid and Psyche. Apuleius was writing in the Second Sophistic and the Tale reflects the Platonic thought of the time. Apuleius creates the role reversals and character changes of Psyche and Cupid so that by the end of the Tale they reflect Platonic thought regarding divine love. There are several role reversals that reflect societal realities, such as marriage and slavery. For example, Venus questions Psyche's status in her relationship with Cupid and also makes Psyche, who was born a free person, her slave. Finally, there are intratextual details that link Psyche and Lucius. Psyche is the female version of Lucius since her situations and adventures mimic his: 1) both Psyche and Lucius share common characteristics, including curiosity; 2) they share similar predicaments, such as becoming slaves and contemplating suicide; 3) and they share a common goal in seeking the divine. Plot and characters are seen in Chapter three to change sometimes as a result of one approach being followed, sometimes several, or even all.

Before we begin our exploration of the Tale and its role reversals, we must first address other possible influences on the Tale, which have some importance for this study, but not enough to receive individual sections: 1) *The Ass* attributed to Lucian; 2) the ancient novel; 3) ancient drama including both comedy and tragedy; and 4) love poetry.

The *Metamorphoses* is considered the Roman version of the earlier Greek work by Lucian titled the *Ass* (Morgan and Harrison 227). While Apuleius's version is similar, what separates it from the Greek version most is the Tale. The Greek version provides Apuleius with a framework in which to embed the Tale so that he can present a more learned novel to his audience. Compared to Lucian's work, the Latin version is not bawdier than the raunchy Greek one and Apuleius's is at some points more spiritual and philosophical, especially in the Tale and the ending of the *Metamorphoses*. The Greek and Roman versions are similar but since the Tale is what separates them from one another, the thesis, with its focus on characters in the Tale, must naturally leave the *Ass* behind.

The ancient Greek novel usually includes a young male and female protagonist who must overcome several obstacles so that they can be together. Typically the two young lovers meet and then are separated by villains; sometimes they are forced to become slaves, and by the end they are reunited and live happily ever. Those happy endings are seen in popular tales like Chariton's *Chaereas and Callirhoe* or in Xenophon's *An Ephesian Tale*. There are a few parallels that are discussed in the thesis within the approaches but a full analysis of the ancient novel and the Tale would go beyond the scope of this thesis and has received much attention by other scholars, such as Whitmarsh and Konstan. According to Whitmarsh (5), 'Apuleius—who was very aware of

the Greek intellectual currents that washed around him—was reacting to the dominant Greek narrative form of his day, *viz.* the heterosexual novel'. The Tale is Apuleius's response to the Greek novel and while it can be compared and contrasted deeply to ancient novels, the scope of the thesis would become unmanageable were it attempted here.

Besides the ancient novel, there are several other genres that seem to have influenced the Tale. For example, there are elements of tragedy and comedy. Psyche, for instance, is sentenced to death, like Antigone, Iphigenia, or Andromeda. There are elements of Roman comedy found within the Tale as well. Cupid is similar to the main character who must overcome his father, a role that Venus exhibits, to win the girl; he is like Euthynicus of Plautus' *Casina*, who must outplay his father to have Casina. A father in New Comedy often makes himself the obstacle to his son's love out of fear that he is involving himself with a girl of low status. Konstan (138) and May both give this as the motive for Cupid's secrecy, another detail found in New Comedy. May argues that Cupid's situation is worse since Psyche does not share similar social status, his mother is completely against the relationship and he enters a marriage-like situation with Psyche without the legalities attached (221-222). Lastly, the Tale's hasty ending closely resembles those found in Plautus's *Mostellaria* and *Casina*. While these details are interesting when analysing the characters and plot, they do not run particularly deep. The thesis will now and again point out parallels such as those above but a separate section solely about parallels to drama is not warranted.

The Tale also reflects some elements of Latin love poetry. According to Parker and Murgatroyd, Psyche embodies the beautiful and famous lovers of the poets who

manipulate their lovers (402). Cupid also represents the male lovers: ‘he is malleable, letting his girl do as she pleases; he deprecates and suffers from malevolent female influence on his mistress; he is betrayed by her and leaves her, but is subsequently reconciled to her’ (Parker and Murgatroyd 403). While this observation based on Latin love poetry about Cupid is interesting and will have occasional relevance to the material this thesis covers, the thesis focuses on Psyche.

There are several scholars who have focused on the Tale and are relevant in this thesis. Scholars such as Finkenpearl, Kenney, and Sandy provide a general understanding of the Tale and the *Metamorphoses* as a whole. For the individual sections, Propp is invaluable in analysing the characters’ functions in the Tale. Campbell provides a method of analysing Psyche’s journey as a heroic one that is similar to that of male heroes of myth. The tales found within the ATU allow us to compare the Tale to similar tales that share the same category of the Tale as well as those that do not. Hackett offers a psychological approach to Psyche’s development and how that aids in Cupid’s maturation. Schlam provides a particular insight into the artistic tradition while Harrison and Wright discuss the philosophical basis to Apuleius’s Platonic thought. Fitzgerald and Bradley provide useful information on the social connections that Apuleius makes when he is creating his role and character changes. Finally, Krabbe and Kirichenko provide insight on the intratextual details found within the Tale and its larger work, the *Metamorphoses*, especially between Lucius and Psyche. As we see, scholars have each taken a single approach and have focused on that one particular subject. However, there is no single work that combines all the approaches and analyses how they are used to

create Psyche's character changes and role reversals as well as the affect that she has on Cupid and Venus.

Chapter 1: Techniques and Approaches¹

Introduction

As we can see, the Tale's narrative resembles the plots of ancient novels, comedy, and tragedy. Since Apuleius is writing a work called the *Metamorphoses*, we should expect the element of change at every turn. At the same time, there cannot be complete chaos—there will be an underlying coherency to what changes are possible. Cupid and Psyche, after overcoming obstacles, will marry. The stages by which this can happen are varied but limited, and this chapter will explore the main ideas which Apuleius relied upon for advancing his narrative and developing his characters. These include 1) narratological patterns revealed by Propp; 2) Campbell's stages of the hero's journey; 3) Fairy tales in the ATU as well as those outside the system; 4) neurotic familial relationships comparable to Freud's Oedipal Complex; 5) the artistic tradition of Cupid and Psyche; 6) Platonic ideas about love and the soul; 7) societal norms such as slavery and marriage; and 8) the narratological function of the Tale within the *Metamorphoses* as a whole. This examination will provide the tools for making sense of the role reversals catalogued in the subsequent chapters.

Propp

Propp reacted to the little attention which folklore had attracted by embarking on his own deep study of traditional Tales (*Theory and History* 3). He gathered elements of folktales and created a template of functions that could be applied to most folk and fairy tales, and which are equally applicable to the Tale. Propp focused on the function of the

¹ All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

characters within folklore, particularly the wondertale, a type of folktale which displays a particular compositional scheme (*Theory and History* 74). According to Propp, while a wondertale is a folktale, it has certain elements that differentiate it from the rest of folklore. He provides this definition:

A wondertale begins with some harm or villainy done to someone (for example, abduction or banishment) or with a desire to have something (a king sends his son in a quest of the firebird), and develops through the hero's departure from home and encounters with the donor, who provides him with the magic agent that helps the hero find the object of the search. Further along, the tale includes combat with an adversary (the most important form is slaying a dragon), a return, and a pursuit. Often this structure is more complicated, for example, when the hero is on his way home and his brothers throw him in a pit. Later, he escapes, is subjected to a trial by difficult tasks, and becomes a king and marries, either in his own kingdom or in that of his father-in-law. (*Theory and History* 102)

For Propp, while actions differed between wondertales, the function of the characters remained the same; he provides this example: '1. The king sends Ivan after the princess; Ivan departs. 2. The king sends Ivan after some wonder; Ivan departs. 3. The sister sends her brother for some medicine; he departs. 4. The stepmother sends her stepdaughter for fire; she departs. 5. The smith sends his laborer for a cow; he departs.' (*Theory and History* 82-83). For Propp, the dispatch and the departure are the same, while 'the dispatching and the departing characters, the motivation behind the dispatch, and so forth, are variables' (*Theory and History* 83). There are one hundred and fifty elements that are found within wondertales (Propp, *Theory and History* 83). As an added point, Propp

noted that most functions are binary within the wondertale; for instance, ‘a difficult task implies its solution, pursuit ends in rescue, the battle leads to victory, the initial misfortune or disaster is liquidated at the conclusion, and so forth’ (*Theory and History* 75).

The Tale fits the definition of a wondertale. Venus represents a villain who wishes to destroy Psyche because of Psyche’s rival beauty. Psyche’s heroic departure from home can be found within the onset of her journey to find Cupid after he leaves her. Pan can be seen as a donor who gives Psyche advice on how to find Cupid as well as how to appease Venus. While there are no violent or physical combats, a battle of wits occurs between Psyche and Venus as they navigate their slave and master relationship respectively. The Tale becomes complicated in that Psyche must perform difficult tasks imposed by Venus before she is reunited with Cupid. Psyche later marries Cupid in a formal marriage with Jupiter’s blessings, and joins the Olympians.

Along with the definition of a wondertale, Propp created a system that can be applied to folktales. The template is composed of letters, numbers and symbols; they are meant to represent specific functions or elements found within a folktale. The elements and the functions found within Propp’s template as applied to the Tale can be seen in my summary in Figure 1 on the following page.

As one can observe, there are many elements from the template that can be applied to the Tale as well as elements which are repeated. For the most part, the template is a good tool for analysing the Tale. The template is able to provide functions that can be applied to the Tale, such as the departure to the quest and both the tasks and the roles of

villains. However, there are certain details within the Tale that do not have a corresponding function that can be found in Propp.

<p>A king and queen have three daughters. Psyche, the youngest, has divine beauty (1). Because of Apollo's prophecy, they must marry Psyche to a monster. They leave her on a rock for her husband. Then she is taken to Cupid's palace. Cupid only visits her at night and makes her promise not to look at him in his real form and she agrees (2). She is permitted to see her sisters, after she agrees not to betray him by revealing who he is. After being persuaded by her sisters, Psyche lights a lamp to reveal her monster-husband and potentially kill him (3). Cupid flees and Psyche realises that she must find him (4). Venus hears of her son's relationship with Psyche, and vows to punish both Cupid and Psyche (5). Psyche wanders trying to find Cupid, who has been healing and is under strict guard in his mother's home (6). Venus demands that Psyche perform tasks in order to prove her merit (7). Psyche's first task is to sort out a massive pile of seed and grain into separate piles; ants help her with this task (8). Venus imposes another task on Psyche. Psyche is to retrieve golden tufts of wool from savage sheep (9). A talking reed aids her by telling her the easiest way to accomplish the task (10). Psyche is successful and Venus imposes a third task (11). The third task is to fill an urn with deadly Stygian water. Psyche is aided by Jupiter's eagle, who takes the urn and fills it for her (12). Upon receiving the urn, Venus orders a final and more deadly task: to procure some of Proserpina's beauty (13). A tower informs Psyche how to get to the Underworld without committing suicide as well as how to navigate the realm safely (14). Psyche is successful and resurfaces with the beauty box. She succumbs to her curiosity and opens the box, falling into a death-like sleep. Cupid, now healthy, finds Psyche and wakes her from her sleep (15). Psyche marries Cupid and becomes immortal (16). Venus is reprimanded by Jupiter and forced to accept her son's union (17).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial situation (α). 2. An interdiction is addressed to the hero (γ) intensified with a promise. 3. Violation of the interdiction (ζ^1). 4. Departure from home on a quest (C\uparrow). 5. Villainy (A^1). The villain receives information about his victim (ζ). 6. The villain incarcerates, imprisons (A^{15}). 7. A difficult task is proposed to the hero (M). 8. Various characters place themselves at the disposal of the hero (F^9). The task is accomplished (N). 9. M. 10. F^9 and N. 11. M. 12. F^9 and N. 13. M. 14. F^9 and N. 15. Enchantment is broken (K^8). 16. The hero marries without obtaining the throne (W^*). A married hero loses his wife; the marriage is resumed as the result of a quest (W^2). 17. The villain is punished with a magnanimous pardon (U and U neg.).
---	---

Figure 1.

For example, while Psyche does possess divine beauty, Venus only finds out about it through the collective effect of the people who build up her beauty. Through their actions Psyche's beauty gains Venus's attention, jealousy, and wrath. Another aspect that Propp's methodology does not seem to consider is the idea of themes within a tale. In breaking down a tale into functions alone, it ignores other elements that add cohesiveness to a narrative.

Campbell

Campbell, much like Propp, was interested in the elements of myths and folktales. He focused on heroes and on the hero's journey. By examining many tales from different cultures, including Native American, Indian, African, etc., Campbell isolated several stages through which a hero passes in his journey; these stages are present in ancient myth and also the Tale. As will be shown, the narrative pattern is so strong that, on a basic level, the Tale progresses in a familiar and coherent manner and the narrative pattern helps to maintain the narrative flow even as the Tale changes genre and its characters change their roles.

The first stage of the hero's journey is the 'call to adventure' which 'signifies that destiny has summoned the hero and transferred his spiritual centre of gravity from within the pale of his society to a zone unknown' (48). According to Campbell, the adventure can begin as a mistake or by chance (48). In the case of the Tale, Psyche's journey begins with her mistake of betraying her husband while he sleeps. During their journeys, heroes are usually aided by supernatural or magical beings, who are usually masculine: 'In fairy

tale lore it may be some little fellow of the wood, some wizard, hermit, shepherd, or smith, who appears to supply the amulets and advice that the hero will require' (59). In Psyche's case, the first helper she encounters is Pan, who gives her advice on how to find Cupid (Apul. *Met.* 5.25). Campbell actually uses Pan from the Tale as an example of a dangerous presence that poses risk to the hero who enters his domain. On their adventure, the hero encounters their first threshold, which is 'at the entrance to the zone of the magnified power' (64). Beyond that threshold lies the unknown and dangerous areas that the hero will have to traverse. Psyche encounters this threshold when she enters Venus' temple (Apul. *Met.* 6.8). When the hero arrives at the threshold, they are greeted by a benign figure who may also be malevolent. In Psyche's case, she encounters Ceres and Juno, who, since they cannot directly aid her out of fear of Venus, kindly give her advice (Apul. *Met.* 6.1-4). Psyche also encounters a malevolent figure in the form of Venus. Like Campbell's description of the 'bad mother' figure, Venus fulfils the role of the 'hampering, forbidding, punishing mother' (92). Campbell also states that 'the meeting with the goddess (who is incarnate in every woman) is the final test of the talent of the hero to win the boon of love (charity: *amor fati*), which is life itself enjoyed as the encasement of eternity' (99). Psyche has to encounter the bad mother figure within the goddess of Venus in order to be with Cupid. When she encounters the goddess, Psyche is subjected to various forms of violence meted out by Venus including whipping, hair pulling, and imprisonment in a room (Apul. *Met.* 6.11).

The second stage of the journey occurs while the adventure is in progress; the hero undergoes initiation by which he undertakes a 'road of trials' (81). For Campbell, the hero is often aided by advice or supernatural helpers, or 'it may be that here he

discovers for the first time that there is a benign power everywhere supporting him in his super human passage' (81). The road of trials is most relevant to the Tale and the main focus of Chapter Three but, in short, Psyche, as she tries to reunite with Cupid, is helped by various creatures and objects in her trials and labours which include menial tasks, encountering dangerous sheep, gathering Stygian waters and venturing into the Underworld.

Campbell asserts that if the adventurer is in fact a female she will have qualities that prove her worthy of marriage to an immortal: 'she is the one who, by her qualities, her beauty, or her yearnings, is fit to become the consort of an immortal' (99). This aptly describes Psyche who, through her beauty and completion of the tasks, proves herself worthy to be Cupid's wife.

As with heroes of mythology, there comes an end to their adventure. The final stage occurs when they have appeased or conquered the villain and are rewarded for their efforts, usually with an elixir of immortality from the gods. Psyche also attains that reward: 'Jupiter himself gave her a draft of the elixir of immortality; so that she is now and forever united with Cupid, her beloved, in the paradise of perfected form' (100). Like the mythological hero Hercules, Psyche is rewarded for accomplishing difficult tasks with marriage and immortality. Figure. 2 illustrates how well Campbell's typology works for the Tale.

Campbell's ideas are very useful for analysing the Tale in that they are so general that they may easily be applied to a story like the Tale. Campbell also helpfully uses Psyche as a specific example within his work in order to demonstrate some of the stages

and trials that a hero encounters in their journey. If Campbell's system has a weakness, it is its fluidity. It is not always clear when a hero passes from one stage to another.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Psyche betrays Cupid and must go on a quest to find him. 2. In Psyche is aided by Pan, helpful ants, a magical reed, Zeus's eagle, and an enchanted tower. 3. In her search, Psyche crosses the threshold of Venus' temple. 4. Venus subjects Psyche to trials and menial tasks. 5. Psyche is granted immortality by Jupiter and is married to Cupid. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The call to adventure (by mistake). 2. Aid of supernatural or magical beings. 3. The hero crosses a threshold that is the entrance to the zone of magnified power. 4. The road of trials. 5. The triumph.
--	--

Figure. 2

Aarne-Thompson-Uther

Narrative patterns link the Tale to folktales and heroic myth. The Tale also shares superficial details with other fairy tales and can be classified with them. This categorisation is found within the Aarne-Thompson-Uther classification system (henceforth, the ATU). On the surface, the ATU should be able to easily provide traditional stories parallel to the Tale which could illustrate how typical its narrative is.

The ATU attempts to organise tales into groups and sub groups on the basis of theme or motif. The Tale falls within section 300-749 out of a possible 2399 tales. Section 300-749 contains tales with a magical element in their plot; within that section, subsection 425-459 includes tales containing supernatural husbands; a further subsection, 425-449, includes stories where there is a search for a husband. The Tale falls within the classification of 425 along with *Beauty and the Beast* and other tales involving supernatural husbands. To be even more specific, the Tale is classified with a variation

code of A, making the index number of the Tale 425A. The variation includes stories with the theme of a ‘maiden on quest for her vanished bridegroom’ (*Aarne-Thompson*). Tales of this sort have standard details in their introduction, like the promise of a present from a journey, a daughter who is promised in marriage by her father, a daughter who promises herself in marriage, an impulsive vow (like Jephthah’s), or an attempt to evade a vow (*Aarne-Thompson*). These details are found within the Tale as well as the stories that share the same classification number. If the classification system is thorough and valid, then the ATU should be a useful tool for easily finding parallel stories.

The Tale does share certain elements found within the tale of *Beauty and the Beast* and, as mentioned previously, it is placed with similar tales according to ATU. In order to bring out the similarities, a brief summary of *Beauty and the Beast* as retold by the French novelist Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont in 1756 entitled *La Belle et la Bête* follows. This version adapts an earlier version of tale recorded by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve. The tale begins with a merchant who asks his three daughters what presents they would like him to bring them back from a trip abroad. While the two eldest daughters request dresses and such, the youngest asks for a single rose. The father, while on his travels, becomes lost because of bad weather and finds a castle. Although he is not able to gain the attention of the owner or any of the occupants of the castle, he enters. He notices that there is no one present, yet there is a table laden with a meal, which he proceeds to eat. He remains in the castle, regardless of never meeting or seeing its owner, until one fateful day when the weather clears. Exploring the castle-grounds, he sees a beautiful garden which he often visits. Just as he is about to leave the castle to resume his travels, he notices a rose bush. Remembering his promise to his youngest

daughter, he reaches out to pick the bloom, only to be stopped by a beast wearing regal clothing. The beast reprimands him for taking advantage of his host; to eat and sleep in his own room was not enough, he had to steal his rose from his personal garden. After explaining that his daughter only wanted a single rose, the beast forgives him with the caveat that he bring his youngest daughter to live with him. The father reluctantly agrees and having returned home tells his daughters what happened and the promise he made. The youngest agrees and goes to the castle to live with the beast. Everyday the Beast asks Belle to marry him; each time she declines. Belle often dreams about a handsome prince who asks her why she keeps refusing his offer; she explains that she cannot marry the Beast since she only thinks of him as a friend. She does not make the connection that the prince and the Beast are one and the same. Eventually Belle becomes homesick and wishes to see her family. The Beast allows her to go on the condition that she return in a week. He gives her an enchanted mirror and ring to take with her. The mirror would allow her to see the castle and the Beast, and the ring would let her return to the castle in an instant. Upon seeing her well dressed and in good health, Belle's sisters instantly become jealous. To ensure that she does not return to the Beast in time and that she incur his wrath, they make a show of not wanting her to leave, even rubbing their eyes with onions to make it appear as if they are crying. Belle, swayed by her sisters, agrees to stay longer. The seven days pass by quickly and she does not remember the vow until she looks into the mirror and sees the beast lying unconscious. She uses the ring to rush to his side and agrees to marry him, realising that she loves him. Immediately the beast transforms into the handsome prince who tells her that he was placed under a curse by a

fairy which could only be lifted if he found true love. The tale ends with the two marrying and living happily ever after.

The Tale and *Beauty and the Beast* are similar. To begin, both include three daughters, the youngest of whom is the most beautiful. The youngest in each also marries a supernatural beast and must keep her promises to her husband. Psyche, like Belle, has a father who allows her to be with a beast. Both fathers are willing to sacrifice their daughter to a monster. Both Psyche and Beauty live in a mysterious enchanted dwelling, far away from their family, with servants to fulfil their every wish. Psyche and Belle also have jealous sisters who try to sabotage their younger sibling's relationships. Both Belle and Psyche are so simple and naïve that they are unaware of the machinations of their sisters. Psyche and Belle both lose connections with their old families. At the end of both tales they reunite with their lovers and have a happy ending. The stories share similar themes of heroines and their supernatural lovers, betrayal, redemption, and love. Psyche and Belle, while sharing similarities, also have differences. For instance, when it comes to the sacrifices that are made, the circumstances differ. In Psyche's case, she is sacrificed to marriage to a beast because of her beauty; in Belle's case, she offers herself to live with the Beast so that her father may live.

The ATU also has subsections that include stories where heroines perform tasks or dangerous deeds in order to get their husbands back. This highlights an issue that Vladimir Propp had with the classification system. He argues that it should be the function of the character and the action, not necessarily the character who is doing the action itself which should be used to categorise folktales (*Morphology* 18-19). There are many other categories that the Tale could fall into but does not in the ATU, and that

makes the classification of the Tale too narrow and the ATU in general less useful. For example, there are tales like *The Three Princesses of Whiteland* that involves a man undergoing obstacles in trying to find his wife after he breaks his promise to her. That tale falls under section 400, the quest for the lost bride. Another tale is entitled *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon* that is also under 425, but it would have been equally well categorised with 'supernatural husbands'. Another issue with the ATU is that it is not comprehensive enough. The Palestinian tale, *Jummez Bin Yazur, Chief of the Birds* bears even more similarities to the Tale than *Beauty and the Beast*. As with *Beauty and the Beast*, I summarise this tale to highlight how, through comparison, traditional the Tale feels.

In the Palestinian tale, there is a merchant father who has three daughters; Sitt il-Husun, the youngest of the three, a step-daughter, is the most beautiful. The tale begins with the merchant asking his daughters what they would like upon his return from the *hajj* (a pilgrimage to Mecca); the two older sisters desire items while the youngest requests that he bring back for her the Chief of the Birds. On his way home from the *hajj*, he suddenly remembers his youngest daughter's request. With difficulty he finds where the Chief of the Birds lives and summons him: 'Jummez Bin Yazur, Chief of the Birds! My daughter has asked for you' (Ibrahim and Kanaana 118). Three days pass and a bird appears at Sitt il-Husun's window, who from that day on would turn into a handsome youth and spend the night with her. Every time that he departs, he leaves a purse of gold coins under her pillow.

Her sisters learn of this and become jealous and plot to sabotage her relationship. Sitt il-Husun is simple and innocent; she would never suspect her sisters of treachery.

Both Psyche and Sitt il-Husun accidentally wound their winged lovers. At their request she finds out that he is vulnerable to glass. Upon learning this, the two sisters break Sitt il-Husun's window so that, when he flies in, he is wounded. Sitt il-Husun waits for him to come, and then realises that her sisters have tricked her.

Under the guise of a beggar, she goes in search of Jummez. While resting under a tree she overhears two doves talking about Jummez's wife wanting to kill him and that the only cure is to rub on his wound a concoction of dove's blood and feathers. Sitt il-Husun makes the concoction, finds him and applies the medicine. When he wakes up, she explains how she had been tricked by her sisters. He forgives her but now his sisters do not agree to their marriage.

They order her to complete a set of tasks to prove her worth. The first order is to sweep and mop the entire town. Jummez helps her to accomplish the task. The second is to gather enough feathers to fill ten mattresses. Once again, Jummez aids her by telling her to go to the top of a mountain and shout that he is dead. When she does so, all the birds pluck out their feathers which she gathers and brings back to his sisters. The sisters then demand that she bring a straw tray from a wall of a ghoul (a female ghoul). Once again Jummez aids her; he informs her that at the ghoul's lair she will see meat in front of horses and barley in front of lions as well as a stone terrace of the house that has collapsed. He tells her to switch the food and to repair the wall, which she does. As she attempts to take the tray, she wakes up the ghoul but is able to escape since the horses, lions and the wall refuse to obey the ghoul. She accomplishes the task and his sisters deem her worthy of marriage to their brother.

As we can observe, Sitt il-Husun is similar to Psyche in that both are so innocent and simple that they cannot see past their jealous sisters' plots. Like Psyche, she undergoes a quest to find her lover. As in the Tale, there is a familial roadblock for the two lovers, Venus for Cupid and Psyche, the sisters for Sitt il-Husun and Jummez. There is also a deeper supernatural undertone that connects *The Bird Husband* with the Tale than *Beauty and the Beast*. Sitt il-Husun has help from her supernatural lover, encounters a ghoul, and is aided by helpers, like Psyche. While Sitt il-Husun's tasks may not have been as difficult as Psyche's, nevertheless, she must accomplish them in order to be with her lover.

Using Propp's method of analysis, Sitt il-Husun's tale includes many of the same functions which are found in the Tale. There is an initial situation, departure from home for a quest, villainy, performance of difficult tasks with the help of magical helpers, and the marriage of the hero. There are also familiar elements at work from Campbell's work. Sitt il-Husun's call to adventure begins with her mistake of unknowingly injuring Jummez and having to go in search for him after he flees. She enters the threshold and is greeted by his sisters who are intent that she prove that she is worthy of their brother. She must undergo trials and is rewarded with marriage to Jummez.

The ATU, while it is useful in classifying some tales, falls short in certain respects for analysing the Tale. For example, it does not necessarily group tales together by how similar they are overall; similar tales can appear in separate sections, or, as seen with the comparison of the Palestinian tale to the Tale, are missing. It focuses merely on motifs and themes. Propp compensates by focusing on the functions of tales and not the themes.

The strength of his approach lies in its ability to be applied to any tale regardless of superficial details of a story.

We have analysed the narratological patterns which can be found in Apuleius. While it cannot be claimed that Apuleius' primary goal was to compose a fable or fairy tale, the reader should feel that overall his tale follows their general pattern.

Psychological Elements

The Tale also expresses the anxieties that are often exhibited in characters from Greek mythology. In the Tale, this anxiety is found primarily in the relationship between Cupid and Venus. Venus fears being replaced as the sole focus of Cupid's life. In this she is similar to figures like king Oenomaus, Hippodameia's father in the myth of Pelops, who will not give up his daughter until he is defeated in a chariot race by a suitor (Pind. *Ol.*1.66-90).

Cupid also displays anxiety in his fears of his mother who substitutes for a father figure. During her angry rant to Cupid, Venus first threatens to have him replaced as a son; second, to 'blunt his arrows'; finally, to apply 'more stringent corporal remedies'. These can be taken metaphorically as threats of castration (Apul. *Met.* 5.30).² Further proof that we have Venus acting as a father-figure comes when she, enraged, yells at Psyche, 'the marriage is not between equals, and what is more took place in the country, without witnesses, and without his father's consent, and cannot be held to be legitimate' (Apul. *Met.* 6.9).³ She is acting in the role of an outraged *pater familias*. During her speech to Cupid, Venus accuses him of being a *parricida* (Apul. *Met.* 5.30), stating that

² Kenney's translation.

³ Kenney's translation.

he has no respect towards her, or perhaps referring to Mars, his stepfather. Once again Venus is placing herself within a masculine role as a father who, in hyperbolic language, shows anger at being disrespected by his son. Further, Cupid has issues growing up and escaping from his mother's grasp; for instance, Cupid flies to his mother's home to heal (Apul. *Met.* 5.29). There is also an Oedipal theme in that Cupid falls in love with a woman who bears divine beauty similar to his mother's. Further, Cupid and Venus do not have a conventional mother-and-son relationship. For example, Venus bestows open and long wet kisses upon her son (Apul. *Met.* 4.33).

Artistic Tradition

Apuleius' audience would also have been aware of several standard depictions of Cupid and Psyche. These become available to Apuleius in his depictions of Cupid and Psyche and potential plot elements of the Tale. There are certain artistic type scenes of Cupid and Psyche that Apuleius had available in framing the Tale, with the assumption that his readers would make the connections.

The first type includes images of Cupid and Psyche locked in a loving embrace, commonly found in statuary. One example of this type, from a Greek original of the second century BCE, depicts a wingless Cupid embracing Psyche (AT No.1).⁴ Another example, a statue, now at the Altes museum (AT No.2), shows a Cupid with his customary feathered wings embracing a Psyche with butterfly wings.

A second type-scene includes Psyche torturing Cupid or vice versa in the Tale. Cupid causes Psyche pain and distress by not revealing who he is; Psyche causes Cupid

⁴ The AT. Nos are keyed to the works of art listed after the bibliographic entries in the Works Cited section.

pain by wounding him with a drop of hot oil. An example of this scene can be found in a green jasper intaglio held at the Cleveland Museum that dates between the First and Sixth Century BCE (AT. No.5). The piece depicts Psyche torturing Cupid, who is bound to a tree, with a torch. This scene continues to be popular even after Apuleius. For instance, the scene can be found in a mosaic of the Third Century CE (AT. No.6) showing Psyche stealing the bow and arrows from a sleeping Eros.

A third type depicts Cupid and Psyche as attendants to Venus. Indeed, Venus enlists the aid of Mercury in her quest to find Psyche and her manner is that of a master attempting to locate an errant slave. Mercury, who is put in Venus' service, calls out in his search 'if any man can recapture or show the hiding-place of the king's runaway daughter, the slave of Venus, by name of Psyche' (Apul. *Met.* 6.8). More often than not, Venus's relationship with her son is closer to that between master and servant; she claims, for instance, that she can easily replace him with one of her servants in her home (Apul. *Met.* 5.29). Venus usually uses Cupid as a servant to do her bidding as she does in the beginning of the Tale when she sends him to ruin Psyche (Apul. *Met.* 4.30-31). Among many examples of this type, there is a terracotta relief from the Fifth Century BCE which depicts Eros and Psyche drawing a cart in which Aphrodite is standing followed by Hermes (AT No. 3).

A fourth and final type is that of Cupids or Erotes leading the soul to heaven. The earliest appearance of Psyche with Eros is from the late fifth century BCE. According to Schlam (4), an Etruscan scarab depicts Psyche with butterfly wings, and near her is a bow symbolising Eros. In the Roman period, this scene is usually found on children's sarcophagi. Cupid and Psyche are often depicted as children themselves or as

adolescents. Psyche represents the soul which Cupid gently carries, depicting a tender rather than a sensual feeling (Huskinson 52-53). For Schlam, following the ideas from Plato, Eros and the soul are interconnected in that love is the conveyance by which the soul attains immortality. This imagery is often found on sarcophagi depicting Cupid/Eros lifting the soul pictured as someone asleep (Schlam 25-28). Cupids/Erotes who lead the soul can be found on a sarcophagus in the Vatican dating to the Antonine Period (138-193 CE) (AT No.4).

Philosophical Elements

Apuleius was a philosopher and that is evident in the *Metamorphoses*. According to Harrison, the *Symposium* of Plato provides a central theme for the Tale. In the *Symposium* Socrates explains the true nature of love: ‘Love’s true object is the beauty of the soul, not the body, and thus is the greatest of the gods, drawing man towards contemplation of the divine’ (225).⁵ Love and the soul are paired together in Platonic thought as the ideal pair, and so, make an ideal couple for Apuleius. Psyche is able to join the world of the divine through her union with Cupid.

Elsewhere in the *Symposium*, Socrates describes two Erotes to complement the two Aphrodites, on the grounds that there is no Aphrodite without Eros. Socrates describes the first Eros: ‘the Eros who belongs to Aphrodite Pandemus is truly pandemian and acts in any sort of way. And here you have the good-for-nothing human beings have as their love’ (Pl. *Symp.* 181B).⁶ The second Eros, who has more sense and is not full of the outrage that Pandemus Eros exhibits, is concerned with the love of men.

⁵ Harrison’s translation.

⁶ Benardete’s translation.

The Cupid/Eros that is within the Tale bears similarities to the first Eros who later matures when he finds love.

According to Hunter, there is no single Platonic pattern found within the Tale; instead several ideas are woven throughout the story as well as the whole work of the *Metamorphoses*. Hunter states that ‘Cupid and Psyche, and indeed the *Metamorphoses* as a whole, must be set within the extraordinarily rich panorama of half-philosophical, half religious ideas which were available to an educated man of the second century, many of them of a distinctly Platonising flavour’ (230). The Platonic connection between the meeting of Love and the Soul is incorporated into a whimsical and charming tale within the larger story of Lucius the Ass, which also draws on Platonic ideas.

Societal Norms

Apuleius not only drew inspiration from artistic traditions and philosophical thought but also from aspects of everyday life with which his audience would be familiar, including: 1) slavery; 2) the passage of a young woman into womanhood and marriage; and 3) changing family dynamics.

Slavery is a very big topic within the Tale. Psyche, Venus, and Cupid take on the roles of slave, slave-owner, and *deliciae* (child–slave), respectively. Psyche is the slave. She changes into that role so that she can reunite with Cupid by submitting herself to Venus. Venus herself portrays the slave owner. In this role, she exercises her legal rights to recover, punish, and force Psyche to do her bidding. Cupid is a particular type of slave called a *deliciae*. Venus deliberately keeps him immature and dependent on her. As his relationship with Psyche grows, the bond of servitude to his mother dissolves.

As a young woman, Psyche is expected to marry and produce an heir for her husband's household. While Psyche ultimately fulfils this role, Venus makes the journey very difficult. When Psyche enters Cupid's home, he tells her that she is the mistress of the household and refers to her as his wife, even though they are just lovers (Apul. *Met.* 5.5). She believes that their union is legal. However, Venus declares the marriage invalid since she did not consent. By completing Venus's tasks, Psyche reunites with Cupid and fulfils her role by becoming his legal wife and a legitimate member of the household, and by bearing his child.

Psyche is a catalyst for changing Venus's and Cupid's family dynamics. Venus appropriates the masculine role in the household. For instance, she proclaims to Cupid that she can strip him of his status and powers by replacing him with a slave (Apul. *Met.* 5.29). Likewise, Venus disapproves of Cupid when he goes behind her back and takes Psyche as his wife. When Venus acts as a *pater familias*, Psyche's marriage and the legitimacy of her unborn child are placed in doubt. It is not until Jupiter, the true *pater familias* of the divine household, steps in and takes control that the issue of the union's legitimacy is resolved. He declares it a legal marriage between two equals. In doing so, he also creates a normal family dynamic between Psyche, Cupid, and Venus. Venus is forced to accept the union and can no longer oppose having Psyche as her daughter-in-law; she also loses her control over Cupid.

Intratextual Details

The Tale has several intratextual details that connects it to the rest of the *Metamorphoses*. To begin, the main characters of both tales are similar. Both Lucius and

Psyche have the same curious nature that leads them both to mishap and adventure.

Lucius in the first book claims that he is a very curious person (Apul. *Met.* 1.2). Curiosity leads Lucius into becoming an ass in Book 3; it also leads Psyche into breaking her promise to Cupid as well as to her opening the beauty box Proserpina gives her (Apul. *Met.* 6.21). Both Lucius and Psyche undergo trials and setbacks in their quests. For Lucius, his quest is to regain his human form after being transformed into an ass; for Psyche, it is to overcome the trials that Venus has set for her so that she can be reunited with Cupid. They both face enemies: in the case of Lucius, his owners and the band of robbers; in Psyche's, her sisters and Venus. The *Metamorphoses* as a whole provides a framing story to the Tale by giving characters for comparison as well as thematic details; for example, Psyche is similar to Lucius in their quest for the divine. According to Walsh, the result of the union of Psyche and Cupid, *Voluptas*, reflects the relationship of Lucius and Isis. Walsh states that 'this union reflects that special relationship of Lucius with Isis which after initiation is represented as apotheosis, and which brings Lucius *inexplicabilis voluptas*. In this sense Apuleius has made the histories of Lucius and Psyche converge' (192).

Lucius is not the only character with whom Psyche shares a connection. Charite, a girl who is abducted by the same thieves who take Lucius, also shares similarities with Psyche. It is interesting to note that Charite is told the Tale by the kidnapper's servant and that Charite's story provides the immediate frame to the Tale. Charite is kidnapped on her wedding night from her soon to be husband Tlepolemus; while she is not legally married to him she constantly refers to him as her husband. Psyche, while she never had a legally binding wedding ceremony with Cupid, searches for her husband after he flees

from her. Psyche acknowledges her marriage and Cupid as her husband during her nightly talks with him (Apul. *Met.* 5.6). Cupid, for his part, refers to himself as her *maritus* (Apul. *Met.* 5.6). In the end, both Charite and Psyche are rescued by their lovers and are married. The tales of Psyche and Charite share love and chance as major themes. Both are driven by love to be with their lovers and it takes a bit of luck and chance for them to be reunited with them. Other connections can be made between Psyche and Charite. For example, both are threatened with terrible punishments, by trials or by being sewn up within the Ass (Apul. *Met.* 6.30-32) respectively. However, there are differences to be found as well. For example, while Psyche and Charite are reunited with their soon-to-be husbands, Psyche is granted immortality and gives birth to Pleasure (*Voluptas*); Charite is only allowed a brief amount of time with Tlepolemus, for he is murdered shortly after they are wed (Apul. *Met.* 8.4-6). Soon after, Charite kills herself with her husband's sword to join him (Apul. *Met.* 13-14). Still, even in this she shows the same kind of resolve to be with her husband as Psyche has shown. It is interesting, and perhaps a little surprising, that Apuleius even foreshadows Charite's joining her husband through death; it is through the sleep of death from which Cupid rescues Psyche and they are subsequently reunited.

Cupid also has connections to the character Tlepolemus, who rescues Lucius and Charite from the robbers who have kidnapped them (Apul. *Met.* 7.5-12). Similar to Tlepolemus, who disguises himself as a notorious thief, Cupid is depicted as a hideous monster (Frangoulidis 293). Both men have to rescue their brides to attain a happy ending. Frangoulidis connects Haemus, Tlepolemus' alias, and Cupid. Haemus is a brigand whom everyone fears and Cupid a god whom mortals and immortals fear

(Frangoulidis 295). For Frangoulidis, the threatening and frightful appearance of Haemus is similar to the depiction in the oracle's prophecy of Cupid as a beast. Haemus describes himself as follows:

*ego sum praedo famosus Haemus ille Thracius, cuius totae provinciae nomen
horrescunt, patre Therone aequae latrone inclito prognatus, humano sanguine
nutritus interque ipsos manipulos factionis educatus heres et aemulus virtutis
paternae.*

I am Haemus, the famous brigand, the one from Thrace, at whose name whole provinces are horrified, descended from father, Theron, a famous thief also. I was nourished on human blood and raised in their bandit ranks, heir and emulator of my father's virtue. (Apul. *Met.* 7.5)

He is portrayed as someone who frightens entire provinces as well as one who feeds off human blood, in short, as a monster. Further, 'Theron' is evocative of a 'beast', since Greek *θηρίον*, means 'little beast'. It is also interesting to note that the name Haemon evokes *αἷμων* in Greek which means 'bloody', a good name to have as a brigand. The name also means 'clever', an allusion to his tricking the band of thieves. The description of Haemus is similar to the oracular description of Cupid too (Apul. *Met.* 4.33).

*nec speres generum mortali stirpe creatum, sed saevum atque ferum vipereumque
malum, quod pinnis volitans super aethera cuncta fatigat, flammaque et ferro
singula debilitat, quod tremit ipse Iovis quo numina terrificantur fluminaque
horrescunt et Stygiae tenebrae.*

Do not hope for a human son-in-law, but cruel and fierce and serpentine evil, which flying above the aether on its wings harasses and crushes all individually

with fire and steel, before whom Jove himself trembles, by whom the gods are frightened, and whom the Stygian shades and streams tremble at. (Apul. *Met.* 4. 33)

Cupid is described as a cruel serpent, whom the king of the gods fears. This brings his level of terror higher than that of Haemus. Apuleius is very clever with the description of ‘fire and steel’; it fits Cupid with his metal tipped arrows and torches as weapons and evokes the weapons of bandits like Haemon who claims to be, who would use fire and steel as well. This description of the weapons provides some foreshadowing of whom the groom will be. While provinces fear him, the gods and the Stygian shades fear this monster. However, both are not who they seem; they are more than their monstrous descriptions. Haemus is in reality Tlepolemus intent on rescuing his bride; Cupid is a god intent on saving his Psyche for himself and from his mother’s notice.

Discussion

Apuleius’ Tale mirrors narratological patterns familiar from folktale and heroic myth. As seen in the approaches of Propp and Campbell, one can break the Tale down into its elements, functions, or stages. While the Tale does not function in the *Metamorphoses* only as a fairy tale, there are obvious parallels between it and traditional stories. By taking different, but familiar, approaches rooted in the patterns of traditional stories, Plato, familial relationships from Greek myth, and artistic representations, Apuleius is able to introduce surprising and interesting changes in the Tale without risking losing his audience. Apuleius adds coherency amidst the role reversals and

changes to the Tale by relying on a limited number of threads on which he can draw to advance his narrative and depict his characters.

Chapter Two: Psyche's Moments of Role Reversal within the Tale

Introduction

On the surface, Psyche seems to be a flat, one-dimensional character, who often appears as simple-minded and naïve. A thorough examination of her character reveals that she undergoes character changes, and by the end of the Tale Psyche is more complex than she first appears at the beginning. This chapter breaks down the Tale into three sections: the first, 4.28-4.35, from where we are introduced to Psyche to where she is left on the mountaintop to await her fate; the second, 5.1-5.24, where Psyche discovers her new home and husband to where Cupid abandons her; finally the third section, 5.25-6.24, which takes us from Psyche's abandonment, her trials and her reunification with Cupid to the end of the Tale. Each section examines Psyche's character changes and role reversals.

Section One: *Metamorphoses* 4.28-4.35

This section covers Psyche's character from the beginning of the Tale to the point where she is left alone on the mountaintop to await her fate. From the beginning she is a simple character and this initial characterisation allows her metamorphosis as the Tale progresses.

Apuleius directly characterises Psyche at the beginning of the Tale. Psyche's beauty is described as 'so perfect that human speech was too poor to describe or even praise it satisfactorily' (Apul. *Met.* 4.28).⁷ She is so beautiful that she is worshipped as the goddess Venus (Apul. *Met.* 4.29). An interesting detail is that she is not named until Venus, her divine rival, mentions her name three chapters into the Tale (Apul. *Met.* 4.30);

⁷ Kenney's translation.

Psyche, at this point, has no identity other than her beauty. Psyche, a mortal, possesses divine-like beauty that attracts attention far and wide. Eventually, the admiration that Venus enjoys and expects shifts to Psyche; Venus's altars and temples are empty and cold, while Psyche is venerated as Venus as she walks through the streets (Apul. *Met.* 4.29). Rivalry with a god or goddess, whether intentional or not, is a common element in Greek mythology, tragedy, and novels that rarely turns out well for the mortals involved. For example, in Xenophon's *Ephesian Tale of Anthia and Habrocomes*, the hero incurs the wrath of Eros because of his famed beauty.

Indirect characterisation is also evident in the beginning of the Tale. For example, Apuleius gives the impression that Psyche's beauty has left her alone and isolated. Psyche's beauty is a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it is making her famous; on the other, Psyche feels lonely and isolated. People may have travelled far and wide to catch a glimpse of her or to worship her, but as Apuleius writes, 'everyone praised her, but no one, king, prince or even a commoner, came as a suitor desiring her in marriage' (Apul. *Met.* 4.32).⁸

Apuleius also characterises Psyche through evoking famous heroines from myth. For example, Psyche's father, at the behest of Apollo's oracle, marries her to a monster by placing her atop a crag to await her fate (Apul. *Met.* 4.33). Psyche's sacrifice to a monster upon the crag combines elements from wedding and funeral processions, which can also be found in the stories of Iphigenia, Antigone, and Andromeda.

Several authors, including Euripides and Lucretius, have told the tragic tale of Iphigenia. Euripides writes of Iphigenia's plight in two of his works: *Iphigenia at Aulis*

⁸ Kenney's translation.

and *Iphigenia in Tauris*. The former details the circumstances leading to and including her sacrifice; the latter, what happens to her after she is saved by Artemis and made an attendant at her temple at Tauris. There are numerous similarities between Psyche's plight and Iphigenia's. A priest informs Agamemnon that Iphigenia must be sacrificed, so that the Greeks can appease Artemis (Eur. *IA*. 89-91); a priest of Apollo had advised Psyche's father to abandon his daughter dressed in 'the ornament of a funeral marriage' to appease the anger of the gods (Apul. *Met.* 4.33). Though reluctant, Agamemnon agrees and lures his daughter to Aulis with the promise that she will marry Achilles. The chorus describes Iphigenia's procession as a wedding and a funeral. They begin with the "marriage" portion of the procession: 'O what bridal-chant rang with the crying of the Libyan flute, with the footfall of dancers replying to the voice of the lute, with the thrill of the reeds' glad greeting' (Eur. *IA*. 1036-1039)⁹. The chorus soon ends with the fate of Iphigenia: 'but men shall wreath thine head for death, thy golden hair—as heifer white and red down from the hill—caves led, a victim pure, shall stain with blood thy throat snow-fair' (Eur. *IA*. 1080-1085). Apuleius's description of Psyche's wedding/funerary procession is similar:

Iam feralium nuptiarum misserimae virgini choragium struitur, iam taedae lumen atrae fuliginis cinere marcescit; et sonus tibiae zygiae mutatur in querulum Ludii modum, cantusque laetus hymenaei lugubri finitur ululatu.

Now the pageantry of the funereal marriage for the very pitiable maiden is arranged. Now the light of the torch falters with the ash of black soot; and the sound of the marriage-flute changes into a sorrowful style of the Lydian mode,

⁹ Way's translation of Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* is used throughout.

and the glad song of the marriage is brought to a close with mournful wailing.

(Apul. *Met.* 4.33)

There are similarities to be found in that both girls are surrounded by mournful and joyous sounds as they go in their procession, which is described as having both matrimonial and funereal themes. To add to the funeral context, Apuleius uses the letter ‘u’, especially with *mutatur in querulum Ludii modum* and *lugubri finitur ululatur* for the sound effect of mourning and wailing that is common place in funeral processions.

Both Iphigenia and Psyche are given a chance to speak to their parents about their situation, and their speeches have a similar tone. Iphigenia attempts to appease her mother, Clytemnestra, before her sacrifice; she tells her that she is aware that it is because of Artemis’ decree that the sacrifice must happen. Iphigenia claims that ‘if Artemis hath willed to claim my body as her right, what, shall I, a helpless mortal woman, thwart the will divine? Nay, it cannot be’ (Eur. *IA.* 1396-1397). In her speech to her parents, Psyche tells them that there is no need for their weeping and lamentations:

Invidiae nefariae letali plaga percussi sero sentitis. Cum gentes et populi celebrarent nos divinis honoribus, cum novam me Venerum ore consono nuncuparent, tunc dolere, tunc flere, tunc me iam quasi peremptam lugere debuistis. Iam sentio, iam video solo me nomine Veneris perisse. Ducite me et cui sors addixit scopulo sistite.

You perceive too late the deathly blow of nefarious envy. When nations and peoples were celebrating us with divine honours, when sounding together with one voice proclaimed me as the new Venus, then you ought to have grieved, then you ought to have wept, then you ought to have mourned me like I was lost. Now

I understand, now I see; that I perish because of the name of Venus alone. Lead me and place me on the rock which fate has assigned me. (Apul. *Met.* 4.34)

Psyche's speech also resembles Antigone's in Sophocles' *Antigone*. In her speech, she relinquishes herself to her fate while admonishing Creon's actions: 'I am led along the road ready for me. I shall never again be suffered to look on the holy eye of the day. But my fate claims no tears—no friend cries for me' (Soph. *Ant.* 877-882).¹⁰ In this case, there is a sense of impending doom that Psyche, Iphigenia or Antigone cannot escape. In Psyche's admonishment of her parents we see the first signs of a deeper character; she, like Antigone, is more than a simple-minded girl submissively and silently going to her death.

Apuleius allows us to see similarities between Psyche and both Iphigenia and Antigone, but since there are variations in the outcomes of the stories of the two heroines, the audience may be left in suspense over what may happen to Psyche. Antigone was fated to perish in a cave; Iphigenia on the other hand, has different fates depending on the author. For Euripides, Iphigenia mysteriously disappears (*IA*.1583) and becomes an attendant to Artemis in Tauris performing human sacrifices that would have included her brother, Orestes (Eur. *AT*. 617-621). For the later Latin authors, Iphigenia is given a somewhat different treatment. Lucretius does not spare Iphigenia, and she is indeed sacrificed by her father and the priest at Aulis (Lucr. 1.80-101). Finally, there is Ovid, who describes a mist that rolls in leaving a hind behind, with Iphigenia nowhere to be found (Ov. *Met.*12.32-35).

¹⁰ Grene's translation.

The actual resolution of Psyche's scene strongly parallels Andromeda's rescue by Perseus. Andromeda is similar to Psyche in that she is punished for beauty. In Andromeda's case, her mother, Cassiopeia, boasts of her own beauty, and that leads to Andromeda's sacrifice to the sea monster. Andromeda and Psyche share similar parents who are responsible for their dread fate. Once it is learned that Andromeda must be sacrificed, she is dressed for a sacrifice as if she were about to be married (*Man.* 5. 546-548). Andromeda is left alone on a crag to await the sea monster, but she is rescued and spared from that fate by Perseus. Psyche, similar to Andromeda, is left on a crag and is doomed to a marriage with a vicious serpent; she too is rescued.

Our understanding of Psyche's character and our sympathy for her tragic situation is enhanced by Apuleius' evocation of heroines from Greek myth and is further intensified by his use of vivid description which drives home that Psyche is suffering terribly. Apuleius creates a scene full of sounds with a procession full of people mourning or celebrating as well as Psyche in her finery being led to the mountaintop (*Met.* 4.34). He also paints a lonely picture of Psyche all by herself atop a mountain and the sight of her dress hem swaying as Zephyr prepares her for her flight (*Met.* 4.35). One can hear the mournful wailing and the wedding flutes piping as well as the cries of the mourners, including Psyche's parents (*Met.* 4.34). One can almost hear the wind blowing atop the mountain. The audience is left with an image of Psyche, alone in a vast empty and remote location close to the heavens but far away from everything that Psyche knows (*Met.* 4.35). Psyche, accustomed to city life, the role of a royal princess, and the adoration of crowds, is now alone on an isolated peak. At this point Psyche is left alone socially, physically, and psychologically. Psyche, from this point on, is no longer the beautiful,

royal daughter; she is now a bride awaiting her destined groom. Little does she know what awaits her.

Section Two: *Metamorphoses* 5.1-5.24

This section will explore Psyche's character and role changes from the time that she safely enters her new kingdom and home to her abandonment by Cupid.

After she is carried to the valley by the Zephyr she falls asleep, no longer fearful (Apul. *Met.* 5.1). She wakes up rested and calm, at which point Apuleius describes Cupid's palace through Psyche's eyes. She thinks that it is a 'delightful country house of some god', perhaps even Jove's (Apul. *Met.* 5.1).¹¹ Psyche eventually crosses the threshold into this mysterious estate. While Psyche is exploring, she, and the reader, learns of her new station in life, as the mistress of her own home, from an invisible servant (Apul. *Met.* 5.2). The invisible voice informs Psyche that she is now the mistress of all the wealth that she sees and she is given a banquet fitting for her new role (Apul. *Met.* 5.2-3). Despite not knowing where she is, or who or what the unseen servants are, and despite the fact that she has not met the master of the house, Psyche remains calm, composed and even a bit brave. At this point, Psyche is similar to her character from the first section where she is calm and composed on the mountain, awaiting her fate.

Eventually, she becomes more comfortable as the mistress of the house and encounters her husband, though she never sees him. The first time that Psyche interacts him is her first night in her new home which is described as an encounter on a battlefield rather than a nuptial night. After this, Cupid declares her to be his wife (Apul. *Met.* 5.4).

¹¹ Kenney's translation.

Sleep symbolises that a boundary is present or being crossed: 1) Psyche sleeps immediately upon arrival in Cupid's kingdom, and 2) her sleeping with Cupid, literally and metaphorically, marks her change from maiden to wife. As Emily West claims (18), 'sleep and night are liminal, even dangerous, times in Homeric epics. The boundary between the human and divine world blurs'. Psyche is fully aware that the being visiting her every night is not a mortal being but someone divine, and that does not bother her in the least.

While Psyche is happy enough while Cupid is present, after he leaves, she reverts to being the unhappy girl that she was before she was placed on the mountain crag. Psyche was admired and worshipped, but she was alone and miserable; now, she is married and has an extravagant home with a divine husband, and yet is still lonely. After her husband leaves, she starts to feel that same sense of loneliness that she experienced before:

Sed eo simul cum nocte dilapso diem totum lacrimis ac plangoribus misella consumit, se nunc maxime prorsus perisse iterans, quae beati carceris custodia septa et humanae conversationis colloquio vidata.

But when he and the night disappeared together, the miserable girl spent the whole day crying and mourning, constantly repeating that she was completely destroyed. Locked up in this lavish prison and deprived of the discourse of human conversation. (Apul. *Met.* 5.5)

Apuleius heightens Psyche's predicament with the vivid phrase *beati carceris custodia septa* with its harsh 'c' sounds. Her loneliness is emphasised by her husband's refusal to let her see her sisters, whom, he says, she ought not to trust. A new side of Psyche

appears, one that is manipulative and conniving. She may have agreed to her husband's terms, but she attempts to control him with endearments and even threats of suicide the next time that he visits her (Apul. *Met.* 5.6). Through her manipulations, Psyche is granted the boon of seeing her sisters, with the caveat that she neither listen to her sisters' advice on revealing who he is, nor allow her own curiosity to take a hold of her (Apul. *Met.* 5.6). Psyche's response foreshadows the rest of the Tale:

'Sed prius' inquit 'centies moriar quam tuo isto dulcissimo conubio caream. Amo enim te efflictim, et, quicumque es, diligo aequae ut meum spiritum, nec ipsi Cupidini comparo.'

'I will die a hundred deaths sooner than lose this most delightful marriage with you. For I adore you to distraction, whoever you are, I love you just as my soul, and I do not compare you to Cupid himself.' (Apul. *Met.* 5.6)

Psyche does not know yet that Cupid will rescue her from death.

When Psyche's sisters arrive, we see that Psyche is torn between her oath to her husband and her ties to them. For, while she supplies them with the greatest of luxuries and gifts, she makes up a persona for her mysterious husband (Apul. *Met.* 5.8). Despite her sisters' negativity towards her, which is prompted by their jealousy, Psyche naively believes that they mean her no harm (Apul. *Met.* 5.9).

Psyche is warned again by her husband about her sisters; not only do we get a description of Psyche from her husband's point of view in his speech, but also a new role for Psyche. Cupid describes her as having *genuina simplicitate* and *teneritudine animi* (genuine simplicity and tenderness of soul) (Apul. *Met.* 5.11), and towards the end of his speech, he tells her that she is also carrying his child and her actions will have

repercussions on the future of the baby's divinity. Psyche's new role as a wife now entails being the guardian of Cupid's child (Apul. *Met.* 5.12). Even in the face of this, Psyche refuses to be a compliant wife, and through her new skills in manipulation, attains her goal of seeing her sisters again

Once again her sisters visit and Psyche still suspects nothing. Apuleius directly describes Psyche as naïve (*misella, utpote simplex et animi tenella*) (Apul. *Met.* 5.18). They encourage her to kill her husband, who they claim is a monster. In her frenzied reaction, stressed by Apuleius's use of many verbs in asyndeton, we see a conflict which sets both her trust in her sisters against her trust in her husband and her role as a sister against her role as a wife,

Festinat differt, audet trepidat, diffidit irascitur; et, quod est ultimum, in eodem corpore odit bestiam, diligit maritum.

She hastens and she delays, she dares and is agitated, she is in despair and is now enraged, and that which is the most important, in the same body, she hates the monster and loves the husband. (Apul. *Met.* 5.21)

However, Psyche decides to follow her sisters' plan and to reveal what her husband looks like once and for all before she tries to kill him. At this point, Psyche appears to be daring and brave, much like a hero preparing himself to kill a monster. In fact it can be said that Psyche is a hero attempting to save a maiden (herself) from a monster. Despite her initial heroic resolve it is still a difficult task for her; Apuleius describes her as too weak of mind and body to act (*corporis et animi alioquin infirma*) and it is only because a cruel fate is leading her on that she proceeds (Apul. *Met.* 5.22).

At last we come to the famous scene where Psyche discovers that her husband is Cupid. Just as we saw Cupid's estate through Psyche's eyes, so too Psyche provides our view of her husband: his flowing blonde hair, his white wings, and his weaponry which lies by the bed (Apul. *Met.* 5.22).

In this scene Apuleius directly characterises her as being *curiosa* (Apul. *Met.* 5.23). This quality leads her to examining Cupid's arrows, pricking herself with one and falling in love with Cupid. In the aftermath of this she wakes up Cupid by accidentally dropping hot oil from her lamp onto him. According to Relihan, role reversal is seen in this scene with Psyche becoming the tormentor, and that motif is necessary in romance for the couple to achieve sexual symmetry (77). If Psyche suffers, so must Cupid.

Cupid, angered, attempts to fly away, but Psyche grabs his leg out of desperation becoming a burdensome passenger in his flight (Apul. *Met.* 5.24). Unlike her situation before, when she was preparing and willing to await her fate atop the mountain, Psyche fights to get what she wants. However, Cupid reprimands her, even calling her *simplicissima Psyche* (Apul. *Met.* 5.24) and abandons her. Psyche is again left all alone. She now reverts to the girl that she was at the end of the first section. At the end of each section so far, we have been left with a picture of a vulnerable girl alone in the landscape. Psyche experiences isolation and grief at her situation. That she was once loved by a god and now carries his child makes it even worse.

Metamorphoses 5.25-6.24

In this final section, we follow Psyche as she changes from Cupid's abandoned lover to an avenger, Venus' slave, a hero, and finally Cupid's immortal wife.

After the events outlined in section one and two, Psyche must undergo changes to be with Cupid. Section 2 started and ended with Psyche being alone. Section 3 starts with her alone and ends with her married, a mother, and an Olympian. Along the way she has moments of bravery, though they are at times offset by actions of despair. This section is most remarkable for Psyche's role as a heroine of myth or folklore who is involved in a quest far beyond her own ability and one which often requires helpers of one sort or another.

Psyche's quest begins at the point of her abandonment. Her despair is so great after Cupid abandons her that she attempts to drown herself in a river, but even the flowing water fears Cupid and spares her life by gently carrying her to a grassy bank. This action of gently carrying Psyche is similar to the way that Zephyr carried her gently down the mountain at Cupid's behest. The reader may recognise Cupid's hand behind Psyche's survival and success, whether he is directly or indirectly involved himself. Pan, too, in the early part of the Tale, is a helper. She finds him in her wanderings and learns that she must stop trying to harm herself and to seek out Cupid through prayers and earn his favours to gain her lover back (Apul. *Met.* 5.25). Reunification with Cupid is common motivation through Psyche's quest, especially when she is forced to endure Venus's cruelties.

During her quest to find her husband, she visits one of her sisters. At this point, we see a startling change in Psyche's character. Apuleius evokes Medea, the most vengeful woman in Greek mythology, through Psyche's actions. Just as Medea exacted vengeance on Jason, through murder, for his destruction of their marriage, Psyche

contrives the murder of her own sisters for their destruction of her union with Cupid.

Psyche uses her sister's jealousy and greed against her:

Meministi consilium vestrum scilicet quo mihi suasistis ut bestiam, quae mariti mentito nomine mecum quiescebat, priusquam ingluvie voraci me misellam hauriret, ancipiti novacula peremerem. Set cum primum, ut aequae placuerat, conscio lumine vultus euis aspexi, video mirum divinumque prorsus spectaculum, ipsum illum deae Veneris filium, ipsum inquam Cupidinem, leni quiete sopitum. Ac dum tanti boni spectaculo percita et nimia voluptatis copia turbata fruendi laborarem inopia, casu scilicet pessimo lucerna fervens oleum rebullivit in euis umerum. Quo dolore statim somno recussus, ubi me ferro et igni conspexit armatam, "Tu quidem" inquit "ob istud tam dirum facinus confestim toro meo divorte, tibi que res tuas habeto. Ego vero sororem tuam"—et nomen quo to censeris aiebat—"iam mihi confarreatis nuptiis coniugabo." Et statim Zephyro preacipit ultra terminos me domus eius efflaret. (Apul. Met. 5.26)

You remember the counsel of course by which you persuaded me to slay with two-edged knife, before it devoured poor me with its ravenous maw, my husband who, with the deceiving name of husband, would sleep with me. But, as this had pleased me as well, as soon as I gazed on his face in the co-conspiring light, I see a wondrous and certainly divine sight, that very son of the goddess Venus—I say Cupid himself—asleep with gentle peace. And, roused by the sight of such beauty and disturbed by the immeasurable wealth of pleasure, while I was struggling with want of enjoyment, naturally, by worst chance, the lamp blazing spit hot oil on his shoulder. And by this pain having been immediately knocked out of sleep,

when he saw me armed with fire and iron, says “You yourself, because of that dire crime, go away from my bed; take thou for yourself your property. I myself truly will take your sister”—and he was saying the name by which you yourself are known—“as my wife in a traditional ceremony”. And straightaway he orders Zephyr to waft me out beyond the borders of his home. (Apul. *Met.* 5.26)

An interesting note here is Psyche describing herself with fire and steel, a similar description to the monster in the prophecy given to her father (Apul. *Met.* 4.33). Psyche successfully manipulates her envious sister into doing what she wants by appealing to her vanity, greed, and luck. Much as Medea tricks Jason into believing that she was accepting of his new bride, Psyche tricks her sister into believing that Cupid wants her as his new bride. The sister reacts as Psyche has anticipated, and what results is a death reminiscent of the violent deaths of the princess and the king in Euripides’ *Medea* (1165-1220). Her sister dies in a rather gory death:

‘Accipe me,’ dicens, ‘Cupido, dignam te coniugem et tu, Zephyre, suscipe dominam,’ saltu se maximo praecipitem dedit. Nec tamen ad illum locum vel saltem mortua pervenire potuit. Nam per saxa cautium membris iactatis atque dissipatis et proinde ut merebatur laceratis visceribus suis alitibus bestiisque obvium ferens pabulum interiit.

Saying ‘Receive me, Cupid, as a bride worthy of you, and you, Zephyr, carry your mistress’ with an enormous leap she jumped head long. But she was not able to reach that place, not even in death. For her limbs fell upon the rocks’ edges and were scattered, and she died with mutilated vitals—just as she deserved—offering an instant meal for the birds of prey and beasts. (Apul. *Met.* 5.27)

Psyche does not accompany her sister to the crag; instead she visits her other sister.

There, she gives the same speech that she gave the first sister, resulting in her death as well. The act of taking revenge on her sisters presents a role reversal for Psyche from being a loving and caring sister to that of the vengeful woman.

Psyche later reverses her role of a free woman into that of a slave. She thinks that that she may not be able to appease Cupid as his lover but instead as a suppliant asking for his forgiveness: '*si non uxoriis blanditiis lenire, certe servilibus precibus propitiare*' 'If she could not appease him by wifely endearments surely to appease by servile entreaties' (Apul. *Met.* 6.1). From this point on, until she is rescued by Cupid from death, Psyche acts in the persona of slave. At the same time, Psyche exhibits heroic behaviour. showing Herculean traits by accomplishing tasks under servitude to pay for her transgressions.

She is pious like the hero Aeneas, who is famous for his dedication to his family and his piety. While Psyche's dedication to her family is focused primarily on Cupid who is the subject of her quest, her piety elsewhere, though, should not be overlooked. Piety is shown when Psyche carefully organises a neglected temple of Ceres. Psyche's piety is also displayed in her praise of Ceres and her daughter, Proserpina (Apul. *Met.* 6.2). As a third example, after Ceres, out of deference to Venus, refuses to help, Psyche is still vigorous and determined as she was at the start of her quest, and visits one of Juno's temples. Psyche acts just as piously with Juno herself.

What is interesting in their conversation is that Juno considers Psyche a bona fide slave:

*Sed contra voluntatem Veneris, nurus meae, quam filiae semper dilexi loco,
praestare me pudor non sinit. Tunc etiam legibus quae servos alienos profugos
invitis dominis vetant suscipi prohibeor.*

But against the will of Venus, my daughter-in-law, whom I have always loved in place of a daughter, shame does not permit me to champion (you). Likewise, I am prohibited by the laws which forbid that the fugitive slaves of others be taken in when their masters are unwilling. (Apul. *Met.* 6.4)

Here Psyche, although she has not stated that she is a slave of Venus, is addressed thus by Juno. While Psyche decided that she would seek out Cupid as a slave, she did not intend for Venus to take on the role of the *domina*. Upon learning that Juno cannot help her, Psyche's despair is again noticeable; she describes the situation as a shipwreck (Apul. *Met.* 6.5), which has extra force since ancient novels often use a shipwreck as a plot element.

At this point Psyche consciously attempts to take on a masculine role. She is at a loss about what to do and she is not able to gain support in her quest and she must therefore rely on herself alone. In a question to herself, she includes a reference to acquiring a man's characteristic *Quin igitur masculum tandem sumis animum* 'Therefore do you at last finally summon a man's spirit?' (Apul. *Met.* 6.5). In the same scene she acknowledges herself to be the slave of Venus and prepares herself to endure the anger of Venus for the sake of her quest. By attributing a masculine role to Psyche, Apuleius is able to showcase Psyche in a typical hero's role, that of the suffering hero who has to endure a set of trials to complete his quest, be it re-establishing his home like Odysseus or Aeneas, or redemption, like Hercules.

Next, Psyche's slave status is solidified. Venus treats her as a runaway slave rather than her daughter-in-law. For example, Mercury, at the behest of Venus, publicly announces her as the *fugitivam regis filiam, Veneris ancillam* 'the king's runaway daughter, Venus' slave' (Apul. *Met.* 6.8). Then, upon entering Venus' household, her status is fully that of a slave of little value or power. One of Venus' attendants insults and assaults her and she is cruelly abused by Venus herself (Apul. *Met.* 6.8). After she is beaten and reviled by Venus the focus shifts from Psyche's role as a recovered slave enduring her mistress's punishment to her role as a servile hero like Hercules who performs tasks set by Eurytheus and even enslaves himself to Queen Omphale.

Campbell describes heroes performing tasks to accomplish their goal, and that is what Psyche must do so that she may acquire her goal. Her tasks, comparable to the labours of Hercules under Eurystheus, include 1) sorting out heaps of grain, 2) collecting wool from killer-sheep, 3) getting water from the source of the Underworld rivers, and 4) a catabasis to fetch a box with some of Proserpina's beauty in it. She is still presented as a heroine of myth and folklore and has helpers along the way: ants help her sort the grain; a reed reveals that the sheep leave wool behind caught on bushes; Jove's eagle fetches water for her; and a tower reveals the path to the Underworld.

Her moments of resolution and dedication to her quest are balanced by the same level of desperation that appeared occasionally earlier: she attempts to kill herself once, and naturally enough, is described as being petrified at the thought of going to the Underworld.

Apuleius uses evocation to keep Psyche grounded in the context of a hero. This sometimes adds to the general tone and other times has more point: 1) her tasks, as

mentioned, are reminiscent of Hercules's labours; 2) she descends to the Underworld at Taenarum, where Theseus and Perithoos too enter the Underworld in their ill-fated attempt to abduct Persephone to be Perithoos's wife; 3) her dread, and its description as petrifying, at a stretch, also evokes in general the story of Perseus, which was already at play with Andromeda earlier—this may also playfully hint at Psyche's rescue by Cupid—and it is the kind of dread that Jason, who is portrayed in a very human way, feels when confronted with the tasks by Aeetes (Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 3.422).

Psyche is successful in acquiring Proserpina's beauty box and makes her way out of the Underworld. Unfortunately, Psyche's curiosity gets the better of her; she opens the box after having been told not to by the tower (Apul. *Met.* 6.19). Like Orpheus, she defies orders not to look at something or someone, and loses what she has gained. Just as she was curious before, when she gazed upon her husband, which caused her all her problems, she is still defiant and breaks the commands. She is also still naïve and does not expect that Venus is setting her up. Upon looking into the box, Psyche falls into a death-like sleep. Psyche's sleep is a metaphor for death, and without being rescued she is dead. When she is in this state she reverts to her earlier role as a damsel in distress and is rescued by Cupid.

Psyche was isolated twice before: at one point she had a family but was subject to divine hatred, and then she was loved by a god but was without a family or community. Those good, but flawed, situations are healed when she becomes the lawful wife of Cupid, joins the Olympians, and is able to create a family of her own. Apuleius evokes the image of Hercules, who attains immortality and a divine spouse for his labours in life.

Discussion

We have seen that Psyche's main characteristics from the start consist of obedience, naivety, and simplicity and that as she progresses, she is also shown to be manipulative, deceptive, and curious. For her roles we see her switch between a royal princess, a sacrifice, and a damsel in distress, in section one. In section two we see her changes to a mistress, lover, and a loving sister to a damsel in distress, a vengeful woman, a slave, a hero, a damsel in distress again, and finally Cupid's immortal and legal wife. The task of chapter three will be to use the approaches discussed in chapter one to make sense of how seamlessly Apuleius shifts Psyche's characterisation and roles.

Chapter 3: Application of Techniques and Approaches to the Tale

Introduction

We have examined Psyche's, Cupid's, and Venus's role reversals through several parts of the Tale and how Psyche changes in general. Narratological techniques found in Propp, Campbell, and the ATU allow us to understand how the Tale's characters work and function in relation to traditional stories, including both folktales and myth. In order to understand how Apuleius creates changes in his characters we have to examine the different threads he uses to weave his changes. These threads include, besides narratological patterns, psychological elements, the artistic tradition, philosophical thought, societal influences, and intratextual details. Sometimes he uses several threads to create a scene; other times, simply one. This chapter will explore the methods that Apuleius uses to create his role reversals and character changes.

Propp, who focuses on actions of characters within folktales, allows us to analyse the Tale on the basis of characters' functions. By using Propp in analysing the Tale, we observe that while character changes or reversals may seem initially shocking or surprising, the characters are performing common functions found elsewhere in folktales.

Campbell's stages of a hero's journey can be applied to the Tale. By tracking Psyche's journey through the Tale, we can see some of her role reversals in terms of how she is fulfilling her role as a hero. She does so by answering the hero's call, encountering her obstacle, completing tasks and finally earning a reward. We can also see how Cupid and Venus fit in Psyche's heroic journey. Psyche strives to reunite with Cupid, he is the main reason why she agrees to complete her tasks, and she is rewarded with a divine

marriage to him for her efforts. Venus is her tormentor who forces her to complete one dangerous task after another.

The ATU allows us to interpret the Tale as a traditional fairy tale. Since the Tale is featured within the ATU classification system (425A), we can compare it to similar tales that either share the same designation or similar plots. By comparing Psyche to heroines of similar tales, we can see that in certain instances, though Psyche may seem out of character, she is portraying a role that is found within fairy tales.

Psychological elements are found within the Tale and manifest in Psyche, Cupid, and Venus. Each of the characters change as they evolve psychologically. As the Tale progresses we see the changes they undergo, especially Cupid and Venus. Psyche acts as a catalyst for Cupid and Venus's changes. Cupid becomes more mature in his relationship with his mother as well as with Psyche. Venus displays anxieties felt by characters in Greek myth; she must come to terms with the fears and anxiety over losing her position of power in the household as well as over Cupid.

Before Apuleius wrote the Tale, there was an artistic tradition depicting Psyche and Cupid in various scenes. For example, they were shown in an embrace, other times torturing one another, also as slaves to Venus, and finally, in funereal contexts, where, for instance, Cupids are shown carrying away a soul. Heroes, like Hercules, and women, especially those who are being sacrificed such as Iphigenia or Andromeda, are also popular in art. Apuleius seems to deliberately evoke recognisable type-scenes at several points in his narrative. Apuleius is able to use the different scenes available to him to reflect the changes that his characters are going through.

The Tale can also be examined from a philosophical angle. Apuleius was a philosopher writing in the Second Sophistic and he was greatly influenced by Plato.

According to Morgan and Harrison (232):

The use of Platonic dialogues in the *Metamorphoses* is unsurprising, given Apuleius' likely authorship of an extant arid doxographical work on the doctrines of Plato (*On Plato*), his claims to be a 'Platonic philosopher' (*Apology* 10), and his otherwise gratuitous introduction at the novel's beginning (*Metamorphoses* 1.2) of the claim that his protagonist is descended from Plutarch, the most important literary figure in Middle Platonism, whose work certainly influenced Apuleius.

Apuleius changes the roles of Psyche and Cupid as the Tale progresses so that they come closer to representing the Platonic thought for which they stand.

Apuleius' audience may recognise societal situations that are naturally accompanied by changes. Psyche, for instance, changes from being a freeborn daughter to Cupid's lover, then to a slave, and finally to Cupid's legitimate wife. Cupid, as well, goes through a role reversal from a reckless young man who is too attached to his mother to Psyche's responsible husband.

Finally, to put the Tale into the context of the *Metamorphoses* as a whole, Apuleius has Psyche reflect Lucius' reversals of fortune and circumstances.

The discussion will examine how Apuleius uses several methods to create role reversals. Sometimes one method will be more prominent than others and sometimes several are at work at once. By way of a conclusion, techniques and approaches will be considered as to how they are used by Apuleius in creating changes in his characters.

We now proceed to Propp's narratological technique.

Propp

Propp provides tools for analysing the Tale and its characters through their functions. The Tale's main characters perform functions that enable the plot to move along smoothly, as we saw in Figure. 1 from Chapter One. While some of their actions may appear out of character and the plot may take a surprising new direction it is clear from Propp that the normal functions from folk and fairy tales are still at work. The thoroughness with which Propp can be used to analyse the Tale underscores the fact that Apuleius has traditional stories and story-telling in mind from the overall nature and the flavour of the Tale.

Propp sets up a baseline of functions that characters perform. While some of their actions may come as a surprise on the basis of their characterisation, Propp's functions provide an explanation for their behaviour and role reversal. While Propp's functions can be applied to the whole Tale, this section will focus on instances that reveal surprising character change and reversal. These changes include Psyche's revenge on her sisters, her pious acts, the tasks that she must accomplish for Venus, and the events that occur after she opens Proserpina's box. Cupid's and Venus's changes will also be analysed on the basis of the functions that they are performing.

Apuleius portrays Psyche as a hero of a folktale by her actions. One of Psyche's most surprising acts is to exact revenge on her sisters. She does so by tricking them, in the hope of marrying Cupid, into throwing themselves from a cliff to their death (Apul. *Met.* 5.26-27). Psyche had been naïve and gullible in relation to her sisters; as their

youngest sister, Psyche did not think that they would try to trick her into killing her lover. When Psyche realises their deception they are exposed as villains (Ex)¹². According to Propp, Psyche and her sisters are completing their functions within the Tale. By tricking Psyche out of greed, the sisters are the villains who trick their victim (A⁸); they also represent the family member who lacks something, and they desire to have what they cannot have (α). Finally, when they kill themselves they also fulfil a function marked by being defeated without a battle (I⁵). When Psyche exacts her revenge, are led to believe that she is no longer the innocent and naïve girl to whom we are first introduced. Her actions would come as a surprise to those who think that they know Psyche's character. Apuleius cleverly sets this scene up as a surprise for his readers, who may not have expected simple Psyche to commit such an act, especially towards family members, whom she has always obeyed. This act against her sisters fits into the traditional patterns of a folktale, wherein a villain is punished, and is also used by Apuleius to further the narrative.

Through her journey to reunite with Cupid, Psyche also performs other functions from folktales. For example, she rearranges and organises Ceres's and Juno's temples out of piety. Propp describes such an act, which he designates as E⁷, as when a 'hero performs other forms of services, favors', and comments: 'A special subclass might be made by forms of services of a religious nature' (*Morphology* 39). Psyche's performance of these pious tasks strengthens Propp's suggestion about the need for a subclass. This humble piety, which had not been fully developed previously in the Tale, adds more depth to Psyche's character and allows for the story to progress.

¹² The letters in parentheses are those assigned by Propp to the functions of characters.

When Psyche subjugates herself to Venus, more characters perform functions to aid our hero. For example, ants, enchanted reeds, eagles, and a talking tower all help Psyche complete her tasks. Propp designates actions as a F⁹ where ‘various characters place themselves at the disposal of the hero’ (*Morphology* 41). In her last task, Psyche falls victim to her curiosity by opening Proserpina’s beauty box (Apul. *Met.* 6.20-21). She is the victim that ‘submits to deception and thereby unwittingly helps his enemy’ (Propp *Morphology* 28). Psyche’s opening of the box, it marks a departure from the Psyche who, with or without help, completes her tasks successfully. Here expectations set up by Apuleius in following the pattern of traditional tales and his focus on Psyche as the hero are abandoned and our attention is surprisingly shifted away from Psyche to Cupid, who now becomes the hero. Generally, Psyche is not the only important character and sometimes Cupid and Venus will have important roles in the narrative.

Cupid, though he is not as active as Psyche, performs a couple of functions. When his mother demands that he make Psyche fall in love with a hideous beast, he agrees (Apul. *Met.* 4.31). For Propp, this is designated as θ^1 , where the hero ‘agrees to all of the villain’s persuasions’ (*Morphology* 28). Later, he is also the victim in that he is kept a prisoner by his mother (A¹⁵) as he is healing from his wounds. When Cupid rescues Psyche from her death-like slumber, he becomes the hero of folk and fairy tales, who breaks the enchantment placed on a victim (K⁸). At the same time the audience’s perception of his character changes. He is no longer the son who blindly obeys his mother. Apuleius uses this common element to move the plot along and finish the Tale.

Venus does not perfectly fit in to Propp’s approach. On the one hand, Venus, in her role as the tormentor of Psyche and Cupid, performs the function of the villain. For

example, when she is searching for Psyche as her runaway slave (Apul. *Met.* 6.7), she is a villain performing a reconnaissance (ε). On the other hand, although she locks Psyche up and demands tasks from Psyche, she is not punished as a typical villain of a folktale, i.e. banished or killed; instead she is forced to accept the situation of Psyche and Cupid as a married couple. The situation in which Venus accepts their union and is not punished is not found in Propp's functions. While the Tale has elements that are found within folk and fairy tales, it is not bound to every motif that is present within those tales. By presenting a happy ending that includes Venus, Apuleius is restoring a sense of peace and normalcy. The speed with which he wraps up the Tale would be most familiar to an audience from Roman comedy.

The Tale contains many elements that can be found within Propp's system of folktales. While the characters may seem to act out of character in the Tale, they are in fact completing their function within the storyline. By following traditional story patterns, like taking vengeance on evil sisters, Apuleius reverses his characters' roles and behaviour. Propp allows scholars to see how Apuleius can move his storyline along as well as create changes in his characters. By using Propp's technique, we see that the reader may grow so accustomed to a narrative progressing in the manner of a folk or fairy tale that we are surprised when it does not. For example, Psyche, with or without help, accomplishes all her tasks except, surprisingly, the last one which leads to her death-like sleep and need for rescuing (Apul. *Met.* 6.21). When Cupid rescues her, Apuleius is switching to a new hero within his story. In this instance, modern readers can interpret the change within the Tale as Apuleius abandoning one available thread and following another. Cupid here is like the hero from myth who rescues the damsel in distress, like

Perseus who rescues Andromeda, or a response to a philosophical idea about the relationship between divinity and the psyche, or he is mimicking the artistic tradition from funereal contexts of Cupid leading the soul to a better place.

With Propp, we can understand how Psyche fulfils her function as a hero of folktales; with Campbell we see how she completes the stages of her heroic journey.

Campbell

Campbell in his examination of the hero's journey focused on the stages that heroes go through in their quest. The goal of this section is to show that Campbell's heroic journey is widely applicable to Psyche and within this there is a strong focus on the second stage of the hero's journey, the tasks; the tasks reveal Psyche's heroic qualities and connects her to other heroes of myth. It concludes that on the basis of the tasks that Psyche has to perform, she is similar to the heroes of myth, particularly with her journey to the Underworld.

Psyche does not have an active role until Cupid abandons her and she must search for him. Each hero has a different starting point of their journey, whether it is a plan to found a new city as Aeneas or the need to find his way back home, like Odysseus. Psyche's journey starts with her abandonment by Cupid. At this point she meets Pan, a threshold character and helper, who initiates her wanderings. Pan foreshadows Ceres and Juno as threshold characters themselves and he also is very much a helper figure and also foreshadows the helpers that she will encounter later. At this point she is similar to heroes who must go on a quest to obtain a certain goal, be it an object or a person, by completing a series of tasks.

We have noticed that within traditional tales it is common for the female to have an uncharacteristically active role. Campbell, whose focus is on heroes of myth and legend, commented too on the Tale regarding that striking contrast:

Here all the principal roles are reversed: instead of the lover trying to win his bride, it is the bride trying to win her lover; and instead of a cruel father withholding his daughter from her lover, it is a jealous mother, Venus, hiding her son, Cupid, from his bride. (81)

Having accepted the typical role reversal that is found in traditional tales which may make females uncharacteristically active, Apuleius then applies to Psyche elements from heroic tales of the sort that Campbell was interested in. In the active heroic mode Psyche has a quest with obstacles to overcome. Venus, Psyche's adversary, sets a series of tasks for Psyche to accomplish that prove she is worthy of her son.

After she suffers physical abuse by Venus's attendants and by Venus herself (Apul. *Met.* 6.9-10), Psyche must complete her first task. She must sort a heap of wheat, millet, barley, peas, lentils, beans, and poppy seeds into individual piles all before Venus comes back at night. She is aided in this near impossible task by ants who recognise her as Cupid's lover and take pity on her (Apul. *Met.* 6.10). Importantly, we do not entirely escape the mode of a traditional tale where, as here, a mundane task is made near impossible, but Apuleius is also adding a heroic dimension. Psyche is like Hercules who was assigned the humble and similarly impossible task of cleaning the Augean stables.

Psyche's next task is to gather golden fleece from sheep who are dangerous enough to kill a man with their poisonous bites. Psyche, upon learning her new task, is ready to commit suicide by throwing herself from a rock into a river, but the reed

prevents her (Apul. *Met.* 5.25). Following the advice of the reed, Psyche safely gathers the wool left by the deadly sheep along the riverbank. Once again, Psyche is successful and angers Venus. Apuleius is presenting his audience a mundane task with a dangerous element, one which is both suitable for a traditional tale but also has a heroic aspect to it as well. Psyche is similar to Jason in his quest for the Golden Fleece, and both have helpers: the reed who helps Psyche and Medea, who aids Jason.

With Psyche's success at gathering the wool, Venus attempts to make the next task more dangerous. Psyche must fetch Stygian waters. Once again, Psyche has a helper in this task, Jupiter's eagle. After informing her that she will die if she touches the water, the eagle takes the vial she carries and fills it for her. There are heroic undertones in this task too; Psyche has a brush with the Underworld, just as Odysseus has. Odysseus performs a ritual to speak to the shades of the Underworld to learn what was going on in his kingdom and with his wife, Penelope (Hom. *Od.* 10.485-539). After Psyche presents the water to Venus she is given a final task which will take her into the Underworld itself: retrieving a beauty box from Proserpina.

Campbell notes that the journey to the Underworld is one of the adventures taken by heroes of myth and fairy tales (82). Like Hercules, Theseus and Aeneas, Psyche must travel to the Underworld to complete her task. Hercules was tasked with bringing Cerberus to Eurystheus for one of his labours; Theseus also ventures to the Underworld so that he may help kidnap Persephone. Psyche's connection to Aeneas's *katabasis* is somewhat stronger than to Hercules's. Just as Aeneas's descent into the Underworld to speak to his father occurs in Book Six of the *Aeneid*, Psyche's also occurs in Book Six of the *Metamorphoses*, a detail to which Finkelpearl argues that Apuleius is alluding (335).

The details about navigating the Underworld that the tower gives to Psyche (Apul. *Met.* 6.17-20) are similar to the advice that the Sybil gives Aeneas for his journey to the Underworld (Finkelpearl 336).

Out of all the heroes of mythology, she is most similar to Orpheus in his quest to reunite with his bride, Eurydice. As told by Virgil in the *Georgics* (4.453-527) and Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* (10.1-85), Eurydice is bitten by a snake on her wedding day, and Orpheus travels to the Underworld to convince Hades and Persephone to let him take back Eurydice with him. Once he convinces the gods, they allow her to return on the condition that Eurydice follow him out and Orpheus not look back no matter what he hears. As they are nearing the final steps out of the Underworld, Orpheus looks back and loses Eurydice once and for all. Psyche breaks a prohibition placed upon her, just as Orpheus does, when she looks into the box, despite the warnings given to her. The theme of rebirth is important in Psyche's and Eurydice's stories. Eurydice dies and was given a second chance to return to the land of the living because of Orpheus, while Psyche is given a second chance when Cupid rescues her from her sleep.

Campbell notes that the theme of rebirth is also part of several heroes' paths. Psyche's final task is to retrieve a box of Proserpina's beauty. Psyche is successful, but once she is on her way back to Venus, Psyche's curiosity gets the better of her and she forgets the warning that the tower gave her: not to open the box (Apul. *Met.* 6.19). It is her curiosity that makes her open the box, which results in her falling into a death-like slumber from which she is reborn. As mentioned previously, sleep is special in the *Metamorphoses* in that it is where the human world meets the divine and marks a transition (West 18).

Like Hercules, Aeneas, and Theseus, Psyche accomplishes her tasks. She succeeds with the aid of helpers. Also, like heroes of myth, Psyche is rewarded for her efforts: she is granted immortality and marriage to a god.

Campbell's strength is the insight he provides on the similarity between Psyche and her actions and the action of heroes. Campbell is also important in that he notes that there is a reversal of her character's roles concerning her journey. Apuleius presents a different perspective on a hero by reversing the role into a feminine one while still alluding to male heroes of mythology.

Psyche completes her stages as a hero of myth, but she also has the typical role of heroines found in a range of traditional stories, as the ATU reveals.

ATU

Propp provides a useful of showing how similar traditional tales are to one another. The Tale easily fits into Propp's typology and aspects of role and character change can be shown to be rooted in traditional tales. The ATU should be able to be used in the same way. The Tale should fit into a specific type, on the basis of plot, within the categories of the ATU, and the other tales of the same type should give the impression, through their similarities, that Apuleius' Tale is unfolding naturally as a traditional tale. For the purpose of this study, ATU's 425A, the very narrow category in which the Tale falls, will be used as well as other categories which also contain stories similar to the Tale.

We have seen that the Tale, as a whole, resembles *Beauty and the Beast* as well as *Jummez Bin Yazur*, *Chief of the Birds*, a tale that is not found in the ATU. Psyche also

shares characteristics with characters from other tales. For example, she is similar to the heroine, Parmetella, in the tale, *The Golden Root* by Giambattista Basile, recorded around 1634. *The Golden Root* also shares the same classification with the Tale, 425A.

Parmetella, like Psyche, has a dangerous curiosity, which leads her to disobey her lover's requests. She too is abandoned by him and must complete a set of tasks so that she may be reunited with him. Just like Psyche, she must sort grain at the demand of his mother. In both stories ants help sort the grains. In *The Golden Root*, Parmetella's lover sends them, but we are not told explicitly in the Tale that Cupid has done so for Psyche. Parmetella must also compete with a second bride of her lover to be with him; in Psyche's case, Venus is her rival throughout.

Another tale that shares the same designation and generally follows the narrative but not many specific details of the Tale is *The Iron Stove*, as recounted by the brothers Grimm in 1812. The heroine encounters an enchanted stove that claims to be the son of a wealthy king and promises marriage for her help. The task she must perform is to come back with a knife and scrape a hole in the stove. She is reluctant and even sends others to perform the task. This is all in vain; the demand requires her to complete the task herself. Her attitude and enthusiasm change once she realises that there is a handsome prince within the stove. She agrees to marry him but then breaks her promise. Regretting her decision, she seeks him out. Once she has found him she competes with his new fiancée for his love. The prince and the girl are ultimately reunited and live happily ever after. Like Psyche, the girl breaks her promise to her lover, they are separated, she completes tasks and competes with the other woman.

The ATU is meant to provide parallel stories within the same designation, but the ATU must also be used broadly in this type of examination, to produce a truer range of the stories with similar plot elements to the Tale. There are several sub categories in which the Tale could have been placed, such as the tales of supernatural adversaries (300-399), or supernatural tasks (460-499). There is another very relevant subsection called the persecuted heroine (510A), in which the heroine is ill treated by step-siblings or a mother. While her sisters are her biological siblings, Psyche is treated as though she were a step-sister, as in *Cinderella*, in which the two step-sisters are jealous of their sister and in the end are cruelly punished. On the same note, Venus is also similar in her actions to an evil step-mother. For example, in the tale *The True Bride*, by the Grimm brothers, the step-mother demands unrealistic tasks of the heroine, each of which must be completed in one day, including sorting twelve pounds of feathers, emptying a large pond with only a spoon, and building a grand castle. The bride accomplishes her tasks through a helper, this time a fairy godmother.

While Psyche shares similarities to characters in the same classification, there are other general similarities to be found within most fairy tales. The hero or heroine must complete tasks set by an adversary, they are aided by a helper, magical or mundane, and they accomplish their goal. Psyche, like the heroines and heroes of traditional tales, must overcome villains, be they family or not, so that she may reunite with her lover. In Psyche's case, among the villains that she faces are her sisters. Psyche takes revenge on her sisters; though this may seem out of character within the Tale, it is normal behaviour within a fairy tale. One of the benefits of reading many similar traditional tales is that it is easier to judge whether a detail is odd or jarring in the narrative. For example, that

Psyche cruelly destroys her sisters is a surprising development, but an organic one in consideration of tales like *Cinderella*, or *The Iron Stove* where the heroine acts similarly.

As we see, Psyche shares similar roles to heroines of fairy tales. Now we can move on to what motivates the Tale's characters psychologically.

Psychological Elements

Numerous scholars¹³ have used psychological approaches to make sense of Psyche's adventures. The aim of this section is not to establish which modern psychological approach best explains how Psyche, Venus, and Cupid mature and change, but rather to consider the Tale in relation to the flawed characters in myth who wrongly hold on to power or a specific role. These characters and myths seem to reflect a natural anxiety and fear felt by people in the face of change or of losing power. In this section it is argued that the characters in the Tale reflect anxieties and fears, especially Cupid and Venus. Psyche highlights those feelings and acts as a catalyst who pushes them to change and to take new roles.

Before considering the Tale at this level, it is worth noting that, through their own psychological approaches to the Tale, some scholars have made excellent observations relating to the character and role change: 1) Relihan (75) emphasises a) how Psyche's potential marriage to a monster responds to how frightening the prospect of marriage would be for a young girl, and b) that Psyche's vacillations between obeying and disobeying are a natural way that Greeks and Romans would have had of showing someone struggling with growing up (76); 2) Neumann notes (102) that growing up for

¹³ See especially Gollnick, who gathers together various ways in which previous scholars who use psychological approaches have interpreted the Tale.

Psyche is finding the right balance of feminine and masculine qualities in the Tale and that ultimately she must be passive enough for Cupid to fully take on the active masculine role; and lastly 3) Morwood, arguing a point which complements Neumann's, observes that Cupid's over-indulgence of Psyche at the start of the Tale gives Psyche no chance of maturing and that her abandonment by Cupid ultimately allows her to mature (111).

Venus and Cupid display anxieties and fear of change. Venus's anxieties are very strong throughout the Tale and the following will examine those anxieties and the changes that she undergoes and how Psyche spurs on those changes. After that, Cupid's changes will be highlighted.

Venus, though a powerful goddess, fears being replaced by Psyche in terms of beauty and in her relationship with Cupid. First she hears that Psyche is taking the honours that are bestowed upon her (Apul. *Met.* 4.29-30); next she discovers that Cupid has chosen Psyche as his lover (Apul. *Met.* 5.28). Venus is used to being the most important person to her son, even to the point that their relationship has a sexual charge. For example, Venus is seen bestowing Cupid with 'long kisses, open mouthed and closely pressed' (Apul. *Met.* 4.31). When she hears that he has taken up with a lover, she confronts Cupid and warns him that she can strip him of his powers and that she will not accept the marriage (Apul. *Met.* 5.29-30). Venus's encounter with Psyche highlights the fears that Venus has about aging. When she sees Psyche's rounded belly, she is faced with the prospect of being a mother-in-law and most importantly a grandmother, a role that she does not want to accept (Apul. *Met.* 6.9).

Try as she might, Venus cannot stop the changes that happen to her son and herself. Despite the control that she exerts over Cupid, he still defies her orders and takes Psyche as his lover. Cupid even comes to Psyche's rescue and is aided by Jupiter. Venus's assumed role of *pater familias*, a position that she does not want to lose, is overridden by Jupiter, the real *pater familias* of the divine household. Venus is then forced to accept Psyche as Cupid's wife, as well as her status of mother-in-law and the feared role of grandmother.

Venus's struggle and loss is parallel to myths in which a father figure wants to hold on to power and authority at any cost. Ouranos is a prime example of a father who wants to stay in power at any cost (Hes. *Theog.* 155-160). Venus's issues are reminiscent of Hippodameia's father, Oenomaus, in the myth of Pelops. The anxiety that Oenomaus has that he will be replaced by his daughter's future husband is similar to Venus's fear of being replaced: Psyche is similar to Pelops in that she threatens Venus in her role as the father. Just as Pelops defeats Oenomaus (Pind. *Ol.* 1.66), Psyche overcomes Venus. Apollodorus suggests that Oenomaus may have loved his daughter and therefore did not want her to marry, which is suggestive of the incestuous undertones in Venus and Cupid's relationship (Apollod. *Epit.* 2.4). Psyche completes Venus's challenges and proves that she is worthy of marrying Cupid.

Cupid is presented as a flawed character from the start. First, he is too dependent on his mother and while he is at times naughty, he normally does everything that Venus wants (Apul. *Met.* 4.31). Second, as mentioned previously, the relationship that he has with his mother has a sexual charge. Third, he has a fear of his mother. This fear is evident in his desire to keep his relationship with Psyche a secret from his mother both by

keeping Psyche at his personal retreat and in not trusting Psyche with his true identity. Gilligan has an interesting theory about the latter point (136); she believes that Cupid keeps meeting Psyche in the dark because he does not wish to gaze upon the face of his mother, whose beauty is shared by Psyche, in bed. I believe, though, that the fear is not in seeing his mother's face, but rather in getting caught. Venus has a bird that reports to her things that are of interest to her, including Cupid's actions (Apul. *Met.* 5.28). If Cupid is seen with Psyche, news would travel to his mother about his betrayal. Lastly, Cupid refuses to grow up; he is an irresponsible young man. For example, he keeps Psyche as his mistress rather than his wife. Even though he repeatedly tells her that she is his wife, he does not legitimise the relationship.

Over the course of the Tale, Cupid begins to grow up and becomes responsible. First, though his mother would have liked to have seen Psyche remain in her death like sleep, Cupid rescues her. Second, he approaches Jupiter to aid him in his quest to be with Psyche. By going to Jupiter, Cupid once again defies his mother and, further, he is now working within the male world by going to the true *pater familias* of the Olympian family. Psyche, through her faults and transgressions, allows him to be an active male, which is more than he is allowed in his relationship with his mother. Lastly, by the end of the Tale he legally marries Psyche, which finally legitimises their relationship, and he becomes a father.

His entry into adulthood in general parallels a test or trial of a hero in myth who overcomes an obstacle to prove his worth or to win a bride. To return to the story of Oenomaus, Cupid is similar to Pelops who has to prove, one way or another, that he is

worthy of marrying Hippodameia. As another example, Perseus wins Andromeda as a bride by killing a sea monster (Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.4.3).

Psyche serves to highlight the problems that Cupid and Venus have in their relationship and she is the catalyst that forces them into normal and expected familial roles. Cupid goes from an immature and irresponsible youth, who cowers behind his mother, to a responsible husband. Venus is forced to come to terms with the fact that her son is no longer under her control and that Psyche will be her daughter-in-law.

Interestingly, the emotional and psychological torture that Psyche and Cupid inflict on one another has its start much earlier than the Tale in the artistic depictions of Cupid and Psyche, a topic which is further explored in the next section.

Artistic Tradition

The artistic tradition had been long depicting Psyche, Cupid, and Venus before Apuleius wrote the Tale. Apuleius and his readers would have been familiar with the characters from these visual representations. Apuleius takes those depictions and transforms them into characters with a story. Some of the surprising changes in character and plot are related to Apuleius's weaving of elements from the artistic tradition into the Tale. The artistic traditions that Apuleius may have relied upon were the images of Psyche and Cupid in an embrace, torturing one another, in funerary depictions, or in relation to Venus. In this section, we will see how changes in plot and character may be related in three ways to Apuleius' recognition of his readers' appreciation of visual art. First, the common depiction of Psyche with her wings will be discussed. Secondly, the depictions of Psyche, Cupid, and Venus in art that are reflected in the Tale will be

explored, including: 1) Psyche and Cupid embracing; 2) Psyche and Cupid as servants of Venus; 3) Cupid as Psyche's salvation; 4) Psyche and Cupid torturing one another; and 5) Cupid and Psyche depicted as children engaging in adult behaviour. Lastly, attention will be given to Apuleius' use of common depictions of heroes and heroines in myth, like the sacrifice of Andromeda, or the labours of Hercules that reinforce the Tale's general allusions to heroes and heroines of myth.

Psyche is typically represented with wings. According to Schlam (4), 'a winged girl as the iconographic form for Psyche is a composite figure which developed out of three traditions for visually representing the soul, that of the bird, the *eidolon*, and the butterfly'. These can be feathered wings but they are usually butterfly wings, since for the Greeks and Romans a butterfly can represent the soul. According to Aristotle, the image of Psyche as a butterfly was represented the butterfly emerging from a chrysalis. This idea merged with the Archaic period's of the soul as an *eidolon* which, when present, represents the separation of the body and soul (Arist. *Hist. an.* 551a14).

As mentioned previously in Chapter One, Psyche is usually found embracing Cupid (AT No. 1 & 2)¹⁴. The imagery of Psyche and Cupid embracing may have influenced Apuleius to create a story behind that embrace. Imagery of the two embracing existed prior to the Tale being written; incorporating the embrace would not seem out of place for Apuleius to depict a scene his readers would recognise.

There is no artistic tradition which depicts Psyche as attempting the specific trials ordered by Venus, but there are pieces that show Psyche and Cupid as attendants to

¹⁴ The AT. Nos are keyed to the works of art listed after the bibliographic entries in the Works Cited section.

Venus (AT No. 3). Apuleius sets out what Psyche has to do as part of her duties in servitude to Venus, which entails reversing some of her roles as a woman into more heroic masculine ones, for example entry into the Underworld. There was an artistic tradition for depicting mythological heroes like Hercules performing their labours. The imagery of a hero performing his labours, and the description of Psyche as a slave to Venus may have inspired Apuleius to add more masculine features to Psyche's character; or Apuleius might be suggesting that Psyche is suffering Herculean servitude and labour.

Another popular scene is that of Cupid leading Psyche to an afterlife, this scene is typically depicted on Roman sarcophagi (AT No. 4) dating to the early Antonine period. The imagery of the moment of death used in funeral contexts is naturally of great importance to the living and the dead and it is also very important in the Tale. At the end of the Tale, when Psyche falls into a death-like sleep, she is rescued by Cupid (Apul. *Met.* 6.21). Several role reversals are associated with this scene. First, Psyche becomes the passive one in relation to Cupid; up to this point she was the one who was fulfilling tasks while Cupid stayed in his mother's room until he healed (Apul. *Met.* 5.28). Second, Cupid acts defiantly towards his mother by siding with the woman he loves rather than her; he is no longer passive in his relation to his mother. Third, once she is rescued, Psyche is brought to the divine realm where she is given an elixir to become an immortal (Apul. *Met.* 6.24). Apuleius adds an extra layer of relevance to Psyche's change from mortal to immortal by linking it to the images of Cupid and Psyche on sarcophagi.

Another common motif in art is Psyche's torture of Cupid and vice versa, which Apuleius incorporates (AT No. 5 & 6). In some cases Psyche is not present, but her symbol, the butterfly is and Cupid tortures it. Because of Cupid, Psyche undergoes

periods of pain and anguish. Apuleius illustrates for his readers how it is possible for Cupid to torture Psyche and vice versa. While Cupid does not torture Psyche physically within the Tale, he is the source of her anguish, which can be seen as torture of her soul. At the moment when she is thinking of the murder of her mystery husband, Apuleius describes her anguish and confusion at even contemplating the act (Apul. *Met.* 5.23). Immediately following that scene, she accidentally burns him with hot oil and Cupid is now the one being tortured. Cupid then abandons Psyche, which reverses their roles again. Venus, who knows that Psyche wants to reunite with Cupid and that Cupid may want to go back to Psyche, also tortures Psyche and Cupid by denying them access to one another (Apul. *Met.* 6.11). When Psyche submits herself to servitude to Venus in hope that she will be reunited with Cupid, both are under Venus' roof unaware of each other's presence. Both Cupid and Psyche are left in their own misery physically and emotionally.

Cupid is usually depicted in Roman art as a chubby little boy or a young adolescent. Apuleius presents him as a young man in the Tale rather than the child that his readers were accustomed to seeing. According to Platt (90), 'from the 3rd century BC, in a development typical of the period's interest in "genre" scenes, Eros began to be widely represented as a child rather than an adolescent'. This representation juxtaposes the image of the powerful deity with that of an innocent child (Platt 90). During the Hellenistic period, Eros was a very popular figure in art, especially a tortured Eros. According to George (159), 'precedents for "Cupid Punished" in Greek and Hellenistic art appear in sculpture, terracotta, and carved gems that depict Eros pursued threateningly by other erotes, being beaten with a sandal by his mother Aphrodite'. In the Tale, we see Cupid suffering not only from the wound inflicted by Psyche, but also from his mother;

clearly Apuleius is playing with the imagery of a tortured Cupid. Although there are a lot of typical portrayals of Cupid being tortured by his mother or by Psyche, in the end Apuleius lets him escape from that role into the role of a husband.

Psyche and Cupid were both depicted as children in art. In the Tale, both characters behave childishly and naïvely despite the fact that they are adults in a relationship. Though claiming Psyche as his wife, Cupid runs back to his mother when he is hurt (Apul. *Met.* 5.28); Psyche, for her part, blindly trusts her sisters when it comes to her husband. Apuleius reflects the imagery in art by which Cupid and Psyche are sometimes depicted as children who are behaving as adults, such as kissing, engaging in close embraces, or torturing one another (AT No. 5). This mixture of adult and child-like behaviour allows Apuleius to present them as characters who undergo a maturation; they grow and accept one another for who they are and mature over the course of the Tale.

Mythological subject matter in art was common in domestic settings, and the image of the heroine being sacrificed is represented in, for example, Pompeian paintings. The sacrifice of Iphigenia is a common image; examples include a Pompeian fresco from the first century CE (AT No. 7), and the fresco on the west wall of the House of M. Lucretius Fronto in Pompeii (AT No. 8) which depicts the tragedy of the sacrifice of Andromeda. This type of image may have influenced Apuleius to depict Psyche as the heroine who is about to be sacrificed for the sake of her family (Apul. *Met.* 4.33-35).

Apuleius takes common images that his readers would have encountered in their daily lives and creates a story that gives the art a backstory. By using artistic depictions of Cupid, Psyche, and Venus, Apuleius provides his own interpretation. Lastly, Apuleius'

descriptions should be understood as alluding to both literary and artistic accounts of the myth to put Psyche's struggles in the context of famous heroes and heroines.

The tradition of depicting Psyche and Cupid in artistic scenes is strong. Just as the artistic tradition has a strong influence in the Tale, so does philosophy. We can now examine how philosophy influences the Tale.

Philosophy

Psyche and Cupid, in art and literature, invite philosophical interpretations. Psyche is more than a woman trying to reunite with Cupid; she is also the physical representation of the soul trying to find a higher existence with the divine that Cupid represents. Apuleius was a Platonist and wrote several philosophical treatises including *De Platone*, so it is not surprising that the Tale would reflect philosophical thought from Plato and from his own work. This section will explore the philosophical ideas within the Tale and the roles that Psyche and Cupid play within those ideas. Those ideas can be seen in the role reversals of the characters as Apuleius aligns them with their philosophical counterparts.

Apuleius was writing within the age called the Second Sophistic, a period from the reign of Nero until about 230 AD. While the majority of scholars accept that a philosophical interpretation of the Tale is possible, some scholars argue against this view. Dillon, for example, claims that Apuleius was not a philosopher (311), while Harrison argues that his novel is not a philosophical treatise but instead a 'low life fictional narrative for the delectation of its audience' (258). Harrison also claims that the idea of a romance between 'Love and Soul' is more a reflection of erotic Latin elegy and Greek

novels than Platonic philosophy (257). However, many scholars have argued that the Tale is Platonic allegory, and that is my position and the basis for the following exploration.

According to Sandy, ‘steeped in Platonist philosophy, Apuleius could not in a fable involving characters named Love (Cupid) and Soul (Psyche) ignore such Platonic models as the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, both of which lay at the core of the second-century *paideia*’ (255). Fletcher, in agreement, claims that the Tale is evidence for the personification of the soul and that it is a complex piece of Platonism (267). In the Tale, Apuleius explores Platonic ideals found within the *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, and the *Phaedo* through his characters; Psyche, for example, represents the human who is attempting to achieve a higher plane of existence with the divine.

From Homer in the Archaic period to Plato in the Classical period, writers and philosophers believed that mortals had a soul, but the beliefs about the nature of the soul differed from the beliefs popular in the Second Sophistic. According to Wright (56):

The concept of the soul changes in Classical Antiquity from the *eidolon*, a substance whose existence is dependent upon the life of the body to the psyche who, with the Platonists and the Neoplatonists, is imprisoned in the body during life. Of divine origin, the soul passionately desired to return to the perfection from which it came, and to some form of union with the divine.

Wright also claims (59) that Psyche represents the everyday soul that is pursuing that divine goal. Apuleius describes her in mundane terms as simple and curious; she is still human, much like base humans who have not reached the divine state in the *Phaedrus*. When Psyche sees Cupid for the first time, the reader is reminded of the passage in the

Phaedrus (251a) which describes the soul that gazes upon the divine when it has yielded to the pulls of pleasure and then seeks the divine:

ὁ δὲ ἀρτιτελής, ὁ τῶν τότε πολυθεάμων, ὅταν θεοειδὲς πρόσωπον ἴδῃ κάλλος
εὖ μεμιμημένον ἢ τινα σώματος ἰδέαν, πρῶτον μὲν ἔφριξε καὶ τι τῶν τότε
ὑπῆλθεν αὐτὸν δειμάτων.¹⁵

But he who is newly-initiated, who has often viewed those things on an earlier occasion, when he sees a face of divine appearance, well remembered for its beauty, or some bodily form, at first he shivers, and feeling of the old awe comes over him.

As Psyche gazes upon Cupid she falls in love with him; she gives up her plan to kill her mystery husband. Cupid's desertion of her leads Psyche to try to find him so that they may be together again. She is trying to preserve the heavenly love that she found with Cupid, the same type of love which is considered noble in Plato's *Symposium* (187d-e):

δεῖ χαρίζεσθαι καὶ φυλάττειν τὸν τούτων ἔρωτα, καὶ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ καλός, ὁ οὐράνιος, ὁ τῆς Οὐρανίας μούσης Ἔρως.

It is necessary to gratify and to guard the love of those who are orderly, and this is the one that is beautiful, the heavenly one, the Eros of the Heavenly Muse.

Psyche must complete certain tasks in her quest, including some set by Venus; while tasks are common for heroes, the reader may also detect Platonic ideas at work. Apuleius himself writes in his work *De Platone* that the soul undergoes *labor*, *sollicitudo*, and *tristia* (238), and these relate well to Psyche's struggles. During the Tale, Psyche undergoes *labor*, *sollicitudo*, and *tristia*.

After she is abandoned by Cupid, Psyche begins her search with *laboranti vestigio* 'laboured steps' (Apul. *Met.* 5.26). Psyche also confesses to Ceres that she is

¹⁵ Translations from the Greek text are mine unless otherwise specified.

weary from *diutino labore* ‘long suffering’ (Apul. *Met.* 6.2). Psyche beseeches Juno to aid her, claiming that she is enduring *tantis laboribus* ‘great suffering’ (Apul. *Met.* 6.4). She undertakes several labours as a way to find her divine lover. Some of her labours are voluntary, such as when she tidies Ceres’ temple (Apul. *Met.* 6.2), or when she agrees to become Venus’s slave. Once she is enslaved, she is also handed over to Venus’ handmaidens, named Sollicitudo and Tristities, and she is tormented (Apul. *Met.* 6.9). When Cupid abandons Psyche, she becomes so sad and distraught that she cannot imagine life without him, and she even contemplates suicide several times through the Tale.

One of Psyche’s tasks involves venturing into the Underworld, a task that is accomplished by male heroes of myth. According to Wright (61), this task demonstrates gender role reversal of the soul. Wright claims that ‘Apuleius’ mingling of gender roles for Psyche indicates that the human soul should have both masculine and feminine qualities’ (61). From the analysis of the Tale presented so far, the point made by Wright may be made even stronger. We have seen that Psyche shows masculine qualities elsewhere, such as when she tells herself that she ‘must finally summon up a man’s spirit’ (Apul. *Met.* 6.5) so that she can prepare for her encounter with Venus. Apuleius presents Cupid and Psyche as reflections of philosophical thinking; Psyche reflects the mortal longing for the divine and Cupid in his role as the divine love that Psyche seeks.

When Psyche falls into her death-like slumber and is rescued by Cupid (Apul. *Met.* 6.21), she represents the moment in which the soul crosses over to unite with the divine. Upon her “death” she ascends to a higher plane. Her soul leaves the physical confines of her body and achieves what she desires (Pl. *Phd.* 66b),

κινδυνεύει τοι ὥσπερ ἀτραπὸς τις ἐκφέρειν ἡμᾶς μετὰ τοῦ λόγου ἐν τῇ σκέψει,
ὅτι, ἕως ἂν τὸ σῶμα ἔχωμεν καὶ συμπεφυρμένη ᾗ ἡμῶν ἡ ψυχὴ μετὰ τοιούτου
κακοῦ, οὐ μὴ ποτε κτησώμεθα ἱκανῶς οὐ ἐπιθυμοῦμεν.

It is probable you see that there is a kind of path as it were, that carries us out with
our argument in the examination, because, so long as we have a body and our soul
is mingled with such great evil, never will we get adequately what we desire.

Psyche is a human who is trying to attain her goal of reuniting with her divine lover, but
her very human flaw of curiosity gets in the way of her achieving this goal. It is when she
succumbs to her curiosity and “dies” that her soul is rescued by Cupid. He is the divine
force who helps Psyche attain that existence.

In this interpretation, Cupid plays a very important role in the Tale as the divine
force which Psyche longs for. Harrison states that Apuleius speaks of and contrasts three
types of love in *De Platone*, the noble, base, and median (237-238). The types of love
mentioned in *De Platone* reflect the description by Diotima to Socrates in the *Symposium*
(202d-e),

τί οὖν ἄν, ἔφην, εἴη ὁ Ἔρως; θνητός;

ἥκιστα γε.

ἀλλὰ τί μήν;

ὥσπερ τὰ πρότερα, ἔφη, μεταξὺ θνητοῦ καὶ ἀθανάτου.

τί οὖν, ὦ Διοτίμα;

δαίμων μέγας, ὦ Σώκρατες: καὶ γὰρ πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον μεταξὺ ἐστὶ θεοῦ τε καὶ
θνητοῦ.

What then, I said, could Love be? Mortal?

Not in the least.

But truly what?

The very thing I said, between a mortal and an immortal

What is that, o Diotima?

A great spirit, for everything that has to do with the a spirit is entirely between a god and a mortal.

Cupid ultimately has a match in Psyche that fulfils every part of his nature—something mortal, something immortal, and something in between.

As Cupid evolves and his character changes, he goes through those three types of love. When Psyche is told that she is to marry a monster, she is sent up to the mountain whence she is brought to Cupid's home. While he is with her his identity and appearance remain such a mystery to her that she is easily convinced that he is a serpent-like monster. This stage of their relationship is almost entirely about sex. This relationship is similar to Apuleius' first kind of love, which is base and animal-like. When Cupid is pricked by his own arrows, he falls in love with the soul, Psyche herself (Apul. *Met.* 5.24); this represents the second, more divine, type of love.

In regards to the third type of love, after Cupid returns to health, he comes to the realisation that he loves Psyche. Kenney notes when Cupid rescues Psyche that 'the real Cupid is back and that all his behaviour in the meantime has been out of character' (195). While Cupid withdrew to heal in his mother's chambers, love and lust also withdrew from the world. Apuleius makes it clear that when Cupid is not acting normally the world is out of sorts. When Psyche encounters Pan, for example, he does not act in his usual lusty ways, but instead speaks to her about love and how to reunite with her lover (Apul. *Met.* 5.25). Cupid's retreat is very uncharacteristic. As a god of love he is supposed to be a constant in everyday lives. During that time of healing, he realises that he loves Psyche, the human, just the way that she is, and with that realisation he is able to save her. When

Cupid comes to the realisation that he loves Psyche not only for her beauty but also for her soul we are reminded of the philosophical message in the *Symposium* (210 b-c),

μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὸ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς κάλλος τιμιώτερον ἡγήσασθαι τοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι, ὥστε καὶ ἐὰν ἐπιεικὴς ᾖν τὴν ψυχὴν τις καὶ σμικρὸν ἄνθος ἔχῃ, ἐξαρκεῖν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐρᾶν καὶ κήδεσθαι κτλ...

But after these things he should set a higher value on the beauty in the souls than in the body, so that if someone, being good in his a soul, and has even a little bloom, that suffices for him to love and care for him etc...

When he does rescue her, he achieves that third type of love, which is a combination of both earthly and divine. Cupid loves Psyche as the mortal she is; however, since she ultimately is made immortal by Jupiter, his own longing for divinity is fulfilled.

Through Apuleius's application of philosophical ideas, Psyche and Cupid go through transformations. Apuleius personifies philosophical ideas about love in Psyche and Cupid; through them he presents those ideas in a whimsical tale without smothering his readers with too serious a topic. On the one hand, we can see the changes in the plot and the characters as driven by Apuleius's interest in philosophical ideas, such as the ascension to the divine and divine love; on the other hand, the Tale has many layers and it is only in part a vehicle for philosophical ideas, which might in fact overwhelm the reader, undercut the Tale's charm, and be out of keeping with the tone of the whole work.

While Apuleius's tale is allegorical in places, it also is rooted in his reader's reality.

Societal Norms

Apuleius uses many methods to enable role reversal for his characters.

Interpreting social norms, Apuleius creates familiar changes in Psyche, Cupid, and Venus. This section examines how both slavery and marriage figure in the Tale. Slavery was a natural part of the Roman way of life and it is not surprising to find it within the *Metamorphoses*. While in reality humans would own slaves, the owning of slaves is also a detail that is transferred to the divine beings within Tale, in that Venus becomes Psyche's owner. This section examines the theme of slavery in terms of: 1) slavery and identity; 2) slavery and the ancient novel; 3) slave owners and runaway slaves. The second part of this section focuses on how the roles of the characters were naturally meant to change with marriage. The section concludes with a discussion as to how Psyche completes her role in the marriage and family, along with how Cupid and Venus's familial roles are changed.

According to Fitzgerald, 'slaves were a supplement necessary to the self image and identity of their masters and mistresses' (5). Venus declares Psyche her slave to show that while Psyche may be as beautiful as she, Venus is more powerful. While the master-slave relationship, in reality, had its set rules, the rules do not necessarily apply to the slave-owner relationship within the novel. In the ancient novels, characters who are normally free people, namely royalty, can become slaves. As Fitzgerald states (95):

The enslaved heroes and heroines of the Greek novel are still the same people under their changed circumstances- only their relation to the power has changed. Their adventures as slave are a testing ground for the qualities (some of them physical) that will prove they deserve the status with which they were born.

Lucius and Psyche both find themselves in positions of servitude. Lucius, while he is an ass, has many encounters with masters, some cruel, others more benign. When dealing with the gods and the supernatural, there are no set rules as to how the interaction will play out. Such is the case with Psyche and Lucius. When Venus declares Psyche her runaway slave, Psyche's role reverses from free to slave instantly and the subsequent scene parallels what a search for a runaway slave would appear like in reality (Bradley 491). Venus goes to Mercury for his aid in obtaining Psyche:

'quanto iam tempore delitescensem ancillam nequiverim repperire. Nil ergo superses quam tuo praeconio praemium investigationis publicitus edicere. Fac ergo mandatum matures meum et indica qui possit agnosci manifeste designes, ne, si quis occultationis illicitae crimen subierit, ignorantiae se possit excusatione defendere.' Et simul dicens libellem ei porrigit, ubi Psyches nomen continebatur et cetera. Quo facto protinus domum secessit.

Nec Mercurius omisit obsequium. Nam per omnium ora populorum passim discurrens, sic mandatae praedictionis munus exequabatur: 'Si quis a fuga retrahere vel occultam demonstrare poterit fugitivam regis filiam, Veneris ancillam, nomine Psychen, conveniat retro metas Murtias Mercurium praedicatorem, accepturus indicivae nomine ab ipsa Venere septem savia suavia et unum blandientis adpulsu linguae longe mellitum.'

'for such a long time I have not been able to find my hiding hand-maid. Therefore there is nothing left but to announce through your proclamation a reward for a public search. Therefore, see to it that you expedite my command and that you designate the marks by which one may be able to recognise her plainly, that, if

anyone has undertaken the crime of illicit concealment, excuses of ignorance not be able to protect him.’ And while she is speaking she passes to him a notice where was contained the name Psyche and the rest of the facts. And with that having been done, she immediately went home.

And Mercury did not set aside his obedience. For the execution of the commanded pronouncement, spreading on the lips of all nations, was followed up thus: ‘If anyone will be able to drag back from flight or to point out the hidden fugitive daughter of the king, Venus’s handmaid, named Psyche, let him meet Mercury, the crier, behind the Murcian turn-posts, to receive by way of an informer’s reward, seven sweet kisses from Venus herself and a long honeyed one with the jab of her caressing tongue. (Apul. *Met.* 6.7-8)

Mercury here acts as the town herald who would proclaim the transgression and the reward for the slave as well as informing his audience of the law. It was common for slaves to attempt escapes from their servitude, and it was normal for such declarations to be held. According to Bradley, the scene is reminiscent of a praetor stating the facts about the runaway slave (491).

The imagery of a runaway slave is solidified when Juno speaks to Psyche. Juno claims that she cannot aid her for she would be breaking the law by hiding a runaway slave from his or her master (Apul. *Met.* 6.4). The law to which Juno is referring is the *lex Fabia*, which lays out the consequences for harbouring another citizen’s runaway slave. By alluding to this law, Apuleius is really bringing in a strong touch of social reality.

After Psyche learns that she has been declared a runaway slave, she knows that she must confront Venus. Fitzgerald’s idea that slavery is a proving ground for the

worthiness of a character is cruelly evoked by Venus herself; before she gives Psyche her first task, Venus tells Psyche, ‘since it seems to me that you, ugly slave, can earn the favours of your lovers only by diligent drudgery’ (Apul. *Met.* 6.10). By stating that Psyche has ‘lovers’, Venus is implying that Psyche is a common woman and questioning the paternity of her unborn child. We see in this scene the actions that would take place should a slave run away from his or her owner.

Psyche approaches Venus’ dwellings and is attacked by Venus’ attendants as a runaway slave (Apul. *Met.* 6.8). While Psyche may have been a princess and then Cupid’s lover, her status is gone as she becomes enslaved by Venus. As a vengeful goddess, Venus simply declares Psyche a slave and Psyche is helpless against her. According to Fitzgerald (97-98):

Both characters, in a sense, lose ownership of their bodies, from which they receive only suffering; both are taken away from their world and sink to the levels of slaves, and both end up in a new and socially desirable position.

Ultimately when Psyche is rewarded for her efforts and granted immortality and a legitimate marriage to Cupid, the relationship between Psyche and Venus undergoes another transformation. No longer is Psyche Venus’ slave; she is now her daughter-in-law. Psyche’s path to becoming a legitimate member of the divine family is not an easy one. Throughout she undergoes several role changes.

Psyche is not the only character that undergoes a change that relates to slavery. Cupid, though a god, can be seen as representing a special slave, namely, a *deliciae*. A *deliciae* was a young slave that was kept as a sort of pet by their owner and remained in a childlike state for the pleasure of their owner. George identifies a statue that is dated to

the Antonine period which depicts Cupid as a small child with a chain around his ankles; the statue may represent a *deliciae* (158). The way that Venus treats Cupid in the Tale is different from how a mother treats her son. Here, she treats him like a pet slave who could easily be replaced by another. By defying his mother several times, Cupid symbolically escapes the role of the *deliciae* by maturing and becoming his own person, free to make his own decisions.

Changes are a part of life. Psyche, as a young woman, is expected to marry and join her husband's household. Normally, she would leave the protection of her home through a legitimate wedding and become attached to a new household where there would be no question as to her new status in her new home. However, Psyche's actual path to her new family is not so straightforward.

Psyche is the dutiful and submissive daughter, as she should be, and agrees to be sacrificed for the sake of her family. When Psyche becomes part of Cupid's home, it is not as his legal wife, but as his lover. This situation provides a surrogate family for her, but her marriage is in reality not sanctioned. While she is living under Cupid's roof, she is under his protection and is closely guarded until she becomes pregnant. At this point, things become more serious for Psyche, since her status will affect the status of her unborn child.

Though she finds herself with child, Psyche does not show the level of maturity one would expect from a soon-to-be *matrona*. Psyche allows her curiosity to get the better of her, which leads to her abandonment. Psyche's natural course of having a family does not go as expected as compared to that of a normal woman that she feels that she must make it right. It is up to Psyche herself to find a way to reunite with Cupid at all

costs, even to submit herself in servitude to Venus. The natural course of Psyche's life is only restored after she drinks the ambrosia; she is now divine and now has an equal standing with Cupid. With this new status, Psyche takes her rightful place in the divine family into which she enters upon her marriage. With the birth of her child, Psyche completes her feminine and most important role in the family by producing a free-born heir.

Venus does not play the role that one would expect a mother to have in a typical Roman household; instead she takes on a masculine, fatherly role. By taking on the role of the father, Venus actively reverses her role in the household. Fathers, who had *patria potestas*, made all the important decisions in the household, including whether to accept as marriages as legitimate as well as children (Gardner 1-2). During her angry tirade towards Cupid, we find that she has the power to strip her own son of his power and to replace him. She proclaims herself his sovereign whom he disobeyed (Apul. *Met.* 5.29); adding insult to injury she informs him further:

Vero ergo scias multo te meliorem filium alium genituram, immo ut contumeliam magis sentias, aliquem de meis adoptaturam vernulis eique donaturam istas pinnas et flammam et arcum et ipsas sagittas et omnem meam suppellectilem, quam tibi non ad hos usus dederam. Nec enim de patris tui bonis ad instructionem istam quicquam concessum est.

Therefore I would have you know that I will bear another son better than you; in fact so you feel the disgrace more, I will adopt someone out of my young household slaves and I will give to him those wings and fires, and the bow, and your very arrows, and all my goods, which I had not given you the uses. Not

indeed was anything granted from the goods of your father for that equipping.

(Apul. *Met.* 5.29)

We find out the roles that fathers have through Venus who places herself in that powerful position through her rant to Psyche about the legitimacy of her union with Cupid. Venus states:

Felix vero ego, quae in ipso aetatis meae flore vocabor avia, et vilis ancillae filius nepos Veneris audiet. Quamquam inepta ego frustra filium dicam. Impares enim nuptiae et praeterea in villa sine testibus et patre non consentiente factae legitimae non possunt videri, ac per hoc spurius iste nascetur, si tamen partum omnino perferre te patiemur.

Fortunate indeed I myself, who in the very bloom of my life will be called a grandmother, and the son of a worthless handmaiden will be called the grandson of Venus. Although unsuitable, I myself to no purpose will call him son. Indeed a marriage not between equals—and on top of this in a villa without witnesses and also without a father not consenting—is not able to be seen as made legitimate; and by this that child will be born illegitimate, if for all that we allow you to carry the pregnancy to term. (Apul. *Met.* 6.9)

Here, Venus states why she cannot consider the union of Psyche and Cupid as legitimate, nor their child. Since Cupid's father is not present, Venus takes on that masculine role. Whether or not she wants to accept the marriage of Cupid and Psyche, she is forced to. For Jupiter legalises the union, acting as the divine family's *pater familias*. According to Osgood, Jupiter's ruling clears the legality issue of their union (421). Venus is relegated

back into the role of a less than powerful *matrona* by the end of the Tale, and she also becomes a mother-in-law and a grandmother.

Cupid takes a while to mature in his relationship with Psyche and his mother. Only after he has done this can he and Psyche have a legitimate family. Before he can become the responsible husband to Psyche, he has to work on his issues regarding marriage and the necessity to mature and become his own person.

When it comes to marriages, Cupid is the one that many fear because of his power to destroy homes. Cupid is typically seen as the reckless god, who ruins many marriages. Seneca writes of this in the *Phaedra*:

One tyrant has mastered all my heart. The winged boy knows no limits, his power spreads over the earth. He sets light even to Jupiter with the flames which no one can master. The sturdy Warmonger has felt those terrible torches, and the Blacksmith god who made the triple thunderbolt, the one who stirs the forge of ever-burning Etna, even he grows hot with such a little fire. Even Phoebus himself, who aims his missiles on a string, is pierced by an arrow fired by a keener marksman, a boy who flits light but falls heavy on the sky and earth alike. (185-195)¹⁶

In the Tale, Cupid takes a while to mature and become a proper husband to Psyche. Cupid has been labelled as irresponsible and reckless, but by the end of the Tale he is a surprisingly different Cupid. Apuleius reverses Cupid's image from the irresponsible and carefree god into a family man. According to Morwood, 'the irresponsible boy has grown into an individual who has made a serious commitment to a single woman and it is

¹⁶ Wilson's translation.

appropriate that this union should last forever' (115). Cupid shows this commitment and maturity by going to the head of the divine family, Jupiter, for his aid. Jupiter legitimises Cupid's marriage, superseding Venus and thereby reversing her role back to being Cupid's mother, not his father. Jupiter claims that he raised Cupid and that he is allowing him to marry Psyche. To assuage Venus on the union, who is still in the paternal role, Jupiter assures her that he will 'arrange for it to be a lawful and legitimate and in accordance with the civil law' (Apul. *Met.* 23). Jupiter undoes Venus' earlier threat that the marriage cannot be viewed as legal, and reins in Venus.

As we finish with the societal details of the Tale, we can now analyse the Tale using the final approach, intratextual details between the Tale and the *Metamorphoses*.

Intratextual Details

The Tale is found within the larger work of the *Metamorphoses*; it is a pendant story that reflects the content of the outer story. There are similarities between Psyche and Lucius, the protagonist of the outer story. Psyche can even be seen as the female version of Lucius, since she shares similar situations with him. This section examines the characteristics and situations that link Lucius and Psyche. First, curiosity causes both of their predicaments. Secondly, both Lucius and Psyche undergo states of role reversals in their quests. Thirdly, they find themselves in situations so desperate that they contemplate suicide. Lastly, both become connected to divinities.

Curiosity is a trait that connects Psyche and Lucius. The following will examine: 1) how Apuleius uses curiosity to create change for Psyche and Lucius; for Lucius, his transformation and Psyche, her abandonment; 2) how Lucius and Psyche represent the

negative qualities of curiosity; and lastly 3) how Lucius's and Psyche's curiosity is enabled by helpers.

It is interesting to note that, in extant literature, the word *curiositas* was only used once before Apuleius in a letter of Cicero; Apuleius made the word popular, and it is a key word in the *Metamorphoses* (Walsh 75-76). *Curiositas* and its various forms appear around forty-one times. Curiosity is one of the central themes shared between the Tale and *The Golden Ass*; it leads both Psyche and Lucius to their adventures and predicaments. Lucius's curiosity resulted in his transformation into an ass; Psyche's, to betraying Cupid and to her abandonment. According to DeFilippo:

Under the sway of *curiositas* both Lucius and Psyche let rational considerations be overcome by the power of their sensual desires and pleasures, of their desires to do or know things they aren't supposed to do or know and which are somehow bad for them. (491)

Curiosity is seen as a negative quality and some interpret the Tale and the *Metamorphoses* as a cautionary tale (Walsh 76). According to Kirichenko, Apuleius presents the contrasting views that the ancient Greeks held regarding curiosity, namely, that nosiness and being curious was a bad habit and that the only acceptable form of curiosity was that of intellectual curiosity (343-344). Lucius and Psyche display curiosity several times in their journey, and Kirichenko notes that overall there is a motif of what he terms 'sacrilegious curiosity' in which their curiosity about magic or the divine is seen as a religious transgression and will be punished by divine law (349). Cupid abandons Psyche because of her violation of his request to keep his identity a secret. Her curiosity is the reason that she falls into a death-like sleep and is rescued by Cupid. Psyche's

rebirth foreshadow Lucius' tale with his rescue by Isis in Book 11. According to Kirichenko:

Lucius' biography, as narrated by Apuleius, could be conceived as structured around two contrastive poles: his first contact with the divine (confrontation with magic) is unbidden and, therefore, sacrilegious, whereas the second one (initiation into the mysteries of Isis) is sanctioned by the goddess herself and, therefore, presents a manifestation of true piety. (359)

On the basis of the negative impact of curiosity, Walsh claims that, with the Tale, Apuleius is 'projecting the same lesson of the dangers of curiosity into the world of myth' (76).

The curious actions of Psyche and Lucius are sometimes enabled by helpers. Both Psyche and Lucius are described as *simplex*, and through their simplicity and naivety, misguided by others, they find themselves in predicaments which they can only escape through Fortune's help. According to Krabbe, 'both Lucius and Psyche pay a price for their unwise choice of teachers and for their impudent curiosity' (209). She also notes that 'neither Lucius nor Psyche is vicious, both act foolishly but are fundamentally *simplex* and *innocens*' (309). Psyche's helpers are her sisters who not only fuel her curiosity and desire to see who or what her husband is, but also convince her to kill him. Through her decision to heed her sisters, Psyche ends up reversing her situation with her lover; she goes from being Cupid's lover to being abandoned. Lucius finds a helper for his curiosity in Photis, who tells him of her mistress's magic and accompanies him to her magic room. Out of his desire for Photis, Lucius grabs a jar and begins spreading the

ointment that will transform him into an ass (Apul. *Met.* 3.24). Their curious nature is the driving force for their actions and adventures.

Sparked by curiosity, Psyche and Lucius begin their adventures, so that they may attain their goals: for Lucius, transforming back into a human; for Psyche, reunification with Cupid. Both Lucius and Psyche have heroic adventures similar to Hercules's and Aeneas's: they encounter a villain, they undergo labours, and they ultimately are rewarded for their trials. If something is important for Lucius to suffer, it is reflected within the Tale as something that Psyche must undertake, which accounts for some of the changes that she goes through.

They undergo reversals as they progress through their adventures. Lucius is at times captured and set free (Apul. *Met.* 4.6; 6.25-32), or is placed in a position of servitude (Apul. *Met.* 7.16-21; 8.23-25; 9.8-13) and is finally transformed back into a human (Apul. *Met.* 11.12-15); Psyche, a pretend wife and mistress, ends up as a slave to Venus, all the while performing heroic tasks. Both Lucius and Psyche encounter women who pose as obstacles. Psyche has harmful interactions with her sisters and Venus; Lucius has several women whom he encounters that are detrimental to his journey. During their quests, Lucius and Psyche also punish those that caused them harm. Psyche exacts revenge on her sisters for their role in breaking up her union with Cupid; Lucius, however intentional or unintentional, takes his revenge on the boy who tortures him by placing heavy and thorny loads on his side and back (Apul. *Met.* 7.17-24). Here both characters reverse their role from being the victim into an avenger.

When their adventure begins, both Lucius and Psyche attempt one of several acts of suicide. Michalopoulos notes that Lucius had reasons to kill himself before he was

transformed into an ass, but he shrugged those incidents off and merely counted them as bad luck, but as soon as he is an ass, the thought of suicide strikes him (541). Lucius' decision to kill himself once he is an ass, even though he previously had opportunities, is similar to Psyche's, in that she was calm and accepted her fate to be placed on a mountain to await a monster. However, she is distraught when she is abandoned by Cupid (Apul. *Met.* 5.25). Both Lucius and Psyche attempt suicide in several ways. Lucius tries to end his life as an ass by eating laurel-roses but was thwarted by a farmer (Apul. *Met.* 4.3.1-3). Lucius' second attempt occurs when he tries to jump from a great height. Psyche also attempted to throw herself into the river as well as from a tower, when faced with her final task of going to Underworld. Michalopolous states (545):

The cases of Lucius-the-ass and Psyche differ considerably in seriousness, so that their relation through this common motif may look comical. However, the fact that Lucius-the-ass thinks and reacts just like Psyche—besides being comical—is more proof that the embedded narrative of *Cupid and Psyche* is closely connected with and reflects the main story of Lucius.

Lucius and Psyche have more than their curiosity and their adventures to link them together; they also share a connection with the divine. The quests of Lucius and Psyche, though with different aims, lead up to a union with divine powers greater than what they expected. For Psyche, her desire to reunite with Cupid; for Lucius, the search for rose-petals so that he may be transformed back into a human. Psyche is granted immortality and welcomed into the Olympian family; Lucius not only returns to human life but forms a union with Isis. According to Krabbe, 'Psyche's union with Cupid, the immortalizing of a human by union with the divine, finds its parallel in the initiate

Lucius' mystical union with Isis' (356). Because of their patience and persistence, they are rewarded for their efforts by being granted *voluptas* (Krabbe 593).

Discussion

Apuleius drives his narrative forward and creates opportunities for reversal in many ways. His reliance on traditional tales, as analysed in relation to Propp, Campbell and the ATU, is sometimes enough to accomplish this. At other times, and especially in pivotal scenes, he may use many approaches and techniques. Apuleius uses a varied approach to creating change by focusing on several pivotal scenes within the Tale. These scenes include Psyche's sacrifice, her abandonment and revenge on her sisters, her rescue, and finally, her trials.

When Psyche is about to be sacrificed for the good of her family (Apul. *Met.* 4.33-35), Apuleius primarily uses one method in creating this scene. Apuleius uses the artistic tradition depicting heroines about to be sacrificed, in this case, Andromeda and Iphigenia.

The scene in which Psyche wakes Cupid from his slumber resulting in her abandonment (Apul. *Met.* 23-24), on the other hand, demonstrates the use of four of the techniques. For one, after Cupid abandons Psyche, she begins her quest to reunite with her divine lover, bringing philosophical elements to the scene. Secondly, when she breaks her promise to Cupid and gazes upon him, Psyche inadvertently begins her adventure. This reflects Campbell's idea of the first step of a quest, the call to adventure. Third, Psyche is also performing a function identified by Propp by breaking an edict that Cupid

gives her. Lastly, as Psyche looks upon Cupid, a drop of hot oil injures him, which represents the artistic depictions of Psyche's torture of Cupid.

After her abandonment, Psyche has a reversal of character. She goes from simple and naïve to vengeful as she takes revenge on her sisters for ruining her relationship with Cupid. First, Apuleius makes intratextual connections in this scene: her revenge mirrors Lucius' revenge on the boy that tortured him when he was an ass (Apul. *Met.* 7.19). Secondly, Psyche once again completes a function of a hero in Propp's system, for she is punishing her enemy. Lastly, the ATU also features in this scene. Tales within the ATU depict the villains, in this case the evil sisters, being punished for their acts.

Cupid's rescue of Psyche shows four approaches (Apul. *Met.* 6.21). First, this scene shows the psychology of Cupid. He is no longer the obedient son of Venus, but a mature man who is ready to stand up for his wife, even if that means going against his mother. Second, Cupid's rescue of Psyche from her death-like sleep also reflects the artistic tradition which depicts Cupid leading the soul to heaven. Third, the scene also depicts philosophical elements related to her "death" since it mirrors the soul's encounter with the divine in a higher plane. Lastly, the rescue of Psyche shares intratextual aspects from the larger tale, for Lucius is given a rebirth when he is rescued by Isis and is initiated into her cult.

Psyche's trials under Venus show the most narratological techniques and approaches. All eight approaches are found in her trials. First, trials such as Psyche endures are part of the hero's journey according to Campbell. Second, in fairy tales in the ATU (425-449), the princess or hero must pass through trials to achieve their happy ending. Third, as Propp noticed, heroes also go through trials in folktales and must

overcome obstacles and challenges presented to them as part of their function. Fourth, on an intratextual level, Psyche shares similarities to Lucius, who must undergo several trials to become human once again. Fifth, there is a philosophical element in the Tale. The Platonic dialogues suggest that the soul must suffer in its quest towards the divine; Psyche suffers as she struggles to complete the tasks given to her. Sixth, the trials also reflect visual arts. Heroes in art are shown in the midst of or having overcome obstacles. Seventh, the tasks that Psyche must complete have a social aspect, in that they have feminine qualities; for example, she sorts grain, gathers wool, fetches water, and obtains a beauty box. Finally, as she completes one task after another, Psyche psychologically grows from the naïve and obedient girl ready to be sacrificed for her family to risking death to reunite with Cupid.

As the examples show, there are several places within the Tale that have multiple threads that Apuleius uses to weave his story. We can see from the aforementioned scenes that what may seem like a simple part of the Tale often involve several, if not all, of the approaches and narratological techniques that Apuleius had at his disposal. Apuleius uses the several threads at his disposal to create changes and role reversal.

Conclusion

Over the last several years, scholars have become increasingly interested in Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*. Much of the recent scholarship on Psyche focuses on her role in the philosophical aspect of the Tale or intertextual comparisons. There has been surprisingly little attention given to role reversal, and the goal of this thesis has been to correct that by focussing on Psyche's role reversal and how she acts as a catalyst for Cupid's and Venus's character changes.

Chapter One set out the narratological techniques and approaches that Apuleius uses to create role reversal and character changes in Psyche, Cupid, and Venus. With Propp, Campbell, and the ATU we have tools necessary to break down the issue of role reversal in terms of its function, a hero's journey, and in relation to similar heroines in other tales respectively. Propp and Campbell provide a technique for a modern audience to understand the traditional elements of the Tale. The subsequent approaches allow us to understand the possible threads that Apuleius uses to create changes. Some of the approaches were ones that his audience would recognise, such as the philosophical aspect and the artistic tradition, and others, such as psychology, take a modern approach. A major goal in chapter one has been to explore the approaches and to show that they are valid and can be considered as threads that Apuleius uses to weave the Tale

For Chapter Two, it was necessary to break up the Tale into three parts to highlight the changes and role reversals that Psyche undergoes as she advances through the stages in her life change. In the first section, the reader is introduced to her and the circumstances that lead her to becoming Cupid's lover and the object of Venus's jealousy. The second section examines her role within Cupid's household and the events,

such as when Psyche's sisters attempt to trick her into murdering her lover, that cause her to change the most. The last section covers all the changes that Psyche undergoes, from after she is abandoned by Cupid to the end of the Tale. In this section are Psyche's various role reversals and character changes, brought on by Venus, in her quest to reunite with Cupid. By the end of this process, Psyche successfully becomes Cupid's legal wife and gives birth to their daughter, Voluptas. This chapter is very important for it provides the details for the analysis in chapter three.

Chapter three reveals how Apuleius creates opportunities for Psyche's role reversals and character changes. There are moments in which one approach is used to create change, for example the artistic tradition is relied on when creating a dramatic scene like Psyche's sacrifice/marriage on the mountain-top. At other times, Apuleius uses all the techniques revealed in the approaches, for example when Psyche completes Venus's tasks. When there are moments of great changes in the characters or plot, more threads tend to be used.

Psyche changes and she also acts as a catalyst for changes in Cupid and Venus; these changes are also explored in chapter three. When we are first introduced to Cupid, he is an obedient son who is unusually close to his mother. His relationship with Psyche frees him from Venus's control and allows him to grow and become his own person. Venus exhibits different personalities: 1) the jealous goddess; 2) the anxious and vengeful goddess, and lastly, 3) the peaceful and loving deity. At the beginning of the Tale, she is jealous of Psyche and sets out to ruin her. Because Venus's plan backfires when Cupid falls in love with Psyche, Venus becomes even more jealous at being replaced. When we are first introduced to Venus she appears to be an anxious and vengeful goddess, similar

to Juno who seeks to punish heroes like Hercules. By the end she becomes the happy, loving and peaceful Venus about whom Lucretius writes.

Work on the thesis has also illuminated the following areas for exploration which could lead to a greater understanding of Apuleius's technique and the Tale, but which would have been too tangential to follow up in the thesis: 1) Venus's character; 2) Apuleius and the ancient novel; and 3) a newly discovered philosophical work by Apuleius.

Psyche is a very important character and has been the focus of the thesis but Venus is also important. At times Venus exhibits traits similar to an angry Juno, at times, she is like an anxious and paranoid father of myth, and finally, she becomes a Lucretian Venus. She is a complex and nuanced character, who deserves individual study.

While usually passed over for more serious avenues of study, such as philosophy or epic, ancient novels are increasingly gaining scholarly interest. The Tale is similar in its content to ancient novels, but with a twist in that its main characters are divinities. It would be interesting to see in depth how the Tale compares to other ancient novels in its plot, themes, and characters, just as it was interesting to see how the Tale compared to stories in the ATU.

Lastly, Stover attributes a newly found work to Apuleius, which he considers to be part of the philosophical treatise *De Platone* (ix). We have already seen that the Tale reflects philosophical ideas and the new work might add a deeper understanding of the Tale by revealing even more of Apuleius's philosophical thought in the Tale.

The Tale is no simple story, but a complex narrative that requires a multi-layered approach to fully appreciate Apuleius's technique. With the narratological techniques and

subsequent approaches, we see how Apuleius creates his changes and role reversals. At some points he uses one approach, for example, the artistic tradition, and at other, often important, moments he uses all of the techniques and approaches to achieve changes in his characters.

Works Cited

Scholarly Works

- Apuleius. *The Tale of Cupid and Psyche*. (Trans. & Afterthought) Relihan, Joel. Hackett Publishing. 2009. Print.
- Cupid and Psyche*. Ed. E. J. Kenney. Cambridge University Press. 1990. Print
- Bradley, Keith. "Roman Slavery and Roman Law." *Historical Reflections Reflexions Historiques* 15.3. (1988): 477-495. Print.
- Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*. New World Library. 2008. Print.
- DeFilippo, Joseph. "Curiositas and the Platonism of Apuleius' Golden Ass." *The American Journal of Philology* 111.4 (1990): 471-492. Print.
- Dillon, John. *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C to A.D. 220*. Cornell University Press. 1977. Print.
- Finkenpearl, Ellen. "Psyche, Aeneas, and an Ass, Apuleius Metamorphoses 6.10-6.21." *TAPA* 120. (1990): 333-347. Print.
- Metamorphosis of Language in Apuleius: A Study of Allusion in the Novel*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press. 1998. Print.
- Fitzgerald, William. *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2000. Print.
- Fletcher, Richard. *Apuleius' Platonism: The Impersonation of Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press. 2014. Print.
- Frangoulidis, S. A. "Intratextuality in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*." *AntCl* 66 (1997): 293-299. Print.
- Gardner, Jane F. *Family and Familia in Roman Law and Life*. Oxford University Press.

1998. Print.

George, Michele. *Roman Slavery And Roman Material Culture*. Toronto: University of

Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division. 2013. Print.

Gilligan, Carol. *The Birth of Pleasure*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 2002. Print

Gollnick, James. *Love and the Soul: Psychological Interpretations of the Eros and*

Psyche Myth. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press. 2014. Print.

Harrison, S. J. *Apuleius: A Latin Sophist*. Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press. 2000. Print.

Hunter, Richard. *Plato and the Traditions of Ancient Literature: The Silent Stream*.

Cambridge University Press. 2012. Print.

Ibrahim, M and Kanana, S. *Speak Bird, Speak Again: Palestinian Arab Folktales*.

University of California Press.1989. Print.

Kenney, E. J. ‘Psyche and her Mysterious Husband’ in ‘Antonine Literature’ ed. Russell

D. A. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1990. Print.

Kirichenko. Alexander. “Satire, Propaganda, and Pleasure of Reading: Apuleius’ Stories

of Curiosity in Context.” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*. 104 (2008):

339-371. Print.

Konstan, David. *Sexual Symmetry: Love in the Ancient Novel and Related Genres : Love*

in the Ancient Novel and Related Genres. Princeton University Press, 2014. Print.

Krabbe, Judith. *Lusus Iste: Apuleius’ Metamorphoses*. University Press of America.

2003. Print.

May, R. “Cupid and Psyche: A Divine Comedy.” *Apuleius and Drama: The Ass on Stage*.

Oxford University Press. 2006. Print.

Michalopoulos, Andreas. “Lucius’ Suicide Attempts on Apuleius’ ‘Metamorphoses’.”

- The Classical Quarterly*. 52.3 (2002): 538-548. Print.
- Morgan, J and Harrision, S. "Intertextuality". Ed. Whitmarsh, Tim . *The Cambridge Companion to The Ancient Greek and Roman Novel*. Cambridge University Press. 2008. Print.
- Morwood, James. "Cupid Grows Up." *G&R* 57. 1 (2010): 107-116. Print.
- Neumann, Erich. *Amor and Psyche: The Psychic Development of the Feminine. A Commentary on the Tale by Apuleius*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1956. Print.
- Osgood, Josiah. "Nuptiae Iure Civili Congruae': Apuleius's Story of Cupid and Psyche and the Roman Law of Marriage." *TAPA* 136. 2 (2006): 415-441. Print.
- Parker, S and Murgatroyd, P. "Love Poetry and Apuleius' 'Cupid and Psyche'." *CQ* 52. 1 (2002): 400-404. Print.
- Plato. *Symposium*. Trans. Seth Benardete. Intro. Segal, Erich. *The Dialogues of Plato*. New York. 1986. Print.
- Platt, V. "Burning Butterflies: Seals, Symbols and the Soul in Antiquity". ED. Gilmour, L. *Pagans and Christians from antiquity to the Middle Ages*. Archaeopress. 2001. British Archaeological Reports series. Print.
- Propp, Vladimir. *Theory and History of Folklore*. Trans. Ariadna Y. Martin and Richard P. Martin. Ed. Anatoly Liberman. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press. 1984. Print.
- . *Morphology of The Folktale*. Trans. Laurence Scott. Ed. Svatava Pirkova Jakobson. Martino Publishing: USA. 1958. Print.
- Sandy, Gerald. *The Greek World of Apuleius: Apuleius and the Second Sophistic*. Brill,

- Leiden. The Netherlands. 1997. Print.
- Schlam, C. *Cupid and Psyche: Apuleius and the Monuments*. University Park: Pennsylvania. 1976. Print.
- Seneca, Lucius Annaeus, and Emily R. Wilson. *Six Tragedies*. Oxford University Press. 2010. Print
- Stover. Justin. *A New Work by Apuleius: The Lost Third Book of the De Platone*. Oxford University Press. 2016. Print.
- Sophocles. *Antigone*. Trans. David Grene. ED. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore. *Sophocles I*. 1991. University of Chicago Press. Print.
- Walsh. P. G. *The Roman Novel*. Bristol Classical Press. 2006. Print.
- West, Emily. "Marriage, Cosmic Tranquility, and the Homeric Retiring Scene." *CW* 104 (2010): 17-28. Print.
- Whitmarsh, Tim (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to the Ancient Greek and Roman Novel*. Cambridge University Press. 2008. Print.
- Wright, Constance. "The Metamorphoses of Cupid and Psyche in Plato, Apuleius, Origen, and Chaucer." ED. Constance Wright and Julia Holloway. *Tales within Tales: Apuleius Through Time*. AMA Press. 2000. Print.

Artistic Works

AT No. 1	Capitoline Museum, 2 nd c. BCE. Inv. No. MC0408
AT No. 2	Altes Museum, c. 150 CE. Sk. 151
AT No. 3 ¹⁷	Museo Nazionale Tarentum, Locrian relief.
AT No. 4 ¹⁸	Vatican, Lapidaria Gallery
AT No. 5	Cleveland Museum, 1-6 th c. BCE. Cat. 161
AT No. 6	Antakya Museum, 3 rd c. CE. Inv. No. 1021
AT No. 7	National Archaeological Museum of Naples, 1 st c. CE. Cat. No. 9112
AT No. 8	House of Lucretius, Pompeii, 79 CE.

¹⁷ Please refer to Schlam in Works Cited.

¹⁸ Please refer to Schlam in Works Cited.