VIII

ARTICULATING THE INEFFABLE, STRUCTURING THE ABSTRACT : APULEIUS AND CUPID'S *DOMUS REGIA*

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> I found myself on the threshold of a new understanding. I discovered that architecture was perhaps the first of all the arts, and that the house was the most perfect expression of the self.
>
> (Oliver Marc, *Psychology of the House*)

Sommaire. — *Dans le conte d'Amour et de Psyché, Apulée porte une attention toute particulière à la description de la* domus regia*. Au-delà des rôles* ***esthétique*** *et* ***symbolique*** *qu'endosse la* ***description*** *du palais, c'est à l'importance* ***narratologique*** *de cet "élément de décor" que s'attache le présent article.* ***Seuil*** *de la dimension féérique, le palais est aussi le lieu* ***dans lequel et à partir duquel*** *se nouent les diverses dimension du conte. Il s'offre ainsi comme un point de vue sur les* ***différentes pistes de lecture****.*

Abstract. — *This paper takes a close look at and into Cupid's* domus regia *in Apuleius' Tale of Cupid and Psyche. Rather than approach the palace disjunctively in terms of its* ***psycho-symbolic*** or *its* ***architectural*** *properties, I argue that a synthetic consideration is necessary if we are to understand fully that the house, mostly overlooked, plays a critical role, as the* ***house-within-the-tale-within-the-Tale*** *: it stands as a* ***liminal*** *and transformative epicenter* ***in and through which*** *many of the complexities of the narrative coalesce, and thereby offer the listener important* ***reflective opportunities****.*

In Roman architecture and literature, the *domus* has been seen to exceed its material confines, and function in more socio-symbolic ways. The physical structure might represent its owner's social status : in 6.5 of *de architectura*, Vitruvius explains how farmers need unadorned and functional spaces, whereas prominent citizens need lofty and lordly vestibules, spacious atria and peristyles, lush gardens, and so on, as "properly befits their dignity" (*ad decorem maiestatis*) [1]. And it would be hard to miss the social and political representative capabilities of Cicero's Palatine house were one to read the

1. Afin de ne pas alourdir l'important appareil des notes, il a été exceptionnellement décidé de rassembler en fin d'article les références complètes de la bibliographie.

Vitruvius *de* Arch 6.5.2. Book 6 is dedicated to private dwellings. See A. Wallace-Hadrill (1998) 43-53 ; (1988) 43-97. For other social readings of the house both archaeological and literary, see M. Grahame (2000) ; (1998) 156-178 ; (1997) 137-164 ; S. Hales (2003) ; R. Laurence (2007) ; (1997) 7-14. R. Saller

orator's laments in the exilic letters of 58 B.C.E., or his hyperbole in the speeches *post reditum* [2].

In addition to its potential for reflecting social and political standing, the house might also represent the internal machinations of a person. Lucretius analogizes a crooked house with rickety reasoning [3]. And Cicero demonstrates the dangers of those who rely too heavily on the material world, in contrast to the sage, who relies only on the well-founded structure of his internal and mental reasoning : the paranoid Sicilian tyrant Dionysius retreats into the material world by means of drawbridges and moats in order to hide from the world and its fatal hazards. The tyrant's retreat reifies and perpetuates the sick state of both his mind and his relationship to architecture [4].

The house of Cupid [5]

Given the figurative options for reading domestic space, this article explores the properties of the *domus regia* in Apuleius' tale of Cupid and Psyche, the tale-within-the-tale of the *Golden Ass*, regarded as "one of the richest and most complex sections of the *Metamorphoses*" [6]. About the tale in general, Shumate identifies four "basic approaches" to the scholarship : "those concentrating on its literary antecedents ; its folkloric features ; its psychological symbolism ; and its mythic significance or allegorical function" [7]. The house situated within the tale, however, has not been so scrutinized in this way. In fact, it has been mostly overlooked in terms of its structure and significance. The aim of this article is to extend the analyses beyond Shumate's "basics". Specifically, I consider the *domus regia* by working alongside scholars such as Brodersen,

(1984) 342. provides a rich supply of primary references where the *domus* extends beyond the 'concrete'. T.P. Wiseman (1987) 393-413. Primary sources include Plautus *Mostellaria*, and Plutarch *Publicola*.

2. See A. Riggsby (2002) 159-196 ; A.-M. Claassen (1992) 19-47 ; N.J. Herescu (1961) 137-156 ; A. Wilcox (2005) 237-255. See also G.E. McIntosh (2014) *Syllecta Classica*. Even the *Paradoxa Stoicorum* (§ 4), written twelve years later (46 B.C.E.) reveal a Cicero still stewing over the house he lost while in exile.

3. *DRN* 4.512-521.

4. *TD* 5.58ff. The notion of the unimportance of the material world appears also in the 'Dream of Scipio' in Cicero's *de republica*.

5. For a helpful overview of the ancient novel, in terms of history, 'genre', influence, and reception, see H. Hoffman (1999) 1-12 ; J. Gollnick (1992) 11-23 ; A. Laird (1993) 173-174 ; and T. Hägg (1983) 1-4, 182, 190. Most useful up to its day is C. Schlam's 1971 article, itemising scholarship on Apuleius since 1938 ; relevant to this paper are the pages on scholarship on the Cupid and Psyches tale (299-301). For specifically directed consideration of the House of Cupid, see J. Annequin (1994) 237-241. For an overview of "légendes locales et thèmes litteraires" see L. Herrmann (1952) 13-24.

6. W.S. Smith (1999) 203. On the various *Einlagen* ('episodes' or 'tales') within the *Golden Ass*, see J. Tatum (1999) 157-194. A. Scobie (1978) notes that the insertion of tales within tales does not find its origin in Apuleius ; there are Greek precedents that evidence this "pattern of narrative interruption" (43). N. Shumate (1996) notes that this tale in particular "is distinguished both from the other tales and from the main action by its remote fairy-tale atmosphere, its divine characters, and its happy ending" (36). W. Woeller (1963) examines the *Märchentyp*, the 'fairy-tale type' in the tale of Cupid and Psyche (97-105). And J. Annequin (1994), "Faut-il solliciter le mythe philosophique, celui du *Banquet* et du *Phèdre*, en particulier l'interprétation de Eroticos de Plutarque, en jetant plus loin encore le regard, interroger la reprise du thème chez Plotin ? Faut-il se tourner du côté du conte populaire, du folklore, comme l'ont fait depuis longtemps tant d'auteurs en cherchant de tous côtés ?" (230).

7. Shumate (1996) 252, n.1. On possible Greek, influential precedents, see J. Mason (1999) 217-236 ; and A. Barchiesi (2010) 195. On symbolic aspects, folktale motifs, and religious elements, see C. Moreschini (2010) 211-221.

Morwood, Drake, and Schlam, on the one hand, who have looked a little at the architectural aspects of this place [8] ; and on the other hand, scholars such as Moreschini, Panayotakis, Murgatroyd, and Shumate, who have focused on the other-worldliness of the ekphrasis in general [9]. I propose here that both the architectural and the abstract threads are not only concurrently available, but they ought as such to be considered in tandem[10]. For the house, and the narrative on the house mark a critical point of intersection of both the concrete / architectural and the abstract / other-worldly aspects of the palace, of the tale, of figures within the tale, and of those reading the tale nowadays. To focus only on one aspect is, to me, to miss the rich potential of the *domus regia*. This more synthetic proposition gains currency, first by examination of the house and its new occupant within the Cupid and Psyche tale ; then by considering the house in the broader context of the whole novel ; and finally, by exploring the relationship that the house may have to the text, to the characters, and to anybody and everybody who comes across it [11]. Through reflective consideration of the 'real' and 'symbolic' capital of the palace, we see that those within the immediate tale, those listening to the tale in the tale, the author, and the reader have the potential to *experience* the material and ineffable aspects of the house, offered at once not only to the story within, but also to the human and psychological possibilities emanating from it, and available to all.

House and occupant in tale

Pursuant to the introductory remarks about the ways to interpret a house, one might reasonably wonder when first encountering Cupid's house, the

8. S. Brodersen (1998, 103-125) lays out identifiable features (external architecture and interior decoration) that situate the palace firmly within the 'real' Roman élite houses and villas. She considers the 'real' structure of the place, by comparing it to archaeological remains and literary references, though she does note that the typically Roman features are, in Cupid's palace, far more opulent than any Roman could afford – which is only appropriate as this is the house of a god. J. Morwood (2010) mentions that the palace, "is almost indecently luxurious with its profusion of gold, silver, and precious stones its extravagant grandeur setting it against a tradition of Roman poetry that rejects such vainglorious show" (108). G. Drake (2000) notes only that the palace "is lighted not by the sun but by its gold and silver walls and gem-stone floors" (12-13). C. Schlam (1992) mentions the "palace" but only to say that this is where Psyche lands, that it is "magic" and that it is set in an "ideal landscape" (84). Elsewhere (1976) he looks at artistic representations of Cupid and Psyche, and considers the possibility of correlation between these representations and the text ; and he discusses (1992) the representations of Cupid and Psyche on ancient monuments, 81-95. See also C. Schlam (1978) 99. Noticeable is that he does not talk at all about the palace of Cupid. If this is due not to an oversight, but rather to an ellipsis in ancient visual representation, then that too is notable. F. Millar (1999) writes, "Apuleius clothes his sequence of fantastical episodes in a mass of vivid, concrete and realistic detail, of physical objects, houses, social structure, economic relations, the political framework of local communities, and the wider political framework of the Empire" (252). Though he mentions 'houses', there is no mention at all of the *domus regia* of Cupid. Rather, he talks of other households within the novel, particularly as they pertain to economic consumption, 265-266.

9. C. Moreschini (2000) 21-44 ; C. Panayotakis (2001) 576-583 ; P. Murgatroyd (1997) 357-366 ; N. Shumate (1999) 113-125. On the sources and models for the tale, see E.J. Kenney (1990) 17-22.

10. C. Schlam (1978) notes, "The complex mixture of folktale, myth, literary sophistication, and symbolism allows the tale to be read on several levels, which do not necessarily exclude one another" (99).

11. C. Schlam (1992) talks of this tale as an "assemblage of incidents," and notes that it "can be read and enjoyed without such [philosophical and religious] interpretations, but it does not exclude or invalidate them" (90). I include references to the philosophical and religious elements, but think that the palace and the possible interpretations of it are worth a different sort of interpretation. For a helpful overview of literary interpretations of the *Golden Ass*, see S.J. Harrison (1999) xxxii-xxxix ; and J. Gollnick (1992) 9-11.

extent to which that *domus regia* is 'real', 'symbolic', or 'imaginary'. Here it helps to look as the properties of the house :

> *Nam summa laquearia citro et ebore curiose cauata subeunt aureae columnae, parietes omnes argenteo caelamine conteguntur bestiis et id genus pecudibus occurrentibus ob os introeuntium. ... Enimuero pauimenta ipsa lapide pretioso caesim deminuto in uaria picturae genera discriminantur : uehementer iterum ac saepius beatos illos qui super gemmas et monilia calcant ! Iam ceterae partes longe lateque dispositae domus sine pretio pretiosae totique parietes solidati massis aueris splendore proprio coruscant, ut diem suum sibi domi faciant licet sole nolente : sic cubicula sic porticus sic ipsae ualuae fulgurant.* (5.1)

> "The high ceiling, artistically paneled with citron-wood and ivory, was supported on golden columns. The entire walls were worked in silver in relief ; beasts and wild cattle met the gaze of those who entered there. … The floors too extended with different pictures formed by mosaics of precious stones ; twice blessed indeed, and more than twice blessed are those whose feet walk on gems and jewels ! The other areas of the dwelling, too, in all its length and breadth, were incalculably costly. All the walls shimmered with their native gleam of solid gold, so that if the sun refused to shine, the house created its own daylight. The rooms, the colonnade, the very doors also shone brilliantly. The other riches likewise reflected the splendour of the mansion" [12].

From its debut, we see that the place can certainly be thought of as real. Apuleius describes the abode's structure as well as its décor in terms of its physical and material make-up. Brodersen focuses on this materiality and, by comparing it to extant archaeological remains, argues that "Cupid's palace is not a palace of fairystyle, but is patterned after a Roman villa". The decoration also resembles real Roman interiors, though she notes that the materials used in the *domus regia* were far more extravagant than any Roman could actually afford. Thus, the structure is in some sense typically Roman, while the sight of the site is where reality shifts to fantastical ; in each case, the physical and material make-up of the palace are showcased [13]. And as Murgatroyd has noted, this description has a "very strong visual

12. Translation by P.G. Walsh (1994). On literary precedents of palaces presented in ekphrastic form (e.g. Homer, Ovid, Lucan), that influenced Apuleius, see P. Murgatroyd (1997) 357-359, A. Barchiesi (2010) 193, and H. Erbse (1947) 107-126, with specific reference to Cupid and Psyche at 107, 117-120. On the structure of the description, see P. Murgatroyd (1997) 360-361. And on the description as providing the reader with a realistic 'experiential' opportunity to travel through the space as one actually would have done, see again P. Murgatroyd (1997) 361. See also J. Annequin (1994) whose article explores the symbolic aspects of the Cupid and Psyche narrative as 'just a tale' : "Ce «conte» est-il une simple digression ou annonce-t-il la suite des aventures de Lucius ? Est-il une simple narration ou possède-t-il une dimension symbolique ?" (226). R. Henneböhl (2007) explores the "Methoden und Einsichten der Deutung" of the tale (60-71). More broadly, P. Habermehl (2010) discusses the reception of Apuleius in terms of influence, interpretation, and drama (149-154).

13. S. Brodersen (1998) 114-122. She claims also that "[t]here is sufficient evidence for the thesis that the plan of Cupid's palace is identical with the plan of a typical Roman villa" (121). See also, "Cupid's palace is based on very real, Roman foundations" (113). S.J. Harrison (1998) identifies an architectural parallel between the *domus regia* and its general character of a *locus amoenus* with the palace and grounds of Alcinous and Arete in the *Odyssey*, 59. And J. Annequin (1994) points out the inseparability between the 'real' palace, replete with its lavish material, and the very natural landscape in which it is set : "ce palais est indissociable de la prairie humide et fleurie" (239) ; see also 275.

impact : sight is the only sense appealed to" [14]… One would be hard pressed not to conceive of this house as 'concrete' [15].

Yet Apuleius (or the old hag narrator) also tells us that the palace was 'the work not of human hands, but of divine craftsmanship' (*aedificata non humanis manibus sed diuinis artibus*, 5.1), that 'you would know as soon as you entered that you were viewing the bright and attractive retreat of some god' (*iam scies ab introitu primo dei cuiuspiam luculentum et amoenum uidere te diuersorium*, 5.1), that 'the one who shaped all this silver into animal-forms was certainly a genius, or rather he must have been a demigod or even a god' (*mirus prorsum [magnae artis] homo immo semideus uel certe deus, qui magnae artis suptilitate tantum efferauit argentum*, 5.1), and that 'you would be justified in thinking that this was a heavenly palace fashioned for mighty Jupiter when he was engaged in dealings with men' (*nec setius opes ceterae maiestati domus respondent, ut equidem illud recte uideatur ad conuersationem humanam magno Ioui fabricatum caeleste palatium*, 5.1) [16]. These comments are threaded throughout the physical portrait, and from them it is apparent that the palace is, on the one hand, *real* inasmuch as one can 'enter' the space (and experience it materially). On the other hand, the space has symbolic value. In fact, such a splendid *domus* (per the Vitruvian prescription) is only appropriate for the owner, the divine and otherworldly Cupid [17]. As Murgatroyd notes : "Like Love the *domus* is special, pleasure-giving and very beautiful, and has an aura of mystery, marvel and divine splendor" [18].

The house has both real and symbolic value. And yet it is also always already imaginary, for it belongs to Cupid, who is of neither the material nor mortal world, and who is never seen by Psyche until the inevitable deception [19]. He dwells in the imagination. Furthermore, the house is run by disembodied voices, by invisible attendants and 'gusts of wind' (*nullo seruiente sed tantum spiritu*, 5.3) that serve food, bathe, play music, and generally tend to Psyche's every need. Likewise, the food is sumptuous, and the wine 'as delicious as nectar' (*ilico uini nectarei*, 5.3), the drink of the gods. As Apuleius puts it, 'nothing imaginable was missing' (*nec est quicquam quod ibi non est*, 5.2) [20].

14. P. Murgatroyd (1997) 364.

15. J.J. Rossiter (2007) uses the description of Cupid's palace to help with the history of houses and their physical components in Late Antique Carthage, 371-375.

16. On the language (nouns, adjectives, types, etc.) used in this passage, see P. Murgatroyd (1997) 363-364.

17. S. Brodersen (1998) has the same sentiment, 117. Notes C. Panayotakis (2001) : "All things related to Cupid radiate blissful light. The gold columns of his palace (5.1.3) – indeed, the whole of the palace- generate a light of their own, which is quite separate from the light of the sun (5.1.6)" (581). See again C. Panayotakis (2001) : "Psyche's attraction to Cupid's shining palace and to all bright items connected with him should be regarded as not simply the amazement of a simple young girl, who is speechless at the sight of a beautiful building situated in a most charming landscape, but as a soul's ardent desire for the divine light" (578).

18. P. Murgatroyd (1997) 365. See also R. De Smet (1987) 29-30.

19. On Psyche's emergence from the dark, and an interpretation of her movement towards the light (and towards seeing) as a development of Psyche's unconscious, see E. Neumann (1956) 75-78.

20. One can reasonably argue that the house is only ever imaginary as it is presented in a literary format, and thereby begs for the listener's (Charite, Lucius) and reader's (Apuleius' contemporaries, us, etal.) imagination. This notion is discussed later on. For now, see R. De Smet (1987) 29-30 ; particularly, "Un dualisme

When the new occupant crosses the threshold (*intra limen sese facit*, 5.2), she reinforces the real, imaginary and symbolic aspects of the house. For one, the palace is again real, as it is an earthly place 'in a soft and grassy arbour' (*teneris et herbosis*, 5.1), and it is a place to which mortals could go : Psyche first, and her sisters later make their way there. It is also again imaginary : at the start of the tale, Apuleius describes Psyche in terms that invite the immediate listener (Charite / Lucius) or later reader to look beyond the words into the realm of imagination :

> *Erant in quadam ciuitate rex et regina. Hi tres numero filias forma conspicuas habuere, sed maiores quidem natu, quamuis gratissima specie, idonee tamen celebrari posse laudibus humanis credebantur, at uero puellae iunioris tam praecipua tam praeclara pulchritudo nec exprimi ac ne sufficienter quidem laudari sermonis humani penuria poterat.* (4.28)
>
> "In a certain city there lived a king and queen with three notably beautiful daughters. The two elder ones were very attractive, yet praise appropriate to humans was thought sufficient for their fame. But the beauty of the youngest girl was so special and distinguished that *our poverty of human language could not describe or even adequately praise it*."

Through Psyche, the future occupant of the house, Apuleius asks us to see past the superlative, past language even, into the realm of the imaginary. Occupant, like the place to which she moves, is of another world [21]. In other words, as an imaginary sort of figure, any entrance by Psyche into space or place is also always already imaginary.

And it is precisely as she crosses the threshold (*intra limen sese facit*) that Psyche invests the house with symbolic capital. For at the very moment that she enters the house, she assumes a new identity, one that symbolizes her status as wife of Cupid, and that in turn is appropriate to her new abode [22]. However, Psyche's efforts to ensure some symbolic consonance between her self and her new place, on the one hand, and between herself and her new husband on the other, prove to be a struggle : while at times she experiences 'the greatest rapture' (*summa cum uoluptate*, 5.2) regarding the house and its treasures, and she claims to value her unknowable

semblable, mais plus accentué charactérise la notion du [lumière] che Platon : d'un côté la lumière qu'on aperçoit à l'aide des sens, dans l'autre côté la lumière de la perception intérieure et de la vérité" (29).

21. Indeed, mortal men neglect Venus because of their compelling desire to see Psyche. On the envy and wrath of Venus towards Psyche, see E. Neumann (1956) 57-61. See also C. Schlam (1976) 1. N. Shumate (1996) 253. E. Finkelpearl (1998) 67-71, who discusses Apuleius' allusions to, and inversions of the portraits of Venus and Cupid in Vergil, Ovid and Lucretius. For instance, Venus in the tale of Cupid and Psyche resembles the wrathful Juno from the *Aeneid* ; but she is more aligned with Ovid's Venus inasmuch as each is petty and vengeful. And see H. Erbst (1947) 119.

22. N. Shumate (1996) describes Psyche's reaction to the extravagance of the palace : she "eagerly examines the treasures of the palace and derives much pleasure from the sight" (255). (Note, though, that there is no inclusion here of the sight of the physicality of the palace ; rather Shumate elaborates Psyche's wonderment by way of her delight in the invisible servants, disembodied voices, and such.) For the physicality of the palace, and its role in the transitionary experience of Psyche, see P. Murgatroyd (1997) 361-362. See also J. Annequin (1994) : "Traditionnellement, on distingue dans le conte deux grands espaces narratifs disjoints, l'espace familier, et l'espace étranger où le héros se rend pour réaliser le programme narratif sur lequel porte le contrat qu'il a passé avant son départ avec le destinateur social" (236). On whether Psyche even ought to have entered the palace, see R. Hennebôhl (2007) 65.

husband 'higher than Cupid himself' (*nec ipsi Cupidini comparo*, 5.6), at other times she feels 'confined and enclosed in that blessed prison, bereft of conversation with human beings for company' (*beati carceris custodia septa et humanae conuersationis colloquio uiduata*, 5.5) [23]. Notes Schlam, "Psyche's life in [Cupid's] castle … is a mere simulacrum of bliss. The love offered her is deficient ; she is miserable in her loneliness and is easily made afraid" [24]. The struggle perhaps demarcates a symbolic 'desire' at odds with the symbolic 'reality'.

Like the house, wife and husband are mutually representative. Here is another muddled symbolic relationship. When Psyche 'invents' a portrait of her husband to her all-inquiring sisters, she first describes him as 'a handsome young man whose cheeks were just darkening with a soft beard, and who spent most of his day hunting in the hills of the countryside' (*confingit esse iuuenem quendam et speciosum, commodum lanoso barbitio genas inumbrantem, plerumque rurestribus ac montanis uenatibus occupatum*, 5.8) ; he is essentially a male and masculine equivalent to Psyche. Later she says he is 'a business-man from an adjoining region…middle-aged, with streaks of grey in his hair' (*maritum suum de provincia proxima magnis pecuniis negotiantem iam medium cursum aetatis agere interspersum rara canitie*, 5.15) [25]. Both portraits are fantastical, but only one 'fits' in terms of a mutually representing couple. The inconsistency of representation alerts suspicion in the sisters, particularly because of the misfit between the latter 'man' and his house as well as between that man and their indescribably beautiful sister. The former description aligns well with the place : we learn in 5.9, after the initial description, that the sisters are savvy to the divinity of Psyche's husband precisely because of the appearance of the house. Psyche's inventions later serve only to emphasize an expected correlation between a house and its owner's 'identity and status' (*quisue uel qualis ipsius sit maritus*, 5.8). Thus, when she changes her tune, and describes her husband as 'all-business' and 'middle-aged', the incongruence between house and owner jolts the sisters into a more convinced suspicion [26].

23. Additionally, she is repeatedly torn between the admonitions of her husband and the suggestions of her sisters.

On the contradictory experience of ecstasy and confinement, see E. Neumann (1956) : "Psyche's life and love is an ecstasy of darkness. It is a state of not-knowing and not-seeing, for her lover can only be felt and heard" (70). Also : "Psyche's existence is a nonexistence, a being-in-the-dark" (74). On the 'rapture', see M.-C. Von Franz (1992), who notes the bliss and happiness that Psyche first experiences, but notes also that it is "an ideal place, a fool's paradise of happy love" that cannot last (105). See also J. Morwood (2010) 109 ; and R. De Smet (1987) 29.

24. C. Schlam (1992) 96.

25. On these two 'blind' portraits ("novelettish fantasies"), see J. Morwood (2010) 110-111. W.S. Smith (1998) points to Apuleius' "preoccupation" with physical appearance : "The essence of a condition or character is contained in physical detail" (71) ; in this way, the latter portrait fails to capture Cupid's essence.

26. The sisters aren't affable characters anyway. H. Erbse (1947) describes the deceipt of the sisters, to which Psyche falls prey ; they do this in part by soliciting Psyche's '*Misstrauen*' (120-121). E. Neumann (1956) argues that they are "man-haters", representative of the "matriarchal attitude" (72-73). But, he continues, the "sisters represent an aspect of the feminine consciousness that determines Psyche's subsequent development without which she would not be what she is, namely the feminine psyche" (73). N. Shumate (1996) says that the sisters "embody the inimical world of error" (257). E. Finkelpearl (1998) identifies a parallel between the sisters' deception that led to Psyche's 'fall', and Sinon's deception in *Aeneid* 2 that led to the fall of Troy, 95-101. L. Herrmann (1952) find a parallel between the sisters and the

The struggles that she undergoes reflect a challenge of morphing identity, which is in part a social inevitability : she is moving to a new place, and assuming a new role [27]. It is also in part due to the specifics of her circumstances : her marriage to Cupid is one that bestows upon her several often contradictory forces, ideas, and choices. She must juggle her past and her present in order to face her future. Her past is comprised of things mortal and material while her present is comprised of things immortal and sublime. Thus as she crosses the threshold of the palace she herself becomes a liminal figure, at odds in terms of preserving who she was, nurturing who she is becoming, and somehow smoothing over what could only be a rough, and unwelcome (as Venus repeatedly whines) transgression of the normal order of things [28]. A quote from Jung is pertinent here :

> "Is what science calls the 'psyche' not just a question mark arbitrarily confined within the skull, but rather a door that opens upon the human world from a world beyond, allowing unknown and mysterious powers to act upon man and carry him on the wings of the night to a more than personal destiny ? [29]"

The reference to the soul as a 'door' that unites the human from the 'beyond-human' is both spatial and architectural. The crossing of the threshold in Psyche's story, then, becomes symbolically critical [30] (the reference also to 'wings' is nice, given Psyche's counterpart).

Several scholars have accounted for Psyche's journey and her struggles by arguing that she is an allegory for the Platonic ascent of the soul from the material (the 'human') to the ideal (the 'beyond-human') [31]. Of particular

Sirens (18). And M.C. O'Brien (1998) works through the idea that Cupid, Psyche, and the sisters represent the three parts of the Platonic soul, 24-27. See also R. De Smet (1987) who discusses the role of *lucerna*, the sisters, and Psyche's eventual 'visual' of Cupid (33-34) ; and J. Annequin (1994) 251.

27. E. Neumann (1956) comments on the change of identity that a bride undergoes : her 'defloration' represents "a truly mysterious bond between end and beginning, between ceasing to be and entering upon real life" (64) ; see also 69. And G. Drake (2000) notes that here we see the "Death of the Maiden" (12). J. Annequin does too : Apollo, he notes, "prédit pour Psyché un "hymen de mort" qui la fera passer dans un autre monde" (237) ; he notes also the traditionally gendered roles assumed inside Cupid's palace (261).

28. Concerning the transitional experience of a woman when she marries, E. Neumann (1956) observes the liminality without using the word : "To experience maidenhood, womanhood, and nascent motherhood in one, and in this transformation to plumb the depths of her own existence : this is given only to the woman" (64). And E.P. Nolan (2000) argues that the ultimate vision of the *Golden Ass* is "the discovery that true being is an eternally feminine, metamorphic process of becoming" (46).

29. C. Jung (1971) 94-95. On a possible Jungian reading of this tale, see J. Gollnick (1999), who argues for the plausibility of 'dreams' as a hermeneutical interpretive tool (3-12). Chapter 6 is dedicated to a dream interpretation of the tale of Cupid and Psyche. Interesting to me is that, despite the important 'spatial' aspect to (archetypal) dreams, especially considered in a psychological and/or psychoanalytic light, Gollnick doesn't lend any relevance to the palace where everything seems to take place or transform. See also Gollnick, ed. (1992) : chapter 3 is comprised of a collection of Jungian interpretations of the tale (65-112). Chapter 2 is comprised of Freudian interpretations of the tale (29-64). For a helpful bibliographical list of Jungian and pyschoanalytic analyses, see J. Annequin (1994) 232, n. 18.

30. Dowden (1998) has it that it is Psyche's first *sleep* that transitions her from one world to another, to otherworldliness. This other world "may be … our real home" (13). K. Dowden draws an interesting parallel between the sleep of Psyche and that of Odysseus when he finally, asleep, reaches Ithaca – an initially unknown and mysterious place for him (13-14). And R. De Smet (1987) talks of 'light' as 'being' : from the dark (death) to the light (life) –both of which are metaphorical –Cupid's house as destination is very bright –literally (30).

31. C. Moreschini (1999), who includes a history of allegorical interpretations, from Late Antiquity, Boccaccio, Rennaissance, to modern (215-228). He also (2010) presents a Platonic interpreta-

pertinence to this ascent is the argument which Apuleius supports in *de Platone*, that the nature of things is dual [32]. Thus, as Panayotakis shows, "the material world is perceived by the mortal eyes and can be even felt by means of the hands ; however, the other aspect of nature, the permanent and everlasting one, can only be understood after careful thinking by means of the sharp vision of the mind" [33]. When Psyche becomes the death-bride of Cupid, she is caught between the material and the permanent, between seeing with her eyes and with her mind, between touching and thinking, and between life and death, which is between the Jungian 'human' and 'beyond-human' [34].

Other antithetical elements confront Psyche : 'human / divine', 'hands / *artes*', 'woman / man', 'material / ideal', 'eyes / mind', 'darkness / light', 'innocence / knowledge', 'curiosity / truth', 'slavery / freedom', 'beginning / end', and 'embodied soul / winged eros' [35]. Importantly, these antitheses come to the fore only when Psyche crosses the threshold (*intra limen sese facit*, again) and enters the *domus regia* ; only then can her

tion (227-236), but ultimately claims that any allegorical significance is, by Apuleius' design, one that does not dominate the 'entertainment' values of the story (241). J. Gollnick (1992) also provides a brief history of allegorical interpretation (13-17). C. Schlam (1992) argues that the Cupid and Psyche tale provides a "range of philosophic and religious associations," and perhaps as such is the "most overtly allegorical part of the novel" (97). A. Wlosok (1999) notes Apuleius' inclination, somewhat along the vein of Plutarch : "Like Plutarch…Apuleius, as a Platonizing philosopher, is open to a theology of revelation and could regard the Isis religion as the fulfillment and perfection of his Platonism" (156). On scholarship that has examined Apuleius' Platonism, J. DeFilippo (1999) provides a good summary (270-289) ; his own focus is on the theme of *curiositas* to Platonic elements (namely "images and metaphors for the soul") in Apuleius' novel. As does G. Garbugino (2009) 211. See also R. Heine (1978), who provides a concise but neat history of allegorical interpretations of the Cupid and Psyche tale, as well as the novel more wholly (32-36) ; he cites Warburton's note on the allegorical aspect of this tale, on p. 33. And N. Shumate (1996) 259-260. Also, C.S. Wright (2000) claims that Psyche "represents every living soul pursuing the Neoplatonic goal of transcendence" (55-72). R. Merkelbach (1953) identifies Egyptian religious elements in the tale (106-108). S. Robitschko (2007) draws parallels with the Bible, notable books of Esther and Solomon (50-58). L. Graverini (2009) includes texts and philosophies other than those of Plato, to point in the end that Apuleius can reasonably be read in multiple lights : "I romanzi sono un prodotto di una cultura in cui la religione e la filosofia … giocavano un ruolo importante" (83 ; 57-59, 75-84). S.J. Harrison (1998) begs off the allegorical road, arguing that the philosophical allusions serve rather to demonstrate Apuleius' "literary learning" (57).

32. C. Moreschini (2001) 22-35. See C. Schlam (1976) 34-35. Here too, Schlam claims that "Apuleius' primary interest is in the possibility of mediation between the human and the transcendent perfection of the supreme deity". See also C. Schlam (1992) 18. S.J. Harrison (2000) exposits clearly the philosophical threads and influences in Apuleius ; chapter 5 in particular focuses on *de Platone* (174-209). R. De Smet (1987) talks of the relationships between Plato, the light, and Apuleius (41). He notes also the symbolic dualism seen throughout ancient literature (38, 41).

33. C. Panayotakis (2001) 579

34. E. Neumann (1956) discusses the 'death and the maiden' motif, and identifies Psyche's experience as an archetypical example of the "feminine mysteries" (62-63). M.-L. Von Franz (1992) describes the union of Psyche and Cupid as a *hieros gamos*, which is "often mythologically identical with the death experience" ; and that Psyche is caught in the magic realm of the underworld, the 'Beyond', "which is identical with the unconscious…a paradisiacal, fairylike, alluring, and soporific beauty" (92-93).

35. M.-L. Von Franz (1992) shows that the Cupid and Psyche tale is an "*enantodramia*, a beginning turn[ing] into the opposite" (110). She later discusses how, given Psyche as an animistic archetype in the unconscious, the unconscious "is in some way identical with the whole unconscious. It contains in itself the opposites : it is everything, masculine and feminine, dark and light, everything overlaps" (103). Very interesting is P. Murgatroyd's (1997) observation of structural (as in, physical/architectural) antitheses (365). See again R. De Smet (1987) 29-30.

struggles and transformations start their course [36]. The *domus* is that which enables and motivates even as it disables and deters. The threshold is a liminal space that forces liminality upon its occupant, and is the locus of coalescence of dualistic drives or ideas. At one and the same time, the house is material and sublime, and it represents one occupant externally (Cupid : status and beauty), and the other internally (Psyche : the soul at odds within) [37]. It is in this space that Psyche can start addressing her identity, and it is through this space that she can 'become' [38]. Thus it is more fruitful to consider the architectural and abstract threads in tandem ; they work symbiotically.

Psyche's agency in all this is significant : Cupid doesn't *make* his new bride cross over the threshold ; Psyche actively takes herself across it (as the force behind the *sese* demonstrates), and this is key to the significance and effects of her experience. Cupid may be an agent, from a 'psychic' perspective, in mobilizing this action taken by Psyche : Schlam observes, "Eros is a figure of divine love, as the daemon freeing the soul from the bonds of flesh, and as an embodiment of the divine with which the soul seeks to be united" [39]. But Psyche acts more 'physically', of her own volition, possibly out of an unconscious yearning for union with the divine. Having made that choice, and having taken herself across the threshold, Psyche undergoes something of a transcendent experience ; despite the complexities of place, role, and identity, there is a salvation observable with her transition [40]. The choice to be her own agent, and to move into the new space, is one that has positive potential for other listeners (Charite and Lucius) and readers (us, for instance) as well.

Cupid, Psyche, and the house are liminal figures, mostly in motion. The house assumes special value since it is in this place alone that Cupid and Psyche, the divine and mortal, male and female (and all dualistic properties) unite.

36. E. Finkelpearl (1999) identifies a *katabasis* when Venus assigns various labors to Psyche, one of which involves a trip to the Underworld (292-293 ; 300-304). Finkelpearl is interested in demonstrating an attempt by Apuleius to connect, via allusion, Psyche with Vergil's Aeneas. But we might see here a certain correlation between transformation the crossing of a threshold, and the coalescence of various drives, with the transition from life to death, the ultimate *katabasis*, if you will. See also the significance of Venus and the labors she assigns to Psyche, in H. Erbse (1947) 117-119.

37. There is a certain irony here, but one that perhaps supports the very fluidity of things : the external / physical aspects of the house are attributed to the sublime figure, whereas the internal / sublime aspects are attributed to the mortal. On 'Psyche' as 'soul', and Apuleius' play with her name and the Latin equivalent, '*anima',* see J. Tatum (1999) 177-178.

38. Without reference to the house as the place where this happens, E. Neumann (1956) nevertheless notes that when Psyche becomes the death-bride of Cupid, "love and hate, light and darkness, conscious and unconscious enter into conflict with one another. This is the phase of the separation of the original parents, in which the principle of opposition comes into being" (109). One might feel, all the same, that while Psyche can start addressing her identity, it will be (necessarily) out of her grasp, alluring her but, like desire, ultimately unrealizable.

39. C. Schlam (1976) 31.On the "tempo" of, and patterns within the Cupid and Psyche tale, see E.J. Kenney (1990) 24-26.

40. J. Annequin (1994) argues, contrarily, that Psyche is passive : "Elle s'inscrit dans 'une grammaire de la passivité' alors que le héros inscrit son action dans une 'grammaire de la volonté' " (275). C. Schlam (1976) notes a shift in the iconographic forms of Cupid and Psyche at the time when Apuleius was writing this tale. Sarcophagi reliefs at this time represent "a more intense concern with the afterlife" (32). Perhaps the potential salvation identifiable in Psyche's experience demonstrates this contemporary concern with the prospect of life after death.

House as tale-within-tale

If Cupid's house is a liminal locus within its specific tale (of Cupid and Psyche, narrated by the old hag), it is liminal also when it comes to the rest of the text. The novel can be represented by this basic framework [41] :

1 – 4.27	Exemplars of negative curiosity
4.28 - 6.24	Cupid and Psyche tale
	Psyche's negative curiosity
	Psyche's *ordeals*
	Psyche's **metamorphosis/apotheosis**
6.25 – 10	Lucius' *ordeals*
11	**Lucius' metamorphosis/enlightenment**

As others have noted, the tale occurs at the center of the novel. What I want to point out is this : it is in the middle of the middle (in the enchanted realm and its *domus regia*) that the particular exchange between Cupid and Psyche occurs (*medio luci meditullio prope fontis adlapsum domus regia est*, 5.1) [42]. The palace is at the center of the center, perhaps perceived as the 'epicenter' of the tale and novel. Shumate sees the tale as a "magical interlude" that temporarily lifts Lucius out of his "increasingly problematic reality" [43]. In a structural sense, then, the preceding narrative leads towards it, and the proceeding narrative away from it ; and as an interlude, the tale-within-the-tale is set as a mythical recess from reality [44]. We see also that the tale, and particular to my case the house-within-the-tale(-within-the-tale), provides a locus for the transference of, or transition to the bigger themes : if 'negative curiosity' provides the narrative backbone for the first four books, and if 'trials' and 'change' are the themes of the second half, then it is in the

41. C. Schlam (1992) provides a different, but still cohesive (and perhaps more specific) structure for the Cupid and Psyche tale (82). A. Scobie (1978) sees a tripartite structure to the whole novel : Lucius before metamorphoses, Lucius metamorphosed, and Lucius remetamorphosed (49). S.J. Harrison (1998) discusses the Cupid and Psyche tale in terms of its internal structure *and* that of the whole novel : the tale within the tale has structural as well as thematic links to the broader narrative, and has an epic flavour (52) ; and he provides a structure particular to the tale (in the form of 'Acts') later on (58). And J. Annequin (1995) describes the 'architecture' of the novel as 'complex' and simultaneously "réelle et illusoire" (276). On the specific structure of the Tale, see the schematic in S. Robitschko (2007) 51.

42. N. Shumate (1999) 114 ; Schlam (1992) 35. Scobie (1978) : "the nuclear tale of Cupid and Psyche … not only refracts and recapitulates Lucius' adventures up to the point at which the tale is introduced, but also looks forward to their happy conclusion" (53) ; A. Scobie also notes that the tale of Cupid and Psyche is "carefully set at the mathematical midpoint" of various inserted stories (54). R.Th. Van der Paardt (1978) notes also the "multiple encased narratives" whose longest is the tale of Cupid and Psyche (81). So does W.S. Smith (1998) 70.

43. N. Shumate (1996) 252.

44. J. Tatum (1999) concludes, "[The tales] often anticipate a later event in the main narrative… Although often introduced as entertainment or diversion, on the whole, the tales are as much instruction as amusement" (191). See also R.Th. Van der Paardt (1978) who also notes scholarship on the "summarizing and anticipatory" function of this tale (81, and n. 55). Noteworthy is that N. Shumate (1996) includes two chapters in Part I (Things Fall Apart) of her book : one, "Books 1-4.27 : The Material World" and two, "Books 6.25-10 : The Social World". Between the 'material' and the 'social' lies the tale of Cupid and Psyche, that middle narrative of transformation and transference. Shumate's reasoning for holding off at the start on the tale is that "it seems to be qualitatively different in tone and type from the rest of the *Metamorphoses*" (36).

middle, in the tale, in the house where Soul and Love meet, that these themes converge and then shift [45].

These observations are set within the *general* narrative framework. It is helpful also to focus more closely on the immediate extension of Cupid and Psyche, and the house. Here, we find Charite listening intently to the old hag's story. As Schlam notes, "the tale is told to comfort Charite" [46]. Tatum, Sandy and Shumate, have pointed to the parallels between Psyche and Charite, the latter being the person for whom the tale is ever told [47]. Sandy remarks, "Charite does not realize that the tale of Cupid and Psyche has special relevance to her own situation, that it is a *fabula de se*" [48]. Each woman falls under the envious eye of another, she suffers certain hardships or toils, she is transformed from a naïve, young woman to one who exacts vengeance, and she triumphs via the ultimate reconciliation with her beloved [49]. The tale of Cupid and Psyche, then, provides Charite with the opportunity – whether she takes it or not – to contemplate and even to structure the direction of her life. She *can* choose a life directed towards the sublime ; and she can be active in this choice, just as Psyche was an active agent (*sese facit*) in crossing the threshold within the tale. And if Charite does make this move, if she takes herself towards the sublime, then she can do so without a god for a husband, and without a palace decorated with precious metals, and maintained by ethereal attendants. She can do so with a spouse from her own mortal world, and can embark upon this from the cave in which she hears the tale. Thus the *domus regia* is simultaneously that which enables a shift

45. As M.-L. Von Franz (1992) notes, of the tale of Cupid and Psyche, "psychologically it fits completely into the context of the novel" (77). And P. Henneböhl (2007) elucidates the psychological and symbolical aspects of the tale (60-71), particularly by way of the "Sprache und Inhalt, Symbolik und Psychologie sowie existenzielle Bedeutsamkeit" (60). In terms of 'curiosity' as a theme, A. Wlosok (1999) discusses Lucius' *curiositas* – principally for knowledge, but specifically for the ultimate knowledge that is magic, or *divina disciplina* (143-151). And he parallels Lucius' *curiositas* with that of Psyche (148-149). Later he argues that magic (or, 'parapsychological phenomena' per Von Franz (1992) 9) is set against, and as a perversion of religion (151-153). On the other hand, S. Lancel (1961) correlates Apuleius' curiosity with his later spiritual awakening. Also on Lucius' *curiositas* see J. Tatum (1999) 160-162. On *curiositas* as a shared characteristic of Lucius and Psyche, see C. Schlam (1992) 97-98. On *curiositas*, see DeFilippo (1999) 269-289 ; with particular reference to Psyche's *curiositas*, see 274-275. See also N. Shumate (1996) 255-257. G. Garbugino (2009) 212-213. And G. Sandy (1978) 129. This word has appeared only once (in extant Latin literature) before its use is *The Golden Ass*, namely in Cicero *ad Att*. 2.12.2. On this relative neologism, see A. LabHardt (1960) 209 ; and C. Schlam (1992) 48-57. S. Lancel (1961) itemizes the uses of the word in Apuleius (26), and categorizes its appearances as '*curiositas* des mirabilia' and '*curiositas* d'ubristique'(27-40). For further reading possibilities, see J. Annequin (1994) 232, n. 20.

46. C. Schlam (1992) 98. Elsewhere, Schlam (1978) notes that the tale of Cupid and Psyche is told "to give comfort and hope to the captured girl" (99). On Charite, dreams, and earlier 'versions' of Charite, see R.-M. Lucifora (2008) 929-949.

47. A. Wlosok (1999) comments that Psyche's experience "is the consolatory hint at Charite's liberation" (148). M.-L. Von Franz (1992) remarks, "There are even late antique gems in which Charite is called Psyche, so that even for a man of Apuleius' time, it was clear that these are two parallel stories with the difference that one couple [Tlepolemus and Charite] consists of real people while the other [Cupid and Psyche] consists of *daimones*" (79) ; see also, "Charite and Psyche are a personal aspect of the same figure in [Apuleius'] unconscious, which is tied up with the positive aspect of the mother complex" (110). And R. Merkelbach (1953) 104-105.

48. G. Sandy (1999), 131. On allegorical readings and influences, see E. J. Kenney (1990) 27-28. And E. Finkelpearl (1998) identifies allusions in Apuleius's Charite to Vergil's Dido (115-148).

49. As C. Schlam (1992) notes, "The culmination of Psyche's career in an act of divine grace makes the tale a beacon of hope for Charite" (74).

in lives, and that whose place-ness ends up not actually being necessary at all [50]. The house is a locus where mental and spiritual change can occur [51].

Likewise, we see that Lucius too is provided an opportunity for learning. As with Charite, the parallels between the experiences of Psyche and those of the assman have been noted : Tatum claims that Psyche's struggles, and the tale about her, are "an allegory for Lucius' own adventures too" [52]. Garbugino similarly notes that the allegorical significance of Lucius' adventures is "déjà évoquée par la *fabella* d'Amour et Psyché". Wlosok notes, "Psyche's fate mirrors that of Lucius and serves to illustrate it". Schlam notes, "The tale of Psyche is shaped, through religious motif, so as to provide an analogue to the career of Lucius" [53]. In addition, per Sandy, each undergoes "loss of identity caused by unrestrained curiosity, quest for it in the face of malign Fortune, and its restoration by divine grace in union with God" [54]. Thus, as with *Charite*, Lucius hears the old hag's tale in the cave, and is thereby invited to think of the tale's applicability to his own life [55]. He too can be an active agent in his own change ; and in some sense, he *does sese facit* to sublime revelation and transformation at novel's end [56]. The tale provides a "parallel expression-in-miniature of Lucius' own movement

50. One thinks immediately here of the Platonic cave, emergence from it, and enlightenment. On a non-Platonic (though reminiscent of Plato) reading of the importance of 'light' in the process of the soul's struggle towards enlightenment, see C. Panayotakis (2001) 577.

51. One thinks here of C. Jung's 'House Dream'.

52. J. Tatum (1999) 177, and 180-181. See also P. Merkelbach (1953) 104.

53. G. Garbugino (2009) 210 ; see also 213. A. Wlosok (1999) 148. Schlam (1976) 35-36. See also C. Schlam (1992) 35 and 50-51, where he spells out a number of analogues between Psyche and Lucius. And again, C. Schlam (1978) 99-100. J. Gollnick (1999) provides a helpful and concise review of key scholarship on the parallels between Psyche and Lucius (106-109).

54. G. Sandy (1999) 131. See also J. DeFilippo (1999) 286-288. And E. Finkelpearl (1999) : "in light of the much-noted parallelism of Psyche's story with Lucius', it seems that we are to see her as making the descent [to the underworld] in his place, perhaps symbolically for him" (304) ; and "strangely, Lucius – or some alter-Lucius – does seem to be in the underworld at the moment Psyche descends. … / … A surrogate ass and rider are there to suggest Lucius' spiritual and symbolic descent, perhaps hinting obscurely at his future enlightened knowledge of that realm" (305). See also N. Shumate (1996). See also W.S. Smith (1998) : "the Psyche tale and the story of Lucius carry on a kind of wide-ranging dialogue with each other, and a considerable variety of connections might be drawn on both a superficial and a more profound level" (73). Finally, L. Graverini (2009) correlates Psyche's dumbfounded response when she sees Cupid (in/as the light) with Lucius' final epiphanic vision in Book XI (79).

55. R.Th. Van der Paardt (1978) argues that the tale is relevant to Charite, but it is "just as relevant to Lucius, the assman listening in ; it is in fact the story of his life which is being told here and his future is being anticipated" (81). And P.G. Walsh (1970) argues that the "adventures of Psyche are deliberately shaped to stress the connexion between the maiden's error, suffering, and redemption and the similar experiences of Lucius" (190). Also, E.J. Kenney (1990) 14-17.

56. A. Wlosok (1999) claims that Lucius fails "to show the slightest sign of an increased inner maturity or even a catharsis which would lead him towards being chosen for serving Isis" (143). And he later claims that "the story fails to have an effect on the ass. He sees it as nothing but a 'nice little story'. He is far from learning from it" (149). See also E.J. Kenney (1990) who notes Lucius' lack of awareness that the tale is a "paradigm of his own predicaments" (23). Perhaps. But through the tale of Cupid and Psyche, Lucius is, I believe, at least offered the possibility for contemplating, however subconsciously, the sort of spiritual path that this story offers. And it is surely the case that he carries the story in his own psyche, no matter if the effects aren't immediately apparent. Furthermore, as A. Wlosok notes, Lucius undergoes "enlightenment" at the story's end : "the Isis religion [is] a spiritual religion," a "field for philosophical revelation" (155). Whether or not the hag's tale is a tale that sets the enlightenment into motion, remains uncertain, but I think that the argument can reasonably be made that it *could*. And as W.S. Smith has noted, Lucius' "enthusiasm for learning is indomitable despite his frequent setbacks" (206). So it is reasonable to suppose that he would seize this opportunity, especially given that in Book 11, "Lucius learns the meanings

from 'false' to 'true' values" [57]. Robitschko too notes, "Das Märchen von Amor und Psyche stellt also in seinen wesentlichen Aussagen ein Duplikat der größeren Lucius-Erzälung dar". And as Tatum notes, there is a "thematic connection" between (Lucius' reception of) the hag's tale and his revelatory experience in Book 11 [58]. Unlike the damsel, however, he is neither a newly-wed nor a figure with any fixed address. He is single, and he is homeless. Yet even so, when he hears the tale, he has the potential now to contemplate and direct his life towards the philosophical or sublime [59]. Again, then, we see that the story with the *domus regia* is at once the locus that offers a threshold into a new life, and mobilizes sublime possibilities, even as it becomes an unnecessary 'actual' object for so pursuing. The mind (again, as a house within), not the material, is what is most needed [60].

The house of Cupid does not sit alone in its solicitation from listeners and readers alike to read into its space, to extrapolate the possibilities of moving beyond the material, and to garner a certain self-knowledge from its more abstract or ephemeral properties. Other houses in the novel suggest in a supportive though less explicit way, that the *domus regia* offers much of promise to those who are open to take it. By way of a comparative perspective, other houses show the dangers of turning down the invitation to reflect on the palace and its positive potential in terms of life choices, direction, and learning. These houses are mostly oppressive locales. For one, Psyche is a prisoner (*desertam suam solitudinem*, 4.32) in her parents' house (*apud parentes*). Second, once her parents drop their beautiful daughter off, they retreat into their house for 'perpetual darkness' (*clausae domus abstrusi tenebris, perpetuae nocti sese dedidere*, 4.35). Further, Psyche's sisters are exiles in their husbands' homes (*egregiae domum,* 5.9), and are there barricaded (*cunctam domum seris et catenis obditam custodientem*, 5.9). Finally, Cupid is held captive in Venus' palace (*Cupido solus interioris domus unici cubiculi custodia clausus coercebatur acriter*, 6.11), as is Psyche (as she

of his former life and chooses to turn away from [it]," away, that is, from the indulgent and physical to the ascetic and spiritual, from the superficial exterior to the *inner* self (W. S. Smith, 1999, 209).

57. N. Shumate (1996) 252.

58. S. Robitschko (2007) 49. J. Tatum (1999) 177. See R. De Smet (1987) who notes the antithetical relationship between light and dark, life and death, seen not only in Apuleius, but also in the Mystery Rites and in Plato ; in particular, "l'expérience positive 'd'être dans la lumière' a donné naissance à des expressions où *lumière* est utilisée comme métaphore pour *la vie*, en antithèse avec l'obscurité qui représente la mort" (29).

59. M.-L. Von Franz (1992) identifies this possibility, noting that "Just as a dream that is not understood still has a certain effect upon consciousness, this story leaves behind a deep emotional impact". For Lucius, "it is as if, for the first time, the inner totality, or the structure of the Self, turned up from the unconscious, touched consciousness" (80). On the other hand, H. Heine (1978) argues that Lucius "experiences a lot of things and earns virtually nothing" (31). G. Puccini (1999) demonstrates that in the end and after all of his adventures, Lucius can in fact turn to virtue, primarily by way of his acceptance of the Mysteries of Isis and Osiris : "Lucius, en acceptant les initiations aux mystères d'Isis et d'Osiris, s'ouvre à la vertu de contemplation du divin, accède aux vertus du pureté, d'obéissance, de silence, et de justice" (295).

60. Following the Jung reference above, and the hermeneutic potential of 'dreams', J. Gollnick (1999) argues that the tale of Cupid and Psyche is an "*archetypal* dream" that "summarizes Lucius' past experiences and forecasts his future conversion and religious transformation" ; as such, it "involves both the *present* and *precognitive* dimensions" (9). See his 'dream interpretation' of the tale in chapter 6. One might wonder then about the objects within the house – the lamp, for instance – and how they may play within the 'dream' scape.

and Cupid are kept separate from one another : *sic ergo distentis et sub uno tecto separatis amatoribus tetra nox exanclata*, 6.11. These other houses, as oppressive spaces, do not and cannot offer what the *domus regia* does ; they stand in relational opposition to it.

House, tales, author, reader

The boundaries of the house extend beyond the immediate narrative of the Cupid and Psyche tale : the 'threshold' can be crossed not only by a Venus-on-earth, but by a damsel in distress, and even an ass. One can reasonably argue too that the boundaries of the house, and the opportunities for transitioning into a contemplative consideration of the possibilities of the sublime, are open to any listener. As Smith notes, "we [readers] are startled to discover that we were not really listening to the ass report this tale to us after all, but were fellow listeners along with him" [61]. That means that the contemporary reader too is invited to engage such possibilities. As Tatum notes, any flaw that Psyche has, which shows the same flaw in Lucius, is also "something to be found in all men" [62]. And as Schlam notes, "the *Metamorphoses* as a whole can, like the central embedded narrative [of Cupid and Psyche] lighten the spirit with a tale of providential healing" [63]. The reader is implicated here too [64]. In this sense, all that a reader needs, if he is to turn towards the sublime, is not an enchanted palace (place-ness does not matter) nor a divine partner ; all that matters is what is housed in this book, and the *domus regia* that is (in) the reader's mind [65].

So, as Psyche undergoes a shift in 'being' by taking herself into the house, so too, in a sense, does the house itself, as well as the whole novel : each oscillates between its real, symbolic and imaginary properties. We've also seen that Charite, Lucius, and now the reader in turn, can undergo his own shift, psychologically, spiritually, and so on. 'Change', or as Smith writes, 'metamorphosis' is "truly the reigning god in this novel" [66]. In fact, "the most unexpected surprise of all in the novel [is] the transformation of the *Metamorphoses* itself from a collection of anecdotes providing varied

61. W.S. Smith (1999) 203.

62. J. Tatum (1999) 178. See also : "the tales emphasize the inability of all human beings to improve their luck on their own, and, by the picture they give of the foibles and weaknesses of others, they widen the range of humanity beyond a single character, Lucius, to suggest that *all* men act in this way" (192).

63. C. Schlam (1992) 98.

64. A. Laird (1993) considers the relationship that the text has on all readers, though with a focus on the metamorphosis of Pamphile into an owl. He argues that the metamorphosis extends not only to beguile Lucius but also the reader : "[T]he reader too [begins] to realize, like Lucius, that the more he attempts to investigate closely what is going on the more confused and stupefied he becomes" (169). See also D. van Mal-Maeder and M. Zimmerman (1998) 91-94.

65. P. Murgatroyd (1997) does note though that the visual impact that the palace has on Psyche is one that "encourages the same response in readers" (366). More relevant, C. Moreschini (2010) considers the moralistic aspects to the Cupid and Psyche tale, perhaps pointing to the moralistic potential for outside readers (221-227). And G. Puccini (2009) considers whether the Platonic "care of self", seen in Apuleius' philosophical works, is apparent in this novel : "Certes le mauvais usage des plaisirs disperse les êtres entre differents rôles négatifs et les vices l'emportent surs les vertus. Mais le soici d'améliorer son âme pour devenir le meilleur possible en vertu ne nous semble par pour autant étranger à l'écriture de cette fiction" (283 ; see 290-295 especially).

66. W.S. Smith (1999) 205.

edification and entertainment into a fable about the journey of the soul through life" [67].

All of this comes about because of Apuleius' narrative. He has guided his characters to look beyond the surface, and at the same time has invited his readers to do the same thing. Which is also to say that, if his story of Cupid and Psyche, as related by the old hag [68], provides some meaning to the internal 'readers' Charite and Lucius, then his own story as a whole may very well invite the 'external' reader also to find some sort of spiritual significance. We might count Apuleius himself as a type of 'external' reader, looking upon his story (and therefore his self) even as he generates it [69].

For Apuleius too traveled a spiritual path. In fact, Wlosok states that Apuleius "employed the adventure of the assman Lucius for the purposes of religious propaganda" [70]. And having done so, our author arguably allegorizes his experience, and casts it within the archetypical mythological narrative, thereby making it available to anybody and everybody [71]. Neumann remarks, "Myth is always the unconscious representation of such crucial life situations, and one of the reasons why myths are so significant for us is that we can read the true experiences of mankind in these confessions unobscured by consciousness" [72]. And Schlam notes, the myth of Psyche's experience is a paradigm for the transformative promise guided by the divine : "the paradigm is incorporated into the rites of initiation in Book XI, a ritual reenactment of death and resurrection" [73]. So Apuleius' spiritual awakening is mirrored and expressed through the experience of Psyche, whose own

67. W.S. Smith (1999) 207. See also F. Millar (1999), who argues that the *Metamorphoses* is itself a transformation, from a Greek original (249).

68. On the role of the old hag, her story, and why she might have quite naturally elaborated on the elaborateness of the palace, see P. Murgatroyd (1997) 362. See also D. van Malmaeder and M. Zimmerman (1998) 84-88.

69. W.S. Smith (1999) analyzes the ways in which the narrating *persona* relates to Apuleius (195-216).

70. A. Wlosok (1999) 142. Adhering closely to Lucan, Apuleius makes an important shift : "he turns the retransformation of the ass into an act of redemption" (142). See also 144. And see G. Garbugino (2009) who notes that the redemptive experience undermines and stands in significant contrst to the previous pejorative remarks made to Lucius the ass (210). R.Th. Van der Paardt (1999) problematizes the relationship between the "I" of the narrator (the 'ass') and the author (Apuleius) (345-346). M.-L. Von Franz (1992), in some sense, sees a spiritual shift as necessary for Apuleius and his contemporaries : "Apuleius was really born into the decaying corpse of a dying civilization, as far as spiritual values are concerned" (12). The "process of renewal" arose, of all places, in Nazareth, she continues. For an excellent summary of psychological readings of the tale, see J. Gollnick (1999) chapter 5. On Isis, the light, and Lucius (spiritual path), see R. De Smet (1987) 32, 38-40.

71. A. Wlosok (1999) observes that Apuleius is "hiding" behind the old hag narrator (155). C. Schlam (1976) notes, "The tale is placed by Apuleius at the center of the *Metamorphoses*, a work in which multiplicity and shifts in perspective are essential to the author's thought and technique. His announced subject is change. His final vision is of a divine stability which pervades and transcends the shifting fortunes of human experience" (3). And E.P. Nolan (2000) argues "the promised but hidden pattern of secret coherence becomes the central quest of the reader in his own pilgrimage through the text" (41).

72. E. Neumann (1956) 65. What seems rather paradoxical at this point is that the listener or reader can experience individuation in this way, yet as that individuation takes place, it serves to show that each person operates within a Jungian collective unconscious ; see E. Neumann (1956) 106-111 and 128-131. See also R.A. Johnson (1977) who provides Jungian interpretation of feminine psychology based on the Cupid and Psyche tale, as does R. Henneböhl (2007) 61-62. And M.-L. Von Franz (1992) reads the Cupid and Psyche tale as "a big archetypal dream" (77) ; see chapters 5 and 6 (77-121 also).

73. C. Schlam (1976) 35. See also J. Tatum (1999) : "the tales are not simply relevant to the main story, they are in fact essential to it conclusion and its philosophy of human life in relation to Isis" (192).

'coming-to-the-light' extends to Lucius [74]. Several scholars have written on the biographical potential in the tale, and I defer to them, save to say that there is, at the least, the possibility here of the merging of the internal subjects (Psyche, Lucius, Charite) and external ones (Apuleius, and any subsequent reader), in terms of what might be called an experiential, interpretive community [75].

What emerges in the end is that the house is not only complex in its own right, but it is also a repository for several 'life paths' that both the immediate (Psyche) and removed (Charite, Lucius, and the reader in turn) audiences are invited both to contemplate and possibly to pursue when first they come upon the house and its tale, when they then *intra limen se se facit / faciunt*, and when finally they move away from it once the story is told [76]. Insofar as choosing which path to pursue, there is only one way to live the right life per the Apuleian presentation –namely that for each move away from the epicenter (the *domus regia*) and the center (the tale of Cupid and Psyche) towards and along the route of life, there is a concomitant move away from the material to what might be called the sublime. It is a move from dwelling in 'fact', as it were, to pursuing self-understanding and the spirit, or soul [77]. Thus even as the *domus regia* is front and center, and even as it mobilizes and represents the immediate and broader narratives within the novel, it is in the end, a place whose 'place-ness' must be considered alongside its symbolic and imaginary capital, rather than remain separate from it. It is through a synthetic consideration of both the symbolic and architectural aspects of the

74. Of the tale of Cupid and Psyche, M.-L. Von Franz (1992) says, "psychologically it fits completely into the context of the novel, and also we cannot ignore the fact that the book is written by a man who chose this fairy tale and inserted it at a certain point. Therefore I am going to take it from the standpoint of masculine psychology, representing the problem of Lucius-Apuleius" (77-78). Von Franz, in other words, reads Apuleius' own experience through that of Lucius.

75. For the possibility of self-understanding through texts, see below. On Apuleius' biography, see M.-L. Von Franz (1992), chapter 1 : "The Life and Times of Apuleius" (7-18). See also F. Millar (1999) : "Apuleius *may* be importing into the novel a profound personal experience : and he may even at the end intend to blur the distinction between himself as author… and Lucius the hero and narrator" (249-250). A. Scobie (1978) discusses briefly the "confusion of the *ego* of Apuleius' created narrator with the *ego* of the creator himself" (47). See also Gollnick (1999) who presents a "literary psychology" (following Edel) means of understanding – in this case, that Apuleius' text really cannot *not* tell us about the author himself (5). And A. Laird (1993) argues that "the same means of inducing belief are generated by factual and fictional texts alike" (147) making the point that in some sense the facticity of the tale, albeit allegorical, is not at stake so much as the presentation and formation of belief.

76. J. Winkler (1985) explores the role of the readers and their interpretive approaches through time (11-13). E.J. Kenney (1990) sees also the role of the reader here : "Just as Lucius will not grasp that these *narrationes lepidae* are relevant to his own situation until after he has been saved by Isis, so the reader of *Met*. will not realize that instruction lurks beneath the promised *Lepidus susurrus* until he reaches the same place in his reading as Lucius in the story" (13). Later : "Ambiguity and irony repeatedly operate to put the alert reader on notice that his responses are being manipulated" (23).

77. Something for further consideration here is the Gadamerian line of interpretation, that argues that (1) a text plays an intermediary role, and (2) in this role, establishes a dialogic relationship between text and author, and between text and reader. The text can represent, or be a canvas for the projection of the self, of one's expectations, and of one's work towards greater self-understanding. This idea permeates Reception Theory, which had found sensitive and provocative grounds in Classics scholarship (I think right off of William W. Batstone). In terms of the potential for applying this Gadamerian reception to the tale of Cupid and Psyche, as I said, there is ground for further consideration, in another project. But there is a sense of this already, found in E.P. Nolan (2000) 37 ; and R.Th. Van der Paardt (1999) 245-246 ; see also J. Winkler (1985).

house, that the positive possibilities of a move towards the ephemeral can be mobilized [78].

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78. One might think here about the Stoic concept of *oikeiosis*, with particular reference to Hierocles' representation of it by way of concentric circles, with the *oikos* at the centre, then various circles extending out from the house to the *polis*, and so on, until there is the final circle, also the ultimate goal, which represents the *Logos*.

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