

# Divine Authority in ‘Cupid and Psyche’: Apuleius *Metamorphoses* 6,23–24\*

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The long inserted tale of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* (4,28–6,24) presents as its culmination a divine council and a celestial marriage between its two eponymous protagonists (6,23–24). This paper aims to look at the relation of the presentation of divine authority in Apuleius’ divine council and marriage to its literary models, and at how these two climactic episodes reflect on the tale of Cupid and Psyche and on the *Metamorphoses* as a whole.

## 1 The Divine Council (*Met.* 6,23)<sup>1</sup>

*Sic fatus iubet Mercurium deos omnes ad contionem protinus convocare, ac si qui coetu caelestium defuisset, in poenam decem milium nummum conventum iri pronuntiare. Quo metu statim completo caelesti theatro pro sede sublimi sedens procerus Iuppiter sic enuntiat:*

*‘Dei conscripti Musarum albo, adolescentem istum quod manibus meis alumnatus sim profecto scitis omnes. Cuius primae iuventutis caloratos impetus freno quodam coercendos existimavi; sat est cotidianis eum fabulis ob adulteria cunctasque corruptelas infamatum. Tollenda est omnis occasio et luxuria puerilis nuptialibus pedicis alliganda. Puellam*

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\* It is an especial pleasure to dedicate this to Gareth Schmeling, prolific scholar and doughty champion of ancient novel studies, in return for his great generosity and many kindnesses over many years of friendship.

<sup>1</sup> The translations in this paper are taken from Zimmerman et al. 2004, and the content expands my work on 6,23–24 in this volume; the text is that of Helm 1931. I am most grateful to Maaike Zimmerman and my fellow-members of the Groningen Apuleius project for that volume for all their help and discussion.

*elegit et virginitate privavit: teneat, possideat, amplexus Psychen semper suis amoribus perfruatur.' Et ad Venerem conlata facie: 'Nec tu,' inquit 'filia, quicquam contristere nec prosapiae tantae tuae statuque de matrimonio mortali metuas. Iam faxo nuptias non impares sed legitimas et iure civili congruas,' et ilico per Mercurium arripi Psychen et in caelum perduci iubet. Porrecto ambrosiae poculo: 'Sume,' inquit 'Psyche, et immortalis esto, nec umquam digredietur a tuo nexu Cupido sed istae vobis erunt perpetuae nuptiae.'*

Having spoken thus, he ordered Mercury to call all the gods at once to an assembly, and to announce that any not present at the divine gathering would suffer a penal fine of ten thousand sesterces; by which threat the heavenly auditorium was filled at once and Jupiter, tall and sitting on his lofty throne, uttered as follows:

'Gods inscribed in the roll of the Muses, surely all of you know that I have brought up the youth you see before you with my own hands. I have thought it right that the hot impulses of his early youth should be restrained by some kind of curb; it is enough that he has been defamed in daily stories, on account of adulteries and all kinds of debaucheries. All such opportunity must be removed, and the licentiousness of boyhood must be tied down by the fetters of marriage. He chose a girl and robbed her of her virginity: let him hold her and possess her, and embracing Psyche let him always enjoy his love.' And to Venus, facing her, he said: 'And you, daughter, do not be troubled or have any fear for your great lineage and status as the result of a marriage with a mortal. I will now make this marriage not an unequal one but legal and in accordance with civil law.' And at once he ordered Psyche to be put into custody by Mercury and escorted to heaven. Offering her a cup of ambrosia, he said 'Take it, Psyche, and be immortal, and Cupid will never depart from your embrace, but this marriage of yours will be for ever.'

Here at 6,23, Jupiter, having been effectively blackmailed by Cupid in 6,22, calls a divine council in order to bring Cupid's mortal beloved Psyche into the divine pantheon, thus ensuring that she can be married to Cupid with all due and proper ceremony. Jupiter moves swiftly to announce his decision in favour of the marriage to the collective gods, perhaps in order to defuse a potential personal confrontation with Cupid's mother Venus, who has con-

sistently persecuted Psyche and can be expected to object to her union with Cupid in the most forceful terms (cf. 6,9).

The divine assembly is a standard epic feature from Homer on, but its effective topic of the apotheosis of Psyche in particular pursues a theme of especial Roman interest, established in Latin literature since the famous assembly in the first book of Ennius' *Annales* which debated the apotheosis of Romulus (*Ann.* 51–56 Skutsch), parodied after Ennius by Lucilius (see D. Servius on Vergil *Aeneid* 10,104, Lucilius fr. 3 Marx) and Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*, and alluded to by Horace (*Odes* 3,3,15–68) and Ovid (*Met.* 14,812–815).<sup>2</sup> This literary theme had especial cultural force in imperial Rome, where since the elevation of Julius Caesar senatorial debates made real periodic resolutions on the apotheosis of emperors. This gave particular historical edge and relevance to the tradition (apparently established in Ennius and certainly present in Lucilius) of using senatorial procedure to characterise the deliberations of the divine assembly, originally simply framing a mythological motif in familiar Roman terms.

Apuleius can be seen following this Roman tradition closely in reprocessing this epic idea. The Zeus/Jupiter of epic commonly calls a divine council on his own initiative,<sup>3</sup> but the Roman emperor likewise had a right to summon the Senate,<sup>4</sup> and Ovid had famously compared the epic Jupiter in council to Augustus *in senatu*;<sup>5</sup> imperial perhaps too is the form of the meeting, simply announcing an executive decision without significant discussion.<sup>6</sup> Jupiter begins proceedings, as often in an epic divine council,<sup>7</sup> but perhaps echoing the emperor's right to introduce his business as the first item on the Roman senatorial agenda.<sup>8</sup> Mercury's function as advertiser of the meeting recalls that of the heralds (*praecones*) attached to Roman magistrates and emperors,<sup>9</sup> whose responsibilities could include summoning the Senate,<sup>10</sup> and echoes his previous role; Mercury also behaves as a *praeco* for

<sup>2</sup> For further material see Harrison 1991, 57.

<sup>3</sup> *Il.* 8,2; 20,4; Verg. *Aen.* 10,2; Ov. *Met.* 1,167.

<sup>4</sup> Talbert 1984, 187.

<sup>5</sup> *Met.* 1,199–204; cf. Feeney 1991, 199–200.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Millar 1977, 351 on the lack of real debate of imperial proposals in the Senate.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Il.* 4,5; 8,4; *Od.* 1,28, Verg. *Aen.* 10,5.

<sup>8</sup> Talbert 1984, 165.

<sup>9</sup> Compare the *praeco* of Severianus the proconsul of Africa mentioned at Apuleius *Florida* 9,10.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. e.g. Suet. *Claud.* 36,1: *senatum per praecones propere conuocauit*.

a deity in proclaiming Venus' earlier edict for the recovery of Psyche (6,7).<sup>11</sup> Fines for non-attendance at the divine assembly clearly echo those for the Senate, which seem to have existed already in the late Republic and were increased by Augustus,<sup>12</sup> but their specific amounts are not recorded. Apuleius' 10,000 sesterces, one fortieth of the equestrian *census*, seems a suitably large fine for the divine 'senate,' though the anthropomorphism is of course highly comic. *Dei conscripti Musarum albo*, the opening words of Jupiter's speech, parodies *patres conscripti*, the traditional address used by speakers in the Senate,<sup>13</sup> while *albo* alludes to the *album* or register of senators,<sup>14</sup> maintained by the senatorial *scribae*, replaced in this parody by the Muses, who as the daughters of Memory (Hes. *Theog.* 53–55) are amusingly appropriate keepers of divine records.<sup>15</sup>

The motif of the comic divine assembly in Apuleius also has Greek sophisticated counterparts, as we might expect for an author who is arguably the nearest thing to a Latin sophist and whose links with contemporary Greek culture have been well established.<sup>16</sup> Two satirical works by Apuleius' exact contemporary Lucian also depict the divine assembly of the gods in amusingly anthropomorphic mode. In *Deorum Concilium* a divine assembly is called in an unsuccessful attempt to purge the divine community of exotic outsiders such as Dionysus, and Athenian assembly procedure is evidently burlesqued, especially in the legalistic language of the lengthy final resolution (14–18).<sup>17</sup> At the end of *Icaromenippus* (28–34), Menippus' fantastic flight and unexpected arrival on Olympus leads Zeus to call a divine assembly, seeking to suppress the atheistic activities of philosophers, once again parodying Athenian procedure and also evoking Homeric divine meetings by short verse citations.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, it is not possible to establish a relative dating of the Apuleian and Lucianic works, but it has been plausibly argued that the parallels between these works and the *Apocolocyntosis* of Seneca

<sup>11</sup> Cf. 6,7 (Venus to Mercury) *nil ergo superest quam tuo praeconio praemium investigationis publicitus edicere*.

<sup>12</sup> Gellius 14,7,10; Dio 54,18,3; cf. Rich 1990, 195–196.

<sup>13</sup> Dickey 2002, 284.

<sup>14</sup> Tacitus *Annals* 4,42, Talbert 1984, 523.

<sup>15</sup> As commentators note, Apuleius' joke is developed by Fulgentius (*Myth.* 1 prol. 15), where the muse Calliope says *sum e virginali Eliconiadum curia Iouis albo conscripta*.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Sandy 1997, Harrison 2000.

<sup>17</sup> Helm 1906, 152–165, esp. 162–163 on assembly parody, suggesting with some plausibility an ultimate origin in Attic Old Comedy.

<sup>18</sup> Helm 1906, 80–114, esp. 82 on Homeric echoes.

derive from a common source in Menippean prosimetric satire, which may have influenced Ennius and Lucilius earlier.<sup>19</sup> For Apuleius it is at least possible that the comic divine assembly, incorporating allusions both to epic texts and to legal procedures, is a literary inheritance from both Greece and Rome.

Jupiter's speech at 6,23, like his previous meeting with Cupid in 6,22, ultimately presents the father of the gods as the indulgent (grand)parent;<sup>20</sup> but he begins in much sterner tones. Thus he echoes two recognisable literary stereotypes from New Comedy, those of the stern and indulgent fathers. Jupiter's initial insistence on the restraining of the young man's passions and impulses recalls (e.g.) the words of Chremes about his son Clitopho at Terence *Heaut.* 944–945 (*ut eius animum, qui nunc luxuria et lascivia / diffluit, retundam redigam*), which is well matched by the similarly vivid coercive metaphors of *freno quodam coercendos...tollenda est omnis occasio et luxuria...alliganda*. But Jupiter ends by echoing the more generous type of comic father in the lenient treatment of an errant son. Jupiter's view of the rape of a *virgo* as venial (natural enough for a frequent practitioner) belongs to the world of New Comedy, where it is a standard prelude to marriage,<sup>21</sup> rather than of Roman law, where it was a serious criminal offence.<sup>22</sup> Even the verbal expression of Jupiter's 'paternal' clemency has a ring of New Comedy. The stark, almost prosecutorial statement of the young man's past offences in the perfect tense, followed asyndetically by single verbs expressing forgiveness and future concessions (*puellam elegit et virginitate privavit: teneat, possideat, amplexus Psychen semper suis amoribus perfruatur*) recalls the words of the lenient father Micio in Terence's *Adelphoe*, famously cited by Cicero (Ter. *Ad.* 120–121, cited at Cic. *Cael.* 38): *fores ecfregit, restituentur; discidit / vestem, resarciatur*. But in the *Metamorphoses* we are a long way from Terentian moralising: there is clear hypocrisy and irony here from Jupiter's perspective, since the adulterous supreme god's own multiple rapes listed just before our passage at 6,22 are naturally not followed by compensatory marriage to the injured party. Such cynical humour is a strong feature of this scene.

<sup>19</sup> Helm, loc. cit. n.18 and n.19.

<sup>20</sup> Cupid has no evident father in the *Metamorphoses*, but in plausibly Roman terms the role of his absent father is taken by his grandfather and senior male agnate Jupiter.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Pierce 1997.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Keulen 1997, 213 n. 48; Gardner 1986, 118–121.

Following his general address to the assembled gods as a whole, Jupiter turns to defuse the specific and violent objections to the marriage of Cupid and Psyche previously expressed by Venus in the novel at 5,30 and 6,9, dealing with her very Roman worries about the marriage's legality and its potential lowering of her family's status.<sup>23</sup> Commentators usually compare this scene with Jupiter's reassurance of Venus in Vergil *Aeneid* 1,223–296, the main model for the immediately preceding Jupiter/Cupid scene in 6,22; this indeed has the same two divine actors and provides some details,<sup>24</sup> but Jupiter's conciliation of Venus here at the end of the Cupid and Psyche tale also resembles his final conciliation of Juno in the *Aeneid* (12,791–842), which leads similarly to the accomplishment of a climactic marriage (between Aeneas and Lavinia) which Juno had previously violently opposed. As Kenney notes,<sup>25</sup> the concern with proper and full marriage here expressed by Jupiter (*Iam faxo nuptias non impares sed legitimas et iure civili congruas*) echoes that traditionally found at the end of Greek novels, one of many parallels between the inserted tale of Cupid and Psyche and a complete Greek ideal romance (see below on 6,24); here as at 6,22, where the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* is alluded to, the marital affairs of the gods are wittily imagined as governed by Roman legislation.

Psyche's new divine status has a double marker in the text. First, Mercury is ordered to install her on Olympus. As Kenney notes,<sup>26</sup> this is a reversal of Mercury's common role as ψυχοπομπός, escorting mortals to the infernal regions,<sup>27</sup> and Psyche's earlier descent to the Underworld (6,17–21) is here inverted into an ascent to the abode of the gods. Second, Jupiter offers her ambrosia to drink;<sup>28</sup> Kenney rightly compares Venus' treatment of Adonis at Ovid *Met.* 14,606–607 *ambrosia cum dulci nectare mixta / contigit os fecitque deum*, and consuming divine food or drink is a mark of apotheo-

<sup>23</sup> On this issue see Keulen 1997, 213–215.

<sup>24</sup> So Jupiter's initial allaying of Venus' fears '*Nec tu,*' inquit '*filia, quicquam contristere*' recalls *Aeneid* 1,257 *parce metu*.

<sup>25</sup> Kenney 1990a, 222, comparing Chariton 8,1,4.

<sup>26</sup> Kenney 1990b, 223.

<sup>27</sup> The overtone of 'arrest' in *arripi* (cf. *ThLL* s.v. 640,61ff.) is therefore ironically appropriate, as is that of escorting a prisoner to judgment in *perduci* (cf. 3,3 *ad gravissimum iudici vestri sacramentum eum curavi perducere*, *ThLL* s.v. 1283,22ff.).

<sup>28</sup> In Homer ambrosia is usually divine food, nectar divine drink, still the case in the Augustan period (cf. Heubeck, West and Hainsworth 1988, 221) Apuleius seems to be the first to ignore this distinction ( *poculo* must suggest a beverage, though 5,22 picks up the further Homeric use of ambrosia as an unguent).

sis (cf. famously Hor. *Odes* 3,3,11–12 *quos inter Augustus recumbens / purpureo bibet ore nectar*) which goes back at least to Pindar.<sup>29</sup> Jupiter's words *immortalis esto* reflect the Roman formula of manumission, *liber esto*,<sup>30</sup> and Psyche's passage from mortal to immortal can fittingly be seen as gaining her freedom, especially as Venus has previously treated her as a runaway slave (*fugitiva*, 5,31 and 6,8).

Jupiter's final promise of Cupid's eternal fidelity comes somewhat ironically from the chronically unfaithful Jupiter, but fits the 'happy ever after' endings of the Greek romantic novels often echoed in Cupid and Psyche. The phrasing of *nec unquam digredietur a tuo nexu Cupido* appropriately recalls epithalamial language, e.g., Catullus 61,98–105: *non tuus levis in mala / deditus vir adultera, / probra turpia persequens, / a tuis teneris volet / secubare papillis, / lenta sed velut adsitas / vitis implicat arbores, / implicatur in tuum / complexum*. The eternal embrace and marriage of Cupid and Psyche here may reflect the common use of a depiction of the embracing pair on Roman sarcophagi, looking to the reuniting of a mortal couple in the afterlife.<sup>31</sup> But the perpetuity of the union of Cupid and Psyche may also perhaps have a second, metafictional sense: the marriage of Cupid and Psyche will be perpetuated in the fiction of Apuleius. We find a parallel metafictional moment predicting future commemoration in the novel we are reading in Lucius' report of the Chaldean seer's prophecy about Lucius himself in *Met.* 2,12 (*nunc enim gloriam satis floridam, nunc historiam magnam et incredundam et libros me futurum*), words which may refer to the *Florida* as well as the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>32</sup> This metafictional element here would match that of *voluptas* as the reader's pleasure in 6,24 (below).

## 2 The wedding of Cupid and Psyche (6,24).

*Nec mora, cum cena nuptialis affluens exhibetur. accumbebat summum torum maritus Psychen gremio suo complexus: sic et cum sua Iunone Iuppiter ac deinde per ordinem toti dei. tunc poculum nectaris, quod vinum deorum est, Iovi quidem suus pocillator ille rusticus puer, ceteris vero Liber ministrabat, Vulcanus cenam coquebat; Horae rosis et ceteris*

<sup>29</sup> See Heubeck, West and Hainsworth 1988, 136.

<sup>30</sup> Plautus *Men.* 1029, *ThLL* s.v. *liber* 1282,7ff.

<sup>31</sup> For examples see Schlam 1976, 7–8 and 25–30.

<sup>32</sup> See conveniently Harrison 2000, 231–232 and van Mal-Maeder 2001, 214–217.

*floribus purpurabant omnia, Gratiae spargebant balsama, Musae quoque canora personabant...Apollo cantavit ad citharam, Venus suavi musicae superingressa formosa saltavit, scaena sibi sic concinnata, ut Musae quidem chorum canerent, tibiae inflaret Saturus et Paniscus ad fistulam diceret. sic rite Psyche convenit in manum Cupidinis et nascitur illis maturo partu filia, quam Voluptatem nominamus.*

And there was no delay before an abundant wedding-dinner was served. The bridegroom reclined on the top couch, embracing Psyche in his lap. Likewise Jupiter too with his Juno, and then all the gods in order. Then the cup of nectar, the wine of the gods, was served to Jupiter by his own cup-bearer, that boy from the country, and to the rest by Bacchus, while Vulcan cooked the dinner; the Hours made everything crimson with roses and other flowers, the Graces scattered balsam, the Muses, too, made tuneful song resound. Apollo sang to the lyre, while Venus came in to the rhythm of the sweet music and danced in all her beauty, having set up the show to her own taste in the following way, so that the Muses for their part sang the chorus, while a Satyr blew on the *tibiae* and a small Pan sang to the pan-pipes. Thus Psyche duly passed into the hand of Cupid, and there was born to them in childbirth in due time a daughter, whom we call Pleasure.

This ending of the tale of Cupid and Psyche looks back specifically to elements near its beginning: the swift, quasi-miraculous arrival of luxurious food and drink here recalls Psyche's stay in the palace of Cupid near the beginning of the tale, suggesting a resumption of divine room service after the discomforts of her wanderings and labours: we may especially compare 5,3 *et ilico vini nectarei eduliumque variorum fercula copiosa nullo serviente, sed tantum spiritu quodam impulsa subministrantur* (note the similar passive verb) and 5,8 *illarum prorsus caelestium divitiarum copiis adfluentibus satiatae*. This ring-compositional link is one of several such closural reprises in this final chapter of the tale.<sup>33</sup> the traditional lovers' embrace of *gremio suo complexus* (cf. e.g., Catullus 45,1–2 *Acmen Septimius suos amores / tenens in gremio*) both invokes a Roman marriage-feast<sup>34</sup> and looks

<sup>33</sup> For ring composition as a closural device in classical literature see Roberts et al. 1997, 309.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Juvenal 2,120 *gremio iacuit nova nupta mariti*, Tacitus *Ann.* 11,27,1 *discubitum inter convivas, oscula complexus*.

back to the earlier reclining embraces of the pair in Cupid's palace (cf. 5,6 *maritus accubans eamque...complexus*), while the presence of the joyful *tibiae* recalls the specific absence of *tibiae* at Psyche's 'funereal marriage' at 4,33 *sonus tibiae zygiae mutatur in querulum Ludii modum*: a tragic non-marriage is now triumphantly turned into an actual and glorious union.

The appearance of the gods at the wedding-feast, with Jupiter and Juno first and followed by the lesser deities, is one of several details in this chapter recalling the celebrations of the marriage of Peleus and Thetis and particularly its narration in Catullus 64 (cf. Catullus 64,298–299 *inde pater divum sancta cum coniuge natisque / advenit caelo*), though there are also some differences; Peleus does not become divine on his marriage, a later problem for the union, and in Catullus the gods descend to Thessaly, unnecessary here as the marriage takes place on Olympus. The presence of the Muses as entertainers is not found in Catullus but in other versions of the wedding of Peleus and Thetis (Pindar *Nem.* 5,22–25 with Apollo accompanying, *Pyth.* 3,89–91).<sup>35</sup> The attendance of the gods is also a feature of the wedding of the newly deified Hercules to Hebe (*Od.* 11,602–603, *Hes. Theog.* 950–953, *Pind. Nem.* 1,69–72), a marriage with obvious similarities to that of Cupid and the ex-mortal Psyche: the presence and acquiescence at that marriage of the immortal bride's mother Juno/Hera, a reconciled enemy of the previously mortal bridegroom,<sup>36</sup> is clearly paralleled by the attendance of Venus here and her similar relationship with Cupid and Psyche.<sup>37</sup>

As in the case of the burlesque divine assembly (see above), the wedding-feast finds important parallels in contemporary Lucianic satire. The performance by different gods of appropriate and sometimes amusing menial roles is also found in the divine symposium attended by Menippus at Lucian *Icaromenippus* 27. Here Menippus gives his account:

καὶ ἄρτον τε ἢ Δημήτηρ παρεῖξε καὶ ὁ Διόνυσος οἶνον καὶ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς κρέα καὶ μύρτα ἢ Ἀφροδίτη καὶ ὁ Ποσειδῶν μαινίδα. ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῆς ἀμβροσίας ἡρέμα καὶ τοῦ νέκταρος παρεγευόμην· ὁ γὰρ βέλτιστος Γανυμήδης ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας εἰ θεάσαιτο ἀποβλέποντά που τὸν Δία,

<sup>35</sup> In Catullus the Muses are replaced for dramatic and other reasons by the prophetic Parcae.

<sup>36</sup> *Apollod. Bibl.* 2,7,7.

<sup>37</sup> For these and other parallels between the Apuleian story of Psyche and the mythical narratives about Hercules see Harrison 1998, 61–62.

κοτύλην ἄν ἧ καὶ δύο τοῦ νέκταρος ἐνέχει μοι φέρων... ἐν δὲ τῷ δείπνῳ ὃ τε Ἀπόλλων ἐκιθάρισε καὶ ὁ Σιληνὸς κόρδακα ὠρχήσατο καὶ αἱ Μοῦσαι ἀναστάσα τῆς τε Ἑσιόδου Θεογονίας ἦσαν ἡμῖν καὶ τὴν πρώτην ᾠδὴν τῶν ὕμνων τῶν Πινδάρου.

And Demeter provided bread, Dionysus wine, Heracles meat, Aphrodite myrtle-berries and Poseidon sprats. At the same time I tasted a little of the ambrosia and nectar; for the excellent Ganymede, in his kindness, whenever he saw Zeus looking away somewhere, brought me and poured into my cup a measure or two of nectar... at the dinner Apollo played the lyre, and Silenus danced the *kordax*, and the Muses stood up and sang to us part of the *Theogony* of Hesiod and the first ode from the hymns of Pindar.

The parallels with Apuleius' picture of the 'bring-your-own' divine feast with a combination of high- and low-brow performance are too close to be coincidental.<sup>38</sup> Direct influence either way between two contemporaries is again possible, but as with the divine assembly in 6,23 it seems most likely that Apuleius is adopting a Greek comic tradition, originating in the emphasis on the communal feasting on Olympus in Homer and especially in *Iliad* 1,597–611, where Hephaestus serves wine to the gods, Apollo plays the lyre and the Muses sing.

Another important influence on Apuleius' presentation of Olympus here is Greek and Roman art, which Schlam has plausibly identified as a major general source for Apuleius' tale.<sup>39</sup> Cupid and Psyche are commonly pictured as reclining together in embrace in Roman art,<sup>40</sup> and the pairings of gods on couches at the wedding recall the traditional depiction in Greek and Roman art of the twelve Olympians enthroned in six male-female pairs, most famously perhaps on the east frieze of the Parthenon<sup>41</sup> with Jupiter and Juno (Zeus and Hera) seated together at their head.<sup>42</sup> Hoevels<sup>43</sup> suggests that this whole scene suggests a visual conception like that of a painting, and the

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Helm 1906, 160 n. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Schlam 1976.

<sup>40</sup> cf. Schlam 1976, 28; *LIMC* s.v. Psyche, 62 (perhaps a wedding scene) and 65.

<sup>41</sup> *LIMC* s.v. Dodekathēoi, 4a.

<sup>42</sup> *LIMC* s.v. Hera, 208.

<sup>43</sup> Hoevels 1979, 226.

groups of figures with their identifying attributes certainly recall aspects of Roman mosaic design and wall-painting.<sup>44</sup>

Fittingly, this pictorial aspect of the scene was enthusiastically picked up in Renaissance art; the wedding-banquet of Cupid and Psyche with its attendant deities was a key scene in Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti's lost cycle of Cupid and Psyche in the Villa Belriguardo near Ferrara (1497), and can still be seen as a central feature of Raphael's Loggia di Psiche at the Villa Farnesina (c.1518) and Perino del Vaga's Stanza di Psiche at the Castel Sant'Angelo (1545–1546), both in Rome.<sup>45</sup> There is also a link with Roman religion in the arrangement of the gods at the divine banquet: the allocation of one divine pair to each couch with Jupiter and Juno at the head recalls an aspect of the religious ceremony of *lectisternium*, in which couches were laid out in public with reclining images of the gods as an act of worship; cf. especially Livy 22,10,9 (in a twelve-god *lectisternium*) *sex pulvinaria in conspectu fuerunt, Iovi ac Iunoni unum*.<sup>46</sup>

This conclusion of the tale of Cupid and Psyche in 6,24 naturally has particular weight for its interpretation. It clearly matches in some detail the traditional narrative climax of ideal Greek novels, the marriage (or conjugal reunion) of a heroine and hero previously separated by adversity (or parental opposition). Kenney suggests a particular literary allusion in the appearance of the Paniscus to the wedding of Daphnis and Chloe in Longus, at which the bridal couple set up an altar to Pan the Soldier (*Daphnis and Chloe* 4,39,2).<sup>47</sup> This link may in itself be debatable, but the wedding of Cupid and Psyche clearly resembles that of Daphnis and Chloe as a Greek novelistic happy ending, and (more specifically) *Daphnis and Chloe* 4,39,2 is the only other place in the main ancient novel tradition where the happy couple have named children as a consequence of their climactic marriage, and where the children have clearly symbolic names appropriate to the character of the novel, Philopoemen ('friend of shepherds') and Agele ('herd'). Once again the relative dating of the two texts is difficult to calibrate in the current state of the evidence, but an allusion to the closure of Longus' text at the end of the Apuleian episode most like a Greek novel seems far from unlikely here.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> For a mosaic showing a labelled group of banqueting deities see Dunbabin 2003, 69.

<sup>45</sup> For these and more see de Jong 1998.

<sup>46</sup> See further Latte 1960, 242–244.

<sup>47</sup> Kenney 1990a, 224.

<sup>48</sup> *Daphnis and Chloe* is normally dated between the second half of the second century and the early third century C.E., which would fit with the date assigned by most scholars to

Many interpretations have been proposed for the evidently symbolic child Voluptas.<sup>49</sup> Within the plot of the *Metamorphoses*, the birth of Voluptas indicates the return of an element allegedly missed by men when Venus withdrew from the world (5,28: [rumour amongst men as reported to Venus] *tu vero marino natatu secesseritis ac per hoc non voluptas, non lepos...sint, non nuptiae coniugales*). Once again, previous disruption is resolved in this closural event. But the name clearly has broader, allegorical significance. As Kenney notes, the name Voluptas fits the overall character of the *Metamorphoses*, reflecting the programmatic statement in the prologue that the work's purpose is pleasure (1,1 *lector intende, laetaberis*).<sup>50</sup> Voluptas here thus refers (I would argue) to the pleasure of the text,<sup>51</sup> stressing that the purpose of the *Metamorphoses* is literary entertainment: as already noted, in the prologue the reader is invited to enjoy the work, while here Voluptas as offspring of Cupid and Psyche represents the production of pleasure through a now completed reading of their story in this inserted tale: as Cicero claims (*Fam.* 5,12,5) *expletur animus iucundissima lectionis voluptate*, 'the mind is sated with the most enjoyable pleasure of reading.' Even the phrase *maturo partu*, suggesting a birth at full term, may have a symbolic aspect. On the literal level, the successful birth of Psyche's baby at full term recalls and inverts her sisters' earlier threat that her supposedly monstrous husband will devour her and her baby when her pregnancy matures,<sup>52</sup> another closural element here in raising previous worries to dismiss them. On the metaliterary level, the 'full term' could suggest the maturation and completion of the long tale of Cupid and Psyche itself.<sup>53</sup>

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the *Metamorphoses* (after 158) – for a discussion of that date see Harrison 2000, 9–10. A convincing allusion to *Daphnis and Chloe* in the pastoral aspect of the *Metamorphoses* has been recently proposed by Weiss 2004 (I am grateful to Dr Weiss for a copy of his paper).

<sup>49</sup> For two samples of views different from those expressed here, see Kenney 1990b and Penwill 1998.

<sup>50</sup> Kenney 1990a, 225.

<sup>51</sup> I here lift a term from the title of Barthes 1973, though my view of the pleasure of the text is more like that of Brooks 1984 with his emphasis on the drive towards and psychological satisfaction of the completion and closure of a fictional plot.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. 5,18 *cum primum praegnationem tuam plenus maturaverit uterus, opimior fructu praeditam devoraturum*.

<sup>53</sup> For the idea of literary parturition (ironic for a largely male authorship) compare the famous image of Gellius 17,10,2–3 on Vergil's composition of the *Aeneid*: *dicere eum solitum ferunt parere se versus more atque ritu ursino*.

The repeated stress just noted on textual pleasure at the opening of the *Metamorphoses* and at the end of this crucial inserted tale supports a key idea in modern scholarship on the novel, that the tale of Cupid and Psyche forms a *mise en abyme* or parallel miniaturisation<sup>54</sup> of the overall plot of the *Metamorphoses* in which it forms such a substantial and central episode.<sup>55</sup> Psyche's similarity to Lucius as an imperilled wanderer who eventually finds a divine haven has long been clear, though any analogy between the erotic union of Cupid and Psyche in Olympus and the chaste service of Isis and Osiris in a Roman sanctuary which forms the end of Lucius' own story must ultimately be something of an ironic contrast. It may be, too, that the apparent suggestion of meaningful Platonic philosophical allegory in Cupid and Psyche (e.g. the imitation of the myth of Love and Soul from the *Phaedrus* at 5,23–24) may be as misleading and ironic as the apparent suggestion of real religious significance for the novel in Book 11.<sup>56</sup> As ever, Apuleius' novel plays wittily on the reader's expectations as well as demanding a sophisticated literary repertoire from him or her.

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<sup>54</sup> On *mise en abyme* see Dällenbach 1989.

<sup>55</sup> For influential expressions of this view cf. Walsh 1970, 190–192, Alpers 1980, Wlosok 1969.

<sup>56</sup> Here I follow the views argued for in more detail in Harrison 2000, 238–259.

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