

2017

Metamorphosis of Love: Eros as Agent in Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary France

Jennifer N. Laffick
University of Central Florida

 Part of the [History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology Commons](#)
Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorsthesis>
University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the UCF Theses and Dissertations at STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

Laffick, Jennifer N., "Metamorphosis of Love: Eros as Agent in Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary France" (2017). *Honors Undergraduate Theses*. 195.
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorsthesis/195>



METAMORPHOSIS OF LOVE:
EROS AS AGENT IN REVOLUTIONARY AND POST-REVOLUTIONARY
FRANCE

by

JENNIFER N. LAFFICK

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in Art History
in the College of Arts and Humanities
and in The Burnett Honors College
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term, 2017

Thesis Chair: Dr. Margaret Zaho

ABSTRACT

This thesis chronicles the god of love, Eros, and the shifts of function and imagery associated with him. Between the French Revolution and the fall of Napoleon Eros's portrayals shift from the Rococo's mischievous infant revealer of love to a beautiful adolescent in love, more specifically, in love with Psyche. In the 1790s, with Neoclassicism in full force, the literature of antiquity was widely read by the upper class. Ancient Greek texts reveal an important facet of the god of desire; the fact that he is an agent, if not the patron, for homosexual, homoerotic love. This aspect of Eros directly collided with the heteronormative principles that existed in Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary France, leaving French Neoclassicists with the challenge to reconcile the ancient role of Eros with the moralizing, rational ideals of society. Thus, the popularization of Eros and Psyche in French Neoclassical art exemplifies this attempt to create a heteronormative ideal couple to epitomize patriarchal France. Throughout my thesis I pose the question: How do depictions of Eros and Psyche produced in the years surrounding the French Revolution reflect the antique tastes of Neoclassical artists and the heteronormative society within which these pieces were produced?

DEDICATIONS

To my mother- for encouraging me to dream big.
To my father- for teaching me to persevere.
To my brother- for being my best friend.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Margaret Zaho, Dr. Ilenia Colón-Mendoza, and Dr. Evans. Dr. Evans, your passion and enthusiasm throughout this endeavor has left a great impression on me and I will fondly remember our conversations on all things mythological. Dr. Colón, throughout my thesis and beyond, your compassion and warmth have left an outstanding impact on me. I will always cherish our conversations of and outside the field. Finally, my thesis chair and mentor, Dr. Margaret Zaho, I am so grateful for the consistent wisdom and guidance you have given me throughout this process and ultimately over the past four years. Your knowledge, dedication, and incomparable passion for Art History has shaped my own for the discipline, and I will always treasure the generosity and kindness you have shown me.

I must also thank my friends for their unfailing reassurance and support throughout this process. I am particularly appreciative to McKenna, my travel buddy and lifelong friend, who sacrificed hours beyond end in Paris to accompany me to the Louvre for research.

Finally, thank you to my dear family- without your continual encouragement and love I would never be the person I am today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: EROS IN ANTIQUITY.....	4
CHAPTER TWO: EROS IN TRANSITION.....	16
CHAPTER THREE: EROS AS AGENT	29
CONCLUSION.....	42
APPENDIX: FIGURES	45
LIST OF REFERENCES	82

INTRODUCTION

The god of love, known as Eros, Cupid, or Amour, depending on the respective region and period, has a complicated and distinct history. Generally, society knows him as Cupid, the inciter of love, lust, or desire who makes his appearance in the month of February, particularly on the 14th for Saint Valentine's Day. After this, he usually leaves mere mortals alone until the next year. This sequence of Cupid is relatively new in conception, as late as the 19th century to be exact, and the god of love has a complicated, involved history within Western society and art.

His first appearance in a literary work is in the 6th century BCE poet Hesiod's account of the genealogy of the gods, *Theogony*. Eros is the fourth being to be created and is the "loveliest of all the Immortals," but also one of the most powerful as he holds authority of love and sexual desire for both mortals and immortals.¹ As a male, in most accounts at least, Eros holds a particular power over males that his female counterpart and eventual mother, Aphrodite, doesn't possess. Within this particular confine of men, Eros often is regarded as the instigator, if not the patron of male homoerotic love and sexual encounters. Eros cannot be solely denoted as 'the god of homosexuality,' as he rouses and inspires plenty of heterosexual trysts. However, he does appear in a number of poetic works by Greek authors ranging from Theognis to Plato and art, particularly in red-figure pottery, that articulate and portray Eros's role in homosexual pursuits and sex acts.

In ancient Rome, artists began shifting Eros's depictions from a youthful, athletic, independent adolescent to a mischievous, chubby infant, almost always accompanied by his mother Aphrodite. The Roman poet and philosopher, Apuleius, wrote *The Golden Ass* (also called

¹ M. L. West, trans., *Hesiod: Theogony and Works and Days* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 1-6.

The Metamorphoses of Apuleius) in the late 2nd century A.D. and in that work Eros becomes an object of heterosexual desire himself. It is with the tale of Eros and Psyche, found in books four through six of *The Golden Ass*, that the god is submitted to the very woes and raptures of the desire he so often stimulates. Eros and Psyche became one of the most popular romantic myths illustrated throughout ancient Rome.

As Christianity rises and widespread pagan mythology diminishes, so does Eros to an extent. It is not until humanist Florence of the mid 1300s where interest in Eros is revived. Simultaneously as *The Golden Ass* circulated and artists illustrated the tale, Eros takes a Neo-Platonic manifestation as putti, decorative, allegorical angels who surround Neo-Platonic realized scenes. A monumental distinction is also made during the Renaissance; a winged infant was not necessarily equivalent to a symbol of love, much less desire. For the first time in art, a winged infant could represent two particularly polar ideals: lustful and celestial.²

Throughout the High Renaissance (notably Raphael's fresco cycle at the Villa Farnesina) and well into the Rococo, the popularity of Cupid and Psyche rises and maintains a steady popularity in art, largely due to the 1669 reworking of Apuleius's story by the French poet, Jean de la Fontaine. Though Eros, in the guise of an infant Cupid, was represented more in these periods of art, often assisting his mother in rousing lustful pursuits or as a solitary revealer of love.

By the 1780s, there is a definitive shift under way in depictions of the couple as well as renderings of the male body in general. The myth of Cupid and Psyche reached a new peak of popularity in French art and depictions of the male body experienced a new sort of 'crisis' in that

² Charles Dempsey, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 1-4.

there were two extremes: either an over-masculinized, Hercules-esque man or a fleshy, androgynous ephebic youth that is thought to cater to the redefined, homoerotic male gaze of Neoclassicism. Eros was consistently depicted as the latter yet always with his lover, Psyche. In this thesis, I pose the following question: How do depictions of Eros and Psyche produced in the years surrounding the French Revolution reflect the antique tastes of Neoclassical artists and the heteronormative society within which these pieces were produced?

CHAPTER ONE: EROS IN ANTIQUITY

The first established literary account of Eros and his origins is in Hesiod's *Theogony*, composed circa 700 BCE. The poem traces the genealogy of the Greek gods from the beginning of time. After bidding Zeus's daughters a hymn of prosperity, Hesiod compels the Muses to reveal, "what thing among them came first."³ They answer, the first of all things created being Chasm, the literal meaning of the word Chaos. Second, was Gaia, or Earth, in which immortals could situate themselves upon this mother goddess's peak of Olympus. The next is Tartarus, a deep abyss within the Underworld. The fourth, of course, is Eros who needed to attract the opposites for further creation. Hesiod describes Eros as the "loveliest of all the Immortals, who make their bodies (and men's bodies) go limp, mastering their minds and subduing their will."⁴ Eros is followed by the deity Erebus, who is a personification of darkness, and Nyx, a goddess of the night. Eros eventually joins Aphrodite after her appearance from the sea as an attendant, along with the deity Himeros, the personification of yearning desire and longing. From then on, Eros is typically seen within Aphrodite's cohort, doing her work, often of powerful and violent erotic assault.

There is not a definitive textual depiction of Eros as Aphrodite's young son until the third century BCE in book three of Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica*, the heroic story of Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece.⁵ Book three chronicles the love affair of Jason and Medea and opens with

³ West, trans., *Hesiod*, 1-6.

⁴ Stanley Lombardo, trans. *Hesiod: Works and Days and Theogony* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1993), 5.

⁵ Monica S. Cyrino, *Aphrodite* (London: Routledge, 2010), 48. There are earlier texts that connect Eros and Aphrodite as mother and son, however these are later Greek authors referencing earlier fragments of texts that are not extant today. For instance, the 3rd cen. BCE

a scene of Hera imploring Aphrodite to persuade her son to shoot his arrows at Medea to permeate her with love for Jason. The scene is as follows:

He threw down all his toys and with both hands clutched hold firmly to the side of the goddess' tunic; he begged her to give the ball to him at once, there and then... With a smile she said to him: "Be witness now your own dear head and mine! I swear to give you the gift and not deceive you, if you shoot your arrow into Aietes' daughter." At these words he gathered up his knucklebones, carefully counted them, and threw them into his mother's shining lap.⁶

This account clearly depicts the god as the character we have come to know; a mischievous, defiant infant in the lap of Aphrodite. Apollonius of Rhodes' description is a poetic disparity of Hesiod's primordial god. Hesiod's cosmogonic Eros is no child, but rather recognized as an adolescent, handsome and winged, fundamental to life itself.⁷

Eros was not just vital for divine interventions of love and lust, but also integral in day-to-day Greek life, as his very name manifests itself in the Greek language. The noun *erōs*, has several implications, mostly a sexual targeting energy working towards an object of desire but also, as Homer articulated, one can have *erōs* for food, dancing, sleep, or war. However, as James Davidson puts it, the common noun *erōs* is most tentatively defined as, "wanting the pleasure of a piece of it."⁸ Eros also manifests himself in adjectives, such as *erannos*, *erateinos*, *eratos*, and *eroeis*, all generally meaning lovely or attractive and applied to any multitude of people, places,

Greek poet Theocritus notes in *Idyll* 13 that Sappho makes Eros the child of Aphrodite and Ouranos.

⁶ Richard Hunter, trans., *Apollonius of Rhodes: Jason and the Golden Fleece: The Argonautica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 146-155.

⁷ Geoffrey Grigson, *The Goddess of Love: The birth, triumph, death and return of Aphrodite* (New York: Stein and Day, 1977), 65.

⁸ James Davidson, *The Greeks and Greek Love: A Radical Reappraisal of Homosexuality in Ancient Greece* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007), 14-15.

objects, or activities.⁹ Eros also reveals himself in two other common nouns, denoting roles in a homosexual, pederastic relationship.

For a young aristocratic man, typically in his twenties, labelled as the *erastēs*, would take a teen-aged youth, labelled as the *erōmenos* (beloved), to bond with and train until he reached his thirties where he'd achieve heterosexual matrimony and fatherhood. At this point, the *erōmenos* would be of age to take a boy lover of his own. In its essence, pederasty embodied the ideal of *kalos k'agathos* (beautiful and good) and the aristocratic desire for self-perpetuation.¹⁰ This was the standard from the seventh century BCE onward, and while certain details within the relationship changed, such as widening the age gap between the *erastēs* and *erōmenos*, Eros was continually present and played a critical role in these relationships.

Though Eros is the god of all encompassing love, and heterosexual couples were certainly not immune to his wiles and violent afflictions, it is fundamental to consider him within the context of male relationships and sexual trysts. Eros complements Aphrodite in their divine conquests of love. He doesn't, as it is often assumed, reinforce her. For though they are both deities of Love in general, Eros has a particular purview for a certain kind of love, the embodiment of the object of Love for boys and men; whereas Aphrodite embodies this object of desire for women.¹¹ This is evidenced in both literature and art, as well as cult practices.

Imagery of Eros acting as a participant and even instigator in homoerotic relationships is found in numerous examples of Archaic Greek red-figure pottery. The former is demonstrated

⁹ K.J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 43.

¹⁰ William Armstrong Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 1-2.

¹¹ Davidson, *The Greeks*, 14.

explicitly at the center of a well-preserved kylix (Figure 1). Enclosed by a typical meander border, viewers see a teenage Eros in mid-flight holding a boy's body against him. Eros is recognizable by his graceful large wings which will serve as his indicator of divinity in almost all depictions of him. While he does have a small, non-erect penis, Eros holds the boy in position for intercrural intercourse. Eros is the recognized *erastēs* in this scene, for though the two boys' bodies look similar in age, the lyre identifies the boy with fuller hair as the *erōmenos*. Musical instruments, particularly the lyre, have a longstanding association with the *erōmenos*, as they were often considered competitive courting gifts for the *erastēs*.¹²

When he himself is not rendered as the *erastēs* or *erōmenos*, Eros takes on a metaphorical or a symbolical role in the pederastic situations depicted on the kylix.¹³ This is exemplified in another red-figured kylix, attributed to the Telephus Painter c. 470 BCE (Figure 2). Encircling the edge of the kylix, the scene depicts a muscular, handsome Eros between a seated man, the *erastēs*, and presumably a youthful *erōmenos* as he carries a gift of meat. Eros is more commonly seen as a middleman for these transactions of courtship than as a participant in the homoerotic relationships themselves. Several of the most eminent poets of Archaic and Classical Greece, either curse or praise Eros for his divine interventions in their homoerotic affairs.

¹² Andrew Lear and Eva Cantarella, *Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty: Boys were their gods* (London: Routledge, 2008), 77. The gift of a lyre was of particular significance within the pedagogical facet of a pederastic relationship. For as Lear articulates in Chapter 3, "the recitation of epic poetry, accompanied by the reciter himself on the lyre, was central to Greek education." For more on the lyre and pederastic relationships see K.J. Dover's enduring book *Greek Homosexuality*, 74-75.

¹³ Lear and Cantarella, *Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty*, 156-57.

The Archaic lyricist Theognis addresses several epigrams to his boy lover, Cyrnus. Overall, the theme from the Theognid collection is bitter, cynical, even resentful, but nevertheless desperately devoted. He expresses this disregard in lines 1273-78:

You dried my hull for a while. But I've slipped out of the squall and found a port as night came on... Eros, too, rises in season, when the Earth swells and blooms with Spring flowers. Then Eros leaves Cyprus, that lovely island, and goes among men, scattering seed on the ground.¹⁴

Praise and beckoning for Eros to intervene in a homoerotic romance is exhibited in the anonymous skolion, according to Plutarch, that chronicles around the love of a Chalcidian soldier and a boy who saw him die.

You boys who have a share of the Graces and noble fathers, do not begrudge the company of good men during your honor of youth. For together with courage of Eros, the limb-loosener, flourishes in the cities of the Chalcidians.¹⁵

These texts exemplify the juxtaposing nature of Eros, for he is both extolled and damned, both inflictor of ecstasy and cruelty. In a word, Eros is bittersweet.¹⁶ No scholar explores this dichotomy of personality more thoroughly or elegantly than Anne Carson in her book, *Eros: The Bittersweet*. Carson argues that perhaps "sweetbitter" is better ascribed to the character of Eros, for he often brings "sweetness and then bitterness" in a chronological sequence that is exemplified by many of the poets that described their induced afflictions.¹⁷ Eros's own identity can be paralleled with that

¹⁴ Thomas K. Hubbard, ed., *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 42.

¹⁵ Hubbard, ed., *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome*, 53.

¹⁶ In the 1495 book, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, a story in which explores the allegories of love, Eros is labelled as bittersweet.

¹⁷ Anne Carson, *Eros The Bittersweet* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 3-4. The infamous poetess Sappho is one of the first to comment on Eros's contradiction of pleasure and pain in fragment 130. She laments, "Eros once again limb-loosener whirls me sweetbitter,

of the god of altered states, Dionysus. This complex identity instilled a great deal of fear and reverence to the god. While Eros did not have the all-encompassing following Aphrodite did, his cults were intensely devout. Though scattered across ancient Greece, Eros had the most dominating presence in the city of Thespia.¹⁸

There is in fact imagery for offerings to Eros's altars in context to homoerotic relationships. For Eros himself is again depicted as an integral faction of the relationship in a neck-amphora (Figure 3) by an artist who charmingly calls himself the Flying Angel Painter. A young boy is seen running away from what is presumably an altar of Eros in the gymnasium while the god himself, enraged, beats him with a stick. This is not a particularly unusual scene, for other contemporary vases depicted youths at altars, finding themselves overwhelmed by the presence of the deity they are worshiping. However, it is remarkable to see Eros, compelled by a boy of the right age and beauty, to either wield himself onto him by uncontained desire, or, perhaps more realistically, to feel spite for the boy's supposed *erastēs*.

Cult worship of Eros was also prominent in Athens.¹⁹ The god is depicted with Aphrodite on the Parthenon frieze, as they look out over the processional Athenians. He also received sacrifices and other honors in the gymnasium of Plato's 'Academy.' This is where Plato situated his school, and not unsurprisingly attests to his great preoccupation for love and Eros. This

impossible to fight off, creatures stealing up." While Aphrodite appears often in her lyrics, particularly when summoning back a lover (notably female), Eros is interestingly mentioned in description of carnal lust, suggesting, perhaps, an association with homoerotic relationships between both genders. For more on Sappho's relationships see Page DuBois's comprehensive book *Sappho*.

¹⁸ Davidson, *The Greeks*, 19.

¹⁹ Davidson, *The Greeks*, 16-17.

obsession, as well as Eros's involvement within homoerotic pursuits, perhaps is best manifested in Plato's work, *Symposium*.

Each attendant attempts to construct their own mythology for the god, Eros, while defining and supporting their claims about the implications of the emotion eros itself. Out of all the guests, the speech of Pausanias attests to the homoerotic nature of Eros the most, particularly through the guise of pederasty.

He launches his speech by defining the nature of duality within Eros which he splits into the following: Pandemic Eros, the far younger and who partakes in both the male and female looking for only carnal satisfaction of sexual conquest, and Uranian Eros, the older who only partakes in male love and has no part in insolence.²⁰ Pausanias's speech of the Uranian, or heavenly Eros, begins with the following:

Contrast this with the Love of Heavenly Aphrodite. This goddess whose descent is purely male (hence this love is for boys), is considerably older and therefore free from the lewdness of youth. That's why those who are inspired by her Love are attracted to the male.²¹

It is important to consider Aphrodite in the context of Pausanias's speech, for there is a duality of Aphrodite and Eros. Without one there isn't the other and since Aphrodite is double, so must be Eros. Pandemic Eros stems from the Pandemic Aphrodite (which literally translates to Aphrodite "of all the people") whose parents are Zeus and Dione; this is the Aphrodite we are most familiar with today. The Uranian Aphrodite is motherless, and is born from *Uranos*, Heaven, and thus so is the Uranian Eros. The distinction between the Pandemic Eros and Uranian Eros is

²⁰ Jamey Hecht, *Plato's Symposium: Eros and the Human Predicament* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1999) 44.

²¹ John M. Cooper, ed., *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997), 466. "Her Love" refers to Eros, the son of Aphrodite.

tantamount in understanding subsequent representations. The Pandemic Eros is depicted as a churlish toddler entrancing victims into lascivious pursuits, while the Uranian Eros is closer to the handsome adolescents we've seen depicted on vases. Though it should be noted that this Uranian Eros is often associated with blurred definitions of gender, and has been depicted as androgynous.²² The Uranian Eros is what eventual French Neoclassicists will refer to in their renderings of the god, as will be discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

There is a definitive shift between imagery that seemingly depicts the Uranian Eros assisting or participating in pederastic pursuits, and the Pandemic Eros working *hoti an tuchê* (by chance). This transformation is marked by the ascent of Roman culture and the decline of Greek, during the period of Hellenism and all Roman periods after. Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* of the third century BCE includes the first definitive literary description of Eros as a mischievous toddler. Thereafter, more texts and works of art begin to ascribe Eros as such, until the Romans define his identity as Venus's young son and co-conspirator, Cupid. This certainly correlates with orderly Roman culture and stoic ideals, as domesticating Eros neatens his complex and intricate genesis. This simplified Eros will perpetuate throughout the rest of history, particularly within the Rococo as Chapter 2 will elaborate.

Eros was designated another role, that of a monogamous, heterosexual lover himself. Apuleius completely redefines the essence of Eros with the 125 CE publication of *The Golden Ass*, also known concurrently as *Metamorphoses*, containing the story of Cupid and Psyche. There are also extant depictions and stories of the couple dating back as early as 4th century BCE.²³ However,

²² Hecht, *Plato's Symposium*, 45-46.

²³ Dorothy Johnson, *David to Delacroix: The Rise of Romantic Mythology* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press: 2011), 67-70.

it is with the popularization of *The Golden Ass* that Cupid and Psyche are solidified in literature and art. A platonic philosopher who claimed he cultivated the nine Muses, Apuleius had great celebrity at the release of *The Golden Ass*.²⁴ Comprised of eleven books, *The Golden Ass* chronicles around the protagonist Lucius's obsessive desire to practice magic, which eventually leads him on a journey of metamorphoses.

The tale of Cupid and Psyche begins in Books Four through Six by an elderly woman in order to console a young kidnapped girl. At this point Lucius is an ass and he listens along, as the story unfolds. Psyche is introduced as a beautiful virgin mortal, so captivating that she gains the attention of Venus's own admirers. Venus erupts in jealousy and decrees that Psyche must marry an outcast of a man. From the Delphic Oracle, Apollo demands Psyche to marry a "viperous and fierce thing" that even Jupiter fears. She follows his orders and is transported to a lush, divine palace. While she is waited upon incessantly and receives opulent banquets, Psyche does not know her now-husband, except by his touch and smell, for her husband only is with her, at night, as he consummates their marriage. He specifically instructs her never to seek his face. Urged by her jealous sisters, however, Psyche decides she must know the identity of her husband. She arms herself with a dagger, in case Apollo's prophecy of a serpent husband is correct, and a lamp. The lamp's light reveals a sleeping, delicate being and perhaps with too much excitement she stumbles and drips wax on the wings of Cupid.

He awakens in a rage and abandons her to be victim of Venus's cruelty. Cupid soon becomes impotent and frustrated and "Pleasure, Grace, and Wit" disappear from society under

²⁴ Julia Haig Gaisser, *The Fortunes of Apuleius and the Golden Ass: A study in transmission and reception* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 1.

such conditions. Psyche is now given a set of impossible tasks that serve as her atonement, that she manages to accomplish by both nature (ants) and divinity (Jove's eagle). Her curiosity, again, impels her to open a box which contains the beauty of Proserpine, Queen of Hades. The box emits fumes which induce a deathlike swoon, only until Cupid rescues her. The story then quickly moves from triumph to marriage to apotheosis. Jupiter grants the couple's wish to be wed, but only if Cupid is wedded forever to the girl he had seduced. They marry in a grand Olympian fashion with Venus reconciled. Cupid and Psyche eventually produce a child named Voluptas, or Pleasure, and the story ends on a note of triumph and ultimate stability.²⁵

The story is fairytale like in essence, from the narrator who unfolds the story to its happy ending. *The Golden Ass* was received with immense praise and popularity. One of the most enduring conceptualizations of the couple is the 2nd century CE Roman marble copy of a Hellenistic sculpture (Figure 4). The couple is shown in an embrace, kissing. They are both young, pre-pubescent and the sculpture epitomizes the innocence of the two lovers. It is not known for certain whether or not the original intent for the sculpture was to depict the young couple, Cupid and Psyche, as Cupid's wings or Psyche's butterfly are not shown. However, the lovers assumed their identities of Cupid and Psyche when found in Rome, on the Aventine Hill, in 1749.²⁶

In a slightly earlier fresco, of entirely different nature, found in the notoriously lascivious city of Pompeii, the couple is seen kissing again (Figure 5). The couple is identifiable by their wings. If they were removed, the image would appear indistinguishable from the frescoes that

²⁵ Jean Hagstrum, *Eros and Vision: The Restoration to Romanticism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989), 75-78.

²⁶ Francis Haskell and Penny Nicholas, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 30.

adorned the infamous brothels, of which paying male customers would choose their position for intercourse from frescoed squares on the wall. The divine love is reduced to a carnal tryst and Eros resumes his aggressive cosmogonic self. However, it is important to note that Apuleius's tale had not been disseminated at this point and therefore the characters that are personified by innocence have yet to be solidified in the canon.

In the 2nd century we begin to see the role and rendering of Eros change drastically from all-encompassing, merciless god to decorative putto.²⁷ These depictions are particularly popular on Roman sarcophagi. On a marble Severan sarcophagus dating 220-225 CE (Figure 6), several infant erotes hunt wild beasts on the edge of the front face while two erotes hold up garlands below. While these decorative erotes are the focal point of the frontal side of the sarcophagus, scenes from Apuleius's myth are depicted on both ends of the sarcophagus. On the left end (Figure 7), Eros awakens Psyche with an arrow and on the right side (Figure 8), the couple embraces. The inclusion of scenes from the story of Eros and Psyche was uncommon in production of Roman sarcophagi, and soon after the production of this particular exception, the god of love is soon reduced to pure decoration.

With both the story of Cupid and Psyche and the domestication of Cupid as Venus's son, Eros's role changes drastically from his original all-powerful conception. These two destinies for the god continually manifest themselves throughout the course of Western history, as Christianity dictates the featuring of pagan deities. Not until the late 18th-century do French artists, in particular,

²⁷ A putto, putti plural, is a winged, often exaggeratedly chubby infant who is characterized by their mischievous and often meddlesome antics in love. The first form of the putto is the Greek erotes, for they are often seen assisting Eros and Aphrodite. In Roman art works, particularly sarcophagi, Eros himself begins to be depicted in this form. For more see Chapter 1 of James Davidson's book *The Greeks and Greek Love*.

look back to the cosmogonic origins, and subsequent depictions, of Eros to configure him to fit their own, new agendas.

CHAPTER TWO: EROS IN TRANSITION

Until Jean de la Fontaine's 1669 lyrical, epic poem, *Les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon*, reworked from Apuleius's original myth and set at contemporary Versailles, Eros and Psyche as a couple faded into obscurity in France. However, by tracing the dissemination and the subsequent changes in function and purpose of Eros in literature (particularly in Apuleius), we can further understand the significance of Eros and his imagery in a larger context. Late-antique and medieval reception of Apuleius is difficult to inference, and more is known today about his "philosophical" texts than those considered "literary." More can be deduced from the former, as Apuleius was deemed with great celebrity in regards to his philosophical rolls. However, literary writing, particularly within the genre of fiction, enjoyed a poor reputation and was disdained as callow and frivolous in the 4th and 5th centuries.²⁸ Those who continued to read Apuleius's literary works, much less enjoyed them, particularly *The Golden Ass*, left little trace in the historical record. However, as Julia Haig Gaisser points out, *The Golden Ass* "survived because someone in the fourth century wanted it to."²⁹ It has been suggested that Sallustius, platonic writer and friend of Emperor Julian, is this person who copied *Golden Ass*'s rolls into a codex.

In Apuleius's homeland of North Africa, writers were more drawn to his earlier works. Fulgentius the mythographer of the early fifth century included a reworked story of Cupid and

²⁸ Julia Haig Gaisser, *The Fortunes of Apuleius and the Golden Ass: A Study in Transmission and Reception* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 41-42. A genre within fiction may have been exempt from this shoddy review. Positive comments exist from the physician Theodorus Priscianus, who suggested that Greek erotic stories could be used as a cure for impotence. For more see *Ancient Greek Novels*, edited by Susan A. Stephens and John J. Winkler.

²⁹ Haig Gaisser, *The Fortunes of Apuleius*, 43.

Psyche in his *Mythologies*, providing metaphorical interpretations for each of the fifty myths included. Within his allegorical readings, Fulgentius offers a rather misogynistic tone compared to the original telling, focusing far more on the female error and sins of carnal desire rather than on the redemptive qualities of divine love.³⁰ This perhaps vaguely foreshadows the patronizing interpretations of the myth in French art in several centuries to come that I will revisit in Chapter 3.

After these authors, and a few others who rework and transmit *The Golden Ass*, Apuleius becomes relatively obscure for several centuries. There are, of course, the few accounts ranging from access in a monastic library in Spain to an unknown author of an obscene rendition of the text, whom scholars refer to as Spurcus in the twelfth century. However, by the fourteenth century, 1345 to be exact, Apuleius experiences a revival with humanist philosophers and writers who subsequently produce imagery to match the text. One of the most important of these is the Bolognese scribe Bartolomeo de' Bartoli, who illuminates his manuscript of *The Golden Ass* with the first images of Psyche since the late antiquity. At the beginning of book five, there is an historiated initial of the letter *P* for Psyche (Figure 9). This illumination marks the beginning of book 5 as she has been placed in Cupid's garden by the god Zephyr. She rests gracefully in a mysterious, magical garden. The letter *P* encloses her in the garden, as well as ensures the validity of her virginity (for now).

³⁰ Haig Gaiser, *The Fortunes of Apuleius*, 53-59. Fulgentius suggests that the light that Psyche shines on Cupid represents the sinful flame of carnal desire, of which should be hidden at all times. This goes in direct contrast with a passage from the New Testament (Matthew 5:15-16) of how God's good light should be proclaimed. It is almost certain that Fulgentius wanted his readers to make this connection.

For the most part, the time in between Roman antiquity and the early Renaissance, Eros was reduced to simple decorative marginalia within rolls and codices. He appears, however, in the eminent French medieval poem, *The Romance of the Rose*. Begun by Guillaume de Lorris in 1230 and completed in 1270-80 by Jean de Muen, *Romance of the Rose* is an allegorical poem that centers around concepts of courtly love. Cupid is seen as instigator of love and is rendered as a more mature (and clothed) god and on folio 15 (Figure 10), he is seen locking the heart of the protagonist of the Lover. Cupid's own love story is not mentioned, for it his mere function of inciting love, or preventing it, that is emphasized in *The Romance of the Rose* and in most works before the 17th century.

It is only two centuries after *The Romance of the Rose* that Donatello completely reinvents Cupid's function in the humanist world, that of the allegorical, Christianized putto. It has recently been confirmed that the earliest post-antique sculptural representations of putti are by Donatello dating to 1429.³¹ There are three putti who adorn the Siena Cathedral's Tabernacle of the Baptismal Font, two of which play musical instruments while the other (Figure 11) dances along.

Donatello continues creating unprecedented sculptures that relay back to the ancient world. The earliest fully independent bronze statue with a pagan theme that survives from the Renaissance is his *Attis-Amorino* (Figure 12), dating 1440-43.³² The name is misleading as the figure represents neither Attis nor an amorino, but rather a wine-spirit. However, given the ancient relationship between Bacchic imagery and that of Eros, particularly within realms of homoeroticism, Donatello's original title isn't that far-fetched.

³¹ Charles Dempsey, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 18.

³² Dempsey, *Inventing the Renaissance Putto*, 58.

Thus, the putto is revived and continually reworked to serve as Christian allegories, represent spirits of the nightmare, or continue their pagan mythological functions of instruments of love and desire. This simultaneously happens with Apuleius's *Golden Ass* increasing dissemination, to the point of eventual dominance in representations in art. The most decadent and elaborate examples during the Renaissance is the Psyche Loggia in the Villa Farnesina (Figure 13).

A new edition of *Golden Ass* was published in 1500, with commentary from Fillippo Beroaldo the Younger. Raphael is said to have drawn and marked on all the pages, familiarizing himself with the story.³³ The original conception of the loggia was supposed to serve as an interpenetration between architecture and gardens. Raphael realizes this vision by the abundance of garlands, acanthus leaves, and flower imagery. The adventures of Psyche are told within the pendentives whereas celebratory scenes are depicted on the ceiling. This monumental endeavor would go on to influence future renderings of the couple, particularly those by French Neoclassicists.³⁴

During the Baroque period, particularly in France, pagan mythology served as primary inspiration for both art and literature. The myth of Cupid and Psyche was no exception. By the 17th century it began its ascent into the new acme that eventually was reached by Neoclassicists. Baroque literary works, particularly produced by Paris's literati, would serve as inspiration for the artists of the 18th century.

³³ Elsa Gerlini, *Villa Farnesina Alla Lungara Rome* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e zecca dello stato, 2000), 63.

³⁴ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 81-2. Raphael's subsequent engravings by Marc Antonio Raimondi of the loggia were widely distributed. By 1802, a deluxe Didot edition of Apuleius was published entitled *La fable de Psyché, figures de Raphaël*, of which outline engravings were made by artists Dubois, Marchais, and potentially Girodet.

In 1668, Jean de la Fontaine and Mademoiselle de Scudery, arguably the most eminent poets in 1660's Parisian high society, were personally recruited by King Louis XIV to write a work that would, in effect, advertise the splendors of Versailles.³⁵ The poets had personal creative liberties over the subjects and themes, La Fontaine concentrating on Apuleius's myth of Cupid and Psyche in his *Les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon*. However, La Fontaine adds new, contemporary characters who tell a revised story of Cupid and Psyche as they frolic the grounds of Louis's pleasure palace.³⁶ Poliphile and his three friends find themselves at the Palace of Versailles, where they both comment on the exemplarily divine nature of the man made palace and listen to Poliphile share the story of Cupid and Psyche.³⁷ The setting for the story within the friends' romp is also, of course, Versailles, for Cupid's palace is also that of Louis's.

Positive reception of *Les Amours* was nearly immediate, for only three years later the illustrious Parisian playwright, Molière (b. Jean-Baptiste Poquelin) staged the tragicomedy ballet *Psyché*. This was not the first ballet based on the story of Cupid and Psyche, for two other French renditions were produced within the 17th century.³⁸ However, Molière's rendering included several

³⁵ Guy Walton, *Louis XIV's Versailles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 63.

³⁶ These characters, four friends- Poliphile, Gélaste, Acante, Ariste, whose names not only symbolize their preferences and temperament but are also representations of components of the ideal humanist man of the era. For example, the name Acante derives from the leaf designs characteristic to Corinthian columns and thus this character is aware of the natural world around him and takes delight in mimesis of nature in art. For more on the allegories within La Fontaine's *Psyché* see Nathaniel Gross's article "Functions in the Framework in la Fontaine's 'Psyche.'" ³⁷ The name of Poliphile is most certainly derived from the Italian, Neoplatonic 15th century book, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. The story chronicles around the protagonist Poliphilo, his love Polia, and his adventures within his dreams. Cupid is ever present throughout the narrative and serves as an agent for inciting and reigniting the love between Poliphilo and Polia.

³⁸ John S. Powell, "Psyché: The Stakes of Collaboration," in *Reverberations: Staging Relations in French since 1500- A Festschrift in Honour of C.E. J. Caldicott*, ed. Phyllis Gaffney et al. (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2008), 5-6. Marie de Medici was an ardent fan of the

of La Fontaine's original characters in addition to grand soliloquies that are indebted to La Fontaine's lyric monologues. Originally, the lavish play was mounted to commemorate the peace treaty, Aix-la-Chapelle, and was performed in the first week of January 1679 at the expansive Salles des Tuileries within the Tuileries Palace for Louis XIV and his court. The five-hour long production received immediate praise and was given at least 80 times between its showings at both the Salles des Tuileries, and a public run at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal. It was such a spectacle of artistic collaboration, particularly between that of poet Jean Racine and Molière that 18th- century audiences continued to praise its efforts. Voltaire himself stated, "There has never been a more excellent piece of theater put together to serve a king who was worthy to be served by such men."³⁹

It is clear by Voltaire's recognition of the ballet's significance and grandeur, that the 18th- century acquired a continued interest in both this theatrical accomplishment as well as its mythological subject matter. This enthusiasm certainly translated well into 18th-century art, by the eminent Rococo artist François Boucher. Commissioned in 1737 by none other than King Louis XV, Boucher was to create a series of five tapestries representing the story of Psyche. It is no surprise that Louis XV would choose this subject, for since his childhood, the king had been routinely linked to the god of love. Katie Scott translates the royal lawyer and diarist, Matthieu Marais's glittering, poetic comparison, "On his long golden curls, on his Hyacinth's hair, the crown dazzles...He resembles Love."⁴⁰ Boucher sought professional literary help for his tapestries

myth of Cupid and Psyche and an Italian troupe performed a rendition for her in both 1607 and 1612.

³⁹ Powell, "Psyché," 2. "...afin que tout ce qu'il y eut jamais de plus excellent au théâtre se fut réuni pour servir un roi qui méritait d'être servi par de tels hommes."

⁴⁰ Katie Scott, "Under the sign of Venus: The making and meaning of Bouchardon's *L'Amour* in the age of the French rococo," in *Manifestations of Venus: Art and Sexuality*, ed. Caroline Arscott et al. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 82.

from the critic Louis Petit de Bachaumont, who told the artist, “There is enough in this story to make not only several paintings but a whole gallery... You would paint that, if I were Louis XV.”⁴¹

Out of the five tapestries, I will focus on the fourth tapestry in the series, *L’Abandon* (Figure 14). Psyche is abandoned, in a desolate, cavernous wilderness that is a far cry from the garden she originally found herself in. She arrives here immediately upon exposing Cupid’s identity as he retreats back to Olympus. The dramatization of the instant change of scenery is a creative initiative on Molière’s part for nowhere in either literary sources (Apuleius or La Fontaine) does the setting so rapidly change at Psyche’s drop of wax. Boucher looked to Molière’s ballet, or rather the scene directions and the subsequent images produced. The instructions read, “Cupid disappeared, and the instant he took flight, the splendid garden vanished. Psyche is alone in the middle of a vast country, and on the the wild bank of a great river into which she wishes to throw herself.”⁴²

Compositionally, the image looks straight to Charles-Antoine Coypel’s painted manifestations of the *Psyché* production (Figure 15). In the 1730 painting by Coypel, Psyche deliberately evokes the drama of Molière’s ballet, as she faces the audience with her arms widely spread in dramatic gesture. We see that Boucher echoes this dramatization of abandonment and despair, and the fact that he takes influence from Molière solidifies the entertaining tone of the myth that persists through the monarchy and its subsequent Rococo depictions.

Boucher also takes fanciful, creative liberties in his version with the additions of languid, frothy river nymphs that add to the characteristic winsomeness of the Rococo. Boucher also treats Cupid different from Coypel. Boucher conceives the god of love as an impish infant putto, rather

⁴¹ Kathryn B. Hiesinger, “The Sources of François Boucher’s “Psyche” Tapestries,” *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 72, (1976): 10.

⁴² Hiesinger, “The Sources of Francois Boucher,” 19.

than Coypel's clearly enraged, muscular adolescent. Stylistically, Coypel's painting is within the late Baroque classicism that was soon to be out of fashion. His rendering of the god certainly foreshadows trends that appear in the later decades of the 18th-century, in addition to reverberating that of earlier red-figure vases. However, Cupid as teenager was not the standard, and Boucher's treatment of Cupid as an infant was certainly canon for well beyond the first half of the 18th-century.

Today, in the 21st century, we are inundated with anxiety over the sexualization of bodies of children. In a study done in the late 1990s, it was concluded that "no subject is as publicly dangerous now as the subject of the child's body."⁴³ One of the tenants of typical Rococo art is the inclusion of frolicking, playful putti that Satish Padiyar describes as having a two-fold insinuation for its viewers. "On the one hand, the viewer could take delight in seeing children playing at things they cannot understand, and on the other, could take solace in imagining 'serious' adult activities as forms of play."⁴⁴ Though this notion seems innocent on surface level, the implications of representing the god of carnal desire as a child, brings serious alarm to those viewing these depictions today. These distressing insinuations are perhaps amplified when he is, in fact, situated in a heterosexual love story with a teenage girl.

There have been suggested theories to solve this dilemma. Padiyar proposes that because of the orderly and rationalizing philosophies of the French Enlightenment, artists, writers, and philosophers alike were fond of 'containing' Cupid. This 'containment' of sorts was limited to two

⁴³ Anne Higonnet, *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 133.

⁴⁴ Satish Padiyar, "Menacing Cupid in the Art of Rococo," in *The Triumph of Eros: Art and Seduction in 18th-century France*, ed. Frank Althaus et al. (London: Fontanka Publishing, 2006), 21.

options. On the one hand, Cupid is domesticated, in that he becomes the child of Venus and Mercury and is subsequently “encouraged, remonstrated with, scolded, or violently beaten” and plays an integral role in a quite dysfunctional family.⁴⁵ This triad dates back to antiquity and is exhibited in François Boucher’s painting, *Mars and Venus Surprised by Vulcan* (Figure 16). While the other ‘containment’ is, of course, coercing him into a heterosexual, monogamous relationship with Psyche, where Cupid’s own sexual license and autonomy is erased. The latter proved to be most popular in the last half of the 18th-century in concurrence with the preference of depicting Cupid in his Greek cosmogonic lean, older guise (these depictions are explored in Chapter 3). Otherwise, the former option of the child ‘son’ Cupid, became prevalent during Bourbon monarchic rule.

But this approach fails to consider the god as the infant lover of an older, mature girl. This strange arrangement is manifested throughout Rococo art. A painting that epitomizes this age gap in lovers is Joseph-Marie Vien’s 1767 painting, *Psyche Looking at Sleeping Cupid* (Figure 17). The year implies a transitional period between styles, thus creating an interesting dichotomy. Though Neoclassical with defined lines, subdued colors, and crisp folds in drapery, the rendering of Cupid’s body is characteristic of the puckish toddler preferred in Rococo works. The dramatic, voyeuristic aspect of the work is reinforced by not only the pulled back curtain in the left corner and the very shape of the painting, but also with Psyche’s accentuated gesture of reveal. She exposes a ruddy cheeked god, deep in sleep but, with one hand clenched around his bow and the

⁴⁵ Padiyar, “Menacing Cupid,” 23. This narrative had been integral in most periods before as well, but is perhaps amplified in the Rococo, with the popularization of languid, domestic scenes such as portraits in a lady’s toilette. However, this family lineage contradicts Hesiod’s account, which the 18th-century French mythographer, Abbé Banier recounts in his works. For more see Frank E. Manuel’s book *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods*.

other resting on his arrows, could leap into action at any moment. His golden tresses are reminiscent of Marais's description of the boy king, Louis XV. Psyche's expression remains cool and unwavering, a contrast to literary depictions of this moment. The choice of this rendering of an infant is indeed bizarre, but not at all unprecedented. However, it is subject to change as the century progresses.

Artists of the 1790s, such as the English satire cartoonist James Gillray, parody this strange dichotomy of baby Cupid with a more mature Psyche. In his 1797 print entitled *The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche* (Figure 18), viewers are confronted with a paunchy Cupid a step behind his tall, reedy, virginal (indicated by her flat chest and pointed nose and chin) bride in their marital procession. The composition itself was copied from the Duke of Marlborough's 1st century BCE Roman onyx gem (Figure 19) of the same scene that artists, contemporary to Gillray, such as Josiah Wedgwood and John Wedgwood, copied in great abundance. The only difference, however, is the renderings of the lovers themselves for they are both portrayed as toddlers, a tradition kept by all other subsequent reproductions. Jean Hagstrum suggests that the Gillray cartoon is a "spoof of overly refined allegorizing" that was the standard in all art leading up to the 19th century.⁴⁶ It is also a parody that pokes fun at the the portrayals of the two lovers, as infant and woman, popular in art through the 1770s.

However, by the 1780s there is a shift in depictions of the couple. Vien's scene of Psyche revealing Cupid's identity continues in popularity through the very end of the Bourbon monarchy. A French sculpture entitled *L'Amour et Psyché* (1780- 1785) by François-Nicolas Delaistre (Figure 20) shows this scene of reveal, but in an entirely new conception. Psyche looks onto the lean,

⁴⁶ Hagstrum, *Eros and Vision*, 73.

handsome youth with acute curiosity and intensifying desire with her lips parting ever so slightly. Cupid is deep in sleep, but unlike Vien's Cupid, Delaistre's god is not ready for attack, his bow and arrow are at his feet. At Psyche's feet is the dagger she just dropped, as her hand is still open.

Perhaps most interesting, however, is the narrative cycle of the myth itself in low relief on the base of the sculpture. From just below the sculptural group on the base, Delaistre begins the story with Venus making a request to Jupiter, most likely for the damning of Psyche, of whose beauty she is infinitely jealous of. The story continues to the right and the god Mercury departs to send the fatal message to Cupid, who is supposed to antagonize Psyche on Venus's behalf. He, of course, falls in love and weds Psyche, and the next scene on the base continues right where sculpture leaves off, Cupid leaving Psyche as she begs for his mercy. Her pose is reminiscent of a 2nd century Roman sculpture (Figure 21), that depicts Psyche at the mercy of a snarling Cupid. Delaistre would have certainly been familiar with this sculpture, for he was the winner of the Prix de Rome in 1772 and studied in Rome from 1773-1777. This gave the sculptor an ample opportunity to view the antique sculpture of Eros and Psyche which was in the family collection of the Borghese.⁴⁷ For Delaistre originally created this sculpture in terracotta during his stay in Rome.⁴⁸

As the body of Eros transitions into a consistent adolescent, at least in depictions with his lover, Psyche, sculptors capitalized on the subject of couple. The pinnacle of this exploitation is

⁴⁷ Anthony Majanlahti, *The Families Who Made Rome: A History and Guide* (London: Chatto and Windus, 2005), 180. The Louvre acquired the sculpture in addition to another of Eros in 1807. The purchase is due to Camillo Filippo Ludovico Borghese's financial difficulties, though probably most in part a result of pressure from his new brother-in-law, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte.

⁴⁸ James David Draper and Guilhem Scherf, *Playing with Fire: European Terracotta Models, 1740-1840* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003).

the Italian sculptor, Antonio Canova's marble sculpture, *Amor and Psyche*, dating from 1787-93 (Figure 22). The now infamous sculpture depicts the moment when Cupid rescued Psyche from the underworld with a single kiss. The kiss in turn saves Psyche from the poisonous vapors she inhaled from a vase she opened from Venus.

Contemporary writers took note of the slightly homoerotic rendering of sculpture. The German art critic, Ludwig Fernow, in translation by Carol Ockman, lamented over the unheroic nature and the similar renderings of each figure:

Both figures are delicately and elegantly formed, though both are too powerless and slender; the faces, as in most of Canova's works of this class, are soft and pretty, but in place of physiognomical expression, present nothing better than that of modern elegance and melting sweetness.⁴⁹

The basis for Fernow's argument is not at all without basis, the figures do look analogous, as Cupid's slender, feminine arm and a draped fabric rest over Psyche's breasts and genitals. Additionally, Psyche's flowing, coiled hair is swooped back so that viewers can only see her tresses if they walk behind, an action of which Canova intended. The twentieth-century scholar Jean Hagstrum comments that the fluidity of the two bodies create a whole, new being stating, "Both bodies are equally delicate, both equally eager for union, the two together making one new androgynous whole."⁵⁰

Canova's sculpture, regardless, was met with overwhelming success that continued well beyond the 18th-century. By 1800 the mythographer Aubin-Louis Millin had extolled the sculpture to be the model for the new depictions of Cupid. He asserts that modern artists should represent

⁴⁹ Carol Ockman, *Ingres's Eroticized Bodies: Retracing the Serpentine Line* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 91.

⁵⁰ Hagstrum, *Eros and Vision*, 82.

the god as Hesiod's adolescent Eros instead of the infant, particularly when he appears as his own protagonist in a narrative (i.e. in the story of Cupid and Psyche) rather than a simple agent inciting desire.⁵¹ This concept is critical in evaluating the works produced in the years of and after the French Revolution, for though Eros is the protagonist of his own story, his physical rendering and allegorical presence suggest that he is an agent not for mythological characters, but rather for the artists and society in which the art was produced.

⁵¹ Dorothy Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 77.

CHAPTER THREE: EROS AS AGENT

The period of and following the French Revolution witnessed a salient shift in depictions of the couple Eros, the god of love, and Psyche. Eros is popularly portrayed as an infant revealer of love in Rococo art, however, Neoclassical representations of Eros veer toward an androgynous adolescent in love, more specifically in love with Psyche.⁵² This transformation is most certainly correlated to one of a larger scale and scope, that of the male nude. For in the years surrounding the French Revolution depictions of the male body in art enter a juxtaposing enigma of either a virile, hyper-masculine, robust man or a languid, sarcous, often androgynous ephebe.⁵³ Eros is consistently depicted as the latter, and while these portrayals as an adolescent can be traced back to Archaic Greek pottery, it can be argued that he is the subject of the male gaze in the guise of a homoerotic ephebe. With few notable exceptions, Eros is always depicted with Psyche in Neoclassical art as a lover himself instead of an instigator of desire. It is in this chapter that I construct the argument that Eros is depicted with Psyche in a majority of Neoclassical paintings and sculpture in a reconciliation of artists' revived Greek desires and the heteronormative principles that Post-Revolutionary France insisted upon.

These Greek desires can perhaps be epitomized by the work of one Archaic Greek lyricist, Anacreon. In his poetry, Eros appears as an agent of homosexual desire. In fragment 357 of *Poetae*

⁵² Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 68-72.

⁵³ Abigail Solomon-Godeau, *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 23-24. Solomon-Godeau goes on to define these two models of masculinity as either being hard or soft, phallic or feminized within the context of a bourgeois and pre-bourgeois ideologies of gender.

Melici Graeci Anacreon prays to the triad most associated with carnal desire, in hopes his male beloved reciprocates his love;

Lord, with whom Eros the subdue, And the dark-eyed Nymphs, And rosy-skinned Aphrodite, Play, you roam about, The lofty mountain peaks. I beseech you, please come to us, Well disposed, and hear, Our prayer with favor. Become a good advisor to Cleobulus, That he accept my love, O Dionysus.⁵⁴

Anacreon continues his *PMG* in fragments 358-360, expressing his desire for Cleobulus;

Once again golden-haired Eros, Hitting me with a purple ball, Calls me out to play with a fancy-sandaled maid... Boy with a maiden's glance, I seek you out, But you hear not, Unknowing that you are the charioteer, Of my soul.⁵⁵

Anacreon is one of the fundamental poets to be considered when evaluating French Neoclassicism. His poetry experienced a revival of enthusiasm in the mid-eighteenth century, was revered, and given many homages in the century to follow. Art critics soon designated the term "Anacreontism" to the Neoclassical preference to mythological male nudes. Anacreontism is, at its very core, "the continued enthusiasm for all things Greek" and rivals the equally as popular preoccupation with Republican Rome throughout the late eighteenth century.⁵⁶ The publisher D'Ambroise Firmin Didot expresses how the French and ancient Greeks are really quite alike in the following;

From the earliest time of antiquity, the name of Anacreon recalls the most gracious aspects of poetry. "The poetry of Anacreon deals entirely with love," said Cicero; and the Anacreontic name will always be associated with this pleasing genre, dear above all to the French, a happy people, living in a temperate climate where the vine flourishes, and who,

⁵⁴ Hubbard, ed., *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome*, 36-37. Hubbard suggests that there might be a pun on the name "Cleobulus." For not only was Anacreon known for his witty and epigrammatic style of lyric, but the Greek roots that Cleobulus is composed of are *kleo-* (famous) and *boul-* (advice).

⁵⁵ Hubbard, ed., *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome*, 37.

⁵⁶ Solomon-Godeau, *Male Trouble*, 103.

like the Athenians, have the gift of enjoying life, with their inborn playfulness, liveliness and elegance of wit.⁵⁷

That the French Neoclassicists channeled the Athenian “gift of enjoying life” is of no debate, for they mirrored the very patriarchal, social constructions that were present in both ancient Greece and Rome. Abigail Solomon-Godeau asserts that the studios of most French Neoclassical artists promoted a ‘masculinization’ and in rejecting female artists, there is a sort of reconciliation within representations of masculinity itself.⁵⁸ These constructions can be ascribed to what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick notably designates “homosociality” in her eminent book, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Many early modern and modern societies were under the assumption that in order to have a working patriarchy, homosexuality must be discounted. Sedgwick proves, with a society that was open and to a degree promoted homosexuality, exemplified with ancient Greece, that “while heterosexuality is necessary for the maintenance of any patriarchy, homophobia against males at any rate, is not.”⁵⁹

This theory contends when juxtaposed with the Greeks, the societal model that the French Neoclassicists often turned to, but not when put into practice within their own lives in France. For

⁵⁷ Solomon-Godeau, *Male Trouble*, 103.

⁵⁸ Solomon-Godeau, *Male Trouble*, 56. There are notable exceptions to the notion that women had no place in Neoclassical art or studios. Jacques-Louis David did, in fact, accept twenty-two female students into his studio throughout his career. Though this number is a fraction of the 433 male students that are recorded to have entered his atelier, the few female students that have been researched, including Marie-Guillemine Benoist and Angélique Mongez, had extremely successful, independent careers, respectively. For more on the female students of Jacques-Louis David, see Mary Vidal’s article “The ‘Other Atelier’: Jacques-Louis David’s Female Students,” and Mary Sheriff’s article “Jacques-Louis David and the Ladies.”

⁵⁹ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 4. For more on the implications of homosexual relationships and homoerotic pursuits in ancient Greece, see James Davidson’s comprehensive study in his book *The Greeks and Greek Love*.

in the 1770s through the 1780s, homosexuality was not the open, integral faction of the upper echelon's life, namely due to the 'anti-sodomite' laws that engulfed France. This changed, however, in September 1791, when the Constituent Assembly approved the new Penal Code that ultimately lacked any reference to Ancien Regime laws on sodomy. It did not mention 'crimes against nature,' thus creating a loose 'tolerance' of homosexuality. This is not to say by any means that homosexuality was reconstructed into a new liberal ideology. Instead, as Antony Copley describes, the 1791 Penal Code is "suggestive of proto-Victorian prudery, a wish to impose a conspiracy of silence on such behavior."⁶⁰

The conflicting nature of the laws of constraining homosexuality, and consequently the perceptions of homosexuality in France can be tangibly traced within the process of translating Anacreon. In his exhaustive study, Satish Padiyar tracks the history of French translations and, subsequently, expurgations of the poet.⁶¹ Padiyar ultimately concludes that throughout the translations, beginning in 1681 with Anne Dacier, there was no effective silencing on the subject of explicit homosexual desire, but instead the process of translating produced a discourse which was "a proliferation of voices, increasingly cacophonous."⁶² Just before the 1791 Penal Code's silence of, and subsequent 'turn of a head' to homosexuality, Moutonnet-Clairon scathingly reviewed the archaic Greek lyricist. Padiyar translates his critique, "This poet had too much taste, too fine a spirit, to have indulged in such outrageous vices; a shameful passion, which degrades

⁶⁰ Antony Copley, *Sexual Moralities in France, 1780-1980: New Ideas on the Family, Divorce, and Homosexuality* (London: Routledge, 1989), 24.

⁶¹ Satish Padiyar, *Chains: David, Canova, and the Fall of the Public Hero in Postrevolutionary France* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 52-85.

⁶² Padiyar, *Chains*, 83.

man, and puts him beneath animals.”⁶³ By the 1790s and the early 19th century, with the new Penal Code in place, French artists lived in a society that had not blatantly renounced homosexuality, but rather acquired a quiet blindness to it, in which they had to make reconciliation with the universal heteronormative principles that were in place and the ideals of the ancient past.

Artists repurposed and appropriated Classical mythology they so esteemed in order to express their sentiments within this societal dichotomy. Eros provided an interesting answer to this clash. As the Greek god who granted homosexual love and instilled homoerotic desire, Eros is shown, in his adolescent, ephebic form (his original Greek, cosmogonic guise), almost exclusively with Psyche in Neoclassical works of art.

The popularization of the myth can numerically be indicated by the twenty-seven paintings and sculptures shown in the Salon between 1797 and 1814 that portray the lovers, Eros and Psyche.⁶⁴ And while the myth’s vogue can be attributed to a number of societal factors, one of the most tangible influences of the trend was the 1797 production and widespread dissemination of Pierre Didot the Elder’s edition of La Fontaine’s *Les Amours de Psyché et Cupidon*.⁶⁵ One year later, one of the chief illustrators of this edition, François Gérard, produced arguably one of the most successful renditions of the myth in his 1798 painting, *Psyche and Amor* (Figure 23).

⁶³ Padiyar, *Chains*, 75.

⁶⁴ Solomon-Godeau, *Male Trouble*, 116. This number does not take into account copious prints, illustrated books, and works that were excluded from the Salon.

⁶⁵ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 79. The drawings that Gérard produced for this edition were almost most certainly inspired by Raphael’s Amor and Psyche fresco cycle at the Villa Farnesina. Prints of Raphael that were produced by Raimondi were widely disseminated throughout France at this point. Gérard may have continued to work on the Cupid and Psyche myth, for in 1802, these Raphael engravings were outlined and used in a new edition of Apuleius’s translation, entitled *La fable de Psyché, figures de Raphaël*. For more, see volume two of Mélanie Salitot’s *La Mythologie dans le livre illustré parisien sous la Révolution, 1789-1804*.

Interestingly enough, the scene depicted is neither directly described in Apuleius's 2nd century story, the source for most interpretations in the history of art, nor in La Fontaine's 1668 rendition, which takes place at the palace of Versailles. Rather, the oil on canvas painting is a creative initiative on Gérard's part, portraying the young, virginal Psyche on the brink of sexual manifestation. She sits, in a pose reminiscent of antiquity's *Venus Pudica*, unaware of Amor's presence in an unspecified, supposed idyllic vastness. Psyche's physiognomy, however, does not directly reflect that of ancient Greece or Rome, but rather the contemporary *belle idéal* with even an en vogue coiffure. Amor is revealed as an adolescent ephebe, shown in the moment before he caresses Psyche, creating suspense for the viewers. Before even reading the title, viewers know that this is a representation of the couple, Cupid and Psyche, by their symbols; Psyche's butterfly, which hovers just about her head, and Cupid's conspicuous, pristine, almost peacock like wings.

Critics at the Salon were enchanted by Gérard's pathos and almost all commented on the palpable innocence of Psyche. Dorothy Johnson translates, as one critic exclaims, "What grace! What modesty! What innocence! Do not disturb these lovers. Let me enjoy this brilliant dawn, this opening up of a virginal heart."⁶⁶ Another proclaims, "This is a simple, candid, virtuous young girl... But where is the sensuality? Can you not see it in her innocence?"⁶⁷

It is clear by these quotes that critics believed that the art of Eros and Psyche, particularly Gérard's interpretation, epitomized sexual innocence being transformed into passionate, carnal love. Pierre-Jean-Baptiste Chaussard, perhaps the most influential art critic of the time, wrote

⁶⁶ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 86.

⁶⁷ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 86.

considerably on Gérard's *Psyche and Amor*.⁶⁸ Ewa Lajer-Burcharth suggests, based on accumulated reviews of this work and others of the era, that Chaussard thought women should look to Psyche, particularly Gérard's Psyche, as a sort of model of behavior. Chaussard states, in translation by Lajer-Burcharth, that this ideal behavior is an "ineffable mixture of subtlety and dignity, of sensuality and modesty."⁶⁹ To what extent women actually followed this model constructed by Chaussard is questionable. However, it was rumored that this painting started a fashion for paleness (*paleur à la Psyché*) and a trend for blond wigs.⁷⁰

That an eminent critic molded, so to say, the ideal woman of the day based on a submissive, virginal Psyche, attests to the idea that her character was manipulated to facilitate a patriarchal normal. This idea is expressed by Christine Downing, who comments on the masculine tendencies of the myth in literature, that is tantamount with the art produced, notably within Neoclassicism. Downing points out that the relationships typically analyzed within the myth are of Aphrodite and Psyche as two women pitted against each other. As well as, of course, Eros and Psyche's own tumultuous relationship, particularly the aspect of Eros's 'heroism,' saving her when it was really he who put her up for Aphrodite's malevolence.⁷¹ However, she argues the relationship between Psyche and her sisters is the most dynamic of the story, for they manipulate, lie to, and convince Psyche to reveal Eros's identity which leads to the turning point of the myth. Downing states that

⁶⁸ Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines: The Art of Jacques-Louis David after the Terror* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 281.

⁶⁹ Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 283.

⁷⁰ Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 283.

⁷¹ Christine Downing, *Psyche's Sisters: Reimagining the Meaning of Sisterhood* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988), 41-43.

the myth of Eros and Psyche “affirms the centrality of sisterly experience in female life without really doing justice to its complexity.”⁷²

Despite being in Jacques-Louis David’s atelier at the same time as François Gérard, Anne-Louis Girodet’s treatment of the god of love could not be more different. Girodet was obsessed with mythology and the poet Anacreon, creating a series of engravings entitled *The Odes to Anacreon* (Figure 24). Girodet expressed how important Eros is in the scope of art, writing in an epic poem of the art of painting:

Which god brings art into being? ...it is a greater god, the son of Venus; this god whom the gods themselves worship for his power, from his ethereal breath art comes into being—without him, art would still be in the void.⁷³

Girodet disguises Eros as Zephyr, a tradition dating back to antiquity, in his eminent painting, *The Sleep of Endymion* (Figure 25), which interestingly was produced within the same year as the new Penal Code, 1791.⁷⁴ Zephyr (Eros) reveals Diana’s moonbeams to her lover, the shepherd Endymion. The painting has been written on extensively within the past three decades, namely for the epitomizing nature of the treatment of the male nude. I would like to consider,

⁷² Downing, *Psyche’s Sisters*, 52.

⁷³ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 40.

⁷⁴ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 46-51. Girodet himself explicitly defines that the god Eros is disguised as the god Zephyr, for Johnson translates, “This concept is entirely my own... that of the young Amor in the form of Zephyr, who smiles as he pulls back the foliage.” Johnson theorizes that this complicated iconography is due to themes of “hiddenness” and “exhibition,” in addition to the interrelationship of the two. This interrelationship of the two mythic beings is not completely inventive on Girodet’s part, for it traces back to depictions on Greek red-figure vases and even in the literature of Plutarch, who, in his *Erotic Dialogue*, references a fragment from the 7th century lyric poet Alcaeus that suggests Zephyrus is actually Eros’s father. For more on this interrelationship, particularly in pottery, see Chapter 4, *Pederasty and the gods*, of Andrew Lear and Eva Cantarella’s book *Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty: Boys were their gods*.

however, the role of Eros within the seemingly heterosexual nature of Diana and Endymion's relationship.

Girodet almost treats the myth as a strictly homosexual one, reducing the female character to a moonbeam while Eros gleams at the languid, exposed Endymion. Though, upon first glance the figure of Endymion appears female, perhaps insinuating the traditional, heterosexual male gaze. This composition, however, is reminiscent of the pederastic stories depicted on Greek vases.⁷⁵ Also, upon closer inspection, along the border of the maroon fabric on which Endymion drapes himself, there is a phallic patterning (Figure 26). Perhaps, the most definitive reason why Girodet exploits the homoerotic nature of Eros, and gets away with it, so to say, is because he himself was known to have "intense relationships with other men" and was fully engaged in the homosocial standard of the time.⁷⁶ Though the piece was simply intended to fulfill the Academy's required study of the male nude, *Endymion* was immediately regarded as a mythological masterpiece at its debut in the 1793 Salon.⁷⁷

It is without any doubt that *The Sleep of Endymion* influenced several Neoclassical artists. Pierre-Narcisse Guérin, for example, pays direct homages to Girodet's eroticizing nature of sleep and themes of "revealer" in two paintings, *Aurora and Cephalus* (Figure 27) of 1810, and *Iris and Morpheus* (Figure 28) of 1811. What is interesting, however, is how Guérin reintroduces women as revealers and Eros is reduced to a mere infant companion appropriating Girodet's composition back into a story of heterosexual, carnal lust.

⁷⁵ Lear and Cantarella, *Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty*, 151-52.

⁷⁶ Solomon-Godeau, *Male Crisis*, 70-72.

⁷⁷ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 44-45.

Though Girodet's influence is indeed traceable in terms of themes and compositions, his treatment of Eros as homoerotic revealer goes unparalleled. Throughout the first twenty years of the 19th century, Eros is generally seen with Psyche, as a lover, in a myriad of interpretations and conceptions. These often mirror Gérard's supposed intent of creating a quintessential couple, by placing the couple in scenes in which Eros is in control of Psyche's destiny. For example, in terracotta sculpture, Claude Michel, known as Clodion, epitomizes this concept of Eros rescuing Psyche in his sculpture dating 1797-1800, entitled *Cupid and Psyche* (Figure 29). Clodion creates a figural group, depicting a teenage Eros carrying Psyche as she lies in an unaware state of bliss, surrounded by putti in his arms. The scene is moralizing and exemplifies the idea that Psyche's entity is bound to Eros's gallantry and rescuing.⁷⁸

These representations of the lovers permeate throughout the early 19th century. It isn't until Jacques-Louis David's, the teacher of Gérard and Girodet, rendition of the myth that the moralistic innocence, that ultimately represents an ideal heteronormative couple, is shattered.⁷⁹ In his 1817 painting entitled *Amor and Psyche* (Figure 30), the viewer acts as voyeur to Psyche's boudoir (indicated by the butterfly emblem at the base of her bed) where the couple has seemingly just made love. Eros looks to the viewer and greets them with a knowing smirk, as he appears to be untangling himself from Psyche, and even perhaps, solicits the viewer's approval for his clumsy bravado. It is after all morning, as we can see from the sun beginning to rise in the landscape in the background, and Eros must leave before his identity is revealed. Eros is ultimately depicted as

⁷⁸ Downing, *Psyche's Sisters*, 51.

⁷⁹ Dorothy Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David: The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1997), 8.

a sneering adolescent who triumphs gloatingly over his sexual conquest, while Psyche is represented as just the opposite as elegant and graceful.

This painting was produced within a year of David's arrival in Brussels for his exile. The critical reaction was laden with disgust and complete denouncement of the painting. The art theorist, Auguste Hilarion Kératry lamented over the loss of innocence in the painting. He writes, in translation by Dorothy Johnson, "There is no god here; there never was one. There is no woman who would not be frightened by the sight of the being who has usurped his place."⁸⁰ Even David's friends were abhorred by the overt lascivious nature of the painting. Johnson translates the concerns of art critic Edmé François Antoine Marie Miel, "This Amor is not a god, he is not even a beautiful adolescent; he is the model, an ordinary model, copied with a servile exactitude, and in whom the expression of happiness is nothing more than cynical grimace."⁸¹

David 'defended' his work by producing an antidote to the lewd, conquest like nature of *Amor and Psyche*. With *The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis* (Figure 31), created the following year, David states that the painting serves as a "pendant to my Psyche."⁸² For in *Telemachus and Eucharis*, David treats the couple with the same pathos as his student Gérard used for Eros and Psyche, a couple chaste and innocent yet sensual as they are on the brink of sexual manifestation. It is with David's *Amor and Psyche* the entire function of the myth of Eros and Psyche is recalculated and altered. For though François Picot received better critical reception for his 1819 painting, *Amor and Psyche* (Figure 32), (namely for the unsullied representation of Eros, with genitals that appear to be barely developed, and the less claustrophobic feeling of the

⁸⁰ Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David*, 66.

⁸¹ Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David*, 67.

⁸² Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David*, 65.

composition) Neoclassical treatments of romantic mythological subjects were in decline and the myth of Eros and Psyche had passed its acme.⁸³

The appropriation of the myth of Eros and Psyche by French Neoclassicists in the years surrounding the French Revolution was certainly not without calculation and consideration. For these artists were met with the galling task of reconciling their revived homosociality, that often was muddled with homosexuality, with a society that at best had, as Copley articulates, a turn of head to this sort of behavior.⁸⁴ However, Neoclassical artists certainly found ways to settle this dichotomy, for as Foucault suggests in the second volume of his *History of Sexuality*, the Greeks created their lives into an oeuvre and thus the making of the self turned into a conscious project, that ultimately resulted in ‘turning oneself into a work of art.’⁸⁵ I believe this to be true in that Neoclassical artists not only projected their desires into their work of art (Girodet in *The Sleep of Endymion*), but they also constructed their professional lives around their desires.

Eros and Psyche, as a myth itself, provided a platform for artists, already invested in depicting romantic mythology, to consolidate the known instigator, if not patron, of Greek homoerotic love within this patriarchal, heteronormative society. The result is Eros and Psyche facilitating and promoting a model of a young couple, though continually with Eros represented as the ephebic adolescent whose own sexuality is continually blurred. In most Neoclassical portrayals, Psyche is stripped of any underlying complexity and becomes a damsel of submission to Eros, who either patronizes or rescues her, ultimately in control of her destiny. This fabricated

⁸³ Johnson, *David to Delacroix*, 51.

⁸⁴ Copley, *Sexual Moralities in France*, 24.

⁸⁵ Daniel Orrells, *Classical Culture and Modern Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 270.

couple represents chastity, morality, and ultimate innocence until David amends their function in his 1817 painting. The popularization of Eros and Psyche attests to not only the complications in depictions of the male nude body in Neoclassical art, but also the disunion between classical revivalism and France's moralizing society within the years of and after the Revolution.

CONCLUSION

Epitomized by François Gérard and destroyed by Jacques-Louis David, the notion of idealized, pure love embodied a period of art from about 1780 to 1820. After this, the treatment and perception of venerated love and classical mythology shifted, and while it didn't disappear, the reverence for these ideals certainly diminished as the world progressed. However, one last major French artist did find similar inspiration as the Neoclassicists in the story of Cupid and Psyche and produced a series of paintings in the late 19th century. William-Adolphe Bouguereau created a number of paintings derived from Apuleius's story. The first, *Psyche et L'Amour* (Figure 33) was shown in the Exposition universelle de Paris in 1889. And while the renderings of the bodies were concurrent with that of the Neoclassicists and the scene is moralizing and idealized in its elements (male hero rescuing swooning female), Bouguereau and his mythological works were soon deemed painfully traditional and unfashionable and are often overlooked in the shadow of his contemporary Impressionists within late 19th century French art in the canon of Art History.

Throughout the course of Western history and the subsequent imagery each culture produced, Eros, the god of love, has undertaken numerous roles. As this thesis has attempted to demonstrate, the function of Eros in each period and region was reflective of the society's entire culture at large. By tracing the literary sources that served as various artists' inspiration, we can gain a more complete and richer comprehension of each work's function and meaning. Beginning with Hesiod's *Theogony*, which puts Eros as the fourth being created in the entire universe, a unique and all-encompassing precedence is created for Eros. This is reflected in the fearful reverence that many mortals had for him, for they were often victims of Eros's incited lust. Homosexual relations between men were affected with particular violence and affliction from

Eros, as this is articulated and conceptualized in several poets' oeuvres and artists' red figure pottery.

Later in antiquity, the Roman writer Lucius Apuleius Madaurensis denoted a new role for the god of love, that of lover himself, in *The Golden Ass* that would add new dimension for further representations of Eros. With the popularization of Apuleius's myth of Cupid and Psyche, depictions of the young, often pre-pubescent couple were produced in abundance until the rise of Christianity. In medieval art and literature, the myth of Eros and Psyche was generally overlooked, with Cupid acting as an allegorical figure in stories like *The Romance of the Rose*. With a few exceptions, notably translations of Apuleius, Cupid isn't reintroduced until the Renaissance.

With Italian humanists' interest in pagan mythology and classical philosophy the myth of Cupid and Psyche experiences a rebirth of its own. This is perhaps most prominently manifested in Raphael's Psyche Loggia at the Villa Farnesina, of which he derived scenes from the widely disseminated translation of *The Golden Ass* by Beroaldo the Younger. By the 17th century, the story reaches a new point of vogue with La Fontaine's epic reworking of the story in his *Les amours de Psyché et Cupidon*, produced in 1669 as an advertisement of sorts for Louis XIV's palace of Versailles. With this publication and Molière's tremendously successful *Psyché* ballet, French artists and their patrons of the next century were consistently inspired by the love story. Rococo works depicting Cupid and Psyche emphasized the strange eroticism of a teenaged girl in love with an impish infant, particularly in paintings exhibiting the reveal of Cupid's identity.

This shifted though with the rise of morality and idealized love in Neoclassical works and thought. The decades surrounding the French Revolution witnessed a definitive shift in depictions of the couple, one that complemented the other major shift of the period; representations of the

male body. As gender roles shifted and became more obscured, so did depictions the male nude, for it was either depicted as a hyper-virile, masculine athlete or soft, feminized ephebe. The latter has been investigated as perhaps the product of a homoerotic male gaze, as the concept of homosociality infiltrated artists' studios. It is also the fashion in which Eros was consistently rendered, which coincided with his original cosmogonic guise of ancient Greece. However, this rendering of Eros was only produced when he was placed next to his lover, Psyche, the virginal beauty that supposedly represented the model woman of the first years of the 19th century. This dichotomy represented the objective of heteronormativity and idealized love in Revolutionary France while continuing the vogue of ephebic, homoerotic representations of the male. These conclusions can offer further investigation into not only how mythology served as a narrative for societal agendas in Revolutionary France, but also how the treatment of the male nude as ephebe can offer insight into questions of the male gaze and perception.

APPENDIX: FIGURES

Figure 1: In the manner of Douris. Red-Figure Kylix. N.d. Berlin	49
Figure 2: Telephus Painter. Red-figured kylix, 470 BCE. Munich.	50
Figure 3: Flying Angel Painter. Red-Figure Neck Amphora. N.d. Villa Guilia, Rome.	51
Figure 4: Roman copy of Greek original. <i>Cupid and Psyche</i> , 2 nd century CE. Marble. Capitoline Museum, Rome.	52
Figure 5: <i>Cupid and Psyche</i> , n.d. Fresco. Pompeii.	53
Figure 6: Marble Sarcophagus with garlands, 220-225 CE, Roman. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.	54
Figure 7: Left end of Marble Sarcophagus with garlands, 220-225 CE, Roman. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.	55
Figure 8: Right end of Marble Sarcophagus with garlands, 220-225 CE, Roman. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.	56
Figure 9: Bartolomeo de' Bartoli. <i>Psyche in Cupid's Garden</i> (in <i>The Golden Ass</i>), 1345. Illuminated Manuscript. Vatican Collection, Rome	57
Figure 10: Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun. <i>Le Roman de la Rose</i> (<i>The Romance of the Rose</i>), 1230-1280. Folio 15, Illuminated manuscript. National Library of Wales, Wales.	58
Figure 11: Donatello. <i>Spiritello</i> , 1429. Bronze. Tabernacle of Baptismal Font, Siena Cathedral, Siena.....	59
Figure 12: Donatello. <i>Attis-Amorino</i> , 1440-43. Bronze. Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.	60
Figure 13: Raphael Sanzio. <i>The Loggia of Cupid and Psyche</i> , 1518. Fresco. Villa Farnesina, Rome.	61

Figure 14:) François Boucher, woven by Beauvais tapestry manufactory. <i>The Abandonment of Psyche</i> (from a set of five tapestries called "The Story of Psyche"), 1742. Wool and Silk. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.	62
Figure 15: Charles-Antoine Coypel. <i>Psyche Abandoned by Cupid</i> , 1730. Oil on Canvas. Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille, Lille.	63
Figure 16:) François Boucher. <i>Mars and Venus Surprised by Vulcan</i> , 1754. Oil on Canvas. Wallace Collection, London.	64
Figure 17: Joseph-Marie Vein. <i>Psyche Looking at Sleeping Cupid</i> , 1767. Oil on Canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.	65
Figure 18: James Gillray. <i>The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche</i> , 1797. Aquatint etching. The British Museum, London.	66
Figure 19: Tryphon (signed by). <i>Cameo with the wedding of Cupid and Psyche</i> , mid 1 st -late 1 st century BCE. Onyx. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.	67
Figure 20: François-Nicolas Delaistre. <i>L'Amour et Psyché</i> , 1780-85. Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris.	68
Figure 21: Roman. <i>Eros and Psyche</i> , 2 nd century CE (restored in the 18 th century by the workshop of B. Cavaceppi). Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris.	69
Figure 22: Antonio Canova. <i>Amour and Psyche</i> , 1787-93. Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris.	70
Figure 23: François Gérard. <i>Psyche and Amor</i> , 1798. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris...	71
Figure 24: Anne-Louis Girodet. <i>The Odes to Anacreon, Ode XXII</i> . Engraved by Charles Chatillon after Girodet, 1826.	72

Figure 25: Anne-Louis Girodet. <i>The Sleep of Endymion</i> , 1791. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.....	73
Figure 26: Anne-Louis Girodet. Detail from <i>The Sleep of Endymion</i> , 1791. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.	74
Figure 27: Pierre-Narcisse Guérin. <i>Aurora and Cephalus</i> , 1810. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.	75
Figure 28: Pierre-Narcisse Guérin. <i>Iris and Morpheus</i> , 1811. Oil on canvas. Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.	76
Figure 29: Claude Michel (Clodion). <i>Cupid and Psyche</i> , 1797-1800. Terracotta. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.	77
Figure 30: Jacques-Louis David. <i>Amor and Psyche</i> , 1817. Oil on canvas. The Cleveland Art Museum, Cleveland.	78
Figure 31: Jacques-Louis David. <i>The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis</i> , 1818. Oil on canvas. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.	79
Figure 32: François Picot. <i>Amor and Psyche</i> , 1819. Oil on Canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.....	80
Figure 33: William-Adolphe Bouguereau. <i>Psyche et L'Amour</i> , 1889. Private Collection.....	81



Figure 1: In the manner of Douris. Red-Figure Kylix. N.d. Berlin



Figure 2: Telephus Painter. Red-figure kylix, 470 BCE. Munich.

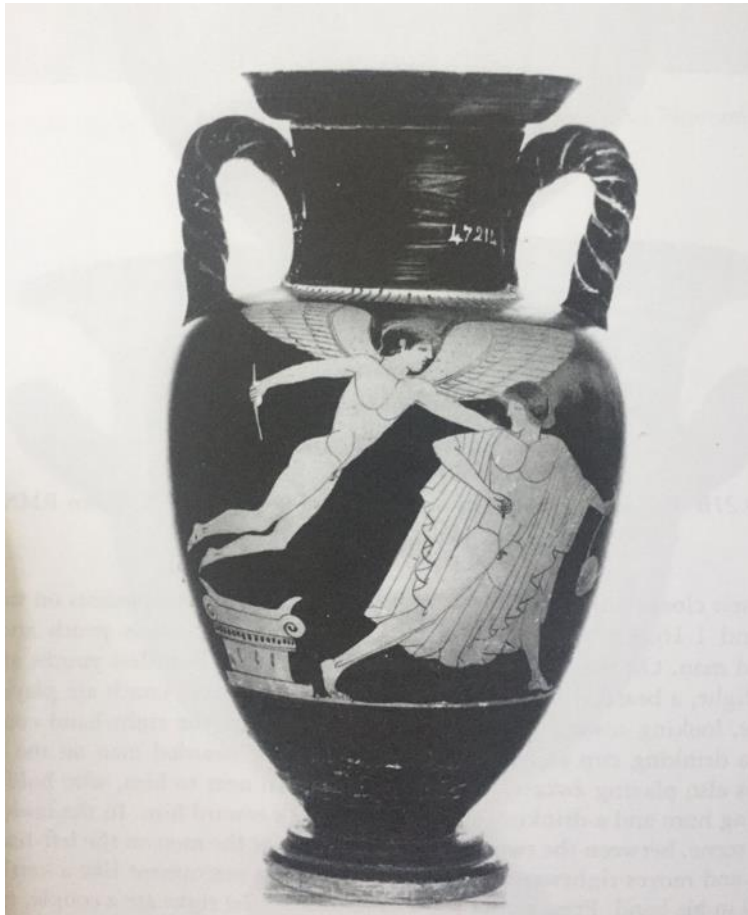


Figure 3: Flying Angel Painter. Red-Figure Neck Amphora. N.d. Villa Guilia, Rome.



Figure 4: Roman copy of Greek original. *Cupid and Psyche*, 2nd century CE. Marble. Capitoline Museum, Rome.



Figure 5: *Cupid and Psyche*, n.d. Fresco. Pompeii.



Figure 6: Marble Sarcophagus with garlands, 220-225 CE, Roman. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 7: Left end of Marble Sarcophagus with garlands, 220-225 CE, Roman. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 8: Right end of Marble Sarcophagus with garlands, 220-225 CE, Roman. Marble. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 9: Bartolomeo de' Bartoli. *Psyche in Cupid's Garden* (in *The Golden Ass*), 1345. Illuminated Manuscript. Vatican Collection, Rome



Figure 10: Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun. *Le Roman de la Rose* (*The Romance of the Rose*), 1230-1280. Folio 15, Illuminated manuscript. National Library of Wales, Wales.



Figure 11: Donatello. *Spiritello*, 1429. Bronze. Tabernacle of Baptismal Font, Siena Cathedral, Siena

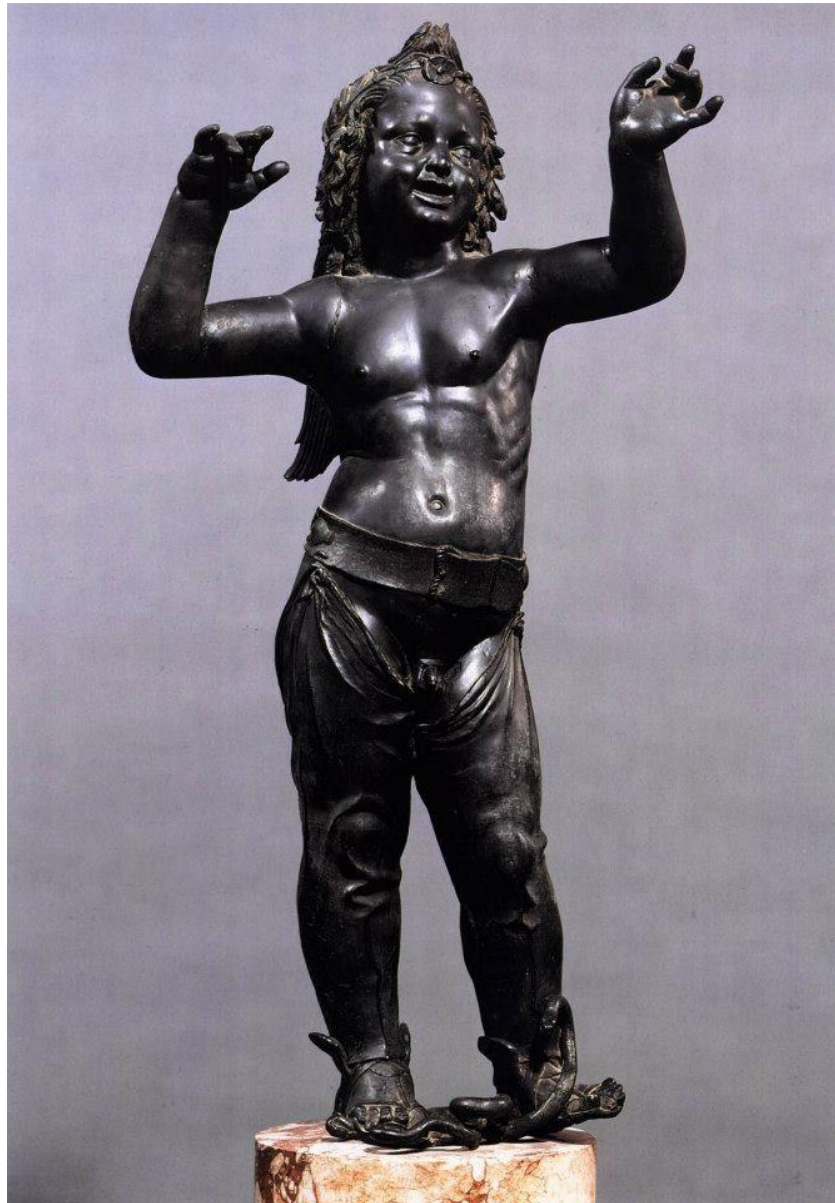


Figure 12: Donatello. *Attis-Amorino*, 1440-43. Bronze. Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence.



Figure 13: Raphael Sanzio. *The Loggia of Cupid and Psyche*, 1518. Fresco. Villa Farnesina, Rome.



Figure 14:) François Boucher, woven by Beauvais tapestry manufactory. *The Abandonment of Psyche* (from a set of five tapestries called "The Story of Psyche"), 1742. Wool and Silk. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.



Figure 15: Charles-Antoine Coypel. *Psyche Abandoned by Cupid*, 1730. Oil on Canvas. Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille, Lille.



Figure 16:) François Boucher. *Mars and Venus Surprised by Vulcan*, 1754. Oil on Canvas. Wallace Collection, London.



Figure 17: Joseph-Marie Vein. *Psyche Looking at Sleeping Cupid*, 1767. Oil on Canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure 18: James Gillray. *The Marriage of Cupid and Psyche*, 1797. Aquatint etching. The British Museum, London.



Figure 19: Tryphon (signed by). *Cameo with the wedding of Cupid and Psyche*, mid 1st-late 1st century BCE. Onyx. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Figure 20: François-Nicolas Delaistre. *L'Amour et Psyché*, 1780-85. Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

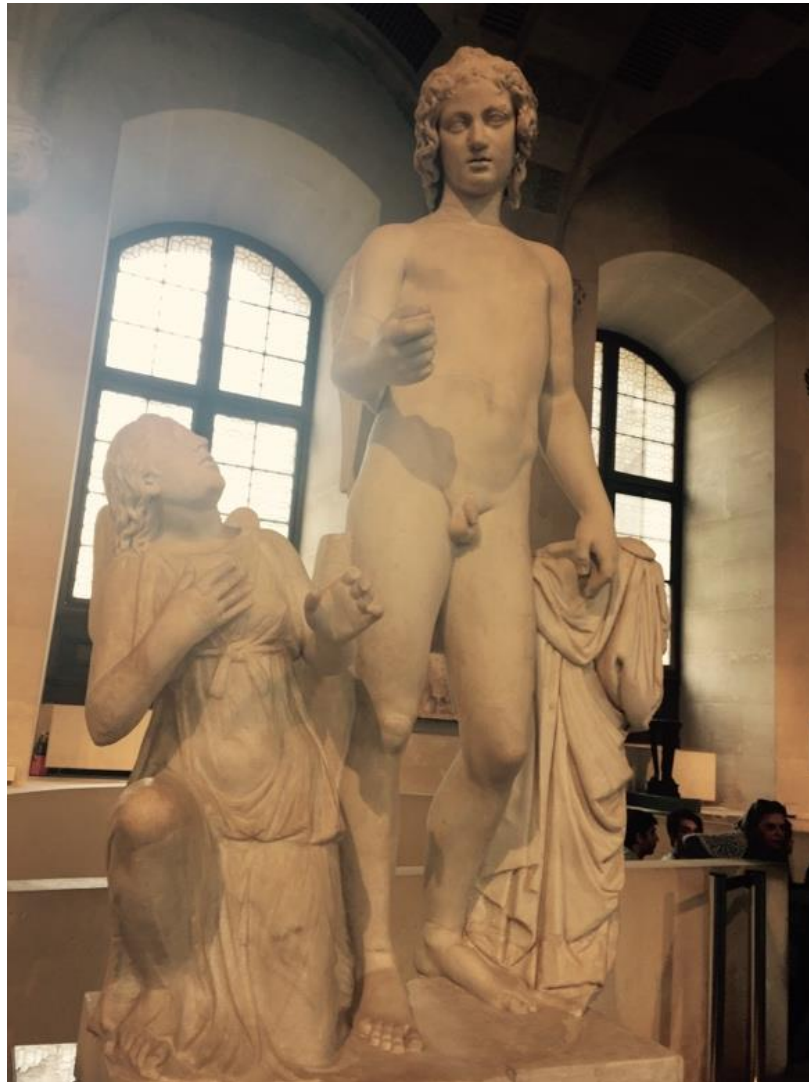


Figure 21: Roman. *Eros and Psyche*, 2nd century CE (restored in the 18th century by the workshop of B. Cavaceppi). Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure 22: Antonio Canova. *Amour and Psyche*, 1787-93. Marble. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure 23: François Gérard. *Psyche and Amor*, 1798. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

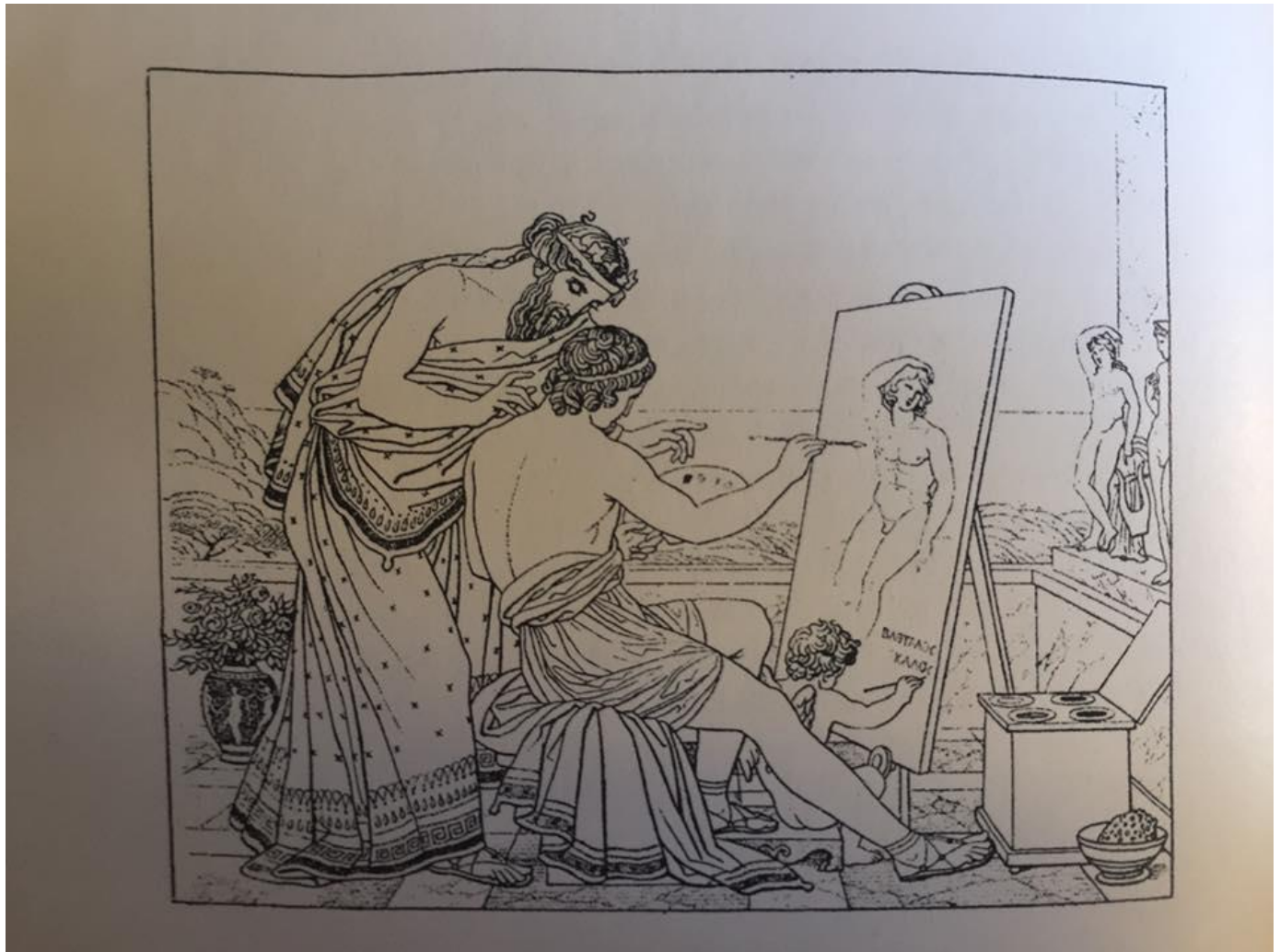


Figure 24: Anne-Louis Girodet. *The Odes to Anacreon, Ode XXII*. Engraved by Charles Chatillon after Girodet, 1826.



Figure 25: Anne-Louis Girodet. *The Sleep of Endymion*, 1791. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure 26: Anne-Louis Girodet. Detail from *The Sleep of Endymion*, 1791. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure 27: Pierre-Narcisse Guérin. *Aurora and Cephalus*, 1810. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

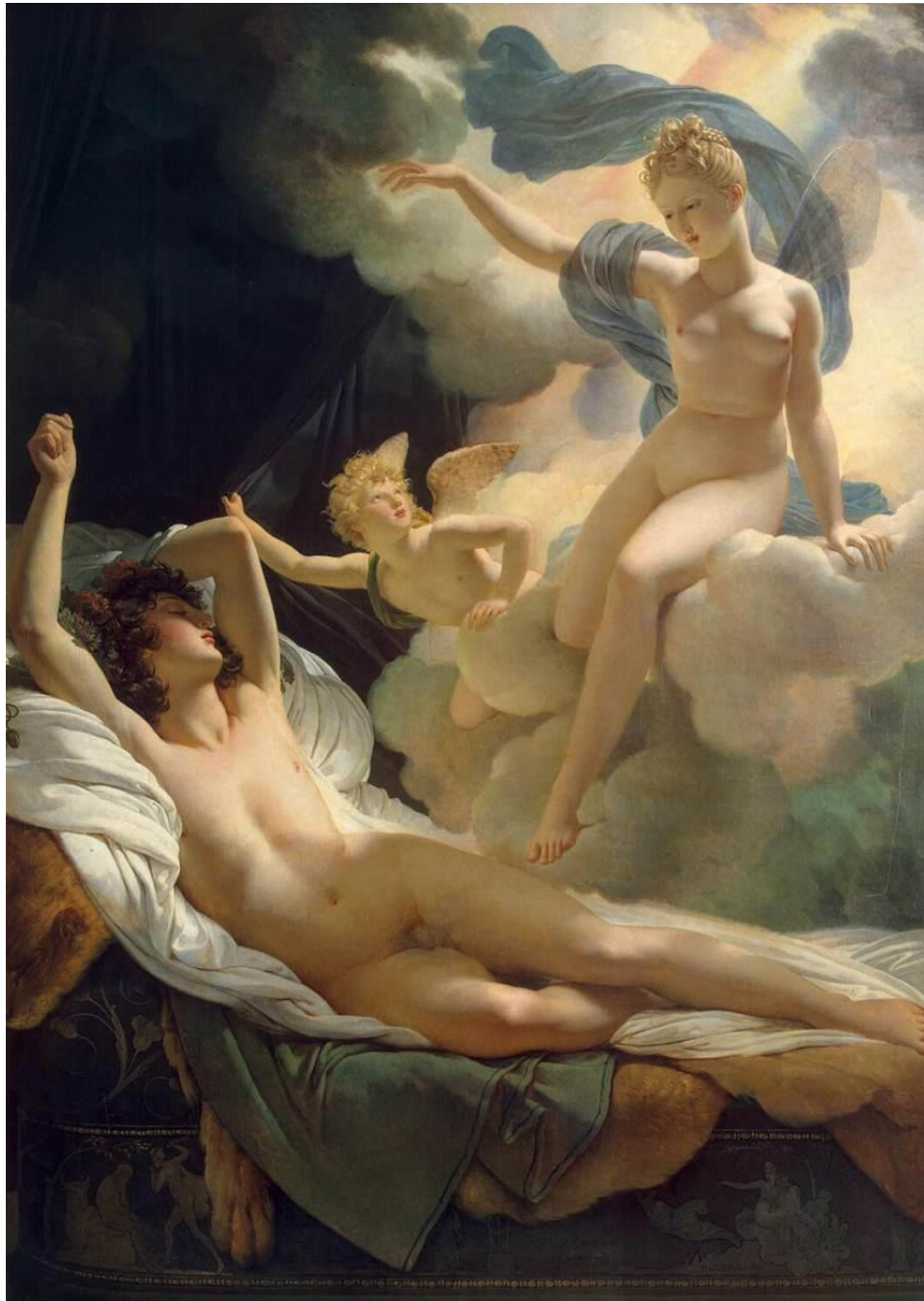


Figure 28: Pierre-Narcisse Guérin. *Iris and Morpheus*, 1811. Oil on canvas. Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



Figure 29: Claude Michel (Clodion). *Cupid and Psyche*, 1797-1800. Terracotta. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Figure 30: Jacques-Louis David. *Amor and Psyche*, 1817. Oil on canvas. The Cleveland Art Museum, Cleveland.

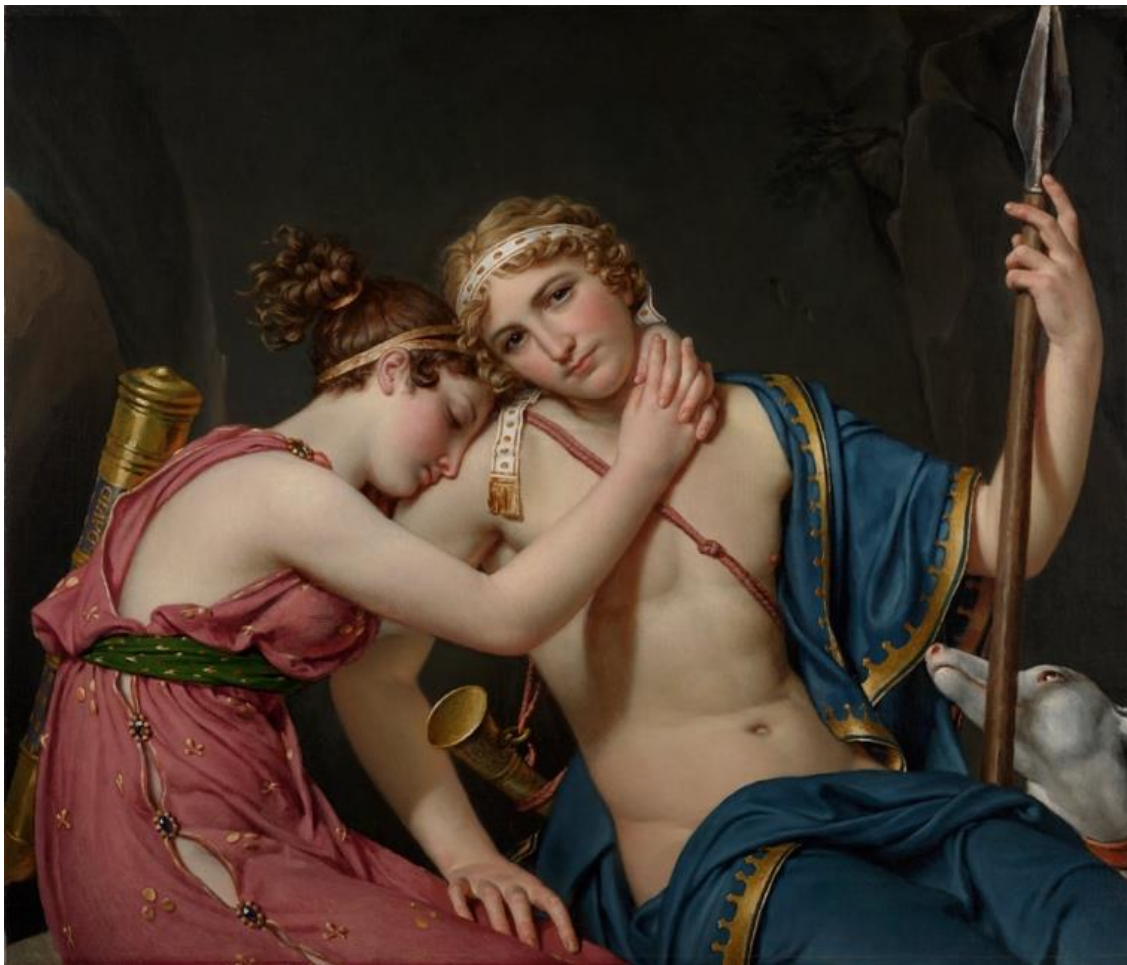


Figure 31: Jacques-Louis David. *The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis*, 1818. Oil on canvas. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

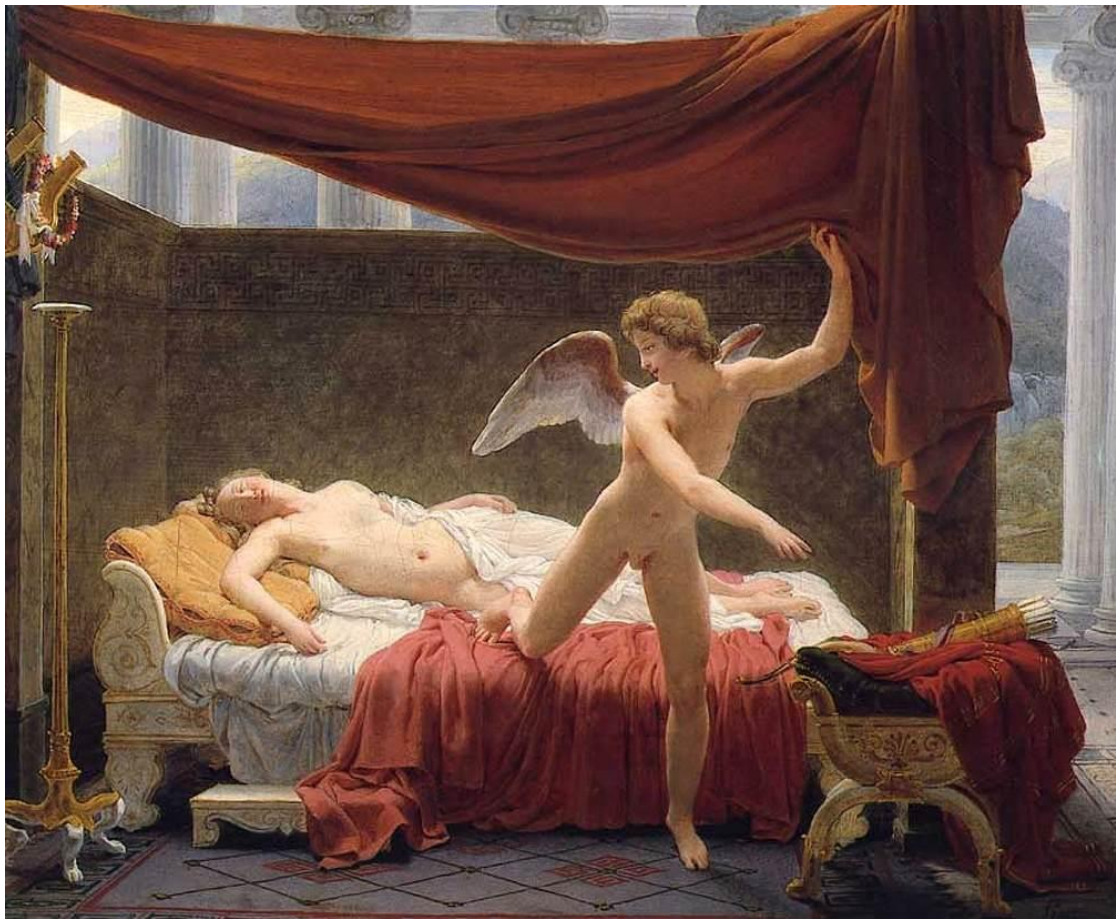


Figure 32: François Picot. *Amor and Psyche*, 1819. Oil on Canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure 33: William-Adolphe Bouguereau. *Psyche et L'Amour*, 1889. Private Collection.

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Boardman, John et al. *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC)*. Zurich: Eros, 1989-.
- Carson, Anne. *Eros The Bittersweet*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- Cooper, John M., ed. *Plato: Complete Works*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997.
- Copley, Antony. *Sexual Moralities in France, 1780-1980*. London: Routledge, 1989.
- Cyrino, Monica S. *Aphrodite*. London: Routledge, 2010.
- Davidson, James. *The Greeks and Greek Love: A Radical Reappraisal of Homosexuality in Ancient Greece*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007.
- Dempsey, Charles *Inventing the Renaissance Putto*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Dover, K.J. *Greek Homosexuality*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Downing, Christine. *Psyche's Sisters: Reimagining the Meaning of Sisterhood*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988.
- Draper, James David and Guilhem Scherf. *Playing with Fire: European Terracotta Models, 1740-1840*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 2003.
- Gaisser, Julia Haig. *The Fortunes of Apuleius and the Golden Ass: A Study in Transmission and Reception*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.
- Gerlini, Elsa. *Villa Farnesina Alla Lungara Rome*. Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e zecca dello stato, 2000.
- Grigson, Geoffrey. *The Goddess of Love: The birth, triumph, death and return of Aphrodite*. New York: Stein and Day, 1977.

- Hagstrum, Jean H. *Eros and Vision: The Restoration to Romanticism*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989.
- Haskell, Francis and Penny Nicholas. *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.
- Hecht, Jamey. *Plato's Symposium: Eros and the Human Predicament*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1999.
- Hiesinger, Kathryn B. "The Sources of François Boucher's "Psyche" Tapestries." *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* 72, (1976): 10.
- Higonnet, Anne. *Pictures of Innocence: The History and Crisis of Ideal Childhood*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1998.
- Hubbard, Thomas K., ed. *Homosexuality in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook of Basic Documents*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Hunter, Richard, trans. *Apollonius of Rhodes: Jason and the Golden Fleece: The Argonautica*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Johnson, Dorothy. *David to Delacroix: The Farewell of Telemachus and Eucharis*. Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1997.
- Johnson, Dorothy. *David to Delacroix: The Rise of Romantic Mythology*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011.
- Lajer-Burcharth, Ewa. *Necklines: The Art of Jacques-Louis David after the Terror*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
- Lear, Andrew, and Eva Cantarella. *Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty: Boys were their gods*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Lombardo, Stanley, trans. *Hesiod: Works and Days and Theogony*. Indianapolis: Hackett

- Publishing Co., 1993.
- Majanlahti, Anthony. *The Families Who Made Rome: A History and Guide*. London: Chatto and Windus, 2005.
- Ockman, Carol. *Ingres's Eroticized Bodies: Retracing the Serpentine Line*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995.
- Orrells, Daniel. *Classical Culture and Modern Masculinity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Padiyar, Satish. "Menacing Cupid in the Art of Rococo." In *The Triumph of Eros: Art and Seduction in 18th-century France*, edited by Frank Althaus and Mark Sutcliffe. London: Fontanka Publishing, 2006.
- Padiyar, Satish. *Chains*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.
- Percy, William Armstrong. *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996.
- Powell, John S. "Psyché: The Stakes of Collaboration." In *Reverberations: Staging Relations in French since 1500- A Festschrift in Honour of C.E. J. Caldicott*, edited by Phyllis Gaffney, Michael Brophy, and Mary Gallagher. Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2008.
- Schmidt, Leigh Eric. "The Fashioning of a Modern Holiday: St. Valentine's Day, 1840-1870." *Winterthur Portfolio* 28 (1993): 209-45.
- Scott, Katie. "Under the sign of Venus: The making and meaning of Bouchardon's *L'Amour* in the age of the French rococo." In *Manifestations of Venus: Art and Sexuality*, edited by Caroline Arscott and Katie Scott. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*.

New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

Solomon-Godeau, Abigail. *Male Trouble: A Crisis in Representation*. London: Thames and

Hudson, 1997.

Walton, Guy. *Louis XIV's Versailles*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

West, M.L., trans. *Hesiod: Theogony and Works and Days*. Oxford: Oxford University Press,
1988.