# A HANDBOOK TO THE
RECEPTION OF OVID

EDITED BY JOHN F. MILLER AND CAROLE E. NEWLANDS

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Acknowledgments

Introduction

Carole E. Newlands and John F. Miller

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Ovid has proved the most influential and indeed the most versatile by far of all the poets of Latin antiquity. His works have exerted a fundamental influence on the literature and art of the West, beginning in ancient times and continuing with astonishing vitality to the present day, inspiring in recent times not only poetry and painting but novels, plays, and films. The present volume explores how Ovid's poetry, and indeed Ovid's life itself, has been interpreted, rewritten, critiqued, adapted, translated, and metamorphosed in later periods of time and different cultures.

One of the requirements of such a handbook is to offer a broadly based survey of significant research. Thus this volume provides an extensive temporal sweep in the West from Ovid's times to our own. It encompasses all of Ovid's major works and it explores key players in their reception, many of them familiar figures in the Western literary canon but viewed afresh through an Ovidian lens, others less well known and here brought significantly to our attention. The contributors represent a variety of geographical and cultural backgrounds. But so rich and diverse is the afterlife of Ovid and his works that this volume cannot, and does not, aim to be comprehensive. The history of the reception of Ovid's poetry covers many periods of human history and involves many geographical regions and disciplines, in particular literature, dance, drama, film, and the visual arts. While chronologically ambitious, our volume nonetheless is necessarily selective. Its focus is literary, but also pays attention to the influence of Ovid's poetry on the visual arts (Barolsky, Casid, Knox, Winkler) and music (Solomon). While its surveys of recent research on Ovid's impact also offer fresh ways of thinking about Ovid's poetry, the volume's emphasis falls squarely upon reception, that is, upon documenting and exploring from multiple perspectives how Ovid's poetry has been interpreted and transformed over time in response to the individual circumstances of a writer or artist, to be sure,

but also to the major intellectual, social, and political changes that have shaped that response.

As a whole, this volume identifies culturally specific moments in the reception of Ovid's poetry while also tracing historical continuities and discontinuities. An interesting case is how women writers through the ages engage with Ovid's poetry. Although his works explore the intricacies of the female voice and psychology, in some eras women seemed to play little part in the acquisition of Ovidian cultural capital. The resulting gendered imbalance in reception reveals the historical pressures upon the reception of Ovid, pressures which begin with the *Art of Love* itself when Ovid tells Roman matrons that this poem is definitely not written for them—surely a tongue-in-cheek remark, for they would have been among his most literate readers (*Ars* 1.31–34). Nonetheless, during the Middle Ages Christine de Pizan and Heloise responded in important ways to that very *Art of Love* as well as to the *Heroides*, Ovid's fictional letters by heroines (Desmond). Much later, a handful of women writers shared in an early modern craze for the *Heroides*—writers like Aphra Behn, Mary Wortley Montagu, and Jane Barker (Horowitz). More recently, we find a large number of women writers reacting to Ovid's poetry: the enormously successful play *Metamorphoses* by Mary Zimmerman, granted the Tony award in 2002, and two recent novels, Jane Alison's *The Love Artist* (2001) and Benita Jaro's *Betray the Night* (2009), both of which adopt a provocative feminist perspective on the poet. Charlotte Higgins recently updated the *Ars Amatoria* in her delightful mock-didactic *Latin Love Lessons: Put a Little Ovid in Your Life* (2007). In the visual arts of the modern era, women have responded to Ovid's poetry in ways that are both playfully deferential (for instance, Mme Yyonde) or alienating (Casid); New York artist Kiki Smith's sculpture *Daphne* shows a bare, mutilated, headless stump, a tree stripped of its leaves, a woman devoid of face, hands, and feet. A large group of modern and contemporary women poets likewise meditate on Ovid's Daphne from female points of view; Anne Sexton, Silvia Plath, A.E. Stallings, Alice Fulton, Eavan Boland, Jorie Graham, and others give a voice to the beautiful nymph unsuccessfully chased by Apollo, and then transformed, in the first love story of the *Metamorphoses* (Martindale 2005: 200–17).

We start neither from the idea that poetry "hands down" a tradition in a linear progression nor from a simple perspective of afterlife or *Nachleben*; rather, we begin from the understanding, outlined by Andrew Laird (2010: 356), that reception is a dynamic two-way process in that texts do not retain a continuous identity but are constituted by their interpretation over time—all the more insistently the case with the poetry of the master of change. Ovid was an acutely self-reflexive and self-conscious poet about his relationship to his predecessors and to posterity. Our study of the reappropriations and reworkings of Ovid's texts thus starts with Ovid himself (Feldherr; Myers), and, to paraphrase Lorna Hardwick, thereafter crosses boundaries of place, language, and genre as well as time (Hardwick 2003: 4). Central questions of this volume include what new meanings the author and his works acquire through migration to often quite alien registers; and to what

ideological ends — aesthetic, intellectual, cultural, and political — Ovid's poetry has been adapted. The definition of reception studies is constantly changing. But by stimulating debate, the rewritings, translations, and revisions of Ovid's poetry over time encourage a greater critical and historical awareness in its readers and indeed further creativity.

The study of the reception of Ovid is particularly complex because he produced such a large and diverse body of work. As we see from this volume, his epic *Metamorphoses* consistently stands out over time. No epic poet subsequent to Ovid could ignore his innovative reshaping of the Roman epic code, his challenge to Virgil's epic; the *Metamorphoses* is crucial for understanding imperial epic (Keith). For Dante, Ovid is the poet of the *Metamorphoses* (Clay), and the *Metamorphoses* reaches the peak of its influence in the Renaissance (Casali; Hardie; Keilen) as well as, perhaps, our own times (Godel; Brown; Winkler; Casid); translation involving radically different approaches by prominent English poets allowed Ovid's epic to reach a wide audience from the sixteenth century to our own time (Hooley).

However, Ovid's elegiac poetry was extremely influential, too, in charting new generic territory; the *Heroides*, the *Amores*, the *Ars Amatoria*, the *Fasti*, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* all represent different, experimental approaches to the elegiac genre, a monumental achievement for a traditionally slender genre. Several of the essays show how later writers, beginning with the Flavians Statius and Martial (Rosati), capitalized on the creative range of Ovid's experimentation with elegy and his language of luxury and desire. Despite its title and central trope, Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* drew on the erotic tropes of Ovid's *Amores* as well as on his epic (Harrison). Moreover, the reception of Ovid's poetry in late antiquity and the Middle Ages was far from being dominated by allegorical interpretation, even with regard to the *Metamorphoses* (Hays; Fumo). The sixth-century poet Maximianus revived erotic elegy with the ironic persona of an elderly lover (Fielding). At the height of the Middle Ages Ovid's amatory elegy was instrumental in the development of the courtly discourse of a language of desire (Desmond). The structuring of the *Amores* as a sequence charting the rise and decline of the poet's engagement with *eros* provided an influential template for love poetry, from Petrarch's development of the sonnet sequence to Goethe's elegiac love poems (Braden). Even the puritan Milton in the seventeenth century found in Ovid's elegiac poetry a potent source for his creative imagination, beginning early in his career with his Latin elegies (Green). The elegiac, etiological *Fasti*, in its negotiation with imperial ideas of time, introduced the concept of the calendar poem that became an important political genre in the Renaissance (Kilgour). Well before the twentieth century made urban alienation a major theme, responses to the exile poetry in the Middle Ages explored this concept (Keen). Moreover, the return of elegy in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* to its origins in lament and its adaptation to the politics of Ovid's imperial exile laid the basis for subsequent social and cultural interventions in situations not necessarily of geographical displacement but of censorship and cultural alienation (Keen; James;

Kahn). But despite its thematic and generic complexity, Ovid's poetry also consistently confronts common major issues of erotic and political power, and crises of identity involving personal loss, betrayal, and cultural alienation—in short, the fundamental themes of love and death. The return of his poetry to these major issues again and again in different ways, and different genres, constitutes part of Ovid's enduring fascination.

The study of the reception of the poetry of Ovid is particularly rewarding as well as complex, for Ovid himself was a poet obsessed with his future reception and in all his works he attempted to control how they would be read by posterity (Feldherr; Myers). Essentially there are two strands to the reception of "Ovid": there is the poet himself, a fascinating case study of tragic downfall and poetic transcendence, and there is the poetry itself; the proximity of the "life" to the poetry means that these two strands often become interwoven, for it is almost entirely through Ovid's poetry that we know of his "life," or at least as he chose to represent it both for his critics and supporters in Rome and for posterity. The scripting of his own life in exile as a case study in metamorphosis became an open invitation for later writers to write speculative biographies that focus on the mystery of his exile, harnessing it to a variety of ideological agendas. For instance, in the thirteenth century a three-book elegiac poem, *De Vetula*, presented itself as "the last will and testament of Ovid" found on his tomb. In this popular pseudonymous work Ovid has renounced the erotic life for Christianity; his particular life thus models that of the "everyman" in religious thought who necessarily suffers on the path to spiritual redemption. On the other hand, a popular story included in many of the medieval *accessus* ("introductions") to Ovid's works reflects historical and aesthetic concerns in a comic vein. According to this narrative our poet, climbing up a ladder to enter Livia's turreted bedroom, was compelled by a call of nature to descend; Virgil, however, had removed a rung from the ladder and Ovid fell and broke his leg. The story plays off Ovid's enigmatic statement at *Tr.* 4.10.51, *Vergilium tantum vidi*, "I only saw Virgil," and thus makes a crude attempt in the vein of the *fabliau* to explain both the historical reason for Ovid's exile (adultery with the emperor Augustus' wife) and his perceived rivalry with Virgil. In recent times novelists have imaginatively explored Ovid's exile through the lens of contemporary culture and politics. For instance, Austrian novelist Christoph Ransmyer in *The Last World* (1988) ambitiously merged Ovid's world with that of the East German totalitarian state (Godel). At the end of his life English Poet Laureate Ted Hughes (1930–98) essentially assumed the mantle of Ovid when he interwove Ovidian biography and epic poetry in the award-winning poems *Tales from Ovid* (1997) and *Birthday Letters* (1998), a powerful diptych crafted from the *Metamorphoses* and Ovid's *Heroides* and the exile letters.

Underlying the remit for this volume is the pertinent question, "Why Ovid now? What is our enduring fascination with Ovid in the twenty-first century?" In her essay in this volume, Casid explores what might be the relevance of "Old Masters" to today's fractured, self-questioning culture. Ovid's poetry has often been

read for the pleasure of his verse and his gift of storytelling; Knox in this volume has shown how Ovid's storytelling permeated popular culture in Italy from early on, appearing as decorative themes and conversation pieces on the walls of houses in Pompeii. But, as Feldherr suggests, it is not sufficient to say that Ovid's poetry, particularly the *Metamorphoses*, endures because of the power of his fictions when freed from their specific cultural moorings. Even as he seduces with words, Ovid draws attention to the irony and instability of language. A central trope of Ovid's reception is change, inviting exploration of ontological questions of identity, image, and reality that appeal to postmodern sensibilities. For instance, the major modern theme of bodily and cultural alienation was given Ovidian form in Kafka's novella *Metamorphosis* in 1915, written in the middle of World War I. The dynamic nature of Ovid's art, constantly shifting in perspective and emotional register, invites change in response at the epistemological and aesthetic levels. But in our contemporary world, where scientists can engineer hybrid creatures well beyond Ovid's imaginings, Ovid's poetry can nonetheless still powerfully appeal to a sense of wonder as well as our fears. His paradoxical, oracular formulation of metamorphosis, *Met.* 10.566 *nec tamen effugies teque ipsa viva carebis* ("you will not escape, yet you will be separated from yourself while alive"), can suggest the horror of imprisonment, or the glory of liberty—or perhaps both. In reception, Ovid is a poet very much of our times, and of all time (Brown).

This volume follows a basic chronology, beginning with Ovid himself as a key figure in his reception. Such a temporal format invites comparative study according to which Ovid's various works can be seen to shift in importance, depending on the historical period and the social and cultural circumstances in which the poems were produced and read. The frequent shifts in the popularity of Ovid's works demonstrated here should invite us to consider our own forms of literary inclusion and exclusion. For instance, from the essays in this volume (de Armas, Galloway, Hardie, Kilgour) we learn that Ovid's Roman calendar poem the *Fasti* was widely read and used as a school text and literary source in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and beyond; it also inspired one of the most famous of premodern paintings, Botticelli's *Primavera*. Despite a renaissance of interest in the *Fasti* in the 1990s, study of this elegiac poem has not kept pace with other new work on elegy which generally confines its generic range to love poetry (e.g. Lively and Salzman-Mitchell 2008; Gardner 2013). In contrast, the prominence given the *Heroides* by three critical studies in the past decade (Lindheim 2003; Spentzou 2003; Fulkerson 2005) is not yet matched by comparable interest in their reception (see however Horowitz; Solomon). The heyday of the *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* seems to have been the Middle Ages, when these erotodidactic texts invited critical rereadings and innovative play on gendered conflict and desire (Desmond); but the afterlife of this text in the early modern and modern periods requires further investigation. The vagaries of Ovid's reception and the practical constraints on a volume of this kind inevitably result in lacunae; these are partly redressed by recent collaborative volumes such as Keith and Rupp (2007) and Clark, Coulson, and McKinley

(2011) on the Middle Ages; by Ziolkowski (2005) on the modern reception of Ovid; and by Ingleheart (2011) on responses to the exile poetry over a 2000-year span. In general, however, the gaps in our own more comprehensive survey highlight areas where there is urgent need for more critical exploration.

This volume reveals that, as in his own day, so over the intervening years there have been many Ovids, often in coexistence, and his poetry has served many purposes. Major recurrent themes of his reception include of course erotic passion—for, which other Roman writer has so fully explored the complexities of the human heart and made the emotions the driving force of human action? Exile and alienation, major themes of modern literature, also preoccupy writers from the Middle Ages. Pleasure, delight, and beauty are important aesthetic categories in Ovid's poetry that can both seduce but also discomfort the reader in their very allure. If there is one overall theme that emerges from this volume, however, it is that writers and artists over time have consistently responded to the subversive nature of Ovid's poetry. We do not mean necessarily politically subversive, though obviously that is often an important feature of his reception too. While Virgil's *Aeneid* has been used in support of nationalist agendas (Thomas 2001), the reception of Ovid's poetry has usually involved critique of such agendas, testing whether the power of art can challenge state power and effect social and political change (Godel; Ziolkowski). In general, however, we mean "subversive" in the sense that his poetry constantly challenges conventions and norms, whether they are political, literary, artistic, or social.

In exile Ovid constantly wrote against the fear of poetic oblivion, aware of the implacability of the political system that finally held him in its grip. A short story by Antonio Tabucchi tells how Ovid dreamt that, restored to the emperor's favor, he was transformed into a beautiful butterfly, but was torn to death by an overenthusiastic crowd of his fans (Miller 2001). This disturbing parable of Ovid's reception nonetheless makes its central symbol, the butterfly, a figure of immortality. And precisely because of the revisions, rewritings, even depredations of his poetry by successive generations, Ovid has claimed for himself an enduring major place among European writers, thinkers, and artists. While the attention given individual works varied over different periods of time, as we see from this volume, Ovid himself has remained a figure of unbroken authority who gave future generations artistic license to innovate, challenge, critique, and delight. The overall aim of this volume therefore is to reveal the rich diversity of the reception of Ovid over time, its continuities and discontinuities, its surprises. An understanding of the historically based, multicultural processes of reception may well increase our sense of the transformative power of Ovid's poetry even in the present day. This volume thus is open-ended; it is an invitation to further exploration, scholarly or creative, of the reception of this most protean poet.

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Ovid's Self-Reception in His Exile Poetry

K. Sara Myers

The study of Ovid's reception begins with Ovid and importantly is shaped by his statements about his poetry and career in his exile poems. Ovid in exile is the "first extant reader to interpret and reprocess" his earlier works (Hinds 1999a: 48). In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid does more than reflect on his earlier poetry; he attempts to control its reception and to construct an image of "Ovidianism," which is meant to convince the emperor to recall the poet. But, of course, there are more "re-s" involved in the exile poetry than reception: Ovid reflects on his career, recalls, rewrites, and revises his earlier works, refutes the misinterpretation and condemnation of the *Ars Amatoria*, and rebukes the emperor for his excessively harsh punishment of the poet and his flawed understanding of his poetry. Ovid is concerned with the reception both of his earlier poetry, especially the *Ars*, and that of his current project, the exile poetry. He seeks in exile to shape an image of his poetic career that will guarantee his lasting fame. This chapter will look at some of the general strategies and themes of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* that reflect "Ovid's self-consciousness about how his texts will survive and how they will be reread in the light of new circumstances" (Burrow 2002: 302).

I want to look specifically at three aspects of Ovid's self-reception in his exile poetry. First, I am interested in the way in which Ovid in exile encourages a rereading of his earlier poems, in an attempt to shape their reception and interpretation in ways that will reflect his current situation and plead his case with the emperor. This involves defending his past (erotic) poetry by crafting an ideal reader and by conditioning his audience's reception of his texts. Second, and closely related to the first strategy, through allusions to his earlier poetry, Ovid encourages the reader to read his personal history into his poetic corpus, to reconsider his earlier work in the light of his current exilic state. This reuse of past erotic, mythical, and metamorphic motifs to shape his current experiences creates interesting and piquant

conflicts between poetic fictions and the poet's new reality. The poet offers himself as the subject of poetry: *Tr.* 1.5b.57–58 *pro duce Neritio, docti, mala nostra, poetae, / scribe*, "instead of the Neritian hero, learned poets, write of my sufferings". Finally, in exile Ovid reflects on his poetic career, defends his literary choices, and compares his downfall with other career models, as he advocates for the future transmission and survival of his poetic texts.

Rereading and Revising

The emperor Augustus relegated Ovid to Tomis on the Black Sea (modern Constanta in Romania) in 8 CE, when the poet was 51 years old (*Tr.* 4.10.95–96), for two crimes: the *Ars Amatoria* and an unknowable "mistake" (*Tr.* 2.207 *duo crimina, carmen et error*). Ovid's exilic *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* represent a radically new departure in the Roman elegiac tradition, but Ovid is less interested in proclaiming their originality than in stressing their inevitability. His exilic condition poses a generic opposition to the possibility of writing in any genre other than elegiac lament.[1] These are poems born from his sad new circumstances (e.g. *Pont.* 3.9.35 *cano tristia tristis*, "being sad, I sing sad songs"), and must function to rescue the poet by representing him at Rome, pleading his case with the emperor, and defending his career. While Ovid continually stresses the discontinuity and decline of his exilic poetic production in comparison to his pre-exilic poetry (e.g. *Tr.* 3.14.33 *ingenium fregere meum mala*, "my misfortunes have crushed my talent"), modern critics highlight instead the close relation of his exilic and pre-exilic phases, pointing out his undiminished poetic abilities, his unchanged style, wit, and irreverence. Decline instead may be seen as a trope, a strategic pose designed to evoke sympathy and reproach the emperor (Nagle 1980: 171), or it may function as an ironic, self-mocking pose (Williams 1994: 50–99).

Ovid emphasizes his former position as Rome's foremost poet by reminding his readers of his past literary achievements. One of the ways he does this is through pervasive allusions to his earlier writings. Although Ovid frequently defines the exile poetry in terms of a rupture with his literary past, especially with his didactic love poem, the *Ars Amatoria* (*Tr.* 1.1.67 *non sum praeceptor Amoris*, "I am not the teacher of Love"; cf. *AA* 1.17 *ego sum praeceptor Amoris*), it is well known that there is a strong line of continuity between the elegy of exile and Ovid's earlier amatory elegy (Kenney 1965; Evans 1983). Although he expresses regret for the composition of the *Ars Amatoria* (e.g. *Tr.* 5.1.8), Ovid continually positions his new poetry in relation to his previous love poetry, constantly evoking the repudiated model and reminding the reader of it (Labate 1987). Ovid persistently identifies himself as a love poet throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (*Tr.* 4.10.1–2; *Pont.* 2.11.2). In *Tr.* 5.1.17–20 Ovid's wish that he did not follow the love poets Gallus, Propertius, and Tibullus still functions to reinscribe him in this genealogy. In his imagined epitaph, Ovid remains *tenerorum lusor amorum,* "he who played with

tender love" (*Tr.* 3.3.73). Widely demonstrated is Ovid's redeployment in Tomis of the techniques, vocabulary, and themes of the amatory mode when framing his suit to Augustus and expressing his longing for inaccessible Rome (for the similarity of Ovid as "*exclusus exul*" and *exclusus amator*, see for example Nagle 1980, Helzle 2003, Rosati 2003 on *Pont.* 2.2.40). His wife is offered the fame and immortality earlier offered to Corinna in the *Amores* (*Tr.* 4.3.81–82, 5.14.1–6). In *Pont.* 3.3 a now bedraggled Cupid himself returns (replaying his numerous earlier programmatic scenes in Ovid's poetry); his changed appearance announces the sadly altered condition of the exile elegies, yet marks a defiant continuity with the poet's earlier amatory works.

It is, of course, Augustus' reception of the *Ars Amatoria*, the *causa exilii* (*Pont.* 3.3.23), that concerns Ovid above all. Ovid's repeated defenses of the offending poem serve as persistent rebukes to the emperor, who by including the poem in his condemnation of the poet provided Ovid with his best weapon for his self-defense. It suited Ovid to claim that his poetry was the major cause of his exile (*Tr.* 5.12.45–46), as his offense was apparently unmentionable (e.g. *Pont.* 3.3.73–74 *quicquid id est (neque enim debet dolor ipse referri, / nec potes a culpa dicere abesse tua)*, "whatever it is (for the pain itself ought not be recalled nor can you say that you are free from guilt)"). *Tristia* 2 constitutes Ovid's most prominent attempt to rewrite the reception of the *Ars Amatoria*, to defend it as morally neutral and harmless. In this poem Ovid does not so much apologize for the *Ars Amatoria* as instruct Augustus (and his readers) how to read poetry, while expressing his views on readership and reception (Barchiesi 2001). Among his many claims, Ovid suggests that Augustus has not had the time to read the *Ars Amatoria*, busy as he is with affairs of state (213–40) and that he has been "critically naive" about the nature of poetic reception (Williams 1994: 193). Ovid argues that "the burden of interpretation falls on the reader of the poetry" (Gibson 1999: 23). The morals and mind of the reader determine whether a text is harmful (301 *omnia perversas possunt corrumpere mentes*, "all things can corrupt perverse minds"); there is no *crimen* in his *Ars* (240), if it is read *recta mente* (275). A sound and balanced judgment is required (80). Ovid suggests that "every work of art is open to deviant interpretations" (Barchiesi 1997: 33). The *Ars* has been unjustly singled out against the author's intention and Ovid's tendentious review of Greek and Latin literature (361–538) is meant to show that all texts are potentially immoral if misread, even Virgil's *Aeneid* (533–36), and yet all of Ovid's erotic predecessors eluded punishment (469–70). The teleological thrust of this catalogue of authors firmly asserts Ovid's position in the literary tradition (Ingleheart 2010: 22–24). Later, Ovid will turn to Germanicus in the hopes of finding in a fellow poet a proper understanding of the nature of poetry (*Pont.* 4.8.67–68).

Ovid also attempts to shape Augustus' understanding of his *maius opus*, the *Metamorphoses*, encouraging especially a recognition of its panegyrical intent.[2] At *Tristia* 2.63–66 Ovid proposes that Augustus will find in the epic praise of himself. This "retrospective authorization of an 'Augustan' reading of the poem" (Hinds 1999a: 50) may, however, be undermined by its advertised fictionality (64 *in non credendos*

corpora versa modos, "bodies changed in unbelievable ways"), which casts doubt on
the credibility of Augustus' own projected deification at *Metamorphoses* 15.861–70.
Later in *Tr.* 2 Augustus is again enjoined to find time to read the epic (557–62):

> atque utinam revoces animum paulisper ab ira,
>   et vacuo iubeas hinc tibi pauca legi,
> pauca, quibus prima surgens ab origine mundi
>   in tua deduxi tempora, Caesar, opus!

Would that you might recall your mind from anger awhile and order a few lines
from this be read to you in leisure, those few lines in which, beginning from the
first origin of the world, I led the work down to *your* times, Caesar!

Ovid here rewrites *Met.* 1.3–4 (*primaque ab origine mundi / ad mea perpetuum deducite
tempora carmen*, "lead down a continuous song from the first origin of the world
to my times"), modifying its temporal teleology in Augustus' favor. Bruce Gibson
(1999: 19–20) has drawn attention to the potentially deflating force of the repeated
pauca, which seems to draw attention to the fact that Augustus is mentioned only
at the beginning and end of the epic. This revision also deflects attention from the
epic's epilogue, which celebrated Ovid's own poetic immortality (*Met.* 15.871–79;
cf. 871–72 *iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iouis ira nec ignis / nec poterit ferrum nec edax
abolere vetustas*, "now I have completed a work which neither the anger of Jove
nor fire nor iron nor devouring old age can destroy"). In *Tr.* 1.1, however, Ovid
had already suggested an emendation of this epilogue, urging the *Tristia* book to
tell the books of the *Metamorphoses* to include his *fortuna* in their metamorphic
catalog: *his mando dicas, inter mutata referri / fortunae vultum corpora posse meae*, "I
would like you to tell them that the aspect of my own fortune can be reckoned
among those changed bodies" (119–20). Like his poetry, Ovid himself has been
transformed and damaged by exile (*Tr.* 3.11.25 *non sum ego quod fueram*, "I am not
as I once was").[3] Throughout the exile poetry Ovid repeatedly casts doubt on, but
never wholly surrenders (e.g. *Tr.* 3.7.45–52; *Pont.* 3.2.29–32), his exultant assertions
of immortality in the epilogue, frequently "conceding to the firepower of *Iovis ignis*
and *ira* the very supremacy against which his epilogue had taken its final stand"
(Hinds 1999a: 50).

When Ovid in *Tr.* 1.7.11 suggests that the *Metamorphoses* provides a *maior imago*
of himself, a better representation of the poet in his absence, it is a modified *Meta-
morphoses*, as he goes on to suggest the addition of six lines to the preface, which
offer a "newly pessimistic way into the *Metamorphoses*" (Hinds 1985: 26) by point-
edly referring to the writer's exile (35–40):

> orba parente suo quicumque volumina tangis,
>   his saltem vestra detur in urbe locus.
> quoque magis faveas, non haec sunt edita ab ipso,
>   sed quasi de domini funere rapta sui.
> quicquid in his igitur vitii rude carmen habebit,
>   emendaturus, si licuisset, erat.

Whoever you are who touch these volumes bereft of their author, to these at the very least let a space in your city be granted. And that you may favor them more, these were not published by their author, but were as if snatched from his funeral. Whatever flaw this unformed poem may have, he would have emended it, if it had been permitted.

Ovid encourages a newly autobiographical reading of the epic, in which his mythological figures serve as analogues for his own (much worse) sufferings. He "retrospectively reads the reality of his own exile into the fictions of the earlier poems" (Hardie 2002b: 285).

It is through allusion especially that Ovid in his exile poetry redeploys and rewrites his earlier poetry to reflect the circumstances of his exiled state. As Gareth Williams suggests, in Ovid's earlier *Heroides* and *Metamorphoses* the psychology of estrangement, alienation, and exile was fully engaged before the blow of relegation fell and thus "in his artistic arrangement of exile Ovid is banished by Augustus to strangely familiar psychological territory" (2002: 245). Ovid frequently frames his new situation as the experience "in actuality" of many of the myths and metaphors of his earlier poetry, finding in them prophetic allusions to his future fate. Most famously, Ovid elevates his sufferings by comparing them with those of numerous mythological figures, all human victims of the gods, many of which appear in his earlier poems.[4]

Ovid, as we have seen, describes his exilic condition as a metamorphosis (*Tr.* 1.1.117–20) and identifies with a number of mythological victims in the *Metamorphoses*, such as Phaethon (e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.79–82, 3.4.29–30; *Pont.* 1.2.31–32), Icarus (*Tr.* 1.1.89–90, 3.4a.21–24), and Semele (*Tr.* 4.4.67–68). Within this scheme of "mythic victimology" (Hinds 2007: 198), Ovid famously identifies himself with Actaeon (*Tr.* 2.103–8), who inadvertently (*Tr.* 2.105 *inscius*, cf. *Met.* 3.142 *non scelus invenies*) incurred the vengeful wrath of Diana, and, having been transformed into a stag, was dismembered by his own hunting dogs (*Met.* 3.173–255). By this analogy Ovid underlines his own innocence and elevates his personal tragedy.[5] The image of mutilation and dismemberment is frequently applied to Ovid's exilic condition in his mythic comparisons (see *Tr.* 1.3.73–74). In *Pont.* 1.2.27–28 Niobe provides a parallel for Ovid's own eternal grief, a motif Ovid associates with his choice of genre in the exilic elegies. He contrasts his "real" fate with that of the fictional Niobe and laments his inability to undergo transformation and be relieved of his suffering, as Niobe was allowed. Elsewhere, Ovid's language suggests that through excessive mourning his body is, in fact, experiencing liquefaction in a manner similar to mythical figures such as Byblis or Egeria, who are transformed into water through grief in the *Metamorphoses* (*Pont.* 1.1.67–68, 1.2.55). Exile is, finally, similar to metamorphosis as "a form of exilic limbo, poised between life and death" (Putnam 2010: 38; *Pont.* 3.4.75–76). Ovid's sufferings will elevate him to the ranks of mythical heroes (*Pont.* 3.1.56 *nos quoque conspicuos nostra ruina facit*, "My downfall will also make me famous").

Ovid also uses the vocabulary of transformation to depict the extremes of the landscape in Tomis (Frings 2005: 252–262). Located, as he claims, at the ends of the earth, natural marvels abound. Boundaries are not observed, especially those between the elements of land and water in its frozen form. The barrenness of Pontus is described in terms similar to the opening cosmogony of *Met.* 1 (*Pont.* 3.1.20 *in terra est altera forma maris*, "the land is but another form of the sea" ~ *Met.* 1.291 *iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant*, "now there was no distinction between sea and land"). The frozen fish (*Pont.* 3.1.15–16 *in aequore piscis / inclusus tecta saepe natavit aqua*, "in the sea the fish often swim covered by a roof") and dolphins trapped by ice (*Tr.* 3.10.43–44) are the sorts of marvels typical of the ends of the earth, and also are reminiscent of the reversals of the flood in *Met.* 1 (296 *hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo*, "one catches a fish caught on the top of an elm," 302 *silvasque tenent delphines*, "dolphins occupy the forest"). These scenes suggest that Ovid's exilic world represents a reversion to Chaos and the kind of breakdown of elemental boundaries so typical of the transformations of the *Metamorphoses*. At *Tr.* 1.8.5 Ovid laments that a friend's deceit has turned the world upside down: *omnia naturae praepostera legibus ibunt*, "all things shall proceed in reverse of the laws of nature."

Ovid's exile poetry shares the most in content, tone, and form with his *Heroides*, wherein he had already explored the subject position of "isolated and often paranoid uncertainty" (Williams 1997: 115; see Rahn 1958; Rosenmeyer 1997; Frings 2005: 240–52). The abandoned heroines similarly express in elegiac epistles their desperation and laments to absent lovers. Ovid aligns his new poetry with the *Heroides* at the beginning of the collection at *Tr.* 1.1.13–14, where the mention of *liturae* "blots" caused by his *lacrimae* "tears" constitutes an echo of *Her.* 3.3 *quaecumque aspicies, lacrimae fecere lituras*, "whatever you will see, tears have made the blots" (itself an allusion to Propertius 4.3.3–4) and establishes "the *litura* as a sort of trade-mark of the elegiac epistle" (Hinds 1985: 15, cf. *Tr.* 3.1.15–16). Tears and complaints are leitmotifs of both the *Heroides* and the *Tristia* and *ex Ponto*, which make a generic statement by drawing attention to the ancient etymological association of elegy with lament (see Knox 1995 on *Her.* 15.7 *flebile carmen*; *Tr.* 5.1.5 *flebilis ut noster status est, ita flebilis carmen,* "as my state is lamentable, no less is my poetry doleful"). At *Tr.* 1.3.82–84 (*te sequar … accedam profugae sarcina parva rati*, "I will follow you … I would be a small burden to your ship of exile") Ovid's wife is made to speak words of entreaty similar to those of Briseis to Achilles in *Heroides* 3.68–69 *non ego sum classi sarcina magna tuae … sequar*, "I am not a heavy pack for your fleet … I shall follow" (another allusion to Propertius 4.3.46). In a move similar to his suggested revisions to the opening of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid suggests at *Tr.* 1.6.33 that his wife could now be placed at the head of the collection of the single *Heroides*: *prima locum sanctas heroidas inter haberes*, "you ought to have first place amongst the revered heroines" (Hinds 1999b). As letters, the poems in both collections express worries about communication, imagine their reception (*Tr.* 5.2.1–2; *Her.* 18.16–18, 20.1–8), complain about the

circumstances of writing and their letters' linguistic deficiencies (*Tr.* 3.1.17–18, 3.14.49–55; *Her.* 3.1–2), and ask to be read (*Pont.* 2.2.7 *perlege, Her.* 4.3, 5.1). The ultimate failure of Ovid's exilic letters to achieve their purpose in recalling him from exile makes the experience of reading them even closer to that of the ineffectual letters of his mythological heroines, whose endings were always already determined.

While Ovid clearly mythologizes and fictionalizes his exilic experiences and surroundings and thereby encourages his reader to read the poet's personal circumstances back into his earlier poetry of metamorphosis and erotic suffering, he is simultaneously eager to contrast his real suffering with fictional sufferings and thus gain sympathy for his very real miserable condition (*Tr.* 3.11.61 *crede mihi, felix, nobis collatus, Ulixes*, "believe me, compared with me, Ulysses was lucky"). Ovid cannot be transformed into a tree or stone to escape his sorrows like the characters in the *Metamorphoses* (*Pont.* 1.2.33–34), nor can he fly away from his place of exile (*Tr.* 3.8.1–12). Ovid's autobiographic persona is invested in convincing the reader that his self-representation in his exile poetry is true (*Tr.*1.5.80 *in nostris fabula nulla malis*, "there is no fiction in my sufferings"; cf. *Tr.* 4.1.66), yet his whole poetic corpus famously flaunts "his power to command or suspend our credence in his fictions" (Feeney 1991: 225). As Philip Hardie observes, "reality, in Ovid's and his reader's shared experience of his poetry, long ago fused too intimately with the text to emerge now in its pristine and pretextual innocence" (2002b: 285). Fritz Graf (2002: 114), however, suggests that while in the exile poetry "reality exceeds by far the limits of what the mythic template can perform, … the mythic tradition still functions as a gauge; by its very breaking down, it signals the new and unheard-of suffering of the exile." Ovid's stress in his exile poetry on personal autobiographical detail served to create the portrait of the artist in exile which proved so potent a vision of Ovidianism for later artists (see Lyne 2002).

Poetic Careers

Ovid's poems are characterized by a marked tendency to locate themselves self-consciously within the poetic tradition and within the poet's own poetic career (Barchiesi and Hardie 2010: 59). In his exile poetry Ovid reviews and seeks to shape the reception of his poetic career, past, present, and future, and to compare it with those of other poets. His exilic poems show an "obsessive concern with his current status and posthumous reputation" (Farrell 2004: 50; e.g. *Pont.* 1.5.71–86). Ovid is, understandably, worried about the continued circulation and survival of his texts. The immortality and autonomy of poetry become major preoccupations as Ovid seeks to recall his earlier success, to secure the continued renown of his name at Rome, and to pledge further literary success, if recalled. The exile poetry creates a portrait of the artist *not* at Rome, which becomes as much a portrait of the artist (as he used to be) in Rome. Only Ovid's poems can travel to Rome

(*Tr.* 3.14.8) and only they keep alive his name there (*Pont.* 3.5.33–34). Through these recollections Ovid reminds the reader of his earlier role in Rome as its most famous poet (e.g. *Tr.* 5.3). His expressions of a continuing desire for fame announce his future ambitions (*Tr.* 5.12.37). One of the major themes of Ovid's exile poetry is the commemorative power of his poetry (e.g. *Tr.* 5.14), which offers to his addressees the promise of future poetic composition. His advertisement of the utility and importance of poetry for the creation of imperial authority and even divinity (*Pont.* 4.8.55, 63–64) holds out both promise and implied threat (cf. *Tr.* 4.9.24).

In his self-fashioning of his poetic career Ovid has in mind especially the progress of Virgil's career (see Farrell 2004).[6] At *Rem.* 395–96 Ovid famously matches his poetic achievements in elegy with Virgil's in hexameter. In *Tr.* 2 the generic ascent and evolution of Virgil's career is meant to provide a parallel for Ovid's self-defense of his career trajectory (537–40):

> Phyllidis hic idem tenerosque Amaryllidis ignes
> 	bucolicis iuvenis luserat ante modis.
> nos quoque iam pridem scripto peccavimus isto:
> 	supplicium patitur non nova culpa novum;

This same man as a youth had written earlier in bucolic meter playful poetry about the tender passions of Phyllis and Amaryllis. Long ago I too erred in that kind of writing: thus a fault not new is suffering a new punishment.

Ovid draws attention to his "greater works" in his defense at *Tr.* 2.548. Famously, Ovid's claims at *Tr.* 1.7.15–20 to have burnt upon departing in exile the unrevised manuscript of the *Metamorphoses* recall Virgil's dying wish to burn the manuscript of the *Aeneid*. The professed incompleteness of the epic (14, 22, 28–30) aligns Ovid with the potent myth of Virgil's death and his poetic perfectionism.[7] As he asserts the parity of his epic with Virgil's, Ovid also reproaches Augustus for not approving of his poetry as he had Virgil's (cf. *Tr.* 2.533 *tuae … Aeneidos*). Ovid here and elsewhere creates an image of a famous poet interrupted at the height of his career, leaving his two greatest works unfinished, the *Metamorphoses* (cf. *Tr.* 3.14.19–23) and the *Fasti* (*Tr.* 2.549–552).

Although Ovid claims at *Tr.* 2.549 to have already written all 12 books of the *Fasti*, the second half seems never to have been published. In the event, the failure of the unfinished *Fasti* to reach its goal becomes "a mute reproach to the constraints set upon the poet's speech" (Feeney 1992: 19), but also suggests the possibility of completion should he return to Rome in happier circumstances. The surprising absence within the exilic corpus of any mention of Ovid's contemporary revisions of the *Fasti* after the death of Augustus may be part of his poetic strategy to underline the poetic limits imposed by his exilic condition. In Tomis Ovid is cut off from Rome and its religious festivals, disconnected from Roman time (*Tr.* 3.12.17–26;

Hinds 2005: 217). Although he complains about his inability to write timely enco-
miastic poetry (e.g. *Tr.* 4.2.57–58), he does, however, begin to compose poems
on imperial themes, such as the military triumphs of Tiberius (*Tr.* 4.2; *Pont.* 2.1, 3.4
[12 CE]) and accessions to the consulship (*Pont.* 4.4 [14 CE] and 4.9 [16 CE]). In mid-15
to late 16 Ovid began revisions to the *Fasti* from exile. He composed a new proem
for *Fasti* 1, containing a dedication to Germanicus, which replaced an exordium
to Augustus (*Tr.* 2.551), and made additions or changes elsewhere as well, mostly
in Book 1, which reflect on his exiled condition and new political circumstances
(see Syme 1978: 46; Fantham 1985; Herbert-Brown 1994: 173–212; Barchiesi 1997:
177–80; Green 2004: 15–24). The "dynamic interplay" between the "pre-exilic and
exilic strata" of the *Fasti* "serves only to enrich and to deepen the exilic nature of
Fasti's discourse" (Boyle 2007: 7), as the reader is invited to reread the whole poem
(and its incompleteness) in the new light of exile.

At *Tristia* 5.1.42 Ovid promises *carmina laetitiae … plena* ("poems full of joy")
if he is recalled from exile, poetry very different from his earlier love poetry, of
which Caesar himself will approve (43–45). Mario Labate (1987) has suggested that
the post-exilic career Ovid is mapping out might have looked similar to Statius'
occasional poetry in the *Silvae* (e.g. *Pont.* 1.2.131 *epithalamium*, 1.7.29–30 *epicedion*,
3.4.3 *triumphus*, 4.11 *consolatio*). Ovid is increasingly promising praise poetry, on
such themes as Augustus' deification (*Pont.* 4.6.17–18) and the military triumphs
of Tiberius and Germanicus (*Pont.* 2.1). In *Pont.* 3.4, a poem celebrating Tiberius'
Pannonian triumph of 12 CE, Ovid complains that his distance from Rome makes it
impossible for him to offer a timely and eyewitness account of the event (essential
to occasional poetry); he must instead rely on hearsay alone (*Pont.* 3.4.20 *oculi fama
fuere mei*, "rumor has been my eyes"). Ovid's promises depend on his presence in
Rome and constitute an important new argument for his recall.

Pont. 4.8 contains a petition to Germanicus that promises future commemora-
tion in Ovid's poetry if he is removed from Tomis. This promise was to be ful-
filled initially in his revisions from exile to *Fasti* 1, but in supporting his claim of
poetry's power to bestow immortality, Ovid cites the Trojan and Theban epic cycles
(51–54), and the *Metamorphoses*, evoked once again through verbal echoing of its
opening cosmogony (57–60):

> sic <u>Chaos</u> ex illa <u>naturae</u> <u>mole</u> prioris
>   <u>digestum</u> partes scimus habere suas; (cf. *Met.* 1.6–7)
> sic <u>adfectantes</u> <u>caelestia</u> <u>regna</u> <u>Gigantas</u> (cf. *Met.* 1.152)
>   ad Styga nimbifero vindicis igne datos

Thus [from poetry] we know that Chaos, separated from that mass of prior
nature, has its proper divisions, by this that the Giants aiming at heavenly rule
were hurled to the Styx by the cloud-bearing fire of the avenger.

The evocation of the cosmogonic temporal sequence of the *Metamorphoses* contin-
ues in the mention of the apotheoses of Liber, Hercules, and Caesar in the following
lines (61–64), recalling the series of apotheoses in the *Metamorphoses* leading up to

that of Caesar at the end of the epic (15.746–85). Ovid hereby reminds Germanicus that he has indeed created gods before (*Pont.* 4.8.55 *di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt*, "even the gods, if it is permissible to say this, are created by poetry").

At *Pont.* 4.8.49–51 Ovid echoes Horace's famous claims that the immortality of poetry outlasts material structures (*C.* 3.30.1–5, *C.* 4.8). These allusions serve to recall Horace's importance for the poetics of Ovid's exile poetry and also his career as a "paradigmatically successful and imperially favored poet" (Oliensis 2004: 307).[8] After writing his *Epistles*, Horace turned to imperial themes in the fourth book of *Odes*. Earlier in *Tr.* 4.8 Ovid had used Horatian imagery and language to contrast his miserable old age in exile with the ideals of poetic retirement expressed in Horace's *Epistles* 1 (*Tr.* 4.8.19–28; 24 ∼ *Epist.* 1.1.2). Ovid thereby suggests both that he deserves an honorable retirement, no less than Horace, and that, as Horace did, he too could turn to the composition of encomiastic poetry.

Finally, the tragic poetical and political career of the love poet and prefect Cornelius Gallus, who fell from Augustus' favor and was forced to commit suicide, provided Ovid with a significant personal and poetical negative career paradigm.[9] In a number of poems Ovid encourages an analogy between the disruption of his poetic career and Gallus' tragic end. Barchiesi and Hardie suggest that "*Tristia* 2 is implicitly structured as a supplement to Gallus' career, an opportunity for a victimized elegiac poet to talk back" (2010: 69). In *Tr.* 4.9, which contains a threat of poetic attack against an enemy (16 *Pierides vires et sua tela dabunt*, "the Muses will provide strength and their own weapons"), Ovid forcefully asserts the universal fame and immortality of his poetry in terms recognizably Gallan (20–22; Cairns 2006: 98):

> quodque querar notum, qua patet <u>orbis,</u> erit.
> ibit ad <u>occasum</u> quicquid dicemus ab <u>ortu,</u>
> testis et <u>Hesperiae</u> vocis <u>Eous</u> erit.

My complaint shall be known wherever the world extends. Whatever I say shall proceed from the rising sun to its setting, and the East shall be a witness to the voice of the West.

This allusive reminder of the survival of Gallus' works supports Ovid's perhaps increasingly desperate claims for the ultimate autonomy of poetry: *Tr.* 3.7.47–48 *ingenio tamen ipse meo comitorque fruorque: / Caesar in hoc potuit iuris habere nihil*, "my genius is my companion and my resource: Caesar has not been able to have any jurisdiction over that." While Ovid's exilic self-construction of his poetic career includes its successful resumption upon his recall, unfortunately, the emperors did not prove to be good readers of his poetry.

Notes

1   Although he did, in fact, also compose the elegiac invectives of the *Ibis,* make revisions to the *Fasti,* and perhaps wrote *Heroides* 16–21.

2   Ovid claims that Augustus is praised in all of his poetry at *Pont.* 1.1.27–28; cf. *Tr.* 1.2.101–4.
3   On the analogy of the declining quality of Ovid's poetic corpus and his own physical state, see for example *Tr.* 4.6.39–44, 5.13.3 *aeger enim traxi contagia corpore mentis*; Newlands (1997).
4   On the mythologizing of Ovid's exile, see Broege (1972), Claassen (1988; 2001: 44–57), Viarre (1988), Videau-Delibes (1991: 19–178), Davisson (1993), McGowan (2009: *passim*).
5   On the possibility of post-exilic revision of this section (and other passages) of the *Met.*, see Kenney (1982: 444, n. 1).
6   On the numerous allusions to Virgil throughout the exilic works, see Hinds (1985) on *Tr.* 1.1, Williams (1994: *passim*), and Putnam (2010).
7   Hardie and Moore (2010), Tissol (2005). Cf. *Tr.* 2.38, 3.14.20.
8   Horatian influence is pervasive in the exile poetry. See for example Hardie (2002a: 297–99), Ingleheart (2009).
9   *Tr.* 2.445–46 *non fuit opprobrio celebrasse Lycorida Gallo, / sed linguam nimio non tenuisse mero*, "Gallus was not reproached for celebrating Lycoris, but for not holding his tongue after too much wine." Ovid explicitly distances himself from Gallus' crime at *Tr.* 3.3.47–48 *non aliquid dixi*, "I didn't say anything."

Further Reading

Casali (1997) argues that Ovid urges the reader to interpret in his exile poetry a climate of fear under the tyranny of Augustus. Gaertner (2007b) discusses Ovid's style in the exile poetry and his indebtedness to ancient epistolographic conventions. Habinek (1998) has a chapter that reads Ovid's exile poetry as a colonizing narrative, which valorizes legitimacy of Roman imperialism from its margins. Holzberg (2002) in one chapter traces thematic patterns in the exile poems and suggests that Ovid, inspired by the Greek epistolary novel, constructs an exilic "plot." Luck (1977) is the only commentary on all of the *Tristia*.

Oliensis (1997) suggests that Ovid's highly advertised suppression of the names of the addressees of the *Tristia* is meant to reflect the aura of paranoia and suspicion prevalent in Augustan Rome.

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Modeling Reception
in *Metamorphoses*
Ovid's Epic Cyclops

Andrew Feldherr

Ovid's superlative influence on Western artistic production is not to be explained only by the rich diversity of stories his *Metamorphoses* contains. Rather, his demonstration that the telling matters as much as the tale, and his advertisement of the resources of genius to appropriate even well-known subject matter and stamp it with the marks of a distinctive authorial personality, make him the poet of reception par excellence, a perpetual model and inspiration for artists asserting the capacities of the "individual talent" against the power of tradition. Yet his championing of the processes of literary transformation as a medium for the perpetuation of an individual poetic voice becomes all the more eloquent and poignant because he also uses the theme of reception to explore the many constraints on the poet's ability to free himself from the limits of time and material existence.

This obsessive attempt to control his fame and reception is demonstrated early in his career through the figure of Ulysses in the *Ars Amatoria* who, among the countless paradigmatic narrators to be found in his works, best captures this aspect of Ovidian poetics (e.g. Galinsky 1975: 4–5). As teacher of the arts of love, Ovid asserts the power of representation against material reality through the example of how Ulysses used to enchant the sea goddess Calypso by retelling the fall of Troy in continually new ways (*AA* 2.123–44). Like Scheherazade, the storyteller has a great deal at stake in maintaining an erotic enchantment through narrative. But while the situation in the *Arabian Nights* highlights the vulnerability of the princess, Ovid himself reinvents Ulysses' situation to put his narrator in charge. Homer's Odysseus was not so much the male seducer as the mortal prisoner of an all-powerful divinity, but in the *Ars* his eloquence gives him the ability to "torture" the sea goddess with love. And if Scheherazade had the burden of inventing a new tale every night, Ulysses faces the greater challenge of preserving his power over Calypso by keeping her wanting to hear the same story over and over, possibly the best known story in

ancient literature. The more we consider Ulysses' situation, the more constrained and conditioned the power of the author appears.

We can further diagnose three oppositional forces that limit the narrator's Orpheus-like mastery: the traditional story itself, the force of matter over language—when Ulysses draws a diagram on the beach of Troy and the Greek encampment, the waves wash it away (2.139–40)—and finally the material conditions of the narrative act, that is, the fact that storytelling itself exists in time and requires physical means, whether visual or vocal, and demands the attention and interpretation of a specific audience. The narrator's comment on this scene between Ulysses and Calypso—*ergo age, fallaci timide confide figurae, / quisquis es, aut aliquid corpore pluris habe*, "therefore, whoever you are, be wary of trusting a deceptive appearance (*figurae*), or have something of greater worth than the physical body" (*AA* 2.143–44)—asserts the importance of eloquence over bodily attributes; however, because *figura* can refer both to fleeting physical beauty and to the literary figures of eloquence itself—as well as the very drawings the waves have just obliterated—the same words also recall the fragility of the artist's deceptively incorporeal figures.

Both the language and the issues raised in this passage recur at the climax of Ovid's "greater work," the *Metamorphoses*, as the poet predicts his own transcendence of mortal limits precisely through an unending process of reception (15.871–79):

> Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
> nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
> cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
> ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi:
> parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
> astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum,
> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,
> siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.

Now I have completed a work which neither Jupiter's anger, nor fire, nor the sword, nor devouring time will be able to wipe out. Whenever it wishes let that day, which has rights only over this body, end the span of my uncertain life: despite that I will be borne, eternal, above the lofty stars, with the better part of myself, and my name will be indestructible. Where Roman power stretches over conquered lands, I shall be read by the voice of the people, and by reputation/speech I shall live throughout all ages, if the presages of prophets have any truth.

As in the erotic triumph of eloquence over *figura (AA* 2.143), Ovid's posthumous survival resolves itself into the separation from the body, but here of a self that seems to evade simple definition. A first reading of line 875 suggests that the poet

is skimming above the "deep" sea, like a bird perhaps, but when the enjambed *astra* in the next line puts him above the "high" stars, this new transformation takes him upward toward divinity. In either case the transformation appears as a miraculous one, depending on a sleight of hand by which words become the things they describe, just as the lines Ulysses draws on the sand become "walls." No reader could believe that Ovid actually had become a bird or a god. Ovid here wants to escape from the repetitive forces of materiality—the ones that destroy every other body—and this makes the meaning of his words all the more unbelievable. At one level, of course, the entire passage can be read as a kind of riddle, to be "solved" by reconciling the miraculous with the everyday: "How does a poet become immortal? By being read." Yet the language also insists that this mundane mechanism of repetition really is immortality, that Ovid becomes present every time the poem is read, so again the demand he places on his readers, his seduction and even possession of them, remains undiminished. Again too, for Ovid to become himself means the supersession of another poetic voice, especially that of Horace, who provides the most immediate model for Ovid's claims here (*Odes* 3.30; see esp. Hardie 2002b: 94–97). Ovid's words can indeed make Horace seem "dead": Horace's poetry is a "tomb" (*monumentum*, 3.30.1) not a self, and his claim "not to perish entirely" seems to rely more on his being praised (*laus*, 3.30.8) than reanimated. Ovid's *fama* glances back in the direction of *laus*, but then turns into speech. As Ovid's imitation at once "buries" Horace, though, too powerful a recollection of the earlier poet retranslates Ovid's apotheosis into his own funerary idiom.

Both passages together reveal that the Ovidian claim to live through his reception, for all its apparent confidence that language and speech can soar free of time, appears simultaneously as an effortful and unending negotiation: a negotiation with the poetic tradition; a negotiation with the materiality of his poetry, both in the sense of its physical presence as text and the real referents that can always expose the falsity of words; above all, it is a negotiation with his audience, who ultimately decide whether his words become him, and who must, like Calypso, keep asking questions to the end.

The facts about reception highlighted so far are anything but unique to Ovid. Every author's work survives by the grace of its readers' judgments, and their interpretations depend in turn upon a knowledge of the literary traditions within which that work positions itself. But as Barchiesi and Hardie have pointed out (2010), Ovid is unique in that no other Roman author so insistently writes his signature into every one of his works. The context of the *Metamorphoses* gives a special significance and importance to Hinds' description of textual reception and transformation as a continual process of simultaneous comparison and contrast between the new work and the old (1998: esp. 99–124). Not only is this self-evidently a poem about change, but the result of each change is to present a new problem of interpretation that involves precisely the comparison and contrast of new and old. Working out whether Daphne's transformation into a laurel tree is a triumph or a tragedy, to take a programmatic early example, depends on how one perceives the relationship

between the tree and the nymph she was before. Ovid himself in a later poem (*Tr.* 1.7) will figure the epic as his own image, and such a claim connects with the imagery of the epilogue, where his work is not a monument but a "self." This makes the hermeneutics of metamorphosis more than a metaphor for the process of reading: the text itself becomes an object, the product of change, that may or may not also manifest the presence of its author. So too the process of metamorphosis also often transforms the individual to the generic: Daphne becomes *a* laurel tree and becomes the name of the species. Ancient conceptions of animals tended to deny individual qualities to animals, so that turning into a wolf was equivalent to turning into any or all wolves (Solodow 1988: 191). The thematic and poetic interests of this poem thus link a text's ability to define its tradition particularly closely with the problems of its materiality and to the preservation of the author as an historical individual. The poem's becoming Ovid at once depends on its physical survival, which alone involves a violation of the principle that every thing that exists in material form is precisely subject to time, but also on its being more than what it literally is, just as a tree that is just a tree is not Daphne.

There are many historical reasons why this longest and most complex of Ovid's works, completed or—as Ovid would himself tendentiously claim as if to revise his own epilogue—abandoned unfinished in 8 CE (cf. *Met.* 15.871 *exegi*, "I have completed"), might have been preoccupied with the issues of transmission, reception, and survival (*Tr.* 1.7; see Hinds 1985: 21–27). Whether or not Ovid anticipated the forced exile that would transform his own life, or whether the poem as we have it was actually revised afterwards, Ovid's own later references to the work cast the *Metamorphoses*, still present in Rome after its author's banishment, as a stand-in for the poet, and allow the characters within it—Actaeon, for instance, or Arachne—momentarily to assume the likeness of Ovid. Beyond the author's personal experiences, the empire too was inevitably approaching a momentous transformation, as the *princeps* whose assumption of power had heralded an "empire without end," and whose presence was itself conveyed throughout the empire by an unprecedentedly sophisticated use of images, approached his own death (Hardie 1997).

Whatever external contexts shape Ovid's interests in the poetics of transformation and survival, one aspect of the poem's form adds a new dimension to the topic, and this was Ovid's decision for the first and only time in his career to adopt the dactylic hexameter appropriate to the genre of epic poetry. Every other surviving work of Ovid was written in elegiac couplets, a meter closely associated with both erotic poetry and the poetry of lamentation, a link Ovid would activate after exile in his *Tristia*, making it even plainer that this was the mode that conveyed the distinctive voice of Ovid—aptly, for these are above all first-person forms. Of course, the lover of the *Amores*, the preceptor in the *Ars Amatoria*, and even the exiled poet of the *Tristia*, are *personae* not to be casually identified with the historical Ovid, or casually distinguished from him, but in all of these genres, the speaker is above all telling his own story. In writing epic, Ovid is in the position of his own Ulysses,

forced to retell the same stories differently, but with the additional challenge that while Ulysses could narrate his own adventures, Ovid does not feature as an actor in the stories he reports. Indeed he even cedes the role of narrator to countless characters, which continually raises the problem of identifying a unifying voice behind all these remote and varied speakers (Barchiesi 1989: 2002). Whenever Ovid becomes merely a repertory of narrative material, one of the risks epic poses to the survival of his poetic identity is fulfilled.

A key passage from the *Metamorphoses* specifically highlights the tensions in the epic genre that make it the quintessential manifestation of Ovidian anxieties about the power of speech, namely the allegorical description of *Fama* in 12.39–63. The centrality of *fama* to Ovidian reception will emerge unmistakably in the poem's epilogue, where *fama* becomes the mechanism through which Ovid will "live" (15.878). The very name *Fama* pulls in two directions: on the one hand, her personification draws on a number of conventional markers of the epic genre. Thus she is not any speech (the root meaning of her name), but she is also just "speech," or indeed "rumor," one of the most unreliable and ephemeral communicative media. As Zumwalt (1977) has argued, the first appearance of *Fama* occurs at the point in the narrative when the Greek expedition sets out for Troy, thus heralding a new intensification of the poem's epic properties as it reaches the narrative material of the epic cycle, of Homer, and of Virgil. This will be the beginning of the sequence of deaths for which the undying "fame" bestowed by epic offers compensation. Yet the fall of Troy also marked the moment when historical narrative, with its emphasis on reporting the truth of what actually happened, becomes available as an alternative to myth (Feeney 2007: esp. 81–82). *Fama*'s significance in a historiographic context, where the word defines the unreliable oral tradition that opposes the solid evidence of autopsy, thus helps to articulate two opposing conceptions of speech corresponding to the narratological fork in the road we are approaching and to the "lies mixed with truth" (12.84) that echo in her house. It balances history, a mode of narrative that measures itself against reality, against epic, a poetic form that begins when real people die. Indeed *Fama* literally becomes the voice of the narrative at this moment, for it is she who "made known" (*fecerat … notum*, 12.64) that the Greeks had arrived at Troy. Since there is no corresponding ending point to what she reports, *Fama* becomes at once the source and the voice of Ovid's poem from here on, a fact that invites the reader simultaneously to measure the truth criterion of history against the aim of glorification that motivates epic and to locate Ovid's narrative within the figurative murmur of competitive, and repetitive, voices that make up *Fama*.

The problem of repetition has a corresponding effect on *Fama*'s capacity to fulfill epic's goal of exalting her subjects. Each new narrator, again like Ulysses, adds something to the received account, swelling and renewing the sound, and also historicizing epic in the sense that it allows the story to change over time (indeed the image of *Fama*'s house is specifically modeled on the palace of a contemporary Roman aristocrat with its throng of place-seeking clients and its

rumormongering). But as a result, none of the stories stands out distinctively; rather they are subsumed, via *Fama*'s echo chamber of repeated voices, into a noise like the sea (which, we may recall, also obliterates *nomina* in Ulysses' drawing), or like thunder (12.50–52), another conventional image for epic poetry (Call. *Aet.* fr. 1.20). Correspondingly, *Fama* moves further and further away from the real events she describes, not only in time but in accuracy, for the consequence of all these new additions is to increase the "measure of falsehood" (12.57).

Let me turn now to one episode that illustrates the mutual transformation of epic and its Ovidian author, namely, the treatment of Polyphemus in Books 13 and 14. In a number of ways, this episode foregrounds generic issues and the problems of creativity and repetition germane to reception. First, the material not only features in the oldest strand of epic poetry, the Homeric *Odyssey*, but was also frequently readapted by later poets, especially by Virgil. Thus it provides an ideal locus for considering epic as a whole, as a long process of transmission, while also emphasizing the particular place Ovid comes to assume in it as the immediate successor of Virgil. Second, as has been well studied, the Polyphemus story in particular juxtaposes epic with a number of other poetic forms: Polyphemus the shepherd recalls the traditions of pastoral, and Polyphemus as a would-be seducer owes much to the particularly Ovidian genre of elegy (see esp. Farrell 1992; Barchiesi 2006). My discussion will highlight three issues that form aspects of Ovid's generic metamorphosis and simultaneously analyze how literature constructs a presence in history: the emergence of a recognizably authorial voice, the rhetorical function of epic as praise, and, finally, the representation of apotheosis.

Like the crowd in *Fama*'s cave, Ovid must here make his voice heard over countless other versions of the story; indeed the theme of repetition emerges, repeatedly, in the "Little *Aeneid*" of Books 13 and 14. While the narrative as a whole follows Aeneas' unidirectional progress toward Italy, the story of the *Aeneid*, the bulk of Ovid's treatment centers on Polyphemus and Circe, both programmatically excluded from Virgil's itinerary. But the point of this restoration is not only to reintroduce fabulous, mythical elements—the *Metamorphoses*' speciality—into Aeneas' progress toward Roman history. Ovid alludes so insistently to Virgil when Virgil in turn alludes to Homer. An awareness of this multiple intertextual echo makes the sameness of the story stand out over its individual treatments. Equally significantly, as Papaioannou (2005: 92–95) argues, Ovid stresses the role of reported speech in the presentation of the Cyclops. His two appearances in the poem are examples of indirect narration: Galatea tells of his jealous murder of Acis (13.750–897), and Achaemenides describes the slaughter of Ulysses' companions (14.167–222). The "hearsay" quality of both stories, appropriate to a figure whose name recalls not only *Fama*, as Papaioannou points out, but specifically the multiplicity of Ovid's *Fama* (POLY-PHEMus),[1] reminds the reader that Achaemenides, repeating the story told in the *Aeneid*—by Achaemenides, himself—figures Virgil's own retelling of a story from Homer. And indeed Homer himself tells the story of both Polyphemus and Circe only in the reported

narrative of Odysseus. Both monsters literally have their literary origins only in speech.

But the repetition that marks these characters is not only intertextual. Within Ovid's poem too a pattern of echoes develops that does full justice to the circularity implied by the names of both Circe and the Cyclops. Circe, this transformer of men, remains, like the gods in Minerva's tapestry, always herself. A jealous and predatory goddess already in the *Odyssey*, she first turns up in Ovid's poem using bestial metamorphosis as punishment for a rival in Glaucus' story of her revenge on Scylla (14.1–67), and does the same with a little variation in the story of Picus, told by Macareus (14.308–440). The Cyclops who destroys Acis anticipates the bloodthirsty rage Achaemenides will describe after he loses his *lumen* in reality rather than metaphor (13.775 ~ 14.189). Both figures become points to which the narrative continually returns, and each return finds them replaying the same role, although succeeding speakers, both within the poem and in the earlier epics, tell their stories from contrasting perspectives.

Thus the different voices in the narrative, though they may lack a self-conscious awareness of other versions of the story, bear a close relationship to that of their epic author, and not just because they face an analogous problem of making their Polyphemus stand out over others. It is precisely the inclusion of strongly contrasting perspectives that makes the *Metamorphoses'* treatment of this material distinctive. Ovid therefore becomes recognizable simultaneously as and through these internal characters. And this has a further consequence, for, as we have seen, the repetitive aspects can be thought of as products of different tellings, against which each new telling competes, or of the essential sameness of the narrative figures themselves. Thus it emerges both as a literary competition with Homer, and as an intratextual competition with Polyphemus and Circe themselves. (So we have seen in the case of Ulysses that the very identity of the basic story he has to tell provides the measure of his eloquence.) An Achaemenides or a Macareus highlights this competition between narrator and narrative subject because each has himself done battle with Polyphemus and Circe. And if we remember that those monsters themselves possess the power to transform—Polyphemus through reductive mastication and also in indirectly causing the transformation of Acis—we can see yet a new figure of the Ovidian author of *Metamorphoses* inscribed also in the story within the story, reminding us of the endlessly reiterated struggle between narrative "inside" and textual "outside."

Another aspect of the reciprocal transformation of author and text emerges when we consider how Ovid stages the reception of Virgil in his poem.[2] Ovid's use of Virgilian intertexts makes clear that Ovid is not merely citing Virgil as a stage in the transmission of epic, but also epic as a stage in the literary development of Virgil. Ovid's Little *Aeneid* also tracks his predecessor's poetic career by sketching its beginning and ending. Already, at his first appearance in the *Aeneid*, Polyphemus is described as a shepherd (*pastor*) and his sheep are the one pleasure that provides a consolation (*solamen*) for his loss (*Aen.* 3.657; see Thomas 1996: 240–43).

Polyphemus quite literally enters Virgilian epic by way of the *Eclogues*, where shepherds programmatically seek consolation for the losses of love. Ovid's first Polyphemus emerges from the same context. By a typically Ovidian prolepsis he has become the lovesick shepherd to whom his Virgilian self is initially compared. Ovid also transparently evokes Virgil's own "Second Eclogue" when his Cyclops describes the satisfaction he takes at seeing his image in the sea (13.841–42). Virgil had himself retrospectively altered this reflexive moment by making the "not so *informis*" Corydon (*Ecl*. 2.25) appear as an upgrading of the *informis Polyphemus* described at *Aen*. 3.658. But now the true face has returned to the mirror (here transformed perhaps by the generic associations of the sea into an "epic" mirror), and the reflection refigures its original source, Polyphemus.

Having cited the "Second Eclogue" first, Ovid performs another literary regression when he cites the "First Eclogue" second, at the point where the Cyclops returns to the poem in the speech of Achaemenides (14.154–222). Adding a second internal narrator, Macareus, to narrate Odyssean material within the main narrative was a signal Ovidian innovation to compete with Virgil's invention of Achaemenides. This doubling alone creates a kind of bucolic effect recalling how pastoral singers compete to describe their experiences among the flocks from highly original perspectives (an amoebeic metadiegesis?): Achaemenides has been left behind in a nightmare world of anti-pastoral where shepherds rend their guests by night; Macareus too has participated in herding—as a member of the herd (*pecoris pars una*, 14.288). More precisely, the scene offers an epic revisitation of the situation of the "First Eclogue." The Greek remainer, AchaeMENides (Paschalis 1997: 140), combines the experiences of Tityrus: he has been left behind and also been saved by a figure worthy of veneration. Though his own *tegmen* has been cleared of rustic brambles (14.166 ∼ *Ecl*. 1.1, via *Aen*. 3.594), like his prototype he causes amazement to his companion (14.162 ∼ *Ecl*. 1.11), and his first words are an expression of gratitude for the divine savior who has rescued him (14.162–63 *quis te casusve deusve / servat* ∼ *Ecl*. 1.6). Of course, Achaemenides has been rescued from pastoral rather than by pastoral, and this story of his generic elevation acquires an interesting ambiguity precisely when it is narrativized through the lens of epic. On the one hand, the return to the role of grateful Tityrus, instead of being forced to relive the *Odyssey*, makes the "First Eclogue" an appropriate ending for this epic flashback. On the other, it is specifically via the hero of the *Aeneid*, or rather through the epic succession, from Homer to Virgil to Ovid, that Achaemenides does more than remain a Greek, that he becomes Macareus ("blessed"; Hinds 1998: 112, n. 22). Specifically, what this figure owes his savior is not that he has stayed in the same place but that he has moved forward. And this salvation takes a form that anticipates the ultimate *telos* of epic in Ovid's version, the escape from death. He will have a tomb, not a mere belly, and thus the chance to live, in the Ennian sense, in the mouths of men (*ROL* 1.402), rather than dying in the mouth of Polyphemus (14.174). His *Fama* becomes an escape from this creature of repetitive *Fama*, a

comment on the literary reception and survival of Virgil's text and a prefiguration
of Ovid's own.

Whether we put pastoral at the beginning or the end of Achaemenides' story
matters when we map it not only against the succession from epic to epic, but also
against the career of Virgil himself. The speaker who becomes "his own man," *iam
suus*, in Ovid's hands, is one who from the beginning could be easily read as a figure
for his author, Virgil, whom he resembles in retelling Homeric material in a new
voice (Hinds 1998: 113–14). Perhaps *iam suus* measures Achaemenides' progress
toward acquiring his own identity as a character rather than simply continuing as
what he surely must have been, whether as Tityrus or Achaemenides, a distinc-
tive creation of Virgil. But by contrast, the bucolicization of Achaemenides makes
the biographical presence of his original author very strongly felt and raises ques-
tions about how to understand Virgil's progression through the genres. Infusing
the epic Achaemenides with the characteristics of the more overtly autobiograph-
ical Tityrus connects the praise of Aeneas within Virgil's epic with the praise of
Augustus voiced through Tityrus' celebration of the god who saved him. Perhaps
this bucolic intrusion allows us to return the epic Virgil to his bucolic self and recog-
nize the Alexandrian poet of *recusatio* in the author of panegyric epic. Or perhaps
it exposes the entire epic as a personal gesture of payback on the part of a client
beholden to a patron. However we decide to read it, Ovid's ventriloquism anchors
literary fiction in the historical realities of its time and the person of an author at
least as much as in a depersonalized tradition of literary echoes.

Praise and blame, specifically the capacity of epic as rhetoric to exalt its celebrant,
also becomes a theme in Achaemenides' speech. His own story marks his progress
between the power of two strikingly juxtaposed figures, Aeneas and Polyphemus.
These form the "before" and "after" of his narrative, the one bringing the prospect
of death, the other a literal and figurative escape from death. So too in the cos-
mic hierarchy, the flesh-eating Polyphemus seems more beast than man, while the
savior Aeneas resembles the god he will become at the end of his own narrative.
Looking back to the Cyclops' earlier appearance in Galatea's narrative, his qual-
ities as bad host, solitary forest dweller, and *contemptor* of the gods make him a
carefully calibrated antithesis to the receptive, urban, and above all *pius* Aeneas.
However, if Achaemenides' narrative accentuates the distinction between these
two figures, Galatea's unwittingly suggests a similarity between the Cyclops and
the hero that raises questions about the kind of progress Ovid constructs epic as
fashioning. Her Polyphemus loves a nymph who loves another. This may initially
strike us as "Ovidianizing" the *Aeneid*, by making an essentially erotic plot respon-
sible for an epic event. But the oldest story in the world is also a plausible candidate
for being the essential narrative that all epic poetry repeats over and over. Here
rivalry in love becomes the signature narrative of Galatea, and of Scylla, and of
Macareus' Circe, but it is also the story of the *Aeneid* (Aeneas–Lavinia–Turnus),
not to speak of the *Iliad* (Agamemnon–Briseis–Achilles, Menelaus–Helen–Paris)
and the *Odyssey* (suitors–Penelope–Odysseus). Hence the much-discussed simile

comparing Polyphemus in his love for Galatea to a "bull raging when his cow is taken away, unable to stand still and wandering the forests and mountain pastures" (13.871–72). This simile specifically recalls another famous Virgilian transference, as Virgil turns a literal description in the *Georgics* into a simile describing the final battle between Aeneas and Turnus (*Aen.* 12.715–22 ∼ *Geo.* 3.219–23). Not only does the mere act of comparison between the two texts expose a potential similarity between Polyphemus and Aeneas; it also recalls the relative place of each on the progression that leads from beasts to gods, a progression which the very process of metamorphosis continually folds back upon itself in Ovid's poem. By this measure as well, Polyphemus becomes a powerful symbol of regression.

Ovid's appropriation of the simile also draws attention to the process of comparison itself. Virgil's simile in the *Aeneid* simultaneously bestializes his hero and also raises questions about the relationship between the figurative and the literal. The bull in the *Georgics* is a bull, but Aeneas, from an optimistic perspective, is merely like a bull. Ovid's simile, however, strikingly underlines the likeness of tenor and vehicle—making the essential difference implied by the figure harder to maintain. The bull in Ovid's simile is *furibundus*, and the corresponding adjective describing Polyphemus, *ferus* (13.873), highlights the "wild" aspect of his rage. The forests and upland pastures where the bull wanders are also the stomping ground of Polyphemus as a shepherd. Transferring the simile used of Aeneas back to this more animal figure, then, centripetally pulls the epic comparands toward the bestial. Virgil's comparison of Aeneas to a bull is now mediated through a second comparison to a figure (Polyphemus) whose identity with the bull provides a model for reading likeness rather than difference in the simile.

Indeed comparison becomes both the essential mode of describing Polyphemus and his own characteristic means of expression. Like Achaemenides, Galatea treats Polyphemus as one of a pair of figures. She begins by asking whether she loves Acis more than she hates Polyphemus (13.755–56), a rhetorical question indeed for this comparison of the two figures has generic implications as well: is her speech an exaltation of Acis, who is literally magnified at its conclusion (*maior*, 13.896), or invective against the Cyclops? Polyphemus himself is literally a creature of *Fama* in his almost tragic attempt to find words in which both to praise and blame his beloved Galatea. In both cases he can only resort to an endless series of comparisons: whiter than the petals of the privet, *that same* Galatea is nevertheless more savage than untamed heifers (13.789–807), an image that links Polyphemus' problems of comparison with the comparison Galatea uses of him, as a bull deprived of his cow. Polyphemus' authorial face, his competence as an Ovidian narrator describing the same thing differently, becomes as uncertain as the "likeness" of Galatea, both to the purportedly identical self that emerges from Polyphemus' speech and to any of the myriad physical objects to which she is compared. (This parallelism or confusion between the author and the subject of his narrative—what makes the exiled Ovid "present" in the stories he tells—emerges also from the paradox that the "author" describing Galatea is himself a character in a story Galatea herself narrates.)

As in the simile borrowed from the *Aeneid*, a nexus of interpretative questions opens out that renders the same figure, Galatea, Polyphemus, Aeneas, subject to praise and blame, simultaneously accentuating how both processes rely on an open-ended comparison of the literal and the figurative. In the *Aeneid*, such comparisons not only affect the characters within the narrative but also form an important part of how the poem defines the world around it. The poem praises Augustus, to the extent that it does praise Augustus, largely through analogy, leaving it up to the reader to perceive the likeness or difference between the *princeps* and the mythical figure of Aeneas, or conversely, "bad guys" like Cacus, whom Ovid's own blood-thirsty herdsman also recalls. By amplifying these rhetorical functions while also blurring the distinction between praise and blame, Ovid's rewriting of the *Aeneid* profoundly transforms its model.

The apogee of transformation in Ovid's poem, and its own end, lies in apotheosis. The Polyphemus episode suggests the very human narrative of the love triangle as "the same story" epic tells over and over again. This plot at once highlights the presence of the text's human author Ovid, whose own literary biography begins with elegy, and, as we saw with Polyphemus' animal passion for Galatea, reduces characters' motives to biological essentials. But perhaps the repetitive element that becomes even more prominent as the epic moves to its close should be seen as apotheosis; Aeneas, Romulus, and Caesar all become gods, with similar transformations intimated for Augustus and, in what we have already recognized as an ambiguously figurative sense, for Ovid himself. Even Acis, though a sea god, becomes celestial, at least to the extent of turning blue (*caerulus*, 13.895).

How does an emphasis on apotheosis as opposed to erotic rivalry change the way in which Ovid's poem invites its readers to position the work in relation to its epic predecessors? Again there are several alternatives. On the one hand, this ending marks the ultimate move into fantasy, as historic figures become divinities who seem most at home in the poem's early pages. And that apotheosis befalls characters who become progressively more historical as we approach the present only highlights its miraculous aspect. In generic terms as well, apotheosis, though an important and perhaps innovatory feature of Ennius' *Annales* (Feeney 1991: 122–23), marks a new departure in the line extending from Homer to Virgil: Homer's heroes are emphatically mortal, and while the *Aeneid* alludes to the divinization of Aeneas, its own narrative stops tragically short of such a transformation. By this reading, Ovid's triumphant progression to heaven through the power of words marks a similarly transcendent new step for epic which finally brings it to its ultimate goal. But from another perspective, apotheosis is above all an historical phenomenon; Augustus, not Ovid, had made Caesar a god, and his apotheosis, as Ovid presents it, ultimately says more about the emperor's status than his adopted father's (15.760; see Feeney 1991: 210–24). Here what Ovid exposes is not the transcendent potential of epic but the all too human motives behind it, and rather than completing the mission of epic poetry, he brings the whole house of *Fama* crashing down around him. Within the poem,

this alternative view of even apotheosis as anything but miraculous emerges again from the process of comparison prompted by a metamorphosis, whose potential to deflate the apotheoses that follow by reducing them to likeness to itself is associated appropriately with "cyclic" epic. The last episode just before the wanderings of Aeneas is the death of Memnon. Memnon's divine mother, Aurora, begs Jupiter to give her son "some honor in compensation for death" (13.598). This episode recounted in the cyclic *Aethiopis* provides, as Slatkin (1992: 22–27) argues, the mythic prototype for the series of divine parents asking favors for their sons that runs throughout the epic tradition, via Ennius' Mars at the beginning of the *Annales* and Virgil's Venus at the end of the middle of the *Aeneid*, to culminate in the deification of Julius Caesar at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. Originally, that honor had been immortality, but in a nod both to the mortal hero of Homeric epic, or for the greater glory of Aeneas, or to signal the metamorphic focus of this poem, the "honor in compensation for death" here becomes a transformation. Nevertheless, in practical as much as literary terms Memnon's end closely anticipates an imperial funeral, as a bird flies forth from his tomb, just as the sight of a winged soul was meant to confirm that the deceased emperor had become a god (Beard and Henderson 1998). Here, however, the bird is just a bird, a *vera volucris* (13.607), and a very nasty little bird at that. Like cyclic epic, it produces immediately a multitude of imitations, all circling (*lustrant*, 13.607) around the tomb before beginning their own little *Iliads*, or perhaps civil wars, by rending each other with their hooked claws. They have undergone a gender change too and are female (*sorores*, 13.608), a further undercutting of male heroic commemoration. Is this all there is to apotheosis, or is it only the beginning?

One essential aspect of Ovidian reception derives from the familiar and very persuasive claim that his great gift to the West was to free mythical narrative from its cultural moorings, making it "pure story." But Ovid also appears as a poet of parody who exposes literary artifice, especially the encomiastic language of empire, reminding us that words are just words. What the *Metamorphoses* has to teach us about its poet's legacy is the reciprocity of these two faces of his poetics. Ovid perpetually yokes the capacities of fiction to surpass reality with a reminder of the real conditions in which poetic fictions are produced. The last word about Ovid's fame should go again to *Fama*, not the fantastical allegory of Book 12, but *libera fama* (15.853) at the poem's conclusion. Ovid uses this phrase to define the historically grounded speech of his contemporaries, as they compare Augustus to his father (15.852–60). This expressly forbidden comparison grows into a network of further comparisons which travel backwards, precisely along the lines of epic, via Achilles and Agamemnon, to the beginnings of the poetic cosmos. Ovidian *fama* here defines a process of imagination and comparison that seems to go beyond, indeed to defy, its specific historical prompts. But how flattering these comparisons are, or, alternatively, how such praise can ever be the mark of a free man (*liber*), are questions the poet and his readers can never escape. By linking the perpetual *fama* (878) he wishes for his poetry to the *libera fama* of Roman civic discourse,

Ovid ultimately recognizes that how his work will be transmitted and received lies beyond his narrative control.

Notes

1   On the etymological significance of the name in the Greek tradition and in Virgil, see Paschalis (1997: 135–36).
2   Hinds (1998: 99–122) offers a now classic analysis of how Ovid's *Aeneid* transforms our reception of Virgil's poem. My emphasis here will be on the conception of the Virgilian author that emerges from the passage. On Ovid's use of Virgil's career as a model, see Farrell (2004) and Putnam (2010).

Further Reading

For an overview of Ovidian poetics, with a particular focus on problems of representation and reception history: Hardie (2002b). The best introduction to intertextuality: Hinds (1998). For the unities of Ovid's own career: Tarrant (2002) and Barchiesi and Hardie (2010); on *Tr.* and *Met.*: Hinds (1985). Narratology: Barchiesi (1989; 2002) and Wheeler (1999). Ovid's treatment of the gods and apotheosis: Feeney (1991: 188–249). On the Polyphemus episode itself: esp. Farrell (1992), Hinds (1998: 99–122), Papaioannou (2005), and Barchiesi (2006), as well as the Cambridge commentaries of Hopkinson (2000) and Myers (2009).

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Ovidian Myths on Pompeian Walls

Peter E. Knox

In the epilogue to the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid predicted widespread popularity for his poem among ordinary people throughout the Roman world: "Wherever the might of Rome extends in the conquered lands, I shall be read and recited by the general public" (*Met.* 15.877–78 *quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris, / ore legar populi*). Scholars should attach more weight to Ovid's choice of the word *populus*: in contrast to many of his contemporaries, Ovid refers to a wide readership, not a select few. In the absence of any solid data about the popularity of his works in the decades after his death, our best evidence for the reception of Ovid among the public comes from the domestic decorations of Pompeii. From the frescoed walls of the buried city several hundred representations of mythological scenes, almost entirely of the late Third and Fourth Styles (and thus postdating Ovid's works), have been cataloged in a recent study (Hodske 2007). Approximately 41% of these have been identified as scenes that correspond to episodes in Ovid's poem (Hodske 2007: 130), but that figure does not necessarily indicate that there is a direct relationship between the choice of these particular scenes and Ovid's texts. A great many factors must have played into a patron's decisions about which scenes to depict, including balance, color, and thematic relationships (cf. Simon 1990; Zanker 2002; Clarke 2006; Lorenz 2008). Nonetheless, it is clear that in many cases literary associations played a major part in a homeowner's choice of theme. One celebrated instance is the painted frieze with scenes from the *Iliad* in the House of the Cryptoportico (I 6, 2.16). If we find that Ovid's poetry is a major inspiration for the decorative themes of homes in Pompeii in the company of the likes of Homer, it is important evidence for the widespread reception of his works. The question of whether the *Metamorphoses* was the source for paintings with identifiably Ovidian myths must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. So too must the question of whether viewers would have associated these images with Ovid's texts, whatever the motivation of

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the owner might have been. In many instances it will simply not be possible to make a determination one way or the other, but there are a few secure examples that can only be derived from Ovid and they provide a context for assessing the broader impact of Ovid's myths in the frescoes of Pompeii.

The love story of the Cyclops Polyphemus and the sea nymph Galatea, for instance, is a popular subject in Pompeian frescoes, which one might well associate with Ovid. Sixteen paintings on the theme have been discovered there, all of them attributed to the Third or Fourth Styles, but it is not certain that they were inspired by Ovid's account of the story in the *Metamorphoses* (13.750–878), even though that was the literary version in which most Roman readers of that time would have known it. For the story was popular long before Ovid (Bömer 1982: 406–11). First made famous in song by the dithyrambic poet Philoxenus (c. 435–380 BCE), the clumsy courtship of the beautiful nymph by the lovesick giant was also the subject of a famous poem by Theocritus (*Idyll* 11). Roman poets, such as Virgil (*Ecl.* 7.37–40, 9.39) and Propertius (3.2.7–8), refer to the story as one that would be familiar to readers, and there are many depictions of the scene in figurative art (Montón Subias 1990; Touchefeu-Meynier 1997) earlier than Ovid's account. The story is depicted in a famous fresco from the villa of Agrippa Postumus at Boscotrecase, which can be dated to shortly after 11 BCE and thus antedates the distribution of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1962: 9–11). Now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Plate 1), it depicts Galatea riding a dolphin in the lower left, while Polyphemus, sitting upon a rocky crag, gazes at her (Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1962: 38–51; Bastet and De Vos 1979: 45–47; Ehrhardt 1987: 54–57). The painting incorporates an allusion to the later adventures of the Cyclops in the *Odyssey*, with Polyphemus depicted on a smaller scale to the right, hurling a rock at a ship that is disappearing from the scene. That the scene was already well established in the pictorial repertoire of domestic decoration is confirmed by the recurrence of the same theme in an earlier painting from the House of Livia on the Palatine (Rizzo 1936).

Obviously, there can be no influence from Ovid in the formulation of this scene; but can we be as confident about later depictions in the Fourth Style from Pompeii? For example, a close copy of this painting was created for the south wall of the triclinium of the House of the Priest Amandus (I 7, 7) some 50 years later (Carratelli and Baldassarre 1990: I 586–618; Hodske 2007: plate 91.1). The most significant departure from the earlier version of Boscotrecase is the elimination of the allusion to the *Odyssey*: the smaller figure of the Cyclops is gone, although a ship still appears in the background (Ling 1991: 114; Simon 2007: 150–51). The Homeric affinities of the story have been literally erased. It is not possible to link this painting securely to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but the context in which it was displayed in the House of the Priest Amandus opens the possibility for that association. For on two of the other walls of the same room are depicted scenes that are found in the *Metamorphoses*: on the east wall the fall of Icarus (*Met.* 8.183–235), and Andromeda's rescue by Perseus (*Met.* 4.604–803) on the facing west wall (Schefold 1957: 30–31).

Both subjects are also found in paintings that predate Ovid, and so a relationship between these images and his text cannot be guaranteed, even though in the details of their composition they are consistent with his accounts of these stories. But the juxtaposition with the Cyclops is suggestive. It may well be that by the mid first century CE, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was already supplanting earlier works as the principal point of reference for Roman readers who decorated their homes with scenes from mythology. There is further evidence to be gleaned from frescoes that can be connected with the *Metamorphoses* with a greater degree of certainty, as we shall see below.

The debates about levels of literacy in the Roman world can simply never be resolved because we will never have the kind of data needed to resolve them. Estimates on the low end of no more than 20% for male literacy do not leave much room for widespread familiarity with literary texts, if they are right (Harris 1989: 259–87), but they do leave some room. And the prominence of metrical graffiti scrawled on the walls of Pompeii also suggests the presence of a reading public, even if it is easy to be overly optimistic in drawing conclusions from their presence (e.g. Gigante 1979). But it is important also to consider that the visual evidence of familiarity with Hellenistic narratives like Ovid's *Metamorphoses* points to some significant penetration of literary culture into the life of a provincial city. Of the roughly 1200 homes excavated in Pompeii, 184 have one or more rooms decorated with mythological panels (Hodske 2007). That works out to about 15% of homes in Pompeii in which one might expect the inhabitants to be able to read broadly enough to respond to the images as references to literature, a figure that is suggestively close to estimates of the percentage of the population that might have been reading books.

Ovidian Themes

The story of Pyramus and Thisbe, one of the most famous in the *Metamorphoses* (4.55–166), is known from no extant literary sources earlier than Ovid, although he must have found it in some text now lost. In all likelihood, however, the form in which the story was told before Ovid was quite different from his version. References to Pyramus and Thisbe in later Greek texts suggest that the deaths of the unhappy lovers were accompanied by an altogether different kind of metamorphosis than that described by Ovid, in which their blood permanently changes the color of the hitherto white berries of the mulberry tree to red. In the Greek east, where the story originated, Pyramus was transformed into the river in Cilicia that bears his name, while Thisbe became a nearby spring (Knox 1989). A second-century CE mosaic, discovered in excavations at Nea Paphos on Cyprus, depicts this eastern version of the myth in a composition that differs strikingly from representations of the story in Pompeian frescoes (Kondoleon 1994: 148–56; Linant de Bellefonds 1994). But Ovid's preeminence as a source for the story in the west

Figure 3.1 Pyramus and Thisbe. House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto, Pompeii. After S. Rizzo, *La pittura ellenistico-romana* (Milan: Fratelli Treves, 1929).

is illustrated by a fourth-century CE mosaic depicting Pyramus and Thisbe that was discovered in Carranques, Spain. Although it resembles the example from Nea Paphos in its figurative style, in content it reflects the Ovidian version of the story (Arce 1986; Fernández Galiano 1994: 203).

This rare tale of star-crossed lovers is found in five paintings of the Fourth Style from Pompeii, all of which clearly reflect the narrative provided by Ovid. The best of the group is in a garden triclinium of the House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto (V 4, a.11). The painting remains in situ (Figure 3.1), but has virtually disappeared and can now best be studied from reproductions (e.g. Hodske 2007: 246 and plate

160.1; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 1028). Pyramus lies dead in the foreground, bleeding from his self-inflicted wound, while Thisbe falls on his sword above him. Hovering over them both is the tree that refers to the metamorphosis in Ovid's account, and in the background we see the tomb that marked their secret rendezvous, while a lion disappears from the picture to the right. Versions of the same scene were discovered in four other locations, each of them containing some distinctive elements of the Ovidian account. Simpler versions of the scene, now in a rather sad state of preservation, were found in the House of the Restaurant (IX 5, 14–16) and the House of Venus in a Bikini (I 11, 6). The best preserved is the one belonging to the House of Octavius Quartio (I 2, 2), while the last example from an unnamed house at I 14, 5 has now vanished (Hodske 2007: 246–47). There can be no other explanation for the appearance of these paintings in Pompeii than a desire to display a scene from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Although no other examples have been recovered from other sites, it is a reasonable inference that these specimens from Pompeii were not unique. Indeed, it is likely that, like other themes in Pompeian frescoes, they were imitated from the more fashionable homes of the elite.

Similar observations can be made about paintings of Narcissus, one of the most popular subjects in Pompeian frescoes. This story is found in 52 paintings at Pompeii, all of them attributable to the Fourth Style (Hodske 2007: 166–71). The story is scarcely attested in the literary or artistic record before Ovid, so it is most likely that this burst of popularity in the mid first century CE can be securely attributed to the success of Ovid's poem. And Ovid's version of the story contains at least one distinctive feature that differs from the prevailing Greek version, which is best represented by the Augustan-era mythographer Conon, whose account we know from the summaries by the Byzantine scholar Photius. In this version Narcissus is cursed with his fatal self-love by a spurned male lover (New Jacoby, 26 F 1 24):

> And while the rest of his lovers gave up loving him, Ameinas was very persistent and demanding. When he did not let him in, but even sent him a sword, he killed himself before Narcissus' doors, begging the god mightily that vengeance would be his. And Narcissus, when he saw his own face and form when they appeared in the water of a spring, became the first and only extraordinary lover of himself.

While Ovid alludes to Narcissus' rejection of would-be male lovers, as well as female (*Met.* 3.353–55 and 403–6), in his account he gives the central role to the nymph Echo, who is not found in any extant Greek version of the myth.

Echo appears in several paintings of the Narcissus myth in Pompeii, such as one in a cubiculum of the House of the Ephebe (I 7, 10–12), in which she is depicted looking over his left shoulder as he gazes at his reflection (Rafn 1992: 710). It is not out of the question that an earlier Hellenistic source associated Echo with Narcissus (Hutchinson 2006: 81), and in fact she is depicted together with Narcissus in a much later, second-century CE mosaic in Antioch (Kondoleon 1994: 37–38),

in which influence from Ovid is unlikely. But it seems far more plausible that her appearance in Pompeian paintings of the myth, where she is found in nine other examples (Hodske 2007: 170–71), is due to Ovid's influence. His extensive narrative of almost 200 lines (*Met. 3.339–510*) is distinctive for its detailed characterization of Narcissus through monologue and the enlivened account of Echo's pining for him. On *prima facie* grounds, it seems most likely that for the denizens of Pompeii, these paintings would have evoked the *Metamorphoses*. And if they were most likely to relate the figures of Narcissus and Echo to Ovid, it then seems most likely that all of the paintings of Narcissus, even the ones without Echo, would suggest to the viewer a source in the *Metamorphoses*.

Arrangements

In the complete absence of documentary evidence for the rationale behind any of the decorative schemes in Pompeii's residences, we can only survey the material remains for inferences about the tastes, predilections, and inspirations of individual owners. The factors that might have played a role in determining the choice of subjects for paintings and their disposition throughout the homes are legion and for the most part not susceptible of analysis. Individual tastes, cost, availability of suitable craftsman, lighting, and room function might all or in some combination play a role in the decision about what scene to place where. For the purposes of this study, we will limit ourselves to two cases in which the weight of the material evidence suggests that literary taste was a determinant in the choice of paintings and that the patron's tastes inclined to Ovid.

The first house, misleadingly named the House of the Restaurant (IX 5, 14–16), where excavations were begun in 1878, is now in a rather poor state of repair, and several of its paintings were removed to the Museo Nazionale in Naples, making it difficult to recover a sense of the site (Carratelli and Baldassarre 1990–2003: IX 600–69). The floor plan includes two distinct entrances, with two separate atria, made into a single unit by a door cut through a connecting room. The earliest excavators discovered what appeared to be the remains of a stove in the atrium of the house at IX 5, 16. This, together with the decorative scheme of one room off that atrium led earlier researchers to conclude that it belonged to a commercial establishment that included a brothel: the frescoes of this cubiculum off the atrium show four erotic scenes of couples engaged in sexual activity (a fifth has been completely destroyed). There is no reason to infer that this reflects anything other than the tastes of the owner (Clarke 1998: 178–87; cf. Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 600), since erotic art was not the exclusive preserve of professional establishments. And, as we shall see, this scheme may well be consistent with the decoration of the first part of the house (IX 5, 14).

The triclinium north of the first atrium revealed an elaborate decoration in a fresco of Vespasianic date that strongly suggests the patron's literary bent. On the

walls flanking the entrance are Apollo and the nine Muses, all badly faded, but most of them accompanied by readily identifiable attributes, such as Terpsichore's lyre, Urania's globe, and Melpomene's tragic mask (cf. Schefold 1957: 260). Two of the scenes on the other three walls are identifiable. The third, badly faded painting depicts two figures, probably male, standing before a female figure seated on a throne, with three other female figures grouped behind her. The scene has not been identified, but it is replicated in two other locations in Pompeii (Hodske 2007: 266). Of the other two, one shows Dionysus and Ariadne in a vignette probably set on Naxos after the arrival of the god (Hodske 2007: 162 and plate 35.1). And the other displays Pyramus and Thisbe in a version very similar in composition to the example from the House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto (Hodske 2007: 246 and plate 160.2), although the lion has completely faded from this painting (as it has now in the House of Lucretius Fronto). The story of Ariadne's abandonment by Theseus on Naxos and subsequent rescue by Dionysus was, of course, famous, and in addition to Ovid's several treatments (*Her.* 10; *Ars* 1.527–64; *Fast.* 3.459–516), it would have been familiar from Catullus as well as Hellenistic Greek sources (Knox 1998). The setting in a room superintended by the Muses strongly suggests that for the owner of this house the scene had a literary association. What that was cannot be established, but the juxtaposition with Pyramus and Thisbe, a scene that could only have derived from Ovid, might suggest that by now, or at least for this patron, the story of Ariadne, too, had an Ovidian connection.

Other rooms in the house suggest a similar interest on the part of its owner in Ovid's erotic tales. The room immediately to the left of the entrance is decorated with two scenes that by this time had a distinctly Ovidian flavor. In one, Heracles is shown with Omphale, the queen of the Lydians to whom he was enslaved (Schefold 1957: 259; Hodske 2007: 173 and plate 54.4). He is depicted seated before her on his lion skin, with his club in his right hand to complete the identification, but what marks the scene's provenance in Latin literature is the figure of Omphale. She stands above him, holding the hero's other trademark weapon in her left hand. The exchange of sex roles, with Omphale taking possession of Heracles' distinctive garb and weaponry, is known only from Roman sources, and none earlier than the Augustan period (e.g. Ov. *Fast.* 2.319–326; Ov. *Her.* 9.53–128; Prop. 4.9.45 and 3.11.17; cf. Schauenburg 1960). Ovid describes the cross-dressing in the *Fasti* (2.319–26):

> dat tenues tunicas Gaetulo murice tinctas,
>   dat teretem zonam, qua modo cincta fuit.
> ventre minor zona est; tunicarum vincla relaxat,
>   ut posset magnas exseruisse manus.
> fregerat armillas non illa ad bracchia factas,
>   scindebant magni vincula parva pedes.
> ipsa capit clavamque gravem spoliumque leonis
>   conditaque in pharetra tela minora sua.

She gave him delicate tunics dyed with Gaetulian purple; she gave him the dainty girdle with which she had just previously been girt. The girdle was too small for his belly; he undid the clasps of the tunics so that he could thrust out his big hands. The bracelets he had broken, not made to fit those arms, and his big feet had torn the little shoes. She herself took his heavy club, the lion's skin, and the lesser weapons stored in their quiver.

In the same room are two other paintings with potentially Ovidian associations: a second Ariadne and Dionysus opposite the entrance to the room (Hodske 2007: 163 and plate 35.4), and on the other side wall Europa being carried away by the bull (Hodske 2007: 202 and color plate 5.2). The story of Europa's abduction was, of course, widely known and, considered independently, need not evoke any Ovidian reminiscences (Robertson 1988). But here in the home of a patron who is advertising his literary tastes in general and his predilection for Ovid in particular, the scene might include among its responses recollection of Ovid's account in the *Metamorphoses* (2.833–75). And an owner whose tastes ran toward the *Metamorphoses* would probably also enjoy the *Ars Amatoria*, an inclination that is perhaps reflected in the erotic art off the second atrium. The connecting door between the two establishments may simply indicate that the owner of one had acquired the other, perhaps with the intention of combining them into one larger unit.

The nearby House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto (V 4, a 11) contains important examples of late Third and Fourth Style paintings (Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 966–1029; Peters and Moorman 1993), some of which also exhibit clear signs that the owner had a specific interest in the *Metamorphoses*. The principal axis of sight from the entrance (*fauces*) to the house looks across the atrium through the main reception room (*tablinum*) into the garden beyond (Figure 3.2). This would be the point of view of a client or friend who had come to see the head of household (*paterfamilias*), and the most important clue as to his tastes in home decor would be found in the tablinum beyond the atrium, typically the main place of business. Distinctions of space between the more public rooms and intimate settings might also be reflected in the decoration (Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 17–37). In the tablinum, for instance, one might expect examples of more formal art, scenes from epic, perhaps, as recommended by Vitruvius (*Arch.* 7.5.2). The Third Style mythological panels adorning this room certainly have epic associations (Clarke 1991: 146–58), but they reflect the Hellenistic tastes increasingly adopted by the Romans in the first century BCE rather more than they do earlier heroic epic (Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 185). On the north wall are Mars and Venus, divinities associated with epic to be sure, but here they are shown as lovers, a particularly popular theme of which there are 28 examples in Pompeii. The couple are shown in a bed chamber with several attendants, accompanied by Cupid, who gestures toward the bed (Schefold 1957: 85; Hodske 2007: 145 and plate 6.1). Ares and Aphrodite as lovers figure famously in the *Odyssey* (8.266–305), but this painting reflects an aspect of both divinities that is embraced in Hellenistic narrative and Latin elegiac poetry,
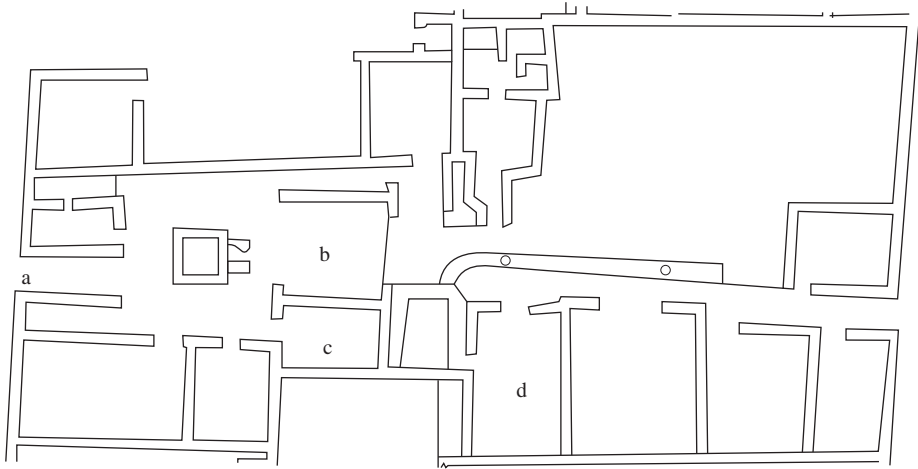
Figure 3.2 Plan of the House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto (V.4.a.11): (a) entrance; (b) tablinum (Mars and Venus; Dionysus and Ariadne); (c) cubiculum (Narcissus; Micon and Pero); (d) summer triclinium (Pyramus and Thisbe). Photo by the author.

rather than epic. The matching panel with Dionysus and Ariadne on the opposite wall is consistent with this theme, as we saw in the House of the Restaurant.

The cubiculum immediately to the right of the tablinum highlights the owner's literary interests more overtly. On the wall to the right upon entering is one of the most remarkable paintings in Pompeii, representing the very obscure story of Micon and Pero (Figure 3.3), which is attested only sparsely in literature (Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 1007–8). It was well enough known by the early first century CE, however, to attract notice from Valerius Maximus, who saw it in a painting (*Memorable Doings and Sayings* 5.4 ext. 1): "Men's eyes are riveted in amazement when they see the painting of this act." And, indeed, the story of Micon, who had been imprisoned to starve to death, and his daughter Pero, who saved him by suckling him at her breast, is depicted in three paintings at Pompeii (Hodske 2007: 251–52, plate 167.1–4). What is even more remarkable than the painting itself is the inscription incorporated into the painting, three elegiac couplets that describe the scene (*CIL* 4.6635 = *CLE* 2048; cf. Courtney 1995: 277–78):

> quae parvis mater natis alimenta parabat
>   fortuna in patrios vertit iniqua cibos.
> aevo dignum opus est: tenui cervice seniles,
>   as[pice, iam] venae lacte … [
>   ]q(ue) simul vultu fricat ipsa Miconem
>   Pero; tristis inest cum pietate pudor.

The nourishment which a mother was readying for her small children was turned into sustenance for her father by cruel fortune. This work merits

Figure 3.3 Micon and Pero. House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto, Pompeii. Photo: Michael Larvey. © Michael Larvey Lighting Design.

> eternity; see, the old man's veins in his wizened neck now (swell) with milk, and at the same time with […] countenance Pero herself massages Micon; sad modesty together with daughterly love is incorporated [in the picture? in her?].

Whatever the source of these verses, whether composed by or for the owner or quoted from another source, they are an advertisement of the owner's taste for elegiac poetry and Hellenistic narrative. In this context it is not surprising, then, to find it accompanied by the Ovidian story of Narcissus, depicted on the opposite wall (Hodske 2007: 167, with plate 41.1 and color plate 3.1; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III 1003–4). And the unique example of the inscribed verses accompanying one of the paintings in the room demonstrates that an important point of reference for the viewer is the literary context from which the story was taken. In juxtaposing this scene of piety and selfless devotion with the depiction of selfishness and self-absorption in Narcissus' tale, the owner of the house perhaps reflects his own sense of Ovid's techniques of arranging contrasting tales for narrative effect and intertextual (or perhaps intratextual) commentary.

Considerable care was taken in designing the garden area of the house to produce an illusion of space and a naturalistic atmosphere. The garden consists of a partial colonnade visible through the main axis of sight from the entrance, in order to create the illusion of a larger peristyle. Within the garden, the exterior walls are decorated with life-size paintings of animals, a type of fresco known as a *paradeisos*, creating the illusion of nature. Two rooms off the garden were decorated with mythological panels in the Fourth Style, contemporary with the paintings of Narcissus and Micon with Pero (Clarke 1991: 158–63). The paintings in one of them have been destroyed since their discovery, but there were originally three panels, one of which may have had Ovidian associations, Europa being carried off by the bull (Hodske 2007: 201 and plate 93.5), while the other two were identified as Poseidon and Amymone and Danae on Seriphos (Schefold 1957: 87; Peters and Moorman 1993: 352–53).

The paintings have faded badly in the other room, which has been identified as a summer triclinium. The two other panels in the room were discovered in too poor a condition to allow for secure identification, but they might well have also reflected Ovidian themes. The painting that was found on the back wall has been variously interpreted as Aphrodite fishing at the water's edge (Hodske 2007: 277 and plate 197.3; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III 1027), a scene familiar from more than a dozen other examples at Pompeii (Hodske 2007: 149–50). But it has also been interpreted as Galatea with a letter from Polyphemus, a variant of the story known only from paintings at Pompeii, but one that might well have been inspired by Ovid's *Heroides*. If so, then it draws on the same context as the paintings that show Polyphemus receiving a letter-tablet (Hodske 2007: 198; Simon 2007: 151). The subject of the painting on the left wall of the room has been variously interpreted as Dionysus accompanied by Silenus (Schefold 1957: 86), a scene described memorably in the *Metamorphoses* (4.9–30). But an equally plausible interpretation of the badly faded painting suggests that it depicts Dionysus' discovery of Ariadne on Naxos (Hodske 2007: 161; cf. Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 1025 with plate 110), which, as we have seen, in an appropriate context could also evoke Ovid. So, too, the less likely interpretation of the scene as Hermaphroditus (Lorenz 2008: 548), a story accorded an expansive treatment in the *Metamorphoses* (4.285–388).

The Ovidian theme is clinched, however, in the depiction of Pyramus and Thisbe on the right-hand wall, discussed above, which contains all the identifying elements of Ovid's narrative. The arrangements of themes from Ovid in the more intimate settings of these rooms reflects one approach to integrating mythological painting into a decorative scheme that underscores the distinctions between public and private characteristic of Pompeian domestic architecture. This tendency is even more pronounced in a famous house of Region II.

An Ovidian Garden Suite

Elegiac love poetry, Hellenistic narrative elegy, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* supply the background against which some Pompeians of a literary bent chose the decor for the more private spaces of their townhomes. One home stands out among those excavated to date for highlighting Ovidian themes in its decorative arrangement, the so-called House of Octavius Quartio (Spinazzola 1953: 369–421; cf. also Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 42–108). It is sometimes still referred to as the House of Loreius Tiburtinus, the name given to it by early excavators, extrapolating from campaign posters discovered on the facade. But that name is a fiction (Castrén 1975: 184), and it is now more commonly called after the name of Octavius Quartio, which appears on a seal discovered in an adjoining shop in later excavations, although it is by no means certain that he was the owner (Spinazzola 1953: 421–34). The house was excavated in three phases in 1916, 1918, and 1933–35. The atrium and some of the rooms off it were seriously damaged in bombing during World War II, and the rest of the house is now threatened by its exposure to the elements. But it remains the prime example of a type of structure described as the "urban villa" (Clarke 1991: 193–207; Zanker 1998: 145–56; Nappa 2007: 362–64), in which the trappings of the great country villas that dotted the coastline of Campania were adapted to townhomes.

Approximately two thirds of the house lot is taken up by an extensive garden (Figure 3.4), which is incorporated into the structure in unique fashion. The house does not have a tablinum at the far end of the atrium, but rather opens immediately onto an abbreviated peristyle. This in turn connects with a trellised fountain and
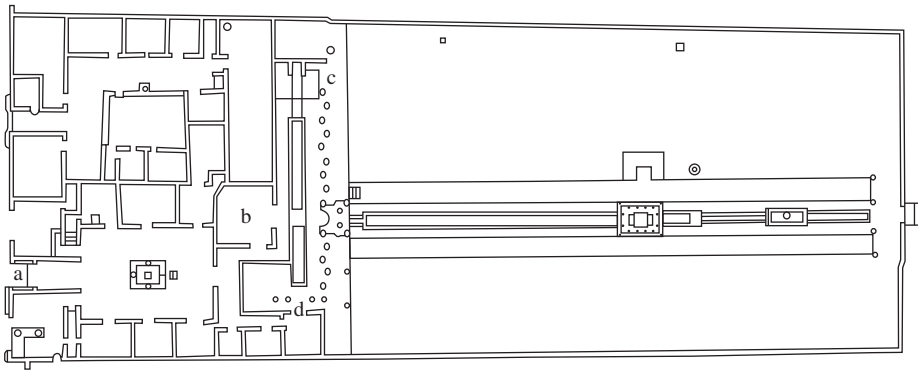
Figure 3.4 Plan of the House of Octavius Quartio (II.2.2): (a) entrance; (b) triclinium (double frieze of scenes from the *Iliad* and the life of Hercules); (c) garden biclinium (Narcissus; Pyramus and Thisbe); (d) 'Isis room' (Diana; Actaeon). Photo by the author.

a canal that links at a right angle with second canal and a series of fountains in the garden, which slopes away below a terrace (Richardson 1988: 337–43). Two quite distinct ambiances are created by this design: the rooms off the atrium, where the paterfamilias would first engage with his business; and the areas overlooking the garden, where more intimate associates might be invited. These distinctions in space are underscored by distinctive decorative schemes and the literary contexts they evoke. The owner of this house was clearly a man with an interest in the world of literature.

Mythological panels were found in two rooms off the atrium, in settings that were less accessible to the public business of the house. In the second cubiculum on the west side of the atrium was Europa being carried off by the bull, now destroyed (Spinazzola 1953: 376, fig. 423; cf. Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III 45). The adjacent cubiculum has the familiar Ovidian scene of Narcissus, together with Venus fishing. These are not presented as panels, but are painted directly on the room's background (Spinazzola 1953: 378–79, fig. 427; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III 48–56). The decor of the atrium and its related rooms is comparable to the House of the Restaurant and the House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto, suggesting a patron's preference for scenes familiar from a reading of the *Metamorphoses*, combined with other stories from Hellenizing narratives. The decorative scheme in the rest of the house is consistent with these themes and shows its owner even more clearly as a reader of texts.

The most important room in the house is usually identified as a triclinium, although it was probably also the main place of business as well, serving the function of the tablinum in a more familiar floor plan. The walls of this room are decorated with a unique double frieze, depicting epic themes associated with Troy (Clarke 1991: 201–7; Baldassare, Pontrandolfo, Rouveret, and Salvadori 2002: 208–9). The large, upper frieze depicts scenes from the life of Heracles (Figure 3.5), with special emphasis on his role at Troy, freeing Hesione, the daughter of Laomedon, and investing Priam as king (Croisille 1985; Coralini 2003). The smaller, lower frieze depicts scenes from the *Iliad*, beginning with Apollo laying waste to the Greek camp with plague and culminating with the ransom of Hector's body (Spinazzola 1953: 970–1008).

The choice of heroic themes for this room, the largest in the house and in a commanding position, coincides with the recommendations of Vitruvius in his chapters on domestic architecture (Vitr. *Arch*. 7.5.2). The unique double frieze is not universally admired by critics, many of whom find the entire decorative scheme of the house in bad taste. Some suggest that this is evidence that its owner was a pretentious freedman of the type parodied by Petronius in his description of the wall paintings in the house of Trimalchio (*Satyricon* 29.9): "And so I began by asking the steward what paintings they had in the middle. 'An *Iliad* and an *Odyssey*,' he said, 'and the gladiatorial games of Laenas'." The case for making the owner of this house out to be a bourgeois social climber has been exaggerated (Petersen 2006: 129–36), but by choosing these scenes for his most important room, he is clearly

Figure 3.5 Double frieze depicting scenes from the life of Hercules (upper) and the *Iliad* (lower). House of Octavius Quartio (II.2.2). Photo: Alinari Archives, Florence.

marking out a distinction from the moods evoked in other parts of the residence. From his place on the triclinium couch, the guest of honor in the house of Octavius Quartio could peruse these scenes from heroic epic (Clarke 1991: 203–5), and as he looked out of the south entrance into the garden he would be reminded of his host's literary inclinations. The view from this room extended through a small covered structure, an *aediculum* set above a fountain below, which framed the long axis of the garden canal. On either side of the aediculum, framing the view, are pedestals on which were placed statues, now removed, of two of the Muses (Jashemski 1979: 45–47). A guest whose level of intimacy with the owner extended to a visit to the garden terrace, however, would be drawn out of the epic associations of Heracles and the Iliadic frieze into the more intimate world of elegiac narrative.

As one stepped out into this terraced area, the decorations evoked a different literary experience. As he looked to the east, the visitor's eyes would naturally follow the line of the canal (*euripus*) left, or to the east. The wall to his left was painted with a hunting scene, suggesting a setting in the woods, providing a setting for the mythological panels that are set at either end of the long canal. But this *paradeisos* contains Ovidian touches as well, with representations by the door to the triclinium of Orpheus (*Met.* 10) and Venus. On the exterior wall of the room at the west end

Figure 3.6   Biclinium in the House of Octavius Quartio with frescoes of Narcissus (left) and Pyramus and Thisbe (right). Photo by the author.

of the terrace, overlooking the garden, the theme is resumed with a hunting scene that has been identified as Meleager and Atalanta (*Met*. 8.260–546). The sculptures that were placed along the canal accentuated this setting, including figures of satyrs, wild animals, and a river god (Spinazzola 1953: 394–406; Tronchin 2011). At the far end is a biclinium (Figure 3.6), a place for dining al fresco on either side of the canal, which was fed by a fountain at its end (Spinazzola 1953: 402–4; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 104, fig. 95). To the left, on the north side, is Narcissus, gazing at his own reflection in a pool (Hodske 2007: 168 and plate 44.2); on the right, or south, side Thisbe is expiring over the body of Pyramus (Hodske 2007: 247 and plate 160.5, as well as color plate 8.1). The paintings are not of very high quality, but the artist took enough pride in his work to sign his name: "Lucius pinxit" (Richardson 2000: 147–53; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 105, fig. 95). And the configuration of the scenes from Ovid was adapted to the owner's particular vision of this space (Platt 2002).

On the west end of the canal, the pair of figures flanking the entrance to a room decorated with themes related to the cult of Isis, are, on the left to the south of the door, Diana being surprised at the bath (Hodske 2007: 194 and plates 85.3 and 4; see too Spinazzola 1953: 392–94; Carratelli and Baldassare 1990–2003: III, 100–1, figs.

88–89), and, on the right to the north of the door, the unfortunate Actaeon being dismembered by his hounds. This theme is reprised on the lower, garden level, where a second set of Diana and Actaeon is found in the nymphaeum. The space on the upper level is thus framed at both east and west ends of the euripus by episodes from the third and fourth books of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and that cannot be simply coincidence. To create a narrative setting for these myths, the back wall facing the canal has been painted with a forested scene, filled with animals for the hunt. These three stories—Actaeon, Narcissus, and Pyramus and Thisbe—are thus set outside the city in the countryside, where strange things happen to people: they encounter gods, fall in love, and are transformed. Their stories thus form the setting for the garden world created by the last owner of this house, who was clearly an admirer of Ovid.

Afterword

Closely related to the problem of literacy in the ancient world is the question of how widespread was what one scholar has called "literary literacy" (Milnor 2009)—not simply the ability to read, but the habit of reading serious literary texts. How many people were reading Ovid, Virgil, Propertius? How well known were their works even among those who did not read them? And at what levels of society? What role did literature play in people's everyday lives? The towns of Campania that were buried in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE, Herculaneum and Pompeii, are of course our best source of evidence about the lives of Romans who weren't written up in books, but might actually have been reading books themselves. Many of these Romans had the financial resources to have their homes decorated with frescoes, and the subjects of these paintings suggest that their owners were actually familiar with a wide range of literary texts. A great many questions remain to be addressed about the artists who executed these works and their relationships with patrons. Many of these questions are probably not susceptible of answer. But the weight of the evidence suggests that the owners of these homes encountered the world of mythology through literature, for which they wanted visual reminders in their homes. In other words, when a guest was invited to recline at a meal in the garden of the House of Octavius Quartio, his host might well have gestured toward Pyramus and Thisbe and asked, "How do you like my painting from Ovid?"

Further Reading

The most accessible introductions to Roman painting are Ling (1991) and Baldassarre *et al.* (2002), while Bragantini and Sampaolo (2009) offers a rich collection of images from Pompeii. Of the numerous introductions to the archaeology of Pompeii, special mention might be made of Dobbins and Foss (2007), which includes articles on most aspects of the site with

a rich bibliography and detailed plans. Clarke (1991) is an excellent introduction to Roman domestic architecture and decor. Most discussions of ancient literacy take their bearings from Harris (1989), with recent studies such as those in Johnson and Parker (2009) placing more emphasis on ancient book culture. Hodske (2007) offers a comprehensive catalog of mythological paintings from Pompeii, much of which is also covered in more discursive form in Lorenz (2008).

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Ovid in Flavian Occasional Poetry (Martial and Statius)

Gianpiero Rosati

A Society of Occasions, and Its Poetics

In the half century separating Ovid's death (17 CE) from the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and the advent of the Flavians (68–69), the growing presence of his work in Latin literary (as well as visual) culture is a matter of clear evidence. Aside from direct and explicit references, that presence in the poetry of the early decades of the empire (from Manilius to Lucan to Calpurnius Siculus to Seneca's tragedies), and in particular in the Flavian era, can be traced through numerous allusions. This chapter will investigate that presence in the so-called occasional poetry, that is, those poetic forms connected not by a specific genre, but from the ways they are produced and used (the "opportunities"), namely the epigrams of Martial and the *Silvae* of Statius.

A poetic production of occasional type was not new on the ancient literary scene (Rühl 2006), certainly not in Greek literature (given the centrality of this dimension in archaic lyric, especially in Pindar), not even in Latin—among the great Augustan poets, Horace in particular is the canonical example of this kind of poetry. In the single occasion provided by everyday life, with its customs, ceremonies, events, and its network of social relations, he finds the inspiration to create a poetic text that offers wider reflections and broadens the space of communication involving the reading audience. Horace was looked on as a model of occasional poetry by both Martial and especially Statius (Rosati 2013); but compared to the inner and socially selected circle of his interlocutors, they substantially broaden his scope: the recipient names mentioned, for example in the epigrams of Martial, denounce extreme social and cultural heterogeneity (Fitzgerald 2007: 141). The most obvious consequence of this variety—a natural outcome of the changing conditions of literary patronage in Rome, with the almost complete disappearance of public

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patronage and the development of a private one (Nauta 2002)—is the turn away
from Callimachean exclusivity (Rosati forthcoming a): Statius, above all, elaborates
a new poetics that refuses to blame improvisation and the requirements associated
with it (contrast the Horatian *nonum prematur in annum*, "put away [your writings]
for nine years," with its corollary of a meticulous *labor limae* [the file's labor]). The
removal of an audience not rigidly selected was the necessary condition for the pro-
duction of a poetry able to meet the cultural needs of a new social elite, desirous
of cultural distinction but unfit for the standards required by Horace's and even
Catullus' Callimacheanism.

Preferring the pleasure of *celeritas* to the more restrained and formalized emo-
tion of a professional elaboration, this warm and fluid poetry is an answer consis-
tent with the Flavian cultural context and with the social rituals through which
literary communication is expressed. Unlike the simulated occasional nature of
Horace's poetry, which is the object of literary fiction (Rühl 2006: 90–91), the back-
ground to the poetry of Martial and Statius is a real occasion, authentically feeding
the social dimension of their production: whether dealing with the inauguration
of a monument, or the description and celebration of a private building, the illus-
tration and memorization of a party or a dinner, a memorial service or any other
social event, the poet makes it the object of a literary text, thus saving it from its
ephemeral transience and giving it a more noble and enduring dimension.

In this sense, albeit in a different form, both Statius and Martial work to give
literary dignity to the "short form," that is, the one that best lent itself to become
the expression of a single event, precisely, the "occasion." In other words, the short
form proves to be the ideal tool to commemorate the cultural consumption of Fla-
vian society, and the two great "occasional poets" of that society, even if apparently
unrelated to each other and more likely rivals, are objectively allies in the same bat-
tle. The battle was to make the short form the instrument to negotiate one's power,
one's cultural authority, with recipients and privileged spokesmen (public but espe-
cially private) seen as potential patrons providing support and protection—hence
an exchange between the cultural capital dispensed by the poet and the economic
and social capital of which the patrons are custodians. A short form in size, limited
in its development and peremptory in the formulation (as the epigrams of Mar-
tial), seems the ideal receptacle to give brilliant expression, sometimes spectacular,
to the wit of a poet who witnesses with pleasure the show of Flavian Rome and
celebrates some of its protagonists. Otherwise, in the case of Statius, his stylistic
virtuosity and imaginative talent create around his characters an aura of myth that
surrounds and decorates the gilded life of his friends/patrons.

Now, in this negotiation that entails an exchange between the cultural author-
ity of one side and the economic and political power of the other, the importance
of Ovid's precedent is evident in many ways. First, the invention, by Ovid, of the
"general reader" as his direct recipient paved the way for a kind of poetry no longer
requiring the mediation of an educated, exclusive elite. This in turn opened the
door to cultural consumption potentially available to "all": that is, to a practical use,

direct and social, of literature. Second, Ovid himself had actually practiced—and indeed also theorized, in the direct relationship with Germanicus, the allegedly designated successor of Augustus (Rosati 2012)—an exchange relationship between poetry and power. Especially in his works from exile, particularly in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the need for support from Augustus had pushed the exiled poet to bring this exchange to his interlocutors, to whom he offers the *officium* that a poet can provide, that is, a sort of celebration in his own verses. But to this point we will return later.

Martial and the Culture of Display

Of all the Augustan poets, whom Martial knows well and repeatedly pays tribute to, Ovid is the one that is most often evoked, both with explicit references and literal quotes, and with oblique and allusive references as well. One of the various possible reasons for this preference is certainly the fact that Ovid could appear as a poet particularly suited to a writer of epigrams, being himself a quasi-epigrammatist poet: not only because he was an occasional writer of epigrams, such as the one introducing the second edition of the *Amores* (which ends with the *pointe* on the reduction of the work from five to three books, easing the trouble of reading: Roman 2001: 136), but perhaps also for a possible epigrammatic production, of which we have some clues. This production is specifically referred to by the grammarian Priscian (*GL* II 149,14 *Ovidius in Epigrammatis*) and is likely the source of at least one of the two Ovidian fragments quoted by Quintilian (*Inst.* 9.3.70 and 12.10.75), the pentameter *cur ego non dicam, Furia, te furiam?* "Why should I not call you, Fury, a fury?" But aside from the possible production of epigrams, it is an inherently epigrammatic feature—the concise and meaningful form, witty and peremptory—that characterizes many aspects of Ovid's style. And that feature was already critically detected, as a narcissistic *lascivia* (jesting), by ancient readers (e.g. Sen. *Con.* 2.2.12, 7.1.27.19, 3.7.1.10; Quint. *Inst.* 4.1.77, 8.5.6, 10.1.88, and 98, etc.). In a more or less disguised form, there are many epigrams, often of a funeral kind (*Ep.* 2.147–48, 5.29–30, 7.195–96 [= *Fast.* 3.549–50], 14.129–30; *Met.* 2.327–28, 9.794, 14.443–44; *Tr.* 3.3.73–6), scattered throughout the works of Ovid; not to mention the many crypto-epigrams—as when, in *Met.* 14.81, a single verse contains the tragedy of Dido's suicide: *incubuit ferro deceptaque decipit omnes*, "she ... fell upon his sword and, duped herself, duped all" (trans. Melville).

But in addition to this quality of Ovid's style, which already serves as a model of intrinsically epigrammatic writing, scholars have identified some more specific formal procedures or subjects which Martial derives from Ovid. The poetry of exile has been seen as a particularly active and productive presence: "In general, Martial adapts motifs formed in the context of 'poetry in exile', and rewrites them in terms of 'poetry as usual'" (Roman 2001: 124). But there is no area in Ovid's production that did not leave substantial traces in the work of Martial. Starting from

the erotic-elegiac corpus—even for certain basic similarities that bind the genres of elegy and epigram (Canobbio 2011b)—continuing in the central poems (especially the *Metamorphoses*), and culminating in the production of the exile, the allusive references to Ovid scattered throughout Martial's work are far from being either inert or mechanical, but they rather function as an effective enhancement of sense, and are a fundamental prerequisite to grasping the intentions of Martial (Pitcher 1998).

A first essential point that unites the two poets is the relationship with the book, with the book as an object, as a mediator in relating to the reader (Citroni 1986, 1995). The poet's address to the book or to the single poem, the act of sending it to the recipient, is a technique certainly not new in Latin literature (remember the precedents of Catullus circa 35 and, more important, Horace's *Epistle* 1.20). However, it acquires a significance and a centrality which was totally unusual with Ovid, especially in his exile production (Citroni 1986; Pitcher 1998; Geyssen 1999). From the shores of the Black Sea, he sends his compositions to Rome—where he can't go in person—with covering formulas (e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.1–2 *Parve … sine me, liber, ibis in Vrbem*; / *vade …* , "little book … you're off to the City without me; go"; 3.7.1–2 *Vade salutatum … Perillam, / littera*, "go … , scribbled letter, … and greet Perilla for me"). These expressions would have been resumed by Martial, either when he was far from Rome, as on the occasion of his stay in Forum Cornelii, in Cisalpine Italy, or in the comeback years in Spain, which he would refer to as his "exile" (3.4.1 *Romam vade, liber …* , "Go to Rome, my book" [trans. Shackleton Bailey]), and when he was in town as well (e.g. 1.70 *Vade salutatum sine me, liber*, "Go in my place and present my greetings, book"). Even when he was in Rome, he could also resume themes and motifs related to the idea of distance, and more generally of the symbolic distance from the center of power, that is the emperor, and the difficulty of having access to it. In the topography of Rome (e.g. the one described in the path suggested by Ovid to the book in *Tr.* 1.1.69–104) a particular role is now attributed to the *alta Palatia* ("lofty Palatine"), the seat of an aloof and feared ruler who is openly identified with Jupiter (71 *augusta mihi loca dique locorum*, "the august site and its incumbent gods"), the thundering god (82) who struck the poet with his lightning (72 *venit in hoc illa fulmen ab arce caput*, "the bolt that struck my head came from that citadel"); and in accordance with the deification policy of the emperor openly promoted by Domitian, it is directly from Ovid that Martial derives and develops those hyperbolic tropes of panegyrical language, which are focused on this subject and usually associated with the Flavian culture (cf. e.g. in the same address to the book, 1.70.5 *sacro veneranda petes Palatia clivo*, "you will take the Sacred Slope and make for the august Palatine"). The emperor is regularly Jupiter on earth (4.8.12, 5.6.9, 8.15.2, 9.28.10, etc.), the god of the Palatine (9.39.1 *Palatino … Tonanti*, "Palatine Thunderer"; 5.19.4 *Palatini … dei*, "the gods of the Palatine"), which is indeed superior to the heavenly Jupiter (according to the popular panegyrical topos of *superare divos*: Canobbio 2004). Not too different from the exiled Ovid (who was forced to call him, in his begging strategy, *mitissima … numina*, *Tr.* 1.1.73–74), Martial celebrates the clemency of this god with the pleasure of a courtier, but he is not silent

about the looming threat of the god's unlimited power (cf. e.g. 7.99.1 *sic placidum videas semper … Tonantem*, "so may you ever see the Thunderer in kindly mood"). Ovid himself made an instrumental representation of an absolute power which leans toward clemency but limits itself to warning the culprit (actual or potential) without physical violence (*Pont.* 2.2.115–16 *sed placidus facilisque parens ueniaeque paratus / et qui fulmineo saepe sine igne tonat*, "but a calm, compliant father, quick to forgive, whose thunder often lacks a lightning charge"; Galasso 1995 ad loc.). It is exactly this representation that will be taken up by Martial (6.83.3–6 *nam tu missa tua revocasti fulmina dextra: / hos cuperem mores ignibus esse Iovis; / si tua sit summo, Caesar, natura Tonanti, / utetur toto fulmine rara manus*, "for you recalled the bolts that your hand discharged; I would that Jove's fires behaved so. If the supreme Thunderer were of your disposition, Caesar, seldom would his arm use a bolt entire"; 9.24.3–4 *haec sunt Iovis ora sereni: / sic tonat ille deus, cum sine nube tonat*, "this is the aspect of unclouded Jove. So the god thunders when he thunders from a clear sky"). Even this reassuring idea of a "cloudless Jupiter," built on the atmospheric identity of the father of gods, seems to come from Ovid (*Pont.* 2.2.63–64 *cumque serenus erit vultusque remiserit illos / qui secum terras imperiumque movent*, "when he is serene, when he has relaxed those features whose changes move the empire and the world"); then it becomes topical in Flavian encomiastic poetry (Mart. 5.6.9–11 *nosti tempora tu Iovis sereni, / cum fulget placido suoque vultu, / quo nil supplicibus solet negare*, "you know the times when Jove is serene, when he shines with his own gentle countenance wherewith he is wont to deny nothing to suppliants"; Stat. *Silv.* 4.2.40–42 *ipsum cupido tantum spectare vacavit / tranquillum vultu sed maiestate serena / mulcentem radios*, "my eager gaze had the time for him, only him—calm of visage, softening its radiance with serene majesty"), and in the imperial cult (Canobbio 2011a and Coleman 1988 ad loc.; Galasso 1995: 162).

If the comparison of Augustus to Jupiter had already appeared in Horace (*Carm.* 1.2.50–52, 3.5.1–4), it is only with Ovid that an explicit assimilation between the heavenly sovereign and his terrestrial counterpart—the emperor—took place (Scott 1930: 53–64). This issue was particularly frequent in the poetry of exile, an event that was caused precisely by the absolute power of the prince (e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.81, 1.4.26, 2.39–40, 3.5.7, 3.11.62, 4.3.69, etc.). In the exile poetry, in fact, great relevance is attributed (again in the wake of Horace, *Ep.* 1.13.1–5) to the idea of presenting the work of the poet to a far-away and foreign emperor, hostile or suspicious anyway. The book is therefore represented by Ovid as fearful and hesitant (cf. *Tr.* 1.1.87 *cave, liber, et timida circumspice mente*, "so be watchful, unassuming"; 95 *dubitantem et adire timentem*, "hesitant still, still scared to approach him"; 3.1.1 *missus in hanc venio timide liber exulis Urbem*, "I'm an exile's book. He sent me. I'm tired. I feel trepidation"; *Pont.* 3.1.119 *quid trepidas et adire times*, "why tremble, why hesitate to approach her?", etc.), a characterization that indeed reflects the specific condition of an exile who implores the sovereign's mercy, but that also reflects the growing awareness of the distance between the people and the summit of power. It is the same awareness that emerges repeatedly in Martial,

for example, when he asks Parthenius, powerful freedman of Domitian, to present
to the emperor the poet's homage (5.6.7–11):

> admittas timidam brevemque chartam
> intra limina sanctioris aulae.
> nosti tempora tu Iovis sereni,
> cum fulget placido suoque vultu,
> quo nil supplicibus solet negare.

  Admit this timid, slender volume within the threshold of the more sacred palace.
  You know the times when Jove is serene, when he shines with his own gentle
  countenance wherewith he is wont to deny nothing to suppliants.

The awareness of that distance is accompanied by the idea that the relationship with
the center of power is now mediated by a series of filters—in other words, the idea
(which we see emerging in the last of Ovid's works), that during the long Augus-
tan principate a "court," controlling and selecting access to the top of the pyramid,
consolidates power and becomes more and more influential. Therefore, it becomes
necessary to examine in detail the best conditions and times for an approach, so
that the risk of an irritated reaction by the sovereign can be reduced. These are pre-
cautions repeatedly suggested by Ovid—aware that his outcast condition imposes
a very cautious strategy—to his friends and hoped-for patrons (*Pont*. 2.2.63–67
*cumque serenus erit vultusque remiserit illos / qui secum terras imperiumque movent … /
tempus adest aptum precibus*, "when he is serene, when he has relaxed those features
whose changes move the empire and the world … the time is ripe for petitions";
3.3.85–92; etc.), or to his wife (on the best way to introduce herself to Livia-Juno:
Pont. 3.1.133–64), which become normal behavior in the approach to the sovereign
(in addition to Mart. 5.6.7–11, quoted above, cf. 4.8.7–12, 7.99, 12.11).
    Together with the explicit deification of the emperor, the introduction of a reli-
gious lexicon in connection with the prince and the imperial court, with the spaces
and rituals that punctuate its everyday life, must be attributed to Ovid. The seat
of the *domus Augusta* which hosts the *Romana … numina* (*Pont*. 2.2.41) is assimi-
lated to a *venerabile templum* (*Pont*. 3.3.91; cf. 2.2.69 *incolumis coniunx sua pulvinaria
servat*, "his wife, still vigorous, tends to his imperial couch"), and the dignitaries,
who live at court next to the gods, are his priests. The definition of the respec-
tive roles appears precisely in the exiled Ovid, who assigns the function of divine
ministers to his friends-patrons, calling for their support from Augustus, the earthly
Jupiter (*Pont*. 2.2.121–23 *qui quoniam patria toto sumus orbe remoti / nec licet ante ipsos
procubuisse deos, / quos colis ad superos haec fer mandata sacerdos*, "since I'm a whole
world apart from my own country, and cannot lie prostrate in person before the
gods whom you worship, please act as my priest, convey my message to those high
deities"). But the language of the sacred will find widespread diffusion particularly
in the occasional poetry of the Flavian age, both in Martial (cf. e.g. 5.6.8 *intra limina*

sanctioris aulae, "within the threshold of the more sacred palace") and in Statius (cf. *Silv.* 5 praef. 9–11 *Praeterea latus omne divinae domus semper demereri pro mea mediocritate conitor. Nam qui bona fide deos colit, amat et sacerdotes*, "Furthermore, I always do my humble best to oblige any appendage of the Divine House; for whoever worships the gods in good faith, loves their priests too"; 3.3.64–66 *semperque gradi prope numina, semper / Caesareum coluisse latus sacrisque deorum / arcanis haerere datum*, "and always you were privileged to walk close to deity, always to attend Caesar's side and be near the secrets of the gods").

This more-than-human characterization of the emperor, the repository of a power without limits, enhances the awareness that making public poetry like Martial's in this context implies constraints and imposes caution. In other words, it conveys the awareness of the inevitably political character of this poetry (an idea urged by the allusive references to Ovid's exile poetry). In this sense the resumption of the distinction between *page* and *life*, on which the second book of the *Tristia* is built (354 *vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea*, "a respectable life-style, a flirtatious Muse"), is significant. Martial reaffirms this principle in his verse as *lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba*, "my page is wanton, but my life is virtuous" (1.4.8) and in the prefatory epistle of the first book (9–12). The "theoretical" precedent to which he appeals especially is Catullus (16.5 *nam castum esse decet pium poetam / ipsum, versiculos nihil necessest*, "for the true poet should be chaste himself, his verses need not be" [trans. Lee]), but the fact that epigram 1.4 is addressed to Domitian reminds us instead of Ovid's letter to Augustus. And the specific Ovidian precedent seems to be alluded to in other passages such as 4.27.1 (*saepe meos laudare soles, Auguste, libellos*, "often, Augustus, you are wont to praise my little books"); 5.15.1 (*Quintus nostrorum liber est, Auguste, iocorum*, "this is the fifth volume of my jests, Augustus"); 8.82.1 (*dante tibi turba querulos, Auguste, libellos*, "while the multitude offer you plaintive petitions, Augustus") and 5 (*fer vates, Auguste, tuos*, "bear with your bards, Augustus"), where the flaunted attribution of the epithet *Augustus* to Domitian, in contexts dealing with the relationship of the emperor with poetic production, emphasizes the two terms of the conflict between a prince (Augustus) and a poet (Ovid), which had had dramatic results and must have then appeared as paradigmatic.

In accordance with the Ovidian figure of the "devoted reader" (Citroni 1995: 431–64), even Martial—a poet fully integrated in the new "society of the book" (Fitzgerald 2007: 139–66)—constantly communicates with the audience of his readers, along with the occasional specific addressee. In addition to them, he also communicates, more or less explicitly, with an indirect and redoubtable recipient: the over-reader Domitian, who in Martial's verses has a looming and threatening presence, like Augustus in Ovid's final poems. Like Ovid, Martial affirms an idea of literature, claiming the freedom which artistic fiction needs and at the same time negotiating with the emperor this demand for autonomy (and for financial support as well). He does this through the instrument at his disposal—that is, the power deriving from his success and exerted amid the vast reading audience

(his own proud claim of being *toto notus in orbe*, "known the world over" [1.1.2] is connected to the similar formulation of Ovid: Citroni 1975: 15–16; Roman 2001: 124).

If the epigrammatic genre aims at presenting its verses dismissively as an innocent *lusus*, a pastime that does not deserve the attention of the powerful, Martial actually boasts of the power of his verses "perpetuating the ephemeral" (Coleman 1998) and ennobling its subject. He is well aware that many of his readers wish to be part of his work (cf. 4.31.1–2 *quod cupis in nostris dicique legique libellis / et nonnullus honos creditur iste tibi*, "your wishing to be mentioned and read in my little books and accounting that as something of an honor"), and he uses his power to confer cultural distinction upon his hoped-for patrons in exchange for the economic and social support he needs.

In this perspective, particularly meaningful are Martial's epigrams celebrating the buildings or the refined settings (such as thermal baths and gardens) that decorate the "villa life" of some of his patrons (e.g. 3.58, 4.64, 6.42, 8.68, 10.30 and 51, etc.), as well as art objects and items of material culture illustrated by the collections of *Xenia* and *Apophoreta*. What the poet actually describes and enhances are the refined lifestyle, the tastes and aesthetic ideals of the Flavian social elite. These elements find full legitimacy in Domitian's Rome—as opposed to the censorious and archaizing ethical models of republican morality—and are indeed the most eloquent expression of the new golden age, of the "best of all possible worlds" realized by Flavian society (Fabbrini 2007). It is not difficult to see, even in this unconventional celebration of luxury and of modern sophistication, the importance of Ovid's model, and his enthusiastic adherence to the values of *cultus* and civilization: in addition to the "manifesto" contained in the introduction of the *Medicamina* (Rosati 1985: 23–35) see the famous lines of *Ars* 3.121–28 *prisca iuvent alios: ego me nunc denique natum / gratulor: haec aetas moribus apta meis / … / sed quia cultus adest, nec nostros mansit in annos / rusticitas, priscis illa superstes avis*, "Let ancient times delight other folk: I congratulate myself that I was born till now; this age fits my nature well … but because culture is with us, and rusticity, which survived until our grandsires, has not lasted to our days" (trans. Mozley–Goold). But, more generally, one can recognize in it the enhancement of an anti-naturalistic aesthetic and of the artificiality that Ovid illustrates both in the lifestyle of Rome's wealthy society and in the mythical-fabulous world of the *Metamorphoses*.

Statius' *Silvae*: Art, Myth, and Villa Culture

In this celebration of luxury and of technological achievements (which has long been underestimated, in compliance with the cliché of Martial as an advocate of archaic frugality), the Spanish poet shows a marked consonance with a dominant feature of Statius' "occasional" poetry. In the *Silvae*, the intrinsically encomiastic aspect of this branch of Flavian poetry, celebrating the happy fullness of life ensured

by the reign of Domitian, becomes even more explicit. The collection, which begins with the celebration of the emperor through the ekphrasis of the equestrian monument erected in his honor, gives an illustration of the lifestyle of the Flavian elite, through the description of their villas, their gardens, and the decorations adorning them, as well as of the technological innovations that were now part of the daily life of the affluent society in the capital of the world.

The line of continuity between this production (and its ideological background) and late Augustan poetry, particularly Ovid, was and continues to be generally ignored (e.g. Zeiner 2005: 75) or at least underestimated. But apart from this Flavian cultural debt to the ideology of the *cultus* and artifice developed by Ovid, it is thanks to him that the way of looking at reality through an artistic filter took place (as if it were already represented by another *medium*). His "ekphrastic eye" acts as a descriptive model of the real; it aestheticizes elements of reality, assimilating them to the artistic sphere or the universe of myth. Moreover, myth itself plays a key role as a tool and symbol of distinction in the elite life; and of course the thematic repertoire that inspires visual artists has as its primary source Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. "Bible of the painters," and of visual artists in general, since the first years of its circulation (as shown, for example, by Pompeian frescoes; Knox in this volume), the poem provides literary models of myth already destined for a very visual perception by its readers: a "poetry for the eyes," finding its natural destination in the most varied forms of a material culture, which uses myth to decorate the spaces of everyday life.

While there are traces of Ovid in Martial's description of precious art objects exchanged as gifts among leading figures of the elite (having as subjects the myths of Hermaphroditus, Hyacinthus, Europa, etc.; Hinds 2007: 141–45), as well as in the iconographies that serve as models for the authors of those objects, in Statius' *Silvae* the visual charm of the *Metamorphoses* works at various levels. In many cases, it must be assumed that the allusive reference to the Ovidian models is consciously planned, from the architecture of the thermal baths and gardens, or from the furniture decorating them; in many other cases, it is Statius himself who evokes, in the mind of the poem's dedicatee (as a gesture of homage) or of the general reader, an illustrious mythical-literary model, able to give them the same aura of distinction as those who adopt a higher lifestyle.

We know that the development of the various forms of home decoration in the late republic and early empire is marked by the progressive weakening of the "realistic" illusion and by the emergence of an anti-realistic and fantastic symbolic language (Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 37). This change does make room for the universe of myth and draws largely on the images and figures staged in Ovidian poetry. This "domestication of myth" created in the *Silvae* animates the interior spaces and the gardens that form the scenic backdrop to everyday life, and it shows elite daily life as an existence that takes place in a more than human setting. Thanks to an extraordinary mastery of the potential of language, Statius activates a series of suggestions that evoke the divine dimension, stirring in his dedicatees the emotion of living in

the midst of divine and semi-divine figures. For example, when he describes the villa of Manilius Vopiscus, next to the luxury of the furnishings dazzling the visitor, he celebrates the technological "miracle" of water running through the whole house (*Silv.* 1.3.34–37):

> Quid primum mediumve canam, quo fine quiescam?
> auratasne trabes an Mauros undique postes
> an picturata lucentia marmora vena
> mirer, an emissas per cuncta cubilia nymphas?

What shall I sing to begin with or halfway, on what ending shall I fall silent? Shall I wonder at gilded beams or Moorish doorposts everywhere or marble lucent with colours or water discharged through every bedchamber? (trans. Shackleton Bailey)

The metonymy of the nymphs / running water piped throughout the rooms (or better the *bedrooms*) of the villa of Manilius Vopiscus animates and mythicizes the concrete reality, creating a visual image with a strong erotic potential, and seems to suggest the hunt of the lord, ruler of his private space, as if he was a god hunting his erotic prey: a very common iconography in Ovid's poem, beginning with the archetypal story of Daphne and Apollo. A "fantasy of power" (Fredrick 1995), therefore, that stimulates and rewards the pleasure of conquest in the householder, who is invited to imagine himself in a more than human condition and experience the thrill of being a god.

An open invitation to feel part of the world of myth is addressed to Pollius Felix. In the celebration of his beautiful villa, where technology has "tamed" nature (which is willingly subjected to the dominion of art), he is assimilated to the figures of Arion, Amphion, and Orpheus (2.2.52–62):

> his favit natura locis, hic victa colenti
> cessit et ignotos docilis mansuevit in usus.
> mons erat hic ubi plana vides; et lustra fuerunt,
> quae nunc tecta subis; ubi nunc nemora ardua cernis,
> hic nec terra fuit: domuit possessor, et illum
> formantem rupes expugnantemque secuta
> gaudet humus. nunc cerne iugum discentia saxa
> intrantesque domos iussumque recedere montem.
> iam Methymnaei vatis manus et chelys una
> Thebais et Getici cedat tibi gloria plectri:
> et tu saxa moves, et te nemora alta sequuntur.

Some spots Nature has favoured, in others she has been overcome and yielded to the developer, letting herself be taught new and gentler ways. Where you see level ground, there used to be a hill; the building you now enter was wilderness;

where now you see lofty woods, there was not even land. The occupant has tamed it all; the soil rejoices as he shapes rocks or expels them, following his lead. Now behold the cliffs as they learn the yoke, and the dwellings as they enter, and the mountain bidden to withdraw. Let the hand of Methymna's bard and therewith the Theban lyre and the glory of Getic quill give way to you: you too move rocks and lofty forests follow you.

The common theme in the *Silvae* of nature overcome by art, that is, by culture and the "marvels of civilization" (Newlands 2002: 154–98), plays a well-known role in the *Metamorphoses* (its symbolic core is in the representation of Diana's cave, where nature imitates art, reversing the terms of the aesthetics of mimesis: 3.158–59 *simulaverat artem / ingenio natura suo*, "Nature by her own cunning had imitated art"; trans. Miller–Goold), and this Ovidian-oriented taste largely inspires the architecture of the gardens of the early empire (Myers 2000; Hinds 2002).

The mythologizing of the landscape, as we said, at times is probably part of an architectural plan consciously alluding to the language of (Ovidian) myth, but on other occasions it is certainly the result of the mythopoetic effects of the poets, who suggest to their patrons a "cultured" interpretation of their world. A very evident case of this kind of Ovidianism, indeed declared, is *Silvae* 2.3 (Hardie 2006; Newlands 2011: 14–15, 157–58), which describes the peculiar shape of a tree in the garden of Atedius Melior. Statius imagines that that tree with the trunk immersed in the lake is the outcome of a metamorphosis, and through a very Ovidian scene, involving a nymph pursued by Pan, he recreates the *aition* of that "artistic" landscape. The words of Diana, who protests the nth rape suffered by one of her nymphs (*numquamne avidis arcebo rapinis / hoc petulans foedumque pecus, semperque pudici / decrescet mihi turba chori*? "Shall I never fend off this boisterous, foul brood from their greedy raids, and shall the number of my chaste company ever dwindle?", 24–26), are an obvious metaliterary footnote referring to the hypotext of the Ovidian poem (Klodt 2005: 217–18, n. 108), establishing a continuity between it and Statius' text—almost an extension of the space / time of the myth from one poet to the other.

The mythicization of everyday life, which creates the feeling of living among the gods in a climate of peace and universal harmony, gives form to the idea of being in a new golden age, the most popular cultural myth in the celebrations of the imperial power. If the spectacularization of reality is a deep-felt issue in Martial, not only in the *Liber spectaculorum* but in every sort of entertainment offered by Rome, the world-city that welcomes and sums up the whole multifaceted reality of the empire (Rimell 2009: 181–206), that issue is also central in Statius' *Silvae*, where the elite lifestyle itself is a spectacle of the energies, the resources, and the potential connected to the empire. The high-quality exotic marbles shown in the sumptuous house of Violentilla (1.2), for instance, are a triumphant exhibition of Roman power in the world, from whose most remote regions flow the most fabulous treasures and wonders. "The poetics of the *Silvae* are fashioned to address the many facets

of Empire, among them the new possibilities for acquiring political power, wealth, social status, and different forms of cultured leisure" (Newlands 2002: 3); and also in this respect an affinity with Ovid can be seen. Ovid is the poet who in elegy had praised the refinements of cosmopolitan and modern urban culture (the new city of marble that Augustus was proud to have built on the former city of bricks; Labate 1984: 13–64), and who in his great mythological poem had adopted the scheme of universal history, making it culminate in Augustan Rome. From Ovid, Statius borrows a global perspective, that is, an attitude that places oneself in the context of an imperial horizon. And as in the Ovidian "poetry for the eyes," even in Statius there is an extensive use of the language of visual perception: the reader of the *Silvae* is carried along in the described environment and faced with its unfolding spectacle, being invited to take part in and enjoy the pleasures that Flavian society offers to its subjects (Newlands 2012: 5–6).

Ovid as Occasional Poet

It is worth analyzing the reasons for the crucial influence of Ovid on Flavian occasional poetry. First, it should be stressed that Ovid himself, in the epistles from Tomi, refers to a production of his poetry (not transmitted to us) of occasional kind, destined for prominent members of the Augustan elite and dating back to the pre-exile period: an epithalamium for the wedding of Paullus Fabius Maximus, his friend and patron, with Marcia, relative of Augustus (*Pont.* 1.2.131–32), and an epicedium for the death of Valerius Messalla Corvinus (*Pont.* 1.7.29–30; more in Knox 2009: 209). This production, albeit in a limited circulation (Citroni 1995: 459–62), shows an Ovid integrated into Roman society, and willing to pay homage either to the members of the imperial family or to the court that revolves around them, or at least to friends and patrons of the social and cultural elite of Rome, who we are told (like those of Martial: cf. above) aimed at the honor of figuring in the poet's verses (*Tr.* 3.4.67–68 *ante volebatis, gratique erat instar honoris, / versibus in nostris nomina vestra legi*, "before, you were eager, it was a much-sought honor to rate a mention in my verse"). Therefore, we deal with an elegiac poet anything but strange or antagonistic to the sphere of civil life, or even to court society: a poet loyal to the prince and willing to make him (even) an indirect tribute by celebrating figures close to him, thus proving to be a subject grateful for the good fortune to live in such a satisfying environment.

This image of a pre-exilic Ovid may be conditioned by the will of the disgraced poet to recreate for himself a past in line with the ethical-political guidelines of the principate and to carve out the position of a poet and *civis* integrated into the ranks of Roman society and its network of relationships. However, there is no doubt that in the works of exile he gives form to a program that envisages for himself, in the case of a hoped-for return to Rome, a function not too dissimilar to the one

served some decades later, during the Flavian age, by the occasional poets, especially Statius (Labate 1987). Statius shows himself willing to put his authority as a poet (the highest among the living) in the service of the new social reality, claiming for himself the role of shrewd interpreter and enthusiastic advocate, capable of orienting the perception of that reality, and thus the "political" judgment of the readers (Rosati 2006); a poet that presents himself as "licensed spokesperson" (Zeiner 2005: 45ff.) of his city and of the life that takes place there—in short, as an advocate of the political structure that made the new Rome possible, and to which his own elegiac production showed an enthusiastic adherence.

This is a key element of continuity, behind the differences at the surface, between Ovid's youthful elegy and exilic elegy, even spreading to Flavian occasional poetry. Not only is there an ideology of modernity that binds Ovid and Statius (and even Martial), but the spectacularization/aestheticization of reality plays a similar celebratory purpose, thus acting as a de facto praise of the "new world" and of the political system that is its bedrock. Ovid himself, aware of his disgrace and of the political and cultural climate of the late Augustan principate, had already envisioned for himself that role of "court poet" which the Flavian poets aspired to. To them, it was the necessary condition for making poetry and safeguarding their role and professional dignity in a "principate without Maecenas." From this point of view, Ovid had paved the way for an important domain of future Latin poetry.

Further Reading

For discussion about Ovid and "Silver" Latin poetry see Williams (1978), Galinsky (1989), and Hinds (1998). Fresh surveys on Ovid's presence in early imperial literature are provided by Tissol and Wheeler (2002), Hardie (2002), and McNelis (2009). Ovid's multifarious influence on imperial (mainly Flavian) material culture is now being intensely explored: Myers (2000), Connors (2000), Hinds (2002), Rosati (forthcoming b). Since the pioneering Zingerle (1877), Ovid's importance for Martial has been widely recognized: the best bibliography is referred to in Hinds (2007); relatively less explored is Ovid's presence in Statius' *Silvae*, but several major issues and suggestions have emerged from the recent critical fortune of this work. On Flavian emperor worship Sauter (1934) and Scott (1936) provide a firm documentary basis; on Ovid's key contribution to the formation of panegyrical language see Scott (1930); many valuable additions are also to be found in recent commentaries on Ovid's exile works.

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Poetae Ovidiani

Ovid's Metamorphoses *in Imperial Roman Epic*

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The story of Ovid's reception begins with Ovid himself: his re-edition of his first, five-book collection of *Amores* in the extant three-book edition (*Am. Epigr.*); addition of a third book to the completed two-book *Ars Amatoria* and recantation of his three-book primer on love in the *Remedia amoris*; composition of six "double" *Heroides* on the model of his friend Sabinus' responses to his single *Heroides* (*Am.* 2.18); and repeated echoes of and revisions to his *Ars*, *Metamorphoses*, and *Fasti* in the exile poetry. With the exception of Virgil's *Aeneid*, moreover, no text so thoroughly informed the early imperial Roman literary imagination as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This chapter charts the enthusiastic reception of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, put into circulation in 8 CE, by the Latin epic poets writing in the first century of our era: Manilius (*fl.* first quarter of the first century CE); Lucan (39–65 CE); Valerius Flaccus (dead by 95 CE); Statius (c. 50–96 CE); and Silius Italicus (c. 26–102 CE). If Virgil's *Aeneid* constituted an important political, thematic, structural, and stylistic model for his epic successors, as many scholars have argued,[1] Ovid's *Metamorphoses* offered them subjects, themes, and poetic techniques to trace fissures in the optimistic Virgilian epic paradigm. Early imperial Roman epic thus enjoys pride of place in the dual reception of Virgil and Ovid, as the earliest example of large-scale negotiation of the *Aeneid* through the lens of the *Metamorphoses*.

The shadowy figure of Manilius, apparently a younger contemporary of Ovid, who authored a five-book *Astronomica* late in the reign of Augustus, is our earliest extant witness to the distinctively, and pervasively, Ovidian configurations that classical epic exhibits in the first century CE (Flores 1995; Wheeler 2009). While his didactic subject and metrical practices align Manilius with the model of Virgil in the *Georgics* (Volk 2002: 196–245; 2009; on meter, Duckworth 1969: 90–91), the impact of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* on his project can be discerned in the proem to the third book, which opens with a decidedly Ovidian cadence: Man. *Astr.* 3.1–3

In noua surgentem maioraque viribus ausum nec per inaccessos metuentem vadere saltus / ducite, Pierides, "Lead me, Pierian Muses, as I rise to new heights; though having dared more than my strength, I do not fear to enter untouched glades [of poetry]." Manilius' invocation of the Muses echoes the proem of the *Metamorphoses*: Ov. *Met.* 1.1–4 *In noua fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora; di … primaque ab origine mundi / ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen*, "My mind moves me to tell of shapes changed into new bodies; gods … draw a fine thread of song from the beginning of the world down to my own times." Manilius' adaptation here of the *Metamorphoses' incipit* suggests his recognition of Ovid's lexical debt to earlier didactic epic, and demonstrates his self-conscious realignment of Ovid's prefatory lexicon with its appropriate linguistic register in didactic.[2] But Manilius complicates this picture by continuing to engage with Ovid's metamorphic diction and themes in the lines that follow, which reject the hackneyed subjects of grand epic (3.3–35)—not only the historical wars of Troy, Messene, Persia, Alexander, and Rome, but also such mythological themes as gigantomachy (*Astr.* 3.5–6), Medea (9–13), and Thebes (16–17), which had recently been treated by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (at 1.151–62, 7.1–424, and 3.1–4.603 respectively).

Such proud assertions of literary originality figure in the proem to each book of the *Astronomica*, but are memorably belied by Manilius' extensive reworking of Ovid's account of Perseus and Andromeda in the fifth book (*Astr.* 5.538–618), which engages Ovidian diction, themes, and narrative trajectory closely in a lengthy mythological digression set into a discussion of the constellation of Andromeda. Beginning, like Ovid, with the impious boast by Andromeda's mother of her beauty (*immeritam maternae pendere linguae / Andromedan poenas iniustus iusserat Ammon*, *Met.* 4.670–71 ∼ *hanc quondam poenae dirorum culpa parentum / prodidit*, *Astr.* 5.540–41), for which Neptune demanded her exposure on a rocky crag (*quam simul ad duras religatam bracchia cautes / vidit Abantiades*, *Met.* 4.672–73 ∼ *mollia per duras panduntur bracchia cautes*, *Astr.* 5.550) and sent a sea-monster (*belua*, *Met.* 4.689; *Astr.* 5.544) to devour her, Manilius emphasizes her maidenly modesty (*manibusque modestos / celasset vultus*, *Met.* 4.682 ∼ *seruatur tamen in poena vultusque pudorque*, *Astr.* 5.553) and beauty worthy of an artwork (except that a slight breeze ruffled her hair: *nisi quod levis aura capillos / moverat et tepido manabant lumina fletu, / marmoreum ratus esset opus*, *Met.* 4.673–75 ∼ *ipsa levi flatu refovens pendentia membra / aura per extremas resonavit flebile rupes*, *Astr.* 5.565–66), such that the hero Perseus, flying home after slaying the Medusa (*victor Gorgonei*, *Met.* 4.617–18; *Astr.* 5.567), no sooner saw her than he fell in love with her (*trahit inscius ignes / et stupet et visae correptus imagine formae*, *Met.* 4.675–76 ∼ *ubi pendentem vidit de rupe puellam, / deriguit, facie quem non stupefecerat hostis*, *Astr.* 5.569–70) and undertakes to rescue her in order to marry her ("*ut mea sit servata mea virtute paciscor,*" *Met.* 4.703 ∼ *pactusque maritam*, *Astr.* 5.578). Manilius, like Ovid, treats Perseus' ensuing combat with the sea-monster as the centerpiece of his narrative (*Met.* 4.706–34 ∼ *Astr.* 5.579–611; see Liuzzi 1997 and Feraboli and Scarcia 2001 ad loc.), and concludes with the hero's successful receipt of his bride in marriage

(*resoluta* catenis / *incedit* virgo, *pretiumque et causa laboris*, *Met.* 4.738–39 ∼ *solvitque haerentem* vinclis *de rupe* puellam, *Astr.* 5.614), before pointedly correcting Ovid's unaccountable omission of the metamorphic capstone of the myth, namely Andromeda's catasterism (*Astr.* 5.616–17): *hic dedit Andromedae caelum stellisque sacravit / mercedem tanti belli*, "he gave heaven to Andromeda, and hallowed among the stars his reward for such a great battle."

Manilius' early appropriation of his admired predecessor's mythic material is a harbinger of the reception of the *Metamorphoses* in the rest of the first century CE. For while Ovid retells the central myth of Virgil's *Aeneid* late in the *Metamorphoses* (13.623–14.580; see Casali 2007), none of the early imperial epic poets rehearse it, although in the epics of Lucan and Silius the myth of Aeneas becomes almost typological for Roman political (and literary) history. Rather, like Manilius, the epic poets of the first century CE obsessively rehearse myths from Ovid's repertoire in the *Metamorphoses*.[3] Most obviously, Statius and Valerius Flaccus compose long mythological epics about Thebes and the Argonauts respectively, drawing extensively on Ovid's Theban narrative of *Metamorphoses* 3–4 and on his treatment of Medea and the Argonauts in *Metamorphoses* 7. But even before their epics, as we have seen, Manilius alludes to these very myths in his rejection of Ovidian subjects in the proem to *Astronomica* 3; and, some 50 years after Manilius, the Neronian poet Lucan conjoins the myths of Thebes and Medea in his civil war epic, *Bellum Civile*, as symbolic of Rome's fatal predilection for civil war and kindred bloodshed.

In composing historico-martial epic without the conventional divine machinery, Lucan rejects the models of Homer and Virgil, though his inclusion of myth—through history, simile, and analogy—admits to his civil war poem a good deal of material traditionally associated with high epic, such as the gods and heroes (Feeney 1991: 250–301, esp. 292–98). Moreover, he tends to draw his myths from the *Metamorphoses*. In this regard Lucan follows the practice of Manilius in the *Astronomica* and anticipates that of the Flavian epicists, Valerius, Statius, and Silius.

We can chart the impact of Ovidian mythmaking in his reception of the Ovidian Perseus narrative. Lucan too extensively reworks Ovid's account of Perseus in the ninth book of the *Bellum Civile*, where he narrates Cato's march through Libya at the head of the republican army. Among the many hazards Cato and his men encounter in the Libyan desert is a snake-infested pool that entices the weary soldiers to allay their thirst despite the deadly venom that infects the waters. Lucan disavows all credence in the tale that Libya's serpents originated from the drops of Medusa's blood spilled by Perseus as he flew over the desert (*BC* 9.619–23):

> cur Libycus tantis exundet pestibus aer
> fertilis in mortes, aut quid secreta nocenti
> miscuerit natura solo, non cura laborque
> noster scire valet, nisi quod volgata per orbem
> fabula pro vera decepit saecula causa.

> Why the Libyan air abounds in such great plagues,
> prolific in death, or what hidden Nature
> has mingled with her harmful soil, no care or toil of ours
> can know; except that a legend, spread throughout the world,
> has deceived the centuries in place of the real reason.[4]

Lucan's expression of disdain for the widespread currency of the myth nonetheless introduces an 80-line mythological excursus on Medusa, which offers provocative testimony, in the phrase *volgata per orbem* / *fabula* (9.622–23), to the "inescapable post-Ovidian dimension [of] the whole system of Greco-Roman myth" (Hinds 2011: 9) in the wake of the *Metamorphoses*.

Elaine Fantham (1992: 110–13) has demonstrated that Ovid supplied the immediate model for Lucan's mythological digression here (*BC* 9.619–99). Ovid's "Perseid" opens with the hero flying over Libya carrying the Gorgon's head (*Met.* 4.617–20):

> cumque super Libycas victor penderet harenas,
> Gorgonei capitis guttae cecidere cruentae,
> quas humus exceptas varios animavit in angues;
> unde frequens illa est infestaque terra colubris.

> As Perseus was flying over the sandy wastes of Libya, bloody drops from the Gorgon's head fell down; and the earth received them as they fell and changed them into snakes of various kinds. And for this cause the land of Libya is full of deadly serpents.

But the historical epicist corrects his predecessor's misguided mythological approach to epic by reordering Perseus' heroic labors to unfold in chronological sequence. Whereas Ovid, in his "Perseid," focuses on the hero's rescue of Andromeda from the sea-monster and delays his account of Medusa's death at his hands to follow it, at their wedding banquet (*Met.* 4.772–89), Lucan opens with his inquiry into the origins of Libya's snakes before proceeding thence to relate Perseus' killing of Medusa (*BC* 9.624–83), his flight over Libya (*BC* 9.684–99), and the catalogue of Libyan snakes born from Medusa's blood (*BC* 9.700–33).

Lucan also indulges in intertextual play with the *incipit* of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, opening his epic narrative proper with quintessentially Ovidian diction and thematics (*BC* 1.67–74):

> <u>fert animus</u> causas tantarum expromere rerum,
> inmensumque aperitur opus, quid in arma furentem
> inpulerit populum, quid pacem excusserit orbi.
> invida <u>fatorum series</u> summisque negatum
> <u>stare diu</u> nimioque graves sub pondere lapsus
> nec se Roma ferens. sic, cum conpage soluta

saecula tot mundi suprema coegerit hora
antiquum repetens iterum chaos …

My spirit leads me to reveal the causes of such great events,
and an immense task is opened up—to tell what drove
a maddened people to war, to tell what cast out peace from the world.
It was the envious chain of destiny, impossibility of the very high
standing long, huge collapses under too much weight,
Rome's inability to bear herself. So, when the final hour
brings to an end the long ages of the universe, its structure dissolved,
reverting to primeval chaos …

Lucan derives the tag *fert animus* from the opening line of the *Metamorphoses* (quoted above),[5] while the "envious chain of destiny" that engulfs Rome in the course of Lucan's poem combines Pythagoras' chain of destiny in Ovid (*seriemque … fati*, *Met.* 15.152) with the series of evils that overwhelms the founder of Thebes and precipitates his exile from the city: *Met.* 4.564–66 *luctu serieque malorum* / *victus et ostentis, quae plurima viderat, exit* / *conditor urbe sua* (cf. *Her.* 9.5). The resulting return to chaos (*BC* 1.74) is itself a recurrent theme in the *Metamorphoses* (Tarrant 2002), expressed in the Ovidian phrase which Mother Earth employs when she begs Jupiter for help during Phaethon's chariot ride: *Met.* 2.298–99 *si freta, si terrae pereunt, si regia caeli,* / *in Chaos antiquum confundimur*, "if seas and lands perish, and the realm of heaven, we are plunged into ancient Chaos." Lucan here reflexively annotates (Hinds 1998: 1–16) his quotation of the Ovidian phrase precisely as a quotation in the words *repetens iterum*, which self-consciously draw attention to his reuse of Ovidian diction and motifs. For if Ovid's epic takes as a central theme the difficulty of establishing and maintaining cosmic harmony (cf. e.g. *cumque sit ignis aquae pugnax, vapor umidus omnes* / *res creat et discors concordia fetibus apta est*, "and though fire fights with water, warm steam generates all things and discordant concord is suitable for offspring," *Met.* 1.432–33), Lucan's epic documents the dissolution of cosmic harmony altogether: *BC* 1.98 *temporis angusti mansit concordia discors* / *paxque fuit non sponte ducum*, "For a narrow time discordant concord remained / and there was peace, though not by the leaders' wish."

The proliferation of Ovidian diction, characters, and themes in the *Bellum Civile* is complemented by Lucan's debt to Ovid in his handling of the dactylic hexameter. James H. Dee's recent computer-generated studies of the hexameters of Virgil and Ovid (2004, 2005, 2006) illuminate important commonalities and differences in their handling of the dactylic hexameter. The most striking feature of the Ovidian hexameter is a predilection for a dactylic first foot (occurring in his eight most frequent hexameter patterns), while that of the Virgilian hexameter is a preference for a fourth-foot spondee (occurring in his eight most frequent hexameter patterns). In addition to his preference for dactylic patterns, Ovid favors the coincidence of

ictus and accent and avoids heavy elision and other irregularities (like half-lines and hypermetric lines) that Virgil cultivated, in order to achieve a smoother and swifter line of verse. As is often remarked, Latin poets of the imperial age (and later) follow Ovid's metrical practices rather than Virgil's, and Lucan is our earliest evidence of this trend, for his hexameter practice frequently aligns with Ovid's by comparison with Virgil's (Duckworth 1967: 89).

Throughout the *Argonautica*, Valerius draws extensively on Ovidian metrics, diction, themes, characters, and myths. Announcing the subject of his poem as "the first straits traversed by the gods' great sons" and the "prophetic ship," the *Argo*, "which dared to pursue the shores of Scythian Phasis" (*Arg.* 1.1−3: *Prima deum magnis canimus freta pervia natis* / *fatidicamque ratem, Scythici quae Phasidis oras* / *ausa sequi*), Valerius draws on the phrasing of multiple literary models. If Apollonios of Rhodes, the author of a celebrated Greek *Argonautica*, is obviously a privileged model here, so too, as Alessandro Barchiesi has noted (2001: 330−31), is the opening of an Ovidian propempticon in the second book of the *Amores* (*Am.* 2.11.1−4), which begins as a "meta-*Argonautica*" and has influenced Valerius' choice of opening word (*prima*), the relative clause with *quae*, the anthropomorphism of the *Argo*, and the reference to the Clashing Rocks. Ovid repeatedly treated Argonautic material, primarily in conjunction with Medea who is the subject not only of his lost tragedy, but also of *Heroides* 12 and the first half of *Metamorphoses* 7. Valerius' debt to Ovid's Argonautic itinerary in *Metamorphoses* 7 emerges in his formulation of the *Argo*'s goal as *Phasidis oras* (*Arg.* 1.2; cf. *Phasidis amnem*, 4.616), which recalls Ovid's own introductory scene-setting to his Argonautic narrative at the outset of *Metamorphoses* 7, right down to its metrical *sedes* (*contigerant rapidas limosi Phasidos undas*, Ov. *Met.* 7.6; itself modeled on Catullus 64.2−3, *dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas* / *Phasidos ad fluctus*).

Valerius' lexical and mythological debts, in his proem, to Ovid (and Catullus) stand in particularly close relation to his description of the *Argo* some hundred lines later (1.130−48). This ekphrasis has been interpreted as "surcharged" with programmatic intertextuality (e.g. Zissos 2008: xxxix), through what Martha Davis (1990: 48) has called the literalization of the metaphor of the ship of poetry. Of the ekphrasis, Barchiesi (1995: 62) has observed that the selection and treatment of scenes invokes a specific mythopoetic tradition, that of Catullus 64 and, above all, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, while Zissos (2008: 153−66) has detailed Valerius' specific lexical and thematic debts in the passage to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It is thus not surprising that on the voyage to Colchis the Flavian epicist's *Argo* continually revisits myths and mythological sites made famous by Ovid's epic (Hershkowitz 1998: 68−78), often—though not exclusively—in passages that seem to renew the sexual symbolism with which Ovid had invested the *locus amoenus* (Hinds 2002). An early example in the *Argonautica* comes in the second book, when the Valerian Hercules rescues the Trojan princess Hesione from a rocky crag in the Troad (*Arg.* 2.451−549). The myth is briefly related by Ovid in *Metamorphoses* 11 (205−13), but appears only rarely elsewhere in extant Latin

literature (Bömer 1980 ad loc.). But of even more interest is Valerius' recasting of this Ovidian myth in the lineaments of another. For Valerius here, in his own account of Hercules' rescue of Hesione, extensively reworks Perseus' rescue of Andromeda, which we have seen functions as a touchstone of Ovidian reception in Manilius and Lucan. Valerius specifies Perseus as an appropriate exemplar for his own hero early in the epic (*Arg.* 1.64–70), when Jason is commissioned by the tyrant Pelias to recover the golden fleece from Aeetes in Colchis, describing him as wishing to possess the heroic attributes of Perseus (his winged sandals) or of Triptolemus (Ceres' airborne chariot, harnessed to flying dragons).[6] Both mythical heroes receive their fullest treatment in extant Latin literature from Ovid, who follows the lengthy Perseus panel of *Metamorphoses* 4.610–5.249 with his account of the rape of Proserpina, which includes the details of Ceres' gift of agriculture through the agency of Triptolemus (5.642–61; Ovid also rehearses this myth in *Fasti* 4.502–60). But the Ovidian Perseus is also an obvious model for Valerius' Hercules because of the Herculean resonances with which Ovid endows Perseus, who finds his mettle tested in a series of trials or "labors" (*labor*, 4.739; *labores*, 5.243; cf. *factum*, 4.757; *pericula*, 4.787; Keith 1999), and is mistaken by Atlas for Hercules himself (4.644–45).

When Valerius relates Hercules' own exemplary rescue of a maiden abandoned to the ravages of a sea-monster, he appropriates Ovid's Herculean Perseus as an apt model. Particularly striking is the (non-Ovidian) phrasing of Valerius' opening description of the seductive charms of the shore of the Troad: *Arg.* 2.451–52 *Alcides Telamonque comes dum litora blando* / *anfractu sinuosa legunt*. The phrasing invites us to expect an Ovidian narrative of amatory desire such as we find in the Perseus episode of *Metamorphoses* 4 (cf. Hinds 2002: 130–36), but Valerius plays against our Ovidian expectations to offer an Ovidian narrative setting that evokes a divine rape, even as he characterizes Hercules as a thoroughly "epic" hero, motivated by glory rather than by love to save the beautiful maiden: *Arg.* 2.495–96 *quale laborantis Nemees iter aut Erymanthi* / *vidit et infectae miseratus flumina Lernae*, "with such pity had he viewed the path to struggling Nemea or Erymanthus and poisoned Lerna's waters."

Hercules is introduced as Alcides (2.451), the "grandson of Alcaeus"—in classical myth the son of Perseus and father of Amphitryo (the mortal father of Hercules). Common though the patronymic undoubtedly is in Latin epic, Valerius' use here implicitly acknowledges his hero's genealogical descent from Perseus in myth as well as his literary descent from Ovid's Perseus narrative in *Metamorphoses* 4–5. Certainly the Valerian Hercules imitates his Ovidian exemplar throughout his heroic rescue of Hesione. Both heroes are struck by the sight of a maiden bound to a rock and exposed to a cruel death (*Met.* 4.627 ~ *Arg.* 2.463), looking for all the world like a statue (*Met.* 4.675 ~ *Arg.* 2.465–66), despite her tears (*Met.* 4.674 ~ *Arg.* 2.464); both inquire into her lineage (*Met.* 4.678–81 ~ *Arg.* 2.468–69) and hear her plaintive tale (*Met.* 4.685–88 ~ *Arg.* 2.471–92) before rescuing her from the sea-monster (*Met.* 4.695–739 ~ *Arg.* 2.512–49), though their rewards for epic

valor differ, with Perseus demanding Andromeda as his wife (4.703; cf. *praemia*, *Met.* 4.757, 5.25) but Hercules accepting the horses Laomedon promises (*donaque dicta feram*, *Arg.* 2.576).

The repeated allusions to Ovid's myth of Perseus in early imperial epic both reflect, and reflect upon, the widespread diffusion of the *Metamorphoses*. As we move away from temporal proximity to Ovid, his epic successors change the focus of their imitations from Manilius' close reworking of Perseus' rescue of Andromeda through Lucan's disavowal of the Medusa myth to Valerius' recasting of Ovid's Perseus narrative in his account of Hercules' rescue of Hesione. All three poets engage Ovid directly, but it is notable that Lucan ignores Manilius altogether while Valerius rehearses some of the didactic poet's details in such a way as to indicate his awareness of this earlier reception of the Ovidian episode (Poortvliet 1992 ad loc.). Statius affords us another glimpse of the impact of Ovid's Perseus narrative on imperial Latin epic, in an ekphrastic treatment of Perseus and Medusa that simultaneously acknowledges Lucan's earlier treatment and engages with its Ovidian source (Newlands 2012: 80–83), while also celebrating the myth's iconic status from a much-cited passage in a classic of the Latin epic tradition.

When, at the end of the first book of the *Thebaid*, the exiled Theban prince Polynices reaches the Argive court of Adrastus, he is invited to join in the celebration of a traditional Argive festival instituted by the king's ancestor Crotopus. Adrastus performs the ritual with a libation from an heirloom cup, on which is depicted Perseus' killing of the Medusa (*Theb.* 1.543–47):

> … tenet haec operum caelata figuras:
> aureus anguicomam praesecto Gorgona collo
> ales habet, iam iamque vagas (ita visus) in auras
> exilit; illa graves oculos languentiaque ora
> paene movet vivoque etiam pallescit in auro.

This cup, embossed, holds images: a golden, winged figure holds the snake-haired Gorgon head, severed from her neck, and now already, as it seemed, he leapt into the wandering breezes; she nearly moves her heavy eyes and drooping countenance, and even grows pale in the living gold.

The image of Perseus bearing aloft the Gorgon's head embossed on the cup points specifically to the beginning of Ovid's "Perseid" (cf. Heuvel 1932: 239–40), where the poet turns from the Argive king Acrisius' rejection of the godhead of Dionysus (which concludes his Theban narrative of *Met.* 3.1–4.603), to his subsequent failure to recognize his grandson Perseus (*Met.* 4.612–16):

> mox tamen Acrisium (tanta est praesentia veri)
> tam violasse deum quam non agnosse nepotem
> paenitet; impositus iam caelo est alter, at alter
> viperei referens spolium memorabile monstri
> aera carpebat tenerum stridentibus alis.

Soon, however, Acrisius will regret having profaned the god—such is the presence of the truth—as much as not having recognized his grandson. The former has now been installed in heaven, while the latter was snatching the slender breezes with hissing wings, bearing the renowned prize of the snaky monster.

Ovid's "Perseid" continues with the description of Perseus' flight over Libya bearing aloft Medusa's bloody head, the memorable prize of his victory over her (4.17–20, quoted above), which supplies an important mythological back story for Statius' Argive scene. On the one hand, Adrastus' recognition of Polynices as his predestined son-in-law corrects the Ovidian Acrisius' failure to recognize his own grandson Perseus. But Statius also refashions Ovid's introduction of the Argive hero Perseus, buffeted by the winds as he flies around the Mediterranean (*Met.* 4.621–23 *inde per immensum* ventis discordibus actus / *nunc huc, nunc illuc exemplo nubis aquosae* / *fertur*) in his own reference to the hero's leap "into the wandering breezes" (*Theb.* 1.545). In this way he characterizes Adrastus' ancestor as another wandering exile like the Theban Polynices (1.312–14). Statius thereby adapts the Argive Perseus to fit the Cadmean paradigm of wandering in exile so prominent in Ovid's Theban narrative and his own *Thebaid* (Keith 2004–05).

Statius also draws extensively on Ovid's depiction of the monstrous Medusa as part woman and part snake: *Met.* 4.784–86 *dumque* gravis *somnus colubrasque ipsamque tenebat* / *eripuisse* caput *collo*, "and while heavy sleep held her and her snakes, he severed her head from her neck." Once a beautiful mortal maiden courted by numerous suitors, the Ovidian Perseus explains, Medusa was transformed by an outraged Minerva into the monstrous Gorgon figure—with hideous face, glaring eyes, and serpents in her hair and girdle—depicted on the shields of mythological heroes to frighten their foes (*Met.* 4.794–803). The Ovidian Perseus' emphasis on Medusa's shocking transformation from beautiful maiden to terrifying monster, more snake than woman (*hydros*, 4.801; *angues*, 4.803), furnishes thematically significant background material for Adrastus' etiological narrative in the *Thebaid* as well. For the Gorgon's snaky head not only functions as the emblem of Perseus' victory embossed on the Argive cup but also foreshadows the death of the monstrous Python snake, the symbol of Apollo's cosmological victory which in turn prompts the god's visit to the Argive court and initiates the chain of events commemorated in the Argive ritual (McNelis 2007: 29–30; Keith 2013). In addition, the ekphrasis reflects self-consciously on the status of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a literary artifact in Statius' day, figured as a precious ancestral heirloom.

Like Manilius, Lucan, and Valerius, Statius' metrical practices and mythical excurses in both the *Thebaid* and the *Achilleid* are highly Ovidian. Although he disavows the subjects of Ovid's "Thebaid" in the proem to his own (*iam nunc* gemitus et prospera Cadmi / *praeteriisse sinam*, *Theb.* 1.15–17), his retrospective history there of Theban crime (*longa retro series*, *Theb.* 1.7) virtually summarizes

Ovid's Theban books and is articulated in self-consciously Ovidian diction (cf. *Met.* 4.564 *serieque malorum*, "a series of misfortunes"), for Ovid too had framed his recital of Cadmus' misfortunes as a progression from the exile's illusory prosperity to renewed exile: *Met.* 3.138–39 *prima nepos inter tot res tibi, Cadme, secundas* / *causa fuit luctus*, "among so many prosperous affairs, Cadmus, the first source of grief for you was a grandson." Statius thus hints that Ovid's Theban narrative of the House of Cadmus cannot be so easily dissociated from his own Theban narrative of the House of Oedipus. Throughout the *Thebaid* too, Statius displays an intimate familiarity with the episodes, characters, and settings of Ovidian myth.

Ovid's Thebes extends its rule over a beautiful but deadly landscape—trackless wilds of woods and mountains ideally suited to the hunt, though monstrous failure seems inevitably to attend individual Thebans' departures from the city, whether in exile or on the hunt (cf. Hardie 1990: 23). This opposition is repeatedly figured in the wanderings of members of the Theban royal house (Actaeon, Narcissus, Pentheus, Agave), beginning with Cadmus, the founder of the line. Ordered by his father Agenor to find his sister Europa, Cadmus embarks on a fruitless search that Ovid represents from the start as exile from his ancestral lands (*Met.* 3.6–7). Statius revisits the Cadmean pattern of exile in his portrait of Polynices going into exile in *Thebaid* 1. An unnamed Theban draws the link between Cadmus' wanderings and his descendants' exile (*Theb.* 1.180–85):

> an inde vetus Thebis extenditur omen,
> ex quo Sidonii nequiquam blanda iuvenci
> pondera Carpathio iussus sale quaerere Cadmus
> exsul Hyanteos invenit regna per agros,
> fraternasque acies fetae telluris hiatu
> augurium seros dimisit ad usque nepotes?

Or does the old omen extend to modern Thebes, from the time when Cadmus, bidden to search vainly for the pretty burden of the Sidonian bullock in the Carpathian sea, found in exile a kingdom in Boeotian fields, and in the aperture of the fertile earth left kindred battle-lines as an augury to his late-born descendants?

Statius dubs both Cadmus and Polynices "the Tyrian exile" (*Tyrii … exulis*, 1.153–54; *Tyrius … exul*, 3.406) on the model of the Ovidian Cadmus, himself a Tyrian (*Tyria de gente profecti*, *Met.* 3.35; *Sidonius hospes*, 3.129; *Sidone profectus*, 4.572) and an exile (*orbe pererrato profugus*, *Met.* 3.6–7; *longisque erroribus actus* / *contigit Illyricos profuga cum coniuge fines*, 4.567–68). The exquisite geographical epithet *Hyanteus* in the anonymous critic's speech (*Theb.* 1.183) also points specifically to Ovid, for the rare word (Bömer 1969: 49) first appears in extant Latin in the *Metamorphoses* (5.312, 8.310) and varies the Augustan poet's *Hyantius*, applied to Cadmus' grandson Actaeon as he wanders in the Theban landscape

(*cum iuvenis placido per devia lustra <u>vagantes</u> / participes operum conpellat <u>Hyantius</u> ore*; *Met.* 3.146–47). When Polynices leaves Thebes, therefore, he rehearses both Cadmus' exile and Actaeon's wanderings (*interea patriis olim <u>vagus exsul</u> ab oris* / *Oedipodionides furto deserta <u>pererrat</u>* / *Aoniae*, *Theb.* 1.312–14). As his characters travel through the topography of Ovid's Theban narrative, so Statius traverses a series of Ovidian mythological *topoi*.[7]

As in the *Thebaid*, so in his fragmentary *Achilleid* Statius reveals a pervasive debt to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as has been well discussed in recent scholarship (Rosati 1992; Hinds 2000); his unfinished epic need not detain us here. Silius, however, merits our closest scrutiny in conclusion, since his *Punica* constitutes in many respects an outlier in this study of Ovid's reception in early imperial epic. For in composing his historico-martial epic on the Second Punic War, Silius embraces the epic model of Virgil, whose *Aeneid* supplies the very premise of the Hannibalic wars, in Dido's dying curse on Aeneas and his descendants (*Aen.* 4.622–29). Indeed, even the most outspoken proponent of an "Ovidian Silius," Marcus Wilson, observes (2004: 35) that the Flavian poet "begins the main narrative of the *Punica* in a Virgilian mode, with his recapitulation of the myth of Dido's foundation of Carthage (1.21ff.)." Moreover, studies of Silius' treatment of the hexameter have repeatedly documented his care in reproducing the cadences of Virgilian verse.

It is especially difficult to discern any Ovidian impact on Silius' proem, which pointedly pays homage to Virgil's famous *incipit*, *arma uirumque cano* (*Aen.* 1.1) and invokes the Virgilian Muse (*Aen.* 1.8) rather than the Ovidian gods (*Pun.* 1.1–8):

> Ordior <u>arma</u>, quibus caelo se gloria tollit
> Aeneadum patiturque ferox Oenotria iura
> Carthago. da, <u>Musa</u>, decus memorare laborum
> antiquae Hesperiae, quantosque ad bella crearit
> et quot Roma <u>viros</u>, sacri cum perfida pacti
> gens Cadmea super regno certamina movit,
> quaesitumque diu, qua tandem poneret arce
> terrarum Fortuna caput …

I begin with the arms by which the glory of Aeneas' descendants was raised to heaven and harsh Carthage submitted to Italian justice. Grant me, Muse, to memorialize the splendor of ancient Italy's labors, how great and how many the men Rome bore for war, when Cadmus' people broke their sacred bond and initiated a competition for rule, for how long they fought, and on which citadel Fortune at last set the capital of the world.

Only Silius' reference to "Cadmus' people" may perhaps be read as an Ovidian intrusion into the clichés of Virgilian epic, if we recall Cadmus' Phoenician origins and Theban exile (summarized by Ovid at *Met.* 2.836–3.13, though Statius' *Thebaid* is an equally plausible source for Silius' diction here). Nonetheless, Silius' inclusion of myth in his historical epic—like Lucan's through history, simile, and

analogy—admits to his historical epic a good deal of material traditionally associated with mythological epic. Indeed, as Bruère and Wilson have shown, despite his Virgilian historical subject, Silius tends to look to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (and *Fasti*) for the myths that he admits to his poem.

Like Lucan and Statius, Silius acknowledges Ovid as an important source in his redaction of the origin of Libya's snakes, when he mentions the Garamantes in his catalogue of those who fought with Carthage against Rome in Spain, in the third book of the *Punica* (3.312–16):

> quique atro rabidas <u>effervescente</u> veneno
> dipsadas immensis horrent Garamantes harenis.
> <u>fama</u> docet, caesae rapuit cum <u>Gorgonis ora</u>
> Perseus, in Libyam dirum fluxisse cruorem;
> inde <u>Medusaeis</u> terram exundasse chelydris.

The Garamantes were there, who shudder at the raging thirst-provoking snakes when their black venom boils over in huge deserts. Report teaches that when Perseus seized the slaughtered Gorgon's head, the dreadful gore dripped over Libya; since then the land has been teeming with Medusa's venomous water-snakes.

Virgil had introduced the Garamantes into Latin epic, but much of Silius' lexicon here is demonstrably Ovidian in inspiration: *effervescere*, in the sense of "boil over," appears first at *Metamorphoses* 1.71, while Ovid describes Perseus as *Gorgonis superator* (*Met.* 4. 699; cf. 5.202), coins the phrase *ora Gorgonis* (*Tr.* 4.7.12), and introduces the adjective *Medusaeus* into Latin (*Met.* 5.257, 312; *Fast.* 5.8). The Ovidian diction constitutes Silius' homage to Virgil's earliest epic successor, whom he recognizes as the source of Lucan's report (*fama*, *Pun.* 3.314 ∼ *fabula*, *BC* 9.623) of the Medusan origins of the Libyan snakes.

Phaethon is another famous Ovidian myth that enjoyed exceptional prominence in the epics of the first century CE. A celebrated instance occurs in Lucan's first book, immediately after the proem, in the eulogistic dedication Lucan offers to Nero (*BC* 1.33–66), which favorably compares the emperor, in his guise as a skilled charioteer, to the mythological Phaethon; the passage has been well discussed by Stephen Hinds (1998: 62–69; cf. Keith 2011). Silius' engagement with the myth arises in his account of the battle between the Romans and Carthaginians near the river Trebia in *Punica* 4, when Venus directs Vulcan's flames against the river god as he confronts the Roman general Scipio (*Pun.* 4.677–95). Silius here echoes Ovid's description of the world catching fire when Phaethon drove the chariot of the Sun too close to the Earth. Throughout the passage, Silius' lexical choices are informed by Ovid's description of the conflagration ignited by Phaethon, even as he adapts an Ovidian picture of the Earth going up in flames to a Homeric description of a river on fire. Silius retains Ovid's picturesque water nymphs (*nymphae passis*

fontesque lacusque / *deflevere comis*, *Met.* 2.238–39 ~ *Nympharumque intima maestus* / *implevit chorus* attonitis *ululatibus* antra, *Pun.* 4.691–92) but varies his portrait of the sea god Neptune, attempting to intervene (*ter Neptunus aquis cum torvo bracchia vultu* / *exserere ausus erat, ter non tulit aeris ignes*, *Met.* 2.270–71), with a description of an Italian river god, Eridanus (= Po), playing the same role (*miratur pater …* / *Eridanus …* / *ter caput* ambustam *conantem attollere* iacta / *lampade Vulcanus mersit fumantibus undis,* / *ter* correpta dei crines nudavit harundo, *Pun.* 4.690–95). Silius' knowledge of and interest in the Phaethon myth is secured by his explicit reference to the Po as "Phaethon's river" (*Phaëthontius amnis*, *Pun.* 7.149), since it is there that Ovid locates Phaethon's fiery end (*quem procul a patria diverso maximus orbe* / *excipit Eridanus flagrantiaque abluit ora*, *Met.* 2.322–23).

The myths of Perseus and Phaethon[8] were given their canonical form by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*, and have afterlives that last well beyond antiquity. But Silius' epic offers tangible evidence of their continuing, specifically Ovidian, currency even in this most Virgilian of imperial epic poets. Silius is in some ways the limit case for a study of the reception of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in early imperial epic, since his *Punica* develops the historical consequences of the founding myth of Rome elaborated in Virgil's *Aeneid*. But even in this sequel to Virgil's Dido narrative, we can see the literary and thematic pressure that the extra-Virgilian myths of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* bring to bear on Silius' Virgilian narrative—not necessarily to deform the Virgilian vision, but to deepen and supplement the master's work.

Acknowledgment

Notes

1   See, for example, Gossage (1959); Mozley (1963–64); Hardie (1989; 1993); Hershkowitz (1998); Ganiban (2007).
2   Latacz (1979); Myers (1994). On Manilius' reuse of Ovid's *incipit*, see Wheeler (2009).
3   On this phenomenon, see Hinds (2011) in connection with Seneca.
4   Translations of Lucan are from Braund (1992).
5   The *iunctura* bears a particularly strong Ovidian valence not only from its programmatic position at the opening of the *Metamorphoses* but from its recurrences in Ovid's *œuvre* (*Her.* 13.85; *Ars* 3.467; *Met.* 1.775). On *fert animus* at *BC* 1.67, see also Wheeler (2009). The *iunctura causas … expromere* (*BC* 1.67) is also Ovidian; cf. *Fasti* 3.725.
6   Zissos (2008: 120).
7   On Statius' Ovidian landscapes, see Newlands (2004) and Keith (2004–05).
8   Another iconic Ovidian myth, Daedalus and Icarus (*Met.* 8.201–30), forms the allusive back story for Silius' description of the Temple of Apollo that Daedalus built at Cumae

(*Pun.* 12.88–101), a scene that more obviously looks to Virgil's treatment of the same monument in *Aeneid* 6.14–33. Cf. Bruère (1959).

Further Reading

On the reception of Ovid in imperial Latin literature, see Gallo and Nicastri (1995), Nicastri (1995), Hinds (2000), Barchiesi (2001), Tissol and Wheeler (2002), Wheeler (2002a, 2004–05), Dewar (2002), Hardie (2002a, 2002b), Keith and Rupp (2007a, 2007b), and McNelis (2009). For studies of the reception of the *Metamorphoses* in individual imperial authors see: on Manilius, Flores (1995) and Wheeler (2009); on Lucan, Bruère (1951), Esposito (1995), Wheeler (2002b), and Keith (2011); on Martial, Hinds (2007); on Seneca, Hinds (2011); on Statius, Rosati (1992), Hinds (2000), Keith (2002, 2004–05, (2007[2008]), and Newlands (2004); on Silius, Bruère (1958, 1959), and Wilson (2004).

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Ovid in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*

Stephen Harrison

Introduction

Modern scholarship on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, the Latin novel from the second century CE, is now generally agreed that it is a sophisticated and highly allusive work which ranges in its intertexts from Homer to writings of its own period (see e.g. Finkelpearl 1998). The presence of works by Ovid among these intertexts is not surprising: as we shall see, there are clear affinities between the two authors, their interests, and their modes of operation. The shared title and subject matter of Ovid's and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* constitute an evident link between the two works, even if the metamorphoses in the plot of Apuleius' novel are rather more limited in number than those of Ovid's epic; and the keen interest of both authors in erotic topics means that a range of Ovidian elegiac works outside the *Metamorphoses* is also drawn upon in Apuleius' novel. Furthermore, both authors are interested in complex self-presentation and in narrative technique, and we will see clear examples of further influence in both respects.

Erotic Elements

As a (somewhat unorthodox) text in the tradition of the ancient novel, for which the topic of love is fundamental (see e.g. Konstan 1994), Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* shows a natural interest in erotic elements, and plainly draws upon Ovidian elegy in this respect. Here I would like to consider the novel's two most important erotic episodes, that of the affair between the protagonist Lucius and the *ancilla* Photis in Books 2 and 3, and that of Cupid and Psyche in Books 4.28–6.24.

Lucius' erotic liaison with the *ancilla* Photis has been rightly considered as playing with the elegiac concept of *servitium amoris* (see most recently Hindermann 2010 and in full detail the commentary of van Mal-Maeder 2001). This figurative servitude of the lover familiar from Ovidian (and other) elegy (especially *Amores* 1.6) is here ironically directed toward an erotic object who appears to be literally a slave: Photis' duties in Milo's household (opening the door and cooking) point firmly to servile status, and at 3.19.5 Lucius claims that he is Photis' erotic slave: *in seruilem modum addictum atque mancipatum teneas uolentem*, "you hold me willingly in bond and ownership like a slave." This is combined with allusions to the equally familiar elegiac concept of *militia amoris* (see again Hindermann 2010 and van Mal-Maeder 2001), the idea that the service of the lover to the beloved is analogous to military service, memorably explored by Ovid in *Amores* 1.9. In the sex scene at 2.17 Photis addresses Lucius as if she were his military commander, changing the wrestling metaphor from his Greek source (preserved in the epitomic *Onos*) into that of the Roman and elegiac *militia amoris* (2.17.3), with some highly suggestive double entendres (fully explored by van Mal-Maeder 2001):

> "Proeliare" inquit "et fortiter proeliare, nec enim tibi cedam nec terga vortam; comminus in aspectum, si vir es, derige et grassare naviter et occide moriturus. Hodierna pugna non habet missionem."

> "Fight," she said, "and fight bravely, for I will not yield to you or turn my back: direct your thrust at close quarters and facing me, advance with gusto, and kill me as intending to die yourself. Today's battle has no release."

A similarly military style is shown by Lucius in the next chapter, where Lucius needs to seek permission from his "commander" to attend a dinner elsewhere (2.18.3):

> Ergo igitur Photis erat adeunda deque nutu eius consilium velut auspicium petendum. Quae quamquam invita quod a se ungue latius digrederer, tamen comiter amatoriae militiae breve commeatum indulsit.

> And so therefore Photis was to be approached and a plan was to be sought from her consent as if seeking auspices. She, though unwilling for me to go further than a nail's width from her, nevertheless kindly indulged me with a brief leave from my erotic military service.

Thus Apuleius makes specific use of the elegiac concept which Ovid (more than Tibullus and Propertius) makes his own, and both writers extensively explore the technical language of soldiering. Apuleius in the two passages just cited uses specialist military terms such as *terga vortam* (retreat), *comminus* (fighting at close quarters), and *commeatum* (leave), and refers to the custom of taking auspices in the context of battle, while Ovid in *Amores* 1.9 similarly deploys *speculator* (1.9.17,

scouting), *obsidet* (1.9.20, besieging), *vigilumque catervas* (1.9.27, lookouts), and *castris* (1.9.44, camp).

Another aspect of Photis also takes us back to Ovid and his typical witty concerns with the complexities and deceptions of love. Lucius' original reason for getting closer to Photis was to achieve access to her mistress, the witch Pamphile (2.6.6–7), and here, as has been noted, he is following the advice of Ovid in the *Ars Amatoria* (1.351–52): *Sed prius ancillam captandae nosse puellae / cura sit: accessus molliet illa tuos*, "but let it be your care first to get to know the maid of the girl you pursue: let her soften your approach." Though nothing sexual occurs between Pamphile and Lucius, the idea of such a liaison is raised more than once (2.5.2–3, 2.6.6) and is clearly a realistic possibility given her adulterous tendencies (2.5.5–6, 3.15–16). But Lucius clearly contravenes Ovid's next instruction (*Ars* 1.375–86) not to have sex with the maid before the mistress, and this provides another potential link with the *Amores*, since Lucius thus runs the risk of facing the embarrassing situation of the Ovidian lover/poet in *Amores* 2.7 and 8. There the poet is first forced to deny that he is having an affair with his mistress's maid but then reveals in the following poem addressed to the latter that this is indeed the case but that she needs to conceal the fact.

But perhaps the most extensive deployment of Ovidian material in the Lucius/Photis episode is in the characterization of Photis' erotic attractions in the sex scene of *Met.* 2.16–17 (again well covered by van Mal-Maeder 2001). Photis' entrance and removal of her clothes recalls the famous appearance of Corinna at *Amores* 1.5.9–12, modifying it so that she provocatively strips herself rather than being stripped by her lover, while the presence of roses and alternating wine drinking recall other scenes of sexual pleasure in the *Amores* (roses: 2.161 ∼ *Am.* 1.2.39–40; wine drinking: 2.16.2 ∼ *Am.* 1.4.29–32). Lucius' request that Photis loosen her hair again looks back to Corinna in *Amores* 1.5.10 and to his advice to women to loosen their hair to attract men in *Ars* 3.783, while the pubis-protecting position adopted by Photis, imitating the Praxitelean *Venus pudica*, again picks up Ovidian reflections on Venus' apparent modesty in the *Ars* (2.613). This is accompanied by an Ovidian-style mention of and play on Cupid's bow and arrows (2.16.4–6), including a version of Ovid's low joke that the archery competition in the *Odyssey* was a clever strategy of Penelope to test the sexual potency of her suitors, made by Ovid at *Amores* 1.8.47–48: *Penelope iuvenum vires temptabat in arcu; / qui latus argueret, corneus arcus erat*, "Penelope was trying the young men's powers in the case of the bow: he who proved the strength of his side, had a bow made of horn." Apuleius' version makes a similar play on the bow as a phallic symbol (2.16.6): *arcum meum et ipse vigorate tetendi et oppido formido ne nervus rigoris nimietate rumpatur*, "I have drawn my bow with great vigor and I am quite afraid that its string will break through excessive stiffness." In this case *nervus* as bowstring/phallus (Adams 1982: 38) adds to the phallic plays of *tendo* and *arcus* (Adams 1982: 20–21), but the image is essentially the same one and clearly influenced by Ovid. Ovid

and Apuleius plainly share not only erotic interests but a broad sexual sense of humor.

The love story of Cupid and Psyche is naturally suffused with elegiac and Ovidian color (for a survey see Mattiacci 1998), and it has already been remarked that the lengthy description of Cupid at 5.22.5–7, at the famous moment where Psyche sees him sleeping in the light of her lamp, recalls a number of Ovidian details (see Mattiacci 1998: 144–46; Zimmerman *et al.* 2004: 276–80):

> Videt capitis aurei genialem caesariem ambrosia temulentam, cervices lacteas genasque purpureas pererrantes crinium globos decoriter impeditos, alios antependulos, alios retropendulos, quorum splendore nimio fulgurante iam et ipsum lumen lucernae vacillabat; per umeros volatilis dei pinnae roscidae micanti flore candicant et quamvis alis quiescentibus extimae plumulae tenellae ac delicatae tremule resultantes inquieta lasciviunt …

> She sees on his golden head the glorious hair, drunk with ambrosia, over his milk-white neck and his rosy cheeks (she sees) the handsomely bound hairlocks straying, some hanging down in front, some behind; because of the shining of their exceeding brilliance now even the light of the lamp was faltering; on the shoulders of the winged god the bedewed wings give off an incandescent whiteness as if of flowers, and although the wings are at rest, at their ends the light and delicate little feathers, quivering and moving up and down, frolic restlessly …

It has not, however, been observed that we here find a rare allusion to Ovid's exilic poetry in the *Metamorphoses* (for another, see the likely reference in the prologue to *Tristia* 3.1, discussed below). Here, I would argue, Apuleius' text invokes another description of Cupid at night, this time a scene where he appears to someone else who is asleep rather than being asleep himself; in both cases Cupid is described from the viewpoint of an actual observer. At *Pont.* 3.3.13–20 the poet sees a vision of Cupid in the night:

> Stabat Amor, vultu non quo prius esse solebat,
> 　　fulcra tenens laeva tristis acerna manu,
> nec torquem collo neque habens crinale capillo
> 　　nec bene dispositas comptus ut ante comas.
> Horrida pendebant molles super ora capilli
> 　　et visa est oculis horrida penna meis,
> qualis in aeriae tergo solet esse columbae
> 　　tractatam multae quam tetigere manus.

There stood Love, but not with the expression he used to have, holding the maple bedpost sadly with his left hand. He had no ring round his neck nor a hair-jewel in his locks, nor was he neatly groomed with well-arranged hair as before. His floppy locks hung over his unkempt face, and his plumage too seemed unkempt

to my eyes, like that to be found on the back of a sky-riding dove which many hands have touched.

Apuleius' emphasis here on neck, hair, and wings, especially hanging locks (note *alios antependulos, alios retropendulos ~ pendebant*), and the similar contexts, suggest that Ovid's picture of Cupid from the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, symbolically bedraggled to represent the supposed decline in the elegiac poet's powers in exile (see Kenney 1965: 44–49), is metamorphosed back into the glorious and beautiful youth familiar from ancient art and literature, the hero of Apuleius' romantic narrative. This witty transformation of a famous Ovidian scene is an appropriately metamorphic move for Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*.

The Two *Metamorphoses*

The title *Metamorphoses* for Apuleius' novel is employed by most modern scholars, though the alternative title of *Asinus Aureus* (*Golden Ass*) seems to go back at least to Augustine (*CD* 18.18.1). It seems likely to have been inherited from its Greek model, "Lucius of Patras" (Photius *Bibl.* Cod. 129), but is surely at least partly chosen by Apuleius to evoke Ovid's epic text, already a classic in the high Roman Empire. Both works begin with a programmatic prologue which promises multiple metamorphosis as the topic of the work: Ovid's declaration to the reader at *Met*. 1.1–2 *in nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora*, "my spirit carries me off to speak of forms changed into new bodies," is plainly picked up by Apuleius' *Met*. 1.1.2 *figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imagines conversas et in se rursus mutuo nexu refectas, ut mireris, exordior*, "I begin a tale of men's shapes and fortunes transformed into different appearances and back again into themselves by mutual connection, that you may wonder at it" (text and translation from Harrison and Winterbottom 2001). The Apuleian text recognizably reproduces some of the key syntax of the Ovidian original (verb of speech stating theme plus noun(s) and past participle), but carefully modifies the key lexical terms with close synonyms (*conversas* for *mutatas*, *figuras* for *formas*, *in alias imagines* for *in nova … corpora*); in some ways the later text caps the earlier one as it includes not just metamorphosis but re-metamorphosis (*in se rursus mutuo nexu refectas*). Though it seems likely that in its use of plurals here Apuleius' prologue may be picking up a detail of its Greek model (see Winkler 1985: 183–85), both works thus begin with a first-person declaration that a series of metamorphoses will be their subject. In the case of Ovid, this is an accurate preview, but in the case of Apuleius the promise of multiple humans changed into other forms is at least misleading, since the main plot really focuses only on the limited transformations of the protagonist Lucius, from man to ass and back again and then from worldly young man to religious cult official (though many of the embedded narratives have metamorphic elements—see Tatum 1972).

Apuleius' plural *hominum* is thus arguably motivated at least as much by the Ovidian model as the Greek model: scholarship has shown that in the

metamorphic narratives of Apuleius' novel the Ovidian epic with its vast reper-
toire of human–animal transformations is the key source (see Bandini 1986). The
transformation of the witch Pamphile into a *bubo* ("screech-owl") at *Met.* 3.21.4–6
plainly draws not only on the metamorphosis of the boy Ascalaphus into the
same bird at *Met.* 5.543–50, but also on those of Coronis into a crow at 2.580–88
and of the Pierides into magpies at 6.669–76, while the narrative of the central
metamorphosis of Lucius into the ass at 3.24 can be compared to that of Chiron's
daughter Ocyroe into a mare at *Met.* 2.655–64, where, as so often in Lucius' story
(e.g. 3.29), the issue of how far the human can become an animal is explicitly
raised. Ocyroe's transformation narrative is then completed by the poet as she
loses the power of speech, but the details of the metamorphosis are closely similar.
Compare *Met.* 2.661–3 and 670–75:

> "iam mihi subduci facies humana videtur,
> iam cibus herba placet, iam latis currere campis
> impetus est: in equam cognataque corpora vertor."
> …
> tum digiti coeunt et quinos alligat ungues
> perpetuo cornu levis ungula, crescit et oris
> et colli spatium, longae pars maxima pallae
> cauda fit, utque vagi crines per colla iacebant,
> in dextras abiere iubas, pariterque novata est
> et vox et facies …

"Now my human form seems to be being taken away from me, now the grass
appeals to me as food, now I have an impulse to run over the wide plains; I am
being turned into a mare, into the shape to which I am related." … Then her
fingers come together, and a smooth hoof binds together a set of five nails in a
single stretch of horn. The extent of her face and neck grows, the longest part of
her long cloak became a tail, her locks, just as they lay scattered over her neck,
turned into a mane, tossed over to the right, and both voice and appearance were
transformed …

with *Met.* 3.24.4–6:

> sed plane pili mei crassantur in setas et cutis tenella duratur in corium et in extimis
> palmulis perdito numero toti digiti coguntur in singulas ungulas et de spinae meae
> termino grandis cauda procedit. iam facies enormis et os prolixum et nares hiantes
> et labiae pendulae; sic et aures immodicis horripilant auctibus. Nec ullum miserae
> reformationis video solacium, nisi quod mihi iam nequenti tenere Photidem natura
> crescebat.

But my hair was completely matted into bristles, and my soft skin hardened into
a hide, and on the tips of my slender hands my fingers lost their number and
collected into a hoof on each, and a large tail came from the end of my spine.
Now my face was enormous, with gaping nostrils and pendulous lips: likewise,

> my ears sprouted with massive additions. And I could see no consolation for
> my transformation, unless for the fact that, though I could no longer embrace
> Photis, my natural endowment was growing larger.

Both humans as they are transformed into quadrupeds remark, horror-struck, on
the specific features they gain (hooves, large head, tail); the influence is beyond
doubt, and the relocation of the epic Ovidian theme in the lower literary frame-
work of the novel is marked by Lucius' final focus on his new phallic enlargement
as an ass.

Likewise, the re-transformation of Lucius from ass to human in *Met.* 11 seems
to pick up one of the few re-transformations from Ovid's poem, that of Io at *Met.*
1.738−46:

> Ut lenita dea est, vultus capit illa priores
> fitque, quod ante fuit: fugiunt e corpore saetae,
> cornua decrescunt, fit luminis artior orbis,
> contrahitur rictus, redeunt umerique manusque,
> ungulaque in quinos dilapsa absumitur ungues:
> de bove nil superest formae nisi candor in illa.
> officioque pedum nymphe contenta duorum
> erigitur metuitque loqui, ne more iuvencae
> mugiat, et timide verba intermissa retemptat.

> Since the goddess was pacified, Io resumed the former features which she had
> previously possessed: the bristles fell from her body, the horns subsided, the cir-
> cle of her eyes narrowed, her jaw-opening contacted, her shoulders and hand
> returned, and each hoof split apart and was taken up in five nails. No aspect of
> shape remained from the heifer, except the white color she kept. And the nymph,
> happy with the service of only two feet, rose upright, but feared to speak, in
> case she mooed like a heifer, and timidly tried again the language she had had
> interrupted.

Lucius' return to human form is clearly colored by Io's (*Met.* 11.13.3−14.2):

Nec me fefellit caeleste promissum: protinus mihi delabitur deformis et ferina
facies. Ac primo quidem squalens pilus defluit, ac dehinc cutis crassa tenuatur,
venter obesus residet, pedum plantae per ungulas in digitos exeunt, manus non iam
pedes sunt, sed in erecta porriguntur officia, cervix procera cohibetur, os et caput
rutundatur, aures enormes repetunt pristinam parvitatem, dentes saxei redeunt
ad humanam minutiem, et, quae me potissimum cruciabat ante, cauda nusquam!
Populi mirantur, religiosi venerantur tam evidentem maximi numinis potentiam
et consimilem nocturnis imaginibus magnificentiam et facilitatem reformationis
claraque et consona voce, caelo manus adtendentes, testantur tam inlustre deae
beneficium. At ego stupore nimio defixus haerebam, animo meo tam repentinum
tamque magnum non capiente gaudium, quid potissimum praefarer primarium,
unde novae vocis exordium caperem, quo sermone nunc renata lingua felicius
auspicarer, quibus quantisque verbis tantae deae gratias agerem.

Nor did the promise of heaven deceive me: at once my ugly bestial form fell from me. And first my filthy bristles dropped away, and then my thick skin thinned out, my fat belly contracted, the soles of my feet came out through my hooves into toes, my hands were no longer feet but stretched out for their proper upright function, my long neck shrank, my face and head rounded out, my enormous ears regained their previous smaller scale, my rock-like teeth returned to lesser human size, and my tail, which had particularly tortured me previously, was nowhere to be seen. The people were amazed, and the religious devotees bowed before such evident power of the greatest god and a magnificence matching the visions of the night, and with loud and harmonious cries, stretching their hands to heaven, proclaimed such a splendid act of beneficence from the goddess. But I stood still, bewitched by a mighty stupor, my mind unable to take in such a sudden and great joy, wondering what should be my best first utterance, from where I should make the beginnings of my new voice, by what speech I should inaugurate my just reborn tongue, with what and with how many words I should thank so great a goddess.

In both cases the re-metamorphosis is the immediate consequence of female divine action—in Ovid, the cessation of Juno's ill will, in Apuleius the saving intervention of Isis; in both cases the specifically quadruped features are reversed (hide, limbs, etc.), though naturally the Apuleian passage makes more of this feature given its climactic role in the narrative; and in both cases the newly retransformed individual hesitates to speak, though for different reasons. And of course Apuleius' choice of Isis as the saving deity is a brilliant allusion to the Ovidian original, since Io, once transformed back to human shape, famously goes on to a further metamorphosis in becoming that same Egyptian goddess (1.747–48). The Apuleian text thus sets out to echo and play on its Ovidian counterpart in its most prominent descriptions of metamorphosis and re-metamorphosis.

The prologue to Apuleius' novel has been perhaps the most scrutinized part of the text (see especially Kahane and Laird 2001), and a number of Ovidian links have emerged. An interesting case has been made for the use of *Tristia* 3.1 in the prologue (Graverini 2005); if the prologue is spoken by the personified book itself as some scholars believe (Harrison 1990), such a feature would pick up this prologue elegy of Ovid in which the similarly personified book describes its arrival in Rome and its exclusion from the libraries of the capital, being, like the book of Apuleius, a stranger from abroad. It has also been argued (James 2001) that Apuleius' programmatic *varias fabulas conseram* (1.1.1) looks specifically, via a weaving metaphor (cf. Keulen 2007: 66), to the "different tales" of metamorphosis woven together by Arachne at *Met.* 6.103–28; this has some attractions, not least as Arachne, the artist punished for the content of her work, can easily be assimilated to Ovid himself (see Rosati 1999). Both these elements point to a common interest in narrative technique, and this is an important area in which Apuleius plainly draws on Ovidian models.

Above all, the two texts resemble each other in the importance of their embedded narratives in character voices. This is a key feature in Ovid's text (see Barchiesi 2001; Nikolopoulos 2004), where the potential monotony of continuous narrative by the poet-author is regularly broken up by embedded narratives assigned to other narrators through scenarios such as hospitality (e.g. the cave of Achelous in *Met*. 8, where the tales of Perimele, Philemon and Baucis, and Erysichthon are exchanged by the company) or other devices (e.g. the weaving party of the Minyeides in *Met*. 4). These techniques can be closely matched in Apuleius: the hospitality of Byrrhaena is the location for the tale told by Thelyphron in Book 2, while the whole of the episode of Cupid and Psyche is narrated by the anonymous old woman who keeps house for the bandits in their cave (4.38–6.24). As also in Aeneas' inserted narrative in *Aeneid* 2–3, the issue of focalization is a lively one for both authors, and there is clear interference between the supposed embedded narrator and the overall author-narrator: just as (for example) the tale of Baucis and Philemon in *Met*. 8.611–724 conveys at least sometimes the humor of Ovid-narrator as well as the perspective of its embedded teller the pious old man Lelex (for such issues in Ovid see Nikolopoulos 2004: 92–98), so (for example), the tale of Cupid and Psyche combines the intense literary allusiveness of Apuleius-author with at least some hint of the perspective of the old woman herself (see van Mal-Maeder and Zimmermann 1998). Again, there are complex issues of literary ancestry here (many would see Apuleius' technique of stringing together stories within a frame narrative as drawing on the tradition of Milesian narratives as well as traditional epic, e.g. Harrison 1998), but the overall resemblance of effect is undeniable.

One further element that the two texts share is the thematic grouping of embedded tales: stories can be associated by content as well as narrative framework. Both works are interested in grouped stories of unconventional or adventurous sexual activity: in Ovid we think of the series of tales narrated to each other by the daughters of Minyas as they weave together (4.1–415)—the parent-defying youthful lovers Pyramus and Thisbe, Leucothoe, buried alive by her father for a love affair, the adulterous Mars and Venus, and the gender-bending Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, or of the stories of tragic or "deviant" love sung by the bereaved Orpheus in Book 10 in the gap between the loss of Eurydice and his own death—the pederastic tales of Ganymede and Hyacinthus, the guest-sacrificing working girls the Propoetides, the agalmatophiliac Pygmalion, the incestuous Myrrha, the toyboy Adonis, and the tomboy Atalanta. A similar group of tales focusing on unconventional sexuality is the series of adultery tales in Book 9 of Apuleius' text, told by several different narrators (the extradiegetic Apuleius-narrator, the intradiegetic ass-narrator, and at least one further character-narrator), which have in common the colorful topic of adultery and its various possible outcomes (see Harrison 2006), though these are un-Ovidian in the way that they share some of the same characters.

Another point of contact between Ovid and Apuleius in the matter of narrative technique is their play with two forms of segmentation—the narrative episode

and the book. The Ovidian *Metamorphoses* constantly plays on this tension between plot episode and book structure. The technique begins as early as the first book, which ends with Phaethon arriving at the home of his father the Sun, where the alert reader knows he will come to a bad end, an episode narrated in the next book (1.779): *patriosque adit inpiger ortus*, "he arrived eagerly at his father's place of rising." Here "eagerly" clearly looks forward to Phaethon's overenthusiastic and disastrous handling of his father's chariot in the next book. Likewise Book 2 ends with the kidnap of Europa to Crete (what will happen to her?), Book 6 with the beginning of the Argonaut expedition, to be continued in the next book, Book 8 with a hint from Achelous of the story of his lost horn which he will tell fully in the next book, Book 12 with the preparations for the contest of Ajax and Odysseus which occupies the first half of Book 13, Book 13 with Glaucus' flight to Circe which will lead to Scylla's transformation in Book 14.

The Apuleian *Metamorphoses* uses exactly the same technique, one of a number of adaptations of epic moves in a similarly continuous multi-book fictional narrative (see Harrison 2003). At the end of Book 3 (3.29.8) Lucius-ass declines a dangerous opportunity to eat roses and return to human form (if he reveals himself as human now he may be killed by the bandits): this is a "cliff-hanger" type of closure, where a book closes with a major plot element unresolved, an inducement to read on in the next book. Likewise, the ending of Book 4 brings Psyche to a strange place (in fact the palace of Cupid) which remains unexplained until the next book, while the end of Book 6 is another "cliff-hanger" like that of Book 3: Lucius-ass has been condemned to a horrible death by the robbers and is fully expecting to perish (6.32.3): we need to read on to establish what happens to him. The ending of Book 8 (8.31.5) is another "cliff-hanger," recalling those of Books 3 and 6 with a similarly suspenseful imperfect verb: *destinatae iam lanienae cultros acuebat*, "[the cook] began to sharpen his knives for the planned butchery." Here Lucius-ass is about to be slaughtered to replace a stolen joint of meat, an undignified and comic situation; the prosaic and comic vocabulary of tools and cooking emphasize the low-life tone in this Apuleian version of an originally Ovidian technique.

Finally, analysis of an episode from the second book of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* may help to show how rich the intertextual relationship between the two *Metamorphoses* can be. In *Met.* 2.4–5 Lucius sees in the house of Byrrhaena a statue group representing the story of Diana and Actaeon:

> Pone tergum deae saxum insurgit in speluncae modum muscis et herbis et foliis et virgultis et sicubi pampinis et arbusculis alibi de lapide florentibus. Splendet intus umbra signi de nitore lapidis. Sub extrema saxi margine poma et uvae faberrime politae dependent, quas ars aemula naturae veritati similes explicuit. Putes ad cibum inde quaedam, cum mustulentus autumnus maturum colorem adflaverit, posse decerpi, et si fontem, qui deae vestigio discurrens in lenem vibratur undam, pronus aspexeris, credes illos ut rure pendentes racemos inter cetera veritatis nec agitationis officio carere. Inter medias frondes lapidis Actaeon simulacrum curioso optutu in deam proiectus iam in cervum ferinus et in saxo simul et in fonte loturam Dianam opperiens

visitur. Dum haec identidem rimabundus eximie delector, "Tua sunt" ait Byrrhena "cuncta quae vides."

Behind the back of the goddess a rock arose in the manner of a cave with flourishing moss, grass, leaves, bushes, vines here, small trees there, all made of stone. Within, the statue's shadow shone from the brightness of the stone. On the far edge of the rock there hung apples and bunches of grapes polished most skilfully, set out as similar to reality by an art which rivalled nature. You would think that some of them could be harvested to eat, when wine-bringing autumn had breathed the color of ripeness upon them, and if you leaned down and looked at the spring, which ran from the goddess's feet and quivered in a gentle wave, you would think that the bunches, hanging down as in the country, had no lack of the quality of either reality nor movement. In the midst of the branches of stone Actaeon as a statue could be seen, leaning towards the goddess with fascinated stare, already bestial in form as a stag and changed into stone at the same time, waiting for Diana to wash in the spring. While I peered again and again at this with extraordinary pleasure, Byrrhaena said, "All you see is yours."

There seems little doubt that this passage alludes to Ovid's description of the same episode of Actaeon and Diana (Barchiesi and Hardie 2010: 70–72), which takes place in another grotto, this time an outdoor version, described at *Met*. 4.155–64:

> Vallis erat piceis et acuta densa cupressu,
> nomine Gargaphie succinctae sacra Dianae,
> cuius in extremo est antrum nemorale recessu
> arte laboratum nulla: simulaverat artem
> ingenio natura suo; nam pumice vivo
> et levibus tofis nativum duxerat arcum;
> fons sonat a dextra tenui perlucidus unda,
> margine gramineo patulos incinctus hiatus.
> hic dea silvarum venatu fessa solebat
> virgineos artus liquido perfundere rore.

There was a valley called Gargaphie, thick with pine trees and pointed cypress, sacred to Diana girded for the hunt, at whose end retreat was a forest grotto, constructed by no craftsmanship. Nature had imitated art with its own ingenuity, for it had drawn out an arch born of living pumice and smooth tufa; a transparent spring gurgled from the right with a trickle of water, its widespread pool girded with a grassy bank. Here the goddess of the woods, when tired from hunting, was accustomed to bathe her virgin limbs in clear dewy moisture.

The natural cave of grove and limestone in Ovid is neatly echoed in the manufactured cave of Apuleius' sculpture: Ovid's notion of nature imitating art is reversed by Apuleius to the norm of art imitating nature, moving from a wild environment

to a domestic interior. Apuleius' spring, pool, and grassy bank, though a traditional part of the *locus amoenus*, clearly pick up their Ovidian models given that this is the same story happening in the same location (transformed into a marble artifact in Apuleius' version). It is notable too how Apuleius' statue magically compresses Ovid's narrative into a single moment, showing Actaeon both before and after his transformation.

Byrrhaena's final words to Lucius in the passage cited above are famously ambiguous, combining a hostess's invitation to make himself at home ("my house is your house") with an unconscious (and accurate) prediction that he will suffer the fate of Actaeon in being transformed into a quadruped (van Mal-Maeder 2001: 116). This symbolic use of an ekphrasis of a work of art to foretell the plot of a narrative (prolepsis) is clearly an epic feature going back to Virgil (see Harrison 1997: 59–60) but also finds a specific parallel in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. At *Met.* 13.681–704 there is an extended description of a mixing-bowl given to Aeneas by Anius of Delos, which represents the fall of Thebes and the regeneration of its race through two youths: this has rightly been argued to look forward to the resurgence of Aeneas' destroyed city of Troy through the foundation of Rome by the twin brothers Romulus and Remus (Galinsky 1975: 221), a major event narrated with witty brevity later in the poem at 14.774–75. Thus in Apuleius' treatment of the Actaeon theme we find not only quarrying of material from the Ovidian *Metamorphoses*, but also deployment of one of its more sophisticated narrative techniques.

Conclusion

These examples show beyond doubt that Ovid's epic *Metamorphoses* was a key model for Apuleius' homonymous novel, which used both its material and its techniques, in some cases suitably adapted for the different and lower literary environment of prose fiction. It is also clear that Ovid's erotic poetry provided important elements for the parts of Apuleius' novel concerned with love and sex, and that Apuleius' Ovidian repertoire extended as far as the exile poetry. As already noted, this is not surprising: the two authors and their works are clearly akin, sharing wit and humor, a lively interest in sexuality, and elements of sophisticated narrative technique, all factors which make them appeal similarly to a modern readership.

Further Reading

Winkler (1985) is the most influential and sophisticated modern treatment of the novel. Other good introductions to Apuleius and his novel are Tatum (1979) and Schlam (1992). Krabbe (1989) provides the widest-ranging discussion of the interrelationship of the two *Metamorphoses*. Bandini (1986) identifies extensive Apuleian imitation of Ovidian

metamorphosis scenes. Müller-Reineke (2000) looks at the influence of erotic scenes from Ovid's *Met.* on Apuleius' *Met.* Scotti (1982) examines links between the proems of the two *Metamorphoses*. Hindermann (2010) is the fullest treatment of elegiac motifs in *Met.* 1–3. Mattiacci (1998) identifies some Ovidian intertexts in the Cupid and Psyche section. Hindermann (2009) looks at the influence of the *Ars* on Apuleius' novel (with a full modern bibliography), while Nicolini (2013) shows how Ovidian ekphrases from the *Metamorphoses* influence those of Apuleius' novel.

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A Poet between Two Worlds
Ovid in Late Antiquity

Ian Fielding

Hermann Fränkel's description of Ovid as a "poet between two worlds" may seem more fitting today than it did when his Sather Lectures were first published in 1945. Opposing himself to the view, then predominant, of Ovid as a brilliant but ultimately superficial poet, Fränkel sought to reveal beneath Ovid's rhetorical artifice a deeper concern with different ways of perceiving reality. In this respect, Fränkel argued, Ovid opened the possibility for a new kind of sympathy between self and others, and helped to "prepare the passage from Antiquity to Christianity" (1945: 5). Such claims failed to convince Fränkel's reviewers, who expressed skepticism as to whether it was really an emphasis on the phenomenon of divided identities that ensured Ovid's lasting appeal to Christian readers (Wilkinson 1946; Otis 1947; Syme 1947). In recent decades, however, as Ovid's works have taken on new levels of significance, Fränkel's account of the poet's modernity has also gained belated recognition (Hardie 2000). But, while Ovidian scholars have reused Fränkel's "between two worlds" label in various contexts, there has been no real attempt to update his original thesis of Ovid as a figure on the cusp of Roman and Christian culture. Even with the recent surge of interest in Ovid's reception, relatively little attention has been given to his influence in the period between the fourth and sixth centuries, which sees the transition "between the wonderful self-contained world of Antiquity and that newer one which was to bring Christianity and a different civilization" (Fränkel 1945: 163).

It should be noted that, in late antiquity, Ovid's authority is most clearly perceptible in the field of poetic composition. His poetry, unlike that of Virgil and Terence, has little bearing on the work of patristic authors like Jerome and Augustine (Ronconi 1984: 15). For the poets, on the other hand, Ovid's language, which he had tailored precisely to suit the demands of dactylic meter, was almost universal as a working medium (Kenney 2002: 59–60). His characteristic methods

of epigrammatic expression, discontinuous narration, detailed description, and psychological characterization were similarly pervasive (Gagliardi 1972: 8–9; Roberts 1989: 61–62). In general, though, it is only as a model of poetic technique that he is acknowledged as a presence in this period. E.K. Rand remarked that, while Ovid was one of the standard authors of the later empire, "his influence was not profound. His spirit was still in exile" (1925: 112). In the following survey, however, I will draw attention to a number of examples in which later Latin poets, writing in the elegiac meter in which Ovid claimed preeminence (*Rem.* 395–96), adopt not only Ovid's distinctive style, but also a distinctively Ovidian outlook. These authors are not all Christians, and it will not be suggested that they recognized the same elements of Christian "loving kindness" that Fränkel discerned in Ovid's corpus. It can be observed nonetheless that in each of these cases Ovid is evoked as a means of reflecting on states of limbo, in which choices or desires conflict. In a broader sense than Fränkel may have supposed, then, the poets of this age of transition relate to Ovid as "a poet between two worlds."

Ovid and the Poetry of Exile

The later Latin poets' identification with Ovid is often based on his status as the archetypal author in exile. His collections of elegiac exile poetry, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, were read widely during the Middle Ages (Hexter 2002: 416–22), and their popularity is already evident at the end of antiquity (Wheeler 2004–05: 24–26). Although Ovid complains about their inferior quality on more than one occasion (e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.35–36, 1.11.35–36, 5.1.69–72; *Pont.* 1.5.7–18, 3.9.7–12), these poems would have provided a less objectionable paradigm for the teaching of elegiac versification than his earlier erotic works. In this period, however, Ovid's elegies of exile may yet have held more specific emotional significance. As political power was transferred away from Rome and the old structure of the empire became ever more fragmented, readers and writers of Latin literature increasingly found themselves dispersed over vast geographical distances. Ausonius (Pucci 2000) and Venantius Fortunatus (Roberts 2009: 314–19) are two late antiquity literary figures that use the motifs of Ovidian exile to characterize their separation from friends and family, while at their patrons' distant courts. Other authors, too, respond to Ovid in expressing feelings of isolation, not only from their loved ones, but also from Rome itself. The importance of Ovid's exilic works for articulating a continuing link with Rome and its past is probably best attested in Rutilius Namatianus' *De Reditu* (Wolff 2007).

In this poem, Rutilius, a former city prefect, recounts his journey from Rome to his family estates in southern Gaul in 417 CE. Rutilius takes his leave of literary convention by composing his poetic itinerary not in the hexameter verse of Horace's *Sat.* 1.5 but in Ovidian elegiac couplets. A little more than four hundred years after Ovid had been sent to Tomis, Rutilius presents his own departure for his

native country as an exile from the eternal city (Fo 1989; Tissol 2002). This correspondence with Ovid is emphasized at the beginning of the poem, where Rutilius hails the good fortune of those who can claim Rome as their own land (1.5–6): *O quantum et quotiens possum numerare beatos / nasci felici qui meruere solo*, "O how greatly and how often am I able to count as blessed, those worthy of being born on its happy soil." These verses allude programmatically to Ovid's declaration at *Tr.* 3.12.25–26: *O quantum et quotiens non est numerare beatum, / non interdicta cui licet urbe frui*, "O how greatly and how many times beyond counting is he blessed, who is allowed to enjoy the unforbidden city." Similarly, Rutilius' description of the tearful moment when, leaving Rome through the Porta Portuensis, his "unwilling feet cross the sacred threshold" (1.44 *inviti superant limina sacra pedes*) recalls Ovid's account of his own reluctant parting from his household at *Tr.* 1.3.55–56: *ter limen tetigi, ter sum revocatus, et ipse / indulgens animo pes mihi tardus erat*, "Three times I touched the threshold, three times I was called back, and my very foot, yielding to my heart, moved slowly."

Through these imitations of the exile poetry, Rutilius indicates that he shares Ovid's sorrow at being absent from Rome. But, given the historical circumstances surrounding his journey, it may not be only his own fate that he laments in this elegiac poem. Seven years previously, in 410, Alaric's Gothic army had become the first invading force in nearly eight centuries to sack the city of Rome. While this catastrophe did not prove to be terminal for the empire, it did provoke an ideological crisis about Rome's status as the traditional capital of the world. Generally thought to have been a traditional pagan (Cameron 2010: 207–18), Rutilius would probably have disagreed with the attempts of his contemporary Augustine to shift emphasis from the Earthly City to the City of God. But, in his long farewell address to the goddess Roma (1.47–164), he seems less than certain that she will be able to recover from her latest setback (Roberts 2001: 541). Thus, *De Reditu* represents a moment of profound uncertainty, suspended between memories of things as they once were and fears of what might now become of them. This tension between different levels of reality is depicted through further references to Ovid's poetry in Rutilius' poignant parting vision of the city. As he waits at the mouth of the Tiber before embarking on his voyage, the poet comments on Rome's famous skyline, which is still just about visible from his position (1.193–98):

> nec locus ille mihi cognoscitur indice fumo,
>   qui dominas arces et caput orbis habet
> (quanquam signa levis fumi commendat Homerus,
>   dilecto quotiens surgit in astra solo),
> sed caeli plaga candidior tractusque serenus
>   signat septenis culmina clara iugis.

That place which holds the supreme citadels and the capital of the world, I do not recognize by its telltale smoke—although Homer mentions with appreciation

the signs of weightless smoke whenever it rises from the beloved ground towards the stars—but a clearer expanse of sky and a space serene marks the famous summits of the seven hills.

The exiled Ovid also likens his desire for home to that of Ulysses (e.g. *Pont.* 4.14.35), and commentators on *De Reditu* have noted that Rutilius' image of smoke rising from the roofs is derived from Homer (*Od.* 1.57–59) via *Pont.* 1.3.33–34: *non dubia est Ithaci prudentia, sed tamen optat / fumum de patriis posse videre focis*, "The wisdom of Ulysses is not in doubt, but often he wished to be able to see smoke from his native fireplaces." Rutilius, however, specifies that, unlike the hero of the *Odyssey*, he does not identify the city by the sign of smoke—which might evoke memories, for him, of its recent devastation (Squillante 2005: 174). Nonetheless, the absence of smoke, in this allusive context, would seem to suggest a city uninhabited. As Fränkel remarked of Ovid in a similar instance, we find Rutilius "bent on concealing from his own eyes a disagreeable fact; but he also sees to it that the cloak is transparent … There is some degree of realism, after all, in a game where you know that an illusion is an illusion" (1945: 31).

As he continues his description, Rutilius reflects in a self-conscious Ovidian manner on the unreliability of appearances (1.201–4):

> saepius attonitae resonant circensibus aures;
> > nuntiat accensus plena theatra favor;
> pulsato notae redduntur ab aethere voces,
> > vel quia perveniunt vel quia fingit amor.

Often our ears astounded ring with the noise of the Circus; and increasing cheers announce the theater full. From air disturbed the well-known cries are echoed, either because they are conveyed or because our love invents them.

The mention of resounding theaters can be likened to Ovid's reminiscence of Rome in springtime at *Tr.* 3.12.24 *proque tribus resonant terna theatra foris*, "three theatres resound in the place of three forums." This is one of several examples of the motif of mental vision in Ovid's exile poetry (Nagle 1980: 91–98), and Rutilius seems also to be viewing the city with his mind. His eyes, he says, "as leaders … think they are able to see what they desire" (1.191–92 *duces oculi … / se quod cupiunt cernere posse putant*). Though not nearly as remote from Rome as Ovid was in Tomis, Rutilius is still beset by visual and auditory memories of the city, as if of an absent loved one. Specifically, he resembles the husbands who are watched by Ovidian heroines, such as Laodamia (*Her.* 13.17–24) and Alcyone (*Met.* 11.466–72), as they disappear over the horizon on ill-fated voyages (Roberts 2001: 550–51). These marital separations are also a model for Ovid in describing his own separation from his wife in the *Tristia* (Hardie 2002: 285–88). Moreover, Rutilius takes the line ending *fingit amor* (1.204) from *Pont.* 1.9.8, where Ovid imagines that he sees his friend Celsus after

learning of his death. Like Ovid, however, what Rutilius presents in *De Reditu* is not a simple escape from reality into fantasy, but a liminal situation in which he cannot bring himself fully to accept either reality or fantasy.

For Rutilius, setting off from Rome on a perilous journey through a landscape ravaged by barbarians, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* demonstrate the extent to which poetry can provide relief in the most desperate circumstances. But there were in late antiquity other authors who experienced the sufferings of exile as more than a literary motif, and sought to put Ovid's example to more practical use in the face of personal misfortunes. In Africa at the end of the fifth century, for example, the poet Dracontius composed an elegiac *Satisfactio* in which he asks to be pardoned by Gunthamund, the Vandal king (484–96) who had imprisoned him (Moussy 1988). Before Dracontius, Optatianus Porphyrius had succeeded where Ovid failed by earning a recall from exile with a series of elaborate poems in praise of the emperor Constantine (Polara 1973). Claudian too, in his *Deprecatio ad Hadrianum* (*Carm. Min.* 22), begs forgiveness of an angered dignitary—though Cameron (1970: 397–400) has argued that the poem should be seen as part of an ironical exchange between friends, and subsequent studies have shown how Claudian's allusions to Ovid's exilic works support such a reading (Consolino 2004; Mulligan 2005). Dracontius' *Satisfactio* is of particular interest, however, because in it he seeks, like Ovid in *Tristia* 2, to atone for an offensive *carmen*.

About this earlier poem, now lost, Dracontius displays typically Ovidian reticence, revealing only that he had written in praise of an "unknown lord" (*Sat.* 94 *ignotum … dominum*), whose identity remains vexed (Moussy 1985: 18–26; Merrills 2004). But unlike *Tristia* 2, in which Ovid seeks to persuade Augustus that the *Ars Amatoria* had been grossly misunderstood, the *Satisfactio* is not an attempt by Dracontius to defend his previous work. While he protests elsewhere that one of the king's informers had exaggerated his crime (*Rom.* 7.127–29), here he only claims to have committed his fault unknowingly, because God had afflicted him with madness (*Sat.* 19–28). It might be considered that his persistence in writing poetry, in spite of the ruin it had brought upon him, is itself an indication of insanity—as Ovid says of his own continued poetic efforts at *Tr.* 2.13–16. Certainly, in a "maniacal climate of persecution and obsessive suspicion" (Barchiesi 2001: 86), another poem in honor of Gunthamund would carry the risk of further damaging Dracontius' fortunes, rather than helping them. In the *Satisfactio*, he observes that the written word, like everything else in nature, was created with the potential to be beneficial or harmful (64 *inde fit ut praestet littera vel noceat*). Ovid too, in his apology for the *Ars*, explains that authors can do nothing to prevent their works from being used against their intentions, because *nil prodest, quod non laedere possit idem*, "nothing is useful, which is not also able to injure" (*Tr.* 2.266). Thus, Dracontius suggests that Gunthamund will find nothing iniquitous in his present work if, in Ovid's words, "it is read with the right intention" (*Tr.* 2.275 *recta si mente legatur*).

It is, of course, unlikely that either Augustus or Gunthamund would have read these poems for themselves. At *Tr.* 2.213–40, Ovid argues that Augustus must have been too busy with affairs of state to sit down and peruse his verse; while

in Dracontius' case, it is unclear to what extent his barbarian overlord was even literate at all. Gunthamund nonetheless, in his portraits and titulature, exhibits a certain proclivity for Roman imperial trappings (Clover 1993: X 63), and Dracontius may have anticipated that it would please the king to be told that the elegiac poet, in the manner of the exiled Ovid, had addressed him as though he were Augustus. Although many of Ovid's modern readers have not found the tone of his praise of Augustus to be wholly deferential (Williams 1994: 154–58), Dracontius seems to have no reservations about drawing attention to his use of the *Tristia* as a source for his own panegyric (Galli Milić 2009: 259–60). At *Sat.* 137–48, for instance, he lauds the king's mercy by likening him to a lion that will not kill a prostrate enemy—an analogy that Ovid draws to Augustus at *Tr.* 3.5.33–34. And, as Ovid supplicates Augustus to follow Jupiter's example of forbearance at *Tr.* 2.39–40, Dracontius advises Gunthamund that, "by pardoning us, you piously imitate the thunderer" (149 *ignoscendo pius nobis imitare tonantem*). For Dracontius, a distinguished advocate, the link between clemency and divinity would have been a rhetorical commonplace (e.g. Cic. *Lig.* 38). Still, by using the epithet *tonans* ("thunderer") to refer to the Christian God, he specifically brings to mind Ovid's comparisons of Augustus to Jupiter in *Tristia* 2 (Bouquet 1995: 19–20).

It might seem excessive, for a Christian poet especially, to flatter a mortal ruler in these terms. In fact, given Dracontius' portrayal of what he has suffered at Gunthamund's hands, his praise of clemency might be seen as implying that the king is not quite as virtuous as he makes out. But while there was a danger for Dracontius that his words could be read with unintended meanings, in his imitation of *Tristia* 2 he may have taken "a lesson on one important aspect of poetry, its instability of meaning" (Barchiesi 2001: 102). A key argument in Ovid's appeal to Augustus is that no conclusions can be drawn about the content of his character from the content of his poetry: *Tr.* 2.353 *crede mihi, distant mores a carmine nostro*, "Believe me, my customs are far removed from my song." Dracontius makes a similar distinction toward the end of his *Satisfactio*, where he reminds the king that one of his ancestors pardoned a defendant with the words *non homini ignosco … sed lingua meretur*, "I do not pardon the man, but his eloquence deserves it" (301). Whereas Ovid urges Augustus to judge him by his real personality rather than his poetic persona, Dracontius makes the opposite point: that Gunthamund should take what he says in his poem at face value, as a declaration of loyalty, even if there is no way of knowing whether it reflects his real feelings. Like his Augustan predecessor, then, he treads a thin line between sincerity and irony, presenting himself as neither one thing nor the other. Ovid's works show that, in dialogue with absolute power, the poet is always in exile between the world of the here and now and the world of intellectual freedom.

Ovid and the Poetry of Desire

The example of Dracontius shows how readily and comprehensively Ovid's poetry could be integrated into a Christian context (Bouquet 1995), but elsewhere in

Christian late antiquity he was received more suspiciously, as a purveyor of pagan decadence and vice. For the pseudonymous author of the *Epigramma Paulini* (Fo 1999), the reading of Ovid's love elegy, like the wearing of expensive clothes and jewelry, is indicative of the moral corruption that has resulted among his fellow citizens from their overindulgence of women: *Epigr.* 77 *Paulo et Solomone relicto / aut Maro cantatur Phoenissa aut Naso Corinna*, "While Paul and Solomon are forsaken, Virgil is sung by a Dido, or Ovid by a Corinna." The vilification of pagan verse as a pernicious distraction from the works of scripture is a well-known topos in patristic literature (e.g. Jerome, *Ep.* 22.30)—although, in spite of their professed aversions, Christian authors did not refrain from reading classical poets. As a result, long before the "moralized Ovids" of the later Middle Ages, there is evidence in this period of the tendency to reinterpret Ovid in accordance with the preoccupations of Christian morality. For instance, the satire of female vanity and male effeminacy in Prudentius' *Hamartigenia*, itself an important influence on the misogynistic invective in the *Epigramma Paulini* (Chiappiniello 2009), draws upon Ovid's observations on cosmetics in the *Medicamina Faciei Femineae* (Dykes 2011: 223–28). And, in the *Commonitorium* (Rapisarda 1960), written contemporaneously with the *Epigramma Paulini* in Gaul in the early fifth century, Orientius adapts Ovidian elegiac verse for a didactic poem on the life of Christian virtue.

In most other respects besides meter, the *Commonitorium* appears to bear little resemblance to the elegies of Ovid. The author of the poem, generally identified with St. Orientius who was bishop of Augusta Ausciorum in the 430s CE, uses the elegiac couplet to convey his moral teaching to a broad audience in a sententious and easily memorable form (Roberts 2010: 90). At *Comm.* 1.218, for example, he exhorts his reader to observe the "Golden Rule" of ethical reciprocity and "make sure that, as you love, you are loved" (*fac ut ameris amans*), redeploying a trope from Ovid, *Ars* 2.107, *ut ameris, amabilis esto*, "in order that you be loved, be lovable." Elegiac poetry is well suited to this type of pointed expression; and it is certainly true that, for those who treated Christian subject matter in Latin verse, "there was no other course but to choose from the available range of meters, whatever the risk of arousing unwanted comparisons" (Vessey 1999: 166). But, in the section of the *Commonitorium* that is concerned with the sin of lust, the association of the poem's elegiac form with the erotic works of Ovid could have seemed especially infelicitous. Accordingly, in composing a Christian counterpart to Ovid's didactic *Remedia Amoris*, Orientius presents his readers with a method for escaping not only the snares of love, but also the genre of love elegy (Conte 1989).

While Orientius insists that God's grace alone enables human beings to overcome sexual desire, he still turns to Ovid for practical advice on counteracting desire's effects. At *Rem.* 315–30, Ovid recommends that the suffering lover focus on his beloved's less attractive aspects—and Orientius, too, directs his Christian reader to adopt a different mental attitude toward his love. In a long description that inverts the typical characteristics of the elegiac *puella* (Santelia 2009: 523–25), he presses the reader to envisage how even the most beautiful woman's features

will be disfigured over time: pitch-black hair will turn gray; the face will wrinkle and sag; dazzling eyes will become rheumy (1.423–32). This passage concludes with an exhortation to renounce "the faces of girls and lovely forms" (1.435 *puellares vultus formasque decentes*). Orientius also uses the epithet *decens* with *forma* at 1.376, but it can be noted that the phrase *forma decens*—the "lovely form" of which he urges us to beware—appears prominently in Ovid's depiction of personified Elegy at *Am.* 3.1.9–10: *forma decens, vestis tenuissima, vultus amantis, / et pedibus vitium causa decoris era*t, "Her form was lovely, her clothing very thin, her expression affectionate, and the defect with her feet was a source of allure." Wyke (1989: 124–31) has shown the importance of this description in shaping the ancient literary tradition of representing dangerous female beauty. In Ovid's poem, of course, Elegy's charms prove impossible to resist, but Orientius' admonition against *formae decentes* marks the separation between his Christian elegiac verse and the erotic poetry of his predecessor.

The *Commonitorium* is not the only work in which the genre of Ovidian love elegy is converted to the Christian values of late antiquity. Thus Venantius Fortunatus, the most prolific elegist of the period, alters the traditional topoi of the elegiac lover to describe his spiritual relationship with his *dominae*—namely Radegund, founder of the monastic community at Poitiers, and the abbess Agnes (Consolino 1977; Roberts 2009: 308–19). Also noteworthy is Fortunatus' elegy *De Virginitate* (*Carm.* 8.3), a poetic epistle addressed, in the style of Ovid's *Heroides*, by a Christian virgin to her absent husband, Christ (Campanale 1995: 144–47). Furthermore, the virtues of chastity and virginity are the subject of praise (of a kind) in the elegiac collection of Maximianus (Schneider 2003), a poet about whom little can be said for certain, although he is generally dated to the generation before Fortunatus, in the mid sixth century. Maximianus, who is probably the closest imitator of classical love elegy in later Latin literature, is far more explicit in his treatment of erotic themes than Orientius or Fortunatus—or even Ovid himself. Here, the elegiac lover has become an old man, lamenting the decline of his physical condition and the failure of his previous love affairs. During the Middle Ages these elegies often appeared alongside or in place of the *Remedia Amoris* in collections of school texts, where they were presented as a deterrent against the pursuit of sexual pleasure (Lutz 1974: 214–15). It can be argued, however, that Maximianus, like Ovid, is a more provocative poet than this "moralized" medieval reading would suggest.

While Maximianus draws aspects of his portrayal of old age from various literary sources, including Horace (*AP* 164–75) and Juvenal (10.190–209), his emphasis on the idea of a ruinous reversal of fortune recalls Ovid's account of his own final years in exile. He begins the first and longest of his six elegies by reproaching death for refusing to put an end to his misery, as Ovid does at *Tr.* 3.2.23–30, and complaining that "I am not who I was" (1.5 *non sum qui fueram*), as Ovid says of his exiled self, "I am not what I was" (*Tr.* 3.11.25 *non sum ego quod fueram*). These motifs of hateful old age and belated death are also found in another Ovidian elegiac poem

from the first half of the sixth century—that is, the elegy that begins Boethius'
De Consolatione Philosophiae (Claassen 2007: 7–8). An apparent contemporary of
Maximianus, Boethius actually appears in the third elegy as a kind of *praeceptor
amoris* (Shanzer 1983; Barnish 1990); and Maximianus seems to exemplify Boethius'
teaching that "anyone who wishes to recall his own feelings of lust will understand
that the end of pleasure is sorrow" (*Consol.* 3 p7.3 *tristes vero esse voluptatum exitus,
quisquis reminisci libidinum suarum volet intelleget*). Certainly, the subject matter of
his elegiac collection is as much *tristia* as it is *amores*.

In Maximianus' first elegy, as he contrasts his dismal present state with his glo-
rious youth, he claims to have been so handsome that he could have taken his pick
of any number of beautiful girls—but found none of them sufficiently attractive,
and "remained without ardor upon a lonely bed" (1.76 *permansi viduo frigidus usque
toro*). Ovid, on the other hand, declares that it is better to love too many women
than too few, and that he would wish it only upon his enemies "to sleep on a lonely
bed" (*Am.* 2.10.17 *viduo dormire cubili*). But even if Maximianus' youthful abstinence
may seem to suggest a shift in morality since the days of his predecessor (Consolino
1997: 373–75), in his old age he shows that he is not immune to the allure of the
female form. The next 20 lines of the poem offer an enumeration of the precise
physical characteristics that he finds appealing in a woman: a full figure, pink com-
plexion, golden hair, red lips, a slender white neck. These are all features typical of
the elegiac *puella* (e.g. *Am.* 3.3.3–6), though Maximianus acknowledges that it is no
longer appropriate to be fascinated by such things at his age: 1.101 *singula turpe seni
quondam quaesita referre*, "It is shameful for an old man to recount the features he
once desired." On this point, Ovid would have agreed: *Am.* 1.9.4 *turpe senilis amor*,
"love in an old man is a shameful thing." Maximianus can thus be seen as a "poet
between two worlds": an elegiac lover with an almost Christian sense of shame.

The full extent to which Maximianus diverges from the values of Ovidian love
elegy is made evident in the fifth elegy. The amorous episode that is the subject
of this poem follows the same pattern as the earlier episodes from Maximianus'
life that are recounted in the preceding elegies: in each instance, he submits to
the force of erotic desire against his better judgment, only to be prevented from
consummation by his own feelings of guilt. The fifth elegy describes how the geri-
atric poet was seduced, during an ambassadorial mission to the east, by a woman
known only as the Greek Girl (5.6 *Graia puella*). In a reversal of one of the genre's
most distinctive motifs, the elegiac *puella* takes on the role of the *exclusus amator*,
"standing watchful at my window in the night" (5.9 *pervigil ad nostras astabat nocte
fenestras*) (Pinotti 1989: 197; Consolino 1997: 388). But, whereas the *paraclausithy-
ron* of the Roman elegists typically goes unheard by the beloved, the Greek Girl
beguiles Maximianus with her song. Although Maximianus subscribes to the poetic
tradition that characterizes old age as abhorrent and unfit for love, here, in the same
way as Ovid does his own lover in the *Amores*, he still views and desires the Greek
Girl (5.27–30):

> urebant oculos stantes duraeque papillae
> et quas astringens clauderet una manus.
> ah, quantum mentem stomachi fultura movebat
> atque sub exhausto pectore pingue femur!

Her breasts standing firm, which a single cupped hand would enclose, inflamed my eyes with passion. Ah, how her loins roused my mind, and the fleshy thigh beneath her drawn-out chest!

These verses closely paraphrase Ovid's description of Corinna's naked body from *Am.* 1.5.20–22: *forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi … / quam castigato planus sub pectore venter … / quam iuvenale femur*! "The beauty of her breasts, how fit to be pressed … how flat the belly beneath her restrained chest … how youthful the thigh!" In this poem, Ovid raises the expectation that he is about to give an account of his sexual union with Corinna, before declining to do so at the very last moment. Maximianus' encounter with the Greek Girl is effectively a pastiche of *Am.* 1.5 and another poem that demonstrates the love elegists' tendency to frustrated, rather than fulfilled, desire—that is, *Am.* 3.7, Ovid's "impotence poem." On his first night with the Greek Girl, Maximianus manages to meet the demands of sexual activity—but afterwards finds himself utterly incapable of performing again.

The portrayal of erectile dysfunction in Maximianus' fifth elegy obviously parallels that of *Am.* 3.7, but there is still an important difference between the two poems. As a young man, Ovid represents his ordeal as being out of the ordinary—in fact, as anticipating extreme old age. He says, for example, of his girlfriend's attempts at manual stimulation: *Am.* 3.7.41–42 *illius ad tactum Pylius iuvenescere possit / Tithonosque annis fortior esse suis*, "At her touch Nestor would be able to rejuvenate, and Tithonus to be stronger than his years." But, like the impotent old man satirized by Juvenal (10.205–8), Maximianus proves unresponsive to his lover's efforts to restore his virility. It has been observed that Ovid's "impotence poem" continually threatens to cross over from elegy into other, more obscene poetic genres (Holzberg 2009)—but Maximianus takes the situation in an even more unexpected direction. First, the Greek Girl, lying on her "lonely bed" (5.85 *viduo toro*), sings a requiem for his lifeless penis. Then, when Maximianus laughs at her, she rebukes him: 5.109–10 *nescis, ut cerno, perfide, nescis, / non fleo privatum, sed generale chaos*, "You don't know, traitor, I see that you don't know: not private chaos I lament, but the chaos of it all." After this famous line, she gives a long speech in which she praises the penis as the source and symbol of life's renewal. Here, the image of universal wisdom extending "unconquered hands at your command" (5.129–30 *sapientia … / porrigit invictas ad tua iussa manus*) represents a suggestive variation of Ovid's account of the triumph of Cupid in *Am.* 1.2.20: *porrigimus victas ad tua iura manus*, "I extend my conquered hands to your authority."

Szövérffy (1968: 364) has argued that this passage "has been taken too seriously," and should be read as a satire of the "pan-sexuality" of women. It can be noted, though, that Maximianus makes no rebuttal to the Greek Girl's oration, and the poem ends, abruptly: 5.154 *me velut expletis deserit exequiis*, "She left me, as though the last rites of death were accomplished." Thus, the fifth elegy depicts the failure of Maximianus' sexual capacities as the ultimate confirmation of his "living death." The poem is followed by a 12-line coda, in which Maximianus pronounces, not that his unhappy fate is one to be avoided, but rather that it is one that nobody can hope to avoid. The last lines read (6.11–12):

> infelix ceu iam defleto funere surgo
>   hac me defunctum vivere parte puto.

Unhappy, as if from lamented death, I rise: though dead in this part, I think that I live on.

In view of the lack of direct references to Christianity in the body of Maximianus' poetry, there is very little basis for taking this closing couplet as alluding to the spiritual afterlife. Instead, it clearly echoes Ovid's claim to poetic immortality at the end of the *Amores*: 1.15.42 *vivam, parsque mei multa superstes erit*, "I will live, and a great part of me will survive." A similar thought is found at the end of the *Metamorphoses* too (15.875–76). But, given the "death" that is portrayed in Maximianus' fifth elegy, it is possible to interpret *hac ... parte* as a specific anatomical reference: "although my member is dead, I think I live on" (6.12). In this way, these final verses can be seen as an ironic riposte to the moralizing discourse, predominant in this period, which advocated withdrawal from the flesh (Consolino 1997: 394–400; Schneider 2001: 463–64; Uden and Fielding 2010). Maximianus, like Ovid, does emphasize the frustration and loss that results from erotic desire, while at the same time accepting that frustration and loss, like desire itself, are inevitable parts of life. Such a conclusion might seem rather unsatisfying; but then, it was a move characteristic of Ovid "to offer half-satisfactory solutions for situations which were entirely hopeless otherwise" (Fränkel 1945: 78). And it is this aspect of Ovid's poetry, which resists finality by treating every ending as a transformation of the past, that speaks particularly strongly to the concerns of these poets of late antiquity.

Further Reading

There is currently no one volume dedicated to examining Ovid's presence in late antique Latin literature. The surveys of Ovid's ancient and medieval receptions by Wilkinson (1955), Robathan (1973), Ronconi (1984), Anderson (1995b), Dewar (2002), Hexter (2002), Wheeler (2004–05), and Clark (2011) all address the period of late antiquity, to a greater or lesser extent. There are studies of Ovid's influence on individual authors in the collections by Chevallier (1982), Catanzaro and Santucci (1989), Gallo and Nicastri (1995), Schubert

(1999), and Tissol and Wheeler (2002). In recent multi-authored volumes on the history of elegiac poetry, there are chapters on late antiquity by Roberts (2010), Uden (2012), and Green (2013). References are given above to the standard editions of Latin texts I have discussed, but these poems are generally not well served with modern English translations: for Rutilius, see Duff and Duff (1982); for Dracontius, see St. Margaret (1936); for Orientius, see Tobin (1945); for Maximianus, see Lind (1988).

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Commentary and Collaboration in the Medieval Allegorical Tradition

Jamie C. Fumo

Amidst the "rich and complex network of readings, claims, counter-appropriations, repudiations and retractions" that constituted the medieval Ovidian tradition (Dimmick 2002: 286), scholastic commentaries and their siblings beyond the schoolroom contribute crucially to the history of Ovid's reception. They supply evidence of actual and prescriptive reading of a corpus of ancient texts that were challenging, even perplexing, to medieval Christian audiences both in letter and spirit, yet which had a profound impact on the literary temperament across linguistic traditions in western Europe in the high and later Middle Ages. The poet who coyly fancied himself *magister amoris* became a favored object of study by new, differently affiliated generations of schoolmasters, while Ovid's hope for his name's survival *quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris*, "where Roman power extends over conquered lands" (*Met*. 15.877) was realized in the continued equation of literacy with Latinity sustained by study of his works in monastic and cathedral schools and universities. The transmission of Ovid's works in the medieval period was far from a neutral or purely mechanical enterprise: it necessitated a wholesale moral recalibration of the sometimes salacious pagan poet in conformance with the medieval classification of literary texts under the ethical branch of philosophy (Allen 1982; Minnis, Scott, and Wallace 1988: 13–14; Reynolds 1996: 14–15)—a stunning transformation indeed for the poet of transformation himself (cf. Ginsberg 1998: 62).

This chapter offers an overview of how this hermeneutic metamorphosis was achieved within the school tradition (broadly construed), with particular attention to the accomplishments of recent scholarship in the still relatively nascent task of sorting through and interpreting the mass of textual evidence for the study of Ovid (specifically, the *Metamorphoses*) in the medieval schoolroom.[1] Informing this synoptic review is a metacritical consideration of challenges and preconceptions

informing the field of medieval Ovidian commentary studies, and how these are affected by new paths of research. Reviews of the key installments in the development of the medieval Ovidian commentary tradition are easily accessible in recent guides (e.g. Knox 2009; Clark, Coulson, and McKinley 2011) and will not be repeated here; instead, I intend a more panoramic reflection on the workings of commentary and its value in and beyond the classroom. Finally, adopting a stylistic and narratological approach to the Ovidian commentary tradition, this chapter inquires into domains of interest shared by pedagogic and poetic (i.e. "creative") reckonings with Ovid's poetry. To this end, it considers the extent to which Ovidian commentary could function generatively, within a medieval construct of authorship, as a platform for collaboration—rather than collision—between scholars and the *auctores* they esteem. Pierre Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus,* in its shadowy intersection with vernacular French and Italian poetry, features as a case study in this last stage of the argument.

Proteus Bound? Ovid in Medieval Schools

It is highly appropriate that Ovid's *carmen perpetuum* about change survives in the Middle Ages and beyond precisely through the process of change: adaptation, paraphrase and commentary, translation, and numerous other types of (often radical) reinscription. The grotesque, racy energy of Ovidian metamorphosis becomes the power of adaptability in an ever-changing world. Any discussion of Ovidian reception patterns in the Middle Ages must first of all qualify the notion of "the medieval Ovid." Recent scholars have insisted that Ovid's medieval afterlife cannot be taken as monolithic: the poet's different faces (e.g. as ethical instructor and as unreformed lover)—variously configured in the often fanciful life-narratives comprising the *accessus* that frame Ovid's works in many manuscripts (Hexter 2002: 432–39)—were frequently played off against one another in the literary sphere. Chaucer's Wife of Bath could famously take umbrage at her fifth husband Jankyn's "book of wikked wyves," which collates "Ovides Art" with a coterie of antifeminist authorities (Chaucer 1987: *Wife of Bath's Prologue* 680, 685), while at the same time founding her experiential feminine authority squarely in the third book of that same text (Desmond 2006: 116–43). Ovid in the Middle Ages was, as James G. Clark (2011a: 16) has observed, an "incorrigibly plural" author.

  Just as there were multiple "Ovids" to reckon with, there was a vast diversity of Ovidian textualizations available to students and intellectuals confronting his works. These run the gamut from prose summaries, literal digests, and epitomes, to moralizing and non-moralizing commentaries ranging from the purely philological to the flamboyantly allegorical. Such texts served a primarily pedagogic function, offering a technology by which Ovid's ancient text could be processed and made legible to medieval readers. Within the category of commentary more specifically, a variety of formats existed: interlinear, marginal, *catena* (i.e. freestanding),

anthologized (i.e. commentaries bound with other commentaries), or embedded (i.e. commentaries assimilated into other commentaries) (see Coulson 2011 for examples). In certain cases, commentaries could even displace the text they served, functioning as surrogates for the Ovidian original and taking on scholarly or popular lives of their own. The bewildering variety of medieval pedagogical and interpretative guides to the *Metamorphoses* is challenging to grasp when many of them, despite their obvious importance, remain unpublished, difficult to access, often lacking critical editions, and hence given serious attention only by a relatively small group of scholars (in contrast to the more widespread critical engagement with medieval vernacular apprehensions of Ovid's poetry). Indeed, the most prolifically transmitted medieval commentary on the *Metamorphoses*, the so-called Vulgate Commentary, poses such textual challenges that only small portions of it have been critically edited to date, by Frank Coulson (at work on a critical edition of the complete text; the partial edition is Coulson 1991). While much progress has been made in recent years, thanks to the availability of research tools that make possible a consolidation of textual traditions (such as Coulson and Roy 2000), as well as theoretical advancements in commentary and reception studies, our understanding of the shape and purpose of many medieval Ovidian commentaries remains rudimentary.

Contributing to this problem is an ingrained disaffection with medieval Ovidian commentaries that was inculcated by generations of critics and hardened by old divisions between "medieval" and "Renaissance." The problem is twofold: it rests, first, on the assumption that allegory is the dominant form taken by *all* medieval Ovidian commentary, and second, on a narrow view of the "colonizing" mentality by which medieval Christian structures of exegesis operate on ancient texts. The first assumption, quite easily disproven, derives in part from generalizations based on the more readily available and commonly discussed commentaries, either by named authors (e.g. John of Garland, Pierre Bersuire) or by unnamed but infamous ones (e.g. the poet of the *Ovide moralisé*, properly speaking a "vernacular translation-cum-commentary," Hexter 1986: 10). Too summarily lost in the shuffle are the miscellaneous and often anonymous glosses, paraphrases, and cribs that concentrate on basic philological elucidation in the service of grammatical study—texts that can be placed in a continuum with student guides to Ovid's Latin up to the present day (as sketched in Knox 2009). As Suzanne Reynolds (1996) has illustrated, the primary function of classical texts in medieval schools was that of elementary instruction in Latin grammar, even if a trend toward more complex types of interpretation developed in the later Middle Ages. Literal, before allegorical, exegesis was fundamental to the acquisition of literacy in a medieval context in which "learning to read means learning to read a foreign language" (Reynolds 1996: 8). Studies of manuscript transmission in particular locales have shown that even the burgeoning popularity of a moralizing commentary like Bersuire's did not overturn the market for literal summaries and epitomes (McKinley 1998: 46–47), which together with other practical mediations, remained popular into the later Middle Ages (Clark 2011b: 188).

Arnulf of Orléans, a seminal figure in the development of Ovidian allegorical interpretation, was responsible for a philological commentary on the *Metamorphoses* as well as his *Allegoriae* on the same poem (both c. 1180), and early manuscripts preserving these two layers of commentary together present the grammatical gloss before the allegorical one, suggesting that "'allegorical' interpretation is a secondary movement" and that "medieval Ovid commentaries were not by nature allegorizing and moralizing" (Hexter 1989a: 77; on Arnulf's philological commentary see Coulson 2007: 45–49). In the early thirteenth century, William of Orléans contributed an influential philological commentary, the *Versus bursarii*, centered upon grammatical and mythological explication; many of William's glosses were amalgamated with other material in the widely transmitted Vulgate Commentary (c. 1260), which comprehensively interpreted the *Metamorphoses* on pedagogic levels ranging from the grammatical to the allegorical to the literary and philosophical (Coulson 1989; 2011: 55–58). Similarly, Giovanni del Virgilio, a fourteenth-century Bolognese commentator now known mainly for his prosimetric allegorical interpretation of the *Metamorphoses*, followed the precedent of Arnulf of Orléans in composing a healthily circulated prose *Expositio*, "a detailed and often minute philological analysis not significantly diverging from standard medieval commentary practice" (Black 2011: 127).

With these important qualifications regarding the diversity of Ovidian commentary in place, there is no denying that allegorical interpretation, whether simply "moral" or explicitly Christian, occupies an important place in the ethical rendering of Ovid's poetry for instructive purposes in the Middle Ages. Critics have been quick to generalize about the glaring and—one feels when reading scholarship in this vein—downright offensive incommensurability of Ovid's literary sophistication with the ham-fisted tools of medieval commentators, who broadcast their own ingenuity at Ovid's expense. In this view, the protean Ovid, like the mythological sea god, needed to be duly bound by medieval allegorizers if he was to enunciate a "truth" that was singular and supreme (as with Proteus, this even encompassed prophetic truth, most notably in the pseudo-Ovidian *De vetula*; Hexter 2002: 440–42). The manner of Ovid's textual binding by his interpreters has been colorfully likened to a "straitjacket" from which the defenseless poet needed "rescuing" by more enlightened (read: Renaissance) thinkers (Javitch 1978; Gillespie 2005: 189). Mere "mannequins in a fashion show of alternative interpretations," Ovid's texts required "considerable cosmetic surgery" (or, put more bluntly, "tearing apart") by commentators who were not above adopting "a certain economy with the truth" they claimed to serve (Levine 1989: 204; Gillespie 2005: 183, 205). It follows that medieval commentators did not revive Ovid or even "metamorphose" him: they simply perpetuated his exile in the frozen North. Lines in the sand are easy to draw: if Ovid favors irresolution and moral ambiguity, the allegorizers deal in rigid and prefabricated moral structures (cf. Hexter 2002: 430); if Ovid revels in playful stylistic and tonal shifts, the allegorizers are concerned with content only, not style (Javitch 1978: 101); if Ovid's irony and narrative playfulness frustrate the

didactic function his works pretend to invite, allegorizers take seriously Ovid's pose as *magister* (Javitch 1978: 106–7; Hexter 1986: 21–25). When "hermeneutic subtlety" is granted to medieval commentaries, it is usually located in the *accesus*, or academic prologues, which develop a relatively complex interpretive framework that tends nonetheless to be unrealized in the commentaries themselves (Gillespie 2005: 192). Even the easy-to-mock *Ovide moralisé* has been defended more vocally as a document that engages seriously with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* than have instances of the Latin commentary tradition. As Robert Levine (1989) and Ana Pairet (2011) have differently argued, the *Ovide moralisé* partakes of the transformational quality of vernacular appropriation in a way that taps into the energy of Ovidian aesthetics, even if the moral amplification it performs works toward opposite ends (see also Blumenfeld-Kosinski 1997: 90–136). An evolutionary model underlies such observations, by which the claustrophobic commentaries, intent upon unreflectively "segmenting and decoding" Ovid's text (Pairet 2011: 107), are freshened by the imaginative play of the *Ovide moralisé*, which engages the generative potential of Ovidian flux toward a Christian super-narrative, finally releasing the pure breeze of the secular vernacular tradition, which regards academic commentaries with a healthy skepticism. The interpretations posited by medieval Latin commentators, particularly those with an allegorical bent, are thus seen as predominantly restrictive, designed "to put an end to the daunting chain of metamorphoses" and intent on uncomplicated closure (Pairet 2011: 106).

It is not, however, so easy to pin down Proteus. The conventional view that study of Ovid proceeded from Benedictine monasteries to secular schools and from universities to the extra-clerical milieux of vernacular poets has now been revised by evidence for the continually vigorous study and transmission of Ovid in English monasteries into the fifteenth century (Clark 2011b). Warren Ginsberg has subversively argued that Ovid's characteristic irony anticipates, and in a way preempts, the ethical interventions of medieval commentators by embedding a "counter-voice" within the text itself (1998: 67). Ovid's own self-reflexiveness, in other words, initiates a process of critical reflection capable of assimilating even alien forms of commentary within a continuum of exegesis, thus inverting the power dynamics by which medieval commentators would seem to "master" the master (on which see Gillespie 2005: 200–5). Rather than viewing commentaries as interferences with a pure text which usurp Ovid's authority with scholastic smoke and mirrors, it is possible, as Rita Copeland has maintained, to understand medieval *enarratio poetarum* (glossing of the poets) as a productive art that "continually refashions the text for changing conditions of understanding" (1991: 64). Commentaries, from this perspective, resignify, displace, and reinvent, creating a "countertext" (or, arguably, a "paratext"; see Hexter 2011: 300, n. 71) that positions itself as "co-extensive" with the main text, rather than as a pendant to it. In realigning the sphere of authorial intentionality to fit particular moral, allegorical, or other expectations, commentaries that appear to modern readers as Procrustean beds actually proceed from "a structure of reference which is presented as anterior to the text and from which the

text is seen to emerge as if organically" (Copeland 1991: 76, 81). Presumption and historical error aside, commentators did not view their own activity as an imposition but as an uncovering, and thus presented their work less as supplementation than as collaboration—with Ovid the *auctor*, and with fellow interpreters. Agency was shared, to different degrees, by all who contributed to the formation and transmission of a text; conventional *schemata* of authorship, following St. Bonaventure, distributed authorial responsibility among author, commentator, compiler, and scribe (Minnis 1988: 94–95). Moreover, the notion that academic commentaries, unlike vernacular appropriations, rigidly closed down interpretation is belied by the sheer proliferation of commentaries which spawned, reabsorbed, and mutated into other commentaries, such that a bare copy of Ovid's poem—unusual as this was in the Middle Ages—would appear not "pure" but impoverished.

Learning from the Enemy: The Case of Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus*

The *Ovidius moralizatus*, as the free-floating fifteenth book of the Benedictine monk Pierre Bersuire's encyclopedia *Reductorium morale* was known, was first composed in Avignon circa 1340 and revised in Paris sometime before 1362. Commencing with a (detachable) first book entitled *De formis figurisque deorum*, which moralizes the key pagan gods in a series of verbal "pictures," the *Ovidius moralizatus* proceeds to a book-by-book paraphrase and series of moralizations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* itself. Bersuire's handbook for preachers forms the high-water mark of medieval Ovidian interpretation; it circulated very widely—considerably more than the vernacular *Ovide moralisé*—and was frequently anthologized (Coulson and Roy 2000: 24–27; Coulson 2002: 156 list a total of 90 full and partial texts.) It must for some readers have supplanted the Ovidian original (Clark 2011b: 188). Moreover, the *Ovidius moralizatus* occupies an intertextual matrix of sorts: inheriting the allegorical procedures developed by earlier commentators (i.e. Arnulf of Orléans and John of Garland) and absorbing material from the fourteenth-century *Ovide moralisé*, John Ridewall's *Fulgentius metaforalis*, and Petrarch's unfinished epic *Africa* (cited by Bersuire in the second recension), Bersuire's manual in turn pervasively influenced late medieval and early Renaissance mythography. The *De formis figurisque deorum* inspired further exegesis and iconography related to the pagan pantheon outside of the framework of Ovidian commentary (in particular, the anonymous *Libellus de imaginibus deorum*) and it also informed a project as momentous as Colard Mansion's *Bible des Poètes*, first published in 1484 and reprinted up to 1531 (Seznec 1953: 174–79; Moss 1984: 6–7).

In the *De formis figurisque deorum* and the commentary on the *Metamorphoses* proper, Bersuire offers multiple, conflicting readings of mythological characters and episodes. This compendium of moral and allegorical interpretations of pagan

myth, replete with scriptural citations, formed a repository for preachers seeking entertaining and instructive *exempla* (for instances of this phenomenon, see Wenzel 2011). Like the author of the *Ovide moralisé*, who was active a generation earlier, Bersuire departs from the practice of most earlier school commentaries by designing a text that replaces, rather than accompanies or contextualizes, the Ovidian original—in contrast even to commentaries such as Arnulf of Orléans's and John of Garland's, which could circulate independently of Ovid's text but still were commonly encrusted between lines and in the margins (see Coulson 2011: 51, 64). For the *Ovide moralisé*, translation inevitably supplanted Ovid's original poem with an "improved" text that disclosed hidden significances; in the case of the *Ovidius moralizatus*, the replacement is effected by Latin prose paraphrase hinged to multiple interpretations, treating the *Metamorphoses* as "a resource-text in the making of a new work" (Gillespie 2005: 202).

  Bersuire's prologue to the *Ovidius moralizatus* attempts to justify his project by analogy with the utility of biblical fable and the familiar topos of the veil or husk covering truth, although his logic is rather strained (Minnis, Scott, and Wallace 1988: 366–67; Gillespie 2005: 203–5). Anticipating his procedure of aligning biblical with classical authority in the moralizations themselves—itself a distant descendant of the cross-hatching of pagan and Christian narrative in the *Eclogue* of "Theodulus," a popular school text for much of the Middle Ages—Bersuire's preface is framed by a quotation from the New Testament and a citation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. First drawing on Paul's warning to Timothy that the people "will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:4) to argue for the necessity of uncovering truth in fable, Bersuire offers a series of analogies for the discovery of worth in recalcitrant matter, then credits Ovid with the observation that "it is proper to be taught by an enemy" (*fas est ab hoste doceri*; Reynolds 1971: 34; Berchorius 1966: 2). It is unclear whether Bersuire is conscious of the potential for irony in this curiously circular grounding of the defense of his own ethics in the supposedly inferior ethics of his "enemy." Here as elsewhere in the *Ovidius moralizatus*, if we press beneath the surface of the Ovidian reference point we find a surprising play of signification that sets the tone for some of the more variegated aspects of Bersuire's project. The original context of the reference (*Met.* 4.428) involves the envious Juno's plan to destroy Ino, sister of Semele and thus aunt of Bacchus, who was the product of one of Jupiter's adulterous liaisons. Juno co-opts the tactics that her "enemy," Bacchus, had used against those who resisted his cult: violent intoxication culminating in mutilation. Although she is technically in the wrong in siding with those who deny Bacchus's legitimacy as a god, Juno succeeds in destroying her rival's innocent sister (Ovid calls her sufferings *immeritae*, 4.531), who plunges off a cliff after her maddened husband bashes out their baby's brains with a rock. It is difficult to accept that Bersuire's deployment of this Ovidian reference could be so casual that the reader was expected to be oblivious to its primary meaning, especially since Bersuire's own moral analysis of Book 4 of the *Metamorphoses* covers this scene and interprets it as an allegory

of drunken excess. To base one's project of Christian exegesis on a justification of guerrilla tactics in a sordid pagan turf war appears self-defeating in the extreme, invoking imagery of extirpation far more disturbing than the forceful grooming of the captive woman (Deut. 21:10–13) adopted by St. Jerome to justify the appropriation of pagan literature (for which see Robertson 1962: 338–40). At the least, the Ovidian anchor for Bersuire's recuperative project seems to add grist to the concerns underlying Paul's warning about the allure of fables, and potentially to threaten Bersuire's assertion of religious and moral hierarchy in his commentary.

In a provocative analysis of the interpretive strategies of the *Ovidius moralizatus*, Ralph Hexter (1989b) has defended Bersuire's commentary against charges of vapidity, suggesting that the compositional ethic of the work is narrative as much as moral. Bersuire's use of biblical tags to cap his moralizations, in Hexter's reading, often subverts the expected textual hierarchy by making the Bible seem to "echo" Ovid rather than vice versa. The remainder of this chapter uses Hexter's proposal as a point of departure to explore, through brief examples, what happens when we read *across* Bersuire's moralizations, as we would a literary text. First we will look at how Bersuire's biblical tags may in certain cases actually destabilize his interpretive project; then we will consider how Bersuire's multiple allegorizations of particular Ovidian episodes interpenetrate in ways that defy his professed "reductive" purpose. To approach the *Ovidius moralizatus* thus involves resituating it from its immediate textual environment as a preacher's aid, and viewing it from the perspective of the poetic eye—an optic justified historically by the use of Bersuire's and related guides and commentaries by late medieval poets such as Chaucer. This approach can help unpack Vincent Gillespie's observation of an "unpoliceable self-generating polysemousness" in the reception history of the *Ovidius moralizatus* that abuts what he sees as its heavy-handed and uninventive reclamation of Ovid's material (2005: 205–6). If we look for a manner of dialogue, even if very imperfect, between Bersuire and his Ovidian source, we find that the medieval commentator enters prolifically into the spirit of interpretation that Ovid invites in his portrayal of metamorphosis, which for the ancient poet is not primarily moralistic or even aesthetic, but hermeneutic or epistemological. Ovid, that is, typically uses metamorphosis to call attention to the ambiguity or multiple interpretive possibilities of the situation described, thus implicating the reader in the process of metamorphosis (Wheeler 1999: 33; Feldherr 2002). Bersuire in turn responds, if unconsciously and even unintentionally, to Ovid's presentation of metamorphosis as an invitation to interpretation. In spite of the impulse to reduce, contain, and distill, which is inherent in the title *Reductorium morale*—an impulse that clearly is contrary to the indulgent spirit of Ovid—Bersuire falls short of unqualified success in his project of moral reduction, and this may help account, counterintuitively, for his work's fertility for the late medieval dissemination of classical learning in academic and literary spheres. The approach to Bersuire tested here helps illustrate the flexibility and value even of "didactic" texts proceeding from the commentary tradition, offering further support for the scholarly opinions reviewed earlier in

this chapter that regard medieval Ovidian commentaries less as predatory than as participatory in an authorial ethic.

That Bersuire stretches Ovid in moralistic directions he has no business going is no secret. In Bersuire's moral universe, the intoxication of Bacchus becomes the fervor of the Holy Spirit; Phaethon becomes a contemplative whose thoughts touch Heaven; and, still more outrageously, Myrrha's incestuous coition with her father in his darkened bed becomes the union of an overly ambitious ecclesiastic with Christ in his Church. Bersuire can, however, stretch the Biblical references with which he fortifies his interpretations as much as he stretches Ovid (cf. Hexter 1989b: 62–64). In the *De formis figurisque deorum*, for example, Bersuire follows up a reading of Diana *in bono* as the Virgin Mary with an interpretation *in malo* of the same virgin goddess as a bawd who tempts people into desire (Reynolds 1971: 75–78). As little sense as this makes, it makes even less when Bersuire applies to Diana/*luxuria* a quotation from the Song of Songs, where it is spoken by the Bride addressing her Bridegroom: "Your name is as oil poured out. Therefore, young maidens have loved you greatly" (Reynolds 1971: 77). Ovidian metamorphoses aside, Bersuire has enacted a stunning transformation upon the Song of Songs here, morphing the highly erotic biblical text—routinely allegorized as a celebration of *caritas*—into a commentary on the dangers of physical desire. Bersuire's very procedure of reading Ovid's poem allegorically induces him to read the Bible literally, in a way anticipatory of the stubbornly "backward" exegesis of Chaucer's Wife of Bath. However, strikingly, Bersuire uses the *same* quotation from the Song of Songs when interpreting Diana *in bono*, in perfect accordance with one of the standard medieval interpretations of the Song of Songs, as the wedding song of Christ and the Virgin Mary.

Such perplexities raise the question of how secure a division can exist between interpretations *in bono* and *in malo* in the *Ovidius moralizatus*, at least once the commentary is approached for reasons other than the cherry-picking of sermon *exempla*. Are such interpretations as mutually exclusive as they purport, or are they necessarily complicated by our memory of the one when reading the other, or by the inherent complexity of the material subject to artificial, and inevitably temporary, distinctions of meaning? Bersuire's multiple interpretations of the myth of Apollo and Daphne serve as an example, selected in part because its intellectual and literary contexts in the Middle Ages have been accessibly identified for readers wishing to delve further into the narrative patterns examined here (Barnard 1987; Fumo 2010). This myth also supplies a clear example of the hermeneutic temperament of metamorphosis in Ovid: namely, does Daphne win or lose when she is metamorphosed into a laurel tree? Her wish to remain a virgin seems to be matched by the evergreen form of the laurel, but it is Apollo, not her patron Diana, whom her leaves come to represent. And then, of course, there is Daphne's ambiguous nod of consent; or is that just the breeze fluttering her foliage? The burden of interpretation is left on the reader.

Ovid's treatment of this narrative proceeds from Apollo's defeat of Python, to Cupid's overmastering of the proud Apollo with his arrow of love, to Apollo's

pursuit of Daphne and her transformation into a laurel. As Peter Knox (1990) has demonstrated, before Ovid, the Python and Daphne stories apparently were always distinct, and Apollo's slaying of Python on Parnassus was typically linked with his foundation of the Delphic oracle and the connected tradition of the Pythian games. In some versions of the Python story, Apollo traveled to the Tempe valley in Thessaly to purify himself of blood pollution after killing Python, then brought Thessalian laurel back to Delphi with him and founded his oracle. Ovid's is the first known version to give the Daphne story a Thessalian setting. Notably, however, *Metamorphoses* 1 lacks any mention of Apollo's purification in Thessaly or the foundation of the Delphic oracle, though it does connect the laurel (that is, Daphne) with the garlands used for the Pythian games. Ovid's special treatment establishes the paradox that, instead of purifying himself of Python's slaughter, Apollo succumbs to another kind of malady; instead of quelling the sensual, irrational forces represented by Python, and then cleansing himself of their pollution, he embraces this very bestial ardor in his desire for Daphne. Even as Apollo's epic conflict (his first kill) is redefined in erotic terms (his first love, just as much of a conflict), Apollo himself emerges less as the metaphoric hunter of Daphne than as the prey of desire (Fumo 2010: 68).

Despite the practice of formal segmentation that Bersuire inherits from the Ovidian commentary tradition, Bersuire's paraphrase and interpretations of this material interestingly elicit certain levels of suggestion that are latent in Ovid's poem. Bersuire's first interpretation of Apollo's defeat of Python equates Apollo with a man who successfully suppresses the will of the flesh, which is the Python, but who becomes arrogant in his moral victory and is thus punished by Cupid. In this reading, Apollo is wounded by the very stirring of the flesh which he had defeated in the (phallic) Python. In allowing Apollo's slaying of the Python to signify more than simply a display of arrogance, Bersuire lends the myth more narrative continuity, and even inadvertently registers the implications behind the changes Ovid made to the myth he inherited. Bersuire's other interpretations of the scene, especially when taken together, further rewrite the myth through the process of moralization, giving it a new kind of narrative coherence and meaning. For instance, Bersuire presents Daphne as the human soul fleeing from the temptation of Apollo, who is the devil, and evading him through her transformation into a laurel, that is, a nun (on this and surrounding interpretations, see Levine 1989: 207). Now it is not Apollo but *Daphne* who must suppress her desire. To support his reading, Bersuire quotes Ecclesiasticus 21:2, "Flee from sins as from the face of a serpent." This biblical citation strikingly functions to conflate Apollo with the serpent that embodies fleshly temptation—the serpent he mastered but later failed to discipline—while presenting Daphne as the ultimate victor of the myth, the true slayer of Python. Bersuire then identifies this Apolline serpent with the dragon of Revelation 12:14, from which the woman clothed with the sun flees. Through this reference, the solar imagery usually attached to Apollo (identified with the "sun of justice" a few lines later) characterizes Daphne instead (Fumo

2010: 95). The complex narrative flow produced by the multiple moralizations and biblical citations highlights the continuities and hermeneutic associations that develop across Bersuire's rigidly partitioned mythical system. These continuities are perhaps also evident in Bersuire's subsequent interpretation of Apollo as Christ embracing Daphne as the laurel, which is likened both to the Cross and the "arrow of the word of God"—an arrow that potentially recalls the dart with which Apollo defeated the Python.

There is little doubt that Bersuire celebrates the *ingenium* of the commentator much as Ovid did for the poet (Hexter 1989b; Dimmick 2002: 278–79), although critics differ on the implications of an intervention as seemingly dissident and profligate as Bersuire's for the Ovidian author-function. Does Bersuire flatten the exhilarating topography of Ovid's text into a desert that is barren of all its riches, or does he in some way enhance and add value to the Ovidian original by opening it to a possibly infinite (if strictly defined) arena of meaning? The preceding case study has suggested that Bersuire does in some important respects *re-narrativize* Ovid's *Metamorphoses* through moralizations that expose the interpretive multiplicity inherent in the poem itself. That the interpretations Bersuire offers exploit and mold Ovid's text in ways the Roman poet could never have anticipated is of course true, but it is almost beside the point; what is important to grasp is that narrativizing is not necessarily at odds with moralizing. For this reason many medieval poets regarded Ovidian commentaries and moral guides like Bersuire's as attractive repositories of stories and details with which a free hand could be taken. By this logic, furthermore, it was possible for Chaucer in several cases to adopt the moralized, re-narrativized, newly patterned details of material treated in the commentaries, while disposing of the moralizations themselves (for examples, see Twycross 1972; Fumo 2004).

The intersection of Bersuire's moralization of Ovid with the vernacular poetic tradition highlights the expansive narrative value of what is finally something other than a "reductive" project. Adopting the Apollo and Daphne narrative again as a rubric, we can compare a semi-allegorical ballade by Guillaume de Machaut, "Phyton, le mervilleus serpent," that is contemporary with the *Ovidius moralizatus* but not directly related to it (Wilkins 1969: 22–23). We recall that Bersuire's moralizations reshape the myth such that Daphne, at least temporarily, becomes the victor as the true slayer of Python, who is identified with the predatory Apollo. In Machaut's ballade, the myth is also reordered in an imaginative way, toward a different end: the courtly lady here is described as more cruel than Apollo's Python, who this time *wins* the battle, taking pleasure in the poet's (Apollo's) torment. In effect, Machaut superimposes the erotic *agon* of the Apollo and Daphne myth onto the preceding narrative of the Python.

An even more suggestive poetic point of intersection with Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus* is embodied by Petrarch. Petrarch was both a contemporary and a friend of Bersuire's; they are known to have met on at least two occasions, in Avignon and Paris, during which time they discussed classical studies, among other topics. Petrarch wrote two letters to Bersuire (*Epistolae familiares* 22.13 and 22.14),

one of them a lengthy disquisition on a theme both Ovidian and medieval: worldly mutability, especially regarding Fortune. Bersuire had the rare privilege of reading Petrarch's unfinished epic *Africa*, which provided him with material for his description of the pagan deities in the *De formis figurisque deorum*. Petrarch's free-handed poetic reinvention of the Apollo and Daphne myth in the *Canzoniere* confidently engages in dialogue with Ovid's version of events much as the poet "converses" with Cicero and Livy in his letters. For all their differences in spirit, however, Petrarch's and Bersuire's respective bendings of Ovid's myth bear comparison. While Laura's identification with Daphne's laurel tree and garland is central to the motion of the *Canzoniere*, the famous metamorphosis canzone (#23) rewrites the myth to produce an image of Petrarch, the male lover—rather than Daphne—transformed into the laurel with the first glance of love. This psychological transformation is then conflated with the poet/Apollo-figure's defeat by Cupid, with whom Laura is said to be in league (Durling 1976: 61). Elsewhere, Laura, like the disdainful lady in Machaut's ballade, is a "cruel beast," a Python figure (Durling 1976: 59). Aggression flows both ways in Petrarch's account: the poet's pursuit of his beloved, and the beloved's scorn and torture of the poet (Sturm-Maddox 1992: 35–38). Though the poignancy of the erotic experience is missing, the unusual take on power and gender relations advanced by Petrarch is also present in Bersuire's moralizations, as is the compression of the three parts of the scene: the Python conflict, the Cupid contest, and the pursuit of Daphne. It may not, then, be only the *rime* in *morte di Laura* that absorbs the moral coloring with which medieval allegorizers endow the laurel as a symbol of virtue or chastity: the bold narrative reconfiguration of the myth in the earlier *rime* can also be understood in relation to the hermeneutic recalibrations and techniques of rearrangement practiced by commentators like Bersuire. In the end, the medieval Ovidian commentary tradition is best viewed not as a stifling affront to a once-living text, but as a record of the kind of change that preserves, and in turn provokes further change.

Note

1   Limitations of space necessitate a bracketing of Ovid's works beyond the *Metamorphoses*. Readers seeking information about the medieval academic treatment of the *Ovidius minor* are referred to the scholarship listed under Further Reading, particularly Hexter (1986). Although rich traditions of school commentary attend many of Ovid's poems in the Middle Ages, exegesis on the *Metamorphoses* experienced the most formal development over time and thus is best suited to the kind of diachronic overview offered here.

Further Reading

Alton and Wormell (1960, 1961) is the classic descriptive overview of key figures in the academic study of Ovid from the early to the later Middle Ages, observing a diminishment

in quality of exegesis over time. Clark, Coulson, and McKinley (2011) challenge that view, and provide a lucid, up-to-date synthesis of Ovid's reception in medieval Europe, including manuscript production and transmission, scholastic commentary, vernacular appropriation, and visual media. Copeland (1991), esp. chapter 3, analyzes medieval exegetical procedures structuring the academic commentary tradition (including Ovidian and other texts), arguing that the rhetorical strategies developed in this sphere bridge Latinate and vernacular literate practices. Coulson and Roy (2000) is an essential research tool for locating and classifying Ovidian commentaries, summaries, and biographies up to 1600. Dimmick (2002) offers a succinct introduction to forms of Ovidian interpretation in the medieval period, canvassing Latin and vernacular appropriations and offering useful insights on allegorical exegesis. Gillespie (2005) powerfully contextualizes the challenges posed by Ovid's poetry within broader trends in the ethical interpretation of classical texts and the development of poetic theory in medieval European schools and curricula. Hexter (1986) is a valuable anatomy of early commentaries on Ovidian texts beyond the *Metamorphoses*, focusing on select manuscript witnesses to reconstruct interpretive trends in medieval pedagogy. McKinley (2001) explores constructions of gender and feminine discourse in the medieval Ovidian commentary tradition, providing a useful introduction to major commentators. Minnis, Scott, and Wallace (1988), esp. chapters 1 and 8, includes analysis and translations of extracts from medieval academic commentaries, presented with a view to their theoretical vocabularies, including several *accessus* to Ovid's texts and two interpretations of the *Metamorphoses*. Reynolds (1996) is a theoretically informed analysis of medieval academic reading practices, particularly the glossing of ancient texts, as they contribute to the history of literacy.

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The Mythographic Tradition
after Ovid

Gregory Hays

"Mythography" can be understood in a narrow sense, as the recording or retelling of mythical stories. But once narrated, myths inevitably provoke questions, comments, and attempts at explanation. In this broader sense, "mythography" can describe a broad mass of material, from parts of the Homeric scholia to the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss. As it relates to Ovid, the term potentially includes summaries of Ovidian stories, allegorical interpretation, glosses, and commentaries (insofar as these deal with mythical material), and mythological works of wider scope to which Ovid makes some contribution. For reasons of space, this chapter will focus on the *Metamorphoses*. This is not meant to obscure the role of other Ovidian works, especially the *Fasti*, *Heroides*, and *Ibis*, all of which transmitted mythological knowledge to later readers and inspired later mythographic discourse.[1]

Ovidian *Narrationes*

The *Metamorphoses* itself rests on a foundation of Hellenistic mythography, in both prose and verse (Forbes Irving 1990: 19–37). Nicander is known to have written a poem on mythological transformations, and fragments of a similar work, perhaps by Parthenius, have recently been edited (P. Oxy. 4711); Boios' lost *Ornithigonia* was evidently confined to bird transformations. A prose collection of metamorphosis stories is preserved by the manuscript tradition under the name of Antoninus Liberalis, while papyri offer catalogues of metamorphosed persons (see Renner 1978). From one point of view, the *Metamorphoses* might itself be regarded as a versified handbook of mythology, and there is no doubt that it served as a source of mythical stories for later writers. Yet the reader who tried to use the poem as a reference work would soon run into difficulties. While the overarching structure is chronological (from the Creation to the Trojan War and

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the mythological foundation of Rome), the connections of many individual stories are associative rather than logical. Stories straddle book divisions, merge into one another, and are nested two, three, or four deep. Some are told in full, others much more briefly, still others only alluded to in passing. Internal narrators often compete with the authorial voice.

A not unrepresentative example is the story of Latona and the Rustics in *Metamorphoses* 6. The story follows the episode of Niobe, and is narrated by an anonymous bystander, who recalls a similar event he had heard of in his youth on a visit to Lycia. When he inquired about a local altar, his interlocutor responded with the story of Latona's flight from Juno, her arrival in Lycia with her newborn twins Phoebus and Diana, and her eloquent appeal to the locals for permission to drink from their spring. Their spiteful refusal brought drastic consequences (6.366–81):

> "distulit ira sitim; neque enim iam filia Coei
> supplicat indignis nec dicere sustinet ultra
> verba minora dea tollensque ad sidera palmas
> 'aeternum stagno' dixit 'vivatis in isto!'
> eveniunt optata deae: iuvat esse sub undis
> et modo tota cava submergere membra palude,
> nunc proferre caput, summo modo gurgite nare,
> saepe super ripam stagni consistere, saepe
> in gelidos resilire lacus, sed nunc quoque turpes
> litibus exercent linguas pulsoque pudore,
> quamvis sint sub aqua, sub aqua maledicere temptant.
> vox quoque iam rauca est, inflataque colla tumescunt,
> ipsaque dilatant patulos convicia rictus;
> terga caput tangunt, colla intercepta videntur,
> spina viret, venter, pars maxima corporis, albet,
> limosoque novae saliunt in gurgite ranae."

"Then wrath postponed thirst; for Coeus' daughter could neither humble herself longer to those unruly fellows, nor could she endure to speak with less power than a goddess; but stretching up her hands to heaven, she cried: 'Live then for ever in that pool.' It fell out as the goddess prayed. It is their delight to live in water; now to plunge their bodies quite beneath the enveloping pool, now to thrust forth their heads, now to swim upon the surface. Often they sit upon the sedgy bank and often leap back into the cool lake. But even now, as of old, they exercise their foul tongues in quarrel, and all shameless, though they may be under water, even under the water they try to utter maledictions. Now also their voices are hoarse, their inflated throats swell up, and their constant quarrelling distends their wide jaws; they stretch their ugly heads, the necks seem to have disappeared. Their backs are green; their bellies, the largest part of the body, are white; and as new-made frogs they leap in the muddy pool." (Miller 1916: 313–15)

The episode is typical of the *Metamorphoses* in various ways. It highlights thematic elements (divine anger; speech and silencing) found throughout the poem and prominent in the surrounding stories of Niobe and Marsyas. It admits of a metapoetic reading, playing on the Callimachean image of clear springs and muddy waters (Clauss 1989). In narratological terms one can note the use of an internal narrator—indeed of two narrators (the anonymous countryman and his Lycian informant). Latona's speech offers scope to Ovid's talents as a writer of persuasive rhetoric, even if the appeal here falls on deaf ears. Finally, the episode displays the poem's continual fascination with the physical process of transformation itself, as the rustics turn to frogs before our eyes.

The Latona story is also useful for our purposes because Ovid is the primary source for it, at least in Latin. The myth is attested in the Greek compilation of Antoninus Liberalis (35), who cites Nicander and the shadowy Menecrates of Xanthos. The story is also found in the Virgilian commentary of Servius (*Georg.* 1. 378), but with Ceres, rather than Latona, as the protagonist. Oddly, Servius cites Ovid as his authority; perhaps he or his source conflated the story with the Ceres/Proserpina cycle in *Met.* 5. But this divergence is helpful to us: it means that any later version naming Latona goes back, directly or indirectly, to Ovid.

The earliest of these—perhaps even earlier than Servius—occurs in the collection of *Narrationes Ovidianae* ("Tales from Ovid") that now goes under the name of Lactantius Placidus. This non-existent personage is the product of a complex set of misunderstandings (on which see Cameron 2004: 313–16). In the absence of a better label, however, I will refer to the compiler as "Lactantius." The work itself belongs to a genre attested or credibly reconstructed for other authors, both Greek and Latin. This is what one could call the mythological companion: a handbook keyed to a particular author which summarizes not the work per se, but the myths alluded to by that author in the order that they appear in the text. (In the case of the *Metamorphoses*, of course, these are pretty much the same thing.) One of these was compiled in antiquity for Homer: we know this "Mythographus Homericus" from papyrus fragments, and some of it made its way into the D Scholia of Homer. Many of the mythological notes in Servius' commentary on Virgil may have come from a similar source (Cameron 2004: 184–216). Comparable, though not keyed to a single work, is the fragmentary text known to modern scholars as the "Tales from Euripides" (though it actually includes a few tales from Sophocles as well).

The flavor of the "Lactantian" collection can be judged from its Latona entry (*Narr.* 6. 3, ed. Magnus 1914: 663):

Latona, Coei filia, cum Iunonis ira ob adulterium ex Iove conceptos Apollinem et Dianam parere non posset et nulla eam errantem regio reciperet, novissime venit in Lyciam et, cum ex ardore aestus ac longitudine viae sitim sedare vellet, ab his qui ulvam et iuncum secundum lacum legerent, prohibita est propius accedere. quamobrem ira incensa digrediens petiit a deis, ut numquam stagno accolae carerent. auditis itaque precibus eius Iuppiter agricolas in speciem ranarum transfiguravit.

Latona, daughter of Coeus, unable to give birth to Apollo and Diana, whom she had conceived by Jove, on account of Juno's anger at the adultery, came at last to Lycia and, wishing to quench her thirst after the heat and her long journey, was prohibited from approaching the water by those who were collecting sedge and rushes. Enflamed with anger she went away and asked of the gods that the inhabitants enjoy their pond in perpetuity. Jupiter heard her prayers and changed the farmers into the form of frogs.

"Lactantius's" chapters have a stereotyped form: they typically begin by naming the main character (often identified by a family relationship) and employ relatively short sentences, often a two-part construction consisting of participle or *cum* clause + main verb. The narrating voice is neutral, rarely expressing any emotion or moral judgment on the events described. The summary differs from Ovid's version in specifying Jupiter as the agent of transformation (in Ovid there is an appeal to heaven, but the primary emphasis is on Latona's anger). More striking, however, is the absence of most or all of the "Ovidian" elements in the episode: humor, emotion, rhetoric, embedded narrative — and, of course, verse. Taken as a whole, the chapter is an independent unit, unattached to the story before or after. The effect is to chop up Ovid's *perpetuum … carmen* into a series of discrete units. Ovid, for example, links the stories of Daphne and Io through their bereaved fathers (1.568–87): Inachus could not join the other river gods in consoling Peneus, for his own daughter had recently (etc.) . . . . For "Lactantius" these are two entirely separate stories. In effect, the *Metamorphoses* has been resolved back into its component parts, losing most of its distinctive personality in the process.

"Lactantius" enjoyed a considerable influence in the Middle Ages, and his text was quarried by other compilers. As examples we can cite the so-called First and Second Vatican Mythographers, both of uncertain date, although current consensus would put them around 900–1050 (Zorzetti and Berlioz 1995: xi–xii). The First Mythographer, for example, reproduces the Latona story almost verbatim from the *Narrationes* (*Fab.* 184, ed. Kulcsár 1987: 72). The Second Mythographer also takes over the "Lactantian" narrative, though he revises the passage somewhat and embeds it in a long excerpt from Servius' note on *Aen.* 3. 73 (*Fab.* 27, ed. Kulcsár 1987: 114–16).[2] His compilation enjoyed greater success than his predecessor's; more than a dozen manuscripts survive, against the First Mythographer's single witness. But both suffer from a lack of overarching structure. An obvious improvement in this respect was the *Fabularius* of Conrad of Mure (c. 1210–81), which organizes its entries alphabetically. Conrad's version of the Latona story (which appears in the "Apollo" entry) closely reproduces that in the Second Vatican Mythographer (van de Loo 2006: 134).

If the "Lactantian" collection was the most successful set of Ovidian summaries, it was not the only one. Apparently independent of it is the anonymous twelfth-century compiler, now known as the Digby Mythographer, whose work is preserved in a single Oxford manuscript (Brown 1972). Consisting of a brief

preface and 191 short chapters, this text claims to assemble *non solummodo in Ouidianis sed in quibusdam auctoribus dispersa*, "scattered material not only in the works of Ovid but in various authors." Ovidian stories in fact represent the core of the work, and they appear in their Ovidian order. We can compare the Digby compiler's version of Latona to "Lactantius's" (Brown 1972: 35):

> De Latona. Latona cum semine Iovis esset fecundata et paritura esset gemellos, a Iunone per Pythonem per mundum agitata, tandem in Delo erratica Apollinem peperit et Dianam. Quibus editis tum ex labore cum ex calore sitim colligens ad lacum venit, ut biberet, et ibi procubuit. Sed prohibita ab agrestibus etiam sibi conviciantibus, ira faciente, conviciantes in ranas mutavit aquosas, quae nunc etiam sub aquis maledicere tentant.

> On Latona. When Latona was impregnated by the seed of Jove and was going to give birth to twins, driven by Juno through the world by means of Python, at last she bore Apollo and Diana on wandering Delos. Having given birth to them she felt thirst both from her labor and from the heat, and came to a pond to drink, and there fell to the ground. But having been prohibited by the rustics, who went so far as to hurl insults at her, under the influence of anger she transformed those who insulted her into watery frogs, which even now try to hurl insults beneath the waters.

We note a strong formal and stylistic resemblance to "Lactantius": introduction of the main character in the opening words, use of *cum* clause + finite verb to sketch background and action, relatively simple language. Yet the summary does not depend upon "Lactantius," and Ovidian phrasing (*erratica Delos*; *sitim colligens*; *maledicere tentant*) suggests that the compiler may be working directly from the text. This is confirmed by other features. The Io story, for example, takes over not only Ovid's narrative but his artful transition from the Daphne story (Cap. 23): *Peneo pro mutatione Daphnes filiae suae inconsolabiliter dolente ceterisque fluviis ad eius consolationem convenientibus, solus defuit Inachus, quod …*

The persistence of this genre into the fifteenth century is attested by a number of other sets of summaries.[3] Several of these are extant in more than one manuscript, including the text that begins "Cum Saturnus regnaret …" which survives in at least five.[4] It is the work of the London schoolmaster John Segward or Seward, a number of whose other works survive. These texts are in need of further exploration, individually and as a group. As a kind of preliminary sounding from this material we might look briefly at a set of summaries ascribed to the Ferrarese humanist and teacher Battista Guarino (1434–1503) and found in at least two surviving manuscripts, in London and Berlin.[5] (The ascription to Guarino is found only in the latter.) Like "Lactantius" and the Digby compilation, this is a series of individual *fabulae*, presented in Ovidian order. The text clocks in at about 25,000 words, or roughly a third the length of the *Metamorphoses* itself. The openings of

the chapters hew fairly closely to the "Lactantian" model. Guarino begins with a proper name and a brief identification. The next sentence begins with a linking relative, and a "scene-setting" subordinate clause with *cum* or *dum* leads to the main verb. But in one respect it is quite different from "Lactantius." While some of the shorter summaries are entirely prosaic, most incorporate lines from the text, either verbatim or with light reworking. The opening of the Latona story will give some sense of the verbal texture. The text is transcribed from the London manuscript with one or two minor corrections (ff. 68v–69r):

> DE RUSTICIS IN RANAS MUTATIS. Latona Coei gigantis filia cum peperisset Phoebum et Dianam et fugeret iram Iunonis saeve cum filiis suis et appullisset in Lyciam *longo dea fessa labore* maxime propter aestivum calorem situm contraxerat *uberaque ebiberant avidi lactantia nati. forte* conspexit *locum* quendam parvulum *mediocris aquae in imis vallibus* et *illic* quidam *agrestes* colligebant quosdam fructus silvestres *gratamque paludibus ulvam. Accessit* Latona *positoque genu Titania terram pressit ut hauriret gelidos potura liquores.* Sed cum illi rustici vellent prohibere ipsam ne biberet *sic* est *affata vetantes: "quid prohibetis aquas? usus est communis aquarum"* …

> ON THE RUSTICS TRANSFORMED INTO FROGS. Latona, the daughter of the giant Coeus, when she had given birth to Phoebus and Diana and was fleeing the wrath of savage Juno with her children and had arrived in Lycia, *assailed by weariness, the goddess* had contracted a great thirst on account of the summer heat, *with breasts her greedy nurslings had drained dry. She chanced* to see a certain small place *of modest water down in a dell* and *there* certain *peasants* were gathering certain woodland products *and other native grasses from the marsh.* Latona *came to them, and knelt at the lake's margin for a cooling drink.* But when those rustics wanted to keep her from drinking, *she appealed: "Why do you prohibit me from drinking? Surely the water is for everyone"* …

> (Ovidian phrasing adapted from Martin 2004: 203–5)

The mixture of paraphrase and direct quotation raises the question of the work's purpose. In his 1459 treatise *De ordine docendi et studendi*, Guarino notes that Ovid's main value to students lies in the stories he presents: *Ex Ovidio Metamorphoseon nihil ferme erit quod praeter fabulas eligant, quibus tamen miro studio incumbent*, "From the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid they may select the myths and little else, but to these myths they should apply themselves with great zeal" (*De ordine* 24, trans. Kallendorf 2002: 287–89).[6] It seems likely that his Ovidian *fabulae* were intended for pedagogical use. It is noteworthy that the length of the summaries and the amount of Ovidian wording seem to increase as the work proceeds. One possibility is that it was meant to serve as a kind of graduated textbook, introducing the student at first merely to Ovidian stories in plain language, but gradually also to Ovidian language and verse.

This example raises the larger question of the purpose for which other such compendia were intended. On the one hand, such a summary may have an auxiliary function: it is intended as an aid to experiencing a work directly. A modern parallel

might be the plot summaries that appear in an opera program. Alternatively, the summary may be meant to replace the original work entirely. The obvious modern example is the *Reader's Digest* and its accompanying series of "condensed books." An epitome intended for one purpose can, of course, wind up serving the other, as in the case of contemporary Cliff, Monarch, or Barron Notes sold in college bookstores, which present themselves as supplements to the assigned work but are sometimes used as substitutes for it. Conversely, "Lactantius" may well have been designed initially as a freestanding text, but by the medieval period it was transmitted in the margins of *Metamorphoses* manuscripts, as an aid to readers. The same set of summaries may have served different functions in different settings: the monastic library, the cathedral school, the preacher's study, the poet's workshop.

The Allegorical Tradition

As we have seen, the "Lactantian" summaries involve a process of reduction. Characteristically Ovidian elements of style and narrative are stripped away, leaving a radically simplified narrative frame. As readers of Ovid, we may find this process impoverishing. Yet it may also be a necessary preliminary to a reshaping or reworking of the story. Like a sculpture being melted down, the Ovidian narrative is reduced to a more primitive form in order to be transformed into something else. This is particularly the case with allegorizations. The allegorizer typically starts with a summary of the myth, which then effectively displaces the original text as the object of allegorization. Taken in isolation such summaries resemble the pure prose summary, from which they are distinguished only by the deliberate planting of certain details. But functionally they are quite different. The allegorizer has a hermeneutic axe to grind: his summary exists not for its own sake, but as the theme for his own splendid improvisations.

The allegorical approach to Ovidian narrative can be traced back to the work of Fabius Planciades Fulgentius, commonly known as Fulgentius the Mythographer. Fulgentius appears to have been active in sixth-century North Africa. He was certainly a Christian, but we know nothing of his biography (see Hays 2003). His *Mitologiae* is a three-book compendium of brief mythical narratives with allegorical explanations; it is preceded by an elaborate prosimetrical preface. Fulgentius draws on a variety of sources, including some now lost to us. His work is in no sense a formal commentary on the *Metamorphoses*, nor is it restricted to Ovidian stories. But there is a good deal of overlap with the *Metamorphoses*, including the stories of Proserpina (1.10–11), Daphne (1.14), Phaethon (1.16), Mercury and Argus (1.18), Perseus (1.21), Tiresias (2.5), the daughters of Helios (2.7), Midas (2.10), Actaeon (3.3), Myrrha (3.8), Marsyas (3.9), Orpheus (3.10), and Alpheus and Arethusa (3.12). The ordering of these stories does not follow Ovid's. Yet we can discern an Ovidian trajectory to the work, from an initial book in which the gods are central, to stories involving divine amours and mortal offspring, and finally to stories of unhappy human love, with the gods receding into the background.

Fulgentius alludes to Ovid as a source in discussing the Perseus myth, where he omits a formal summary *quia fabulam Lucanus et Ouidius scripserunt, poetae grammaticorum scolaribus rudimentis admodum celeberrimi*, "since their story has been recorded by Lucan and Ovid, poets familiar to all from the elementary lessons of grammar-school teachers" (*Mit.* 1.21). In other cases verbal echoes show that he has Ovid in mind. Vulcan, for example, cuckolded by his wife and Mars, *adamante catenas effecit ambosque religans diis turpiter iacentes ostendit*, "made chains of adamant, and binding the two of them displayed them to the gods as they lay there shamefully" (*Mit.* 2.7); this echoes Ovid's *illi iacuere ligati / turpiter*, "they lay there shamefully bound" (*Met.* 4.186–87). But Fulgentius' aims are not Ovid's. Indeed, he constructs himself as a kind of Ovid-in-reverse, as he protests in the prologue (Helm 1898: 10–11):

> Non mihi cornutus adulter arripitur nec imbre mendaci lusa [Danae] virgo cantatur, dum suo iudicio deus sibi pecudem praetulit et hanc auro decepit quam potestate nequivit. … Nec referam virginali figmento Nonacrinam lusam viraginem, dum quaereret Iuppiter quod magis esse vellet quam fuerat. Mutatas itaque vanitates manifestare cupimus, non manifesta mutando fuscamus.

> I shall not be taking up the horned adulterer, nor shall I be singing of the maiden taken in by a deceitful shower, when in his own judgment a god preferred a dumb beast above himself and seduced with gold her whom he could not take by force. … Nor shall I mention the Nonacrian maid, taken in by a maiden's form when Jupiter sought out a shape he preferred to what he was. I seek to unmask disguised foolishness, not to obscure clear things by metamorphosis.

Fulgentius in turn influenced a series of later medieval writers who focused specifically on the *Metamorphoses*. The series begins with the *Allegoriae super Ovidii Metamorphosin* of Arnulf of Orléans. Arnulf divides the *Metamorphoses* into a series of discrete "transformations" (*mutationes*), each allegorically explained. The Latona story can again serve as our sample (Ghisalberti 1932: 217):

> Latona siciens ad lacum deveniens, cum ibi vellet bibere, prohibita ab agrestibus, mutavit eos in ranas. Latona, i. religio, siciens, non habens homines qui sibi vacarent, cum de lacu bibere vellet i. de hominibus huius seculi qui sunt velut aqua lacus turbidi et non puri, et ad se eos revocare vellet, prohibita ab agricolis i. idolatris qui bestias agri colunt et adorant quia noluerunt ei consentire, in ranas eos mutavit i. in fece miserie et incredulitatis sue remanere permisit.

> Latona, thirsting and making her way to a pond, but prevented by the rustics when she wanted to drink from it, turned them into frogs. Latona, that is, religion, thirsting, not having people to devote themselves to her, when she wanted to drink from the pond, that is, from the men of this age who are like the water of a lake that is disturbed and impure, and wished to recall them to herself,

prevented by the farmers, that is, the idolators who worship beasts of the field and adore them, since they were unwilling to obey her, turned them into frogs, that is, allowed them to remain in the mire of misery and their own lack of belief.

Arnulf's successors include John of Garland (died c. 1258), whose voluminous works include a poem entitled *Integumenta Ovidii* (ed. Ghisalberti, 1933); much of its content is drawn from Arnulf, with whom it was sometimes transmitted. This tradition can be said to culminate in two fourteenth-century works, one in French and the other in Latin. The vernacular contribution is the immense, though sadly anonymous, *Ovide moralisé*. The poem's 15 books follow the order of Ovid's epic, summarizing and interpreting each of the stories it contains. While he draws eclectically on earlier interpretations of the Ovidian myths, the author generally uses them as a foil for his own readings, in which Ovid's erotic encounters become allegories of Christ and Satan battling over the human soul. The work has a Latin counterpart in the *Ovidius moralizatus* of Pierre Bersuire, discussed at greater length by Jamie Fumo elsewhere in this volume. The genre also flourished in fourteenth-century Italy, where we find Giovanni del Virgilio (fl. 1321) combining prose interpretations (often expansions of Arnulf) with verses, as well as an anonymous set of prose allegories in a Vatican manuscript (ed. Coulson and Molyviati-Toptsis 1992). In England, Thomas of Walsingham (died c. 1422), a monk of St. Albans, compiled a work *De archanis deorum* (ed. van Kluvye 1968), following the familiar episode-by-episode arrangement and drawing on Arnulf and Bersuire, as well as Isidore and other sources. The tradition of Ovidian allegory is still alive in the *Metamorphosis seu Fabulae Poeticae* (1555) of Georgius Sabinus (Georg Schuler), which divides the epic into individual episodes and offers historical and ethical interpretations for each.

Whether interpreters really believed such interpretations, or imagined them to represent the poet's intent, is perhaps not a very useful question. We might do better to ask what functions such readings served for those who produced them. Ovidian stories provided a conventional arena in which scholar-grammarians like Arnulf could demonstrate both their mastery of the poem and their ingenuity in drawing connections. For fourteenth-century preachers they might provide an appealing vehicle for an improving message. Hence the provision of multiple interpretations in Bersuire ("vel dic … ," "or say … "), which place the emphasis not on what the myth *means*, but on what it can be *made to express*.

To a modern reader such explanations often seem bizarre and their connection to the text tenuous. Yet they became part of the poem's interpretative apparatus, and clearly influenced later readers. Where early notes and glosses on the poem draw their mythological material from the Vatican mythographers and Servius, later commentaries also incorporated material from the allegorizers. A notable example is the still-unpublished "Vulgate" commentary, which appears to have been compiled around 1240 in the vicinity of Orléans (Coulson 1989); it draws on both Arnulf and John of Garland. Interpretations based on Giovanni del Virgilio

were inserted by Giovanni Bonsignori in his Italian translation of the *Metamorphoses* (1375–77). As late as 1626, George Sandys's notes to his English translation of the *Metamorphoses* still draw heavily on the earlier allegorical tradition.

Ovid and Modern Mythography: Decline and Rebirth

Giovanni Boccaccio is now best known for his Italian *Decameron*. But he himself would have put more weight on a Latin mythographic work, the *Genealogie deorum gentilium*, begun probably in the 1340s. Boccaccio was still tinkering with it at his death in 1375. Its popularity can be gauged from the number of its printed editions—eight between 1472 and 1532. The index to the standard edition lists 168 Ovidian passages, some cited more than once (Zaccaria 1998). In its comprehensive quest for sources and its sometimes critical attitude toward them it looks forward to three sixteenth-century mythographic works: the *De deis gentium* of Lilio Giraldi (1548), Vincenzo Cartari's *Imagini delli dei de gl'antichi* (1556), and the *Mythologiae* of Natale Conti (1567). For Boccaccio and his successors, Ovid is not the central focus (as for the narrators and allegorizers), but merely one among innumerable authorities. The *Metamorphoses* is dutifully quarried for place names, divine epithets, and mythological variants, but Ovid has begun to fade into the background in a field now enlarged by the addition of Greek sources. This digestive approach to mythography—all available variants searched out, analyzed, compared, sorted, and filed—culminates in massive compendia like Roscher's *Lexikon* and the early volumes of the Pauly-Wissowa *Realencyclopädie*. These works are marked by a typically nineteenth-century quest for origins, and a tendency to regard literary treatments as secondary accretions. In effect, "Tales from Ovid" has become "Evidence from Ovid"—and not even very much of that. The entry for Leto in Roscher's *Lexikon* runs to 13 dense columns; the story of the rustics occupies a mere 16 lines, in which Antoninus Liberalis bulks larger than the *Metamorphoses* (Enmann 1894–97: 138–54).

Yet the *Metamorphoses* never wanted for readers, and it retained its grip on popular mythography. An outstanding example is the work of the American compiler Thomas Bulfinch (1797–1867), son of the architect Charles Bulfinch, who turned late in life to works of edification aimed at a popular audience. In *The Age of Fable*, Bulfinch's professed aim was to help "the reader of English literature, of either sex, who wishes to comprehend the allusions so frequently made by public speakers, lecturers, essayists, and poets, and those which occur in polite conversation" (Bulfinch 1855: 5). The work enjoyed remarkable success, initially with a middle-class audience and subsequently as a school text. It is still in print and still serves as a first introduction to Greek mythology for many American students.

Bulfinch's compendium was not limited to Ovid; Apuleius' tale of Cupid and Psyche appears as chapter XI, legends of Greek lyric poets in XXV, and Virgilian characters in XXXIII, while supplementary chapters briefly survey "Eastern

Mythology" and "Northern Mythology." But the bulk of the material is drawn from the *Metamorphoses*, and the overall structure of the work (a mixture of mythical chronology and thematic association) is still recognizably Ovidian. Thus Apollo and Daphne (*Met.* 1) appear early in the work, preceded only by an introduction and the Prometheus story. Arachne is coupled with Niobe, as in *Metamorphoses* 6. Pythagoras appears as a coda to the classical myths, as he does in *Metamorphoses* 15. But there has also been some rearrangement. Latona, for example, appears in chapter IV along with Io, Callisto, and Actaeon, all victims of a vengeful goddess. In retelling the Latona episode, Bulfinch retains Ovid's internal narrator, but has him react to the punishment of Actaeon, rather than that of Niobe, neatly splicing together two widely separated passages:

> Rumor in ambiguo est: aliis violentior aequo
> visa dea est, alii laudant dignamque severa
> virginitate vocant …
>
> > (*Met.* 3. 253–55)

> utque fit, a facto propiore priora renarrant.
> E quibus unus ait …
>
> > (*Met.* 6. 316)

Some thought the goddess in this instance more severe than was just, while others praised her conduct as strictly consistent with her virgin dignity. As usual, the recent event brought older ones to mind, and one of the bystanders told this story … (Bulfinch 1855: 56)

The chapter itself is translated from Ovid virtually verbatim. Bulfinch's own contribution is the connection of the myth to one of Milton's sonnets ("As when those hinds that were transformed to frogs / Railed at Latona's twin-born progeny … ").

In its fidelity to its Ovidian model Bulfinch's handbook can be contrasted with a more recent production aimed at a similarly general audience. This is the Italian publisher and belle-lettrist Roberto Calasso's *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony* (1993, an English rendering of Calasso 1989). Though marketed as a novel, it is a strange specimen of the genre. Its characters and events are drawn entirely from Greek myth and it contains little or no original invention; much of it is quoted or paraphrased from ancient writers. Its 12 chapters headed by Roman numerals evoke the book divisions of an ancient epic (though not the 15 books of the *Metamorphoses*). Each chapter is divided into a series of shorter sections (about the length of an Ovidian episode). Some chapters are unified by subjects (Dionysus, for example, in II, or Helen in IV), others by more intuitive leaps: III takes us from Theseus to Apollo to the Danaids to pederastic myths. The order of events often seems random or deliberately perverse (the Dionysus chapter ends with the god's birth). The work is full of memorable and quotable observations:

> In any Cretan story, there's a bull at the beginning and a bull at the end. (Calasso 1993: 21)
>
> Crown, necklace, garland: they all have the same shape, and often the one will become the other. (Calasso 1993: 112)
>
> Helen ends in whiteness, as in whiteness she began. (Calasso 1993: 121)
>
> No sooner have you grabbed hold of it than myth opens out into a fan of a thousand segments. (Calasso 1993: 147)

Yet, as this last quotation might suggest, an overall theme or message is elusive. To complicate matters, Calasso has represented the book as only one portion of a multi-work project that also includes a similar treatment of Indian myth, a series of historical meditations centered around Talleyrand, and studies of Kafka and Tiepolo.

Whatever else it may be, Calasso's book is clearly a work of mythography. To describe it as *Ovidian* mythography may initially seem arbitrary. The *Metamorphoses* is certainly one of Calasso's sources, but he ranges widely among ancient authors; he owes a surprisingly large debt to the *Dionysiaca* of the sixth-century AD Greek poet Nonnus (see Shorrock 2003). But the *Marriage* is Ovidian in a more profound sense—through its sophisticated transitions, its playful allusiveness, and its deployment of individual stories to construct a larger architectural whole. Though it alludes to Ovid only rarely, it is impossible to imagine without the *Metamorphoses* as a model. Perhaps for the first time since its first publication, Ovid's epic is implicitly treated not as a source for mythography but as a model for what mythography might be.

Notes

1   Translations are mine except where noted.
2   He also has Servius' Ceres variant of the frog story (*Fab.* 117).
3   I give manuscript details followed by the entry number in Coulson and Roy (2000). Basle, Universitätsbibliothek F II 27 (s. XV) ff. 1–17v + Freiburg i.B., Universitätsbibliothek 381 (s. XV), ff. 1–30v (no. 218); Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B. 214 (s. XV) ff. 203–33 (no. 290); Paris, BNF lat. 8320 (s. XIV), ff. 56–71v; Vatican, BAV Reg. lat. 1382 (s. XV; an. 1467), ff. 26–48 (no. 50); Vatican, BAV Ross. 228 (s. XIV), ff. 1–10v (no. 171); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek s.n. 12786 (s. XV), ff. 25–62v (no. 460).
4   Cambridge, University Library Mm. 2. 18 ff. 168r–218r; Cambridge, St. John's College MS D. 22, ff. 281v–296r; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 92 (s. XV) f. 40; Oxford, Merton College 299 (s. XV) ff. 240–72v; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 571 (s. XV), ff. 237–256v (no. 47 = 79 = 80 = 346).
5   London, British Library, Additional 10,092 (Coulson and Roy 2000: 50 = no. 102); Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preussischer Kulturbesitz, lat. quart. 610 (Coulson 2002: 173 = no. 123a).
6   This view is not confined to Guarino. Cf. Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, *De liberis educandis* 69: *Ovidius … nimius lascivus; praeclarissimum tamen opus eius cui 'Metamorphoseos' nomen*

indidit, propter fabularum peritiam, quas noscere non parvi fructus est, nullo pacto postergandum est, "Ovid is … too wanton, yet one should by no means turn one's back on his most famous work, to which he gave the name *Metamorphoses*, for the sake of the knowledge of myths he imparts, which is of no small profit to learn" (trans. Kallendorf 2002: 220–21).

Further Reading

We still lack a comprehensive study of Ovid's medieval reception, though the essays in Clark, Coulson, and McKinley (2011) offer good starting points on many topics. Much relevant material remains unedited; an indispensable guide to manuscript material is Coulson and Roy (2000), with addenda in Coulson (2002). Also needed is a reliable guide to medieval mythography generally (Chance 1994 and 2000 unfortunately do not meet this description). For "Lactantius Placidus" the best introduction is Cameron (2004). Hexter (1988) examines "Lactantius" and Arnulf in their codicological setting. The Digby Mythographer is discussed by Allen (1970); the projected commentary announced by Brown (1972: 2) seems never to have appeared. On the tradition of Ovidian allegory see Demats (1973: 107–77) and Chaudhuri (1987). Hays (2003) deals with Fulgentius' date and persistent attempts to identify him with the bishop and controversialist Fulgentius of Ruspe. On his relation to earlier and later mythography see Hays (2013). For Arnulf and his followers Ghisalberti (1932), (1933a), and (1933b) remain fundamental. On Bersuire see Hexter (1989), Reynolds (1990), as well as Fumo in this volume. Thomas Walsingham and his *De archanis deorum* are illuminated by Clark (2004). For the commentary tradition see Coulson (1989) and (2007) as well as the studies of individual stories in Coulson (2008a) and (2008b). For the Renaissance mythographers Seznec (1953) remains in many ways the most accessible introduction. Cleary (2007) places Bulfinch in his biographical and social context; she has less to say about *The Age of Fable* itself. Shorrock (2003) is a shrewd and insightful introduction to Calasso.

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Ovid's Exile and Medieval Italian Literature

The Lyric Tradition

Catherine Keen

Ovid and the Paradigm of Exile

It has become a scholarly commonplace to speak of the later Middle Ages as an *aetas ovidiana*. The enormous reputation and influence of Ovid's amatory works and the *Metamorphoses* in medieval literary tradition is well established. The works of exile were perhaps less ubiquitous, but still held an important place in the poet's biography and authorial profile from at least the Carolingian period, and the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* were both widely known (Hexter 1986: 89–97). Standard biographies of Ovid, in commentary accompanying his Latin works, always concluded with remarks on his exile, using data primarily from Ovid's own exile poems. Alongside Seneca and Boethius, he became a stock exemplar in medieval consolatory literature on the vicissitudes of Fortune, as for instance in the hugely successful *Elegia* of Arrigo da Settimello (1193):[1]

> Nonne recordaris veluti, stimulante tyrampno,
>   moriger innocua Seneca morte perit?
> Nonne meus Severinus inani iure peremptus
>   carcere Papie non patienda tulit?
> Nonne cupidineus metrosus Naso magister
>   expulsus patria pauper et exul obit? (3.47–52)

Do you not remember how, at the tyrant's order, Seneca obligingly died, though blameless? Did not my Severinus, condemned unjustly, bear intolerable pains in his Pavian prison? Did not Naso, master of love poetry, die exiled and poor, cast out from his country?

As Arrigo's verse suggests, Ovid's importance as antiquity's most famed exiled poet achieved significant medieval *fortuna* in the Italian peninsula. The exile works were studied in schools, universities, and learned circles (Black 2011). Alongside this, Italians responded to the idea of Ovid's exile in their own literary production, both in verse and prose, Latin and vernacular. A list of literary texts with an evident debt to Ovidian exile, produced in the peninsula between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, would include works as diverse as Albertino Mussato's *Cento ex P. Ovidii Nasonis libris V De tristibus ad filium* (1318), a poem on the scholar's own loss of hometown and public reputation composed by selecting and reordering lines of the *Tristia*; the *Bursa exilii* (1381), three books of Latin elegies on his exile by Giovanni Quatrario (from Ovid's native town, Sulmona); Arrigo da Settimello's *Elegia*, a lament for misfortune whose awareness of Ovid is evident in the passage just cited; the large sections of Dante's *Inferno* (ca. 1307–10) in which Ovid's evocations of Tomis are evidently influential; and many more. Curiously, however, the exile books were not translated into Italian at this time, unlike several others of Ovid's works (Hexter 2007: 1320–24).

That Italian authors found Ovid's exile works relevant to their contemporary society is not surprising. In northern and central Italy's thirteenth- and fourteenth-century city-states, the precarious mechanisms of self-government made individual and mass banishments a frequent outcome of inter- and intra-urban faction competition. The intensity of peninsular city politics is reflected in the vast corpora of vernacular political verse produced by the communes' citizen poets. Much of this verse, partisan and corporate in spirit, is categorically un-Ovidian, and is simply too enmeshed in contemporary polemic for any Ovidian consciousness to be discerned.

Equally often, however, poets from the same communal milieux did look beyond the framework of local politics. In lyric verse in particular the condition of exile, which Italian peninsular politics made a personal reality for so many Duecento and Trecento poets, became an established literary motif. Reflecting on the discomforting nature of banishment from their urban *patriae*, Italian poets echoed, in sentiment if not specifically in phrasing, Ovid's laments for the loss of Rome, the supreme *Urbs*, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (Williams 2002: 340; Picone 2003b). Their lyrics took Ovid's exile—his exile elegies, and also the legend of his banishment more generally—as a reference point in their representations of exclusion from the contemporary city-state; and so this chapter focuses on vernacular lyric as a single genre where a pattern of Ovidian engagement appears. Concern with the lyric precludes consideration of some compelling parts of the exiled Ovid's Italian vernacular reception, notably the responses to *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto* of Dante in the *Commedia* (see Smarr 1991; Picone 1993, 2003a). Instead, within the arc of a single formal tradition, our survey examines patterns and variations within his reception history, ranging from imitation, to parody, to rejection.

Ovid and Exile Lyrics in the *stilus miserorum*

In formal poetics, the elegiac meter of Ovid's exile books was noted, in the theory of *convenientia*, as stylistically apt to the sad subject matter. The Roman poet himself had drawn attention to this matching of form and content in the uneven feet of his exile verses (e.g. *Tr.* 3.1.9–12), commenting that *flebilis ut noster status est, ita flebile carmen, / materiae scripto conveniente suae*, "my state is wretched, wretched also is my song, for my work is well suited to its theme" (*Tr.* 5.1.5–6). Dante was the first Italian theorist to offer a formal definition of elegy that suggested it could form part of the stylistic repertory for vernacular as much as for Latin poetry, in *De vulgari eloquentia* (2.4.5–6):[2]

> Deinde in hiis que dicenda occurrunt debemus discretione potiri, utrum tragice, sive comice, sive elegiace sint canenda. Per tragediam superiorem stilum inducimus, per comediam inferiorem, per elegiam stilum intelligimus miserorum. Si tragice canenda videntur, tunc assumendum est vulgare illustre, et per consequens cantionem ligare. Si vero comice, tunc quandoque mediocre quandoque humile vulgare sumatur. … Si autem elegiace, solum humile oportet nos sumere.

> Then regarding what is to be said in poetry, we must know how to judge whether things should be sung in tragic, comic, or elegiac style. By tragic I mean the higher style, by comedy the lower, and by elegy the style of the wretched. If intending to compose in tragic style, the illustrious form of the vernacular must be used to bind together your canzone. If however your style is comic, then use sometimes the middle, sometimes the lowly vernacular. … For the elegiac, however, only the lowly should be used.

With this passage, Dante effects a typical medieval transposition of classical categories of dramatic and narrative styles onto contemporary lyric forms (his brief and elliptical categorization has, indeed, occasioned much subsequent debate: Mengaldo 1978: 22–26). In a later chapter on meter, Dante again seems sensitive to the Ovidian conception of *carmen flebile*, noting that when a canzone begins with a heptasyllable (rather than a hendecasyllable), its uneven metrical quality means that *non sine quodam elegie umbraculo haec tragedia processisse videbitur*, "this tragic canzone will not seem to have proceeded without a hint of the elegiac" (2.12.6).

Dante's knowledge of classical rhetorical theory and poetics was extensively filtered via medieval theorists (Mengaldo 1978: 44–56, 208–22); he may have had only patchy knowledge even of works such as the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, to whom he makes reverent but sketchy allusion as *Magister noster* ("our Master," 2.4.4). For his stylistic categories, he probably drew from theoretical definitions by rhetoricians in whose works Ovid indeed figured as the elegiac poet par excellence, such as Bene

da Firenze or Bono da Lucca, both of whom cite the *elegiae Ovidianae* as exemplars of the "middle" (*mediocris*) style (Mengaldo 1978: 208–9). Carrai, however, suggests that Ovid's *Tristia* was probably a direct and important point of reference in Dante's conception of elegy (2003: 1–2). In *De vulgari*, commenting on a Romance lyric tradition overwhelmingly concerned with love, Dante proposed a notion of elegy that was open to inclusion of the ample tradition of love lament, and hence the influence of Ovid's amatory works, as well as the *Tristia*. Nonetheless, there was an evident trend in medieval Italian poetic and rhetorical treatises to associate elegy with the themes of Fortune's caprice and of public disgrace, in which exile, along with poverty and imprisonment, were highly prominent. Ovid and Boethius remained, in this regard, dominant literary precedents.

Dante echoes some important elements in the Ovidian prescription that a *flebilis status* finds expression in *flebile carmen* in his own exile lyric, "Amor, da che convien pur ch'io mi doglia" (Love, since I must anyway lament), with its accompanying letter dedicating the poem to his patron, marquis Moroello Malaspina (*Ep*. IV). Dante's lyric stresses how love and exile are mutually reinforcing sources of suffering that demand sorrowful poetic expression: his verse allows him to *dolere* and *lamentare*, giving expression to *angoscia* ("sorrow and lament," "agony": 1, 68, 28). As is often noted, the letter addressing the canzone to Moroello contradicts the poem's own internal dedication, in the closing envoy stanza, to the city of Florence (76–84):

> O montanina mia canzon, tu, vai:
> forse vedrai Fiorenza, la mia terra,
> che fuor di sé mi serra,
> vota d'amore e nuda di pietate.
> Se vi vai dentro, va' dicendo: "Omai
> non vi può fare il mio fattor più guerra:
> là ond'io vegno una catena il serra
> tal, che se piega vostra crudeltate,
> non ha di ritornar qui libertate."

O my mountain song, go now: perhaps you will see Florence, my own city, she who locks me out, devoid of love and stripped of pity. If you succeed in entering, go and say: "Now my maker can war with you no more: back there where I come from a chain so binds him that, even if your cruelty weakens, he has no freedom to return here."

Three recent studies of the poem and letter have identified in both complex patterns of intertextual allusion, in which Ovid's *Tristia* plays an important part (Allegretti 2001, 2006; Picone 2002). Chief among these is the designation of the poem itself as "montanina." The term is a vernacular *hapax* for Dante, and inevitably recalls its Latin appearance in *De vulgari eloquentia*, in his pejorative comment on the unsuitability for poetry of *montaninas omnes et rusticanas*

loquelas ... , que semper mediastinis civibus accentus enormitate dissonare videntur, ut Casentinenses et Fractenses, "all tongues from mountainous and rustic zones, such as Casentino or Fratta, whose accents always sound so harshly different from those of citizens at the heart of things" (1.11.6). Since lyric and letter both identify their place of composition as lying in the same Casentino region mentioned in *De vulgari*, the term "montanina" acquires stylistic significance. It recalls Ovid's repeated insistence on the exilic corruption of his polished, urban Latinity through contact with the barbarian languages of Tomis, to the extent of composing in Getic (*Pont.* 4.13.19–20), and reflection on the paradox that his *verba Latina* are alien "barbarian" forms to his co-residents there (*Tr.* 5.10.37–38). And the image of the poem freely entering the place barred to its exiled author recalls very directly the *Tristia*'s opening lines: 1.1.1–2 *Parve—nec invideo—sine me, liber, ibis in urbem: / ei mihi, quo domino non licet ire tuo!* "My little book, you will go—I do not grudge you it—without me to the city, to which, alas! your master may not go." Indeed, Citroni has argued that Ovid's exile books provided the precedent for the medieval poets' habit of apostrophizing their own lyrics in a closing envoy (1986: 143–46). The envoy is recognized, too, as a part of the poem particularly apt to the expression of exilic sentiment (Keen 2009).

Picone (2002) further notes that, in the letter, Dante outlines a psychological drama of exile, whose key concepts are all Ovidian: the notions of expulsion and return; the contrast between *exul* and *relegatus*; and the desire to repudiate an earlier career as love poet. In the letter, however, Dante transposes the exile theme from the political plane of the lyric envoy's engagement with Florence, onto a metaphorical one, representing a psychomachia whose outcome is, at least temporarily, defeat and *relegatio*. In this metaphoric struggle, it is not the historical Dante, but his twin sources of poetic inspiration, amorous and ethical, that have to undergo alternate crises of banishment. The imagery nonetheless aligns Dante with Ovid, and with a poetic biography in which love poetry exerts a compelling and destructive force over the author—though neither here nor elsewhere will Dante permit himself to repeat the Ovidian formula of *carmen et error* ("poem and mistake," *Tr.* 2.207) as direct causes of his exile (*Ep.* 4.3–4):

> Amor terribilis et imperiosus me tenuit, atque hic ferox, tanquam dominus pulsus a patria post longum exilium sola in sua repatrians, quicquid eius contrarium fuerat intra me, vel occidit vel expulit vel ligavit. Occidit ergo propositum illud laudabile quo a mulieribus suisque cantibus abstinebam; ac meditationes assiduas, quibus tam celestia quam terrestria intuebar, quasi suspectas, impie relegavit.

> Love, terrifying and dominant, took hold of me and—fierce as a lord expelled from his own country, who returns after a long exile to his native soil—killed or banished or bound whatever he found in me that tried to oppose him. He slew therefore my laudable intention to abstain from women and from songs

about them; and he mercilessly banished, as if worthy of suspicion, those constant meditations in which I was absorbed as much by heavenly as by earthly matters.

The contradiction evident in the double dedication of the envoy and the letter respectively to the city of Florence and to Dante's aristocratic patron raises the question whether the poem sent to Moroello would have omitted the envoy; and equally, whether Dante would have been prepared for a Florentine audience to learn of its rededication to his new patron (Gorni 1995: 136–38). No evidence is available to resolve the debate: but the self-conscious Ovidian echoes in both dedications could be related to another precept of medieval exile rhetoric that Dante probably knew. The famous rhetorician Boncompagno da Signa, in his dictaminal tract *Boncompagnus* (1215),[3] noted that unlike other dialogic epistolary forms, the letters of exiles are written almost with the expectation of silence or rejection as sole response. Ovid is prominently cited as an example, in a reading of the Pontic books that sets aside their persistent demands for action and response and instead casts them into the self-reflexive mold of consolation (6.5.14):

> Antiquitus fuerit consuetudo, quod si viri sapientes in exilium mitterentur aut detinerentur captivi, faciebant libros de variabili statu conditionis humane, de fortuna, de [consolatione], de variis rerum eventis, sicut fecit Ovidi[us] in Ponto insula, Boethius Papie; [multas] enim fecit epistolas Ovidi[us], quibus nemo respondit aut quia respondere ignorabant aut quia non habebant opportunitates mittendi.

> In ancient times it was customary for learned men, if sent into exile or held as captives, to write books about the inconstant nature of human life, about fortune, on consolation, or on the changing turn of events, as did Ovid in the island of Pontus, or Boethius in Pavia. For Ovid wrote many letters, to which no one replied, either because they did not know how, or because they had no opportunity to send the reply.

Boncompagno's observation chimes with a still blunter glossator's comment on *Ex Ponto*: *utilitas tota est lectoris, quia sibi nulla fuit*, "the work's usefulness serves only the reader, it held none for him" (Hexter 1986: 111). The precepts echo Ovid's own statement, when he ponders the small likelihood of his verses finding readership, let alone prompting action, in Rome, and reflects that their sole *utilitas* is to provide consolation for himself (*Pont.* 1.5.53–56). Under such views, both parts of Dante's composition would likewise become self-sufficient, regardless of their dedications, since exilic texts are destined to remain without response. The contradiction of choosing two opposing dedicatees for poem and letter loses relevance, if each can be understood as a self-consolatory document, with their plaintive commentary on misfortunes in love, poetry, and politics formulated as outlets for misery addressed, in reality, more to their own author than to any apparent recipient.

Thematic Focus: *Urbs* and Wilderness

As well as in its elegiac or consolatory form, Dante's *canzone* also recalls the exiled Ovid in its topographical allusions, stressing his sense of isolation in a harsh wilderness landscape (61–70):

> Così m'ha' concio, Amore, in mezzo l'alpi,
> nella valle del fiume
> lungo 'l qual sempre sopra me sè forte:
>   qui vivo e morto come vuoi mi palpi
> mercé del fiero lume
> che folgorando fa via alla morte.
>   Lasso!, non donne qui, non genti accorte
> veggio a cui mi lamenti del mio male:
> s'a costei non ne cale,
> non spero mai d'altrui aver soccorso.

Thus you have brought me low, Love, amid the mountains, in the valley of that river along whose course you always have power over me. Here you can press me however you like, alive or dead, thanks to that fierce lightning flash that opens the way to death. Alas! I see no ladies here, no one receptive to whom I could lament my ills: if this woman herself does not care, I can hope for no help from others.

Like Dante, many other Italian communal poets of exile place the same binary emphasis found in Ovid on the opposition between nature and culture, contrasting attachment to their home city with repudiation of the anti-urban, uncivilized features of any domicile in banishment (Hexter 2002: 417–24). Such oppositions function powerfully at a symbolic level, despite their historical implausibility, since exile in medieval Italy normally meant relocation to another city, often only 50–100 kilometers distant and normally with buildings, constitution, and social structures broadly similar to those of home. In poetry, however, exile itself was held to make these new places alien, however comparable to the poets' hometowns they might objectively have been. The Italian lyricists display an attachment to the defined urban space and culture of home that strongly recalls Ovid's insistence on his feelings of alienation from the Black Sea settlements.

   Thematically speaking, the most memorable elements of Ovid's oppositional portrayal of the Pontic region and of Italy and Rome are his descriptions of the hostility of the natural environment, the alien landscape, and the ice of northern winters, culminating in extreme images of frozen rivers and sea (*Tr.* 3.10). Harshness of climate is matched by the harshness of the local tribes (*Tr.* 4.1). Ovid's descriptions were themselves rooted in literary tradition, particularly Virgil's excursus on Scythia in the *Georgics* (3.349–83), allowing him to enhance the pathos of

his situation by invoking familiar stereotypes in his stark contrasting of Rome and Tomis (Evans 1975; Williams 2002: 344–49). Ovid's topography and anthropology of alienation were scarcely ever transposed precisely into medieval Italian exile lyrics, since few Italians could plausibly claim experience of such far-flung locations. Among the few examples that closely recall Ovid's terms are two sonnets from the Venetian Giovanni Quirini (before 1295–1333).[4] The paired lyrics, "Io sun tra gente barbare crudele" and "S'io torno al bel paese di Franchía," locate him in an icy Black Sea region, probably Armenia or the Crimea, topographically cognate with Ovid's Tomis. In this genuinely remote location, Quirini lives among tribespeople, presumably the Mongols of the Golden Horde, whose characteristics echo those of Ovid's Sarmatian barbarians:

> Io sun tra gente barbare crudele
> che senza legge vivon di rapina,
> e passo e' monti per neve e per brina,
> sentendo ad or ad or gravosi geli;
>   e non di men Amor cum li suo teli
> mi pugne il cor come d'amara spina,
> in guisa che di sospirar non fina
> e spesse volte fa bagnar i peli.
>   A memoria mi ven la donna mia,
> cum quel splendor e con quella beltate
> ch'io la solea veder altre fïate;
>   e qui mi cresce tanta volontate
> di ritornar colà dov'ella sia,
> che 'l spirito quasi par che vada via.

Here I am among barbarian and cruel people, who live lawlessly from plundering, and I have to pass through these mountains in the snow and frost, feeling continuously the biting cold; but nonetheless Love with his arrows pierces my heart, as with a sharp thorn, so that I sigh unceasingly and often bathe my face in tears. In memory my lady comes to me, with the same splendor and beauty that I beheld before; and my wish to return where she is grows so strong, that my spirit almost departs from me.

> S'io torno al bel paese di Franchía,
> a quella terra che de Altin si fé,
> io non passerò mai l'Arca Noè
> né starrò là dove abian signoria
>   questi Mogolli senza cortesia,
> senza iustitia, veritate e fe',
> che non si satian de tirare a sé,
> e la vergogna non sanno che sia.

> Qui non si fa raggion, qui non dritura,
> quivi l'empio se aleva e il buon s'aclina,
> quivi l'altrui per forza se rapina,
>   qui non si serva la legge divina;
> et è via peggio, ché contra natura
> se adopra ciascun giorno ogni ventura.

If ever I return to the fair Frankish lands, to the city founded from Altino, I shall never again pass beyond Noah's Ark [Ararat], nor stay anywhere ruled by these Mongols, who lack all courtesy, justice, truth and faith, who are always self-serving, and know not the meaning of shame. Here there is no law or rectitude, the wicked rise and the good are crushed; here others' goods are seized by force; here God's laws are never served. Worst of all, here the rule in everything always is: defy nature.

In miniature—and with a good admixture of medieval sentiment concerning love and religion—these sonnets recall distinctly several of Ovid's key terms. Both vividly evoke the local people's savagery, and their hostility to all codes of civilized behavior, while "Io sun" gives a brief but vivid synthesis of Ovid's remote winter landscapes, beyond the mountain ranges that cut the poet off from home (and from love). The sonnets' yearning tone makes the poet's distance from Venice, probably for practical mercantile motives, seem somehow equivalent to banishment.

It is natural that only a Venetian should invoke as a possible location of exilic experience a Black Sea setting with which few other Italian communities had any direct connection.[5] But that exile is a condition closely associated with relocation into hostile landscapes, the binary opposites of city life and civilization, is a theme that in broad terms appears with repetitive frequency in Italian exile lyrics. It is present from the earliest generation of communal poets, the first to widen the vernacular lyric's scope beyond preoccupation with love to include the political topics in which exile formed a distinct thematic sub-category. Allegretti (2006: 127) shows that Dante's exile topography in the *montanina* echoes similar landscapes in preceding exile lyrics. The first communal poet to compose lyrics about banishment, Guittone d'Arezzo (c. 1230–94),[6] writes for instance in "Lasso, pensando quanto" (Alas, thinking how much) about an exile "entra gente croia / ed en selvaggia terra" (among cruel people and in wild terrain, 7–8), when he is forcibly displaced from home and from his beloved. Another early poet, Panuccio del Bagno (active 1270s–1280s),[7] likewise describes how "tra gente croia, / come non saggi, alpestri, / … dimorar mi convene e stare 'n parte" (among people as cruel and crazy as mountain dwellers I have to live and associate, "La doloroza noia," The sorrowful pain: 7–8, 12). Among Dante's contemporaries, his friend Cino da Pistoia (c. 1270–1336/7)[8] draws on the same standard elements, despite spending his exile in the far from uncultured university circles of wealthy Bologna (1–6):

> Ciò ch'i' veggio di qua m'è mortal duolo,
> perch'i' so' lunge e fra selvaggia gente,
> la qual i' fuggo, e sto celatamente
> perché mi trovi Amor col penser solo:
>   ch'allor passo li monti, e ratto volo
> al loco ove ritrova il cor la mente.

All that I see from here gives me mortal pain: for I am far away, amongst wild peoples, from whom I flee, and hide myself so that Love can find me, in my thoughts, alone: then I can pass over the mountains, and fly quickly to the place where my mind will rejoin my heart.

Like Quirini, Cino concentrates on how banishment causes suffering in love; but like Quirini too—or Dante in the *montanina*—this is intensified by the harshness of landscape and people in his place of exile.

The same elements sometimes occur in more playful variations on the theme of exilic alienation. In a *sonetto caudato* doubtfully attributed to Dante, "Iacopo, i' fui nelle nevicate alpi" (Iacopo, I was in the snowy mountains), the poet describes traversing a harsh landscape of "nevicate alpi" and "aspre vie" (snowy mountains and bleak roads, 1, 5). Amongst these unpromising surroundings, he has pleaded with the relatives of the woman Iacopo loves for a successful outcome to their relationship: an outcome that would send her into a "lontano essilio" (distant exile, 10) from her snowy homeland to be with her beloved. There is perhaps nothing here that does not fit the pre-established lyric theme of distant love; yet with Ovid in mind as a possible further point of reference, there is a subversive neatness in the rearrangement of key motifs from his constellation of exile—winter, distance, lost love and lost friendship—as the author takes the utterly non-Ovidian course of loyally serving friendship by arranging for a wife or sweetheart to leave the realms of ice to rejoin her lover (exactly the opposite scenario to those of the *Tristia* or *Ex Ponto*).

A second poem subverting Ovidian motifs of exilic suffering in barbaric realms is a canzone by Antonio Beccari da Ferrara (1315–c.1373).[9] Beccari's first stanza promises to adopt the elegiac "tristo parlare" (sad speech) of self-consolation (the association of which with exile we have already seen), lamenting the loss of love, of cultured surroundings, and of the poet's adopted hometown of Bologna (1–4):

>   Lagrime i occhi e 'l cor sospiri amari
> hanno sofferto tanto
> ch'el me conven alquanto
> sfogar la mente col tristo parlare.

With tears my eyes and with bitter sighs my heart have suffered so, that I must give some relief to my mind in my sad speech.

The poem pursues in detail the contrast of urban and rural, as Antonio laments his loss of the civilized environment and lifestyle of "dolce Bologna" (fair Bologna, 121). His new world is populated by lumpen peasants, uncouth in dress and speech; constant vigilance is needed to guard over livestock and settlements; the poet himself is reduced to adopting the local coarse dress and sharing the toil of peasant life. Antonio thus creates a cluster of exilic elements that seem likely to originate from Ovid, whose poetry he certainly knew well; but the grotesque note struck in his rural descriptions is intentionally comic in effect, reworking the formulae of exile and elegy in a playful and knowing pastiche of literary convention.

Petrarch

All of the lyrics reviewed thus far establish contrasts between their poets' urban *patriae* with the harsh topography and unsettling human contacts of exile, that carry traces, close or distant, of the Ovidian paradigm, even if only Quirini can offer exact recreations of the *Tristia*'s settings. There are good grounds for supposing that the lyricists drew directly on the widely circulated *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*, as well as on vernacular and biblical sources, for important elements in their depiction of exile, in responses ranging from the ambitious stylistic devices Dante adopted in the *montanina* to the thematic parody of Antonio da Ferrara. In the fourteenth century, reception of the exiled Ovid must also be considered in relation to the century's most renowned classical enthusiast, and preeminent lyricist, Francesco Petrarca (1304–74).

Petrarch, indeed, knew Ovid's exile books well (Marcozzi 2001: 84–87). He drew on them extensively in his humanistic Latin treatises and vast corpus of correspondence, as well as in the enormously influential vernacular lyric collection of *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (better known as the *Canzoniere*). In his consolatory letter on exile to Barbato da Sulmona, for instance, he draws an elaborate comparison between the fates of the ancient and modern compatriots (Sulmona being Ovid's native town). Indeed, for Petrarch, Barbato's misfortunes almost outshine Ovid's. Ovid suffered the loss of Italy, and enforced cohabitation with savage tribes, as an individual misfortune; Barbato, remaining in the peninsula, encounters the same barbarian races in Louis of Hungary's army, invading Italy to claim the Neapolitan throne, in a cataclysmic reversal of natural order: *Fam.* 7.1.6 *quid dicturus fuisset [Naso], si Histri populos … ad occupandam armis patriam suam venturos ullo tempore previdisset?* "What would [Ovid] have said could he have foreseen that some day the people of the Hister would have come to occupy his native soil in arms?"[10] In other Latin works, he takes a more skeptical view of Ovid's stance toward exile, condemning his lack of fortitude in the face of misfortune; the letter to Barbato, indeed, also comments on the length and repetitiveness of the exile books' complaints.

Ovid's exile poetry at times seems to have provided material directly for Petrarch's lyrics in the *Canzoniere*. The most extended borrowing occurs in "Ne la stagion che 'l ciel rapido inchina" (At the time when the swift-moving sky sinks, *Rvf* 50),[11] where Petrarch contrasts his restless, love-tormented condition with that of pilgrims, farmers, shepherds, or sailors whose arduous daily toil is rewarded with rest at nightfall. The poet himself can never rest, and his only consolation is to articulate his suffering in verse ("un poco nel parlar mi sfogo": I relieve myself a little in verse, 57). Santagata (2008) shows that the well-worn motif of the sleepless lover becomes specifically Ovidian through the catalogue of comparison with humble rustics, which recalls the opening of *Tristia* 4.1, where the poet's self-consoling verses are paralleled to the songs by which laborers, shepherds, and boatmen alleviate their tasks (*Tr*. 4.1.1–14). There is an Ovidian flavor also in the crusade canzone, "O aspetata in ciel" (O spirit awaited in heaven, *Rvf* 28), when Petrarch expresses the hope that the Christian armies may be joined by the hardy northernmost peoples of Europe, whose homeland is perpetually dark and wintry (46–48):

> Una parte del mondo è che si giace
> mai sempre in ghiaccio et in gelate nevi
> tutta lontana dal camin del sole.

There is a region that lies perpetually in ice and freezing snows, forever distant from the sun's pathway.

In neither of these lyrics, however, does Petrarch use his Ovidian borrowings in relation to a personal experience of exile.

Petrarch was nonetheless conscious of his own juristic status as an exile for most of his early life. In the first of the *Familiares*, he makes exile his existential condition, as the son of a citizen proscribed from his Florentine homeland (1.1.22): *ego, in exilio genitus, in exilio natus sum*, "I, conceived in exile, was born in exile too." In Petrarch's lyric verse, however, a more complex reception of Ovidian exile material is evident when he speaks about feelings of home and belonging, or of exile and estrangement. When Petrarch addresses these themes, he opens a new turn in the representation of exile: a turn that weaves together, but also undercuts, elements both from Ovid's own legend of exile, and from the vernacular lyric tradition in which Ovidian elements had played the influential part already outlined. The main thrust of this new turn lies in Petrarch's topographies of exile. He explicitly rejects the binary opposition between *urbs* and wilderness that had provided Italian lyricists with a standard element in exile lament for more than half a century. Petrarch's best images of well-being and self-possession—such as they are, given his notoriously troubled and shifting poetic persona—are all associated with the idyllic pastoral solitude of Vaucluse. The Rome whose monuments Ovid yearned

for from Tomis, and catalogued in detail in *Tristia* 3.1, is for instance explicitly sub-ordinated early in the *Canzoniere* to the woods and hills of Provence (*Rvf* 10.5–9):[12]

> qui non palazzi, non theatro o loggia,
> ma 'n lor vece un abete, un faggio, un pino
> tra l'erba verde e 'l bel monte vicino,
> onde si scende poetando et poggia,
>   levan di terra al ciel nostr'intellecto.

Here no palaces, no theatre or loggia, but in their stead fir-tree, beech and pine on the green grass, the fair mountain close by, which one may climb and descend reciting verses: these raise our minds from earth to heaven.

The same instinct for withdrawal from the world, to seek out remote solitude and rural, even inhospitable landscapes, recurs again and again. To give only two well-known examples, sonnet 35 makes its theme evident from the opening lines (1–4):

> Solo e pensoso i più deserti campi
> vo mesurando a passi tardi et lenti,
> et gli occhi porto per fuggire intenti
> ove vestigio human la rena stampi.

Alone and thoughtful, I pace the loneliest fields with slow and measured steps, my eyes intent to flee wherever any human trace marks the ground.

And in the extraordinary canzone of distant love, "Di pensier in pensier, di monte in monte" (From thought to thought, from peak to peak, *Rvf* 129), Petrarch deliberately seeks out the landscapes shunned by earlier poets writing of amorous exile (14–16):

> Per alti monti et per selve aspre trovo
> qualche riposo: ogni habitato loco
> è nemico mortal degli occhi miei.

Among high mountains and harsh woods I find some rest: all inhabited places are mortal enemies to my eyes.

The envoy that closes "Di pensier in pensier" follows the tradition of textual personification, telling the verses to travel where their author cannot go (66–72):

> Canzone, oltra quell'alpe,
> là dove il ciel è più sereno et lieto,
> mi rivedrai sovr'un ruscel corrente,

> ove l'aura si sente
> d'un fresco et odorifero laureto.
> Ivi è 'l mio cor, et quella che 'l m'invola;
> qui veder pôi l'imagine mia sola.

Song, beyond that mountain, there where the sky is more serene and happy, you will see me again, beside a swift-flowing brook, where the breeze is perfumed by a fresh, aromatic laurel. There is my heart, and she who steals it from me; here, you see only an image of me.

Petrarch yearns for the fertile Provence left behind "oltra quell'alpe" (66), synonymous with Laura (note the puns on *"l'aura …* / d'un fresco et odorifero *laure*to"). Failing that, he prefers solitude and wilderness.

Indeed, in several sonnets Petrarch explicitly prefers Vaucluse to his true paternal homeland in Italy. Both "L'aura gentil, che rasserena i poggi" (The noble breeze that clears the hills, *Rvf* 194) and "Cercato ò sempre solitaria vita" (I have always sought a solitary life, *Rvf* 259) explicitly reject "[il] mi' natio dolce aere tosco" (my sweet native Tuscan air, 194.6) or "[il] dolce aere de' paesi toschi" (the sweet air of the Tuscan lands, 259.6) for *l'aura* of Provence (194.1) and the valley of the Sorgue (259.8). He names Laura indirectly as "Quella per cui con Sorga ò cangiato Arno" (She for whom I exchanged Arno for Sorgue) in the first line of a penitential *post mortem* sonnet (*Rvf* 308), which even close to the end of the collection places his identity and loyalties in a place of origin that is not, in fact, his civic homeland. If Petrarch does ever express a genuine sense of exile, it is from Vaucluse, not Florence.

With Petrarch, the theme of exile took on new forms in the Italian lyric. Pre-Petrarchan exile verse made return to the city a dominant theme, and set up oppositions between the benign and cultured environment of city life and the harshness of uncivilized nature. In contrast to this predominantly urban imaginary among the communal exile poets, Petrarch established that his true home lay in the Arcadian environs of Vaucluse, and emphatically not the city. The cult of classical letters, and the reevaluation of Ovid evident in Petrarch's early humanist searches for purer versions of pagan mythology and history, coincided with a move away, in his vernacular lyrics, from the Ovidian obsession with cityscape and communal integration as the signs of well-being that constitute the opposite of exile. Petrarch portrayed himself as most "at home" outside the city; but Ovid and the communal poets alike are at ease only inside the *urbs*, enjoying its promiscuities.

With the *Canzoniere*'s lyrics, we mark a separation in the representation of exile between Petrarch and his vernacular predecessors; and also between Petrarch and the Ovidian sensibility to which those earlier medieval Italian poets were so much attuned. Petrarch—who can elsewhere write pathetically of an exile condition dating not simply to his birth but even his conception—in his lyric persona actively

embraces and perpetuates this rootless condition. Despite his Latinate elegance of language and his self-conscious classicism, his representation of exile lacks the rhetorical urgency of previous lyricists' pleas for return to their place of origin. Petrarch puts a new stamp on the themes of exile *erranza* and geographic displacement. For those who follow his new poetic direction, the city, and the density of urban political and cultural networks, fade from view; and a significant aspect of the connection with Ovid is thereby lost.

Notes

1   Arrigo da Settimello, *Elegia*, ed. C. Fossati (Florence, 2011).
2   Dante reference editions: *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. P.V. Mengaldo (2.1–237), *Epistole,* ed. A. Frugoni and G. Brugnoli (2.505–643), in *Dante Alighieri: Opere minori*, 3 vols. (Milan and Naples, 1979); *Rime*, ed. D. De Robertis, 2 vols. (Florence, 2002).
3   http://web.archive.org/web/20061007013337/dobc.unipv.it/scrineum/wight /index.htm (accessed May 10, 2012), with amendments from British Library ms. Cotton Vitellius C VIII.
4   Giovanni Quirini, *Rime*, ed. E.M. Duso (Padua, 2002).
5   Genoa was the only other Italian city in regular contact with the Black Sea: the major port of Caffa in the Horde's Crimean khanate passed from Venetian to Genoese control in 1266. Duso (2002: xiv–xv) discusses Quirini's contact with Caffa, Tana, and Tabriz.
6   Guittone d'Arezzo, *Le rime*, ed. F. Egidi (Bari, 1940).
7   Panuccio del Bagno, *Le rime*, ed. F.B. Ageno (Florence, 1977).
8   Cino da Pistoia, *Rime*, in M. Marti (ed.), *Poeti del dolce stil nuovo* (Florence, 1969), 421–923.
9   Maestro Antonio da Ferrara (Antonio Beccari), *Rime*, ed. L. Bellucci (Bologna, 1967).
10 The same anxiety that the presence of northern fighting forces in Italy contravened the ancient theory of climates is evident in the famous political canzone, "Italia mia" (My Italy, *Rvf* 128), with its denunciation of the "tedesca rabbia" (German rage, 35) of a "popol senza legge" (lawless people, 43) originating in the savage lands ("deserti strani," 29) beyond the Alps.
11 Reference edition for poems and commentary: Santagata (2008).
12 The poem is addressed to one of the Colonna, Petrarch's patrons. It was long considered to have been written in 1330 on behalf of Giacomo Colonna, inviting his father Stefano to visit his bishopric at Lombez. Santagata (2008) makes a strong case for its composition in Vaucluse in 1337/8, addressing Giacomo, absent in Rome.

Further Reading

Those wishing to read more about Ovid's reception in medieval Italy will find Hexter (1986, 2002, 2007, 2011) and Black (2011) useful starting points. Additionally, Black (2007) offers detailed, manuscript-based study of the place of classical authors across the medieval Italian curriculum; more learned readers of the classics are discussed in Witt (2003). The politics

of exile in the medieval Italian city-states is a fascinating subject, on which much remains to be said: useful volumes include Starn (1982), Shaw (2000), and Ricciardelli (2007). Literary responses to exile in medieval Italy have been the subject of numerous conferences, essay collections, and special issues of scholarly journals, though a comprehensive monograph on the subject is still lacking. Among the most useful collections are Heers and Bec (1990) and Ulysse (1991); and the journal issues *Annali d'italianistica* 20 (2002), and *Bollettino di italianistica* 8.2 (2011). Picone has produced a number of thoughtful essays on the theme of exile in Dante and in earlier Duecento poets—(1993, 2002, 2003a, 2003b)—and Sowell (1991) remains invaluable on Dante's reading of Ovid. For Petrarch, useful starting points are to be found in Santagata (2004) and Mazzotta (1993), while Houghton (2011) discusses an intriguing instance of exilic Ovidianism in his Latin correspondence. Finally, among the vast bibliography on Ovid's own exile poetry, I have found especially useful Nagle (1980), Hinds (1985), Williams (1994), and Claassen (1999).

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Venus's Clerk

Ovid's Amatory Poetry in the Middle Ages

Marilynn Desmond

From the moment that troubadour verse emerges in the courts of Provence early in the twelfth century, the concept of *amor*—as an experience, an ideal, and an emotion—dominates the vernacular literary cultures of the medieval West. If modern readers generally categorize the European Middle Ages as a period that idealized desire in the name of *amor*, the medieval reception of Ovid's poetry is largely responsible for making available the language of desire that enabled this idealization. To medieval readers and writers, Ovid was first and foremost a love poet. The Latin texts of Ovid's amatory verse—the elegiac texts, especially the *Ars amatoria*, the *Remedia amoris*, the *Heroides*, and to some extent the *Amores*—circulated widely in medieval Europe from the twelfth century onward (Tarrant 1983); in addition, vernacular renditions of the *Ars*, the *Remedia*, and the *Heroides* (though not the *Amores*) began to appear in the thirteenth century. Although the *Metamorphoses* transmitted an encyclopedic collection of pagan myths to Christian medieval readers—including stories of over-sexed pagan deities and their mortal victims—it is Ovid's elegiac texts on amatory themes that provided medieval literary cultures with an erotic ethic dependent on the physical and mental states of desire as well as the subject positions most conducive to the pursuit and experience, if not fulfillment, of that desire.

In Ovid's amatory poetics, *amor* is structured around a rhetorical practice aimed at persuading the object of desire—through speeches, letters, gifts, or threats—to recognize and respond to the erotic needs of the *amator*. The register of amatory persuasion in Ovid's texts is frequently ironic, an irony that depends almost completely on a Roman political context. In the *Ars amatoria*, for instance, the instructions of the *praeceptor* explicitly countermand the letter as well as the spirit of Augustus' marriage legislation (O'Gorman 1997). The playful yet intense didacticism of the *Ars amatoria* develops through repetition and reiteration to become

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the rhetorical excess that is the hallmark of Ovidian poetics. Because medieval readers lacked a precise understanding of the historical framework within which the *Ars amatoria* was originally produced, the reception of the *Ars amatoria* in medieval textual cultures consequently accorded authority to the rhetorical excess of Ovid's erotic pedagogy. While Ovid's *Heroides* developed an elaborate intertextual commentary on earlier Greek and Roman literature, once removed from the literary context of the Roman world (Davis 2006: 49–70), these texts could be read as historical documents that record—and model—female subjectivity. To the medieval reader, amatory texts such as the *Ars amatoria*, the *Remedia amoris*, and the *Heroides* needed only to be framed around a heteroerotic morality loosely consistent with Christian doctrine on *eros* in order to provide the poetic structures with which to explore *amor* in all its complexity and contradictions.

Though relegated to the periphery of the Roman Empire, an exile from which he never returned, Ovid, particularly Ovid as *magister amoris*, was at the very center of medieval textual cultures, Latin as well as vernacular. When Ludwig Traube (1911) formulated his influential periodization of medieval Latin metrics into three "ages," he designated the twelfth and thirteenth centuries an *aetas Ovidiana*, based on the frequent imitation of the distich—the elegiac couplet of Ovid's love elegies—in medieval Latin poetry. The distich distinguishes the genre of the Latin love elegy from the generically epic *Metamorphoses*, so that the high frequency of elegiac couplets in medieval Latin verse categorically attests to the prominence of Ovid's amatory verse in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Yet, from the Carolingian period to the dawn of humanism, that is, well beyond the *aetas Ovidiana* characterized by Traube, Ovid's love poetry held a privileged place. Texts that appear marginal at best in the ancient canon, such as the *Heroides* (which go almost unremarked in Roman poetry) or the *Ars amatoria* (which Ovid specifically blames for his exile), were central to medieval textual cultures, both Latin and vernacular. In the twelfth century, Ovid takes his place as one of the *auctores*—the classical Latin authors from whose texts schoolboys learned their Latin grammar (Hexter 1986: 1–13). The short, two-line semantic units of the elegiac couplet made Ovid's amatory verse particularly suited to the teaching of Latin grammar. Ovidian texts such as the *Ars amatoria* and the *Heroides* became core pedagogical texts, thereby shaping the thematics as well as the poetics of medieval Latin literature; the medieval schoolboy would acquire a repertoire of erotic rhetoric as well as the discourse of desire in the process of learning Latin. In the medieval classroom, the Latin text of the *Ars amatoria* was taught as a poem about managing the emotion of *amor*, and both *magister* and *discipulus* seem to have accepted its didactic rhetoric without attending to its irony. The *Heroides* likewise become textual treatments of legitimate and illegitimate love (Hexter 1986: 137–302), texts to be read for their exemplarity rather than their intertextual play with the categories of desire in ancient history. Testimony to the pedagogical treatment of Ovid's texts as moral treatises on love comes from the academic prologues known as the *accessus ad auctores*—short prose introductory comments that introduce classical Latin texts and offer interpretive frameworks

for the student (Huygens 1970). These introductory comments treat the *Ars amatoria* and the *Heroides* as ethical treatments on the conduct of lovers (Hexter 1986). Such an approach all but guaranteed that Ovid's *Ars amatoria* would be read as an instruction manual rather than an ironic exploration of the sexual politics of the Augustan age, and the *Heroides* would be read as transcriptions of female desire.

The didacticism of the *Ars amatoria* and the performativity of the *Heroides* offered the medieval Christian reader a formulation of *amor* in all its pagan difference, a difference that paradoxically proved foundational to medieval textual cultures. A medieval Ovidianism as an elaboration on the discourse of *amor* initially surfaces in the "Loire school," a regionally defined literary culture associated with a network of clerical poets in the monasteries and cathedral schools of central France, such as Baudri de Bourgueil (c. 1046–1130), Marbod of Rennes (c. 1035–1123), and Hildebert of Lavardin (c. 1056–1133). F.J.E. Raby describes these poets as "men who knew their Ovid as well as their Bible by heart" (1957: 320). As Gerald Bond has demonstrated (1986), the literary epistle, a poetic form modeled directly on the *Heroides*, animates the corpus of Baudri de Bourgueil and his interlocutors in the "Loire school." An Ovidian eroticism consequently suffuses these letters between men, poetically enhancing the expression of homoerotic desire within the same-sex demographics of the clerical and monastic worlds (Boswell 1980: 243–50). A heteroerotic Ovidianism is also legible in the "Loire school," evident, for instance, in Baudri's imitation of *Heroides* 16 and 17, the letters of Paris and Helen. In addition, when Baudri addresses a poetic epistle to a contemporary nun named Constance, the eroticism that he adapts from the *Heroides* allows him to articulate a passionate, yet chaste, heteroerotic desire, a desire that Constance reciprocates in her epistles to Baudri where she itemizes the symptoms of *amor*, yet expresses a determined restraint consistent with her vow of chastity (Bond 1987). The *Heroides* thus nurtured various forms of desire in Latin textual culture on the eve of the twelfth century.

If the *Heroides* structured the expressions of desire as it circulated in the poetic epistles that passed between Baudri and Constance, the *Ars amatoria* shaped the discourse of erotic violence celebrated a few decades later in the Latin prose epistles exchanged between Abelard and Heloise. Though the genre of the erotic epistle exemplified by the *Heroides* may have lent a rhetorical outline to the love letters that passed between Abelard (1079–1142) and Heloise (c. 1098–1164), the very nature of the desire that develops in their letters derives from the precepts of the *Ars amatoria*. As literary epistles composed in Latin prose rather than the elegiac couplets of the *Heroides*, these letters explore the broad implications of Ovidian erotics beyond the unrequited desire modeled by the mythic lovers of the *Heroides*. As careful readers of Ovid, Abelard, and especially Heloise, found in the *Ars* an erotics at the intersection of pleasure and pain, a formulation of erotic violence as articulated and precisely delineated in the *Ars*. In her first letter to Abelard, Heloise declares that if the emperor Augustus were to offer her the glory of an imperial marriage, she would nonetheless prefer the title of Abelard's *meretrix*: *carius mihi et dignius*

videretur tua dici meretrix quam illius imperatrix, "more dear and more worthy would it seem to me to be called your *meretrix* than the empress of that one." The term *meretrix* points to Ovidian formations of desire, the liminal world of courtesans and concubines (see *Ars* 1.435); indeed, the implied female audience of *Ars amatoria 3* would be classified as *meretrices*. Though Abelard and Heloise report in their letters that their physical and sexual relationship had been violent—and Abelard himself eventually suffers the violence of castration as punishment for the affair—the letters they composed after their separation adopt an Ovidian rhetoric designed to inflict emotional pain and entice sexual desire in the addressee (Desmond 1998). Such erotic epistolography is the material manifestation of the lessons of Ovid's *praeceptor amoris* that a disinterested violence—whether verbal or physical—has considerable efficacy as an erotic gesture.

The presence of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* in the school curricula worked to codify the concept that a pedagogical imperative attaches to the experience of *amor*; that is, that the onset of *amor* must be attended by instruction. This concept is vividly dramatized in Andreas Capellanus' *De amore*, a late twelfth-century treatise on love in Latin prose that opens with a calque of phrases from Book 1 of the *Ars amatoria*. Though much remains unknown and unknowable about this text from northern France (Baldwin 1994: 16–25), *De amore* clearly acknowledges Ovid as an amatory authority through an evocation of the *Ars amatoria*: Andreas's text is formally organized into three books in imitation of Ovid's *Ars*, and Andreas cites and mimics the posture of the *praeceptor amoris* throughout. At the start of the treatise, Andreas locates *amor* precisely within a heteroerotic paradigm in his assertion that the emotion (*passio*) of *amor* derives from the attractions of the other sex (*alterius sexus*). Despite this definitive approach, no clear lessons emerge from this highly contradictory text, so that *De amore* playfully proposes the impossibility of acquiring mastery over the experience of *amor* no matter how obsessively the lover might rehearse the pedagogical discourses available in Ovidian textual traditions. One measure of the capacious format provided by the formal imitation of the *Ars amatoria* is the extensive digression on clerical misogyny in the third book of *De amore*. Unlike the Ovidianism evident in the poetry of the "Loire school" or in the prose letters of Heloise, the discourse of *De amore* does not employ Ovidian erotic poetics to give shape to the expression of desire as much as it lends itself to rhetorical and didactic forms of textual play about desire.

Medieval vernacular literatures are saturated with Ovidian erotic discourse, and the reception of Ovid's amatory texts in vernacular textual cultures generally focuses on the implications of *amor* as a cultural ideal. Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and the *Heroides* survive in a wide range of textual adaptations that exemplify every possible mode of *translatio* from Latin into vernacular. The *Ars amatoria*, in particular, acquires authority in relation to medieval French literature already in the twelfth century. In the prologue to his verse romance *Cligés* (c. 1176), when Chrétien de Troyes lists his various credentials as an *auctor*, he specifically claims to have translated—"au romans mist" (put into the vernacular)—Ovid's *Ars amatoria*

and *Remedia amoris*. Chrétien then proceeds to explicate how the operation of *translatio studii*—the transfer of learning—brought chivalry and learning to France from ancient Greece by way of Rome. Chrétien's prologue claims Ovidian authority for the vernacular text of *Cligés*, the first of Chrétien's romances to idealize the experience of *amor* as an emotion; embedded in the romance of *Cligés* are long, dramatic monologues that employ Ovidian discourse to itemize the pains and suffering of *amor*. *Cligés* consequently dramatizes a heterosexual plot of courtship and desire within an imperial context, a plot that explicitly pays tribute to the imperial ideology of *amor* as found in the *Ars amatoria* (Desmond 2006: 35–54). Thus Chrétien's initial assertion that he has put the *Ars amatoria* and the *Remedia amoris* into "romans" suggests that *Cligés* itself is a narrative adaptation of the *Ars amatoria*. In any case, the rhetorical explorations of *amor* in *Cligés* derive from the textual erotics of the *Ars amatoria*. In addition, the specific citation of Ovid's amatory works in the prologue to *Cligés* testifies to an implied vernacular audience for Ovid's texts by the middle of the twelfth century.

With the expansion of literacy and the concomitant development of vernacular literatures, Ovid's amatory texts—particularly the *Ars amatoria* as well as the *Remedia amoris*—take on a life of their own within francophone literary cultures. Four French verse adaptations of the *Ars amatoria* survive from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, several of which are translations in the medieval sense of the term—texts that paraphrase and rewrite the source text (Lusignan 1986: 129–71). In addition, a French prose translation (in the modern sense of the word) of the *Ars amatoria*, accompanied by glosses, also survives from the thirteenth century, the *Ars d'amours*. French functioned as the lingua franca of literary vernacular cultures from England to Italy in the high Middle Ages; these French renditions of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* contributed to the development of an erotic discourse in medieval literatures throughout western Europe. These vernacular renditions of the *Ars* tend to treat the Latin source text as a purely didactic treatise—a set of instructions for erotic seduction. As such, these versions of Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, particularly the prose *Ars d'amours*, functioned as a conduit for the cultural reception of Ovid's Latin text. Late medieval poets such as Jean de Meun, Christine de Pizan, or Geoffrey Chaucer, for instance, appear to have worked with the prose translation—the *Ars d'amours*—in their appropriation of Ovid's *Ars amatoria*. Since the process of translation limits the potential for an appreciation of Ovidian irony, the transmission of the *Ars amatoria* from classical Latin into medieval vernacular poetry by way of these intermediary French renditions reduces the semiotic richness of a text such as Ovid's *Ars amatoria* into a relatively stark rhetorical exercise in the mechanics of desire and seduction: the complexities of the Latin text are replaced by an earnest register that catalogues the techniques of sexual and emotional manipulation. If the elaborate ironies of Ovid's Latin texts thereby become transformed into a relatively cynical set of instructions, that process enables vernacular poets to recast Ovidian discourse into a specifically medieval transvaluation of eroticism.

The *Ars amatoria* and the *Remedia amoris* underwent "volgarizzamenti" in fourteenth-century Italy: three Tuscan versions and one Venetian version survive (Lippi Bigazzi 1987). Such industrious translation efforts illustrate the centrality of Ovid's erotic poetics to a range of languages and genres in medieval textual cultures. The genre of allegory, in particular, proved to be an efficacious form for the articulation of the multivalent qualities of medieval Ovidianisms in the vernacular. This reception of Ovid is best represented by the thirteenth-century French allegory, the *Roman de la Rose*, which exemplifies the allegorical possibilities of the Ovidian discourses of desire. The *Roman de la Rose* was begun by one poet, Guillaume de Lorris (fl. 1230), who left the text unfinished; several decades later, a second poet, Jean de Meun (c. 1240–1305), took up the narrative where Guillaume de Lorris had left off and appended an additional sequence that extends the allegory extensively. In the prologue to the *Roman de la Rose*, Guillaume de Lorris cites Ovid's *Ars amatoria* as pre-text that provides the *auctoritas* for the amatory poetics of his text (37–38): "Ce est li Romanz de la Rose, / Ou l'art d'Amors est tote enclose" (This is the Romance of the Rose where the Art of Love is completely enclosed). In asserting that the *Roman de la Rose* completely encloses the "Art of Love," Guillaume explicitly invites the reader to find an Ovidian thread with which to negotiate the allegory as it unfolds in the first part of the *Rose*. Guillaume de Lorris's section of the *Rose* transfers the pedagogic lessons of the *Ars amatoria* into a dream-vision in which the protagonist—the dreamer/lover—enters a walled garden where he encounters the God of Love (Amor), a mythical figure taken directly from Ovid's *Ars amatoria*. The God of Love shoots the lover in the eye with an arrow; thus pierced, the lover becomes besotted with an attractive rosebud. His attempt to pluck the rose, however, is thwarted by several figures who personify the personal and cultural constraints on the experience of *amor*. The object of desire, whose responses are further personified in the figure of Fair Welcome (Bel Acueil), is removed from the lover's reach and imprisoned in a castle before Guillaume's section of the *Rose* abruptly ends, unfinished. Jean de Meun's portion of the *Rose* takes up the narrative of Guillaume's text from this point and expands the allegory exponentially to elaborate and comment on every aspect of *amor* as a cultural category. In the process, Jean de Meun relies on the didactic rhetoric of the *Ars amatoria*—initiated by Guillaume de Lorris—to structure his intervention. It is the amatory language of Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, however, that connects both sections of the *Rose* as a coherent allegory.

Jean de Meun's section of the *Roman de la Rose* adapts the first two books of the *Ars amatoria* into a long speech delivered by a personified figure identified as "Friend" (Ami) who provides the dreamer/narrator with a detailed tutorial on how the masculine lover might effectively pursue the female object of desire with minimal financial and emotional investment. The speech of the "Friend" thus dramatizes the lessons of the *praeceptor* in a didactic context made possible by the allegorical format of the text. The advice of the "Friend" is later complemented by a long speech delivered by an "Old Woman" (Vielle) whose language borrows heavily

from the third book of the *Ars amatoria*—the *praeceptor*'s advice to women—in order to obliquely instruct the female object of desire in the most efficacious methods of manipulating the male lover (Bouché 1977). Taken together, the speeches of "the Friend" and "the Old Woman" incorporate the didactic discourse of the *Ars* into an allegorical inquiry into the ethics of desire. Jean de Meun's treatment of the *Ars amatoria* as an ethical treatise allows the *Roman de la Rose* to explore the implications of heteroerotic as well as homoerotic discourse (Gaunt 1998). Ultimately, the allegorical structure of the *Rose* brackets the Ovidian discourse of "the Friend" and "the Old Woman" as momentary interventions in the development of the lover. When the lover finally—and violently—plucks the rose after 21,000 lines of commentary and debate on the art of love by figures such as Reason, Nature, and Genius, the ethical implications of his amatory pursuit and conquest remain unresolved in an exquisitely Ovidian gesture that privileges knowledge over authority. The category of *amor* in the *Roman de la Rose* thus retains the disruptive potential that renders Ovid's *Ars amatoria* such an unsettling text.

If the *Roman de la Rose* exemplifies the medieval appropriation of Ovid's amatory rhetoric, its refusal to critique or endorse any one particular ethics of desire has troubled readers through the centuries. This very Ovidian quality of the *Rose*—its open-ended, rhetorically expansive exploration of desire in the absence of a clear moral center—inspired a range of responses that has left significant traces throughout the vast manuscript tradition of the *Rose* (Huot 1993). The indeterminancy of the text fueled the *Querelle de la Rose*, a literary debate on the merits of Jean de Meun's Ovidian erotics and its implications for readers. The *querelle* itself demonstrates the level of interest late medieval readers took in Ovid's *Ars amatoria*. Christine de Pizan (c. 1364–c. 1430) initiated this debate in 1399 with her "Epistre au dieu d'amours," a satirical poem that recuperates the God of Love from his role in Jean de Meun's section of the *Roman de la Rose* as well as Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and uses him to comment on the politics of gender and desire in late medieval court cultures. Christine's God of Love playfully dismisses the *Ars amatoria* as a text that does not instruct the masculine reader in the conduct of love but in the deception of women, for which reason the God of Love designates the *Ars amatoria* as a text on the "art of great deception" (377).

Christine later develops her critique of the *Rose* and its Ovidian pre-text in several prose letters in which she addresses the potential of the *Rose* and the *Ars* to foster misogynist reading practices that could possibly have a negative impact on the lived experience of women: Christine is not anxious about the *Rose* itself but about one particular way of reading the *Rose*. Christine's reading of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* may well have been derived not from the Latin text but from its vernacular translations, most likely from the prose rendition known as the *Ars d'amours*. In that case, she is responding to a fairly crude treatise on the manipulation of love and lovers rather than to the rich ironies of Ovid's Latin text. Despite her dismissal of Jean de Meun during the *querelle*, Christine was nonetheless greatly influenced by his *Roman de la Rose*, and intertextual traces of her reading of the *Roman de la*

Rose and its Ovidian discourse remain evident throughout her corpus. In the case of Ovid, Christine appears to have made a clear distinction between Ovidian mythography, from which she borrows endlessly throughout her literary career, and Ovid the love poet, whom she excoriates in the "Epistre au dieu d'amors" and in her letters on the *Rose*. Christine's bifurcated approach to the Ovidian corpus—her dismissal of the Ovidian element of the *Rose*, despite her appropriation of Ovidian mythical material from both the *Rose* and the *Metamorphoses* (by way of the *Ovide moralisé*)—illustrates how distinct and separate the reception of Ovid-the-love-poet was from Ovid-the-mythographer in medieval literary cultures.

The reception of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* in late medieval vernacular poetry reaches its zenith in the Prologue of the pilgrim known as the Wife of Bath in the *Canterbury Tales* of Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343–1400). Chaucer's Wife of Bath adopts the Ovidian rhetoric from Jean de Meun's character, the Old Woman. In the *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale*, Chaucer refracts the language of "the Old Woman" from the *Roman de la Rose* through an Ovidian lens supplied by the French version of Ovid's text, the *Art d'amours*. The Wife of Bath has learned her Ovidian lessons quite well, and her confessional rhetoric performs a female subjectivity that accommodates erotic violence as proof of desire. Of all the pilgrims in the *Canterbury Tales*, the Wife of Bath generally impresses readers as the most authentic, most lifelike character; yet she is at her most authentic when she is rehearsing an Ovidian language of desire as formulated in the *Ars amatoria* and transmitted by the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Ars d'amours*. Unlike Christine's critique of Ovid and the *Rose* for their representation of the erotic potential of violence, the *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale* appears to endorse an eroticism authorized by Ovid and ostensibly endorsed by Jean de Meun. In the *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale*, the erotic poetics of the *Ars amatoria* have become domesticated (Desmond 2006: 125–36).

By contrast, John Gower's *Confessio amantis*—a long narrative poem composed in the same decade as the *Canterbury Tales*—explicitly evokes Ovidian amatory discourse within a frame narrative (a lover's confession) that ultimately functions as *remedia amoris* rather than an *ars amatoria*. The poetry of Gower (c. 1330–1408)—particularly his Latin text, the *Vox clamantis*—exhibits his thorough knowledge of Ovid's poetry, including Ovid's amatory texts, in their original Latin. Halfway through the *Confessio amantis*, the lover (Amans) is advised by his confessor that he might take up Ovid's learning in order to quench the heat of his love (4.2668–70). At this point in the text Amans rejects Ovid's lore as a remedy for love, and the encyclopedic lessons continue (Sadlek 2004: 167–207). If Chaucer's *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale* employs confessional rhetoric in advancing the lessons of the *Ars amatoria*, Gower's *Confessio amantis* constructs a confessional, counter-rhetoric from the *Remedia amoris*.

The *Heroides* were widely read within Latin textual cultures from the twelfth century onward (Hagedorn 2004: 22–40). Although the *Heroides* were not translated into French as a coherent, integrated collection of poems until Octavien de Saint Gelais's 1496 edition, vernacular versions of the *Heroides* appear as fugitive

texts, part of larger, narrative texts. The *Ovide moralisé*, for instance, contains paraphrased versions of several of the *Heroides* which are inserted at appropriate points in the mythological sequences. This interpolation of the *Heroides* into the encyclopedic format provided by the *Metamorphoses* effectively emphasizes the reader's need for a context within which to locate the desire expressed in these epistles. In fourteenth-century Italy, several of the *Heroides* are rendered into verbatim prose in Tuscan and French; these translations are often transcribed into longer historical texts in prose that relate the Trojan War and the downfall of Troy (Barbieri 2005; Zaggia 2009). These vernacular *Heroides* are thereby incorporated into the Troy narrative, a context that emphasizes a historical context for these texts as stories of unrequited love. For instance, the second redaction of the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, made in Naples in the Angevin court of Robert of Anjou in the 1330s, includes a number of French verbatim translations of the *Heroides* interspersed within the broader narrative of siege warfare. The laments of Penelope, Oenone, Hermione, Ariadne, Canace, Laodamia, Paris, Helen, Leander, and Hero are all included (Barbieri 2005). Each of the *Heroides* interrupts the account of battles and bloodshed to shift the register of the text in order to allow a space for female-voiced longing and unrequited desire. Each "epistle" is introduced by a rubric which assigns the letter to its mythological hero or heroine without mention of Ovid as the author. Though these vernacular "translations" may not achieve any perceptible level of literariness, they provide access to the subjectivity of Ovid's heroines for the vernacular audience (Desmond 2011). This version of the *Histoire ancienne* circulated widely, and the historical register of the narrative ensured that these French renditions of Ovid's texts would be read as historical documents that purport to record an authentic female experience rather than a literary letter that fictionally comments on the textual traditions of the Trojan War. The two male-voiced epistles by Paris and Leander are paired with the letters from their female objects of desire (Helen and Hero) to exemplify a heteroerotic intersubjectivity. This vernacular tradition of the *Heroides* shaped the poetic reception of Ovid's text.

For Chaucer, the *Heroides* represented authoritative textual versions of classical women and female subjectivities, and the *Heroides* have left traces throughout his poetry (Desmond 2013). For example, in the first book of *Troilus and Criseyde*, Pandarus refers to "Oenone's letter" as a text that Troilus has perhaps seen (1.656). When Troilus responds that he has not read Oenone's letter, Pandarus summarizes it briefly (1.659–65). This evocation of Ovid's *Heroides* 5 at the start of the *Troilus* programmatically connects epistolarity and desire in the narrative of the *Troilus*, much of which hinges on the exchange of love letters. *The Legend of Good Women* represents Chaucer's most intensive exploration of the textuality and female subjectivity of the *Heroides*. However, Chaucer's intertextual engagement with the *Heroides* is outlined in the *Prologue to the Man of Law's Tale* when the Man of Law compares Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* to Ovid's *Heroides*: "For he hath toold of loveris up and doun / Mo than Ovide made of mencioun / In his Episteles, that been ful olde" (52–55); the Man of Law then proceeds to catalogue ancient women

who make an appearance in the *Legend*, to which he assigns the title the "Seintes Legende of Cupide" (61). Chaucer, however, never completed *The Legend of Good Women*; of the nine surviving legends, six are based on Ovid's *Heroides*: Dido (7), Phyllis (2), Ariadne (10), Hypsipyle (6), Medea (12), and Hypermnestra (14). The Legends are introduced by an elaborate allegorical Prologue in which Alceste and the God of Love appear to Chaucer-the-narrator and instruct him to write "glorious legends" about good women to compensate for his portrayal of Criseyde as a traitor to love in the *Troilus*. As the God of Love clarifies, "good women" are defined by their willingness to die for love—an apt description of the erotic discourse of the *Heroides*. Alceste has thus assigned "Chaucer" the task of translating Ovid's *Heroides*. The Legends themselves, however, do not take the shape of translation; rather, each of the Ovidian Legends retells the story of love and abandonment from the *Heroides* and then concludes with a few lines taken directly from Ovid's Latin text and rendered verbatim in English, followed by advice to the reader to consult Ovid directly to read the entire letter.

The combination of brief, translated passages followed by a precise citation of Ovid's text ("Wel can Oyvde hire letter in vers endyte," 1678) implies that Ovid's *Heroides* would have been familiar as well as accessible to Chaucer's audience. Such invocation of Ovid's epistles points to the vernacular renditions of the *Heroides* more than to the Latin original. A similar set of assumptions about the reader's access to and familiarity with Ovid's *Heroides* animates Book 1 of the *House of Fame*. In this dream-allegory, Chaucer-the-dreamer sees several of the *Heroides* painted on the wall of Venus's temple (375–426). These citations of Ovid are inserted into a larger allegorical vision that rehearses Virgil's *Aeneid*. As the dreamer gazes at the visual representation of the *Aeneid*, he articulates a brief ekphrastic summary of several of the *Heroides*; the process of viewing Virgil's text leads him to contemplate the fate of several of Ovid's heroines. Dido's story from *Heroides* 7, in particular, captivates the dreamer / viewer, since it offers a counter-story to Virgil's narrative in *Aeneid* 4 (Desmond 1994: 138–51). This ekphrastic description of the *Heroides* in the *House of Fame*—like the citation of Oenone's letter in the *Troilus* and the precise engagement with the *Heroides* in the *Legend of Good Women*—illustrates the centrality of Ovid's *Heroides* to Chaucerian poetics.

Ovid's amatory texts circulated in a range of formats—in the Latin original, often introduced by an *accessus ad auctores*, in vernacular translations of all sorts, both prose as well as verse, as well as in poetic adaptations by some of the most canonical of medieval vernacular poets. While most learned vernacular poets mined Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (often by way of the *Ovide moralisé*) for mythological narratives that could be used as exempla or could form the basis for longer narrative retellings of classical stories, vernacular poets such as Jean de Meun and Chaucer found in Ovid's amatory texts—particularly the *Ars amatoria*, the *Remedia amoris*, and the *Heroides*—a set of subject-positions for the elaboration of desire. As such, Ovidian eroticism was critical to the formation of poetic subjectivities, particularly feminine subjectivities, in medieval vernaculars. Ovid's amatory texts

are so pervasively absorbed into medieval literatures that they are, paradoxically, easy to overlook. For instance, the personified figure of Amor, the God of Love, makes an appearance in texts such as Chrétien's *Cligés*, the *Roman de la Rose*, Dante's *Vita Nuova* (Ginsberg 2011), Christine's "Epistre au dieu d'amours," Gower's *Confessio amantis*, and Chaucer's *Prologue to the Legend of Good Women*. Each of these texts evokes Amor from Book 1 of the *Ars amatoria*; such literary citation dramatically looks back at Ovid's text.

Not surprisingly, medieval vernacular poets frequently pay homage to Ovid the love poet as *auctor*. The most telling example of such poetic homage occurs in the third book of Chaucer's *House of Fame*, which explicitly dramatizes Chaucer's view of Ovid's amatory texts as the privileged portion of the Ovidian corpus. After Chaucer-the-narrator has left the temple of Venus in Book 2 of the allegory, he enters the house of Fame where he sees perched on pillars a series of statues that represent the classical *auctores*, among them Statius, Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, Homer, along with Josephus, Dares, Dictys, Guido delle Colonne, and Geoffrey of Monmouth (1434–61). The narrator describes each statue by the textual attributes assigned to each *auctor*, so that Virgil is responsible for supporting the name of pious Aeneas, Statius promotes the fame of Thebes, Josephus tells the history of the Jews, and so forth. Chaucer's description of Ovid excludes any reference to his role as a mythographer, even though the concept of the "house of fame" itself is borrowed from the *Metamorphoses*. Instead, in Chaucer's eyes, Ovid is classified simply and succinctly as a love poet when the narrator depicts the clerk of Venus who is responsible for promoting Amor standing on a copper pillar: "on a piler was, / Of coper, Venus clerk Ovide, / That hath ysowen wonder wide / The grete god of Loves name" (1486–89).

Further reading

Clark, Coulson, and McKinley (2011) is a wide-ranging collection of essays that provide a survey of Ovid in medieval cultures, including Byzantine, French, Spanish, Italian, and English literatures. Desmond (1987) is a collaborative collection of essays on Ovid in medieval Latin, French, Occitan, English, and Italian literature. Hexter (1986) offers an edition of several commentaries on Ovid's elegiac works. Bond (1995) examines the significance of Ovid to the poets of the "Loire school," and includes texts and translations. Allen (1992) is a study of the reception of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and *Remedia amoris* in Andreas Capellanus' *De Amore* and Jean de Meun's segment of the *Romance of the Rose*. Desmond (2006) traces the discourse of erotic violence from its origin in the *Ars amatoria* through a series of medieval texts in Latin, French, and English. Stapleton (1996) studies how the *Amores* transmit a concept of persona to medieval Latin, Occitan, and Italian poets. Brownlee (1990) offers an analysis of the reception of the *Heroides* in fifteenth-century Spain. Fyler (1979) examines Chaucer's use of the *Ars amatoria*, *Remedia amoris*, and *Amores*, focusing especially on Chaucer's dream allegories.

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The Metamorphosis of Ovid in Dante's *Divine Comedy*

Diskin Clay

The *bella scola* of Dante's Limbo

We first meet an ancient poet in Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the first canto of the *Inferno*, as Dante finds himself in a dark wood on a mountain whose summit is just illuminated by the light of dawn. He is driven down from the mountain by three beasts: a leopard, a lion, and a wolf. Then Dante encounters a human. He describes this apparition as a "man who seemed hoarse from a long silence" (*Inf.* 1.63), meaning, I think, that Virgil had been long silent in the Middle Ages until Dante restored his voice. This figure identifies himself as a poet and the author of the *Aeneid*. Dante responds by adapting Dido's words when she recognized Aeneas in Carthage: "Are you then *Virgil*?" (*Inf.* 1.79 "Or se' tu quel Virgilio . . ."; *Aen.* 1.617 *tune ille Aeneas . . .*). There are more ancient poets Virgil and Dante will encounter, until Virgil vanishes with the advent of Beatrice on the summit of the Mount of Purgatory. Virgil and Dante reach the first group of poets in the faint light of Limbo beyond the Acheron and the gate of Hell. Dante's Limbo must be the most agreeable place in the entire *Commedia*. Only pagans dwell there. As Virgil and Dante enter Limbo a voice commands: "honor the highest poet whose shade that departed has returned" (*Inf.* 4.80–81). The voice is that of Homer, commanding his fellow poets in Limbo to honor Virgil as "the highest poet." Virgil then introduces Dante to Homer, who is gripping a sword in his hand—identifying him as the poet of the *Iliad*. Homer and the other poets make up the *bella scola*—the "fair school," words which presumably mean that they instruct other poets as Virgil instructed Dante (*Inf.* 1.82–87). The poets of this "school" are, after Homer and Virgil, Horace of the *Satires*, Ovid, and Lucan last. Homer seems to have instructed them all, for he is described as "the master of the most lofty song" (*Inf.* 4.95). After a brief conversation with Virgil, this distinguished group invites Dante to join them

as "sixth in a group of such great wisdom" (*Inf*. 4.100–2). The words *Onorate l'altissimo poeta* are inscribed on Dante's cenotaph in the church of Santa Croce in Florence. Here they are hollow. He was never to return to Florence. Dante, however, could not have known Homer directly, even in Latin translation—he once quotes him from the Latin translation of Aristotle (who quotes *Il*. 24.258–59 in *NE* 7.1; *VN* 2.8)—and he seems to have known Horace only from his *Ars Poetica* (which he quotes at *VE* 2.4.4 and in his Letter to Can Grande, 10.30 Toynbee).

This count is significant. The sequence of six great poets is meant to be historical, and in the fullness of time it will reach its fulfillment in Dante's Christian *Divine Comedy*. It is significant for Dante's concept of history and his concept of "Latin" (by which he means both Latin and Italian) poetry that his "fair school" makes him "sixth among poets of such great wisdom" ("sesto tra cotanto senno," *Inf*. 4.102). The count and sequence becomes more complex as Dante and Virgil encounter Statius on the terrace of the Mount of Purgatory where Avarice and Prodigality are punished. Virgil is amazed that Statius is a Christian, as he must have been to reach the Mount of Purgatory. By the divine dispensation that allows the poets in Limbo knowledge of poetry written after their death, Virgil, whose Messianic eclogue turned Statius to Christianity (*Ecl*. 4.1–13; *Purg*. 22.64–93), knows Statius' epic of the Seven against Thebes (the *Thebaid*), but he can detect no sign of Christianity in it (*Purg*. 22.55–63). The reason that Dante does not count as seventh in the *bella scola* of the poets of the *Commedia* is explained by Virgil in his words to Statius, who has just been released from the fifth terrace: "I have led him as far as my school can take him" (*Purg*. 21.33). That is, all the Latin poets named in Limbo, save Lucan, were born before the birth of Christ; they are Virgil's *scola*. Statius lived during the reign of Domitian (AD 81–96), whose persecutions of the Christians Dante's Statius emphasizes. They coincide with the time "when the world was pregnant with the true faith sown by the messengers of the eternal realm" (*Purg*. 22.76–78).

The Metamorphosis of Ovid in the *Commedia*

Ovid (43 BC–AD 17), who comes third and in the middle of Dante's count, is, indeed, an intermediary. He lived on into the Christian era. When, in canto 25 of the *Inferno* (94–99), we encounter the incredible transformation of thieves into serpents and serpents into thieves, Dante commands Lucan and Ovid to remain silent: "Taccia Lucano … Taccia di Cadmo e d'Aretusa Ovidio / ché se quello in serpente e quella in fonte / converte poetando io non lo 'nvidi" ("Let Lucan fall silent … Let Ovid fall silent, / if in his poetry he transforms Cadmus into a serpent and Arethusa into a spring, I do not envy him"). Indeed, Ovid is essential to an understanding of the pagan poetry of Dante's *Commedia*. Ovid's Arethusa will become essential to an appreciation of the densest allusion of the *Commedia* as the "dead poetry" of the *Inferno* begins to "rise somewhat" when Dante invokes the tale of Proserpina sung by Calliope (*Purg*. 1.1–12; Ovid, *Met*. 5.341–678). Lucan and Statius we will leave

aside to pursue the metamorphosis of Ovid in the *Commedia* and take the poet high into heaven "above the stars," as he would have wished (*Met*. 15.871–79).

Ovid comes third after Homer and Virgil. He is only a figure in Limbo and a text visible in the poem. He is not an actor in the poem, as are Dante and Virgil, and he cannot be expected to play an important role in the action of the *Commedia*. But the text of the Ovidio Maggiore, that is, Ovid of the *Metamorphoses* (the term of *Con*. 3.3.7, Brunetto Latini, and the author of the *Ottimo Commento*), does play that role. Tabulations of Dante's allusions to the poetry of Ovid—that is, the poetry of the *Metamorphoses* (and perhaps also the *Heroides*)—have long been compiled (Moore 1896: 206–28; Toynbee 1968: 483). Although many of these allusions have been seen as *ornamenta* or borrowings, they are not, for they connect the pagan past with the Christian present of Dante's *Divine Comedy* (Hollander 1993: 230–31). No poet before Dante had made this bridge. The Milvian bridge effected the transition from paganism to Christianity with the defeat there of Maxentius by Constantine in AD 312; the bridge Dante constructed was strengthened by his architect's eye to the intimations of Christian truth to be discovered in Ovid. In some ways, Dante read Ovid as the church fathers recommended reading the Old Testament, as casting shadowy intimations (*figurae*) of the New Testament. Dante would call them "umbriferi prefazi" (*Par*. 30.78). For instance, Ovid's version of the creation of the world with its creator (*opifex rerum*, *Met*. 1.79; Gen. 1:1), the Golden Age (*Met*. 1.89–112, 15.260), and the Eden on the banks of the Pergus (*Met*. 5.384–95) were open to a Christian reading. For the later Christian poet the pomegranate eaten by Proserpina (*Met*. 5. 536 *puniceum … pomum*) must have seemed to be the pagan *figura* of the fruit eaten by Eve and Adam in Eden (Gen. 3:6); the flood of Deucalion and Pyrrha (*Met*. 1.260–347) is the pagan equivalent of the flood survived by Noah and his family (Gen. 6:9–22). The apotheoses of Glaucus (*Met*. 13.898–968) and Aeneas (14.583–608) might have seemed a pagan dream of how the Christian becomes immortal with life everlasting. It was a dream only Dante of the canonical six poets was privileged to experience. One could add that Ovid's conception of the three realms of this universe—that of Jupiter in the heavens, that of Ceres on earth, and that of Pluto (or Dis) in the Underworld (*Met*. 5.368, 372, 15.859; cf. *Inf*. 8.85, *Purg*. 1.4, *Par*. 1.23)—reinforced Dante's view that Ovid had an intimation of the Christian world (as did Statius in *Theb*. 4.516). Ceres' earth would perish on the Last Day, but not the realms of Heaven and Hell.

Ovid describes the underworld in three passages in the *Metamorphoses*: the City of Dis, which Juno enters to summon a fury to drive Athamas insane (4.432–80); in his long treatment of the rape of Proserpina (5.294–678, a passage recalled in *Purg*. 1.1–12); and in his treatment of Orpheus' descent into Hades to recover Eurydice (10.1–63). Ovid spends a good deal of time in Hell, but Ovid's Hell, which his Pythagoras mocks as the stock matter of poets (15.153–55), did not impress Dante as much as the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

In 1945 Hermann Fränkel wrote a book with the suggestive title *Ovid: A Poet between Two Worlds*. The meaning of the title is only suggested on the last page of the book (163): Ovid's life spanned the pagan and the Christian eras. Ovid, however, would not have agreed that he was situated between these two worlds (see Fielding in this volume). During his relegation to the Black Sea and Tomis (modern Constanta, AD 8–17), and in his imagination, Ovid dwelt nostalgically in pagan Rome, a Rome he had lost forever because of what he called a *carmen* and an *error*. Ovid was like Actaeon viewing Diana and her nymphs bathing nude. This was Actaeon's *crimen* (*Met*. 3.3.141–42), but the *carmen* (the *Ars Amatoria*) was Ovid's other *crimen* (*Tr*. 2.207). Dante could not have known this Ovidian Rome or Ovid's poems of exile or the poem that helped prompt his exile decreed by Augustus, the *Ars Amatoria* (but see Chapter 10 in this volume).

To return to the passage in the *Inferno* describing the metamorphosis of a thief into a serpent and serpent into a thief—and to focus now on its language—Dante boasts: "Taccia di Cadmo e d'Aretusa Ovidio, / ché se quello in serpente e quella in fonte / converte poetando, io non lo 'nvidio" ("Let Ovid fall silent about Cadmus and Arethusa / if in his poetry he transforms Cadmus into a serpent and Arethusa into a spring, I do not envy him," *Inf*. 25.97–99; *Met*. 4. 571–89, 487–508). *Converte* is a significant word, for it is the root of the word conversion, and points to the central theme of Ovid's epic. *Poetando* ("in his poetry") is also significant since Dante will use it at the end of the *Purgatorio* to describe the pagan dream of Paradise, a dream Dante found reflected in Ovid's description of the Golden Age (*Met*. 1.89–112; *Purg*. 28.139–44) and detected in the beginning of the song of Calliope (*Met*. 5.385–95).

In the *Metamorphoses* there are other transformations of women into water—Ino either into a Nereid of the sea or a fountain (4.543–603); Byblis (9.656–65) and Egeria, the wife of Numa, into springs (15.547–51); and, perhaps, even the ships of Aeneas (14.527–65). The passage that Dante has in mind when he says *taccia Ovidio* is the long episode of the rape of Proserpina in *Metamorphosis 5* in which Arethusa of Elis plays a significant role (5.487–508). Her joy in returning to the light of the stars after swimming underwater and surfacing in Sicily as a fountain (Arethusa, 5.501–3) is like that of both Proserpina returned to earth from the Underworld and Dante returned to the light of day on the shores of the Mount of Purgatory (*Inf*. 34.136–39; Clay 1999).

Dante did not read Ovid as did Petrarch's friend, Pierre Bersuire (Petrus Bechorius, 1290–1362), whose *Ovidius Moralizatus* (in its many versions) could not be more antithetical to Dante's reading of Ovid. Dante saw in Ovid anticipations of his own Christian truth, but he did not waste his energies in the cumbersome allegoresis of the pagan gods in terms of Christian doctrine that we find in Bersuire. An example of this tedious Christian interpretation of the pagan comes in his account of Pluto and the Underworld in the *De Formis Figurisque Deorum*—Book XV of his *Ovidius Moralizatus* (Robson 1965; Engels 1966: 44–53). Paradoxically perhaps,

since it is Ovid and not Virgil who inspires the higher rhetoric of the *Purgatorio*, I will now, in the second part of this study of the metamorphosis of Ovid in the *Commedia*, begin with the exordium to the now elevated style of the *Purgatorio* (1.1–12), continue into the first canto of the *Paradiso* with Dante's evocations of the fates of Ovid's Marsyas and Glaucus (*Par.* 1.19–21, 64–72) and, last, his description of Jupiter and Semele in *Paradiso* 21.1–12 (*Met.* 3.287–315; dispersed in *Par.* 21–23 and analyzed by Brownlee 1991: 224–32). But first, I want to dispose of the very notion of Dante's "borrowings."

Attempts have been made to discover and catalogue Dante's "borrowings" from Ovid and even to claim that Dante wrote of the madness of Athamas "with Ovid before his eyes" (*Met.* 4.511–24; *Purg.* 23.22–27; Moore 1896: 212). Dante was no copyist or borrower from his pagan poets. By far his allusions to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are concentrated in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*—the realms of damnation and purgation—but Ovid is an important presence in the *Paradiso*, as will become apparent. After his exile from Florence (formally declared in March 1302), Dante might have had access to the libraries of the Conti Guidi in the Casentino, Can Grande della Scala in Verona, and Guido Novello in Ravenna, but there were periods of enforced travel when his eyes were closed to texts of Virgil and Ovid. He also was endowed with a good memory, as Virgil reminds us in the circle of the diviners. Virgil does not need to remind Dante of the passage in the *Aeneid* where he speaks of Manto (*Aen.* 10.198–200; *Inf.* 20.52–99) or the Greek prophet Eurypylus (*Aen.* 2.118–19). Most readers of the *Aeneid* will have forgotten these lines by the time they come to the death of Turnus, but Dante did not. Like Calchas, Eurypylus was a prophet who understood why the Greek fleet was becalmed at Aulis, across the Aegean and its destination in Troy. He occupies two lines of the *Inferno*. As he mentions Eurypylus "in a certain passage," he adds: "as you are well aware who know my poem entire" ("ben lo sai tu che la sai tutta quanta," *Inf.* 20.112–14).

There is a modern mode of reading that is more focused on Dante's pagan authors than the Christian truth hidden under the *integumenta* (coverings or cloaks) of Ovid's myths. This mode of reading is more congenial to our literary sensibilities; it is best known by the Italian term *l'arte allusiva*, used by Giorgio Pasquali as the title of an essay he wrote in 1942 in which he distinguishes between reminiscences and allusions. An author can be unconscious of reminiscences, but when he makes an allusion both he and his reader must be aware of the text alluded to for the art of allusion to have its effect (Pasquali 1968: 275–82; Picone 1994: 173–205). "Intertextuality" is now the term in vogue for this art. But it is not enough to recognize the text Dante is alluding to. Dante's reader must also discover what Dante read into it. In the case of Ovid and Virgil of the "Messianic" eclogue (4.1–13; cf. *Purg.* 22.64–73), it is not an allusion to another text that the reader should be alert to, but the truth which Dante's penetrating eye discovered in pagan poetry. Ovid is like the Virgil who directed Statius to Christianity; he carries a lantern behind him and illuminates the path of another who follows (*Purg.* 22.67–69).

The Song Of Calliope

The exordium of the *Purgatorio* deserves quotation and repays careful study (1–12):

> Per corer miglior acque alza le vele
>   omai la navicella del mio ingegno,
>   che lascia dietro a sé mar sì crudele:
> e canterò di quell secondo regno
> dove l'umano spirito si purga
> e di salire al ciel diventa degno.
> Ma qui la morta poesì resurga,
> o sante Muse, poi che vostro sono:
> e qui Calïopè alquanto surga,
> sequitando il mio canto con quell suono
> di cui le Piche misere sentiro
> lo colpo tal, che disperar perdono.

> To course over better waters the small ship
>   of my genius hoists sail,
>   as it leaves behind it a sea so cruel;
> I will sing of that second realm
>   where the human spirit is purified
>   and becomes worthy to ascend to heaven.
> But now let the dead poetry be resurrected,
>   Oh! sacred Muses because I belong to you.
>   And now let Calliope rise higher
> Following my song with the song
>   that struck the wretched magpies with the sound
>   that made them despair of pardon.

Bersuire would not have been capable of discerning the meaning of this passage. The first thing to notice is that the *Commedia* has now become song (4, 10). Dante's song is inspired by Ovid's Calliope, the oldest of the Muses of Helicon, and with this song the matter and the rhetoric of Dante's poem become elevated (cf. the invocation of Virgil to Calliope and the other Muses in *Aen.* 9.525–28). This allusion to a pagan poet is the densest allusion in the entire *Commedia*. It points to the longest passage in the *Metamorphoses*: the account given to Athena of the contest between the Muses of Pieria and those of Helicon and the victorious song of Calliope (*Met.* 5.294–678). The words *resurga* and *surga* are clear allusions to the Ovidian word *surgit* that describes Calliope rising to counter the impious song of one of the Pierides (*Met.* 5.338; cf. Virg. *Ecl.* 4.1 *paulo maiora canamus*). The song of the Pierides is the impious deformation of Calliope's description of the revolt of Typhoeus against Jupiter in this same episode. In the song of the Pierides the Giants (plural) drive

the gods from Olympus to Egypt where they assume animal shapes; in Calliope's poem the giant Typhoeus is imprisoned in Sicily under Mt. Aetna (*Met.* 5.318–31, 346–61).

In Calliope's song of the rape of Proserpina by Pluto there is a telling allusion to the small lake near Henna in central Sicily. Near it is a deep river called the Pergus, now Il Lago di Pergusa (*Met.* 5.385–408). It was here that Pluto spied the young daughter of Ceres gathering flowers with other girls. Of this place Ovid writes *perpetuum ver est*, "here spring is eternal" (*Met.* 5.391). The poet is deliberately recalling his description of the Golden Age (1.89–112; cf. 15.96). Dante saw in these lines a pagan intimation of the terrestrial paradise described in Genesis 2:8–9. This becomes clear as Dante, Virgil, and Statius arrive at the terrestrial paradise at the summit of the Mount of Purgatory in Dante's description of Matelda (*Purg.* 28.139–44):

> Quelli ch'anticamente poetaro
>   l'età de l'oro e suo stato felice,
>   forse in esto loco sognaro.
> Qui fu innocente l'umana radice;
>   qui primavera sempre e ogne frutto;
>   netare è questo di che ciascun dice.

> Those poets who in ancient times
>   wrote of the golden age and its happy state
>   dreamed perhaps in this place.
> Here the root of the human race was innocent;
>   here spring was eternal and every fruit ripe;
>   here was the nectar of which each poet speaks.

Calliope's song that defeated the Pierides is the only pagan song that could serve as the proper inspiration for Dante's dramatic narrative of paradise lost and paradise regained. Calliope can accompany Dante's song of the "second realm" because Dante's is following Calliope's song in Ovid. In Ovid Calliope recalls Proserpina's long captivity in the City of Dis (called *Dite* in *Inf.* 8.68). In a way, her song recalls Arethusa's narrative of her transformation into a pool and her underwater passage from Elis in Greece to Syracuse in Sicily to emerge once again into the light of day (*Met.* 5.501–3):

>   … mihi pervia tellus
> praebet iter, subterque imas ablata cavernas
> hic caput attollo desuetaque sidera cerno.

>   … the earth that I could pass beneath
> offered me a way, and carried above from the deepest caverns,
> here I lift my head and gaze upon the stars I had not seen for so long.

These lines from Ovid might well have inspired the lines that conclude the first canticle of the *Commedia* (*Inf.* 34.136–39):

> Sallimo sù, el primo e io secondo,
>   tanto ch'i' vidi de le cose belle
>   che porta 'l ciel, per un pertugio tondo.
> E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stele.

> We climbed up, he first and I second,
>   until I could see the lovely sights
>   that the heaven carries, through a round opening.
> And from there we ascended to see the stars once again.

Dante's description of the first dawn he had seen since he was driven down from the mountain into Hell undoubtedly echoes Calliope's description of the emergence of Proserpina from the world of Dis (5.568–71):

> Vertitur extemplo facies et mentis et oris;
> nam modo quae poterat Diti quoque maesta videri
> laeta deae frons est, ut sol, qui tectus aquosis
> nubibus ante fuit, victis e nubibus exit.

> Immediately the aspect of her mind and face were transformed;
> for the face that could seem grim to even Dis
> was transformed by joy, like the sun, once obscured
> by heavy clouds, breaks out from clouds that have been dispersed.

Dante's description of his emergence from Hell into the light of a new day on the island mountain of Purgatory is inspired by Ovid's description of Proserpina (*Purg.* 1.13–20):

> Dolce color d'orïental zaffiro,
>   che s'accoglieva nel sereno aspetto
>   del mezzo, puro infino al primo giro,

> a li occhi miei recominciò diletto,
>   tosto ch'io usci' fuor de l'aura morta
>   che m'avea contristati li occhi e 'l petto.

> Sweet was the color of the sapphire to the East
>   that was gathering in the sky
>   pure up to the first circle;
> It made my eyes delight once again,
>   once I had emerged from the dead air
>   that had saddened my eyes and heart.

Transformations of Ovid in the *Paradiso*: Marsyas and Glaucus

Dante's *Commedia* has been divided into the realm of Virgil and the realm of Beatrice (Robson 1965: 5–6). On this reading, the sovereignty of Virgil extends from the beginning of the *Inferno* to the meeting with Beatrice in the Terrestrial Paradise when Virgil vanishes to return to Limbo. The sovereignty of Beatrice begins on the farther bank of the river in the Terrestrial Paradise and extends to the end of the *Paradiso*. This division of realms neglects the figure of Matelda who greets Dante, Virgil, and Statius and is presenting the poem until the epiphany of Beatrice (*Purg.* 28.34–31.111). This description might be true of the authority of two main actors in the *Commedia*, but it is a bad description of the three realms of the poem whose author is not God but Dante. These realms (*regni*) are marked in each of the three canticles (*Inf.* 8.85; *Purg.* 1.4; *Par.* 1.83). The inspiration of Virgil's *Aeneid* extends to the last canto of the *Paradiso* (33.85–87; *Aen.* 3.441–52). Moreover, the division of the *Commedia* into two realms does not recognize the realm of Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* is just visible in the shadow of the Argo at the end of the *Paradiso* (33.94–96; *Met.* 6.721). Dante might have forgotten his vision of God but he did not forget his Ovid.

The Ovidian inspiration that elevates the *Commedia* in style and the transcendence of Christian destiny is apparent not only in the song of Calliope but in the invocation to "good Apollo" in the first canto of the *Paradiso* (1.13–36). Particularly relevant to an appreciation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* at the beginning of the *Paradiso* are the appeals to the figures of Marsyas (1.19–21) and Glaucus (1.67–69). Dante's *figurae* are like the Christian reading of the Old Testament as an anticipation of the New—the *figurae* are sometimes called shadows (*umbrae*). St. Augustine could read Noah's ark as a "prefiguration of the church" (*praefiguratio ecclesiae*, *CD* 15.27; Auerbach 1984: 11–76). This was also Augustine's "gold of Egypt" that God's chosen people carried away from their Egyptian captivity (*De Doct. Chr.* 40.60; Exod. 3:23, 11:2, 12:35). It might be blasphemous to say that Dante's pagan poets offer a prefiguration of this Christian poem, but such a description is not far from the truth. Perhaps the best word to describe the metamorphosis of the Christian is the word Dante chose: *trasumanar* (*Par.* 1.70)—"to go beyond the human."

The invocation to "good Apollo" in *Paradiso* 1 evokes two Ovidian *figurae* of Christian transformation: Marsyas and Glaucus. After invoking "good Apollo" (*o buono Appollo*, *Par.* 1.13–18) and asking him to allow him to ascend to the highest peak of Parnassus to claim Apollo's beloved laurel (1.13–18), he asks the god to enter his breast (1.19–21):

> Entra nel petto mio, e spira tue
> sì come quando Marsïa traesti
> de la vagina de le membra sue.

> Enter my heart and inspire me
> as you did when you drew Marsyas
> from the scabbard of his limbs.

Ovid's vivid description of the flaying of Marsyas by Apollo and the transformation of Glaucus, the fisherman from Anthedon on the island of Euboea, into a god of the sea are for Dante pagan *figurae* for Christian transformation (*Met.* 6.382–400, 12.898–968). "Good Apollo" is puzzling. Is Dante addressing the pagan god known from Ovid (*Met.* 1.452–64, 6.382–400) or is he addressing God (*o divina virtu* and *padre*, *Par.* 1.22, 28)? In his letter to Can Grande, Dante seems to indicate that "good Apollo" and "divine virtue" are one and the same (*Ep.* 10.31 Toynbee). But, as readers, our puzzlement is justified by what seems to be the deliberate fusion of the pagan and Christian in the first canto of the *Paradiso*. Ovid's word for the skin of Marsyas is *cutis*—a Christian word for the flesh; Dante's word for Marsyas' skin is *vagina* (scabbard or womb). It is not inspired by Ovid's description of the living and pulsating body of the satyr—a description that was the inspiration of Roman sculptors and the painters of the Italian Renaissance. *Vagina* suggests birth and Dante's *membra* is an unmistakable evocation of Paul in Romans 7:23: "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Unlike many of the transformations in the *Metamorphoses*, Marsyas survives only as the name of a river fed by the tears of his fellow satyrs and rustic nymphs.

There is another pagan transformation (and Christian transfiguration) that makes the Ovidian inspiration for the first canto of the *Paradiso* as significant as the Ovidian song of Calliope was for the higher poetry of the opening canto of the *Purgatorio*. Dante, looking at Beatrice who was gazing upwards at the stars, is transformed and translated into another world (*Par.* 1.64–69); the experience is described through analogy with another Ovidian figure, Glaucus:

> Nel suo aspetto tal dentro mi fei,
>   qual si fé Glauco nel gustar de l'erba
>   che 'l fé consorto in mar de li altri dèi.
> Trasumanar significar *per verba*
>   non si poria; però l'essemplo basti
>   a cui esperïenza grazia serba.

> Looking at her look I became within
>   what Glaucus became when he tasted the grass
>   that made him one of the gods of the sea.
> Going beyond the human cannot be captured *per verba*.
>   Nonetheless let his example serve
>   for whom grace reserves this experience.

What Glaucus experienced is described by Glaucus himself (in *Met.* 13.848–968). One day, Glaucus observed that the catch of fish he had laid out on a virgin meadow beside the sea leapt into the sea and to life. He was amazed by the potency of the grass, tasted it, and plunged into the sea to become a god of the sea. One detail must have caught Dante's eye. Glaucus describes his inner transformation and the purgation of his mortal nature and its evil by Ocean and Tethys: *Met.* 13.951–52 *ego lustror ab illis / expurgante nefas noviens mihi carmine dicto*, "I am purified by them / by a charm repeated nine times that cleansed the evil in me." Like Glaucus, Dante has been purified—not by an incantation repeated nine times over him but by the removal of the seven Ps (*peccata*) inscribed on his forehead by the angel guarding the gate of Purgatory (*Purg.* 9.112–14). The words of the angel, "Make sure that you wash away these wounds when you are inside the Mount" ("Fa che lavi / quando se' dentro"), were consonant with Ovid's description of the purification of Glaucus invoked at the opening of the *Paradiso*.

Ovid's Jupiter and Semele; Beatrice and Dante

Ovid—that is, the Ovidio Maggiore of the *Metamorphoses*—returns to the *Paradiso* in Dante's brief evocation of the fate of Semele (*Met.* 3.253–315). This is yet another of Ovid's Theban tales; it follows the tale of Diana and Actaeon. Because of the anger of Juno over the affair of Jupiter and Europa the Thebans do not fare well in Ovid. In the case of Semele, Juno is offended by yet another of Jupiter's affairs with a mortal. Now Juno is outraged both by Jupiter's seduction of Semele and Semele's pregnancy, but decides not to scold her brother and husband once again. She descends from heaven in a tawny cloud and, when the cloud parts, she disguises herself as Semele's old nurse, Beroe. When their conversation turns to Jupiter, Beroe asks Semele if her lover was really Jupiter or an imposter. Prompted by Beroe, Semele asks Jupiter to grant her a favor. Jupiter agrees but without knowing what she wants. When he learns that Semele wants to see him in the same form that he shows to Juno as her lover, he is compelled to agree and comes to Semele in the terrifying form of the Thunderer with the bolts of lightning that turn her into ashes.

    This episode is recalled as Dante and Beatrice reach the sphere of Saturn. Dante is fixed on an unsmiling Beatrice and Beatrice warns (*Par.* 21.4–6):

> "S'io ridessi,"
> mi cominciò, "tu ti faresti quale
> fu Semelè quando di cener fessi."

> "If I were to smile,"
> she began, "you would become
> what Semele became when she was reduced to ashes."

At this point in the *Paradiso* Ovid no longer offers Dante a pagan *figura* of his Christian salvation. This allusion must be understood in the full context of *Paradiso* 21–23, for Dante's Semele and Jupiter do not illustrate the going beyond the human, but rather the limitations of the human in its embodied state. Dante the living actor in the poem is incapable of fully perceiving the divine realm of heaven with its seven planetary spheres, crystalline sphere, and the point of light in the Empyrean from which the universe radiates; but as the author of the *Commedia* he has created his limitations as an actor. This is already clear from Dante's question about the spots or face on the moon. Beatrice smiles faintly at his simplicity and gives a long answer to his question on the first sphere of the moon (*Par.* 2.49–148).

As he reaches Saturn, the last of the planetary spheres, he arrives at a ladder leading up to it. Dante has now reached a point of transition. He finds himself at an extreme point between earth and high heaven. He has reached Jacob's ladder and the spheres of reflected light moving down its rungs. His vision is what Jacob saw in a dream, except that Jacob saw angels moving up and down the ladder (Gen. 28:10–12). From this height looking down, the earth appears as a "little threshing-floor" (*aiuola*, *Par.* 22.151). The first sphere of glowing reflected light that approaches Dante is St. Peter Damian. Dante asks if he can see the true form of the Benedictine monk from the monastery of Fonte Avellana on Mount Catria. Peter Damian answers that this blessing will be granted when Dante has reached the highest sphere (21.59–60). Thunder and lightning now return to the poem. Peter describes Mount Catria as being so lofty that thunder sounds below it (21.106–11). The deep cry of the spirits descending the ladder sounds like thunder to Dante (21.142). And Dante is thunderstruck as he beholds the Sun above the sun and he is overwhelmed, as if he had been struck by lightning (23.40–42). But he finally recovers and is now able to sustain Beatrice's smile (*Par.* 23.46–48). At this point of the *Paradiso* Dante's allusion to Ovid's Semele, and to Jupiter, the highest pagan god, no longer offers an anticipation of Dante's experience in the sphere of Saturn.

Pagan myth, however, continues to be invoked in the *Paradiso*: the seven planets are described in terms of pagan myth (*Par.* 22.139–52). As Dante looks down, the landmarks on Earth below are identified by their associations with Europa and Ulysses (*Par.* 27.79–87), but from the sphere of Saturn they seem very remote. Now again the Earth is described as "a little threshing floor" (*aiuola*, *Par.* 27.86). The references to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* go no higher in the *Paradiso* until we finally reach Dante's vision of God and the shadow of the Argo (*Par.* 33.94–96; *Met.* 6.721). The amazing first ship is to be found in Ovid, but not Dante's shadow. We are prepared for Neptune's amazement at the shadow by Dante's invocation of "good Apollo" and prayer to reveal to him the shadow of the blessed realm (*Par.* 1.23 *l'ombra del beato regno*).

Further Reading

Moore (1896) gives an inert list of the passages in Ovid that might have influenced Dante. Barkan (1986) treats the larger theme of metamorphosis in Christian times. Piccone (1994:

173–205) has an excellent treatment of Ovid in Dante. Brownlee (1991) gives a revealing analysis of Dante and Ovid's Semele. Auerbach (1984) provides the essential background for *figura* as it was employed by Christian readers to detect anticipations of the New Testament in the Old.

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13

Ovid in Chaucer and Gower

Andrew Galloway

To dip into the "Ovid" of Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343–1400) and John Gower (c. 1340–1408) is to be confronted by the power not only of Ovid's own poetry throughout theirs, but also the medieval academic interpretive frameworks and, equally, abundant previous literary uses—particularly in French—that shaped and made possible late medieval poets' encounters with Ovid.[1] Yet in their extensive and direct uses of Ovid in English poetry Chaucer and Gower were pioneering, anticipating the Ovidian fixation of Renaissance English literature. Perhaps still more, in fact, than English Renaissance writers—who, it has been argued, narrowed Ovid's political, philosophical, and psychological perspectives to mainly erotic concerns (Simpson 2002: 131)—these two late-fourteenth-century London and Westminster poets, who moved in the same urban and courtly worlds, exchanged source materials, and used one another for legal and probably other more mundane transactions, were innovative in absorbing features from Ovid's poetry to shape their entire poetic development, albeit in shifting ways. Lacking major English antecedent poets but committed to their culture's focus on using past masters as models in all endeavors, both Chaucer and Gower responded to Ovid with an intensity that was neither necessary nor possible for later English writers, whose struggles of literary definition looked back instead to Milton, Shakespeare, or Chaucer himself, if not Gower as well.

One may begin with the books Chaucer and Gower might have used. There are, for instance, large late medieval collections of Ovid's and sometimes other Latin works, featuring the *Metamorphoses* (often called the "maior Ovidius") glossed for grammatical sense, scientific implication, intertextual comparisons to Boethius or the "cosmographical" portion of Plato's *Timaeus* known to medieval Latin culture, and, most notably, ethical, etymological, and what might be called "scientific" allegorical meanings, especially those discoverable from the identities

of the pagan gods and goddesses. The latter are succinctly conveyed by the compressed summary cum exegesis of the *Metamorphoses* in John of Garland's early thirteenth-century *Integumenta Ovidii*, whose couplets on each of the stories were often inserted epigrammatically at the relevant points in the *Metamorphoses* (manuscripts listed in Coulson and Roy 2000: 83–84). One such manuscript is the neatly written thirteenth-century copy from England, Oxford, Bodleian Digby MS 104, which also includes Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *Poetria nova*, from which Chaucer quotes heavily in *The Nun's Priest's Tale*. Such a "school text" would supply most of Chaucer's Latin needs, and many of Gower's, although Gower's recycling of Latin poetry extends much wider (see Beichner 1955 on Peter of Riga's verse Bible, the *Aurora*). In Gower's English *Confessio amantis*, whose sprawling collection of moralized tales—many from Ovid—describe the "sins of love," each tale is framed with Latin verses and prose marginal Latin summaries, much in the style of *Metamorphoses* manuscripts.[2] A direct comparison seems intended. Since Gower also recycles line after line of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* directly in his entirely Latin *Vox clamantis*, he likely owned a collected *opera Ovidii*. Both English writers clearly knew the *Ars amatoria* and *Remedia*, contact with both of which can be assumed to be fundamental to their grammar schooling. That is corroborated by the injunction around 1375 in which the Chancellor of Oxford University forbade grammar masters from reading and expounding the *Ars amatoria*, as well as the twelfth-century closet drama *Pamphilus* (which features a seduction or perhaps rape) and "any other book that draws their students to illicit things or provokes them to vices" (Gibson 1931: 173). Chaucer mentions the *Pamphilus* (*Franklin's Tale* 1110), so we might suppose that he was especially drawn to forbidden works. Yet the Oxford Chancellor's injunction mainly serves to show that teaching such texts at elementary levels was extremely common. Since neither Chaucer nor Gower were professed religious but instead that new monster, professional literate laymen, this may have been the only *institutional* context for their contact with Ovid's poetry. Gower's probable profession as a lawyer, however, involving forensic training in the Inns of Court or elsewhere, might have been responsible for the rote Latin facility his work displays.

Both writers used the *Fasti* and *Heroides*, though in different measures and scale. Whereas Gower quotes many lines from the *Fasti* in the *Vox clamantis* (see Carlson 2011: 407), and includes both the story of King Tarquin and his son's rape of Lucretia as part of his "mirror for princes" in Book 7 of the English *Confessio amantis*, Chaucer used the *Fasti* only for the rape of Lucretia in his *Legend of Good Women*, carving that incident free from its historical context as the end of monarchy in Rome. Chaucer, however, followed the general form of the *Heroides* in designing his *Legend*, whereas Gower only occasionally mines or mentions stories from the *Heroides*. Chaucer supplements his use of the *Metamorphoses* particularly with French translations and intermediaries, particularly the late thirteenth-century *Roman de la Rose*. This work, with its Ovidian promise of teaching the "whole art of love," describes the Lover's first fascination with the Rose in the garden of the God of

Love in the form of a Narcissus-like gaze into a fountain, following that with numbers of Ovidian stories (such as Pygmalion) and Ovidian "lessons" (again from the *Ars* by way of various types or allegorical personages) as the Lover moves through a wandering narrative toward final sexual consummation with the Rose. Both writers use the French verse translation and allegoresis of the *Metamorphoses* known as the *Ovide moralisé* (*OM*, ed. de Boer), written in the early fourteenth century and widely "popular" in the restricted circles of literacy that were only just beginning to expand. Though in French verse, this work displays a "clerical" treatment of Ovid: drawing from the Latin "vulgate" commentary, the *OM* opens by declaring that what this author calls the poet's "fables," though they "seem entirely mendacious" ("qui toutes samblent mençoignables"), are in fact all "true" if one knows how to look for the truth that "lies hidden under the fables" ("souz les fables gist couverte," 1.42–47). Yet the writer of the *OM* translates Ovid's stories closely, with all their immediate passions and ironies, before appending at least one allegorical explication framed by Christian soteriology, sacred history, or ethics. This treatment allows the text to show its capability as a story before it is unfolded as an *involucrum* of Christian truth (in the common medieval Macrobian tradition), keeping a clear separation between "les fables de l'ancien temps" (1.17) and the Christian "enseignement" (1.2) these fables can express. Finally, a prose Latin allegory of the *Metamorphoses* by a French monk, Pierre Bersuire, finished only by 1362, the *Ovidius moralizatus* (ed. Engels), includes some moralizations from the *OM*. Gower, more scholarly and Latin-focused than Chaucer—and on that turf more up to date—consulted Bersuire's work while writing the Latin sidebar glosses to his Englishings of Ovid in the *Confessio amantis* (see Mainzer 1972). There is no sign that Chaucer knew Bersuire.

The plethora of adaptations and apparatus of Ovid available by then is understandable. No commentary or scholia tradition for Ovid's works came down from antiquity—nor any "life" of Ovid, as was the case for other ancient poets. Medieval culture created its own apparatus and biographies. Instances of the latter are the academic *accessus* or "introductions" to Ovid's works appearing in the thirteenth century; these offer one model for an authoritative and "ethical" poet's posture and life even while acknowledging Ovid's wayward youth. A typical thirteenth-century academic commentator presented Ovid's *Remedia* as the work of an author who had "written a manual of love in which he taught young men where to acquire mistresses," and provided young women the same instructions (that is, the *Ars*); then, when both young men and women "indulged their passions to excess" and Ovid became unpopular, the poet sought to reconcile himself with those he had offended, writing the *Remedia* as antidote "against unlawful love." In this book he prescribes "just like a doctor. For a good doctor gives medicine to the sick to heal them, and to the healthy so that they may escape illness" (Minnis, Scott, and Wallace 1988: 25). *Accessus* of the *Tristia* include information about Ovid's exile "because of the book he had written about love" which had corrupted many married women, or because he had an affair with Livia, Caesar's wife, or because he

had learned of Caesar's affair with a male; the epistolary poems of *Ex Ponto* are described as pertaining to ethics, "that is, to moral science, for in each letter he discusses behavior" (Minnis, Scott, and Wallace 1988: 25). Ovid was marked as at once a poetic, sexual, and political daredevil, yet one who survived his own and others' excesses to produce works of high moral and potentially higher allegorical value.

To understand Chaucer's and Gower's relations to Ovid, we should consider Ovid's life—and medieval "lives"—as well as his actual poetry. Chaucer, for example, follows the "repentant poet" in the common, but non-Ovidian medieval form of "apologizing" for having written *against* love or against women; Chaucer strikes that posture when framing his *Legend of Good Women* (c. 1387), which begins with the God of Love (somewhat as in the opening of the *Amores*) taking charge of the poet who had dared resist the claims of love. In Chaucer, the God of Love allows his wife, Alceste, to set the terms of the penance: writing about good women betrayed by bad men—following the general model of the *Heroides* and indeed using that work for a number of its surviving "legends" (the *Legend of Good Women* appears to have been dropped or at least survived incomplete—leaving critics to question whether this particular Ovidian experiment failed).

Chaucer's *Legend*, written at a pivotal moment in Chaucer's career when he was retreating from involvement in London and the royal court, is a work perhaps best understood as marking some growing distance—ideological, professional, and (in his departure from London to Kent in 1386) geographical—from the actual king and court whose major political crises began in 1388 and built toward his deposition in 1399. Chaucer's good fortune, political alertness, and perhaps wry Ovidian irony apparently kept him insulated from much of this. In contrast, Gower seems increasingly to have favored the Lancastrian side-branch of the royal family that managed to overthrow Richard, until in Gower's last decade he became a full-throated propagandist for King Henry IV. Ovid's own late political exile or at least political problems would have been as well known as his reputation for youthful encouragement of sexual licentiousness. In part, Gower neutralized both issues by fashioning himself from a relatively early point as an aged, reformed lover: old John Gower, political sage.

In different ways, Ovid's poetry informs both Chaucer's and Gower's careers and poetic self-fashioning. Throughout his career, Chaucer shapes his poetic identity and persona in a wry distortion of Ovid as *praeceptor* or *magister amoris* (*Ars* 1.17, 2.744). This focus is at least obliquely present as early as Chaucer's first datable—and consummately courtly—poem, *The Book of the Duchess* (c. 1372). The poem begins with the narrator selecting the story of Ceux and Alcion to put himself to sleep, and proceeds to develop into a dream-dialogue with a figure who is in part meant to represent John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster and Chaucer's early supporter or patron, in mourning for the death of his wife Blanche of Lancaster from the plague in 1369.

The story of Ceux and Alcion, from *Metamorphoses* 11.410–748, is available in truncated (and French) form in Guillaume de Machaut's *Fonteinne amoreuse*, a

dream-vision (c. 1361) presenting a healing interaction between a poet and his lamenting patron, which serves as a model for Chaucer's poet-narrator's more bumbling (but also somehow healing) debate with the mourning Black Knight. In a likely reference to Machaut's use of Ovid's story, Chaucer's narrator, seeking to read himself to sleep, selects Ovid's tale from "a romaunce," that is, a work in French (48), in which "were written fables / That clerkes had in olde tyme, / And other poetes, put in rime … While men loved the lawe of kinde" (52–56).

Yet this vague and assorted collection might identify his immediate sources not only as Machaut's poem but also the *Ovide moralisé*, which similarly identifies the tales from Ovid as "fables." Indeed, although there is abundant evidence that Chaucer preferred his Ovid in French whenever possible, he still proceeds as if in pursuit of a "real" Ovid, moving from text to text to fill out his details. Chaucer mentions more of Ovid's details about Ceux and Alcion than are found in Machaut. Even so, Chaucer did not continue his retelling to Ovid's ending, where Alcion's attempt at suicide after finding the body of her husband is slightly recuperated by the gods' transformation of her and Ceux into birds, who go on to mate during the (eponymous) halcyon days of winter. Much less did Chaucer include any of the still more recuperating allegories that follow in the *OM* (e.g. the sea Ceux crosses is the spiritually dangerous world; the sail he uses the five senses; the storm that arises to drown him the temptations from the devil). Instead, Chaucer breaks off with Alcion's lament when discovering her husband's body, leaving the story open at its rawest emotions, which he teasingly leaves unresolved as if concerned that we are losing interest (212–17).

The truth of passion, and the passion for truth, turns Chaucer's interest in Ovid even in this early poem into something more than typical courtly or scholastic invocation. In *Duchess*, the bumbling narrator delivers a kind of physician's "remedy of love" by his interest not only in Ovid's direct drama, as closely as he can encounter it, but also in the Knight's emotional pain. Untutored in the courtly metaphors that the Knight uses, Chaucer's narrator forces the Knight to speak as bluntly as do the two characters in the Ovidian tale that the narrator has initially taken up. The divinely reanimated corpse of Ceux arrives in Alcion's dream to declare, "I am but ded" (204); so too, the Knight, in mourning for Blanche of Lancaster, is forced by the narrator's inability to understand metaphors to declare, "She ys ded!" (1309). And then, somehow, because of this, for the Knight, "al was doon, / For that tyme, the hert-huntyng" (1312–13). Ovid is Chaucer's guide in acknowledging the real pain and loss that even emperors and kings' uncles feel. Chaucer's poem unfolds as a kind of accidental medicine for grief.

This "craft" both of pursuing and bidding farewell to the ties of love—the *Ars* and *Remedia* in continual dialectic—is yet more finely and fully emphasized in Chaucer's subsequent poems. *Troilus and Crisyede* (c. 1386), Chaucer's greatest finished poem, is the most obvious example. Its seemingly modest craftsman narrator, "the sorwful instrument, / That helpeth loveres, as I kan, to pleyne" (1.10–11), stands as a foil to the character who is Chaucer's greatest *praeceptor*

amoris: Pandarus, the manipulative uncle who shows his friend Troilus how to win and keep the girl he has chosen (cf. *Ars* 1.35–40). Only after Pandarus' "art" has succeeded do its dangers fully emerge. Deep values and feelings are evoked and put into jeopardy by adroitly calculated teasings, threats, and stage-managed chance meetings, through all of which Ovid as *praeceptor amoris* if not pagan culture itself seems on trial. Criseyde is converted to love in part by Pandarus' argument that one must seize the day, women must use their youthful beauty while they have it—"So longe mote ye lyve, and alle proude [women who refuse men], / Til crowes feet be growe under youre yë, / And sende yow than a myrour in to prye!" (2.402–4; compare *Ars* 3.73–74 *Quam cito (me miserum!) laxantur corpora rugis, / Et perit in nitido qui fuit ore color*); but by the same principle, there can be little reason for her not to fall in love with yet another man after she is traded, hostage to the Trojan war machine, and sent to the Greek camp. Pandarus' manipulations—on which Troilus utterly depends—are eclipsed by their despair and outrage at Criseyde's betrayal, until when Troilus dies in fury on the battlefield, the narrator similarly spurns both sexual love and pagan "poetrie": "Swich fyn hath, lo, this Troilus for love! … Lo, here, of payens corsed olde rites! … Lo here, the forme of olde clerkis speche / In poetrie, if ye hire bokes seche" (5.1828, 1849, 1854–55). This passionate pursuit of a "remedy" for love in Christian moralization, however, has long been controversial; this end seems more an emotional reprieve from the direct pain of love and loss, hypocrisy and passion, and unconsoling death and betrayal that the pre-Christian world of *Troilus and Criseyde* opened up.

   That politically and emotionally oppressive world of Troy is dotted with allusions to Ovid, featuring his most unsettling images and narratives. Chaucer, for instance, adds to his main source, Boccaccio's *Filostrato*, an allusion to the tale of Procne, Philomela, and Tereus, just when Pandarus, beginning to plot his own sad three-way affair, awakens (2.64–70):

> The swalowe Proigne, with a sorowful lay,
> Whan morwen com, gan make hire waymentinge
> Whi she forshapen was; and evere lay
> Pandare abedde, half in a slomberynge,
> Til she so neigh hym made hire cheterynge
> How Tereus gan forth hire suster take,
> That with the noyse of hire he gan awake.

Among much else here, one might note that "forshapen" means both "metamorphosed" and "disfigured": metamorphoses as further brutality. Yet that Procne's lament cannot be silenced forces attention to women's "answer" to such male assaults and machinations. Indeed, even when Ovid's own words are not used, the ancient poet seems to have impelled Chaucer's distinctive poetic strategy of using women to open up emotional depth and psychological complexity. This is already clear from Chaucer's early *House of Fame* (315–82), where Dido laments in

a brilliant pastiche from Virgil (*Aeneid* 4.305–30) cast in the form of Ovid's *Heroides* 7. Included in such portrayals of human self-consciousness are the female characters' awareness of *being judged* by society and literary history, a self-consciousness Criseyde particularly displays: "O, rolled shal I ben on many a tonge!" (5.1062). A similar weight of literary and public history is felt in Ovid, as in Dido's creation of her own epitaph (*Her.* 7.195–96) and the *Heroides*' project generally. Chaucer, however, presents a stronger sense than Ovid of being a belated heir to an oppressively vast written tradition, in which history, "fame," and identity are bookish, discursively layered, and all-too-human constructions.

Gower's use of Ovid includes that sense as well, though in more intellectual, even "humanist" forms. Yet Gower's identity as *alter Ovidius* was not, like Chaucer's, present from his poetic beginnings. Gower's earliest datable poetry, his long French *Mirour de l'Omme* (c. 1378), is untouched by Ovid. The *Mirour* mentions almost exclusively biblical proper nouns. "Apollo" appears only in stories taken from Christian homiletic traditions, the source of the *Mirour*'s anatomy of sins.

A very different impression emerges from Gower's other, presumably later French poetry: his *Traitié* on married love and the *Balades* (ed. Yeager) which survive only in a single copy dedicated to Henry IV, but which were almost certainly written long before Henry's ascension in 1399. Allusions to classical stories abound in these short French poems, which, whatever their original dates, seem to come from and speak to a far different world than the *Mirour*. Most clearly, they speak to a world that knows Chaucer, or at least the international courtly tastes for Ovidiana reflected in Machaut's poetry and the *Roman de la Rose* on which Chaucer heavily drew. Thus Gower's *Balade* 20 takes up Fortune's wheel, citing Palamedes, Agamemnon, Diomedes, Troilus, and the "fille au Calcas," that is, Criseyde. Given Chaucer's emphasis on fate and Fortune's wheel in *Troilus*, this balade seems likely to reflect and respond to knowledge of Chaucer's poem. Other balades describe the "tempest of the heart" and recall Ulysses detained by the Sirens and Circe (*Balade* 30), recount the seasons and mention the figure of Janus (described in Ovid's *Fasti* 1.63–288; *Balade* 32), and—surely in a direct, because doubled, allusion to Chaucer, both the *Book of the Duchess* and the *Parliament of Fowls*—mention Ceix and Alcyone's transformation into birds, as part of a parliament of fowls on St. Valentine's day (*Balade* 34). Gower's *Balade* 43 also surveys the examples of men betraying women from the *Heroides* (Jason and Medea, Hercules and Deianira, Aeneas and Dido, Theseus and Ariadne, Demophoon and Phyllis) as well as others more mutually if tragically loving (Hector and Penthesilea, Lancelot, Tristan, etc.). The *Traitié* on the joys of marriage takes up as the bitterest counterexamples Jason and Medea, Tarquin and Lucretia, and Tereus, Procne, and Philomela.

After the absence of Ovid from the *Mirour*, this is a startling change. We may speculate that Chaucer's early uses of Ovidiana touched a spark or a nerve in his more learned friend. At a minimum, it is apparent that Gower's *Balades* and *Traitié* register the contemporary effects on the (French- and English-speaking)

English court of Chaucer's Ovidian "courtly" dream-visions and epic—the *Book of the Duchess*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, *The House of Fame*, *Troilus and Criseyde*, and *The Legend of Good Women*. No doubt Gower was also giving notice that he would follow suit.

By the early 1380s, Gower had taken the lead in Ovidian adaptations, at least in sheer quantity, as his Latin *Vox clamantis* (c. 1380; c. 1382) shows. Gower's handling of Ovid in the *Vox*, although called "schoolboy plagiarism" by Macaulay (1899–1901: vol. 1, p. xxxii), is in fact no more slavish than Chaucer's early usages. When Gower evokes Ovid in the "first" edition of *Vox*, Books 2–7 (Book 1 on the 1381 "Peasant's Revolt" was added later), he performs a highly original transformation, using Ovid to express a self-conscious *writerliness* that—apart from Chaucer's women—is rare in late medieval literature. Thus Gower's (first) *Vox* begins with a paean to writing, *Multa quidem vidi diuersaque multa notaui, / Que tibi vult meminens scribere penna sequens* … (2.prol.1–2); he goes on to quote Ovid to bolster this focus on the written and the writer as miraculously powerful (2.prol.61–64):

> De modicis igitur modicum dabo pauper, et inde
> Malo valere parum quam valuisse nichil.
> Non miser est talis, aliquid qui non dare possit;
> Si dare non possum munera, verba dabo.

In my poverty I shall offer a little of what little I have, since I prefer to be worth a trifle rather than worth nothing. There is no one so poor that he cannot give something; if I cannot give gifts, I shall give words. (Trans. Stockton)

The lines capture but redefine Ovid's remarks that he has suasive power in matters of love in spite of his material poverty (*Ars* 2.159–66):

> Blanditias molles auremque iuvantia verba
> Adfer, ut adventu laeta sit illa tuo.
> Non ego divitibus venio praeceptor amandi:
> Nil opus est illi, qui dabit, arte mea;
> Secum habet ingenium, qui, cum libet, "accipe" dicit;
> Cedimus: inventis plus placet ille meis.
> Pauperibus vates ego sum, quia pauper amavi;
> Cum dare non possem munera, verba dabam.

Convey soft flattery and ear-pleasing words, so that by your arrival she might be glad. I come as a preceptor of love not for the rich—no need of my art for he who will give. He who says "Take!" when he wishes has enough wit for himself. I yield; he pleases more than my craft. I am the bard of poor men, because I loved as a pauper; since I could not give gifts, I gave words.

Whereas Ovid doubles his claims about the erotic with those about his literary effi-
cacy, Gower ignores the erotic, presenting writing as a technology whose remark-
able powers especially come into their own when the ills of society as a whole are
the poetry's focus, as in the *Vox*.

This is particularly evident from Gower's uses of Ovid's *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto* in
the introductory dream-vision added to the *Vox* (ed. Carlson), presenting the vio-
lent Rising of 1381. Here, Ovid's laments of political exile become Gower's laments
of *intellectual* exile, surrounded by a rabble of domestic beasts transformed into
monsters, the form in which he persistently casts the peasants who descended
on London in mid-summer 1381, seeking to destroy the legal records that they
correctly identified as the tools of new forms of exploitation of their resources,
and, Gower says, to kill every literate man, especially lawyers, they could find. For
all its literary peculiarity, and elitist political vision (from the perspective of mod-
ern critics), *Vox* 1 was perhaps unusual for medieval readers only in its degree of
application of familiar responses to Ovid, and in the general sense that its focus is
exclusively social and political, not religiously allegorical in any way. But *Vox* 1 also
again emphasizes Gower's role as a kind of master of textuality, *praeceptor scripturae*,
a guide for how books and writing can explain and control not erotic love but the
vicissitudes of social upheaval (1.2135–48):

> Dum mea mens memor est, scribens memoranda notabit,
>   In specie sompni que vigilando quasi
> Concepi pauidus. …
> O vigiles sompni, quorum sentencia scriptis
>   Ammodo difficilis est recitanda meis!
> Vt michi vox alias que vidi scribere iussit,
>   Amplius ex toto corde vacare volo.

> While my mind recalls, it will record in writing what's worth
> Report: what I conceived awake, in fear,
> In form of dream …
> O wakeful sleeps, whose message is now hard
> To be recited in my written text!
> The voice commanded me to write what I
> Had seen: with all my heart I'll give my time to this.
>
>   (Trans. Rigg, in Carlson ed.)

In the face of the rebels' assaults, the manipulability of textual history is the
work's most evident "metamorphosis." Nearly 20% of *Vox* I (393 of 2150 lines)
is quotation, 77% of those (308 lines) from Ovid, often whole lines or couplets
(Carlson 2011: 401–10). Fashioning patchworks from ancient authors was encour-
aged in grammar school (Scase 2013), but facing the scandalous disruptions of
the anti-intellectual (or at least anti-legalistic) rebels of 1381, Gower responded

with a pyrotechnic display of intellectuals' power in manipulating such texts as Ovid's—even if the result was as "unnatural" as anything the rebels were trying to do (Galloway 2010).

The *Vox*'s self-consciousness about writing and rewriting old authorities sets the terms for Gower's English *Confessio amantis*, his major and indeed final step forward in Ovidianism. Gower's efforts to retrace the model of the *ethicus Ovidius*, as defined in the *accessus* to the *Remedia* and other works, are most explicit in the *Confessio*. Not only does the *Confessio* lay out a series of ethically framed narratives like the glossed editions of the *Metamorphoses*; it also features Gower's own narrator undergoing a metamorphosis at the end of the poem. Having at the outset believed he is a young lover, he now gazes into the mirror Venus presents him and sees that he is old John Gower, a revelation that emerges with the awareness of step-by-step changes familiar from many moments in Ovid's "greater poem" (8.2824–32):

> I … sih my colour fade,
> Myn yhen dymme and al unglade,
> Mi chiekes thinne, and al my face
> With Elde I myhte se deface …
> I syh also myn heres hore.
> Mi will was tho to se nomore …

Though not a dream in an explicit sense, the *Confessio* is, like *Vox* 1, an exploration of illusion—that Gower as narrator is a young man in love—and at the same time it is a text that—like *Vox* 1 and indeed *OM*—includes its own commentary. But with its succession of brief tales generated in response to the Lover's need for "confession" and guidance in love from Genius, the priest of Venus, the *Confessio* constitutes a major departure in didactic plan as well. Its very purpose is dual—the presumed needs and feelings of the Lover, the implicit "higher" ethical points of John Gower the author. This duality, which skews and refracts moral inquiry, is especially notable in the Ovidian narratives. Focusing on the "sins of love" (unlike the conventional sins anatomized in the *Mirour*), the *Confessio* particularly uses Ovid to twist its ethical frame in playful directions, "somwhat of lust, somwhat of lore" (Prol. 19). Throughout the *Confessio*, only Ovid is called "the Poete," and only Ovidian tales "Poesie" (e.g. 1.386, 2.121, 4.1038, 4.2668, 5.6710–13, 5.6806, 8.2719). Ovid leads Gower into the unpredictable realm of the literary.

We may glance at an instance less often discussed than some others, from Gower's description of "Avarice," which features possessive and rapacious love. Within the moral tradition, this is strange enough. To illustrate "stealth" of lovers, Gower's "confessor" Genius tells the tale of Hercules, Eolen, and Faunus, drawn from the tale of Hercules, Omphale, and Faunus in *Fasti* 2.303–62. In Ovid, this tale of cross-dressing and attempted rape is *plena ioci* ("full of merriment"), and offered to explain why Faunus (Pan) spurns clothing. When Eolen decides to dress Hercules in her own clothing, Hercules bursts her shoes and bracelets, and he has

to loosen her delicate belt (*teretis zona*) and tunic. When the stealthy Faunus, with "swollen penis harder than horn" (*tumidum cornu durius inguen*), climbs upon the sleeping figure he takes to be Eolen, he finds bristly leg-hair under the tunic he is lifting. Hercules awakening hurls him to the ground, leaving the Lydian girl (*Lyda puella*) Eolen laughing at Hercules, who in turn laughs at Faunus' predicament (*Fasti* 2.355–56).

Gower alters Ovid's tale in tone more than detail. In Gower, to exchange clothing, Eolen wraps her "wympel" around Hercules' cheek, while "Hire kertell and hire mantel eke / Abroad upon his bed he spredde" (5.6889–91). Nothing of lower bodily detail is mentioned. Faunus, seeing the wimple around the head, climbs into bed naked and "Anon he profereth him to love" (5.6923). Gower's lighter tone persists through a minor misreading of the Latin; for "Lyda puella" he read "Saba," a new figure who, arriving with a group of nymphs "al a route," swells the audience for Faunus' humiliation (6932).

Deploying a story that is funny to begin with, this certainly unfolds in a festive way the moral against "stealth," which Gower's Latin sidebar dourly emphasizes. The Lover, who, when his confessor Genius asks if he has committed sins like this, can only reply, "certes no … Mi feinte herte wol noght serve" (6942–45). Rather than the punishment of Faunus for "nyhtes micherie" (nocturnal thieving) that his own moral structure and Latin glosses posit, Gower lingers on the tale's playful loosening of gender identity. Gower even adds lines beyond Ovid on how "ech of hem scholde other clothe … And thus thei jape forth the dai" (6858–69). Gower thus paradoxically both deploys a more somber moral frame than Ovid and devotes more attention to the pleasures of cross-dressing. Gower's elaboration of the latter seems part of his constant concern with protean changes in social identity, from monstrous peasants demanding unheard-of privileges to the narrator's body morphing into a new kind of secular sage. Gower's novel identity as a learned layman was probably relevant to his pervasively keen response to Ovidian transformations.

Gower is not, however, always the more faithful Ovidian follower even when he uses Ovid more exclusively than Chaucer. It is true that when Gower tells the story of Tarquin and the rape of Lucretia (*Confessio* 7.4302–5130), he closely tracks the sequence of narratives in the *Fasti*; in contrast, when Chaucer tells the story of Lucretia (*LGW* 1680–1885), he cites "Ovyde and titus Lyvius," and adds, "the grete Austyn hath gret compassioun / Of this Lucresse" (1683, 1690–91). In fact, Chaucer's sources beyond Ovid's *Fasti* seem not Livy or Augustine directly but the mid fourteenth-century universal history of a Chester monk, Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*, translated into English in 1387 (see Galloway 1993). Yet in spite of more textual mediation, Chaucer's details draw closer than Gower's to Ovid's narrative, especially those details conveying psychological and scenic immediacy. Tarquin's desirous ruminations in Chaucer (*LGW* 1761–63) recall Tarquinius' heated thoughts at *Fasti* 2.761–66, whereas Gower ignores this; Tarquin's threat to Lucrece in Chaucer (*LGW* 1805–11) follows the direct speech in *Fasti* 2.807–9, whereas Gower omits dialogue between them (*Confessio* 7.4968–72); Lucrece's post-rape

appearance in Chaucer (*LGW* 1829–32) uses a funereal simile from Ovid, *ut solet ad nati mater itura rogum* (*Fasti* 2.814), whereas Gower, though mentioning her "clothes blake," generates a different and triter simile, "riht as men sen a welle springe … / Sche wepte" (*Confessio* 7.5004–7). Chaucer, using more intermediaries to assemble his "Ovid," achieves something closer to the ancient poet than Gower. As in the tonal changes of the tale of Hercules and Faunus, Gower seems programmatically to avoid emphasizing violence and aggression, including rape, even when (as in Lucretia's story) that is central to the narrative. Gower's witty, secular intellectualism avoids layering ancient materials with Christian allegory or Christian contempt for the world (which Chaucer veers toward at the end of *Troilus*), but Gower also avoids the violence, tragedy, and chilling individual isolation that Chaucer's uses of Ovid allow.

Just as Ovid did not appear in Gower's first works, so Ovid disappears from Gower's final ones. Both blanks probably indicate how potent yet potentially troubling Gower found Ovid to be. Gower's Ovid, once allowed into his poetry, does not in fact remain securely "moral" in even a conventional secular sense, and Ovid was of no use to Gower when writing more strictly moral or, as later, earnest political poetry. The latter dominated his final years. Almost as soon as Richard II was deposed and Henry IV ascended the throne, Gower's writing became politically supportive to a tense degree. Metamorphosis is dropped, ironic eroticism abandoned, rhetoric entrusted to new purposes. Ovid the exile is exiled from Gower's final partisan poems; though most in Latin, hardly a whisper of Ovid remains. This must be reckoned one of the great costs of the "revolution" of 1399. The pro-Lancastrian poetry that Gower produced in his last years perhaps could not risk embracing an ancient poet whose reputation was at least as shaped by his loss of imperial favor as by any immoral possibilities. Other English poets would return in the late sixteenth century to the ironically erotic if not politically subversive Ovidian themes. Gower's experiment was over.

Dead soon after Henry IV was crowned, Chaucer remained Ovidian to the end, persisting down the path that, though Chaucer had begun it, Gower had taken pains to consolidate. Was indeed Gower's sprawling but linked set of narratives, ending in the author's own metamorphosis, the basis for Chaucer's final literary plan for what is in many ways an equally Ovidian tale collection? One reason to think that Gower's example of large-scale Ovidianism influenced Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* is the prominence in Chaucer not only of so many actual or illusory transformations—from the social metamorphosis of a "povre bacheler" into a princely heir (*Knight's Tale*), to the ironic deflation of an old carpenter's belief that with his (young) wife he can become a second Noah, or even second Deucalion with his Pyrrha (*Miller's Tale*), to the physical and ethical miracle of the Old Wife becoming nubile young maiden (*Wife of Bath's Tale*)—but also of the theme of transforming old tales for explicitly contemporary uses.

This principle has both comic and tragic forms, and for Chaucer, all these are Ovidian. The most comic Ovidian material is in the Wife of Bath's *Prologue* and *Tale*

(including gynocentrically redesigning the tale of Midas: *Tale* 952–82; see Patterson 1991: 286–87), though many others could qualify too. The most tragic Ovidian narrative is Chaucer's final tale, the Manciple's tale of Phoebus and the crow.

Here, Chaucer ties the principle of repeating tales, which governs the entire *Canterbury Tales*, directly to Ovidian transformation. Ovid's use of the story (*Met.* 2.542–632) is brief, an example of a god's jealousy and vengeance to parallel Juno's, encasing in this another tale about cruel divine punishment of a grossly naive tale-teller; the *Ovide moralisé* bloats this with digressions and allegories into over 600 lines (*OM* 2.2121–2735), interpolating a history of the birth of Erichthonius, a sermon discourse against gossips and rumor mongers, an allegory of an ill-repaid servant, an allegory of Phebus's lover as the soul, Phebus as God (the other lover as the devil), and much else. Guillaume de Machaut (who drew from *OM*'s account) perhaps gave Chaucer the idea of using this bleak tale to end a long literary work; closing the *Voir Dit* (c. 1376; ed. Imbs), Machaut presents the tale in a dream-vision to warn that poem's narrator against the danger of rumors about his young correspondent and perhaps lover.

There are many small indications that Chaucer has studied these other vehicles for Ovid's tale. But Chaucer's extreme and self-conscious brevity in conveying this tale manifests the *Tale*'s point about avoiding uncalculated stories or indeed any at all—though paradoxically using a story to do so. The narrator not only sneers at any claim for higher impulses than hunger and lust; he also scorns the use of literature as rhetorical ornament. The result shows he has even left behind not only any Christianizing allegory of Ovid but also any claim (common in the *accessus* tradition) that Ovid's purpose was to present and teach elegant rhetoric. As the narrator, apologizing for blunt language, says (211–20):

> I am a boystous man, right thus seye I:
> Ther nys no difference, trewely,
> Bitwixe a wyf that is of heigh degree,
> If of hir body dishonest she bee,
> And a povre wenche, oother than this— …
> But that the gentile, in estaat above,
> She shal be cleped his lady, as in love;
> And for that oother is a povre womman,
> She shal be cleped his wenche or his lemman.

Bleak and biting as this is, *The Manciple's Tale*'s point is not only that tales and words should be measured and silenced but rather that—as the very need to measure and silence speech shows—tales and words matter. Although the point demolishes the "rhetorical" or "ornamental" argument for poetry, it advances the stronger claim that literature, for better and worse, has enormous power, as the crow knows. That view is deeply Ovidian, even by way of so many medieval intermediaries, compilers, and commentators. For all these, and especially for

Chaucer and Gower, Ovid remained inescapably potent, the epitome of an ancient, risky, unyielding commitment to poetry.

Notes

1   Citations of Chaucer are from Benson (1987); citations of Gower are from Macaulay (1899–1901), with other editions and translations as noted.
2   The *Confessio*'s Latin verses and glosses are translated by Galloway in Peck (2000–06).

Further Reading

Key considerations of Chaucer's uses of Ovid include Fyler (1979), Minnis (1982), Desmond (2006), and Fumo (2010). Considerations of Gower's uses of Ovid include Harbert (1988), McCabe (2011), and Wetherbee (2011). Wider background is in Clark, Coulson, and McKinley (2011), which includes McKinley's "Gower and Chaucer: Readings of Ovid in Late Medieval England."

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14

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the History of Baroque Art

Paul Barolsky

No work of literature from classical antiquity has had so extensive an influence on the imagery of modern European art history as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Neither Homer's and Virgil's epics, nor the great tragedies of ancient Greece, nor the comedies of ancient Rome, nor the histories of Plutarch, Thucydides, and Livy are as abundantly illustrated in the modern period as are Ovid's stories from *Metamorphoses*.

Yet strangely enough, although much has been written in a very scattered literature about numerous Ovidian works, nobody has ever undertaken the task, which would be highly pleasurable, I should think, of surveying works of art illustrating Ovid's poem from the Renaissance to the present—a survey that would embrace the art of Pollaiuolo, Piero di Cosimo, Perugino, Titian, Veronese, Bronzino, van Heemskerck, Cranach, Breugel, Goltzius, Elsheimer, Jordaens, Ribera, Boucher, Falconet, Coypel, Daumier, Moreau, Redon, Picasso, Dali, Magritte, and countless others. Perhaps the undertaking would be too ambitious, indeed as ambitious as Ovid's poem itself, which englobes a vast array of stories in a huge number of voices.

In any event, from the fifteenth century, the heart of the Italian Renaissance, onward, countless major works by the great masters of European art have illuminated Ovid's poem. In this period of well over half a millennium, painters and sculptors have evoked *Metamorphoses* in a wide variety of ways. The greatest concentration of pictures and sculptures by major artists in the modern era that refer to Ovid's poem is to be found, I believe, in the seventeenth century, the age of the Baroque, when Caravaggio, Bernini, Poussin, Velázquez, Rubens, and Rembrandt, among others, illustrated *Metamorphoses*, doing so with a deep understanding of Ovid's theory of art.

For Ovid, the description of a metamorphosis is itself a work of poetic art; inversely, a work of art is, for Ovid's followers among painters and sculptors, a

kind of metamorphosis. Indeed, to generalize Ovid's implicit theory of art, all art is a transformation or metamorphosis of something into something new. This is a theory of art that I believe we take for granted, but when we ponder examples of art that conform to this theory we realize how rich it is. I propose to explore here in some depth a highly selected corpus of major Baroque works by Bernini, Poussin, and Velázquez that are among the greatest of all the modern works of art inspired by Ovid. I do so as a modest contribution to Ovid studies, that is, the reception of Ovid, to our understanding of seventeenth-century art, and ultimately toward a broader history of Ovid's role in the history of art. This essay—and I do mean "essay" in the original sense of "an attempt"—is not intended as an exercise in extensive research that reviews the art historical literature in detail or even in general. Rather, it is a rudimentary exercise in the appreciation of art, both of the great Baroque masters and of the irrepressible ancient poet who inspired them. It depends on reading Ovid closely and then looking closely at the works that evoke his words.

Before we discuss the glorious era of Baroque Europe, which made of Ovidian art a fine art, I want to mention as a context or framework a few great precedents of masterful art inspired by Ovid in the previous, Renaissance period. Doing so, I wish to define some of the qualities of Ovidian art. Let us begin with one of the single greatest works of such art in the entire modern period. I speak of Botticelli's *Primavera*, which is a garden of love where Venus presides, while the three Graces dance gracefully on the left and, next to them, Mercury is seen gazing platonically at the light of the sun (Plate 2). On the right side of the painting we encounter a suggestive evocation of Ovid, for it is here that the painter alludes to the poet in the passage of Zephyr pursuing the nymph Chloris, who is beginning to be transformed into Flora, as if before our very eyes. Botticelli refers here to the story of this abduction briefly told by the goddess of flowers herself in Ovid's *Fasti* (5.201–4). As she speaks flowers flow forth from her mouth (5.194), a detail transformed by Botticelli who shows such flowers as they flow from the lips of Chloris, in other words, as she becomes Flora.

Our interest here in this Ovidian passage has to do with what Botticelli has done in order to retell Ovid's story from *Fasti*. Not only does the painter transform a text into a visual image but he also metamorphoses an Ovidian text (*Fasti*) where there is no metamorphosis, into an image of metamorphosis, Chloris becoming Flora, as if a scene from *Metamorphoses*. The fleeing, frightened Chloris in Botticelli's picture plays Daphne to Zephryr's Apollo. One of the salient features of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is the acute self-consciousness of the poet, who demonstrates his self-reflexive artifice at every turn. In this respect, Botticelli is the Ovidian poet par excellence. The description of a metamorphosis is an opportunity for the poet to display his ingenuity; so too, the painter's display of metamorphosis is an opportunity to follow suit. In the subtle display of transformation, Botticelli is almost a Baroque artist *avant la lettre*.

Let us turn next to another picture of erotic desire and, as we do so, let us remember that Ovid's countless allusions to erotic desire, like those of the artists inspired

by Ovid, reflect a dominant theme of Western art history—that of desire. The theme of erotic desire is illustrated with exquisite wit by Correggio in his voluptuous painting blandly called *Jupiter and Io*, an image painted circa 1530, half a century after Botticelli's Ovidian mythological picture of *Primavera* (Figure 14.1). To appreciate Correggio's work, in which we see a cloud enveloping Io and within
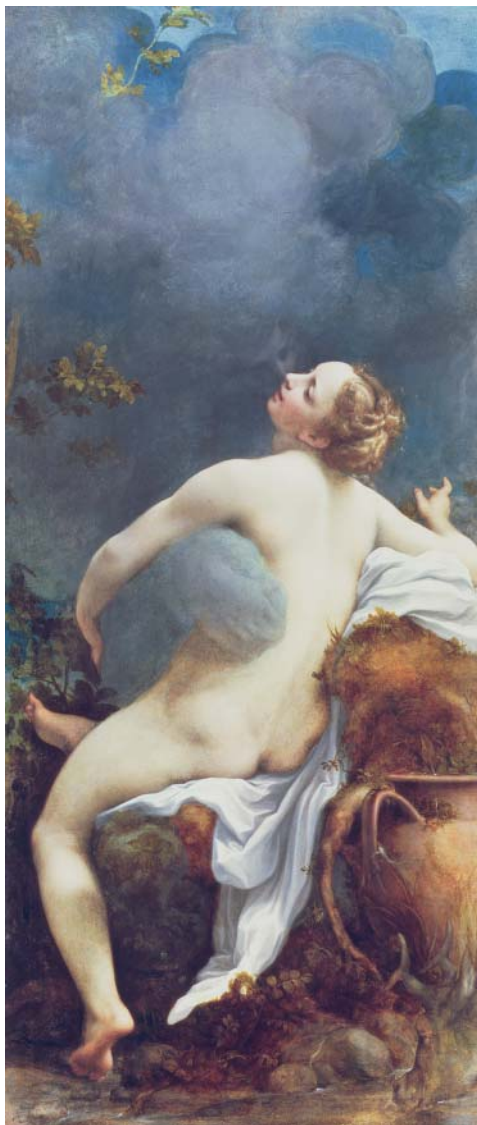
Figure 14.1   Correggio, *Jupiter and Io* (c. 1530). Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library.

which we behold a hint of the head of Jupiter and a glimpse of his hand as it touches Io's flesh, we must consider what the painter has done in metamorphosing Ovid's text. In the ancient poet's story, the cloud serves Jupiter as a way of concealing from Juno his abduction of the nymph (*Met*. 1.599–600), whereas now in Correggio's version of Ovid's story, the cloud that envelopes Io caresses her and heightens her erotic pleasure. It is a cliché to observe the nymph's sexual abandon, the pleasure she takes in Jupiter's embrace. We too easily overlook the simple fact that whereas Ovid speaks of Jupiter's pursuit of pleasure when he takes Io, the painter transforms this idea radically by dwelling not on Jupiter's desire but on the pleasure of the nymph—a radical metamorphosis. Ovid, as I have said, thinks of art as itself a form of metamorphosis, and many of his stories are transformations of his own previous stories; for example, Pan's pursuit of Syrinx is a transformation of the related story Ovid tells of Apollo's pursuit of Daphne. In his transformation of Ovid, Correggio is a very Ovidian artist, reinventing the poet's tale.

Before we turn our attention to the Baroque, I offer one final example of Renaissance art with Ovidian implications. I wish to turn here from painting to sculpture and speak of Michelangelo's four unfinished statues of *Captives*, which were made originally to adorn the tomb of Pope Julius II but which were eventually acquired by the Medici and placed in a grotto of the Boboli gardens (Figure 14.2). In their original intentions, these statues were planned to represent the military strength and ambitions of the pope, whereas when they were put in a grotto they took on wholly new significance. For in its sculptural and pictorial decoration, the grotto illustrated the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha. In this context, Michelangelo's statues evoked the passage in Ovid where after the flood when Deucalion and Pyrrha tossed the stones of the earth behind them, they were gradually transformed into human beings (*Met*. 1.400–15). Ovid says expressly that when they were still stone and yet were gradually taking on human form the stones resembled unfinished statues (1.405–6)—as if he were evoking his experience of the sculptor's workshop where he saw unfinished statuary. In other words, the Medici exploited the unfinished status of the statues to evoke the transformation of stone into flesh to which Ovid alludes. The original meaning of the statues was metamorphosed, given a new significance. Metamorphosis was here seen as a form of art, recalling the fact that every time he pictures for us such a metamorphosis, Ovid is displaying his own artifice. Appreciating the transitional stage of an unfinished statue where a figure begins to emerge from the block of stone, Ovid delighted in what came to be called the *non finito*, doing so long before the *non finito* took on significance for Michelangelo and later for Rodin. Both Michelangelo and Rodin, we might say, were implicitly followers of Ovid.

If Michelangelo had brought his *Captives* to completion, he would have given them the finish resulting from the high polish that we find in many of the statues by Bernini, who saw himself—and was seen by his biographers—as the new Michelangelo. His *Apollo and Daphne*, carved for the Borghese in the early years of the seventeenth century, is one of the great masterpieces of Ovidian art
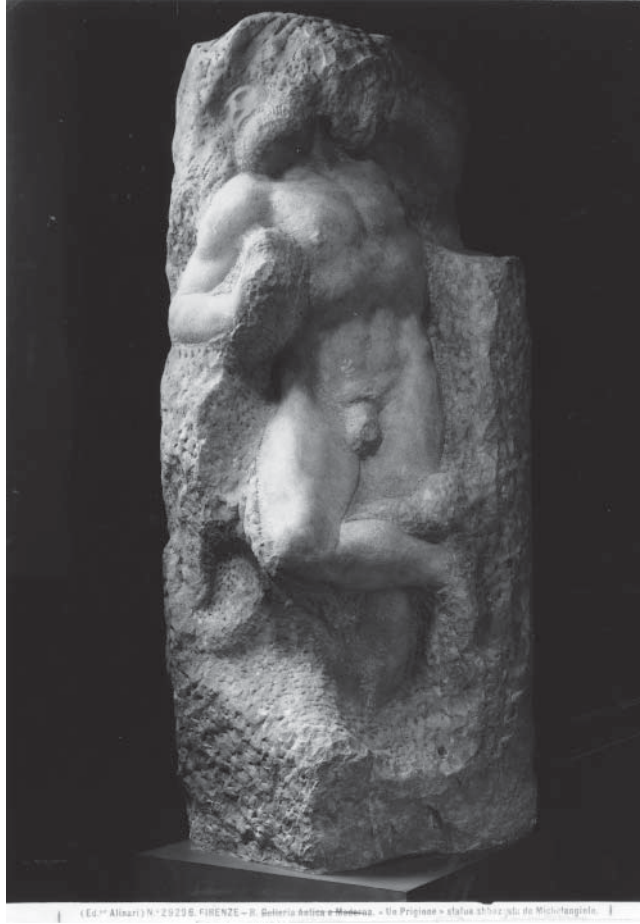
Figure 14.2 Michelangelo, *Captive* (c. 1527–28). Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

(Figure 14.3). It is a work of astonishing virtuosity. As Daphne flees from the transfixed, enamored, lusting divinity, she cries out to her father the river god Peneus and, doing so, she begins to become a tree. Her toes take root, her limbs turn into leafy branches, and her trunk is covered with bark. As Apollo embraces the fleeing nymph, his left hand is pressed firmly into her abdomen, but her flesh here has already become bark and what the god feels does not yield to the touch. Looking at the statue from the side we can see that the sculptor further plays on the god's frustration, as branches project upward from Daphne directly into Apollo's crotch, scarcely the pleasant sensation to which the god aspires.

Bernini's statue, which is a virtuoso performance of intricate, almost unbelievable, carving, is a multiplicity of metamorphoses. In the first place, Ovid's story is

Figure 14.3   Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Apollo and Daphne* (1622–25). Galleria Borghese, Rome. Courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library.

transformed into an image in stone. If Botticelli showed Chloris with flowers issuing from her mouth as she began to become Flora, who is nonetheless immediately next to her, Bernini shows Daphne as both nymph and tree at the same time. His transformation of words into image is one rich in paradoxical implications. Carving his figures out of marble, which is hard, he creates an astonishing illusion of soft flesh, tender leaves, and almost liquid roots, but this transformation of hard

material into living matter which is soft also suggests the very hardness of the bark into which soft flesh is metamorphosed. Similarly, whereas the block of stone out of which Bernini carves is in fact inert, his figures are seemingly in motion as they race forward so swiftly before our very eyes. Whereas the stone from which Bernini carves is of considerable weight, his figures have about them an extraordinary lightness; indeed, Daphne seems to soar upwards, as if evoking the growth of a plant. Although the stone from which the artist carves is mute, we can almost hear the cry of Daphne, her mouth wide open, as she beseeches her father to save her. Finally, whereas wind is itself invisible, we see its effects as it blows the hair and draperies of Bernini's god and nymph.

At the same time as Bernini emulates the classical example of Ovid's text, he also takes inspiration from the canonical *Apollo Belvedere*, a Roman work based on a lost Greek bronze by Leochares. This allusion is also a metamorphosis—again a transformation of art, the translation of an ancient work into a modern work. Whereas the ancient Apollo seems to step forward slowly in a kind of adagio, Bernini's Apollo is fleet of foot as he dashes forward in a sculptural scherzo. The allusion to the ancient work is especially witty, since the ancient statue, before it was damaged, seemingly illustrated the god with bow in hand, as if he were hunting, and Ovid's Apollo as he chases Daphne is himself described as a hunter (*Met.* *1.533–34*). The comparison of Bernini's modern Apollo to the ancient exemplar is especially revealing. When we look at the heads of Apollo in profile in both works, we see how very similar Bernini's is to his model; at the same time, however, we see a remarkable transformation of the ancient model in Bernini's more animated and enlivened rendering. Hence we behold the paradox of remarkable similarity and difference between the ancient and the modern heads of the god—a kind of paradox, which is truly wondrous.

There is another aspect of Bernini's statue, which, frequently overlooked, points to the sculptor's artistic cunning. I speak of the two conspicuous, faceted stones on the base of the statue right behind Apollo. These two stones are the fiction of stone carved paradoxically out of real stone. Stone here is thus the self-conscious fiction of itself. In other words, these stones, one behind the other, like Apollo and Daphne, are in a double entendre, the illusion of what they in fact are—stone. It would almost seem as if these stones are playful petrified parodies of the corresponding figures of god and nymph, who are also shaped out of stone. As Apollo is taller than Daphne, so the second stone is larger than the one in front of it.

The two stones following Apollo are evocative of Ovid in another respect. The poet tells us that Orpheus, son of Apollo, captivated plants and animals, and that even the stones followed him. Could it be that Bernini is suggesting that the father of Orpheus had the same power over the stones that follow him? In any event, the virtuosity of Bernini's statue embodies the poet's very ideal of true art, which conceals art. We can say of the author of the sculpture illustrating the story of the origins of laurel, which becomes the poet's laurel, that Bernini is the poet laureate of all Baroque sculptors.

Figure 14.4   Gian Lorenzo Bernini, *Pluto and Persephone* (1621–22). Galleria Borghese, Rome. Courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library.

There are two other works by Bernini that demonstrate a wit comparable to that exhibited in the statue *Apollo and Daphne*. The first of these is the statue *Pluto and Persephone*, also carved for the Borghese in the period of the *Apollo and Daphne* (Figure 14.4). The statue does not conform in detail to Ovid's account (*Met*. 5.385–408); for example, as a sculptor Bernini does not represent the chariot, which the god of the Underworld drives in the poet's scene of abduction. This detail does not lend itself to sculpture. We see it, however, in painting, for example, in Rembrandt's powerful depiction of the story where Pluto, driving his horse-led chariot, surges down into hell with his prey. What Bernini captures, however, that does indeed recall Ovid, is the powerful resistance of Persephone to the forceful god. She resists by pushing against the head of Pluto, but to no avail. The god of the Underworld seems almost to sneer at her failed attempt to free herself.

Aspects of the work have further Ovidian implications. Bernini carves the illusion of tears upon Persephone's cheek. Tears on a marble sculpture recall the passage in *Metamorphoses* (4.672–75) where Perseus comes upon the bound Andromeda, who at first seems a figure in marble, in other words, like a statue; only when her liberator sees her tears does he realize that she is of flesh. We might almost say that, although Bernini's figure of Persephone is of marble, the tears give us the impression of a woman in the flesh. Bernini heightens this effect in a detail that never ceases to astonish. I speak of the way in which the hands of Pluto sink into the flesh of Persephone. The effect is uncanny, because although we know that the figure is carved out of hard stone, she seems to come alive in the soft flesh, which is so very convincingly evoked. The illusion is what in the Baroque was called "una maraviglia."

This detail of soft flesh carved from marble has further Ovidian implications, since we are made to recall how Pygmalion, fashioning a statue of a maiden out of ivory, which is, like marble, hard and resistant, pressed his hands into his statue with such ardor that he feared he might bruise her (*Met*. 10.257–58). As he squeezes Persephone, Pluto surely does just that as the stone comes alive under his hands. Thus the myth of Pygmalion's ivory figure turning to flesh is implicit in the marble of an artist, who, by implication, is a seventeenth-century Pygmalion.

The other work by Bernini with Ovidian implications is the statue *Medusa*, a work that gets relatively little attention (I am especially indebted here to Steven Ostrow). What is so striking about this statue is the fact that Medusa, despite the monstrous snakes in her hair, is still handsome. We are made to recall that although she became a monster, Medusa was beautiful in the first place, and this loveliness is what attracted Neptune, who defiled her. Only then did she become monstrously ugly. If we look carefully at Bernini's statue, we see upon her head both snakes and hair. The sculptor ingeniously suggests the metamorphosis from Medusa's former beauteous self into her incipiently monstrous condition. In other words, we see a transformation here, as we do in the *Apollo and Daphne*. If we miss the subtlety of this metamorphosis, we miss the ingenuity and wit of the sculpture where the Medusa is paradoxically both beautiful and monstrous at the same time.

The ingenuity of Bernini did not escape the attention of painters. When Poussin came to Rome he was captivated by the sculptor's *Apollo and Daphne*. We recognize its influence on Poussin's painting *Pan and Syrinx* where the figures of god and nymph unmistakably conform to the imagery of Bernini's statue (Plate 3). It would seem that there is an element of wit in Poussin's allusion—his transformation of Bernini's statue into pictorial form. Why? Because in Ovid the story of Pan's pursuit of the nymph Syrinx is a transformation of his own story of Apollo's pursuit of the nymph Daphne. Poussin's choice of Bernini's Apollo and Daphne as the model for his *Pan and Syrinx* is therefore especially apposite, since it evokes the interconnections of these two similar stories in Ovid's poem. In short, Poussin's Pan plays Apollo to Syrinx's Daphne.

Consideration of one more work by Poussin will enable us to penetrate more deeply into Poussin's profound understanding of Ovid. The French painter's representation of the *Birth of Bacchus* gives us a sense of his deep meditation on Ovid (Figure 14.5). Although the painting is in poor condition, we can nonetheless behold in it the messenger god Mercury descending from on high with baby Bacchus, whom he delivers to the nymphs below. They are filled with joy at this moment of theophany. Mercury simultaneously points heavenward toward the reclining Jupiter from whose thigh the god has been born a second time after the conflagration of his initial birth from Semele.

To the right in the foreground we behold the dead Narcissus at the margins of the same pool where the nymphs who receive Bacchus are also bathing. This pool is the place where the beautiful youth had been enamored by his own reflection after which he expired and was transformed into the flower that takes his name. We see these flowers growing next to his head. Behind Narcissus we behold Echo, reclining against a rock in an attitude of grief, her love for Narcissus unfulfilled; the boulder that supports her evokes the very stone into which she vanishes, leaving only the sound of her plaintive voice. High above at the center of the painting, Pan is present playing his pipes, adding a mournful tone to a scene of both joy and sorrow, birth and death. Poussin's painting is about the cycle of life and death. With the joy of birth comes the sorrow of death. Or, to put the point differently, with death comes

Figure 14.5   Nicolas Poussin, *Birth of Bacchus* (c. 1657). Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, MA. Courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library.

birth and renewal. By weaving two stories together, the story of Bacchus and the intertwined accounts of Narcissus and Echo, which are in proximity to each other in *Metamorphoses* 3, Poussin gives us a stoical view of nature in its vastness, where the individual's death is unimportant.

Poussin brings to Ovid a sense of *Metamorphoses* shared by Breugel, who previously exhibited in his sixteenth-century painting of the *Fall of Icarus* a comparable vision of the macrocosm. For in Breugel's painting, which depicts the springtime of the year when the plowman labors in the foreground and we behold the reawakening of nature, we notice the seemingly inconsequential splash of Icarus, who perishes in the sea. Breugel's cosmic landscape reinforces the stoical sense of man's mortality measured against the vastness of nature.

Ovid's poem is abundantly about mortality, the death of the individual, which is always pictured in relation to the birth of the species—as in the myths of the origins of the laurel or the reed. In these myths, the nymphs perish as the plants into which they are transformed come to life. Sometimes, however, death in *Metamorphoses* is stark and imagined without reference to rebirth, or seemingly so. No one captures the harsh sense of mortality with greater effect than the great Velázquez in his mid seventeenth-century painting blandly entitled *Mercury and Argus* (Figure 14.6). Here we see woven together the figures of Io in the background and Mercury in the foreground, as he crawls forward, sword in hand, toward Argus. Guarding the heifer, the latter has finally fallen asleep under the spell of the god's music, which is called to mind by the pipes lying on the ground. There is something truly ominous about this image of impending death, the Big Sleep, to which the painting alludes.

Nowhere, however, does Velázquez more brilliantly and memorably illustrate Ovid than in his painting known as *The Spinners*, a work that is profoundly Ovidian in both its subject and its artistic self-consciousness (Plate 4). The painting is no longer misidentified as merely a depiction of humble weavers, which is what

Figure 14.6   Diego Velázquez, *Mercury and Argus* (1659). Museo del Prado, Madrid. Courtesy of the Bridgeman Art Library.

we see predominantly in the foreground where five women are working, variously carding, winding thread, holding a basket, pulling back a curtain, and employing a spinning wheel. It is apparently a humble scene of labor. Only when we pass through the arch in the middle ground and climb the two steps into the room beyond do we grasp the subject in full. For here on the furthermost wall we see a tapestry of the rape of Europa—a vital clue to the subject of the image. The female figure to the left in armor must be Minerva, the other woman, Arachne, who in a weaving contest with the goddess wove a splendid tapestry depicting the rape of Europa. In short, the picture evokes the weaving contest between mortal and goddess (*Met*. 6.53–128). There is another clue to Velázquez's Ovidian allusion. As frequently observed, the old lady at the spinning wheel in the foreground of the picture has a beautifully shaped, youthful leg, which is exposed. Is this not an allusion to Minerva, who came to listen to the reports of Arachne's prowess disguised as an old woman (6.26)?

Competition lies at the very heart of Ovid's poem. The Pierides challenge the Muses in song, Marsyas takes on Apollo in a musical contest, Pan similarly tests Apollo in such a contest. Likewise, but implicitly, Ovid challenges the epic poets who precede him, Homer and Virgil, by taking themes from their monumental poems and weaving them together in novel, unexpected ways. As Ovid is self-conscious in his implicit competition with Homer and Virgil, so Velázquez is self-reflexive as he competes with Ovid, aspiring to achieve an image more artful than that of the poet who inspires him. In this respect, he recalls Bernini seeking to surpass Ovid and the author of the *Apollo Belvedere* both.

Velázquez's competition is extensive. The tapestry on the wall of the rape of Europa is, as we have observed, an allusion to the work of Arachne, which is clearly a magnificent achievement as Ovid suggests. The modern Spanish painter competes with Ovid's description of the tapestry and the painted tapestry itself. We recognize that Velázquez's image conforms to the painting of the same subject by Titian, which was in the royal Spanish collection, and to the copy made of it by Rubens (Plate 5). Velázquez thus seemingly defines himself competitively in relation to both of these great masters.

Velázquez triumphs over the artists with whom he competes in one very important respect. The painter dissolves the boundary between art and reality in his rendering of the two putti, who fly above the abduction of Europa in the tapestry, which echoes the design of Titian copied in turn by Rubens. These hovering figures are perceived ambiguously as belonging both to the fictive space of the tapestry and to the space of the room where Minerva and Arachne stand. This ambiguity challenges the distinction between art and reality, between the space where the artists stand and the fictive space of Arachne's woven pictorial image.

Velázquez thus rises above the distinction between art and reality in the blurred borders between art and reality. In this respect, he triumphs over Ovid, Arachne, Titian, and Rubens all! What we might say here is that Velázquez extends the competition of Arachne and Minerva in such a way that, in the end, he is the

ultimate victor in art, whose artistic victory resides in the paradoxical ambiguity of his art. The self-consciousness of the brilliantly inventive painter is, as often noted, closely related to the artist's self-reflexiveness in the same period when he portrayed himself in *Las Meninas*. Whereas he is explicitly present in the latter picture, standing before his canvas, he is conspicuous in *The Spinners* by implication. What we might say is that Velázquez's presence in the Ovidian picture is more subtle than that of *Las Meninas*.

Velázquez's supremely self-confident presentation of himself implicit in *The Spinners* and explicit in *Las Meninas*, where he steps back from the canvas at which he works, as if to contemplate his art, epitomizes the unsurpassable artistic self-consciousness of the modern European artist. This self-reflexiveness has deep roots in Ovid's entire poem. Let me explain in brief.

One of the principal elements of Ovid's epic is the shift away from the heroic poems of Homer and Virgil, who celebrate the warrior as hero—Achilles, Odysseus, or Aeneas—to what one might speak of as the Ovidian epic of art, in which the artist is the main hero. This shift is notable from the outset of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where we encounter the myths of Apollo, the divine poet laureate, and Pan, who plays the pipes. Here too we encounter the art of Mercury, musician and storyteller.

Throughout his poem Ovid dwells on the artist as a major theme. Narcissus is implicitly a painter, Pygmalion a consummate sculptor, Vulcan a great sculptor, Daedalus a comparably great architect, Arachne a wonderful weaver, and Orpheus an enchanting singer. Ovid identifies with all of his artists in his dazzling, labyrinthine, beautifully interwoven and powerfully mimetic art. He also speaks of Proteus and many other characters who have the capacity to transform themselves artfully. Ovid too is a protean figure who takes on the personae of his various artist subjects in a poem that, he hopes, will bring him future glory and fame. Ovid demonstrates his art through his personae as Narcissus, Pygmalion, Vulcan, Daedalus, and Arachne. Ovid's close readers have frequently observed, in particular, the way in which the poet compares himself to Arachne when he alludes to his role as a weaver, for his text is itself a woven work of art.

The self-consciousness of Ovid's poem, in which the poet is the implicit hero, would have a deep influence on Dante, who took the next step when he made himself, the poet-pilgrim, the explicit subject, indeed the main subject, of his own modern epic. Building on Dante, Vasari would later translate the poet-hero into the artist-hero—that is, the painter, sculptor, and architect as hero, above all, Michelangelo, who was both poet and artist. In short, the epic of war had become the epic of art in Ovid's poem, which was eventually metamorphosed into the monumental story of the modern poet as hero in Dante, and later transformed into the celebration of the Dantesque artist as hero, Michelangelo, in Vasari's *Lives*, a work that is epic in scale.

Even when modern artists defined themselves without competing directly with Ovid, the ancient poet played a major role in implicitly shaping the self-image of these artists. Ovid, as I have said, had transformed the epic into a work that celebrated the poet—a major step that led to Dante, who, building upon this Ovidian tradition, wrote a monumental poem about himself that led eventually to Vasari's great book in which the idea of artistic and poetic glory shone brightly. In his self-conscious aspiration to glory and fame Ovid is thus one of the principal Muses of the modern poet and artist. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is therefore a major part of the world in which we must approach the Ovidian works of Botticelli, Correggio, Michelangelo, Bernini, Poussin, and Velázquez—artists all, who, like Ovid, brought extreme self-consciousness to their artifice. Modern artists inherited from Ovid, even indirectly, a powerful sense of self-consciousness. Any future history of the influence of Ovid's poem on modern artists will need to take account of the specific relations of works of art to the myths of *Metamorphoses*.

Such a future history of Ovid and modern art will have to place the self-conscious virtuosity of modern Ovidian painters and sculptors within the broader framework of artistic self-reflexiveness exhibited by the protean hero of *Metamorphoses*, even when, as I have said, these followers of Ovid were not expressly illustrating the poet and thus not competing with him explicitly. In his self-consciousness Ovid, both directly and indirectly, inspired and challenged the great European masters, especially Bernini, Poussin, and Velázquez—all of whom rose to the occasion in their own self-reflexive Ovidian artifice and emulation.

Further Reading

This chapter is closely related to a number of dovetailing sketches, listed below, which were published in *Arion* between 1998 and 2010. Focusing on art made in the Renaissance and Baroque in relation to the themes and aesthetics of *Metamorphoses*, but touching on other related topics as well, these pieces are a series of prolegomena to a future book, which I can almost imagine as *Ovid's Metamorphoses in the History of Modern Art from Botticelli to Picasso*. Such a book would expand and extend the story of Ovid's place in the history of art through the last century (Barolsky 1998a, 1998b, 1999, 2000, 2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010).

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The Poetics of Time

The Fasti *in the Renaissance*

Maggie Kilgour

It is often assumed that Renaissance readers identified Ovid only with his epic, the *Metamorphoses*, episodes of which provided models for much art and literature. As other essays in this volume show, however, critics have begun to pay more attention to the role of the broader spectrum of Ovid's works in his reception, especially the impact of his erotic and exilic poetry (see the chapters by Desmond, Braden, Keen, Kahn, Godel). With few exceptions, however, studies of Ovid's influence have ignored the *Fasti*, assuming that writers did not know it, or if they did were not much interested in it (Moss 1982: 18). In this chapter I will show that the *Fasti* was widely known and contributed to what Ovid meant in the Renaissance. Ovid was the great poet of change, desire, and exile, but he was also bound up with thinking about time.

The *Fasti* is a poetic calendar that proceeds through the year, beginning in January and ending unfinished in June, interrupted presumably by Ovid's banishment from Rome. It describes the movements of the stars and recounts events associated with particular Roman customs. Like the *Metamorphoses*, it is full of *aitia*, as it explains the origins and nature of the constellations, the months, and the different rituals that punctuate the Roman year. A few of the episodes told are fairly familiar to us, most notably the story of Lucretia on which Shakespeare based his *Rape of Lucrece* (*Fasti* 2.721–852). More, however, are obscure. At times, therefore, it has been treated as a valuable source of information on Roman ceremonies.[1] In general, however, until quite recently, the *Fasti* has been relegated to the periphery of Ovid's works, assessed by critics as a misguided but mercifully unfinished experiment in poeticizing the calendar (see Newlands 1995: 1–3).

For many recent critics, however, the *Fasti* has become a key work for understanding Ovid's aesthetics and politics (see especially Hinds 1987; Newlands 1995; Barchiesi 1997). Written around the time of the composition of the *Metamorphoses*,

the *Fasti* shares many concerns and characteristics of the epic. The two works ask to be read together as companion poems, and meditations from two distinct and generically defined points of view. Critics have thus examined them as elegiac versus epic perspectives on the same phenomena. As Stephen Hinds (1987) has demonstrated, however, the relation between the poems, as between the genres, is dynamic and complex. The *Metamorphoses* is, of course, itself a rather mongrel kind of epic that absorbs other genres and styles; in the Renaissance it was contrasted with the more unified Virgilian epic, and sometimes identified as the model for the romance. The *Fasti* is also a highly self-conscious generic experiment that draws attention to its own innovation. While Ovid renounces the traditional epic of war of writers like Virgil and claims to return to his first love, the elegy, his subject is now not love itself but, as he announces at the very opening: *Tempora cum causis Latium digesta per annum / lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa*, "The order of the calendar throughout the Latin year, its causes, and the starry signs that set beneath the earth and rise again" (1.1–2). Recreating elegy for this new focus, he pushes generic boundaries to produce what Hinds calls "a rather epic kind of elegy" (1992a; see also Hinds 1992b and Barchiesi 1997). Ovid's first divine informant, the god Janus who is *biceps* and *biformis* ("two-headed," "of double shape"; 1.65, 89), is an image for this formal hybridity (Barchiesi 1991; Hardie 1991; Newlands 1995: 6–7, 67).

The poem's double identity is built into its structure: it is a long poem written in the self-contained elegiac couplets that Romans traditionally considered inappropriate for continuous narrative (Kenney 2002; Miller 2002).[2] There is a typical cheekiness in telling the story of time in a meter that tends to delay it—the form combines stasis and action, as the retarding couplet is swept up into the movement of the year. Ovid's formal experiment thus draws attention to his mastery of tempo and *tempora* (1.1), time, the first word in the poem. Time is a constant theme in all of Ovid's works (Feeney 1999; Hinds 1999, 2005; Zissos and Gildenhard 1999). In this he is hardly original; time is one of the oldest subjects of poetry, a hostile force that seems to mock all human aspiration. Artists write about time in order to conquer it by making the transient and ephemeral eternal. At the end of the *Metamorphoses*, as Ovid moves from timeless myth into Roman history, he draws attention to the problem of *tempus edax rerum*, "time the devourer of all things" (15.234), which he claims to transcend through his art. From its very opening, however, the *Fasti* takes a different approach. Time is the poem's subject but also its substance. The poet tackles time head on by turning it into poetry, shaping the elegiac meter to mark the movement of time. Making time the matter of his poetry, Ovid turns the enemy of human creativity into a vehicle for it. Time becomes a human achievement, the creation of the poet, whom Juno greets as *O vates, Romani conditor anni*, "O poet, author of the Roman year" (6.21). Time is art.

Much of the recent interest in the *Fasti*, however, has focused on the politics of time, discussing its relation to Augustus's recent correction of the Julian calendar. The shaping of the ritual year had played an important symbolic role in the consolidation of the power of the *princeps*. Calendars are a means of expressing

national identities, the characteristics and values that unite a community through time as well as space. Augustus took a very mixed and irregular group of rituals and holidays, many of which were actually foreign in origin, and redefined them, foregrounding days associated with his own family, and making the cycle of the year tell a linear, even typological, story leading from Aeneas to himself. He downplayed some of the older, popular festivals, to focus on celebrations that reflected his own values, making the experience of the rhythms of time express his vision of Roman history, culture, and beliefs. While earlier critics assumed that Ovid's poem is an imitation of and tribute to Augustus' achievement, some recent scholars have suggested that the poem is an attempt to replace Augustus' vision of Rome with the poet's own: Augustan time with Ovidian time. In response also to Virgil's celebration of Augustus and Roman work in the *Georgics*, Ovid offers a year of continuous holidays, one in which the poet and not the *princeps* makes the year.

Given current critical interests in the politics of literature, it is not surprising that the *Fasti* has become popular today. But this still doesn't tell us if past generations read it, and if so what they made of it. Evidence shows that as Ovid became widely taught in the schools, the *Fasti* became a part of the medieval curriculum (Alton 1926; Alton and Wormell 1960 and 1961; McGregor 1978).[3] Although it was the last of Ovid's works to be translated into English, by John Gower in 1640, the *Fasti* was a school text in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. At Wolsey's school at Ipswich, for example, it was studied in the seventh form as an alternative to the *Metamorphoses*, and was read in a year of study which focused on "Verse composition and Latin letter writing. Turning verse to prose and prose to verse" (quoted in Clark 1948: 117).[4] It was of especial interest in the Renaissance; Ann Moss notes that, compared to other Ovidian works, the number of editions of the *Fasti* increased through the 1500s (1982: 18). In Italy, Poliziano made it the center of his 1481–82 lectures in Florence, which influenced the paintings of Piero di Cosmo and Botticelli, while discussions in the Roman Academy under Pomponio Leto were instrumental in the publication of two rival commentaries on the poem (Poliziano 1991; Fritsen 1995). This interest was partly driven by increasing curiosity about cultures of the past. As I have noted, the *Fasti* has been used as a source of information on Roman practices. Moreover, while modern critics have found the notion of a poetic calendar unprepossessing, Renaissance scholars were aware of and fascinated by the ancient tradition of writing time. The first English translator of the *Fasti*, John Gower, recognized Ovid's contribution to an established genre:

> Divers Poets before *Ovid* assayed this work *Fasti*, as *Ennius, Livius, Andronicus* [*sic*] and others. But *Ovid* a long time after diligently turning over all the ancient Calendars and Monuments of the Pontifies, and other old Annals which perteined to religious rites and ceremonies, and reducing the *Romane* year into a more exact order, with an exquisite observation of the Cosmical, Heliacal, and Acronicall rising and setting of all the fixed Constellations, composed this memorable Poeme with much labour and study. (1640: B3)

It was a genre, moreover, which Renaissance writers employed. As John F. Miller has shown, the *Fasti* was echoed in Catholic calendars which narrated the feasts of the liturgical year (2003: 175).[5] Ovid's calendar continued to be imitated during the Reformation, as Protestants envisioned their own versions of rituals and time. The *Fasti* was thus quickly enlisted in a battle over time and the question of who had the authority to determine its proper form that was heating up in Europe with the Reformation.

In post-Reformation England, the most obvious focal point for thinking about time was the debate over Pope Gregory's plans to reform Augustus' calendar. Britain ultimately rejected the 1582 calendar on the grounds that it was foreign and Roman.[6] This refusal to bow to papal power seems a logical extension of the Reformation into the realm of time—though it had, of course, the paradoxical effect of keeping the British stuck in the foreign and Roman time of Augustus. The insistence on a peculiarly English form of time is reflected in other changes that continued through the seventeenth century. As in Augustan Rome, the calendar was central in the creation of a new national identity. Following the Reformation, the English organization of time underwent its own reformation. Previously tied to natural and ecclesiastical cycles, organized by irregular feast days, many of which were of suspiciously Roman (in both senses) origins, the calendar was increasingly regularized to express, as David Cressy put it, "a mythic and patriotic sense of national identity." Through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there emerged "a new national, secular and dynastic calendar centring on the anniversaries of the Protestant monarch" rather than on the old celebration of saints' days (1989: xi–xii). By this means, as well as rejecting the papal year Britain asserted its cultural and historical identity, insisting on keeping time in its own way.

Within Britain, however, the legacy of the Reformation meant that people had conflicting ideas of how to "keep" time. Under the Stuarts, debates over time became focused on the topic of religious holidays, and especially the keeping of the Sabbath. Puritans insisted that the "holy day" be spent in prayer or reading the Bible, newly available in English. The King, however, encouraged playing games, arguably less because of the health benefits of innocent recreation than for the purpose of keeping the lower classes harmlessly occupied and even, since sports were often accompanied by alcohol, stupefied. To the Puritans, this seemed to encourage licentious behavior unfit for a godly Protestant nation. They increasingly attacked games as popish and indeed pagan. They targeted especially the rites of May, claiming that the maypole was a holdover from the pagan Floralia, described by Ovid in *Fasti* 5, a festival which had had a reputation for licentiousness even in Roman times.[7] In response to such criticism, James I issued the *Book of Sports* in 1618, insisting that it was important and indeed godly to play games on Sunday; the debate became even more vigorous under Charles I, who reissued the *Book* in 1633 (Marcus 1986).

As the controversy over the rites of May suggests, the question of time was linked to debates over customs and ritual. Like their continental counterparts, English

scholars were increasingly interested in ancient customs and turned to Ovid as their authority. While generally discouraging his readers from reading Ovid, an author he considered of no moral use, Sir Thomas Elyot recommended the *"De fastis, where the ceremonies of the Gentiles, and specially the Romans, be expressed"* (*The Governor*, 32). As a document for historical and cultural information about the past this work could be read safely. Others also referred to Ovid's text for information on Roman ceremonies and religion. Ben Jonson's 1631 masque *Chloridia: Rites to Chloris and her Nymphs* is based on the story of Flora–Chloris, goddess of the controversial Floralia and of flowers, in *Fasti* 5.183–354. Moreover, as his notes to all his masques show, Jonson had read the *Fasti* carefully and prided himself on his accurate use of Roman rites to create an air of authenticity.[8]

However, Roman customs were studied not only to shed light on the pagan past but also to comment on the English present. John Aubrey's *Remaines of Gentilisme and Judaisme* (1686), which compares British and Roman practices, draws heavily on Ovid's poem to demonstrate that British customs have their origins in Roman ones. According to Aubrey, the early Christian habit of absorbing pagan elements stuck in England: "In the Infancy of Christian Religion it was expedient to plough (as they say) with the heifer of the Gentiles: (i) to insinuate with them, and to let them continue and use their old Ethnick Festivals, which they new named with Christian names, *e.g.* Floralia, they turnd into ye Feast of St. Philip and Jacob, etc. The Saturnalia into Christmas" (1881: 6).[9] English rituals are thus Roman ones newly baptized. While Aubrey is hardly original in tracing modern practices to the ancient world, such assumptions took on a new significance in this period. Puritans insisted that the Reformation required a complete break with any remnants from the Roman past, which should therefore be repudiated, just as, they insisted, the pagan maypoles should be torn down to make way for truly Christian forms of worship (Guibbory 1998). In *Histrio-Mastix*, the Puritan William Prynne glosses his attack on licentious holiday practices with notes from the *Fasti* that prove their nefarious origins (1633: Hh[r], Hh2[r]; see also Pugh 2010: 48).

Even when read simply as a handbook, therefore, the *Fasti* was enlisted in debates over national identity. Carole Newlands has thus argued (2004–05) that the first English translation, Gower's 1640 *Ovids Festivalls, or Romane Calendar*, should be read as part of the pre-Civil War discussions of monarchical authority. But while Prynne used the *Fasti* to show the evils of Roman and English rituals, others invoked it to defend them. Where Puritans denounced the goddess of the Floralia as a whore, Jonson's *Chloridia* made her the symbol of fertile chastity (she was played by the pregnant queen), and used Ovid's story to celebrate masquing and courtly ceremony as the basis of national security.[10] The *Fasti* appears also in Robert Herrick's poetical defense of traditional English customs. Critics have long noted the importance of Ovid for Herrick; while most studies have focused on Herrick's use of Ovid's erotic poetry, some have noted in passing a general resemblance to Ovid's poetic calendar (see Chambers 1975: 114; Parry 1985: 170; Marcus 1986: 142).[11] His collection *Hesperides* is imagined both as a place and

as "my eternall Calender" ("To his worthy Kinsman, Mr. Stephen Soame," 10), whose announced subject is "Times trans-shifting" ("The Argument of his Book," 9). Herrick's vision of time is one centered, as in Ovid, on ceremonies and rituals, many described in terms of Roman practices and figures, and there is a holiday mood that seems shaped in part by the spirit of Ovid's calendar. Syrithe Pugh suggests that Herrick's allusions to Ovid's exilic and erotic verse shows his rejection of an increasingly dominant Puritan ideology (2010: 21–38, 57–83). Drawing on Ovid's erotic poetry, Herrick celebrates the desire that the Puritans wanted to repress; at the same time, he tames it, presenting himself as a remarkably chaste Ovid who therefore disproves Puritan charges of Anglican immorality. The parallels with the *Fasti* are also significant and reveal as much about Herrick's Christian beliefs as his classical tastes. In answer to the growing Puritan demand that England break from its Roman past, Herrick insists that pagan and Christian morals are compatible and can be joined together in a unified vision. He proclaims the importance of ceremony as a means of creating a community that extends in time as well as space and which may therefore include Ovid himself.

While Virgil's *Georgics* with its vision of endless work spoke to some segments of the country (Low 1985), Ovid's anti-georgic *Fasti* offered Herrick and others an alternative. For Milton also it seems appealing, as he begins to consider controversial topics. The importance of Ovid for Milton has long been noted (see Green in this volume). His early works especially draw freely on all of Ovid's poetry, from the erotic to the exilic. Ovid's calendar is recalled in a number of significant places. For Milton, like Herrick, the *Fasti* is first of all a reminder of the necessity and delights of recreation. In the university exercise "Prolusion 6," *Exercitationes nonnunquam Ludicras Philosophiae studiis non obesse*, "That sometimes sportive exercises are not prejudicial to philosophical studies," Milton cites a number of prominent Roman rituals noted in the *Fasti* in order to argue that all people need holidays from work: *Romani sua habuere Floralia, Rustici sua Palilia, Pistores sua Fornacalia, nos quoque potissimum hoc tempore rerum & negotiorum vacui, Socratico more ludere solemus*, "The Romans had their festival of flowers, the farmers their shepherds' feast, the bakers their oven fête; we also especially at this time, free from affairs and business, are accustomed to make sport in the Socratic manner" (Patterson 1931–38: xii.238). For the purposes of this academic debate at least, he renounces a Virgilian–Puritan ethos for one derived from Ovid.

However, Milton's inclusion of the Floralia, singled out by Puritans as the lewd ancestor of the pernicious May Day, for an example of innocent and natural fun is striking for a poet who too often is himself reductively described as a Puritan. While the serious young Milton in many ways modeled himself after Virgil, he clearly has a playful side, and is constantly drawn equally to Ovidian themes and figures. But there is a seriousness to this Ovidianism. John Hale has noted the particularly striking presence of the *Fasti* in *In Quintum Novembris*, an early poem dealing with a national holiday, Guy Fawkes Day (2005: 163–82). The fact that Milton wrote six poems on the subject of the Gunpowder Plot would seem to reflect his interest

in a day which had a growing place in the English national calendar. As David Cressy notes, a recent event had quickly become part of the national year and myth, celebrated as the anniversary of God's deliverance of the nation from the evils of Catholicism (1989: 145–48). The festival became even more significant in the first years of Charles I's reign, when Milton was writing, as fears increased that the King was not going to fight against Catholicism but, seduced by his Catholic bride, Henrietta Maria, encourage it.

Milton's poem is a compact *aition* which, like the stories of the *Fasti*, explains how a day became part of the national holiday schedule. The celebration originates in the rescue of the King from a nefarious (and of course Roman) plot. On the surface, the poem appears a quite conventional and conservative endorsement of the King whose preservation from destruction is celebrated. However, as Hale notes, by the end of the poem, "the king has faded out of the blessedness: the emphasis has shifted onto the Lord, and then to the people in their folk-rites. The crisis as narrated has changed the emphasis" (2005: 183; see also Hardie 2012: 435–37). A subterranean coup has occurred: the King has been subtly removed from the English calendar, which becomes representative only of the people. A similar overthrow of official power has been noted also in Milton's *A Mask at Ludlow* (*Comus*), another work that contains echoes of the *Fasti*.[12] Like all masques, Milton's work addresses the relation of poetry and power. Written to be performed on the holiday of Michaelmas, it is specifically concerned with ritual and the control of time, and with the relation between the pagan and English tradition. The allusions to the *Fasti* in these works might suggest that Milton turns to Ovid's calendar as he works out his own vision of English time. Milton may not be a "Puritan," but he is beginning to challenge the authority of the monarchical system—and also to assert that of the poet himself.

The politics of time in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England thus made the *Fasti* a, well, very timely work. But time is a problem with specific interest for poets, which may explain why they especially are sensitive to authoritarian attempts to reimagine its shape and control our use of it. Another reason for the fascination with Ovid's project of poeticizing the year is the intense desire in the Renaissance to transcend time through art (Quinones 1972). In *Metamorphoses* 15 especially, readers found both a haunting image of the consuming force of mutability and an inspiring assertion of the transcendent power of poetry. It was therefore invoked repeatedly in English poetry, not only to demonstrate time's ruthless force but also to affirm the ultimate triumph of art. The *Fasti*, however, offered writers a different way of imagining time.

Attention to the influence of the *Fasti* seems especially important with Spenser, whose debt to Ovid and obsession with time have both been long noted.[13] References to the *Fasti* appear especially when he is thinking about time and its relation to poetry. Spenser's career begins and ends with two poetic calendars, the *Shepheardes Calender* and the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, which draw on Ovid's work in many ways beyond mere form (Pugh 2005: 18–20, 250–61). While the vision of Ovidian

change in *Mutabilitie* clearly recalls Pythagoras' speech in *Metamorphoses* 15, it is prefaced by a story involving Faunus that is based on *Fasti* 2.303–58 (Ringler 1972: 293). Spenser also remembers Ovid's calendar in the "October" eclogue of the *Shepheardes Calender* in which two shepherds debate the kinds and powers of poetry. The eclogue ends with an emblem taken from Ovid's famous assertion of the poet's divinity in *Fasti* 6.5–6: *est deus in nobis; agitante calescimus illo; / impetus hic sacrae semina mentis habet*, "There is a god within us. It is when he stirs that our bosom warms; it is his impulse that sows the seeds of inspiration."

The specific allusions may suggest further a broader engagement with Ovid's poem. Like Ovid, Spenser experiments formally with the control of tempo and mixes stasis and movement. The independent eclogues of the *Shepheardes Calender*, like Ovid's retarding elegiac couplets, are swept up into a narrative by the passing of the year. Similarly, in *The Faerie Queene*, the self-enclosed Spenserian stanza, with its tendency to revolve around itself, is summoned to action by epic narrative. Like that of Ovid also, Spenser's formal innovation points to a larger generic experimentation. Temporal doubleness reinforces the generic hybridity of the *Faerie Queene*, which combines epic and romance to celebrate both "Fierce warres and faithfull loues" (1. Pr.1.9). In Book 3 Spenser reconciles war and love in the female knight Britomart, for whom erotic desire is the motive for heroic questing as she seeks her future husband, Artegall. At the center of Book 3 is the Garden of Adonis, which makes love the force generating not only heroic action but also the poem itself.

While drawing on a wide range of sources, the Garden of Adonis is a deeply Ovidian place. The endless change that takes place there, like that in *Mutabilitie*, has been traced to *Metamorphoses* 15, while the central, if rather shadowy, figures of Venus and Adonis are taken from *Metamorphoses* 10. However, the Garden is guarded by a figure whose very nature embodies the poem's own formal and thematic doubleness: "Old *Genius* the porter of them was, / Old *Genius*, the which a double nature has" (3.6.31.8–9). While there are prototypes for Genius in medieval literature, Spenser's Genius inherits much of the nature and indeed function of Ovid's Janus, as a symbol of poetic hybridity.[14] Moreover, as Ovid's Janus opens the door to the year itself, Spenser's porter leads into a garden that is central in Spenser's wrestling with time. Time is conventionally the enemy of not only art but love. In Book 2, therefore, the Bower of Bliss, the beautiful but ultimately false earthly paradise, walls time out. In the contrasting Garden of Adonis, however, Spenser tries to imagine a paradise and poetics which do not withstand time but, like the *Fasti*, admit it as the medium of poetry, desire, and life itself. Moving, as poetry does, through time, the poem transforms our perceptions of time. Time first appears in the garden in a cartoon version of the conventional Ovidian *edax rerum*: "Wicked *Time*," the "Great enimy" who "with his flaggy wings / Beates down both leaues and buds without regard, / Ne euer pittie may relent his malice hard" (3.6.39.3). But the poem moves beyond this stereotype, not by trying to transcend time but by embracing the continuous rhythms of temporality: "There is continuall spring, and haruest there / Continuall, both

meeting at one time" (3.6.42.1–2). Time is transformed from a bogeyman into a dynamic rhythm which makes possible the process of constant generation in the garden (see Gross 2004). It is the medium of the creative power of the imagination. A similar transformation appears at the very end of Spenser's epic. In the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, Time first appears as the dreadful and destructive force of Mutabilitie (*Faerie Queene* 7.6.5–6), but then becomes the doorkeeper of Moon: "an hory / old aged Sire, with hower-glasses in hand / Hight *Tyme*" (7.8.6–7). In the end, however, it takes the form of the glorious pageant of the year (7.7.28–47), as the vision of time of the *Metamorphoses* gives way to that of the *Fasti*.

While Ovid's seminal role in Renaissance art and poetry has long been acknowledged, attention to the *Fasti* expands our understanding of what he meant at this time. It was partly Ovid's versatility, his experimentation in different genres and meters, that appealed to artists who were themselves inventing new forms and pushing aesthetic and social boundaries. He was the ideal role model also for a new type of artist who could cockily proclaim his divine stature by quoting *Amores* 1.15.32–3 (*carmina morte carent. / cedant carminibus reges regumque triumphi*, in Marlowe's translation: "Verse is immortal, and shall ne'er decay, / To verse let kings give place, and kingly shows"), *Metamorphoses* 15.878–9 (*omnia saecula fama, / … vivam*, in Sandys's translation: "I, in my fame eternally will live"), or *Fasti* 6.5–6 (*est deus in nobis: agitante calescimus illo: / impetus hic sacrae semina mentis habet*, in Gower's translation: "There is a God in us: in him we live: / His sacred spirits this heat and vigour give"). At the same time, Ovid's fate, the exile ominously demonstrated by the sudden truncation of the *Fasti*, was a sobering reminder that kings did not always give way to verses. Moreover, time itself is difficult to keep, and to keep up with; as at the end of the *Fasti* Ovid admits: *tempora labuntur, tacitisque senescimus annis, / et fugiunt freno non remorante dies*, "Time slips away, and we grow old with silent lapse of years; there is no bridle that can curb the flying days" (6.771–72). Ironically, however, in exile he found himself in a world in which "one would think that time stood still, so slowly does it move" (*stare putes, adeo procedunt tempora tarde, Tr.* 5.10.5).

Many of the favorite Ovidian episodes drawn on in the Renaissance center on artist figures. Characters such as Arachne, Daedalus, Marysas, Orpheus, and Pygmalion show the power but also peril of being an artist. From the *Fasti*, however, artists turned to the story of Flora, told in *Fasti* 5.183–354, with which I would like to conclude. Of all the episodes in Ovid's calendar, this was most often recalled and reworked. I have already noted how Flora, goddess of the Floralia, became a symbol of Roman decadence for the Puritans, of innocent carefree recreation for Herrick and the young Milton, and of courtly power for Jonson. But like so many Ovidian episodes, this tale is also about the origins of the artist's own art. Like so many, also, it begins with sexual violence, as the chaste nymph Chloris is raped by Zephyr. However, unlike most Ovidian rapes, this story has a happy ending, as Chloris, now married to Zephyr, becomes Flora, the goddess of the flowers. Moreover, Chloris's metamorphosis benefits not only herself but also the entire world, which, until this

time, *unius … ante coloris erat*, "before had been of but one color" (5.222). Trans-
formed, she brings beauty, color, and variety into the world. As Carole Newlands
has argued, Flora is Ovid's "poetic alter ego" (1995: 110; see also Barchiesi 1997:
133–40); like Janus also she reflects the spirit of the *Fasti*—in her case, its holiday
spirit. Moreover, like Ovid, she is a master metamorphoser: her garden consists of
the young men whom she has turned into flowers—Narcissus, Adonis, Hyacinthus,
Crocus—as Ovid turned them into the flowers of poesie in the *Metamorphoses*.[15]

 Flora–Chloris is a stock figure in Renaissance pastoral, especially love, poetry.[16]
But she is also used as double for the Ovidian artist. Jonson's masque *Chloridia*
takes *Fasti* 5.222 *unius tellus ante coloris erat* ("before the world had been of but
one color") as the motto of his masque to celebrate the power of both courtly
ceremony and his own poetry to remake the world. The Garden of Adonis is
conventionally read as Spenser's image for the source of his own poetry, an *aition* of
the *Faerie Queene* itself. Spenser recalls Ovid's myth and implicitly models himself
on Flora when he makes his Garden full of young men transformed into flowers
(compare *Faerie Queene* 3.6.45 and *Fasti* 5.222–90). The figure of Flora appealed
also to visual artists.[17] Most famously, she is the subject for Botticelli's *Primavera* (c.
1482; see Plate 2), which as I noted earlier was influenced by Poliziano's lectures
on the poem. The painting focuses on the moment of metamorphosis, when
Chloris becomes Flora. Like other visual artists, Botticelli is attracted to the extra
challenge Ovidian stories offer of capturing the movement of time in a medium
that is primarily spatial. Botticelli creates time through the progression of the
figures moving from right to left, from Zephyr, who sets the scene in motion,
through Flora, to Chloris, Venus, the Graces, and finally Mercury whose gesture
upwards complements and resolves Zephyr's descent. Edgar Wind's influential
reading stressed the Neoplatonic dynamics of the picture, treating it as an image of
regeneration (1958: 113–27). But as Paul Barolosky has more recently suggested,
"in a very deep sense, Botticelli's picture is about the origins of poetry" (2000: 32).
The figure of Flora was also used as an *aition* of his own Ovidian art by Nicholas
Poussin, one of the greatest Renaissance interpreters of Ovid in any medium.
Among his many scenes based on Ovidian stories, Poussin painted two versions of
Flora, *The Triumph of Flora* (1627) and *The Realm of Flora* (1631), the latter of which
he, acknowledging the mediation of Botticelli, called his Primavera.[18] In both of
Poussin's works, Ovid's goddess appears surrounded by the human figures she
has transformed into the flowers of art: Narcissus, Ajax, Adonis, Hyacinth, and
others whose tales Ovid had told. She is the metamorphic artist par excellence,
triumphantly displaying her godlike powers for all eternity.

Notes

1 In the early twentieth century, the tendency to read the poem for historical informa-
 tion was unfortunately boosted by the work of James Frazer, whose eccentric editions
 turned it into an anthropological textbook on Roman ritual, a kind of proto-*Golden*

Bough; see Frazer (1929) and his more succinct Loeb edition (1996), from which citations in this essay are taken (with occasional slight modification).

2   On the form and its conventional English counterpart, the self-contained rhyming couplet, see Wilkinson (1962: 9–13).

3   The poem was well known enough that *Fasti* 1.307 was recycled verbatim in a twelfth-century lyric (Dronke 1968: 2.456, 1.157). As Dronke notes, the poem mixes a range Ovidian sources, though Dronke is unaware of the citation of the *Fasti*.

4   Thomas Elyot assumed that both the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* were "necessary for the understanding of other poets" (1962: 32). The *Fasti* continued to be a regular part of the curriculum, often in rotation with the *Metamorphoses*. In his 1848 edition of the *Fasti*, Thomas Keightley praised its variety and claimed that "There is not, perhaps, in the whole compass of classical literature a work better calculated to be put into the hands of students" (quoted in Wilkinson 1962: 119).

5   See de Armas (2008, 2010) for the *Fasti* in Spain.

6   While Elizabeth was surprisingly keen on following the Pope's changes, the calendar was opposed on the grounds of its papist origins; see North (1983). Debates continued through the 1600s and were revived briefly in 1645 and again in 1699, when the British once more rejected the reform as evidence of the Pope's "pretended *Supremacy*, not only over Churches and Kingdoms, but even the Celestial Motions" (Hoskin 1983: 258). It was not until 1752 that the British calendar was synchronized with that of most of the continent.

7   Much of the information about the seedier aspects of the Floralia came via Lactantius, who had reported that the goddess Flora was originally a whore who, made rich through her sordid profession, had bequeathed her legacy to Rome on the condition that she be made a goddess. The festival retained traces of its origins in promiscuity; see *Div. Inst*. 1.20. The notoriety of Flora and the Floralia was then spread through Boccaccio in *Genealogie Deorum Gentilium* 4.41 and *De Mulieribus Claris* 44 (*De Flora meretrice dea florum et Zephiri coniuge*). Both Giraldi and Cartari note, with somewhat lurid fascination, how at the Floralia *omnes nequitiae & lasciuiae nudis mulieribus peragebantur*, "all wicked and lewd things were performed by naked women" (Giraldi 1696: 42A; Cartari 1631: 159). Through such accounts the Floralia became a symbol of the Roman deification of money and sex, an identification useful, as we will see shortly, for Puritan attacks on later Roman practices.

8   See especially his notes to *Hymenaei, or the Solemnities of Masque and Barriers at a Marriage*, in Jonson (1969: 514–23).

9   Aubrey's syncretic impulse is not all that different from that of Frazer, who in his notes on the *Fasti* makes St. George's Day (April 23) "the modern equivalent of the Parilia" (April 21)—thus conveniently identifying England's birthday with Rome's (Frazer 1996: 415).

10 The fact that the queen had recently given birth to an heir and was already pregnant again showed further how her chaste fertility ensured the peaceful succession of power on which the country depended.

11 Pugh, however, is the first critic to discuss the verbal echoes and parallels of the *Fasti* in more depth (2010: 39–56).

12 Many critics have noted how Milton breaks with convention in that neither the King nor his representative play any role in the resolution of the action; see especially Revard

(1997: 153–56) and Marcus (1986: 178–85). The echoes of the *Fasti* were first noted by Bishop Hurd; I discuss their significance further in Kilgour (2012: 149–63).

13   On Spenser's Ovidianism see Hardie in this volume; for the theme of time in his works see Quinones (1972: 243–89); Gross (2004); McCabe (1989). The *Fasti* should also be considered in relation to Shakespeare, for whom time is a central theme (see Quinones 1972: 290–443) and who is constantly drawn to Ovid (Bate 1993). *The Rape of Lucrece* engages at many levels with the *Fasti*; see my brief discussion in Kilgour (2012: 132–35).

14   The parallel with the Roman Janus generally has been noted by several critics; see especially Norhnberg (1976: 440, 529–30).

15   The link between poetry and flowers goes back to the ancient world, but appears especially frequently in Renaissance English puns on poesie and posies.

16   While the two names are often interchangeable, there is sometimes a fine distinction, reflecting the two stages of Ovid's story: Chloris is associated with virginity, Flora with fertility. In the mid-seventeenth century, however, the name Chloris begins to be used parodically in libertine poetry. While Chloris is conventionally a virgin who rejects all impure advances (see for example William Smith's 1596 "CHLORIS, or THE COMPLAINT of the passionate despised Shepheard"), in Edmund Waller's "To Chloris, upon a favour received" war frightens the virgin into compliance. Other libertines go farther in using the name to mock the ideal of sexual purity. Rochester especially turns Ovid's Chloris into a whore ("Song: How perfect Cloris, and how free," "To a Lady, in a Letter"), a peasant raped by a passing shepherd ("As *Chloris* full of harmless thought"), and a masturbating pigkeeper ("*Faire Cloris* in a Pigsty lay"). Aphra Behn rewrites *Amores* 3.7 as "The Disappointment," naming the dissatisfied mistress Chloris. Ironically, the libertines come to the same conclusion as the Puritans: Ovid's goddess is just a whore after all. I discuss the Renaissance connotations of Flora further in Kilgour (2004).

17   See for example, Rembrandt's two paintings of his wife as Flora (Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, New York; State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg) and Titian's version (National Gallery, London).

18   See Worthen (1979). On the larger context of Poussin's Ovidianism see Unglaub (2006: 139–56). Like the writers I have discussed, Poussin experimented with representing time (see his *Dance to the Music of Time*; *The Four Seasons*) and rituals (*The Seven Sacraments*).

Further Reading

While, as noted, critics are only now becoming interested in the reception of the *Fasti*, recent studies have begun to demonstrate its place in the reception and interpretation of Ovid, especially in the Renaissance. Fritsen (1995) is helpful for information on the role of the *Fasti* in quattrocento Italian art and culture. Miller (2003) has shown the influence of the *Fasti* on Renaissance neo-Latin poetic calendars; de Armas (2008) argues for its significance in Spain, especially Cervantes. Pugh notes its relevance for Spenser (2005: 18–29, 92–96, 254–72) and Herrick (2010: 47–49, 134–39). See Kilgour (2012: 97–163) for its significance in England and especially the early works of Milton.

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16

Shakespeare and Ovid

Sean Keilen

No one has ever seriously doubted that Ovid's poetry had a singular influence on Shakespeare's development as a writer. The churchman Francis Meres was, perhaps, the first to call attention to Ovid's importance for Shakespeare's work, writing in 1598 that Shakespeare's narrative and lyric poems were evidence of *metempsychosis*, or a transmigration of souls: "As the soule of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras: so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and hony-tongued Shakespeare" (Smith 1904: 2.317). This famous remark cleverly draws its central metaphor from a speech that Pythagoras makes in the last book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. It also takes its cue from Shakespeare himself, who makes the Ovidian texture and inflection of his writing clear during every phase of his career. *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *Lucrece* (1594), the poems that established Shakespeare as a major new talent in Elizabethan England's literary culture, are explicit reworkings of stories that Ovid tells in Book 10 of *Metamorphoses* and Book 2 of the *Fasti*. In the epigraph to the former poem, the first printed text to which Shakespeare attached his name, he speaks about himself and his work in the very same words that Ovid used to describe his own poetic ambition, in the first book of the *Amores* (1.15.35−36): *vilia miretur vulgus: mihi flavus Apollo / pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua*, "Let the vulgar crowd marvel at worthless things. But to me, let golden Apollo give cups full of Castalian water."[1]

Two decades later, as Shakespeare's career in the London theater drew to a close, he continued to incorporate Ovidian texts into his own work, interpreting each in the other's light. The last plays of which Shakespeare was the sole author reverberate with echoes of Ovid's voice, and also of Shakespeare's earlier engagements with *Metamorphoses*. In a comic scene in *Cymbeline* (1610) that recollects but also changes the tragic, Ovidian plots of *Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus* (1592), a would-be rapist discovers that his intended victim has fallen asleep while "reading late / The tale

of Tereus. Here the leaf's turned down / Where Philomel gave up" (II.2.44–46). *The Winter's Tale* (1611) ends in a sculpture gallery, where a hard-hearted man falls in love with a statue of the wife whom he believes to be dead, only to discover that the lively "statue" is soft flesh, warm blood (V.3). In *The Tempest* (1611), an embittered sorcerer accepts his losses, abjures revenge, and renounces his magic in a speech that closely resembles a spell that an Ovidian witch once cast in order to rejuvenate an old man. These late, tragicomic allusions to the rape of Philomela, to Pygmalion, and to Medea, all testify to the perseverance of Shakespeare's fascination with Ovidian thought across the span of his writing life. Set these instances of metamorphosis alongside Bottom's transformation into an ass; or the ease with which Shakespeare's comic heroines change their gender by changing clothes; or, following an encounter with a ghost, Hamlet's "antic disposition," which may be a ruse of madness or insanity itself (I.5.175). It is clear that Shakespeare's interest in the trope of metamorphosis was both long-standing and varied, running the gamut from actual, physical change to psychological change, reality to pretense, and from the literal sense to metaphor.

Whereas Meres believed that Ovid had survived in Shakespeare's poetry, Ben Jonson supposed that Shakespeare himself would continue to live on, after his own death, in the First Folio (1623). It may appear that Ovid has no role to play in this transmigration of Shakespeare's spirit from his body to his book, especially because Jonson's poem argues that there is no comparison between Shakespeare and "all that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome / Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come" (Jonson 1996: ll. 39–40). However, on closer inspection, the distinction between Ovid's afterlife and the life force of Shakespeare's imagination is difficult to discern. The commingling of souls that Meres asserted in prose, Jonson demonstrates in allusive verses that hearken back to the concluding lines of *Metamorphoses*, and to Ovid's final boast (*vivam*), in order to predict for Shakespeare the future of limitless vitality that Ovid had claimed for himself: "Thou art a monument, without a tomb, / And art alive still, while thy book doth live / And we have wits to read, and praise to give." Having affirmed the connection between Shakespeare and Ovid in this way, Jonson's tribute also raises a question about his knowledge of the classics; according to Jonson, Shakespeare had but "small Latin, and less Greek" (Jonson 1996: ll. 22–24, 31). For readers in the next century, and for the field of Shakespeare Studies which was then in its infancy, Jonson's passing remark about the extent to which Shakespeare knew Latin would become an insoluble problem.

By the mid-1700s, a new profession of editors, scholars, and critics came to regard Ovid's receptions in Shakespeare's writing in the same way that it regarded Shakespeare's plays and poems: as textual relics and objects of a distancing historical curiosity (De Grazia 1991: 14–48). In the process, the rich self-evidence of Shakespeare's affinity for Ovid—which for Meres and the era to which he belonged meant transmigrated souls, living presences, and delectable sensory experiences—was reframed as a series of empirical questions about the scope of

Shakespeare's classical education. What languages did Shakespeare know and how well did he know them? To which editions of the classics did he have access? Did Shakespeare consult translations? In *An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare* (1766), Richard Farmer argued that Shakespeare's "*Studies* were more demonstratively confined to *Nature* and *his own Language*," and consequently, that Shakespeare had little or no acquaintance with Ovid's Latin (Vickers 1979: 5.278). The argument would diminish Shakespeare's stature were it not for the fact that Shakespeare's lack of formal education is the key to understanding the mystery of his prodigious talents. Farmer's underlying conviction is that Shakespeare was "the most original *thinker* and *speaker*, since the times of *Homer*," and therefore it was imperative that he "emancipate *Shakespeare* from the supposition of a *Classical training*," in order to establish that Shakespeare's genius was a natural endowment, rather than the artificial result of study or of "piratical depredations on the Ancients" (Vickers 1979: 5.261, 278). The impact of the *Essay* was felt immediately. Once Farmer had "removed a deal of *learned Rubbish*, and pointed out to [other commentators] *Shakespeare*'s track in the ever-pleasing *Paths of Nature*," no less a critic than Samuel Johnson declared that the question of Shakespeare's direct knowledge of Ovid and other ancient writers "is *now* for ever decided" (Vickers 1979: 5.273).

Dr. Johnson's pronouncement notwithstanding, Shakespeareans continued to scrutinize Shakespeare's knowledge of the classics, and particularly of Ovid. At the start of the twentieth century, Robert Kilburn Root sifted Shakespeare's plays and poems for direct quotations of ancient texts, along with the "definite, detailed allusions" and "vaguer, more general allusions" that Shakespeare made to Roman authors. Root concluded that "the influence of Ovid is at least four times as great as that of Vergil," the poet who comes directly after Ovid in the order of Shakespeare's preferences (Root 1965: 2–3). Later, Edgar Fripp contended that only the Bible had an influence on Shakespeare's development that was comparable to the influence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Building on Root's research, and opposing the critical tradition to which Farmer's *Essay* had given rise, Fripp argued that "after seven years at an excellent Latin School," Shakespeare "knew his school-book from end to end, and … *loved* it" (Fripp 1930: 98). For him, Shakespeare's works offered incontrovertible evidence that Shakespeare "devoured the *Metamorphoses*" and that "[t]he difficulty was not to bring the boy to his school-book, but to keep him from it" (Fripp 1938: 1.102). Inspired by the vision of Shakespeare's passionate, boyhood devotion to Ovid's poem, Fripp wrote lectures, essays, and books that added greatly to the list of Ovidian sources that Root had compiled for Shakespeare's work. T.W. Baldwin, the author of the standard text about Shakespeare's education, drew extensively on Fripp's research. He also seemed to worry that Fripp had been too credulous in finding Ovid wherever he looked in the shadowy forest of Shakespeare's imagination. "Mr. Fripp has done what one might perhaps at first sight think to be something more than justice to Shakespere's knowledge of the *Metamorphoses*; but in the light of contemporary training in that work,

and Shakespere's own direct hints, Mr. Fripp is probably not unduly insistent, though we should sift his alleged instances with the greatest of care" (Baldwin 1944: 2.454).

Quellenforschung (the study of literary influence) is no longer the heart of Shakespeare Studies as it enters a third century and discussions of Ovid's consequence for Shakespeare have been especially diverse (Velz 2000). In the decades since the publication of Baldwin's work, scholarship has distinguished Shakespeare's interest in the ancient fable (a form of narrative) from his interest in metamorphosis (a practice, and perhaps a theory, of composition) (Barkan 1986). As a result, it is now much easier to grasp the difficult idea that even though a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* appears on the Shakespearean stage as a material object, the poem itself "is no one thing," because "the significance of classical texts" in Shakespeare's plays is always changing—changing in the sense that it "is determined by what they mean to whom at particular moments in the drama" (Burrow 2004: 22). Older and positivistic forms of source study yielded to styles of interpretation that relish ambiguity and uncertainty, and to a form of interpretation that George Sandys, who translated Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the seventeenth century, might have called "double construction."[2] For "the subject of Shakespeare's classical learning cannot be approached simply by the tabulation of sources," when in play after play it appears to be the case that "classical literature is being *made* by dramatic contingencies" (Burrow 2004: 19, 21).

Nevertheless, it is worth acknowledging that the debate about Shakespeare's learning continues, with new scholars stepping into versions of old positions. Jonathan Bate argues that it is essential to interpret Shakespeare's receptions of Ovid in the context of the goals and methods of the rigorous, Latin-language curriculum of Elizabethan grammar school. For him, this means that whenever Shakespeare imitates Ovidian poetry, he applies ancient wisdom analytically to ambiguous modern situations (and expects his audiences to take notice) (Bate 1993: 9–11). By contrast, Charles Martindale prefers to interpret Shakespeare's literary education as an ambiguous experience in its own right, leading not to deep knowledge of the Latin text of *Metamorphoses* or to a "consistent manner" of imitation, but to "discontinuous and opportunistic" ways of using Ovid's work, and to bravura performances of linguistic skill rather than determinate, critical judgments that turn on the relationship of allusion and context (Martindale and Martindale 1990: 23; Martindale 2000: esp. 210–12). The sheer persistence of this quarrel suggests that what may actually be at stake is the value of scholarship itself. In that sense, the roots of the discussion about Shakespeare's learning might be traced back beyond the eighteenth century and Jonson's eulogy for his friend, to the Elizabethan grammar school. There, Shakespeare himself recognized that his teachers were ambivalent about the influence of Ovidian poetry, even though they had endorsed *Metamorphoses* as an *exemplar totius humanae et civilis vitae*, "an exemplar of the whole of human and civil life."[3] For they could not demonstrate conclusively that Ovid shared their values.

Mi perdonato, gentle master mine;
I am in all affected as yourself;
Glad that you thus continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline,
Let's be no Stoics nor no stocks, I pray,
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjur'd.
                    (*The Taming of the Shrew* I.1.25–33)

Imagining Shakespeare's first encounter with Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Fripp conjures a scene in which unforced enjoyment of the poem and a willingness to thwart didactic authority are two sides of one coin. "Sooner or later [Shakespeare] possessed a copy, abridged or unabridged, and he read it from cover to cover, in forbidden if not in lawful hours, when his master was not looking—in bed, in his father's garden, in the forest" (Fripp 1938: 1.102). In all likelihood, young Shakespeare spent the bulk of his time with Ovid's poetry in the classroom, under the watchful eye of his teachers at the King's New School in Stratford-upon-Avon, rather than alone with Ovid in the woods. During the earliest phases of his education, Shakespeare may have read parts of *Metamorphoses* in translation. The schoolmaster John Brinsley encouraged the use of English versions of the classics to help students learn Latin grammar and vocabulary, and also to ensure that they would "make right use of the matter of their Authours, beside the Latine; even from the first beginners: as of *Sententiae* and *Confabulatiunculae Pueriles*, *Cato*, Esop's fables, Tullies *Epistles*, Tullies *Offices*, Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, and so on to the highest" (Brinsley 1612: [§3v]–[A1r]). Later, when his Latin was sound and he had mastered rudimentary forms of composition (including fable, proverb, and epistle), Shakespeare would come back to *Metamorphoses* in the course of learning how to make verses and to write more sophisticated forms of prose (impersonation, description, theme, and declamation). Fripp's excited vision of Shakespeare's childhood and adolescence stands in marked contrast to the ordinarily sober affect of his research, but it also reopens a way of thinking about Shakespeare's familiarity with Ovid that the eighteenth-century studies had foreclosed.

To suggest that the pleasure that Shakespeare took in *Metamorphoses* was immoderate, or that it subverted the will of his teachers, is to speak of Shakespeare in the way that ancient and Renaissance writers often spoke about Ovid. Intended for a career in law and politics, Ovid studied rhetoric at the best schools, but finding poetic composition irresistible, he diverged from the path that his father had ordained for him (*Tr.* 4.10.21–27). Ancient sources suggest that Ovid's talent for versification was matched only by his cheerful indifference to formal instruction. Famously, he consented to participate in *controversiae*—school exercises in which students debated imaginary legal cases—only when the topic allowed him to focus on the portrayal of character. (By contrast, Ovid gladly performed *suasoriae*,

the exercises in which students would impersonate historical or mythological persons in moments of crisis.) The Elder Seneca reports that Ovid "was not too free in his use of language, except in his poems, where he was not only aware of his faults but loved them" (*Contr.* 2.2.12, trans. Winterbottom). More critical than Seneca, Quintilian finds fault with Ovid for being *lascivus* ("playful" or possibly "licentious") and *nimium amator ingenii sui* ("too much a lover of his own wit") (10.1.88).[4] He also blames him for having spent more time making clever transitions between speeches in *Metamorphoses* than he did making the speeches themselves: a "childish and pedantic affectation" and a "silly game Ovid is in the habit of playing" (*lascivire … solet*) (4.1.77). This combination of filial insubordination, compulsive verse-making, fondness for mistakes, and devotion to play and pleasure changed Ovid's biography into a symbol for poetry's perverse refusal to comply with authority, whether it be patriarchal, academic, rhetorical, or linguistic. Perhaps Shakespeare's teachers instructed him to see Ovid's life and work in that light, and perhaps he liked what he saw: a playfulness with words and ideas that could not be reduced to lessons.

The goals of the Elizabethan curriculum were ethical as well as linguistic, and presupposed that by learning to read and write classical Latin, English boys would absorb ancient wisdom and live virtuous lives, in imitation of the noble men whom they studied. In this context, the importance of *Metamorphoses* to grammar school studies is somewhat difficult to fathom. Ovid's reputation for resisting rather than complying with authority made him a dubious choice for imitation, and his myths are poor illustrations of *constantia*, *patientia*, and *pietas*, the Roman virtues that Elizabethan culture admired most. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Ovid's verses set the highest standard for elegance and fluency in Latin, or that centuries of moralizing commentary had shown that his fables could be safely converted into lessons that were suitable for Christian readers. Renaissance discussions of the fable assume that it is in the nature of Ovid's favorite narrative form for the reader to change the text's literal meaning into something else. According to a popular adaptation of Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata* ("preliminary exercises"), "[a] fable is a forged tale, containing in it by the colour of a lie, a matter of truthe" (Rainolde 1563: ii^v). In the same spirit, Thomas Wilson argues that "undoubtedly there is no one tale among all the Poetes, but under the same is comprehended some thing that parteineth, either to the amendment of maners, to the knowledge of the trueth, to the setting forth of Natures work, or els the vnderstanding of some notable thing done" (Wilson 1553: 104r). In a culture that made these assumptions about the nature of fiction and the purpose of interpretation, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was arguably a valuable resource for moral instruction as well as for instruction in style. Of the poem's "dark Philosophie of turned shapes," the translator Arthur Golding "earnestly admonisht" his readers "[t]o seeke a further meening than the letter gives to see." If poets "with fables shadowed so / The certeine truth," asks Golding, "what letteth us to plucke those visers fro / Their doings, and to bring ageine the darkened truth to light … " (Golding 2000: "Epistle," 7, 537–42).

Nevertheless, a long list of Elizabethan educators expressed unease about Ovid's presence in the curriculum. Thomas Elyot allows that *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* might be useful resources for interpreting other ancient texts, but in the end, he advises that it is better not to read them at all. Because "there is litell other lernyng in them, concernyng either vertuous maners or policie," he writes, "I suppose it were better that as fables and ceremonies happen to come in a lesson, it were declared abundantly by the maister than that in the saide two bokes, a longe tyme shulde be spente and almost lost: which mought be better employed on suche autors that do minister both eloquence, ciuile policie, and exhortation to virtue" (Rude 1992: 46). Roger Ascham also glances at the potentially harmful influence of Ovidian writing on boys when he declares a preference for teaching "hard wits" rather than "quick wits"—wit being the faculty with which the Renaissance ordinarily associated Ovid himself (remember Meres's reference to Ovid's "sweet, wittie soul"). Quick wits, writes Ascham, "delight themselves in easy and pleasant studies, and never pass far forward in high and hard sciences." From this assertion, it follows that "the quickest wits commonly may prove the best poets, but not the wisest Orators: ready of tongue to speak boldly, not deep of judgment, either for good counsel or wise writing." "Headie, and Brainsicke," quick wittedness is also associated with other characteristically Ovidian traits: inconstancy, self-indulgence, and disregard for the decorum of relationships in a hierarchical society. "[F]or manners and life," writes Ascham,

> quick wits commonly be, in desire, newfangle, in purpose, unconstant, light to promise any thing, ready to forget everything: both benefit and injury: and thereby neither fast to friend, nor fearful to foe: inquisitive of every trifle, not secret in greatest affairs: bold with any person: busy, in every matter: … of nature also, always flattering their betters, annoying their equals, despising their inferiors: and, by quickness of wit, very quick and ready to like none so well as themselves. (Ascham 1570: 4v–5r)

John Stockwood is more direct in offering a critique of the Ovidian content of Elizabethan education. Appalled by the "shameful filthiness" that he found in "the chief of our schole books," Stockwood warns that a "wicked thing once learned in youth, is very hardly rooted out in age"; when he wrote this text, he had "Tibullus, Catullus, Propertius, Gallus, Martialis [and] a great parte of Ovid" in mind (Stockwood 1579: 68v–69r).

Shakespeare's early work for the theater makes hay of precisely these conservative anxieties about Ovid. It also satirizes grammar school pedagogy, schoolmasters, and above all, the desire on which the entire project of Elizabethan education rests: namely, that ancient literature should be a model for contemporary life (Burrow 2004). In *Titus Andronicus*, a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* not only inspires both Romans and Goths to perform acts of rape, mutilation, murder, and cannibalism; it also offers practical advice for committing these heinous crimes! Partly

on the basis of this play, modern criticism has acknowledged that in Elizabethan England, "opposed attitudes toward Ovid existed side by side, even within the same mind" (Bush 1963: 78). It has also been suggested that Shakespeare's culture "demanded" from Ovid the "ambivalence" that it found in the pages of *Metamorphoses*: "where belief is Christian and education is classical, … there must be a sense in which the reader both does and does not accept the authority of learning" (Lerner 1998: 135). Both of these arguments imply that quite apart from well-crafted lines and wise sayings, what Ovid's poem may have offered Elizabethan readers was an encounter with the mystery of the divided self. When Golding argues that the "use" of Ovid's "dark Philosophie" is that "every man / (Endevoring to know himself as neerly as he can)," should "correct / His feerce affections" lest they "headlong carie him to every filthy pit / Of vyce," he tacks toward this idea without ever making landfall there ("Epistle," 570–77). I would describe Elizabethan England's fascination with *Metamorphoses* in a slightly different way. In Ovid's poem, Shakespeare and his contemporaries stumbled on the unconscious mind of the Roman world, on which their society had founded its own dreams of civilization; and thus they came face to face with uncanny versions of themselves.

Let us partly account for the contribution that formal education makes to Shakespeare's encounter with Ovid by saying that *Metamorphoses*, as an example of the extraordinary playfulness of Ovidian writing, impresses Shakespeare more deeply than any of the moral precepts that his teachers used that text to frame. Everything changes all the time in Shakespeare's poems and plays, but nothing is ever lost entirely. The *Sonnets* ingeniously apply Ovid's Pythagorean claim about the cosmos—15.165 *omnia mutantur, nihil interit*—to the vicissitudes of a poet's love for a beautiful but fickle young man. The order of civilization and the order of Nature are under constant pressure from human desires and the passions, and vice versa. Consider Ulysses' speech about the danger that Achilles' anger poses to the natural, political, and social orders in *Troilus and Cressida*: "Take but degree away, untune that string, / And, hark, what discord follows! each thing meets / In mere oppugnancy …" (I.3.109–24). The difference between subjects and objects of perception is obscure. Consequently, there is more than one way to see and to be seen. The error that Ovid's characters make when they assume that one is free to use other beings as objects, but immune from being objectified in turn, is the germ from which Shakespeare cultivates both comedy and tragedy; the mistake that makes Malvolio ridiculous in *Twelfth Night*, makes Lear pitiable in *King Lear*. Identity is not fixed; it is fluid. As Richard II begins to change from sovereign to subject, he compares himself to Phaëthon: "Down, down I come, like glist'ring Phaëthon, / Wanting the manage of unruly jades" (III.3.178–79). Human psychology and behavior, more often than not, are expressions of a divided subjectivity. The idea holds true across the range of Shakespeare's genres, and for protagonists as well as antagonists. In *Merchant of Venice*, Portia is caught between wanting to obey her father's wishes and to follow the prompting of her own desires (II.1.21–24), while for Iago, who declares, "I am not what I am," the reason why he hates Othello

is as uncertain as it is compelling (*Othello* I.1.64, I.3.378–82). Ambiguity is as great a source of suffering as clear distinctions, but it is also more conducive to imaginative activity, such as poetry and drama. The rape that throws Lucrece's status as a chaste woman into question also makes it possible for her to imagine sympathetically the losses of two Ovidian heroines—the nightingale and Hecuba—to whom she gives voice through song (*Lucrece* 1128–48, 1443–98).

In each of these characteristically Shakespearean ideas, there is the sense of an Ovidian spirit at work. Suppose, however, that at the root of everything that Shakespeare learned from *Metamorphoses* is a knowledge of how to play. A number of Elizabethan writers share that knowledge with Shakespeare, but Shakespeare is set apart from them by the degree to which he not only weaves Ovidian thought into the fabric of his own perceptions, but also doubts poetry's didactic utility. For in learning, like Ovid, how to play with the words and concepts that human beings use in order to create the worlds that they inhabit, Shakespeare also seems to have understood that poetry is subject to the games it plays and stands within the created world's endless flux. Remarkably, from Ovid, the least authoritarian of writers—the one whom Gilbert Murray calls "the type and prophet of … uncritical mimesis"—Shakespeare appears to have learned that while poetry may explore experience, it cannot legitimately instruct it (Murray 1922: 115). For him, the heart of Ovid's most influential teaching may have been the skeptical attention that *Metamorphoses* turns upon its own authority and consequence: "I am transformed, master, am I not?" (*Comedy of Errors* II.2.194).

Shakespeare reworks many Ovidian stories in the course of his poems and plays, but among them, Ovid's first myth is of peculiar and lasting importance. Set at the beginning of the poem, the creation myth suggests that the invention of the world and the composition of Ovid's text are the same kind of act. It also asserts, more fundamentally, that creation *is* a transformation of one thing into something else. And the reverse is also true: Creation being change, every change is a creative act. The priority of these ideas in Ovid's poem suggests that the creation myth is a framework for understanding both how transformation works in other myths and what each new transformation means in Ovid's unfolding speculation about the arts. Ovid's creation myth can also be a lens that brings into focus Shakespeare's thinking about his own art: about the relationship between artists and the objects that they make, and between art objects and the audiences that interpret them, and about the changes that occur during the process of "the work of art." Possibly, by going back to the beginning of Shakespeare's encounter with Ovid, we will discover a new direction that reception studies might take.

Every reader of *Metamorphoses* knows that the universe is a work of art, created when order is imposed on chaos.[5] In the poem's opening scene, Nature wears a face without features (1.6 *unus erat toto naturae vultus in orbe*), and nothing retains its shape (1.17 *nulli sua forma manebat*). To this bewildering environment, an unnamed god introduces basic definitions. He separates one thing from another, and assigns to every part a particular place in his design; thus does the order of Nature come

into being. The creation of the world in Ovid's text is also an effort to put a better face on Nature and, in this context, an attempt at self-portraiture. As his work draws to a close (1.79–83), the *opifex rerum* ("maker of things") uses his own substance (*divino semine*) to fashion humankind in the very image of the power of the gods (*in effigiem moderantum cuncta deorum*). Separated from animals by the stuff that they are made of, human beings also stand apart from other creatures by standing upright, and by having faces that are made for turning upward and looking at the gods (1.85–86 *os homini sublime dedit caelumque videre / iussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*). It is only at this point—when a featureless world changes into something that can look back at the one who changed it—that chaos becomes orderly (1.87–88): *sic, modo quae fuerat rudis et sine imagine, tellus / induit ignotas hominum conversa figuras*, "Then the Earth, which lately had been crude and without form, was changed and put on the unknown forms of men." With the creation of a face that resembles, and looks back upon, its creator, the poem's first story about art comes to an end, but change itself continues, and with each new change, the authority of the self-portraying gods is thrown further into question. Soon piety lies prostrate in defeat, giants wage war on Mount Olympus, Lycaon denies Jove's divinity, and the gods are clamoring to destroy with floods the world that they fashioned as a mirror.

The lineaments of this origin story, which profoundly unsettles the relationship between artist-subjects and art-objects, are detectable in many of the Ovidian myths in which Shakespeare took an explicit interest (Fripp 1930: 98–128; Baldwin 1944: 2.417–55; Root 1965). For example, Actaeon unwittingly adopts the privileged position of a god when he looks upon Diana, and in retaliation, Diana looks back at Actaeon, throwing in his face the water that will wash away his human form (3.187–90). By changing Actaeon into a stag, Diana means to prevent him from telling stories about her, and to establish clearly that she is a subject, not an object, of attention. But no sooner has Diana turned Actaeon into the image of her wrath than she herself becomes the object of speculation—not for one man, but for many men (3.253–55). Later in the same book, Narcissus eagerly pursues a voice that says exactly what he wants to hear, but he is revolted to discover that he is the object, not the subject, of his discourse, when Echo reveals that she has been using his words to express her desire. Narcissus never recovers from this loss of subjectivity, and later, he wastes away while his own reflection gazes back at him. In Book 10, there is Orpheus, who in the pivotal moment of his myth, looks back at Eurydice, only to find her looking back at him. Earlier, his song was irresistible, and changed even Dis and Persephone into reflections of his desire. But now, looking back at Eurydice, Orpheus comes face to face with the limits of his powers to remake the world in his own image, and he suffers the loss of control that every artist must suffer in the process of creating.

What is true for Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is also true for Shakespeare's work. Across a range of experiences and activities—perception, desire, communication, interpretation, revenge—projections of one's own perspective onto the world, in an

effort to possess or make it meaningful as an extension of the self, result in both the world and the self becoming more mysterious, precisely at the point when the subject becomes aware that the face looking back from his reflection is alien as well as familiar. Every subject becomes estranged from his projects and himself, when he becomes the object of the object of his own attention.

When, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595), the fairy queen, Titania, refuses to give her husband what he wants (a changeling boy), Oberon plots to make her fall in love with the asinine man called Bottom. But whereas Oberon expects to relish Titania's face as a spectacle of his authority and power, he is confronted, instead, by an image of his own humiliating desire for a mortal child; the experience changes him and dispels his charm. "Her dotage now I do begin to pity," says Oberon to Puck, as he recalls the sight of Titania: "I will undo / This hateful imperfection of her eyes" (IV.1.45, 61–62). Hamlet produces a play at Elsinore: ostensibly to test the truth of what his father's Ghost has said about his uncle, in actuality to demonstrate the conclusion that for Hamlet is foregone. But when the trap is sprung, it is Hamlet who is caught, not Claudius, for almost no one sees what Hamlet sees. In the place of a master playwright, or of proof that Claudius has committed murder, the Danish courtiers see a madman's self-expression (*Hamlet* III.2). Like Oberon and Hamlet, Prospero also forcibly conscripts living beings to enact a plot that he has written, in the hopes of restoring an idea of himself that bitter experience has damaged. But when Prospero sees the suffering of the players in his drama through the eyes of Ariel, the servant who puts his will into effect, he also sees himself in an unexpected way and foreswears the "project" in which he holds his enemies captive (*Tempest* V.1.1). In each of these cases, drawn from the beginning, middle, and end of Shakespeare's career, the effort to find or impress one's likeness on the world takes the form of a play, which suggests that in Ovid's narrative poem, Shakespeare may have found ways of thinking not only about the creation and reception of works of art, but also about drama.

The fact that Shakespeare's characters cannot help but interpret the world as an extension of themselves should not be mistaken for a positive instruction on Shakespeare's part that we ought to interpret anything in that way. Shakespeare offers observations about human experience, not lessons. He also offers experience itself, in the form of an invitation to make his art meaningful by imagining it in a new way—ever mindful of the fact that in doing so, one will be changed oneself. Second, and in contrast to Golding (for whom interpretation is a process that changes darkness into light, ambiguity into clear distinctions, and doubt into certain knowledge), for Shakespeare, the process of interpretation works in the opposite direction from clear explication: obscuring clarity, making the familiar strange, and restoring ambiguity to topics where there had seemed to be nothing more to say. Golding is convinced that only "a stayed head and judgement" are required to change Ovid's myths into the moral truths about the self ("Preface," 140), but Shakespeare has no such conviction. For him, the imagination overrides

the difference between what we want to discover in a text and what is really there, and reading is less an action that subjects perform on objects, than it is an encounter between subjects, in which the only truth is change itself.

Do either of these responses to *Metamorphoses* suggest a future for reception studies, or for literary studies generally? Both Shakespeare and Golding acknowledge the complexity of Ovid's poem. Both work diligently to rescue the poem from the ancient past and to make it new again, by relating it to the experiences and concerns of readers and audiences in the present day. But whereas Shakespeare embraces Ovidian ambiguity and seeks to extend it indefinitely, Golding is able to tolerate that ambiguity only as a pretext for reading. For him, an encounter with Ovid's poem can have value only if it changes Ovid's "dark Philosophie of turned shapes" into an authoritative account of the self's moral condition. By contrast, Shakespeare seems to imagine that the value of interpretation is precisely that art, interpretation, and the self become more, not less, uncertain. Having learned at Ovid's hand to be skeptical about didactic authority, Shakespeare opens, for us, the possibility of a scholarship that has the features of art.

Notes

1 Shakespeare (2002) is the source for all quotations from Shakespeare's works.
2 Sandys (1970: 151) comments on the myth of Actaeon: "But why may not this fable receave a double construction? Those being the best that admit of most senses."
3 Thus Raphael Regius, whose edition of *Metamorphoses* and commentary on the poem (1493) circulated widely during the sixteenth century. Quoted in Coon (1930: 280).
4 Translations of Quintilian are by D. Russell (Cambridge, MA, 2001), occasionally modified.
5 Translations from *Metamorphoses* are by F.J. Miller, rev. G.P. Goold (Cambridge, MA, 1994), occasionally modified.

Further Reading

Bate (1993) provides a lively and accessible introduction to the topic of Shakespeare's Ovidianism. Maslen (2000) discusses the place of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the influence of the grammar school curriculum on the development of Elizabethan literature prior to Shakespeare. Brown (2002) interprets Shakespeare's encounter with *Metamorphoses* in the context of Ovid's reception in English literature from the Middle Ages to the late twentieth century. For Shakespeare's training in versification, see Baldwin (1944: 2.380–416). For Shakespeare's perception of the tension between the goals of the Elizabethan curriculum and its techniques, see Enterline (2012). James (2003) argues that for Shakespeare and other Renaissance writers, the influence of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was political as well as literary. Enterline (2006) shows that Shakespearean ideas about subjectivity, desire, and perception derive from Ovidian representations of the human body.

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Ben Jonson's Light Reading

Heather James

Ben Jonson took his light reading seriously. He admired Cicero, Seneca, Tacitus, Juvenal, and Quintilian for their moral gravity and wit. But he loved Horace and Martial more. Their slender poetic genres—odes, epigrams, epistles, and genial satires—seem only to have added to their aesthetic appeal and moral stature. And so Jonson placed them on equal footing with the weightiest classical authorities. He extensively imitated Horace in his lyric poems and epistles, as well as his satirical comedy, *Poetaster, or the Arraignment* (1601–1602), and he adapted Martial copiously in his epigrams and his city comedies, in which savvy young men (such as Well-bred and Knowell) rule the day. Horace is the more celebrated of Jonson's classical models, for the good reason that Jonson famously presented himself as the Elizabethan Horace and for the additional, if less persuasive, reason that Horace is more admired by modern critics than Martial is.[1] In fact, Jonson's working copy of Martial's epigrams, a 1619 sixteenmo edited by Pieter Schrijver, gives ample evidence of the studious attention he paid to the poet's slender verses: he read, annotated, and otherwise marked up this tiny book even more thoroughly than his treasured copy of the Latin *Politicorum, sive Civilis Doctrinae Libri Sex* (1623), written by the important Flemish humanist, Justus Lipsius.[2]

Jonson is often said to have restricted the number of approved classical authors to those who tout the more austere moral and political virtues—namely Cicero, Seneca, Tacitus, Juvenal, and Quintilian. His choice of classical authors, moreover, is generally read in terms of his zeal for authorial and even laureate status: he aimed to be a great author and a peer of classical humanists such as Francesco Petrarch, Desiderius Erasmus, Juan Luis Vives, Justus Lipsius, Daniel Heinsius, Isaac Casaubon, Joseph Justus Scaliger, and his own teacher, William Camden.[3] Jonson would not have turned down the compliment of association with the greatest classical philologists of the past and his own day. But it bears emphasizing that

his abundant reading notes and imitative writing show that he radically *extended* the list of privileged Roman writers from the humanist canon to other poets, who are better known for their wanton wit and deep learning than for their moral severity. These are the great comic playwrights Plautus and Terence, and the erotic elegists of the Augustan age. Jonson had time, and plenty of it, for both playwrights and for Catullus, Propertius, and Tibullus. And where historical record left gaps, Jonson might step in to fill them. He attended, for example, to the figure of Gallus, a love elegist whose reputation endured in early modern commentaries on other Roman love elegists—chiefly Ovid—even though his verses had not survived to Jonson's day. There was hope in Jonson's lifetime that at least a handful of Gallus' verses had been recovered, but Joseph Scaliger, the greatest classical scholar of the day, proved them to be a forgery.[4]

Jonson's presentation of Gallus is worth expanding on, and puzzling over, for a moment. Gallus appears as a character in *Poetaster, or the Arraignment*, where he is the friend and colleague of the great Augustan poets. Horace and Virgil treat him as a respected colleague, while Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid (anachronisms apply) see him as an integral part of the social circle of love elegists. It is surprising that Jonson gave more than passing notice to Gallus, considering his own love of documentation and Gallus' absence from the historical record. It would have been easier to ignore him. Yet Gallus is omnipresent in *Poetaster* as a poet, friend, and partier. He is on hand at the private banquet and fancy dress party thrown by Ovid and Julia (seen as the emperor's daughter), in which the love poets, their mistresses, and admirers come dressed as the gods. He is also present when Augustus Caesar, led by the misinformation of spies to believe that Ovid and his friends are plotting treason, bursts in on the party. The encounter is a shock to everyone and especially Augustus, who suffers a surreal emotional meltdown, after which he exiles Ovid and imprisons his daughter. They are guiltless of treason but they are immoral and live, he gravely intones, as if "virtue were no law unto [their] lives" (4.6.45).[5]

Gallus plays a major role in hosting the party: he leads the drinking songs, high-spirited numbers that proclaim the license and liberty due to poets. His most important scene, however, comes in Act 5, when the remaining poets in Rome assemble at the court of Augustus Caesar. The moment is sensitive. The poets are on edge, concerned about a host of problems relating to the exile of Ovid—principally the threat to the traditional liberties of Rome's poets and citizens and the apparently unlimited prerogatives of her emperor. For his part, Augustus seems keen to establish his absolute authority but willing to settle his differences with the poets so that both sides may join together to create a golden age of arts in the imperial court. And yet, even as the emperor offers hope, he issues a pointed and public reminder that Gallus has already received special favor and proved to be a disappointment.

The historical Gallus was made prefect of Egypt, an honor that was also his undoing. Jonson's Augustus addresses Gallus as a "knight" and (5.1.10):

> A soldier of renown, and the first provost
> That ever let our Roman eagles fly
> On swarthy Egypt, [who] quarried with her spoils.

There are historical reasons for the syntax to become so thorny toward the end of Augustus' speech: the historical Gallus successfully led Rome's mission to exploit Egypt's resources but he also took full credit for his triumph, going so far as to erect monuments to himself rather than to Augustus. He was immediately replaced as prefect and soon after committed suicide, apparently by private order of the emperor. In Jonson's play, the prince's dark references to Gallus' ambitious exploits in Egypt suggest an imminent tragedy: the poet's compulsory suicide is due to take place when the satirical comedy comes to an end.

Jonson's choice to include Gallus in his play and hint at his tragic end is significant, especially since the poet's verses were probably lost not to the usual accidents of devouring time but to the *damnatio memoriae*, the erasure of a Roman citizen from public record by imperial order. Simply by putting Gallus on stage and having him confront Augustus, Jonson overruled the prince's will. Certain inferences follow. First and most obviously, Jonson did not restrict the number of classical authors worthy to be remembered: he sometimes expanded that number, even or especially if it meant inviting a dangerous writer to join the canonical ones. Second, his taste in poets was not governed by the judgments, prejudices, errors, or caprice of any prince, even the greatest of the Roman emperors, Augustus Caesar. In fact, the evidence indicates that Jonson did not blindly accept the burnished image of the Age of Augustus that came down to the courts of late Elizabethan and early Stuart England.[6] He seems instead to have understood both the allure, and the illusion, of the golden age of poetry and patronage.

The most complex of Jonson's classical loves, however, was not Gallus but Ovid, the boldest of the Augustan love elegists as well as the darling of the boldest Elizabethan poets. Ovid's exile is even more of a mystery than Gallus' fate: Augustus Caesar apparently found him to be guilty of licentious abuse (for writing the *Ars Amatoria* in his youth) and relegated him to Tomis on the Black Sea, where he remained until his death in AD 17. But his works survived and flourished in subsequent literary history. The love–hate relationship of Elizabethan England for Ovid is widely known if not fully understood. Bold and innovative poets such as Christopher Marlowe, Thomas Kyd, William Shakespeare, Thomas Churchyard, Michael Drayton, and John Donne fell in love with Ovid and aimed to fashion English letters in relation to Ovid and his wanton muse.[7] Even overtly moral and religious poets, such as Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney, had time for Ovid and defended

his poetry against the uneasy suspicions of Tudor schoolmasters and the animus of puritanical enemies of poetry, who openly feared Ovid's license and seductive influence. And yet—it is a curiosity of literary criticism to say so—Jonson is often said to be on the side of Stephen Gosson, the poet-turned-puritan, who argued that Ovid, the "amarous scolemaister," deserved his exile by Augustus Caesar for having "roaued [so] long on the Seas of wantonnesse."[8]

The evidence offered by *Poetaster* is ambiguous and mainly because of Ovid's disappearing act: he is the play's comic protagonist until Act 4, when he is condemned to exile. He is afterwards not seen again, and his absence from the final act raises the question of whether Jonson minds the loss. It is true that Horace, who is personally tied to Jonson, comes into his own in the final act, and this fact suggests the logic of substitution. If the play is read in terms of the "poetomachia" or poets' war of 1599–1602, then the logic is either/or: audiences must choose between Jonson and his rivals.[9] If the play is instead read in light of its Roman interests, the substitution is chronological: when Ovid was exiled, one poetic genre (erotic elegy) fell under the threat of censorship and, in its place, a different genre (satirical comedy) emerged. And in this reading, Jonson's satire is not the hostile rival of the Ovidian poetry of the Elizabethan 1590s. It is instead a surrogate, a creative genre that remembers and honors the poetic form that it supersedes. And in fact, Jonson has two bold aims in his play: to make a case for his own type of satire and to recall a book of poems that was recently censored according to the Bishops' Ban of 1599: namely, the elegies of Ovid as translated by Christopher Marlowe. In the play's first scene, Jonson presents Ovid in the act of composing his *Amores* 1.15, which he recites in Marlowe's translation. In short, Jonson's response to the censorship and exile of other poets, ancient (Gallus and Ovid) or contemporary (Marlowe), is the same: he defies authority and undertakes a recovery project.

This chapter aims to show that Jonson never abandoned Ovid in his own writing, much less exiled him from the broader commonwealth of English poetry. Instead, he valued, embraced, and imitated Ovid throughout his career. And he did so in consort with the austere philosophical values that he and everyone else in his era associated with Cicero, Horace, Seneca, Tacitus, and Juvenal. Ovid was a wanton poet, to be sure, and he went too far for safety. But, as I have elsewhere established, his rhetorical indiscretions were seen, in early modern England, as extensions of a much-prized moral and political virtue: namely, the liberty of speech, *licentia* in Latin and *parrhesia* in Greek.[10] This was the hallmark virtue of republican Rome, and its demise marked the beginning of tyranny under the Caesars, as Ovid hints in *Metamorphoses* 1 (in the senate meeting of the gods) and as Tacitus indicates in his *Annales*. If Ovid took liberties with the norms of sexual mores, rhetoric, and politics, it was because the line between the liberties of poets and their readers and the prerogatives of princes had shifted, dangerously if silently, in the Augustan age.[11] As the prince's prerogatives grew, the liberties of subjects diminished. Ben Jonson made this point whenever he defended Ovid in his poetry, plays, and reading notes.

What is more, Jonson tied his defense of Ovid to his theory of the uses of light reading and light poetry.

Ovid on Trial

The critical consensus that Jonson thought of Ovid as a bad man—if not an obviously bad poet—is in some ways hard to explain. There is no difficulty in establishing that Jonson believed that moral virtue is foundational to being a good poet. He memorably says so in his dedication to *Volpone, or the Fox*:[12]

> if men will impartially, and not asquint, look towards the offices and function of a poet, they will easily conclude to themselves the impossibility of any man's being a good poet, without first being a good man.

This sentence—a cross between a manifesto and a commonplace—is among the most famous of Jonson's various remarks on poets and poetry. It is also cited by critics to explain Jonson's ambivalence about Ovid.[13] The passage, to be sure, makes no reference to Ovid: Jonson is defending the liberties he takes as a satirical poet and playwright. If Jonson's celebrated remark is relevant to the case against Ovid, and I think it is, it remains to be seen how, precisely, it applies.

There is good reason to think that Jonson took precisely the opposite view of Ovid than the one usually adduced by modern critics. A tip of the balance in favor of Ovid comes from no less an authority than Joseph Scaliger. For Scaliger, Ovid was "the most learned of poets" (*doctissimum poetam*) and his "ease was inimitable" (*Ovidii facilitas est inimitabilis*).[14] In saying so, Scaliger is entirely consistent with the general opinion of early modern classicists and humanists. But Scaliger goes farther: he also penned a sharp defense of Ovid as a poet and a moral man. The defense appears in the *Confutatio Fabulae Burdonum* (1608), where Scaliger takes issue with the respected classicist, Piero Vettori (1499–1585):

> … magni nominis vir Petrus Victorius de Ovidio non veritus sit dicere eum ut oratione ac versibus, ita vita et moribus enervatum? Deinde dicit improbe ab illo dictum, munera placare deos et homines, et tamen a Platone prius dictum. Hoc modo non solum Ovidius, sed et Plato improbus fuerit. Sine contumelia hoc dictum velim, Ovidium meliorem poëtam, quam ipsum poëtarum censorem fuisse.[15]

> Piero Vettori, a man of great reputation, has not scrupled to say of Ovid that he was as lax in his speech and verse as he was in his life and manners. And then he says that Ovid wickedly said that gifts please gods and men [cf. *AA* 3.653–54], and yet this had been said by Plato previously. In this way, not only Ovid but also Plato will have been wicked. Without arrogance, I would prefer this saying: "Ovid was a better poet than this man was a critic of poets." (My translation)

Scaliger's defense of Ovid was well known in the seventeenth century. Pierre Bayle approvingly cites it in his entry on Ovid in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697).[16] And Bayle was not the first reader to take in Scaliger's defense of Ovid against Vettori and think, "Hear, hear!" and "Listen up!" Ben Jonson did this long before him. The evidence comes from Jonson's marginalia and reading notes that Jonson penned into his copy of the 1619 version of Martial, edited by Schrijver.

Like many early modern editions of the classics, Jonson's working copy of Martial includes a prefatory section devoted to historical and contemporary evaluations of the author. Martial is the main event, but not the only one. In places, Schrijver expands the scope of commentary to include Catullus and Ovid, whose preferred genres led them, like Martial, to take risks and incur blame. Their elegies and epigrams are slender, sporting, and often toying, and yet suddenly bold. Although modest in scale (they belong to the slender, not the great, genres), they frequently stretch the limits of decorum. Early modern editors and readers linked Martial to Catullus and Ovid on the basis of their wit, elegance, and daring. Both Ovid and Martial, moreover, felt compelled to defend themselves against the charges of immorality. Martial memorably wrote, "my page is wanton, my life is chaste" (1.5.8 *lasciva est nobis pagina, vita proba*), echoing Ovid's declaration in his longest and most famous poem from exile—a defense of poetry and the liberties of speech—"my life is chaste, my muse is jesting" (*Tr.* 2.354 *vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea*).

The passage in Jonson's 1619 edition of Martial that focuses on Ovid is, of course, Scaliger's defense of Ovid against Piero Vettori. It is in some ways unsurprising that Jonson takes note of the passage on Ovid. He knew it was penned by Scaliger. Although the passage provides only an abbreviated title, Jonson annotated his copy of the book to show that he knew who wrote the *Confutatio fabulae Burdonum*. But even if a less impressive writer were responsible for the defense, Jonson most likely would have marked it up anyway. Virtually every page of the book bears the mark of Jonson's opinions. He made philological notes and corrections, took stock of every passage of Martial that he liked (he liked a great deal), and jotted down his own responses to critical opinion (and here he disliked a great deal). He loved Martial, and he seems to have loved this particular edition of the epigrams, perhaps because the small format invited the ready interaction of a working copy. Of the three editions of Martial housed in the Folger Library, this is the smallest and it is also the only one that he marked to the full. The margins of his tiny book overflow with lines, quick crosses, asterisks, manicules, flowers, and several daggers, which variously suggest points of interest (in passing, noteworthy, and essential, a well-turned phrase applied to a good point, and forceful arguments that put an end to all debate).

When it came to the passage on Ovid, Jonson made three marginal notes, and all three come in the form of a quickly sketched flower, suggesting his appreciation of a well-turned rhetorical ornament. He put a small flower next to the remark that

Vettori was wrong to say that Ovid was as lax in his verse as he was in his morals, and he underlined every word of the sentence. He put another small flower next to the observation that Plato had said the very same thing that Ovid said—that gods and men both are swayed by gifts—and yet is not accused of bad morals, and he again underlined almost every word. He put his third and largest flower next to the (fully underlined) comment that Ovid was "a better poet than this man [Vettori] was a critic of poets." The third flower is the more fully drawn of the three. It has two petals instead of a crossbar, and it also has the small mark—a dot or an apostrophe—that Jonson occasionally places above his marginal flowers, perhaps to suggest that a particular rhetorical ornament or flower had an especially sweet smell.

Jonson liked what Scaliger had to say about Ovid. He did not hesitate to disagree with opinions in his Martial, whether they were ancient or recent. He comments that the remarks on one page were made stupidly and pretentiously (sig. B4v *stultè et ambitiosè*), while an opinion on the next page is asinine (*o asinine dictum!*). Next to the moderate remark of Marcus Antonius Mureta that Martial and Catullus were a mix of scurrility and wit, Jonson angrily pens: *durè, durè, in Mureta, et falso* (sig. B5v). To the opinion of Raphael Volaterranus that Martial's Latin lacked elegance and that reading him offered no moral benefit, Jonson snaps, *insulsè* (insipid). But he was all for Scaliger's view of Ovid: Vettori was entirely wrong about Ovid being a bad poet and a bad man. His life, morals, and verses merited a vigorous defense, not tired clichés. This passage is the closest thing we have to a statement, signed in Jonson's own hand, saying that he had reviewed the opinions for and against Ovid and come down on the side of Ovid against the moralists.

On Being Cold: Ovidian Allusions in Jonson's Poetry

Jonson emulated Martial and analyzed his verses in extraordinary detail, as the splendid invitation poem "Inviting a Friend to Supper" reveals, and he imitated Catullus, Propertius, and Tibullus in his lyric poetry and drama. His celebrated lyric collection, *The Forrest*, for example, contains the finest English rendering of Catullus 5 (*Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus*) in the song "To Celia" ("Come, my Celia, let us prove, / While we may, the sports of love," 1–2). And even a glance at the scholarly notes provided in standard editions of Jonson's lyric collection—by Herford and Simpson, Ian Donaldson, and Colin Burrow—reveals allusions to Tibullus and Propertius alongside Virgil, Horace, and Martial. There are allusions to Ovid as well, most notably in the first and last poems, "Why I Write Not of Love" and "To Heaven." But scholarly notes on the Ovidian allusions are often accompanied by a further remark on how distant the original context is from Jonson's imitation. Why are scholars so ill at ease with Jonson's Ovidian allusions? They are surely important and even crucial to Jonson's poetic project in *The Forrest*. Ovid would not otherwise provide the first and very last classical allusions in the lyric collection.

Why, then, do scholars distance Jonson from Ovid, when Jonson himself appears to insist on a strong identification? The standard reasons are personal temperament and a tendency to idealize the Augustan age. It is not uncommon to hear that Jonson banished Ovid from the commonwealth of English letters because he was exiled by no less an authority than Augustus Caesar. But Jonson knew the Augustan age through a mix of skeptical Taciteans and idealizing contemporaries, as all scholars confirm, even those who strenuously disagree over matters of politics, ideology, and poetic interpretation.[17] It is true that Jonson held up a flattering image of the Augustan court as a mirror to his own princes and especially to King James, who saw himself as a second Augustus.[18] Jonson knew the arts of teaching through praise (*laudando praecipere*): he could deliver a serious poetic compliment, especially if it helped him also to deliver moral and political counsel. This is as true for his treatment of his prince as it is for aristocratic patrons such as Sir William Sidney, Lady Aubigny, Sir Robert Wroth, and others to whom Jonson dedicates poems in *The Forrest*.[19] As for Augustus' judgment against Ovid, it seems more likely to have prejudiced Jonson against the prince than the poet. The emperor, after all, exiled Ovid without trial or even arraignment (i.e. a formal reading of the charges against him). The legal term matters: Jonson used it as the suggestive subtitle for *Poetaster, or the Arraignment*. The exile, in the end, may have lifted rather than cemented any of Jonson's more serious reservations about Ovid.

The argument about Jonson's un-Ovidian temperament is in some ways more interesting than the ideological one about the status of the Augustan age, since it moves us into a more direct engagement with Jonson's poetry. In the 1590s, Jonson found himself awash in a sea of Ovidianism. Other poets and dramatists—including Marlowe, Spenser, Shakespeare, Churchyard, Drayton, and Donne—had a passion for Ovid that Jonson could not entirely share. Their idea of poetry was not his, and their particular version of Ovid was not his. And so the idea arises, in criticism, that Ovid and the other sensual poets of the Augustan age left Jonson cold. It is true that Jonson was the first to say that he was not quite fit for erotic elegy. He had elegiac passions, and elegiac meter to boot, but somehow the sensual matter in his body and mind did not fully connect with his verse or his desired audience. He wrote many fine poems on this theme.

One is the unforgettable verse on poetry, love, and aging, "My Picture Left in Scotland" (1–20):

> I now think Love is rather deaf than blind,
>   For else it could not be
>   That she
>   Whom I adore so much should so slight me,
> And cast my love behind;
> I'm sure my language to her was as sweet,
>   And every close did meet
>   In sentence of as subtle feet,
>   As hath the youngest he
> That sits in shadow of Apollo's tree.

> Oh, but my conscious fears
>   That fly my thoughts between,
>   Tell me that she hath seen
> My hundred of grey hairs,
>   Told seven-and-forty years,
> Read so much waste, as she cannot embrace
> My mountain belly, and my rocky face;
> And all these through her eyes have stopped her ears.

If Jonson is hoping for sexual conquest (or persuasion), there is no problem with his meter: it is as agile and deft as the sprightliest English courtier and as urgent as the lines of erotic accounting of Marlowe's "Passionate Shepheard" (which inventories sensual materials) or Catullus 5 (which counts kisses). The problem, Jonson insists, is extratextual: it is the contrast between classical and Petrarchan modes of love poetry and Jonson's aging body. Whereas Catullus inventories the number of kisses he wants (a thousand, and then a hundred, then another thousand, and another hundred), Jonson counts the years he carries on his back, or in his case, around his waist, at 47. Jonson is in possession of an anti-elegiac body: it is not slender, and its ample matter stands in the way of erotic success. At a deep level of allusive play, the poem visits and reverses the first poem of Ovid's *Amores*. In this poem, Ovid (i.e. the *amator*) is preparing to write a great poem of state in dactylic hexameter, and as of the poem's second line, his epic material is coming together nicely with the dactylic hexameter (*Am*. 1.1.2): *materia conveniente modis*. Ovid's heroic goals, however, are doomed when Cupid shows up, laughs, and steals a foot from his meter, leaving him with epic ambitions but elegiac pentameter. In Jonson's poem, the poet aims to write a subtle and sweet love elegy, and he succeeds, only to be intercepted by his aging and all-too-material body, which palpably interferes with the flow of his erotic ideas into persuasive couplets and closes. The poem's rueful joke is that it will not come to a close in the coupling of mutually desiring bodies. There will be no Ovidian material coming together for Jonson except, ironically, in his entirely charming verse.

    The very first poem of *The Forrest*, "Why I Write Not of Love," similarly draws on *Amores* 1.1 and dwells on Jonson's inability to write Ovidian love poetry (1–12):

> Some act of Love's bound to rehearse,
> I thought to bind him in my verse;
> Which when he felt, Away! quoth he,
> Can poets hope to fetter me?
> It is enough they once did get
> Mars and my mother in their net:
> I wear not these my wings in vain.
> With which he fled me; and again
> Into my rhymes could ne'er be got
> By any art. Then wonder not
> That since, my numbers are so cold,
> When Love is fled, and I grow old.

In his landmark study, *Self-Crowned Laureates* (1983), Richard Helgerson has demonstrated the subtle imitations and turns that this poem makes in relation to its most important classical model, *Amores* 1.1. Both Ovid and Jonson present themselves as men ready to take on a huge challenge: composition in a poetic genre to which they are not entirely suited by nature, even though they admire it. For Ovid, the desired meter is epic, while for Jonson it is elegiac. In Ovid's case, the god of love steals a foot from his meter and a good deal more from his public ambitions. In Jonson's case, the same god of love refuses poetic bondage. Jonson tries to swear his fealty to Amor as his poetic god, but the insouciant boy wriggles loose, following Ausonius' poem about the binding of Cupid: there will be no elegiac coupling of Mars and Venus for Jonson. And, as Helgerson observes, Jonson uses these lines to comment on his own turn away from the erotic poetry of Ovid and his own generation.

Helgerson's analysis of the poem as a *recusatio* of Ovid's erotic elegies is the best that I know: it is detailed, thoughtful, and imaginative in the ways that it traces Jonson's rapt attention to the erotic poetry of Ovid and his final admission that he is not suited to replicate the love poet that he so closely imitates. The interpretation of the *recusatio* should remain intact, although the reading of the poem's Ovidian allusions is one stage short of completion. As Helgerson shows, the poem works by increasing turns of the screw of imitation and interpretation, and there is one more turn of the screw to consider: when Jonson swears off the erotic elegies of Ovid, he signs onto the poet's exilic ones. "Why I Write Not of Love" represents a turn *away* from Ovid's love poetry and a turn *toward* Ovid's career in exile. Jonson's poem echoes the major complaints of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, in which the poet often dwells on the physical changes brought on by the conditions of exile: he is perpetually cold, he repeatedly laments—even the wine turns to ice in Tomis, he reports in *Tristia* 3.10.23–24—and he grows old. In exile, Ovid shivers with cold, prematurely ages, and despairs over the way that his words and poetic feet elude him.

The theme of mental and bodily change, which runs throughout the exile poetry, is first signaled in *Tristia* 1.1, where the poet explains why he writes not of love. Ovid opens his first elegy from exile by addressing his own poem as if it were a child heading out on its first tour of the world. It will face opposition, especially in Rome, where it can expect to be challenged and subject to hostile inspection. If this happens, Ovid tells his poem, it must insist on an even closer inspection of its title and contents (1.1.67–68): 'inspice' *dic 'titulum. non sum praeceptor amoris; / quas meruit, poenas iam dedit illud opus.'* "Say, 'examine the title. I am not the teacher of love; that work has already paid its deserved penalty.'" In short, the poems should be safe from harm because they are exilic and not erotic elegies and, in an important sense, they are not even written by the man who wrote the *Ars Amatoria* or *Amores*. That man no longer exists. When the emperor exiled the poet, he altered the very meaning of Ovid's elegiac roles as the *amator* and the *praeceptor amoris*, stripping them of their art and authority. This change cuts deeply: the emperor's judgment on love elegy silences Ovid, rendering him a changed man, a specter of his former

self. After all, Ovid of the love elegies had the means and the privilege of speaking his mind. The exiled Ovid does not. The pain of exile and its effects on poetry are Ovid's main themes in the *Trista* and *Ex Ponto*, but an undercurrent of political complaint remains and thus ties the erotic elegies of his youth to the exilic elegies of his final years.[20]

In first poem of *The Forrest*, Jonson draws on both *Amores* 1.1. and *Tristia* 1.1 to explain why he does not write of love. A god (Augustus in Ovid's case and Cupid in Jonson's) refused his efforts to describe him and bind him in verse. As a result of the rebuff, Jonson undergoes a change that affects his mind, body, and confidence. "Then wonder not," he instructs his reader, "That since, my numbers are so cold, / When Love is fled, and I grow old." Jonson was in his late thirties when he wrote the poems collected in *The Forrest*, and he had many years left to live. There are many reasons for him to say that he cannot write about love—and to suggest that he is temperamentally unable to compose the Ovidian verses that made Shakespeare and Marlowe famous in the 1590s—but fewer that explain why he goes on to repeat Ovid's main complaints from exile: aging, the cold, stiffening meter, and the loss of love and affection. The most compelling reasons are not personal but more broadly cultural and political: Jonson recognized that English poetry and politics had undergone a climactic change since the cultural ferment of the Elizabethan 1590s. The late Elizabethan period was one of great dissent, much of it coming from the poets, whereas the early Stuart period was more stable but also required greater decorum—and less political daring—from its poets. James I emulated Augustus in many ways, including his belief in the absolute rights of the prince. Ovid's poetry of exile makes sense for Ben Jonson in the Jacobean period: it speaks to the considerable challenge that poets, especially courtly ones, have in finding a language for complaint and counsel on important topics of moral and political philosophy. In this context, it is especially important that Jonson's inability to capture the love god is not presented as personal: Cupid demands to know if *any* poets "Can … hope to fetter me?" (l. 4).

The last poem of *The Forrest*, "To Heaven," is among the most beautiful and yet tortured poems in Jonson's writings and in the English poetry of his age. The first half of the poem reflects on the poet's vulnerability to melancholy and despair. The second half explores the reasons for his grief and hesitates between universal and particular accounts. At the midway point, Jonson calls on God for answers (13–16):

> Where have I been this while exiled from thee,
>   And whither rapt, now thou but stoop'st to me?
> Dwell, dwell here still! O, being every where,
>   How can I doubt to find thee ever here?

He then pauses to acknowledge—or brood over—the frustrating banality of his situation, which applies to all men and women (17–20):

> I know my state, both full of shame and scorn,
>   Conceived in sin, and unto labor born,
> Standing with fear, and must with horror fall,
>   And destined unto judgment, after all.

And he concludes with a startling shift from concession ("I know that this grief is common") to dissent ("but even so") (21–26):

> I feel my griefs too, and there scarce is ground,
>   Upon my flesh to inflict another wound:
> Yet dare I not complain, or wish for death,
>   With holy Paul, lest it be thought the breath
> Of discontent; or that these prayers be
>   For weariness of life, not love of thee.

How does one dare complain to a god? The final six lines of the poem bring together two unexpected authorities on the wish for death: the Apostle Paul and the exiled Ovid. The passage from Paul that is most directly relevant is Romans 7:24: "O wretched man that I am! who can deliver me from the body of this death?" As John Kerrigan points out (2001: 249–58), Jonson's poem is torn between the Pauline prayer for death and the quite different meditation on suicide that comes down to early modern England from pagan antiquity. The most direct testimony of the pagans does not come from the Stoics but instead from Ovid, who faced depression, the ravages of age, and the uncertainty of death in his place of exile. Jonson's final allusion in *The Forrest* is a sustained reworking of Ovid's experience in exile as prolonged torture. Jonson alludes to two verses from the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, although the most modern and detailed editions of Jonson's poetry (the Oxford and Cambridge editions) cite only the first passage, from *EP* 2.7.39–42:

> iam dolor in morem venit meus, utque caducis
>   percussu crebro saxa cavantur aquis,
> sic ego continuo Fortunae vulneror ictu,
>   vixque habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum.

> My grief has already become a habit; as the falling drops by their constant force hollow the rock, so am I wounded by the steady blows of fate until now I have scarce space upon me for a new wound. (trans. Wheeler)

The second and more important allusion is to the very last lines of Ovid's exile poetry, when he at last gives up his hopes for any worldly pleasure or ease. Addressing Livor, or Envy, he writes (*EP* 4.16.51–52):

> quid iuvat extinctos ferrum demittere in artus?
>   non habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum.

What pleasure to thee to drive the steel into limbs already dead? There is no space in me now for a new wound. (trans. Wheeler)

Ovid's pain has more in common with Jonson's than has been allowed by scholars who assume that Ovid is the erotic elegist and a toying one at that. In fact, Ovid's awareness of his grief and the way it hollows him out as it becomes a custom suits with Jonson's sense of what it is like to endure in the world not only as a Christian but also as a Catholic "exile" living in an fiercely Protestant state. It is Ovid—more than the Apostle Paul—who provides Jonson with a means to express his sense of being an exile in his own country and even in his own skin: it is Ovid who speaks to Jonson's sense of spiritual alienation brought on by political oppression.

Jonson's allusions to Ovid are highly complex. Not every version of Ovid was equally compelling to Jonson. The Ovid that he loved, defended, and most deeply imitated was the Ovid of exile, a poet who was intimately associated with moral virtue and moral philosophy. Had Ovid stopped writing at the moment of his exile, Jonson may have abandoned him or surrendered him to the Elizabethan Ovidians of the 1590s. But Ovid did not. He continued to write elegies, even in a climate of dearth, and proved to be a model for how later poets might do the same thing. For Jonson, as for many others of his age, Ovid was a poet whose commitment to the liberties of verse and speech redeemed his erotic elegies and put them on a moral continuum with his more obviously virtuous elegies from exile. For Jonson, Ovid was not only welcome to bring his verse, ideas, and feelings to the table: he was as necessary to the conversation about cultural (including moral) ideas as Virgil, Calvin, Lipsius, or Camden. Ovid said nothing treasonous in his lifetime, as he insists in his exilic elegies. He instead made a monumental contribution to a slender but important genre—the elegy—that created a space for poets and readers to exchange their most daring thoughts. In the space of elegy, it was (or should be) possible to speak one's mind among friends. As Jonson puts it in his epigram "Inviting a Friend to Supper," it should not matter what you say at dinner or in an elegy (39–42):

> No simple word
> That shall be uttered at our mirthful board
> Shall make us sad next morning, or affright
> The liberty that we'll enjoy tonight.

Notes

1   The fullest account of Jonson's relationship to Horace is Moul (2010). For a review of Martial's status in modern criticism, see Sullivan (1988).
2   See McPherson (1974), and, for Jonson's Lipsius, Evans (1992).

3   Maus (1984) presents a thorough and persuasive account of Jonson's admiration for the austere virtues of ancient Rome. The two best studies of Jonson's attitude toward authorship, however divergent, are those of Helgerson (1983) and Loewenstein (2002).

4   The poems ascribed to Gallus and published by Aldus Manutius in 1590 were shown to be forgeries by Joseph Scaliger. See *A New and General Biographical Dictionary* (London 1761–62) 5.276; Gibson (2012).

5   All references are to the Revels edition of Ben Jonson, *Poetaster*, ed. T. Cain (Manchester, 1995).

6   See Parry (1981).

7   See especially Keach (1976) and Brown (2004).

8   Waith (1951) 19 acknowledges this point in his influential essay.

9   Jonson's rivals are Thomas Dekker and John Marston, who go under the names of Demetrius and Crispinus. See Bednarz (2001).

10   James (2003). See also Colclough (2005).

11   Tacitus notes that the silence of the Roman senators completed Augustus' achievement of power. Jonson knew Tacitus in the original and in the translations of Henry Savile (1591) and Richard Greenwey (1598). See Smuts (1993: 21–43).

12   All references to Jonson's works, other than to *Poetaster,* are to *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. D. Bevington, M. Butler, and I. Donaldson, 7 vols. (Cambridge, 2012).

13   See Waith (1951) 13.

14   Quoted from Robinson (1918: 161).

15   *Confutatio Fabulae Burdonum* in Daniel Heinsius, *Satirae duae* (1617: 241).

16   Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697).

17   See, for example, Erskine-Hill (1983), who cites the skeptical tradition but ultimately regards Augustus as Jonson's paragon and gold standard of interpretation, and, in the opposite camp, the wonderfully feisty and smart essay by Sinfield (1998).

18   The critical perception that Ben Jonson fulsomely praised the court of James I is widespread. See, for example, Waith (1951) and Helgerson (1983).

19   See Platz (1973: 20).

20   Ovid and the other love elegists of Augustan Rome had written love poetry with a political edge because the prince took the first steps to politicize the *amores* of Roman citizens. See Barchiesi (1997: esp. p. 4); also Hinds (1985), on *Tristia* 1.

Further Reading

While Jonson's relationships to classical authority and various classical authors have received abundant critical attention, the same cannot be said for his pervasive engagements of Ovid. Landmark treatments of Jonson's poetic imitations may be found in Peterson (1981) and Greene (1986). Maus (1984) presents the fullest account of Jonson's relationship to classical authorities, with particular attention to his Stoic models. Tudeau-Clayton (1988) explores his Virgil, while Moul (2010) provides the most detailed account of Jonson's relationship to Horace. Helgerson (1983) and Loewenstein (2002) offer illuminating

accounts of Jonson's attitudes to authorship, and Helgerson in particular examines his complex handling of Ovid. While critics of Jonson's *Poetaster* generally assume that Jonson sides with the prince over the poet when the emperor Augustus banishes Ovid, there are notable exceptions in Talbert (1945), Beaurline (1979), Platz (1973), and Sinfield (1998).

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Love Poems in Sequence
The Amores *from Petrarch to Goethe*

Gordon Braden

"The Countess at his side was stirring too. He knew, telepathically, what she was thinking about. The literature of all ages, from the *Ars amatoria* to *Liaisons Dangereux*, told him theoretically of the effect of music and spectacles upon the feminine mind … " (Forester 1945: 273–74). Such thoughts beset the mind of Commodore Horatio Hornblower in one of the novels of C.S. Forester. This is popular fiction, but skillfully researched popular fiction, and the invocation of a European *philosophia perennis* of upmarket sexual predation, with Ovid as its Plato, is believable for 1812, when the novel is set, and still a viable reference point in 1945, when it is written. (For a twenty-first-century codification, see Higgins 2007.) Forester's specific reference is to the *Ars amatoria*—presumably 1.89ff. *sed tu praecipue curvis venare theatris*, "those curved theaters are a great place for you to go hunting"—but similar savvy is available in the *Amores* (3.2), and the situation in which Hornblower finds himself is an even closer fit with the first concretely imagined lesson in Ovid's sequence (1.4). On a delicate mission to Russia, he is at the ballet in Riga with the Intendant of Livonia and his wife—the wife with whom Hornblower had earlier shared a bed after a soirée at Peterhof. Ovid finds such situations delicious; Hornblower, a British officer in the field, is mostly annoyed at the distraction, but the literary tradition is nevertheless invaluable in keeping him oriented. In modern times that tradition is more likely to do its work without overt citation, but it can be spotted. In the film of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1946), a provocative bit of banter between Lauren Bacall and Humphrey Bogart—"I'd say you don't like to be rated. You like to get out in front, open up a little lead, take a little breather in the backstretch, and then come home free"—echoes some racetrack conversation in Ovid which is unquestionably not about horses (*Am.* 3.2.9–16). But the name of the self-styled *magister amoris* still has its cachet; about eight minutes into Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999), the revelation of an ocean of sexual turbulence just

below the surface of things begins when a suave Hungarian eyes the bored wife of a prosperous New York doctor at a lavish Christmas party, ostentatiously drinks from her not quite empty wineglass (*Am.* 1.4.31–32), and makes his move: "Did you ever read the Latin poet Ovid on the art of love?"

As the poetry of sex and the imperial city, the *Amores* has an afterlife that threatens to become too widespread to discuss except in endless examples. There are moments—one will be treated below—when its appearance on the scene has a scandalous and transformative power, but it often becomes simply part of the environment, like a law of nature: this is just what men and women do when civilization reaches a certain pitch. In a different dimension, though, as a sequence of poems, Ovid's collection plays a more specific role in literary history. Ovid's corpus is one of the best preserved bodies of classical poetry, lacking as far as we know only the tragedy *Medea*, and Ovid's self-consciousness about the shape of that corpus is explicit in more than a few places. The *Amores* opens identifying itself as an edited second edition, and there is no good reason to doubt authorial control over the three books that follow. Their coherence is most obviously their thematic consistency: illicit heterosexual couplings (aside from the poet's unexpected reference to a wife at 3.13.1), untouched on either side by guilt (or disappointment with sexual pleasure once achieved), touched sometimes with danger and emotional high drama, but shot through with gamesomeness and wit. Readers are teased with hints of a linear narrative. There are pairings in which a storyline implied in one poem is rounded off in the next, but beyond that it is hard to add things up. The poet makes an offer of exclusive devotion to one woman—*non mihi mille placent, non sum desultor amoris: / tu mihi, si qua fides, cura perennis eris*, "I am not hot for a thousand women, I am no acrobatic lover; you will, believe me, be my enduring care" (1.3.15–16)—and the appearance of the name Corinna in individual poems has led many to think of the sequence as the chronicle of their particular love affair. In most cases, though, the woman of the moment is not named, and there are indications of different circumstances: sometimes she is married (as Corinna appears to be in 2.12), sometimes an erotic professional of some sort. The self-characterization as a one-woman man is eventually subject to explicit contradiction: *non est certa meos quae forma invitet amores: / centum sunt causae cur ego semper amem*, "There is no single kind of beauty that rouses me; there are a hundred reasons for me to be always in love" (2.4.9–10). We learn that he has seduced Corinna's maid Cypassis (2.8), and get the names of several other women he has lately bedded (3.7.23–24). Even if Corinna is merely *prima inter pares*, it is still possible to assume that the sequence deals in the main with the course of a single affair, though the result is not a story with much narrative shape. Its beginning is not described (unless that is what is happening in 1.5), and traumatic events that you would think would have some kind of aftermath—the poet's physical assault on the woman in 1.7, Corinna's dangerous abortion in 2.13–14—are never heard of again. If the love story has an arc, it is captured near the end in the self-contradicting 3.11 (sometimes treated as two poems), where the poet vows to break things off with the woman (here unnamed) because

of her chronic infidelity, then gives up and decides to go on living with things as they are: a conclusion in which nothing is concluded.

The sequence nevertheless has a narrative arc. The opening poem presents an initiatory event not erotic—Ovid notes the absence on the scene of any boy or well-coifed girl (1.1.19–20)—but vocational: the beginning of his career as a love poet. Cupid forces the issue by making the would-be epic poet's verse unfit for military service by hobbling every other line, but by the end of the poem Ovid is fully with the new program. Poems throughout the sequence mark his progress. The end of the first book celebrates the immortalizing powers of *carmen* and prophesies that those powers will now be his: *ergo etiam cum me supremus adederit ignis, / vivam, parsque mei multa superstes erit*, "So even when the final fire consumes me, I too will live and the great part of me will survive" (1.15.41–42). The first poem in the second book reaffirms his satisfaction with his new genre as the path to such immortality. In 2.18, the penultimate poem in the second book, the poet looks over his résumé, taking notice now of the *Heroides*, which he considers in the same category as the *Amores*, and expresses new impatience to move on; 3.1 stages a debate between *Tragoedia* and *Elegia*, the outcome being that for now Ovid will continue with the latter, but in expectation of soon turning to the former. In 3.9 personified Elegia returns to newly somber purpose to mourn the death of Tibullus; the last poem announces that the poet's service in this genre is over—*raditur hic elegis ultima meta meis*, "This is the last turning post grazed by my elegiacs" (3.15.2)—and he is ready for greater things: *pulsanda est magnis area maior equis*, "A greater field is to be trampled with mighty horses" (18). The *Amores* have been the success that they needed to be, giving him the confidence to rank himself with Virgil and Catullus (as he does) and aspire to something grander.

Aside from claims that love toughens a lover the way war toughens a soldier (1.9), Ovid proffers no arguments that the love of which he writes is any kind of ennobling force. Its disreputability is almost a subject of boasting: *ille ego nequitiae Naso poeta meae*, "I am that Ovid, the poet of my own shamefulness" (2.1.2). It is enough that writing of that love makes him famous. The boast, of course, rounds back on him in the unanticipated end of his career. In poems he had never planned on writing, his memory of his poetic output focuses on the love poetry of his youth, especially the lascivious *carmen* that with his unexplained *error* is responsible for his catastrophic relegation to the Black Sea (a fate that the flirtatious wife in *Eyes Wide Shut* pointedly remembers). Desperately excusing himself, Ovid protests that the poems of his *nequitia* were products of imagination (*Tr.* 2.353–56):

> crede mihi, distant mores a carmine nostro
>   (vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea)
> magnaque pars mendax operum est et ficta meorum:
>   plus sibi permisit compositore suo.

Believe me, my behavior is nothing like my poetry; my Muse is playful, my life respectable. Most of my work is lying fiction; it takes more liberty than its author does.

There are reasons to believe him (more or less), but the self-defense is not so much a renunciation of his earlier identity as a revelation of how much of a piece his life has been. The insistence on poetry's mendacity rhymes with the candor in the *Amores* on the importance of lying, mostly recommended for the man though final instructions to the woman are in the same key: *sit modo 'non feci' dicere lingua memor*, "Just let your tongue remember the words 'I didn't do it'" (3.14.48)—instructions Shakespeare may have been remembering sarcastically in some of his poems to his Dark Lady. Poetry and love both rely on strategic make-believe. Poetry directly figures in the love story when Ovid cites his gift as part of what should commend him to the woman, though the ploy has unreckoned consequences when Corinna's new fame attracts new lovers. Ovid wants to blame an undersophisticated readership: *mea debuerat falso laudata videri / femina; credulitas nunc mihi vestra nocet*, "You should have seen that my praise of my lady was false; it was your credulity that harmed me" (3.12.43–44). But the darkest thoughts concern his own greatest talent: *an prosint dubium, nocuerunt carmina certe; / invidiae nostris illa fuere bonis*, "It's truly unclear whether poetry helps or hurts; it's been a curse to my own good fortune" (13–14). This is comic in context, but uncannily anticipates more anguished stocktaking on the shores of the Black Sea: *ingenio perii Naso poeta meo*, "I, the poet Ovid, died from my own talent" (*Tr.* 3.3.74). The coherence of his life has been his undoing.

The *Amores*, along with most of Ovid's work (including the *Tristia*), was never off the reading list in western Europe in the Middle Ages, though circulating under the coy heading *sine titulo*. In the fourteenth century, though, Ovid's *Nachwirkung* acquires a new dimension in the poetry of Petrarch. Petrarch's public polemic, manifested in his laureation in Rome in 1341 and the accompanying oration, aimed at the revival of that form of civic honor for poetic achievement. He assumed in his own case that it would come to him for his Latin epic on the life of Scipio Africanus; in reality it came, as Ovid claimed in the *Amores* it would come to him, from his love poetry, and in his mother tongue. Times change; for Petrarch, the love poetry is the poetry of unconsummated love, accountable to the stern strictures of Christian sexual morality, and heir to elevated standards worked out in the poetry of the Occitan troubadours and the Italian *stilnovisti*. But Ovid is still the love poet to be reckoned with—I think there is no poet who can equal Ovid, Petrarch writes in his *Rerum memorandum liber* (2.20)—and Ovid is a documentable presence within Petrarch's vernacular love poetry. *Amores* 1.2 supplies the governing conceit for his *Trionfi*. The governing conceit for the even more influential *Canzoniere* is the myth of Daphne, which Petrarch takes from the *Metamorphoses*, along with much more; in *Canzoniere* 23, the so-called *canzone delle metamorfosi*, the Daphne story is only the

first in a string of reconfigurations of Ovidian myth offering a kind of lyric précis of the Latin epic. But phrasing from the *Amores* keeps making itself felt:

> saepe aliquis digito vatem designat euntem
>   atque ait 'hic, hic est, quem ferus urit Amor!' (*Am.* 3.1.19–20; cf. *AA* 1.738)

Often someone points a finger at the poet passing by, and says, "This, this is someone whom savage Love has set on fire."

> onde a la vista uom di tal vita esperto
> diria: 'Questo arde et di suo stato è incerto.'
>   (*Canzoniere* 129.12–13; text and translation from Petrarch 1976)

At the sight anyone who had experienced such a life would say: "This man is burning with love and his state is uncertain."

Moreover, the *Amores* was the main precedent for two aspects of his *Canzoniere* that loom large in Petrarch's influence over the next centuries: his is an authorially ordered sequence of love poems telling its story entirely through the poems themselves, and that story is one in which sexual desire and poetic ambition are closely intertwined.

Petrarch's immediate vernacular predecessors do not as a rule collect their poems. Dante presents his love lyrics concerning Beatrice in narrative order in his *Vita nuova*, but embedded in explanatory prose which takes up more space than the poems. Presenting his own poems in deliberate sequence, but without prose links, Petrarch created the template for what would become the most prestigious form for lyric poetry in the sixteenth century, the sonnet sequence, a form clearly congenial to writers and readers alike. We know that Petrarch took great care with that order, making changes almost up to the last minute. The result, however, is a love story with a good deal of implied incident—encounters, estrangements, provocations, reassurances—but little circumstantial detail. It is impossible to tell from the poems themselves whether Laura is married (tradition has it both ways). There is also no clear narrative continuity; two poems with temporal indicators, *Canzoniere* 145 and 266, appear to violate the chronology established by other poems (they should come before 118 and 221 respectively). There is one decisive event, Laura's death, announced in 267. Unlike Propertius' Cynthia, she does not turn up alive after her own death (Propertius 4.8), though most of the lover's adoration is from such a distance that many of the poems from the last phase of the sequence would seem at home in the earlier parts.

There was enough discomfort with this murkiness in the sixteenth century for Alessandro Vellutello to reorder the poems to reveal a supposedly more coherent

(and biographically accurate) storyline; his was in its time the most popular of the numerous available editions. What is not murky is that the love story is also a story of aspiration for poetic immortality, in a way that both mimics Ovid's sequence—the success of which demonstrates the possibility of achieving such immortality through writing about love—and outdoes it. Ovid writes of a myrtle crown (*Am.* 1.1.29, 1.15.37), Petrarch of the more august crown of laurel; Petrarch's literal receipt of such a crown was effectively the opening manifesto of Renaissance humanism, the cultural and educational movement with which Petrarch's name comes to be durably associated. The change of foliage brings a momentous pun: love of Laura and love of the laurel (*lauro*) are in some deep sense the same thing. The Daphne myth is one of powerful resonance with Petrarch's un-Ovidian love story—Apollo's frustrated desire for the chaste nymph is recuperated in the honorific leaves from the tree into which she is transformed in order to escape him—and Petrarch's sequence explores that resonance in depth. Claims to self-immortalization through poetry, largely unheard in the vernacular before Petrarch, become an expected feature of the sonnet sequences that later flood western European literature:

> though in youth, my youth untimely perrish,
> To keepe thee from oblivion and the grave,
> Ensuing ages yet my rimes shall cherrish,
> Where I entomb'd, my better part shall save;
>> And though this earthly body fade and die,
>> My name shall mount upon eternitie. (Michael Drayton, 1599, sig. Q4v)

Renaissance Neolatin poets imitate the Roman elegists in their own language and meter, and more comfortably in the spirit of Ovid's *nequitia*. The genre attracts unlikely practitioners, including Andrea Sylvio Piccolomini, the future Pope Pius II, and Théodore de Bèze, eventually to become John Calvin's successor in Geneva. Probably the most memorable example is the two-book cycle by the Dutch poet Jan Everaerts, best known by his Latin name, Janus (or Joannes) Secundus. Secundus is immensely self-conscious of his classical models and explicit in his homage. It would have been possible for you, he writes to a woman who is rejecting him,

> inque puellarum, quas olim carmine uates
>> laudauere pii, nomen habere choro,
> qualis quae falso Nasoni dicta Corinna est,
>> Deliaque et Nemesis et bene culta comam
> Cynthia, forma potens, nec non tua, Galle, Lycoris,
>> quarum immortalis forma perenne uiret.
>>> (*Elegia* 1.7.35–40; text from Secundus 2000)

to have had a name in the chorus of girls whom reverent poets once praised
in their songs, like Corinna, so misleadingly named by Ovid, and Delia and
Nemesis and Cynthia, the powerful beauty with the well-groomed hair, and also,
Gallus, your Lycoris: the immortal beauty of all of whom flourishes forever.

Delia and Nemesis were celebrated by Tibullus, Cynthia by Propertius; so real
is the tradition to Secundus that he enthusiastically includes another name from
poetry that, in apparent contradiction of his climactic boast, has not actually sur-
vived. Even claims to novelty are made within this tight grid. Secundus announces a
deliberate innovation in following his first book with a series of *elegiae sollemnes*, cer-
emonial elegies, written each May in commemoration of his first and most happily
remembered love affair—*primus ego ingredior nullo de more sacerdos / annua nequitiae
ponere sacra meae*, "I come, without precedent, as the first priest to perform annual
rites in honor of my shamefulness" (*Elegia sollemnis* 2.21–22)—but the phrasing is
meant to be recognized as an inflection of Propertius—*primus ego ingredior puro de
fonte sacerdos*, "I come as the first priest from a pure spring" (3.1.3)—by Ovid: *ille
ego nequitiae Naso poeta meae*, "I am that Ovid, the poet of my own shamefulness"
(*Am.* 2.1.2). You cannot go far without encountering similar mimicry. Renaissance
imitation of classical literature is seldom so focused and thorough.

   At the same time, the evidence is strong that Secundus' sequence, especially the
first book, is genuinely autobiographical in origins if not in specifics. He appears to
understand Corinna as a pseudonym for someone in particular, and that was prob-
ably the case for at least some of the women in his own sequence: Julia, Domitilla,
Neaera, Venerilla, Lydia, Justina. The first was real enough for the medallion of her
that Secundus sculpted—the sitting is possibly the occasion for *Elegia* 1.6—to have
survived, and to make appearances (as Julia) in some correspondence; Secundus'
brother writes to him about her in brassily familiar terms.

   The choice of Julia as what the troubadours called a *senhal* was probably
motivated by the conviction, common in the sixteenth century, that the real
Corinna was the emperor's daughter of that name (or granddaughter; there
was trouble keeping them straight), and that that liaison was the *error* behind
Ovid's exile. Secundus' Julia—a brunette, like Shakespeare's Dark Lady (*Elegia*
1.5.38)—gives Secundus' love story the kind of narrative line that the *Amores*
lacks. She is the (almost) exclusive focus of the first book. The poet meets her
in Mechelen in May (1530 or 1531), mounts an aggressive and overtly sexual
program of seduction—*quas superas facie, iam iam superabis in arte*, "Those whom
you outdo in looks, soon soon you will outdo in expertise" (*Elegia* 1.5.31)—which
apparently succeeds. Almost immediately, though, an otherwise unattractive rival
appears, who offers what the poet cannot or will not offer: *sancti foedera coniugii*
(1.7.10), a contract of holy matrimony. The conclusiveness of this threat locates
the action in contemporary Christendom; within the universe of the *Amores*,
the married condition of the mistress is not any kind of problem but a source

of enhanced pleasure. The marriage takes place despite a thunderstorm that the jilted poet claims to have called down on the wedding day (1.8); Julia leaves for Antwerp and Secundus for Brussels, and that apparently is the end of it, aside from his vow to commemorate the affair annually in verse. He keeps that vow for three years, though even as he agonizes he is considering a possible successor who has presented herself locally, and longing to return to Mechelen, which he thinks of as Cupid's city: *inter finitimas, experti credimus, urbes / illa sibi formas vindicat; illa daret / forte novas flammas, veteres quae pellere possint*, "From the neighboring cities—trust me, I know—it claims the beautiful women; perhaps it will provide new flames to drive out the old" (1.9.55–57). In the second book he moves on to at least two more brief affairs and the prospect of an unrepentant lifestyle (2.8.87–92):

> me iocus et risus iuvet incertique penates,
> me lyra, me calices, me rosa tincta mero,
> me sine nube dies, et me sine nocte tenebrae,
> et sine nox tenebris, et sine dote torus,
> rixa vacans odiis, et nullo vulnere bellum,
> et matutino victa sopore venus.

Let me enjoy jokes and laughter and changes of address, singing, drinking, roses wet with wine, days without clouds and shadows without night and night without shadows and sex without marriage, combat without hate and war without wounds and lovemaking overcome by sleep at sunrise.

Secundus, 18 or 19 when he met Julia, died not yet 25, unable to take up a long sought appointment in the court of the emperor. We cannot say what turns the love poems might have taken if he had lived; what we have is entirely credible as first chapters in the sentimental education of a young man of modest privilege and higher prospects.

And a young man, of course, of some learning and with a headful of good literature. His own love poems may well be, paradoxically, less fictional than the ones he studiously imitates; their narrative, at least in the first book and the *elegiae sollemnes*, treats literature in the end not as an alternative to life but as its destination. Beyond the anger, fantasizing, and despair that follow in the wake of Julia's desertion are, the last we hear, kinder feelings and a gentle hope (*Elegia sollemnis* 3.77–83):

> o ita cum blando, blandissima mater, Amore,
> o ita, Bacche, velis, o ita, Phoebe pater,
> semper ut illius maneant monumenta caloris
> quem mouit tremulis ignea luminibus,
> magnum quae parvo nomen sortita libello,
> prima meae spolium Iulia mentis habet.

> O beguiling Love and his most beguiling mother, O Bacchus, O father Apollo, do see to the lasting endurance of the monuments of this desire which the fiery girl with the darting eyes roused: she who secured her great name in this little book, Julia who first won my heart as her prize.

Literature is where, the gods willing, love ends up.

The Latin love elegy ventures into English in June of 1557 with two examples by Bèze appearing in translation in Richard Tottel's *Songes and Sonettes*. That anthology will have a major impact on Elizabethan poetry and be reprinted regularly for 30 years; Bèze's two elegies, however, despite discreet improvement by the translator (the woman's interfering *coniunx* becomes her "sire"), are absent from the second edition in July and do not appear again. Full entry of the genre into English awaits Christopher Marlowe's unbowdlerized version of the complete *Amores*, appearing in print as *All Ovids Elegies* sometime in the 1590s. The printing was clandestine and the evasion was well advised; after several editions, the work was among those burned by ecclesiastical authorities in 1599. The purge was incomplete, and by that time the poems had done their work, offering English love poetry an alternative model to the high-minded Petrarchism to which Tottel gave pride of place; after the sonnet craze of the early 1590s, writers and readers welcomed poems of shamelessly unchaste love with a literary pedigree older than Petrarch's. Among those to respond was the young John Donne, who circulated in manuscript poems identified as "elegies," composed in the meter of Marlowe's translation—rhymed iambic pentameter couplets—and frisky with pleasure at the sexual opportunities in contemporary life: "Women are like the Arts: forc'd unto none / Open to all Searchers; unpris'd if unknowne" (9.5–6). They may be his earliest work, and occupy a place in his career like that of the *Amores* in Ovid's.

Donne's "elegies," however, were not published until after his death. The textual situation is full of problems of order and attribution, though an exhaustive study of the manuscripts for the *Donne Variorum* has persuaded the editors (whose text I follow here) that a canon of 12 can be identified as an authorially defined sequence, with six more or less similar poems that can probably be ascribed to Donne and two more that are probably not his (Donne 2000: lxvii–lxxvi). The 12-poem sequence, if that is what it is, is given some narrative shape by two concluding poems that anticipate the speaker's departure and expected return, and hint at a new narrowing of attention to one woman; otherwise there is a discontinuous feel like that of Ovid's sequence. In one case the woman is clearly married (4), in one case clearly not (3); the women are not given names (one of the *dubia* does use the name Julia), and the mood is that of open season.

Some important features of Donne's poetic manner are already evident, including his general avoidance of identifiable borrowing from predecessors. The most straightforward taking from the Latin love elegies is appropriately enough in content, a celebration of a lost sexual golden age in a poem titled "Variety": "How happy were our *Syres* in antient tymes / Who held plurality of

Loves noe cryme" (17.37–38). The source is not in this case Ovidian—the *aetas aurea* in the *Metamorphoses* (1.89–112) is not erotic—but descends from Tibullus (1.3.35ff.) and becomes specifically a festival of free love in Renaissance elegists, including Secundus (*Elegia* 1.7.65–94). The topic is continued in the seventeenth century, notably in Thomas Carew's "A Rapture," flipped from a lost past to a visionary future in which legendary disappointments are undone and, among other satisfactions, Petrarch finally enjoys Laura. "Variety," however, is not in Donne's 12-poem sequence, and his authorship has been repeatedly doubted. Its style is suspiciously smooth and its argumentation easy to follow, and there is something out of key about its message, insofar as the attraction of a sexual golden age is the absence of contention: "Women were then noe sooner ask'd then wonne" (43). If the poem is Donne's, it stands apart from most of his other elegies, where combativeness is all.

Front and center is what Donne calls "my words masculine persuasive force" (11.4), a speaking voice of unhesitating virtuoso confidence that can grade into out-and-out attack. Some elegies turn ostensible love poems into sustained performances of abuse. "The Comparison" begins as praise of the poet's mistress, but quickly shifts to high-octane mockery of someone else's mistress—"like a bunch of ragged Carrets stand / The short swolne fingers of thy gowty hand" (2.33–34)—building to a one-liner: "She, and comparisons are odious" (54). "The Perfume" fires off its nastiness recklessly against a large cast of characters, and would almost be at home in Donne's *Satires*, the other body of poems that he was working on at probably the same time (as if Ovid were collaborating with Juvenal). Addressing a woman he desires, the poet displays a gift for grandiose command aglow with the expectation of being obeyed (8.5–7):

> Off with that girdle, like heavens zones glistering
> But a farr fayrer world encompassing.
> Unpin that spangled breastplate …

Addressing his literary precedents, he appropriates them with a hyperbolic transfiguration that can make them (unlike the golden age topos in "Variety") almost unrecognizable. The poem just quoted is in a manner of speaking Donne's version of *Amores* 1.5, where Corinna makes an unannounced visit to the grateful poet and has sex with him, but the 48-line English poem expands on what occupies 10 lines in Ovid, the undressing, and stops for maximum provocative effect just before the bodies (presumably) meet. While the speaker waits, his erection provides an outrageously literal illustration of the famous *militat omnis amans*, "every lover is a soldier" (*Am.* 1.9.1): "The foe oft times having the foe in sight / Is tyr'd with standing though they never fight" (3–4; Ovid himself might have been envious of that one, or maybe not). At the same time, in what (once you notice it) is a dramatic deviation from precedent, poetry as such—the poet's own poems, the poems of others, poetry as a profession or institution or tool of seduction—does not come

up as a subject. The goal of poetic immortality is nowhere in sight. The closest thing to the enduring consolation of art is provided by the picture of himself that the poet gives the woman in the last entry in the 12-poem sequence as he takes his leave; but that art is not one that Donne himself practiced, and the consolation, with luck, need only serve until his forecast return. The silence about poetry is itself arguably part of Donne's rivalrousness with literary predecessors, but it is also of a piece with his developing way as a poet; his ambition and theme are total victory in their own moment, the here and now, beside which posthumous fame is a frail specter.

Almost two centuries later, another vernacular recreation of the Latin love elegy stands near the threshold of European Romanticism. Goethe's long avoided journey to Italy in 1786–88, when he was in his late thirties and already a writer of some fame, proved to be a major watershed, both artistically, because of the direct encounter with the surviving realities of classical antiquity and the Italian Renaissance, and personally, because of an erotic experience in Rome that in the uncanny way of these things coincided with the artistic. His *Römische Elegien* (he first called them *Erotica romana*) are the most direct expression of that experience: a sequence of 20 poems in German elegiac couplets which treat of a (slightly) clandestine love affair between a Roman woman and a visiting poet from up north (who identifies himself in an early draft as the embarrassed creator of young Werther). The woman may well have been real and, unlikely as it seems, indeed named Faustina, the name used in one of the poems (18.9), though the presentation is overlaid with Goethe's love for Christiane Vulpius, the woman for whom, on his return, Goethe ended an ungratifying platonic connection with another woman and with whom he lived until her death in 1816. Some passages in the sequence are so frankly sexual that they were removed before they were first published in 1795; the sequence announces a joyously unchaste *vita nuova*: "Mehr als ich ahndete schön, das Glück, es ist mir geworden" (More beautiful than I'd ever expected, happiness has come to me, 1a1; German text from Goethe 1977).

The meter signals the main literary affiliation—essentially the same as that of Secundus, to whom Goethe had written an admiring poem a decade earlier. Goethe describes his own sequence elsewhere as "poems in the manner of Propertius," and names him in one of the poems (14a.19); there is a collective salute to the "triumvirs of love" (i.e. Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius; 5.20–21). Ovid is never explicitly invoked, but the *Amores* are clearly part of the repertoire on which Goethe draws. The modern lovers reenact the peremptory undressing of Corinna from 1.5—"Näher haben wir das! Schon fällt dein wollenes Kleidchen, / So wie der Freund es gelöst, faltig zum Boden hinab" (We work fast! Your friend loosens your woollen dress, and it falls quickly in folds to the floor, 1a.23–24)—and the advice on secret communication over dinner in 1.4 is part of the lore behind a scene at an *osteria* where, under the watchful eyes of her uncle and mother, the woman sets the time for an assignation with the lover sitting at another table (15.5–24). Goethe also follows Ovid in making poetry itself a theme, and the theme that gives

the sequence its clearest narrative arc, as poetry and love work out their symbiosis. The two agendas of the Italian trip compete for attention, and one has a clear advantage (5.1–6):

> Froh empfind ich mich nun auf klassichem Boden begeistert;
>   Vor- und Mitwelt spricht lauter und reizender mir.
> Hier befolgt ich den Rat, durchblättre die Werke der Alten
>   Mit geschäftiger Hand, täglich mit neuem Genuss.
> Aber die Nächte hindurch hält Amor mich anders beschäftigt;
>   Werd ich auch halb nur gelehrt, bin ich doch doppelt beglückt.

I am happy now, inspired, holding forth on classical ground; past and present times, pure and enchanting, speak to me. Here, thumbing through the works of the ancients with a busy hand, I follow their advice, every day with more delight. But at night Love keeps me busy in a different way; I become only half as educated, but I'm twice as happy.

Yet at the end of the day, they can converge (14–17):

> Überfällt sie der Schlaf, lieg ich und denke mir viel.
> Oftmals hab ich auch schon in ihren Armen gedichtet
>   Und des Hexameters Mass leise mit fingernder Hand
> Ihr auf den Rücken gezählt.

Sleep overcomes her, I lie and think about a lot of things. I have often even composed poetry in her arms and, tapping with my hand, softly counted out the beat of the hexameter on her back.

Writing the poem about the *osteria* occupies the unwelcome interval before the rendezvous; when that time comes, the Muses know their place: "Lebet wohl! Nun eil ich, und fürcht euch nicht zu beleidgen; / Denn ihr Stolzen, ihr gebt Amorn doch immer den Rang" (Farewell! Now I hurry off, and am not afraid of offending you; you are proud, but you always let Love go first, 15.51–52). In the last poem, though, poetry acquires a nobler role (20.15–22):

> Schwerer wird es nun mir, ein schönes Geheimnis zu wahren;
>   Ach, den Lippen entquillt Fülle des Herzens so leicht!
> Keiner Freundin darf ichs vertraun: sie möchte mich schelten;
>   Keinem Freunde: vielleicht brächte der Freund mir Gefahr.
> Mein Entzücken dem Hain, dem schallenden Felsen zu sagen,
>   Bin ich endlich nicht jung, bin ich nicht einsam genug.
> Dir, Hexameter, dir, Pentameter, sei es vertrauet,
>   Wie sie des Tags mich erfreut, wie sie des Nachts mich beglückt.

It is getting harder for me to keep the beautiful secret; ah, the fullness of the heart easily overflows the lips! I cannot trust female friends; they might scold me. Nor male friends; a male friend could prove a danger to me. As for telling my raptures to the woods, to the echoing cliffs, I am just not young enough, I am not lonely enough. You, hexameter, you, pentameter, you will be entrusted with how she cheers me by day, how she makes me happy at night.

Poetry—indeed, the elegiac couplet—is how the joy of a secret love properly becomes no longer secret.

Goethe does make some major breaks with the tradition to which he pays homage, though in their way those breaks are part of that homage. His love elegies are almost devoid of conflict. The hovering uncle and mother make some trouble, but not much (2.27–28 suggest that the mother was comfortable with the affair once under way). There is one lovers' quarrel, early on (6), though—in another break with tradition (there is some precedent in the harangue from Cynthia's ghost; Propertius 4.7.13–94)—we hear mainly the woman's side, in direct quotation that takes up most of the poem. The first encounter had been precipitate, apparently the result of an exchange of glances in the street, but the poet had reassured her, "Glaub es, ich denke nicht frech, denke nicht niedrig von dir" (Believe me, I don't think you're a loose woman, I think no less of you, 3.2). But it is not long before he accuses her of whorishness, and what we get to hear is her angry denial that there is or has been anyone else. His response is contrite silence: "Und wie sass ich beschämt, dass Reden feindlicher Menschen / Dieses liebliche Bild mir zu beflecken vermocht!" (And so I sat in shame that the talk of malicious men could befoul my beautiful image of her, 6.29–30). We hear of no more quarrels, and the love affair is presented as firmly exclusive and devoted on both sides. This conviction is clearly what the visitor from the north needs for his own comfort, though his reasoning acquires a twist when the rationale for monogamy becomes less moral than medical, a consequence of the introduction of previously unknown venereal disease into contemporary Europe. That is "die neue / Ungeheure Geburt" (14a.7–8), the monstrous new birth sent by some hostile god to destroy the golden age—Goethe calls it that (29ff.)—of classical sexual promiscuity in which the Latin love poets wrote: if Cynthia caught Propertius being unfaithful, at least he did not endanger his health (19–22). It is a historically dubious argument about antiquity, but it serves Goethe's turn in allowing him to celebrate a modern norm of romantic fidelity while simultaneously idealizing the libidinous messiness of the poets whose works he venerates. That idealization moves a tourist's awe into enraptured transvaluation of the cultural inheritance that Goethe had come south to encounter (1.9–14):

> Noch betracht ich Kirch und Palast, Ruinen und Säulen,
>
>   Wie ein bedächtiger Mann schicklich die Reise benutzt.
>
> Doch bald ist es vorbei; dann wird ein einziger Tempel,
>
>   Amors Tempel, nur sein, der den Geweihten empfängt.
>
> Eine Welt zwar bist du, o Rom; doch ohne die Liebe
>
>   Wäre die Welt nich die Welt, wäre denn Rom auch nicht Rom.

Still I gaze at church and palace, ruins and columns, like a diligent, proper person profiting from his trip. But soon this is done with; then there will be only one temple, Love's temple, to receive a worshipper. You are indeed the world, Rome, but without Love the world would not be the world, and Rome would not even be Rome.

The poet can see what the Romans themselves could not quite see: what Ovid was constrained to call *nequitia* was in truth the great soul of their civilization.

Further Reading

Braden (2010) discusses the history of the concept of love elegy as a genre, from antiquity to Rilke. Stapleton (1996) surveys the influence of Ovid's sequence up to the English Renaissance, with special attention to Petrarch and Shakespeare. Cheney (1997) is a study of Ovid's career as a model for literary ambition in the Renaissance. Braden (1999) studies Petrarch's love poetry, with reference both to predecessors and to imitators. Donne (2000) is a new text, with exhaustive summary of commentary to the end of the twentieth century. For Janus Secundus: Endres (1981) provides an overview of love elegy, with text, translation, and commentary for selected poems; Price (1996) is an inclusive study of the life and works. Boyle (1992) is the first installment of a comprehensive biography of Goethe in English, with a detailed account of Goethe's Italian journey and the circumstances surrounding his *Römische Elegien*.

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Don Quixote as Ovidian Text

Frederick A. de Armas

When in 1612 Thomas Shelton published the first English translation of *Don Quixote*, one of two Latin notes he included in the margins refers the reader to Ovid's *Amores* (1.8.43; 1612, A7r). It is as if Shelton intuits the many correspondences between Ovid and Cervantes. Ovid's exile and his death in remote Pontus connect him to a Spanish writer who sought the centers of power, sought the fame of the great poets of his time, but never achieved his goal during his lifetime. Although separated in time by a span of some 1600 years, Cervantes and Ovid established a written dialogue that has seldom been foregrounded, in spite of its significance. The imaginative visions forged by the two writers in *Metamorphoses* and *Don Quixote*, the humor of their style, the complexity of their storytelling and the problematic quality of the numinous, link them in curious ways. A few important studies have begun to unravel some of these questions: Carolyn Nadeau (2002) has studied in depth the women in *Don Quixote*, using an allusion to Ovid as one of the major points of departure for her analysis; John McCaw (2007) has reinterpreted the episode of the wooden horse in Cervantes' novel, relating it to Phaethon; Steven Wagschal (2006) has focused on the theme of jealousy in the two writers; and most recently, William Worden (2010) has delved into the uses of metamorphoses in Ovid and Cervantes. But there is much to be done.

In order to study *Don Quixote* as an Ovidian text, readers must first understand that Cervantes' novel is, in truth, two very different works. The first part, published in 1605, has as its explicit purpose the satirization of the romances of chivalry. The work is both comic and exemplary, showing the madness of a gentleman and his determination to change himself and the world. When, 10 years later, Cervantes published a second part, the focus had shifted. In a metafictional move, characters are told of the publication and success of Part One. Although this would seem to reassert the knight's determination, he loses control as others fashion

elaborate adventures for their own diversion. Don Quixote becomes a plaything of tricksters and aristocrats. The work is further marked by Cervantes' knowledge of a spurious second part as he redirects his character from the jousts at Zaragoza to the beaches of Barcelona in order to reject the journey of the false Quixote. Thus, in this study, the two parts must be contrasted. Although *Metamorphoses* is a constant presence, Part One will also imitate the *Tristia*, while Part Two will be much more focused on the *Fasti* with an important allusion to the *Tristia*. I will begin with the links between the *Metamorphoses* as related to the whole novel, and then show how there is a shift in tone regarding the Ovidian from the first to the second part. A second section will be devoted to the *Tristia* since its presence is announced (and erased) in the Prologue to the 1605 text. Its tone of lament and separation, its link between book and body, and its meditations on cruelty, exile, and censorship spill from the paratext to the very novel itself. The third section will be devoted to the *Fasti* and the presence of pagan feasts and unstable calendars in the second part of *Don Quixote*.

Metamorphoses Transformed

A cursory look at *Don Quixote* should alert the reader that the *Metamorphoses* is at hand. The main characters, as William Worden (2010: 118) has pointed out, undergo witty transformations, starting with an hidalgo who becomes a knight, a laborer who assumes the role of a squire, and a peasant woman who is somehow transformed into the knight's beloved and incorporeal Princess Dulcinea. Indeed, all these transformations are enabled through the imagination of a crazed gentle-man who believes that he can bring back the mythical golden age of humankind through his chivalric endeavors. This initial mythic belief, found throughout *Don Quixote* but expressed most clearly in the speech pronounced by the knight when he gazes upon an acorn, already links the work to the *Metamorphoses* since Ovid describes the four ages of humankind immediately after the myth of creation (1.89–150). In Ovid as in Cervantes, the fruits of the earth and the acorns are given freely to human beings who know not of war or injustice. But the subsequent ages show the decline of humankind as war, deceit, and wickedness rule the land during the iron age. It is in this age that the knight finds himself and he will use the instruments of the times, the instruments of war, to try to bring back the golden ideal. While Ovid inscribes his poem in an age where gods and men can share the world and extends it to cover a universal history to the times of Augustus Caesar, Cervantes places his knight at a time when the numinous is nothing more than an imagined possibility; and if we read between the lines, he sets his tale at a time when Charles V, a new Augustus, is to bring universal peace to the world (De Armas 2006: 112–36). Of course, such a longing is debunked by the knight's continuous defeats.

As the ages revolve, both Cervantes and Ovid make the point that change is at the heart of things, that transformation is the key to their "epic" sweep. Ovid had

recast ancient tales into new forms, giving shape to his *Metamorphoses*; Cervantes also takes ancient tales, be they romances of chivalry or Italian or Greek novels, casting them in a new manner. Taking from Ovid the notion of metamorphosis as a motif that is repeated time and again with wondrous variations, Cervantes shows the knight transforming the rustic and remote corners of La Mancha into a place of adventure where he is constantly defeated. Thus, both use a repetitive model and both use transformations, but for very different ends. Transformations are the source of copiousness, an almost infinite variety that delights the senses and the imagination. The *Metamorphoses* and *Don Quixote* also include so many voices that the authority of a single narrator seems to flounder. The layering of narratives serves to elicit wonder and confusion. Alessandro Barchiesi (2002: 189) points to one example where "Ovid narrates (to the reader) that a Muse narrates (to Pallas) that Calliope narrates (to the referees) that Arethusa narrates (to Ceres)" that she is being persecuted by a river god. In Cervantes, a layering effect begins with Chapter 9 when the narrator, having run out of material, finds a manuscript that contains part of the story of Don Quixote in Toledo. He purchases the work written by an Arab historian (and he claims that Arabs are often liars) and then has it translated from the Arabic by a Morisco boy who also inserts himself in the text. As the narrative of the knight's adventure continues, the reader is often torn between thinking of the "lying" Arabic voice, the amused and innocent version of the Morisco, or the admonitions of the Christian compiler.

Once the adventures/imaginative transformations of the knight give way to his penance in Sierra Morena, the text moves to other genres, creating new and amazing couplings of stories. This labyrinth of tales recalls Ovid's manner of composition as well as the mythical labyrinth where the Minotaur abides (*Met.* 8.159–68; 1978: 1.25.317). Copiousness and the layering of voices are techniques to arouse wonderment in both writers, and they are coupled, paradoxically, with a certain amount of humor. While Cervantes' novel is overtly comic, with touches of pathos and tragedy, Ovid's poem seems to be essentially serious. Even though arbitrary and cruel forces bring about constant transformations and unexpected tragedy, Ovid's work is luminous, filled with awe, invention, and a light touch of humor that gladdens the reader.

In Ovid, metamorphoses usually move downwards, that is, from a divine, semi-divine, or human figure to the animal and plant world. However, he does include a few that point in the opposite direction: Io regains her human shape and becomes a goddess; Pygmalion's statue becomes a woman; Castor and Pollux are transformed into stars; and Hercules, Aeneas, Romulus, and Julius Caesar become gods (Fantham 2004: 15). Cervantes adopts this second direction for his transformations. In Don Quixote's mind, they move upwards from inns to castles, from prostitutes to ladies, and from peasant women to princesses. Rarely, however, do they move from inanimate to animate. A key exception is the famous episode of the windmills. As in Ovid's Pygmalion, an inanimate object comes to life: Don Quixote imagines that these mills with their moving sails are giants with many

arms that move about. These are the very giants that appear in *Metamorphoses* as proof of the downward trend of the ages of the world, the pervasiveness of wickedness and impiety. As the giants try to assault heaven, Jupiter hurls his thunderbolt, destroying them (1.151–55). In Cervantes, the episode is both awe-inspiring and humorous, as the knight attacks these creatures with his lance, his version of the thunderbolt. But then, the wind starts blowing, and the giants/windmills start moving their hands or sails. The knight seems to even recognize one of them, the hundred-armed Briareus (1978: 1.8.130). As he charges against the nearest "giant," Don Quixote's lance is caught by the sails/arms, which lift him up with his emaciated steed, letting them fall precipitously to the ground. In this Cervantine gigantomachy, the giants seem to triumph, although Don Quixote affirms that some enchanter has turned them to stone, to windmills. In this sense, they have once again become inanimate, quiescent.

In the fifth book of *Metamorphoses* nine sisters boast that their song is better than that of the Muses. After a contest where the Pierides sing of the gigantomachy, heaping great praise on the giants and including a "eulogy of Typhoeus" (Johnson 2008: 62–63), they are transformed into chattering magpies. This second version of the gigantomachy vies with the official version of the battle of evil giants against the heavens and also contends with *Amores* 2.1.11–20, where Ovid confesses he would rather struggle with the love of a woman than continue writing of the gods' battle with the giants. Cervantes' imitation, in this instance then, is a heuristic one, exposing the Ovidian subtexts which express a laudatory, conflictive, and humorous vision of the Olympians' battle against the giants. Cervantes contaminates his text with all three visions, but also distances himself from them. He finds a new way of telling of the contest, one that speaks to an age where the numinous is fading into a rigid orthodoxy that forecloses vision; an age where the new Augustus is weakening; and where the lands are suffering from poverty and disease while knights are no longer to be found. By bridging the gap of centuries and providing a new way of looking at ancient metamorphoses, Cervantes forges one of the more visually stunning and iconic episodes of the novel.

There may be even one more significant element in Cervantes' utilization of Ovid's gigantomachy. Patrick Cheney, who has studied the literary careers of ancient and early modern poets, has linked Virgil with Spenser and Marlowe with Ovid. Ancients forge literary careers that move from lower genres to higher ones such as the epic. The moderns imitate these literary career moves. Cervantes, in some ways, follows Virgil in that he begins with pastoral (which relates to Virgil's *Eclogues*) and concludes with a comic epic (*Don Quixote*) and a serious epic (*Persiles*) (De Armas 2002). However, it might be worth studying how Cervantes commingles Virgilian and Ovidian literary careers. Cheney (1997: 36) notes how for Ovid an epic *Gigantomachy* serves as "a career marker," with the poem projected in *Amores* 2.1 finally fulfilled by including the myth near the opening of the *Metamorphoses*. Although Cervantes foregrounds Virgil, his imitation of an ancient's career could be contaminated by his uses of Ovid. After all, the "author's"

friend in the Prologue to Part One of *Don Quixote* speaks of allusions that could be inserted in the novel to make it appear more authoritative. Giants such as Cacus (a Virgilian and Ovidian figure) and Goliath are foregrounded and they indeed appear in the novel. Cervantes' frequent mention of giants is also a pointer to epic; Don Quixote's battle with the windmills breaks the separation between inanimate and animate beings in order to point to the Ovidian conjoining of humor and the epic tradition in his novel.

However, this upward move in Cervantes never reaches the gods. The giants remain forever trapped. Thus, the numinous in Ovid is much more vivid than in Cervantes. In the Spanish novel, deities are often the stuff of humor. The knight's lady to whom he often appeals as if she were a goddess is known not to exist in reality or, worse still, to be a rather common peasant woman. Don Quixote may wish to be compared with a god—he sallies forth as the Sun/Apollo rises (1978: 1.2.80). In this he recalls that Apollo was one of the first gods sung in *Metamorphoses*, as he kills Python (1.441). However, Quixote knows that he is not a deity from the beginnings of time. He belongs to an iron age where constant warfare and the iron that bounds prisoners are the state of things. Thus, he views himself as being as valiant as Mars (1978: 1.20.238); as being punished by Mars for deviating from the ideal behavior of a knight (1978: 1.15, 192). He wishes for a helmet as invincible as that of the martial god (1978: 1.21.255) and believes himself to be under the influence of the god of war (1978: 2.6.84). The reality is that he is nothing at all like the god, the gap between them creating a space for comedy. Most often Don Quixote is defeated in his mad adventures, and no (imagined) talisman from this deity, no golden helmet, seems to help him. He is not at all like the heroic and handsome figure of Mars in Renaissance Italian art, nor like the Mars of Ovid, whose name is used as metonymy for war or battle and who is called Gradivus as the one who marches forth (e.g. *Met*. 14.820). While it is true that the Spanish knight sets out to battle, he is far from frightening, his spear often breaking (unlike that of Mars). His phlegmatic horse is a comic and faded copy of the deity's striking steeds (Cull 1990: 37–54). While Ovid, like Homer, delights in telling the tale of Mars' affair with Venus (in both *Met*. 4.171–89 and *AA* 2.561–88), and while Renaissance artists delighted in painting their forbidden love, Don Quixote, who seems to seek the love of a "princess" at an inn/castle, can only be the subject of a bedroom farce (1978: 1.16.202–6). He is caught with the Asturian maid/princess, but the witness is not Venus' husband Vulcan, who catches them in a subtle net he has made, but a muleteer. Although both Ovid and Cervantes elicit laughter, in the Roman poet, the gods are laughing at their own kind, eliciting a kind of awe-inspired humor in the reader. In Cervantes the separation from the lofty and the numinous is so great that the farce fails to rise above its locale, even though the celestial connotations hover in the distance. In Cervantes, the god comes much closer to the image of Mars as painted by Velázquez, and even this figure, with its melancholy pose, is too bulky and strong for the feeble and sickened knight. Cervantes has mockingly metamorphosed his knight as no son of Mars. He may sally forth, but he lacks the

virile strength, the lust for love and war, the body of a warrior. His one power is that of transforming reality in his imagination, but his trusted weapon leads him again and again into disaster. Cervantes delegates authority for most transformations to his crazed yet humorously deified knight, thus creating a kind of heuristic imitation where Don Quixote seeks to make a better world, just as the early modern text seeks to surpass the ancient through a new vision of the world. In doing so, the ancient text also comes to the fore, asserting its own presence in the narrative.

The 1615 *Quixote* seems much less concerned with the knight's ability to transform the world. Although it may appear that Don Quixote gains strength by knowing that a book about his feats is now being read by many, this ends up detracting from his agency. We will witness instead a knight who is manipulated by others for their amusement. He is no longer the Ovidian visionary who transforms the quotidian through his imagination. Another change occurs in tandem with this one: the *Metamorphoses* is no longer a book to be revered. While we have spoken of heuristic imitation in Part One, Cervantes, at certain points in Part Two, seeks to trivialize the ancient. According to Thomas M. Greene (1982: 45), dialectic imitation occurs when there is a current of mutual aggression as the modern text exposes the "vulnerability" of its model, "while exposing itself to the subtext's potential aggression." As Don Quixote at the wedding of Quiteria and Basilio expresses his desire to see the Cave of Montesinos, he is told of a scholar who can become his guide (1978: 2.22.205). On the road, the knight discovers that his profession was that of "humanist" and that he is the author of a series of rather pedantic and ridiculous books. Among them is one entitled *Metamorfoseos o Ovidio español* (Metamorphoses or the Spanish Ovid, 1978: 22.206). The narrator states that this book was written as a parody of Ovid, as the humanist explains the creation of a number of Spanish monuments following the Ovidian technique of discovering that some objects were actually beings that had been transformed. Thus, the humanist seeks to explain, among others, the Giralda of Seville, the tower of La Magdalena, and a number of fountains in Madrid. He has come with Don Quixote to the Cave of Montesinos so as to decipher the origin of the lakes of Ruidera (1978: 2.23.216). Ovid, then, is being mocked; the numinous nature of his work is deflated; and even the discovery of the origins of Ruidera is ridiculed since Don Quixote's adventures in the cave are something between a grotesque dream and a fanciful vision. At the same time, the novel introduces some words of caution: the humanist is a ridiculous figure who may not understand Ovid. Furthermore, the whole idea for coming to the cave and lakes emerged from a wedding ceremony. Quiteria was to marry the rich Camacho, thus discarding the love of her youth, an impoverished young man. Their young love resembled that of Pyramus and Thisbe (1978: 2.19.179). While the humanist seeks to create a rather pedantic and artificial parody of Ovid, the main text shows how an old tale by Ovid is still very much alive. In this modern version of the story, the rejected Basilio is able to create a ruse to marry Quiteria: he appears to be near death and asks that she marry him in this last moment of his life. Once the ceremony is

performed, he reveals that he is now her healthy spouse. There is no lion or sword here to bring about a tragedy. Rather, the only lions encountered are by Don Quixote, in a preceding episode, and they are caged; when he orders the keeper to open the door, as he waits on foot for the beast to charge him, the lion pays him no attention (1978: 2.17.164). In a comic and inventive manner, Cervantes reconstructs the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe. Death is replaced by fragmentation, but the parts of the tale can be brought together and revivified. The inventiveness of the new comes with a recollection of the ancient story. This brings delight to the reader, who discovers a new mode of imitation. It is comic, heroic, passionate, and inventive. Cervantes has not given up on Ovid, even though his knight might have.

Although the tragic ending has been avoided in this refashioning of a myth, death does come in the end. In a twofold metamorphosis, Don Quixote, defeated by Sansón Carrasco and disillusioned with his imagined successes as a knight and his inability to "disenchant" Dulcinea and a world that continues to be contrary to his needs, decides to return home. He also gives up his chivalric persona and reverts to his former self, this time calling himself Alonso Quijano "the Good." In this final transformation he changes from crazed knight to good Catholic. He writes his will and dies in his own bed in contradistinction to knights of old. But, is this yet another one of his fictions? Whatever the answer, the Arabic sage will no longer be able to contrive new adventures for him. In Ovid's last book, the teachings of Pythagoras are brought to the foreground. Maggie Kilgour (2007: 267) asserts: "At the end of the text, however, Pythagoras' lengthy speech detailing the endless recycling of forms suggests another view of metamorphosis: change as continuous flux." Both Cervantes and Ovid conclude their work with the inconclusive journey of the human being, the changes that come after dying. Ovid's metempsychosis is never mentioned since the gentleman from La Mancha is said to die a good Catholic. But the intertextual links open up new spaces for transformation.

Tristia: Cruelty, Exile, and Censorship

Although we would immediately connect the knight's transformations to those that take place in the *Metamorphoses*, Cervantes' novel announces a very different model at the start, that of the *Tristia*. In this section we will look at some of the mysteries that appear in the Prologue of the 1605 novel and consider how they spill over into the work, in order to reconstruct a conversation with one of Ovid's lesser known works; one that deals with exile, cruelty, lamentation, fragmentation—and even censorship. In the Prologue the "author" bemoans the fact that his book is too plain, lacking the adornment of authoritative citations. A friend arrives and counsels him on easy ways to ornament his text with well-known Latin *sententiae* and classical commonplaces (1978: 1.54–56). The fifth and last maxim intoned by the friend is said to derive from Cato. In an age when classical learning was pervasive among the educated, it would be clear that this particular *sententia* came from Ovid

rather than from Cato. The two verses derive from the *Tristia*, Ovid's meditations on exile: "So long as you are secure you will count many friends; if your life becomes clouded you will be alone" (*Don Quixote* 1978: 55; *Tr.* 1.9.5–6). The first mystery, then, has to do with the cloaking of Ovid's authorship.

Before we attempt to unravel its meanings, let us turn to a second puzzle from the Prologue. Here, the friend mentions, among others, three well-known women from the antique world whose names can be used as an excuse to create a footnote: Ovid's Medea, Homer's Calypso, and Virgil's Circe (1978: 1.56). The friend labels Medea a cruel woman, and her character is carefully delineated in four very different works by Ovid: *Heroides*, *Metamorphoses*, the lost play entitled *Medea*, and the exile collection *Tristia*. Most editors who footnote Medea consider that the friend's allusion derives from *Metamorphoses*, Book 7 (e.g. Nadeau 2002: 87). Yet, of the four texts where Ovid characterizes Medea, only one fits Cervantes' view of her as cruel. *Tristia* 3.9 contains the most clear and concise representation of Medea's cruelty. Ovid explains the origin of the name Tomis, a city on the northern coast of the Black Sea to which he was exiled. For him, "it was a town located in a war-stricken cultural wasteland on the remotest margins of the empire" (Williams 2002: 235). Throughout the *Tristia*, Ovid bemoans Tomis's cruel weather, its constant wars, and barbarian customs. In this letter, he begins by evoking this "wild barbarian world" (3.9.2) and narrating how "wicked Medea" (3.9.2 *impia*) travels to Tomis after abandoning her father at Colchis. But King Aeetes is in pursuit, and as he approaches the harbor at Tomis, his daughter turns pale with fear. She clutches her heart with a guilty hand, daring to think the unspeakable (3.9.16 *nefanda*), linking imminent actions to future deeds. Gazing upon her brother Absyrtus, she immediately decides upon fratricide in order to delay her father and have him mourn for his son. Ovid describes the cruel and bloody manner of the murder. Russell (2011: 340) comments: "In many ways this scene provides Medea a moment of choice, and Ovid shows us how she chooses to behave in an utterly cruel fashion. Ovid's earlier Medeas had a different tone than does the one we see in *Tristia* 3.9, for in the earlier versions there were lighter moments and even elements of humour." As opposed to other works, this one is characterized by its "unrelenting darkness" (2011: 340). Although she had been impious before, she now behaves with such unfeeling cruelty that she foreshadows her future actions. Indeed, the moment is inscribed upon the name of the city, which for Ovid derives from Greek *temno*, "to cut" (3.9.33–34). Medea and the city of exile are cruel beyond belief.

Cervantes' Prologue also imitates the *Tristia* in other ways. At the very beginning of his first exilic collection, Ovid writes an apostrophe to his little book, urging it to go without him to the city, a place where he can no longer enter. By personifying it and claiming that in his own home in the capital of the empire it will find its lost brothers (the other works by Ovid) arranged in order (1.1.107), he treats the book as his own child (1.1.115). The child will enjoy the empire and plead for him, while the poet will remain in a dark and barbarous place where he is buffeted by winter storms. At the same time, he does not have high hopes for his book, since

it was written in a hostile place and thus it was born as a less than perfect creature. Cervantes begins his prologue in a similar manner, calling his book a child of his understanding, which was also engendered in a dark place, in this case a prison (1978: 1.50). The Spanish writer imitates Ovid by creating a whimsical book or child (*antojadizo*), born out of distress. Both writers imagine the ideal situation in which to write a volume or engender a child of the imagination and the Muses (Cervantes 1978: 1.50; *Tr.* 1.1.39–44). But their books come from a different place and state of mind, thus being born defective. Born in the margins, the book as child is a body that can speak and take its message to more civilized places. Being aware of Ovid's banishment, Cervantes shows that he too was banished into a prison and he also wishes to attain the good will of his own imperial Augustus, the Spanish Habsburg, or even the would-be patron of the courtly nobility to whom he dedicates his book. The creation of a whimsical child by both Ovid and Cervantes reflects the difficult situation in which the authors found themselves. Cervantes, who is in his fifties and has not achieved the success he wished in writing, asks the reader to bring him back to the center, to grant him fame in courtly circles.

Ovid's text, then, allows Cervantes to talk about his own exile from the Parnassus of authors of his time; it allows him to point to his captivity in Algiers—surely as cruel a place as Tomis. At the time Cervantes was composing his novel, Tomis was part of the Ottoman Empire, and thus could be linked to the Spanish author's captivity. More importantly, the *Tristia* makes it possible for Cervantes to come up with a new aesthetics, one based on exile, as the book becomes a whimsical body. Paradoxically, he hopes that this body, like Ovid's personified book, will travel to the center of power, to the new Rome which is Madrid. This knowledge also allows the reader to find ways of deciphering the two mysterious allusions. In Ovid's corpus, the figure of Medea in the *Tristia* is the cruelest. She will eventually kill her own children, much as she killed her brother. Evans (1983: 62) writes that "we are asked to associate Tomis with cruel, inhuman deeds and death." Medea comes to represent Tomis, a barbaric and cruel place of exile, one that is cut from the center, much as she cuts her brother from this life. Exile may kill the offspring of invention, but at least Cervantes and Ovid can exhibit a whimsical child.

The first puzzle we encountered is also clearly related to questions of exile from the center. Here, the friend in the Prologue had concealed the provenance of the verses by Ovid, attributing them to Cato. The friend is in a sense "censoring" the true author of his allusion. This is gleaned from the fact that Cato was often referred to as *Censorius* (the Censor), pointing to the last major office he held in Rome (184 BC), and as such became emblematic of traditional Roman rectitude in morality. As censor, he would carry out the Roman census and on the citizen lists give marks of censure to those who he thought acted inappropriately. When Ovid was banished for (as he himself put it) *carmen et error*, a written text and a mistake in behavior, his writings were apparently excluded from Rome's public libraries (*Tr.* 3.1.65–72). He thus experienced censorship in the modern meaning of the term, although in Rome such measures were unconnected with the office of censor.

To further point to the link between Ovid and censorship, we find that the only direct allusion to Ovid in the text of the 1605 novel occurs in the last sentence of the episode of the inquisition of Don Quixote's books carried out by the priest and the barber with the help of the housekeeper (1978: 1.212). Here books—again, like those of Ovid—are at times personified, thus relating the *autos de fe*, the burning of human bodies in early modern Spain, with the burning of books also carried out by the Inquisition.

Each one of the uses of the *Tristia* in the Cervantine Prologue, then, is a way of imitating the work in concealed or mysterious ways. By drawing the reader into these puzzles, the Prologue exhibits a subtle art of imitation, while at the same time pointing to the text of the 1605 novel as a site where these Ovidian mysteries are further explored and developed: cruelty, censorship, fragmentation, exile from the center, and the whimsical body. While the *Tristia* prefaces and thus envelopes the first part of Cervantes' novel, thus skewing the vision of the ever-present *Metamorphoses*, the latter points to *Don Quixote* as a comic but epic-like text where transformation is at the heart of the world as conceived by the knight.

Fasti: Pagan Feasts and Unstable Calendars

Cervantes' 1615 *Quixote*, as noted, depicts a knight who no longer triggers transformations as if he were an ancient god. Since those around him have read the first part of his adventures, they are generally the ones who conceive new transformations of humans and their environment. As the knight is mocked and defeated over and over, his powers wane. The *Metamorphoses*, then, is a text that acts against the knight in Part Two. While in Part One the *Tristia* had served to transform the metamorphic vision and create new and audacious possibilities, in Part Two it is the *Fasti* that impinges upon the text. At the beginning of Part Two, the trickster Sansón Carrasco suggests to Don Quixote that he travel to the jousts in Zaragoza, which will take place during the feast of Saint George in April. However, there is a constant dilation in the novel as the chivalric pair go here and there without ever approaching their goal. And it soon becomes clear that time is out of joint, that feasts are happening at odd times and that the feast of Saint George in April has already passed. Already in Chapter 8 there is a hint that the first feast they will encounter will not be a Christian one. While the knight keeps referring to Julius Caesar and other antique figures, Sancho's joke is not at all one of a simpleton: he calls them "esos Julios o Agostos" (1978: 2.8.97). This is a purposeful pun since Don Quixote has not mentioned Augustus Caesar. In naming the two imperial months, Sancho recalls ancient calendrical time and may point specifically to Ovid's *Fasti*, where the text breaks off right before the two months dedicated to the two Caesars.

In an initial dilation, Don Quixote wishes to go to El Toboso to visit his (imagined) lady, Dulcinea. After a failed attempt to find her palace in the middle of the night, Sancho is asked to bring her to the knight, who will wait for his beloved

princess in the forest. Not knowing what to do, Sancho decides on a deliberate lie. Seeing three peasant women riding on donkeys, Sancho asks Don Quixote to approach and bask in the glory of his beloved. Here Sancho creates a rustic vision of the month of May for his master, one that is carefully crafted utilizing the festival of the Floralia as described in Ovid's *Fasti*. Obviously, this vision may be out of place if the chivalric pair still think they will arrive at the joust of Saint John which takes place the month before. The Floralia is a May festival dedicated to Flora, a goddess who brings about the arrival of spring, creating a landscape filled with flowers. In Ovid and elsewhere, she is seen in the company of the Graces. The episode in Chapter 10 is a carefully crafted tableau of the Ovidian feast. Here we encounter the smell of flowers (be they a luscious aroma of spring or that of garlic flowers) (1978: 2.10.112); the swiftness of the wind recalling spring's Zephyr (1978: 2.10.111) and the "beauty" of three peasant women who prance on their donkeys as if they were the three Graces. Indeed, Sancho describes their attire as if they were this mythical triad (1978: 2.10.108). Sancho's use of this feast is well suited to his station in life, for Flora is a rustic goddess (De Armas 2008: 14–15).

One more element, not "painted" by Sancho, is key to the representation of the Floralia, and it is one that is rarely present in such descriptions, but is found in Ovid as well as in Botticelli's *Primavera* (see Plate 2). Both the narrator and the squire associate Sancho with the god Mercury. And this is as it should be since Mercury, Ovid reminds us in the *Fasti*, is the son of Maia, and it is he who named the month of May after his mother (5.85–89). His feast comes close in time to Floralia for it takes place on May 15 (5.663–92; Newlands 1995: 69). At least thrice in Cervantes' chapter Sancho is called "messenger," one of the main attributes of this antique deity (1978: 2.10.106, 107). Sancho, through his astounding descriptions, can also be related to Mercury as god of eloquence, while his lies are related to this deity as trickster. Of course, Sancho's physical appearance could not be more different from the god's: his phlegmatic obesity contrasts with Mercury's lean swiftness and splendor. Thus, Cervantes's imitation of Ovid adds a comic and grotesque vision to the feast. At the same time, Cervantes places Sancho at the center of this May festival since it was considered to be a rustic one originally, and among the "Republican festivals where license of speech and behavior was preserved," as Carole Newlands (2002: 204–5) reminds us. Sancho chooses Mercury's eloquence and trickery in order to attenuate Don Quixote's imperious narrative. The knight is concerned with fame and rulership; with the transformation of the quotidian into the ideal. In a moment of rebellion, Sancho uses his mendacious eloquence to maintain his position, and thus enhance his material well-being. While Augustus wanted to implant a stern code of virtue in his new empire, Ovid replied with rustic bawdiness (Everitt 2006: 235). The Floralia, then, is Sancho's festival. Flora's feasts foreground his freedom of speech against Don Quixote's constant commands. The martial, Augustan knight will bend, at times, to his squire's mercurial trickery. While Don Quixote accepts Sancho's tale, he cannot see the Floralia, he cannot see his Dulcinea. He thinks his eyes have been clouded by an evil enchanter, not

realizing that it is his own squire's inability to rise to Mercury's perfect eloquence that obscures his vision. The Floralia, then, serves to further destabilize the novel. Not only is time out of joint, but the squire now has the upper hand, borrowing from Ovid something that was reserved to the knight's visionary metamorphoses.

I would like to end this chapter with some brief comments concerning another curious use of Ovid in Part Two of the novel. In the section on the *Metamorphoses*, we have seen how Cervantes reconstitutes the major parts of the Pyramus and Thisbe episode, including an encounter with a lion and a pair of lovers who surmount the fate of the forbidden love recounted in Ovid. Interwoven between the lion and the marriage episode, Cervantes describes Don Quixote's conversations with the Gentleman of the Green Cloak. This figure fears for the future of his son who wants to become a poet, which the father considers not a proper career and one without much of a future. He would rather his son used his studies at Salamanca to become a lawyer, or even a theologian (1978: 2.16.154). Don Quixote, in one of his wisest moments, discusses the art of poetry. He urges Don Diego to allow his son to continue his work because poets are born as such and should not be dissuaded from following their path. Although aided by art and technique, it is their inner inspiration that is key to their writings. At this point, Don Quixote cites the famous phrase by Ovid: *est deus in nobis*, "There is a god within us" (*Fasti* 6.5; *AA* 3.549). The *Fasti* begins discussion of the month of June with the claim that there is a god within the poets who brings inspiration. Knowing this, the poetic voice wishes to see the gods, and indeed three deities appear one after the other claiming that June was named after them. In some ways this image of the month of June takes us back to the Floralia. There, in May's festival, Don Quixote could not see his Flora, his Dulcinea; now, he becomes the inspired visionary claiming that a god resides within the poet. The knight's speech is proof that inspiration has not truly departed. Indeed, it is inspiration that will lead him to "fight" the lion, as part of the creative fragmentation of the myth of Pyramus and Thisbe. As if to underline the mysterious threads of inspiration and imitation, there is yet another instance of the myth. Going to Don Diego's home, the knight is able to listen to his son's poetry. Not surprisingly, he declaims a sonnet on Pyramus and Thisbe (1978: 2.18.175).

Don Quixote as an Ovidian text is filled with transformations, be they those of a knight who as god-like figure, as a new Mars, seeks to transform quotidian reality, or those of a squire who wishes to show his master a rustic Floralia. Ovid's works are also transformed by Cervantes in order to display new forms of imitation. The Pyramus and Thisbe episode is a fine example of how a story can be cut, fragmented, and parodied. While fragmentation recalls the cruel Medea of *Tristia*, who cuts and crushes into pieces her brother's body, Ovid's textual body is revivified through a new way of approaching the classics and through the belief, expressed by the knight, that a god resides within the poet or visionary. While Ovid sings of the woes of exile in remote Pontus, Don Quixote warns poets not to write of things that will lead to their ruin. Turning to the *Tristia* (1978: 2.17.157), the novel warns the reader not to write that which should remain unsaid. This warning comes as

Don Quixote hides poems linked to exile such as the *Tristia* and *Fasti*. In his joyful recreation of the *Metamorphoses*, Cervantes uses Ovid both to praise poetry/fiction and warn of the dangers inherent in them through a visionary knight that is forever defeated. At the same time, a number of mysterious allusions to Ovid arouse the reader's curiosity to discover through the subtle threads of Ovidian imitation what some of the censored words and ideas might have been, why a book written from the margins can inscribe error.

Further Reading

Of the works cited in the chapter, see especially De Armas (2008), Nadeau (2002), and Worden (2010).

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Spenser and Ovid

Philip Hardie

Spenser consciously models his career on that of Virgil (Cheney 1993). The "new poet" makes his major debut with a book of pastoral poetry, *The Shepheardes Calender* (1579), which, in the manner of Virgil's *Eclogues*, both plays with and declines the "famous flight" (*October* 88) of the epic deeds and epic praise subsequently realized in *The Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596), which opens with a close adaptation of the *ille ego* proem of the *Aeneid*, as Spenser exchanges his "oaten reeds" for "trumpets sterne." But from the start Spenser's Virgilianism is mediated through the later tradition, ancient and post-antique; Ovid, Virgil's younger contemporary and one of Virgil's earliest and best readers, is arguably an even more important influence on Spenser than is Virgil. This is most obvious in *The Faerie Queene*, which has been called "the most profound English meditation on the *Metamorphoses* as a whole" (Lyne 2001: 140). It is a national epic full of episodes of metamorphosis and erotic passion, with numerous direct allusions to and reworkings of specific stories in the *Metamorphoses*. As such it is the single greatest monument of the great surge of Ovidianism in Elizabethan literature that reached its peak in the 1590s (on Shakespeare and Ovid see Keilen in this volume).

Metamorphosis

Spenser's "Letter of the Authors" to Sir Walter Raleigh, "expounding his whole intention" in the *The Faerie Queene*, places the poem within a tradition stretching back to antiquity of an exemplary and allegorical reading of the epics of Homer and Virgil for moral lessons. Spenser was also aware of the allegorical and moralizing tradition of reading Ovid, which developed in the Middle Ages with the large-scale interpretations of Pierre Bersuire and the *Ovide moralisé*, and continued

through the Renaissance, in English notably in Golding's interpretative paratexts to his translation of the *Metamorphoses* (on Spenser's use of Golding see Stapleton 2009: ch. 3). But the fact that a reading of Spenser's Ovidianism responds easily to modern critical approaches to Ovid should caution against the assumption that Spenser was in any way blinkered by this medieval tradition. For one thing, moralizing is already fully at home within Ovidian narratives of metamorphosis, particularly in the mouths of internal narrators out to make a point. Metamorphosis slides into moral and psychological metaphor. Anaxarete's petrifaction (*Met.* 14.753–58) is the material realization of her unyielding, stony heart, a condign punishment in the eyes of the narrator, Vertumnus, who is trying to make a point to the reluctant Pomona. The fountain that will not wash off the blood on the hands of Ruddymane is the water that flows from the stone into which Diana transformed one of her nymphs to save her from the pursuit of Faunus, in a typically Spenserian variation on Ovidian themes (cf. also Daphne and Arethusa): "The goddesse heard, and suddeine where she sate, / Welling out streames of teares, and quite dismayd / With stony feare of that rude rustic mate, / Transformd her to a stone from stedfast virgins state" (*FQ* II. ii. 8.6–9).

The first metamorphosis of a human in the *Metamorphoses*, told by an indignantly censorious Jupiter, is that of the tyrant Lycaon into the wolf that he was all along, both metaphorically and by name (Greek *lukos*) (1.209–39). This metamorphosis may not be as paradigmatic and programmatic for the future history of the Ovidian world as Jupiter might like it to be, but it represents one possibility for the meaning of metamorphosis. At the end of a narrative sequence in the Legend of Justice that alludes to a plethora of episodes in the *Metamorphoses* (*FQ* V. viii), Adicia, the wife of the wicked tyrant Soudan, flies into a vengeful rage and runs into the wild wood. After, her husband, a figure for Elizabeth's enemy Philip II of Spain, loses control of his chariot (like Phaethon) and is torn to pieces (like Hippolytus): "There they doe say, that she transformed was / Into a Tygre, and that Tygres scath / In crueltie and outrage she did pas, / To proue her surname true, that she imposed has" (V. viii. 49.6–9). By her name Adicia is a personification of injustice (Greek *adikia*), and she further proves her essential nature through metamorphosis into an animal which typifies "crueltie and outrage," just as Lycaon proves his "wolfishness" by turning into a wolf. If she ceases thereby to be a personification in human form, the slippage from human to animal type of a vice or passion is eased by the close connections that already exist in the *Metamorphoses* between the dynamic process of metamorphosis and the fixed figure of a personification (Hardie 2002: 231–36). Ovidian personifications transform the characters and landscapes on which they work. There is a general point to be made about the importance of the *Metamorphoses* as a foundational text for the later history of European personification allegory, of which *The Faerie Queene* is one of the major monuments, although Spenser's allegories bear the weight of the whole of the intervening tradition rather than, in most cases, drawing directly on the Ovidian personifications.

Adicia's metamorphosis is not directly narrated, and indeed has only the authority of report ("they say"). And the cruel woman Adicia is not transformed into a tiger without residue; report adds that she surpassed even a tiger's cruelty. In this and in other respects the story of Adicia is typical of the ease with which Spenser inhabits and adapts Ovid's metamorphic idiom, and an example of "Spenser's manipulation of the intersections between simile, metaphor, and metamorphosis" (Lyne 2001: 138). At the beginning of the stanza in which Adicia is (said to be) metamorphosed into a tiger, she is compared in a simile to "a mad bitch." That is the creature into which the enraged and grief-stricken Hecuba is transformed at *Met.* 13.567–71, after she has been compared in a simile to a lioness raging at the loss of her cub. Both Ovidian and Spenserian similes are examples of a "protometamorphosis" (Barkan 1986: 20–21), the anticipation in figurative language of a physical transformation. This is the last in a series of similes applied to Adicia before her fixation in the shape of a tigress. In the first she is said to be "like an enraged cow, / That is berobbed of her youngling dere" (V. viii. 46.1–2), possibly alluding to Ovid's bereaved lioness. In the next stanza Adicia is compared in a triple simile to infuriated mythological women who all appear in the *Metamorphoses*, Ino, Medea and Agave, only for the reader to be told that "Yet neither Ino, nor Medea stout, / Nor all the Maenades so furious were, / As this bold woman, when she saw that Damzell there" (V. viii. 47.8–9). Adicia exceeds her human sisters in ferocity as she will exceed the tiger. This correction of the simile is itself an Ovidian trick, an example of the "approximative simile," the simile which explicitly calibrates the exact degree of similarity between tenor and vehicle (Hardie 2004).

Another tour de force of metamorphic imagining is the conclusion to the story of Malbecco, cuckolded by his nymphomaniac wife Hellenore, at *FQ* III. x. To get closer to the goat-like satyrs whose sex-toy Hellenore has become, Malbecco, whose name already includes the Italian word meaning both "he-goat" and "cuckold," *becco*, creeps in among the satyrs' goats, going on all fours and made more complete in his "counterfeit" "through the helpe of his faire hornes on hight" (47.4). The figurative horns of the cuckold have now become visible, a first stage of transformation. After seeing a satyr make love nine times to his wife (the number of which Ovid boasts that he was once capable with Corinna at *Amores* 3.7.25–26), and after she has refused to come back to him, Malbecco escapes from the satyrs. On finding that his treasure, the other object of his desire, has been stolen, he goes mad and runs "As if the wind him his winges had borne," until he comes to a hill overhanging the sea. At this point Ovidian models (Daedalion, *Met.* 11.336–45, and Aesacus, *Met.* 11.783–95) might lead us to expect that he would grow his own wings and turn into a bird. But there is no metamorphosis other than the wasting away over time that has left him no more than "an aery Spright," and he falls on to the cliff without hurt. Crawling into a cave, he feeds on toads and frogs, and "through priuy griefe, and horrour vaine, / Is woxen so deform'd, that he has quight / Forgot he was a man, and Gealosie is hight" (III. x. 60.7–9).

Colin Burrow correctly notes that "metamorphosis into an abstraction is not something that ever happens in Ovid" (Burrow 1988: 115), but what happens to Malbecco can be understood as an easy extension of the transformation by an Ovidian personification of a human actor into a version of herself, for example Envy's (*Invidia*) infection of Aglauros (*Met.* 2.797–832).

Aglauros' envy is itself a sexual jealousy, and Malbecco-Gealosie has some similarities with Ovid's Envy, but this is overlaid with other sources, for example Ariosto's Sospetto "Suspicion," who lives on a cliff high above the sea (*Cinque Canti* ii. 18). As often, Spenser combines imitation of Ovid and of the Ovidian tradition; Ariosto's Ovidianism in particular is a major presence in *The Faerie Queene* (De Sa Wiggins 1991; on Ariosto and Ovid see Casali in this volume).

Mutability

So far, I have looked at instances of "terminal metamorphosis," transformations that halt a life and a story. The major disquisition on change in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the Speech of Pythagoras in Book 15, proposes as a cosmic principle an indefinite mutability that is not exemplified in the vast majority of tales of metamorphosis in the rest of the poem. The Speech of Pythagoras, an embarrassment for many modern critics, was highly regarded and much imitated in the Renaissance. Spenser draws on it in two prominent and much discussed passages, the Garden of Adonis in the middle of Book III (Canto vi), and the *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie*, which first appeared in the 1609 folio edition of *The Faerie Queene*.

The story of Venus and Adonis (*Met.* 10.503–59, 708–39) is first told at the beginning of Book III (i. 34–38), in the ekphrasis of the tapestry in Malecasta's Castle Joyeous, ending with the death of Adonis and his transformation into a "dainty flowre." Ovid's Venus promises to commemorate the death of Adonis with annual ritual lament, a "repeated likeness of your death" (*Met.* 10.726 *repetitaque mortis imago*), and her subsequent transformation of the youth's blood into the anemone, the "wind-flower" which no sooner blooms than it is blown away, turns the terminal metamorphosis itself into an annual cycle of growth and decay. Spenser's Garden of Adonis is the place of perpetual regeneration of living creatures and of repeated metempsychosis. In this cycle of being, matter is eternal, but the external shape changes continuously (III. vi. 38): "The substance is not chaunged, nor altered, / But th'only forme and outward fashion … For formes are variable and decay, / By course of kind, and by occasion; / And that faire flowre of beautie fades away, / As doth the lilly fresh before the sunny ray": compare the language used by Pythagoras of the many shapes into which wax can be molded as an illustration of the self-identity of the soul through all its reincarnations (*Met.* 15.169–72). On the Mount of Venus in the center of the garden grows every sort of flower, a catalogue

of floral metamorphoses like that in the Garden of Flora at *Fasti* 5.209–28, concluding with Adonis, but now restored from his floral to his human form and engaged in continual love-making with Venus, a tableau for the perpetually regenerative force of sexual love. As for Adonis himself (III. vi. 47.4–9):

> All be he subiect to mortalitie,
> Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,
> And by succession made perpetuall,
> Transformed oft, and chaunged diuerslie:
> For him the Father of all formes they call;
> Therefore needs mote he liue, that liuing giues to all.

This both sounds very Ovidian and at the same time gives to sexual generation a central place in the ever-changing and ever-renewed world of becoming that it does not have in the *Metamorphoses* (well argued by Burrow 1988).

The poised balance of "eterne in mutability" is adjusted in Nature's judgment on the debate between the Titaness Mutability and Jupiter and the gods in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*. Whether by accident or design, these two cantos plus two stanzas from an unfinished Book 7 offer themselves as a closing commentary on themes of change and mutability in the preceding six books of the 1596 *Faerie Queene* in the same way as the Speech of Pythagoras in the last book of the *Metamorphoses*. The episode is an exercise in the free creation of a "traditional" myth, in the manner of Ovid's myth of *Maiestas* "Majesty," guarantor of Jovian order, at the beginning of *Fasti* 5. The Titaness Mutability challenges Jove's rule over the universe, secured through his defeat of her brother Titans. She makes a start by attempting to dethrone Cynthia, the moon, herself already the most changeable of the heavenly bodies. The Olympian gods notice the resulting darkening of the moon; Mutability ascends to Jove's palace and the dispute between Mutability and Jove for control of the universe is referred to the judgment of Dame Nature in an assembly of the gods on Arlo Hill in Ireland. Mutability makes her case by appealing to the dominion of change over the four parts of the universe, earth, water, air, and fire; over the seasons, months, and times of day, which appear in pageants of personifications; and over the gods themselves in their planetary manifestations. Spenser draws in general, and in some of the detail, on the Ovidian Pythagoras' lecture on mutability in the natural world, and also on the cosmogony in Book 1 and the Phaethon episode in Book 2 of the *Metamorphoses* (see Cummings 1931).

The location for the trial, Arlo Hill, is a prompt for an etiological invention, the last of Spenser's free variations on the Ovidian erotic tale of metamorphosis, combining elements of the stories of Actaeon, Callisto, and Arethusa (Ringler 1965; Friedmann 1966; Hall 1995). Faunus promises the Irish river Molanna to further her love for the river Fanchin (a tributary of the Molanna) in return for her help

in enabling him to spy on Cynthia (Diana) at her bath. Faunus gives himself away when he laughs for joy at what he sees, and is caught by Diana and her nymphs, who punish him by covering him in a deerskin and then setting their hounds on him. This is disguise instead of metamorphosis, and is also an example of Spenser's use of the exegetical tradition on the *Metamorphoses*, since Natalis Comes, author of one of the main Renaissance handbooks of myth and one of Spenser's sources, reports a version in which Actaeon was not metamorphosed, but clad in a deerskin and hunted down (*Mythologiae* 6.24). And it is comedy instead of tragedy, since the hounds only pursue Faunus until they weary of the chase. It is the landscape that is transformed, as the indignant Diana abandons the fountain, forests, and mountains of Arlo with a curse that transforms the place into the present-day wilderness infested with wolves and thieves. Read closurally, the story is also an *aition* for the poet's final exit from his Ovidian land of faerie into the harsh realities of his Irish home.

Faunus' violation of Cynthia-Diana's private space is also a comic parallel to Mutability's assault on Cynthia-the-moon in the framing narrative. At the end of Mutability's presentation of her case, Nature rules that, although it is true that (VII. vii. 58.2–9):

> all things stedfastnes doe hate
> And changed be: yet being rightly wayd
> They are not changed from their first estate;
> But by their change their being doe dilate:
> And turning to themselues at length againe,
> Doe worke their owne perfection so by fate:
> Then ouer them Change doth not rule and raigne;
> But they raigne ouer change, and doe their states maintaine.

This is not exactly an adjudication in favor of Jove, and in the next stanza Nature seems herself to replace Jove, as, from giving a ruling in the case, she turns herself into a ruler: "Cease therefore daughter further to aspire, / And thee content thus to be rul'd by me." Finally, Nature looks forward to the time "that all shall changed bee, / And from thenceforth, none no more change shall see." This is the Christian triumph of eternity over time, the last of the Petrarchan *Trionfi*. In Ovidian terms it has been compared to the Epilogue to *Metamorphoses* 15 in which the poet seeks to escape the Pythagorean law of universal change by asserting his own power to soar higher even than the stars in an immortality of fame.

Virgins and Wives

The story of Faunus and Diana in the *Mutabilitie Cantos* is the last in Spenser's own sequence of tales of erotic threats to virginal females, Diana or Diana lookalikes,

a sustained confrontation of the realms of Venus and Diana for which a founda-
tional moment is the appearance to Aeneas in *Aeneid* 1 (314–37) of Venus disguised
as a votary of Diana. That paradoxical apparition of femininity, a scene repeatedly
imitated by Spenser, foreshadows Dido's tragic fall from chaste queen to victim
of Venus. Virgil's thematization of the competing demands of the worlds of Venus
and Diana also underpins the whole series of Ovidian tales of rape or attempted
rape that extends from Apollo and Daphne in Book 1 to Vertumnus and Pomona in
Book 14 of the *Metamorphoses*. This is another example of Spenser's combinatorial
imitation of Virgil and Ovid (on the Spenserian polarity of Venus and Diana see
Williams 1961; Burchmore 1977).

Dido's tragedy is inevitable once the queen who makes her entrance in the like-
ness of Diana (in the famous simile at *Aen*. 1.498–503) is enslaved to erotic desire
through the trickery of Venus and Cupid. By contrast, Spenser's Britomart, the
Amazonian knight of Chastity who bears the name of a virginal nymph in the
service of Diana, is set on a path from maidenhood to a marriage that will found
a dynasty. Book 3 of *The Faerie Queene* traces, directly or allusively, some of the
stages in this history, a tale of self-knowledge and maturation that is punctuated
by a series of references to an Ovidian pathology of desire. The flashback narra-
tive of Britomart's earlier history begins when she falls in love with the image of
Artegall that she sees in a magic mirror. In answer to her nurse Glauce's ques-
tions as to the reason for her sighs and sorrows, she confesses her desperate plight
with an Ovidian allusion. "My crime, (if crime it be) I will it reed" (III. ii. 37.7)
echoes Myrrha's soliloquy on her forbidden love for her father (*Met*. 10.321–23
di, precor, … scelerique resistite nostro, / si tamen hoc scelus est). Four stanzas later
the nurse, who has clearly read her Ovid, assures Britomart that there is nothing
unnatural about her love, which is not to be compared to that of Myrrha, Byblis, or
Pasiphae. Unconsoled, Britomart complains that at least those women possessed
their objects of desire, whereas she feeds on shadows, more foolish even than Nar-
cissus who at least did not know that the shadow with which he fell in love was not
a body. She is cheered by Glauce's assertion that she is not like Narcissus, in that
the latter was "Both loue and louer, without hope of ioy," and in the next canto
the two women set off to seek further information from Merlin. From him Brit-
omart learns that her love has a substantial object, that it is licit, and that it will
lead to a famous progeny, but she is still no nearer to a relationship with a person
who exists outside her own head. She will not encounter Artegall in person until
the next book, and her union with him lies beyond the limits of the six books of
the poem.

In the rest of Book 3 the proper relationship between chastity and erotic
desire is explored through relationships between characters other than Britomart.
Britomart's ability to enter and conquer the House of Busirane in pursuit of
Amoret, when Amoret's lover Scudamour cannot, is a sign that she, but not he,
is superior to the heat of desire, which is given multiple representation in the
tapestries of the Ovidian loves of the gods (see below). Britomart's victory over

Busirane leads, in the closing stanzas of the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, to the reunion of Scudamour and Amoret in a sexual embrace of perfect mutuality, the sight of which impassions Britomart: "And to her selfe oft wisht like happinesse, / In vaine she wisht, that fate n'ould let her yet possesse" (III. xii. 46.8–9)—implying that this is what she can look forward to in the future with Artegall. The happy couple are compared to a statue of Hermaphrodite, the Ovidian myth of a fully realized interpenetration of lovers that is in contrast to Narcissus' impossible desire to be united with his beloved (because he is already inseparable from himself).

Thus, in her own experience or in displacements onto the relationships of other characters, Britomart traces a path from the solipsistic frustration of Narcissus to the total union of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis. This is also the trajectory plotted in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, from Eve's narcissistic temptations on first awakening to the possibility of mankind's ascent at some future date to the state of the angels, whose couplings take the form of a hermaphroditic total commingling, "union of pure with pure" (*PL* 8.627). But the distance travelled by an Eve subject to the limitations of the human body as currently constituted is from the self-love of Narcissus, via the coy reluctance of Ovidian nymphs like Daphne, to the experience of happily paired Ovidian couples such as Pomona and Vertumnus, or (once reconciled with Adam after the Fall) Deucalion and Pyrrha (Green 2009). In plotting Eve's personal development on a series of Ovidian women Milton may have had an eye on Spenser's Britomart (on the parallel between Britomart's gaze on the looking-glass and Eve's gaze on the lake see Gregerson 1995).

Recent readings of Spenser's Ovidianism have fed in particular on two trends in Ovidian criticism, an attention to Ovid's (meta)poetic self-consciousness as an artist, and the increasingly political reading of a poet once deemed to be largely apolitical.

Art and Illusion

The slaying of Error in the first canto of *The Faerie Queene* is soon followed by the entrance of another source of illusion and error, Archimago, the "chief magician" (*archi* + *magus*) or archi-tect of images, whose black magic mirrors the verbal magic of the poet: compare Ovid's games with the two meanings of *carmina*, "songs"/"spells." Archimago's ability to "forge true-seeming lyes" (I. i. 38.7) and to create imitations "full of the makers guile" (I. i. 46.7) that deceive the viewer into taking them for the real thing doubles for the power of the creator of *The Faerie Queene* (on the metapoetics of Archimago see Burrow 1999). Archimago's conjuring up of a false Una, through dream-vision and counterfeit, draws on two of the most powerfully metapoetic episodes in the *Metamorphoses* (see Hardie 2002: 277–78 on Ovid's House of Sleep and Morpheus; ch. 6 on

Pygmalion). Like Juno in the Ceyx and Alcyone episode (*Met.* 11.410–748), he has recourse to the House of Morpheus, here the god of sleep rather than dreams, following Chaucer (mediating as often between Ovid and Spenser), to call up a dream of the sleeping Red Cross Knight's beloved, Una (on the sources for Spenser's House of Sleep see Cook 1890). But where the dream of the drowned and dripping Ceyx will lead to the reunion, albeit in metamorphosed shape, of the devoted married couple, the Red Cross Knight's wet dream of an unchaste Una will drive this couple apart. Not content with the dream, Archimago also fashions an airy spirit into a physical likeness of Una, in a repetition of Pygmalion's creation of the statue of a woman more beautiful than any female in nature (cf. *Met.* 10.248–49 *formamque dedit, qua femina nasci / nulla potest*): compare *FQ* I. i. 46.6 "that new creature borne without her dew." Like Pygmalion, Archimago is under the spell of the beauty and verisimilitude of that which he has created (I. i. 45.6–7): "The maker selfe for all his wondrous witt, / Was nigh beguiled with so goodly sight."

In this epic full of doublings, Archimago's false Una is not the only version of a Pygmalion's statue. The Witch of Book 3 creates a false Florimell to console her son, love-lorn for the true Florimell who has fled (III. viii. 5–10). Making a body out of "purest snow," to match the white of Pygmalion's ivory, the Witch "deuiz'd a wondrous worke to frame, / Whose like on earth was neuer framed yit, / That euen Nature selfe enuide the same, / And grudg'd to see the counterfet should shame / The thing it selfe" (III. viii. 5.2–6). This is not only an unnatural but also a theologically evil counterfeit, animated by "A wicked Spright … Which with the Prince of Darknesse fell somewhere, / From heauens blisse and euerlasting rest."

The doubling of art and nature is fraught with negative moral and theological implications, of a kind largely absent from the pagan models, in others of Spenser's elaborate, and highly Ovidian, ekphrases and ekphrastic episodes (Brown 1999: ch. 3). In Malecasta's luxurious and sensuously decadent Castle Joyeous the costly tapestries of the story of Venus and Adonis (III. i. 34–38) use art to portray the art of love with which Venus seduces her paramour, and the viewer is seduced into sharing Venus' voyeuristic gaze, as "whilest he bath'd, with her two crafty spyes, / She secretly would search each dainty lim." Spenser's most elaborate eckphrasis is that of the 33 gods and their lovers on the tapestries in the House of Busirane (III. xi. 29–46), the prison-house of a dominating and destructive form of love. The model is the tapestry woven by Arachne in her competition with Minerva (*Met.* 6.103–28), an Ovidian ekphrasis that Spenser also imitates at length in *Muiopotmos* (1590; see Brinkley 1981; Hulse 1981: ch. 6; MacFie 1990), an epyllion on the fate of a butterfly, Clarion, trapped in a web woven, with more subtlety and craft than the net with which Vulcan trapped Mars and Venus, by a spiteful spider, Aragnoll, the son of Arachne. In Spenser's version, Arachne's transformation is driven by the envy that poisons her after Minerva wins the competition with a marvelously lifelike butterfly woven into the olive-leaf border of her tapestry. This mock-epic epyllion

combines elements of a Virgilian plot with free variations on Ovidian metamor-
phosis and ekphrasis, a showpiece of Spenser's textual weaving which offers the
reader examples of weaving both as miraculous art and as lethal snare.

Vulcan's net is also a model for the "subtile net" (II. xii. 81.4) made by the Palmer,
with which Guyon traps Acrasia and her lover Verdant in the Bower of Bliss. This
is to fight fire with fire, for Acrasia ensnares her victims with natural charms set off
by art, "arayd, or rather disarayd, / All in a vele of silke and siluer thin, / That hid
no whit her alablaster skin, / But rather shewd more white, if more might bee: /
More subtile web Arachne cannot spin" (II. xi. 77.3–7). The reader enters Acrasia's
Bower of Bliss, often contrasted with the Garden of Adonis viewed as a place of
nature's makings, through an ekphrasis of the artfully illusionistic scenes of the
history of Jason and Medea "ywrit" on the gate. This earthly paradise is "A place
pickt out by choice of best aliue, / That natures worke by art can imitate" (II. xii.
42.3–4), a place where art rivals nature and nature rivals art, and where art conceals
itself (II. xii. 58.9 "The art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place")—a very
Ovidian set of concerns. Very un-Ovidian is the "rigour pitilesse" with which the
angry and zealous Guyon breaks down the Bower of Bliss, a violence which has
often been seen in the light of the Protestant destruction of the magical images of
Roman idolatry.

Virgilian and Ovidian Politics

The sudden violence of Guyon, the Knight of Temperance, at the end of Book 2 of
The Faerie Queene echoes the violent killing of Turnus by *pius Aeneas* at the end of
the *Aeneid*. In a Virgilian conclusion a single-minded epic hero sweeps aside a space
of Ovidian desire and enchantment. In *The Faerie Queene* the model of a panegyrical
and dynastic epic, standard in Renaissance readings of the *Aeneid*, is combined with
the divagations and deferrals of the Italian tradition of romance, Ariosto above
all, that owes much to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (see Casali in this volume). Recent
political readings of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* as resistant to or subversive of
Augustan ideology have fed into political readings of Spenser's Ovidianism (Pugh
2005 is a sustained "oppositional" reading of Spenser's Ovidianism; Burrow 2001:
227 looks rather for "counterpoint and coalescence"; for the rapprochement of
Virgil and Ovid in one episode see Suzuki 1987).

Virgil and Ovid are already combined right at the beginning of *The Faerie Queene*.
The sudden storm that forces the Red Cross Knight and Una to take shelter echoes
the storm that opens the main narrative of the *Aeneid*. The catalogue of the
trees of the forest in which they shelter alludes to the list of trees that gather to
listen to the Song of Orpheus at *Metamorphoses* 10.86–105, and includes species
that are the products of Ovidian metamorphoses, so flagging up the importance

of metamorphosis in the poem. But two points should warn against reading too schematic an opposition of the Virgilian and Ovidian into these opening allusions. Firstly, as often with Spenser, the *Aeneid* and *Metamorphoses* are but part of a web of allusions that includes, in this instance, Dante and Chaucer. Secondly, the storm in *Aeneid* 1 is the point at which the hero is driven off course, "wandering" from his epic mission into dalliance with Dido, an episode to which there are multiple allusions both in the opening cantos of *The Faerie Queene* and later in the poem (Watkins 1995).

Spenser is adept at reading Virgil through Ovid, for example in the Garden of Adonis in *FQ* III. vi (where again the Latin poets are only part of a bewildering array of sources and analogues). The Garden combines elements of the Virgilian Underworld in *Aeneid* 6 and of the Ovidian Speech of Pythagoras, which is itself a reworking of the two parts of the Virgilian Speech of Anchises. Spenser's quasi-eschatological view of the endless processes of generation and renewal omits Virgil's historical vision of Roman history culminating in Augustus. But it would be hasty to read into this a critique of the Tudor version of a Virgilian providential history, not least because the major Spenserian reflex of the Parade of Heroes in *Aeneid* 6 is to be found three cantos earlier in the authoritative prophecy by Merlin to Britomart of her glorious line of descendants.

Calendars and Exile

Political readings of Spenser's Ovidianism have been reinforced by attention to his use of Ovidian texts other than the *Metamorphoses*, both in *The Faerie Queene* and in other works. The particular form chosen by Spenser for his book of pastorals, *The Shepheardes Calender*, aligns it with the *Fasti*, and Spenser, like Ovid, registers the impact of the ruler on the national calendar: *November*'s lament for Dido, a figure for Queen Elizabeth, the virginal queen whose "death" is perhaps a protest against her proposed marriage to the Duc d'Alençon, is set in the month of Elizabeth's Accession Day, November 17. *The Shepheardes Calender* greatly expands the themes of exile and loss in Virgil's *Eclogues* 1 and 9, important intertexts for Ovid's exile poetry, and a pervasive deployment of the exilic Ovid's strategies of protest has been read into Spenser's pastorals (Pugh 2005: ch. 1). In 1580 Spenser went to Ireland where he remained for most of the rest of his life, in what became a kind of exile from the English court in a land frequently described by Spenser as a wild waste. The politics of exile and the politics of Irish colonialism have been at the center of recent Spenserian scholarship, encouraging a renewed attention to the importance of the model of the exiled Ovid (McCabe 1991; Hadfield 1997), with particular reference to the *Mutabilitie Cantos* and to the complex use of pastoral and exilic motifs to explore Spenser's situation in *Colin Clovts Come Home Againe* (1595; see McCabe 1991: 89–94;

Pugh 2005: 178–99). Colin Clout, Spenser's pastoral persona, has returned from a sojourn in England at the court of Cynthia / Queen Elizabeth to Ireland, which is at once home (Tityrus returning from Rome to his native woods in *Eclogue* 1) and a place of exile (Ovid in Tomis). Reverence and desire for Cynthia conflict with disillusionment with life at the English court and the place it affords poetry. The unsettled state of the Ireland to which Spenser finds himself relegated is not just a contrast to the prosperity of England but also a sign of the inability of the royal center to maintain peace at the margins, just as, for the exiled Ovid, the disturbed state of Tomis is implicit evidence of the failure of the *pax Augusta* to extend to all parts of the Augustan empire. The uncertainty as to what is home and what is exile is also seen in the circumstances in which Colin first travels to the court of Cynthia. In his native Ireland he encounters a strange shepherd, who calls himself "the shepheard of the Ocean," a figure for Sir Walter Raleigh, whose own "The Ocean to Cynthia" is a pastoral complaint of his exclusion from the favor of Elizabeth, with many points of contact with Ovid's exile poetry. In another inversion, the terrifying sea voyage to England in the company of the shepherd of the Ocean is a repetition of the storm that strikes as Ovid sails into exile in *Tristia* 1.2, as Colin and the shepherd of the Ocean embark on "A world of waters heaped vp on hie, / Rolling like mountains in wide wildernesse, / Horrible, hideous, roaring with hoarse crie" (197–99); "And nought but sea and heauen to vs appeare" (227): compare *Tr.* 1.2.19–25 "Woe is me, what great mountains of water roll along; you would think that at any moment they were about to touch the highest stars … Wherever I look, there is nothing but sea and sky … Between the two rushes the huge roar of the winds."

Once back at home / in exile in Ireland, Colin holds his own court at the center of a circle of friends, fellow pastoral singers, more trustworthy than the faithless climbers at the court of Cynthia. The conflicted complexity of Colin's relationship to Cynthia and her court, and the scorn that he suffers from his beloved Rosalind (another figure for Elizabeth), are transcended in a song on a cosmic and creative Love (835–94), from whose court the lovers at Cynthia / Elizabeth's court deserve to be exiled (894). Colin's circle of friends back home (and in "exile" from the court of Cynthia) is analogous to the society of loyal friends with whom the exiled Ovid exchanges his correspondence. The substitution of a more perfect kind of love for the poet's frustrated Petrarchan love of the ever-virginal Elizabeth, and for the corrupted forms of love practiced by her courtiers, is analogous to the movement in Spenser's *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* from subjection to a Petrarchan mistress to the mutual *socialis amor*, married love, of Spenser for another Elizabeth, Elizabeth Boyle. For this movement a model has been found in Ovid's exilic transformation of elegiac love into love for his wife, with the corresponding substitution of the pitiless emperor for the hard-to-get elegiac *domina* (Getty 2000; Pugh 2005: 153–77).

Spenser's self-deprecating opening "envoy" to *The Shepheardes Calender* (dedicating it to Philip Sidney) echoes topics from Ovid's opening address to his book in *Tristia* 1.1 and from the book's own self-announcement in *Tristia* 3.1:

> Goe little booke: thy selfe present,
> As child whose parent is unkent:
> To him that is the president
> Of noblesse and of cheualree,
> And if that Enuie barke at thee,
> As sure it will, for succoure flee
> Vnder the shadow of his wing …

This might be dismissed as a conventional modesty topos, and *The Shepheardes Calender*, unlike the *Fasti* broken off by exile, reaches its full complement of 12 Eclogues. But *The Faerie Queene*, like Ovid's *Fasti*, breaks off after six of a projected 12 books. At the end of Book 6 Calidore succeeds in chaining the Blatant Beast, the barking monster of envious blame, as roaring *Furor* will be enchained at the end of Roman history according to the prophecy of Jupiter in *Aeneid* 1 (294–96). But in the last four stanzas of the canto the narrator tells us that the Blatant Beast later "broke his yron chaine," and has escaped from the legendary land of Faerie into the poet's own time and space, "Barking and biting all that him doe bate," including Spenser himself (VI. xii. 41.1–2): "Ne may this homely verse, of many meanest, / Hope to escape his venomous despite." Likewise, Ovid's exile poetry falls silent, whether by accident or design, with a poem complaining of Envy's laceration of the poet (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16).

Further Reading

Good brief overviews of the subject are Holahan (1990) and Burrow (2001: 225–34); see also the important articles by Burrow (1988, 1999). There are two book-length studies, Pugh (2005), which covers the field in detail at the same time as developing a strongly political reading of Spenser's Ovidianism, and the more essayistic Stapleton (2009: 17–21) for a convenient overview of earlier discussions of Spenser and Ovid; both books direct attention to the importance of Ovid's exile poetry for Spenser. Another major discussion is Lyne (2001: ch. 2); see also the sections on Ovid and *The Faerie Queene* in Fletcher (1971: 90–106) and Barkan (1986: 233–42). Hulse (1981: ch. 6) discusses *Muiopotmos* and *FQ* III as Ovidian epics. On ekphrasis and the theme of art and nature see Brown (1999). Krier (1990) contrasts the Virgilian and Ovidian gazes in Spenser. On Spenser's use of allegorizing commentary on Ovid, see Hall (1995); for overviews of Renaissance readings of the *Metamorphoses* see Hulse (1981: 243–51); Bate (1993: ch. 1), "Shakespeare and the Renaissance Ovid." De Sa Wiggins (1991) argues that Spenser reintroduces a medieval allegorization to

Ariosto's Ovidianism. For a suggestive exercise in tracing Virgilian and Ovidian modalities through a single episode, see Suzuki (1987).

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Ovidian Intertextuality in Ariosto's
Orlando Furioso

Sergio Casali

> He would be right who should assert that Ariosto has great merit if the study of Ovid's poems still thrives in Italy. In those, more than in other poems, scholars of the *Furioso* have made diligent and patient investigations, with results that could only be very conspicuous, since our Lodovico is in certain qualities closer to Ovid than to any other poet of antiquity. He was equal to the poet of Sulmona in the richness of his phantasy, and superior to him in art; he was similar to him in the rapidity and variety of his scenes and the mastery of his transitions; he matched him in representing the permanent truth of nature; from him he often took sparks and made them into great flames. (Romizi 1896: 96; my translation)

This is how Augusto Romizi started his chapter on Ovid in his book *Le fonti latine dell'Orlando Furioso*, which was meant to be an addition to Rajna's fundamental masterpiece of positivistic criticism (1900). Romizi's eloquence well signals the two points of view from which one can look at Ariosto's reception of Ovid: on the one hand, the intertextual relationship in a strict sense, that in which, according to Romizi, "scholars of the *Furioso* have made diligent and patient investigations," namely the scenes and the passages of Ovid that Ariosto has directly reworked in his poem; on the other, the more general similarities between the two poets in terms of narrative technique and representation of the world.

David Javitch, in the third chapter of his *Proclaiming a Classic* (1991), discusses the first three commentaries to the *Furioso*, those of Tullio Fausto da Longiano (1542), Lodovico Dolce (1542, revised in 1566), and Alberto Lavezuola (1584). Javitch aims to show how these sixteenth-century commentaries enhanced the legitimacy of the *Furioso*. They did not intend to elucidate the poem's intertextuality so much as to affiliate it to great classical poetry—through the search for imitated passages. Javitch demonstrates that the three commentators increasingly recognized the importance of Ovid as Ariosto's model. This recognition attests to the progressive

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importance of affiliation with the *Metamorphoses* as a strategy for the canonization of the *Furioso*; but at the same time, the researches of the early commentators (especially those of Alberto Lavezuola) laid the foundations for the study of the reception of Ovid in the *Furioso*.[1]

On the other hand, the analogies in the compositional techniques of Ovid and Ariosto were highlighted quite early. In order to defend the *Furioso* from the attacks of the neo-Aristotelians, who reproached the poem for transgressing the principle of unity of action, the *Metamorphoses* was proposed as a prestigious antecedent of the *Furioso*'s non-Aristotelian structure. As Javitch observes (1991: 71–72), Giovan Battista Giraldi Cinzio first noted connections between the compositional techniques of the romance and the *Metamorphoses*. In the same way as the modern *romanzatori*, Ovid did not respect the Aristotelian and Horatian rules of the single protagonist and unity of action.[2]

Above all else, awareness of the kinship between the two poems was raised by the decisive influence that the *Furioso*, with its commercial success, had on the two major Italian translations of the *Metamorphoses* published in the Cinquecento: the *Trasformationi* of Ludovico Dolce (1553) and the *Metamorfosi* of Giovanni dell'Anguillara (1561). The *Metamorphoses* became an Ariostesque poem, and in those cases in which we have passages of Ovid that had been imitated by Ariosto, we can see that the translator, even in the plot itself, follows Ariosto's imitation rather than the Latin original.[3]

The analogies between the narrative techniques of Ariosto and Ovid are the subject of some important critical contributions. Javitch (1976) takes his cue from Ruggiero's liberation of Angelica—an episode to which we shall return—to show how Ariosto willingly contrasts the allegorizing exegetical tradition of the medieval and Renaissance commentators who presented a "moralized" Ovid. Javitch (1984) highlights the influence of Ovid's retelling of the *Aeneid* in *Met.* 13 and 14 on the way Ariosto himself confronts the *Aeneid* and the *Divine Comedy*. Looney (1996: 91–121) focuses on what he calls Ariosto's "narrative opportunism," and studies the analogies between the compositional technique of romance known as *entrelacement* (the way in which the poet advances at the same time different narrative threads and moves from one to another with continual interruptions and resumptions) and the way in which Ovid moves from one metamorphosis to another and from one story to another.

More recently, Cabani (2008) has given the most detailed comparative treatment of the two poets' narrative techniques. They share:

> a playful, sometimes humorous tone, which reveals a sceptical attitude about the possibility of reading in an objective way the data of reality. The figure of the parenthesis, just because it tends to undermine statements and, often, to suggest a multiplicity of hypotheses, is the emblem of such an attitude … . Why the lacuna here? Unlike his commentators, Ariosto fully understands Ovid's irony, and is fascinated by the ambiguity that is typical of Ovidian narrative. The antiepic choice of an ostentatiously subjective narrative, and the detached tone typical of one who does not identify with his own inventions, show how deeply he had assimilated Ovid's lesson. (2008: 15)

Both Ovid and Ariosto simulate confrontations about a character or a narrated fact; both often use an either / or formula (*seu, seu*; *aut, aut*; *o, o*; *over*) that expresses hesitation between true and false or being and seeming; both cast doubt on their own statements, or the statements of their characters, and on the real order of events; both show off the arbitrariness with which they select one story rather than another; and so on. In short, they are *ironic* narrators.

Perseus and Andromeda, Ruggiero and Angelica

The liberation of Angelica chained to a rock on the island of Ebuda by Ruggiero mounted on the Hippogriph reworks the liberation of Andromeda by Perseus flying with his winged sandals in *Met.* 4.663–752. It is one of the most prolonged imitations of Ovid in the *Furioso*, and it is interesting to observe which traits of the Ovidian text Ariosto has singled out and highlighted in his allusions. Perseus and Andromeda is "a typical Ovidian love tale, with the usual ironic touches combined with the spectacular defeat of the monster" (Galasso 2000: 958). In fact, what Ariosto reworks and develops are those "ironic touches." In the end, he produces a text that is "hyper-Ovidian." Let us look at some examples.

In Canto 8, Angelica is captured by the pirates of the island of Ebuda (the Hebrides) and, according to the cruel custom of the inhabitants, is offered as a sacrifice to an orc (8.51–67). In *OF* 10.90–111 the liberation of Angelica is modeled on that of Andromeda, with details also coming from Hercules' liberation of Hesione in Valerius Flaccus 2.[4]

In a long parenthesis, Ovid says (*Met.* 4.672–74):

> quam simul ad duras religatam bracchia cautes
> vidit Abantiades (nisi quod levis aura capillos
> moverat et tepido manabant lumina fletu,
> marmoreum ratus esset opus) …

As soon as Perseus saw her there bound by the arms to a rough cliff—save that her hair gently stirred in the breeze, and the warm tears were trickling down her cheeks, he would have thought her a marble statue … [5]

From exactly the same details Ruggiero understands that Angelica is not a statue:

> Creduto avria che fosse statua finta
> o d'alabastro o d'altri marmi illustri
> Ruggiero, e su lo scoglio così avinta
> per artificio di scultori industri;
> se non vedea la lacrima distinta
> tra fresche rose e candidi ligustri
> far rugiadose le crudette pome,
> e l'aura sventolar l'aurate chiome.
>   (*OF* 10.96)[6]

Ruggiero would have taken her for a statue fashioned in alabaster or some lambent marble, and tethered thus to the rock by some diligent sculptor's artifice, were it not that he distinctly saw tears coursing down her rose-fresh, lily-white cheeks and bedewing her unripe apple-breasts, and her golden tresses flowing in the wind.

Perseus falls in love at first sight. In fact, since he stops beating his wings, he runs the risk of crashing ("a comic detail that would more duly belong in a cartoon strip than a heroic tale," Javitch 1976: 94), and addresses her in a brief and incongruously gallant speech, saying that she does not deserve those chains, but rather the chains that bind lovers together:

> "o" dixit "non istis digna catenis,
> sed quibus inter se cupidi iunguntur amantes,
> pande requirenti nomen terraeque tuumque,
> et cur vincla geras."
>
> (*Met.* 4.678–81)

He said "Oh! those are not the chains you deserve to wear, but rather those that link fond lovers together! Tell me, for I would know, your country's name, and why you are chained here."

Just so Ruggiero, who does not ask Angelica (in a Homeric way) to identify her name and fatherland, but only to tell who is keeping her so cruelly chained:

> "O donna, degna sol de la catena
> con chi i suoi servi Amor legati mena,
> e ben di questo e d'ogni male indegna,
> chi è quel crudel che con voler perverso
> d'importuno livor stringendo segna
> di queste belle man l'avorio terso?"
>
> (*OF* 10.97.7–98.4)

"Gentle lady, the only fetter you merit is that with which Love binds his votaries: / quite undeserving must you be of this plight or any other. Who is the miscreant so perverted as to blemish the smooth ivory of your delicate hands with unwelcome bruising?"[7]

Octave 99 reworks *Met.* 4.681–90. Both Andromeda and Angelica would have covered their faces in shame, if they had not been chained; the only thing they can do is weep. Then they begin to reply, but are interrupted by the monster's arrival:

> primo silet illa nec audet
> adpellare virum virgo, manibusque modestos
> celasset vultus, si non religata fuisset;
> lumina, quod potuit, lacrimis inplevit obortis.
> saepius instanti, sua ne delicta fateri
> nolle videretur, nomen terraeque suumque,

> quantaque maternae fuerit fiducia formae,
> indicat, et nondum memoratis omnibus unda
> insonuit, veniensque inmenso belua ponto
> inminet et latum sub pectore possidet aequor.
>   (*Met*. 4.681–90)

She was silent at first, for, being a maid, she did not dare address a man; she would have hidden her face modestly with her hands but that her hands were bound. Her eyes were free, and these filled with rising tears. As he continued to urge her, lest she should seem to be trying to conceal some fault of her own, she told him her name and her country, and what sinful boasting her mother had made of her own beauty. While she was speaking, there came a loud sound from the sea, and there, advancing over the broad expanse, a monstruous creature loomed up, breasting the wide waves.

> E coperto con man s'avrebbe il volto,
> se non eran legate al duro sasso;
> ma del pianto, ch'almen non l'era tolto,
> lo sparse, e si sforzò di tener basso.
> E dopo alcun' signozzi il parlar sciolto,
> incominciò con fioco suono e lasso:
> ma non seguì; che dentro il fe' restare
> il gran rumor che si sentì nel mare.
>
> Ecco apparir lo smisurato mostro
> mezzo ascoso ne l'onda e mezzo sorto.[8]
>   (*OF* 10.99.1–100.2)

She would have covered her face with her hands were they not tied to the hard rock. But she bathed it in tears—this at least she was free to do—and tried to keep it bowed. After sobbing a little, she prepared to speak, in a sad, small voice; but the words did not come—they were thwarted by the loud noise now to be heard from the sea.

The fighting against the monster is different in the two poems, since Perseus succeeds in killing the monster with his sword, whereas Ruggiero is not able to wound the orc with his blows, and must at last resort to the magical shield of Atlante to dazzle it and save Angelica—a gesture clearly alluding to Perseus showing the head of Medusa: something that the Ovidian Perseus does *not* do, and so a further lowering of the epic tone of the fighting on Ariosto's part.

All the same, Ariosto does take some ideas from Perseus' fighting against the monster. For instance, the orc that pursues the shadow of Ruggiero reflected in the sea (*OF* 10.102.2–6) reworks *Met*. 4.712–3 *ut in aequore summo / umbra viri visa est,*

visa fera saevit in umbra, "When the monster saw the hero's shadow on the surface of the sea, he savagely attacked the shadow":

> L'orca, che vede sotto le grandi ale
> l'ombra di qua e di là correr su l'onda,
> lascia la preda certa litorale,
> e quella vana segue furibonda.
> <div align="right">(OF 10.102.3–6)</div>

The orc, seeing the shadow cast by the spreading winds flitting here and there across the water, left its certain prey awaiting it on shore and started a furious chase, curving and coiling, after the elusive one instead.

The following octave contains the same simile of the eagle and the serpent that follows the passage of the shadow in Ovid (*Met.* 4.714–20 ∼ *OF* 10.103–4.1–4).

Perseus ends up with the wings of his sandals drenched with the blood and water vomited by the wounded beast (*Met.* 4.728–32). This comic-realistic detail is recuperated by Ariosto for Ruggiero, who is afraid that, if the orc continues to spray water by beating its tail, the Hippogriph will end up with its wings so sodden that it will not be able to fly any more (*OF* 10.106).[9] In both cases the detail of the soaked wings precedes the final denouement of the fighting: Perseus climbs to the top of a rock and deals the deadly blows to the monster; Ruggiero decides to use his magical shield (107). "By shifting from the hyperbolic description of the monster splashing heaven to Ruggiero's very pressing concern about a drenching his winged steed cannot withstand, Ariosto succeeds in bringing out the potential ridiculousness of the fierce encounter—if only for a moment" (Javitch 1976: 96).

Olimpia Abandoned

The story of Olimpia is the first of the four great "giunte" (additions) of the 1532 edition of the poem (the first edition appeared in 1516, the second in 1521 with minor changes). The episode was inserted in two different parts in cantos 9–11 of the third *Furioso*. The first part, from the tormented love of Olimpia for Bireno to Bireno's abandonment of Olimpia on a desert island, occupied the whole of canto 9, from octave 8 to 10.34; the second part is a duplication of the episode of Angelica saved by Ruggiero: Orlando saves Olimpia from the orc of Ebuda, kills the orc, and gives Olimpia as a spouse to Oberto, king of Ireland.[10]

Canto 10 is introduced by ruminations on the volubility of juvenile hearts, which allusively anticipate the importance of the story of Theseus and Ariadne as a model. Ariosto adapts the words of Catullus' abandoned Ariadne: compare especially "donne, alcuna di voi mai più non sia, / ch'a parole d'amante abbia

a dar fede" (*OF* 10.5.3–4, "my ladies … let none of you ever again believe a lover's word"), "Siate a' prieghi ed a' pianti che vi fanno, / per questo esempio, a credere più scarse" (10.6.5–6, "Let this be a warning to you, good ladies, to be less open to your lovers' prayers and tears") ~ *Nunc iam nulla viro iuranti femina credat, / nulla viri speret sermones esse fidelis* (Catull. 64.143–44, "Now no woman should believe any more her man's oaths, no one should hope that his words are faithful").[11] Ariosto preannounces in his "proem" the model of his story; but this announcement is also somehow misleading, since the main model will not be Catullus', but Ovid's Ariadne.

Bireno, quickly tired of Olimpia, falls in love with the 14-year-old daughter of king Cimosco, whom he is transporting with him as a hostage on his ship. The turpitude of Bireno's love for the daughter of Cimosco is highlighted by some allusions to Ovid's story of the impious love of Tereus for his sister-in-law Philomela. Bireno's blazing passion, for instance, clearly recalls that of the Ovidian rapist:

> non secus exarsit conspecta virgine Tereus,
> quam si quis canis ignem supponat aristis
> aut frondem positasque cremet faenilibus herbas.
>   (*Met.* 6.455–57)

The moment he saw the maiden Tereus was inflamed with love, quick as if one should set fire to ripe grain, or dry leaves, or hay stored away in the mow.

> Non pur di lei Bireno s'innamora,
> ma fuoco mai così non accese esca,
> né se lo pongan l'invide e nimiche
> mani talor ne le mature spiche;
> com'egli se n'accese immantinente …
>   (*OF* 10.11.5–12.1)

Bireno fell in love with her; I tell you, never has dry timber flared up like this, nor ever have the golden ears of wheat fired by a jealous enemy, / the way he took fire …

This first allusion is confirmed by the following:

> facundum faciebat amor, quotiensque rogabat
> *ulterius iusto*, Procnen ita velle ferebat.
> addidit et lacrimas, tamquam mandasset et illas.
> *pro superi, quantum mortalia pectora caecae*
> *noctis habent!* ipso sceleris molimine Tereus
> creditur esse pius laudemque a crimine sumit.
>   (*Met.* 6.469–74)

Love made him eloquent, and as often as he asked more urgently than he should, he would say that Procne wished it so. He even added tears, as though she had bidden him to do this too. Ye gods, what blind night rules in the hearts of men! In the very act of pushing on his shameful plan Tereus gets credit for a kind heart and wins praise from wickedness.

> E se accarezza l'altra (che non puote
> far che non l'accarezzi *più del dritto*),
> non è chi questo in mala parte note;
> anzi a pietade, anzi a bontà gli è ascritto …
>
> *Oh sommo Dio, come i giudici umani*
> *spesso offuscati son da un nembo oscuro*!
> i modi di Bireno empi e profani,
> pietosi e santi riputati furo.
> (*OF* 10.14.1–4, 15.1–4)

And if he made much of the little maid, who could not prevent him from paying her undue attentions, nobody ascribed this to evil motives but to compassion, to goodness of heart … / Gracious Lord, how often is man's judgment clouded in dark mist: Bireno heartless, evil deeds were reputed kind and virtuous!

The idea that Bireno's new love for the daughter of king Cimosco drives out his love for Olimpia further suggests to Ariosto a sentence from Ovid's *Remedia*:

> E come suol, se l'acqua fredda sente,
> quella restar che prima al fuoco bolle;
> così l'ardor ch'accese Olimpia, *vinto*
> *dal nuovo successore*, in lui fu estinto.
> (*OF* 10.12.5–8)

Now just as that which is simmering on the stove goes off the boil if cold water is poured in, similarly the flame kindled in him by Olimpia was simply snuffed out by this new love.

The words "vinto dal nuovo successore" allude to *Rem*. 462 <u>successore novo vincitur omnis amor</u>, "every love is defeated by a new successor."

The octave that introduces the abandoned Olimpia preannounces the importance of epistle 10 of the *Heroides* as an intertextual model through a subtle allusion. Ariosto's narrative begins with an expansion of the Ovidian model:[12]

> tempus erat, *uitrea* quo primum *terra pruina*
> *spargitur* et tectae fronde *queruntur* aues.
> (*Her*. 10.7–8)

It was the time when the earth is first besprinkled with crystal rime, and song-sters hid in the branch begin their plaint.

> Rimase a dietro il lido e la meschina
> Olimpia, che dormì senza destarse,
> fin che l'Aurora *la gelata brina*
> da le dorate ruote in *terra sparse*,
> e s'udir le Alcïone alla marina
> de l'antico infortunio *lamentarse*.
> Né desta né dormendo, ella la mano
> per Bireno abbracciar stese, ma invano.
>
> (*OF* 10.20)

The shore was left behind; and poor Olimpia, too, who slept on until Dawn of the golden rays scattered the ground with hoar frost, and the halcyons could be heard over the water lamenting their age-old sorrow. Neither waking nor asleep, Olimpia reached out to embrace Birenus, but in vain.

Ariosto introduces a double mythological reference. In Ovid the earth is simply sprinkled with vitreous frost; in Ariosto it is Aurora who sprinkles the earth with frost from the golden wheels of her chariot. The attribution of *spargere* to Aurora is sanctioned by Virgil: *Aen.* 4.584–85 *et iam prima novo* <u>*spargebat*</u> *lumine terras | Tithoni croceum linquens* <u>*Aurora*</u> *cubile*, "and Aurora first sprinkled the earth with new light, leaving the golden bed of Tithonus," and this might recall Dido's story, another tale of abandonment modeled on that of Ariadne. Ariosto also expands mythologically the Ovidian detail of the birds who "lament," covered by foliage. Here Ariosto appears to share a reading of *queruntur* as "ominously foreshadowing the heroine's lament about to commence" (Spentzou 2003: 69); not by chance the corresponding verb, *lamentarse*, is emphasized through its collocation in rhyme. Ariosto's specification of Ovid's generic "birds" in the "Alcïone" who lament "their age-old sorrow" refers explicitly to the myth of Ceyx and Alcyone as narrated in the *Metamorphoses* (11.410–742), a story that inversely mirrors that of Olimpia and Bireno as one of eternal conjugal love: Ceyx, notwithstanding his deep love for Alcyone, must against his will "abandon" her and sail on a sea voyage, during which he will die in a shipwreck; the married couple will be transformed into birds and will continue to love each other also in their new shape.[13]

> incertum vigilans, a somno languida, movi
>   Thesea prensuras semisupina manus;
> nullus erat. referoque manus iterumque retempto
>   perque torum moveo bracchia; nullus erat.
> excussere metus somnum; conterrita surgo,
>   membraque sunt viduo praecipitata toro.
>
> (*Her.* 10.9–14)

Half waking only and languid from sleep, I turned upon my side and put forth hands to clasp my Theseus—he was not there! I drew back my hands, a second time I made essay, and over the whole couch moved my arms—he was not there! Fear struck away my sleep; in terror I arose, and threw myself headlong from my abandoned bed.

> Nessuno truova: a sé la man ritira:
> di nuovo tenta, e pur nessuno truova.
> Di qua l'un braccio, e di là l'altro gira,
> or l'una or l'altra gamba; e nulla giova.
> Caccia il sonno il timor: gli occhi apre, e mira:
> non vede alcuno. Or già non scalda e cova
> più le vedove piume, ma si getta
> del letto e fuor del padiglione in fretta.
> (*OF* 10.21)

She found nobody. She withdrew her hand. Again she tried: still nothing. She swept one arm this way, the other arm that; she reached out first with one leg then with the other: nothing. Fright banished sleep; she opened her eyes to look: no one to be seen. No longer did she snuggle warmly in her bereaved bed; she leapt up and was outside in a twinkling.

Ariosto follows Ovid's text closely, almost translating it (note the reproduction of the repetition *nullus erat … nullus erat* in "Nessuno truova … e pur nessuno truova"), with some omissions and significant additions. In particular, Minutelli (1991: 424–25) notices how Ovid's *perque torum moveo bracchia* (*Her*. 10.12) is transformed into "Di qua l'un braccio, e di là l'altro gira; / *or l'una or l'altra gamba*; e nulla giova" (10.21.3–4), with an added reference to Olimpia's legs, a comic detail ("not consonant with poetic decorum," according to Romizi 1892: 28) which is both Ovidian and Ariostesque at the same time. This comic observation is in keeping with other comic lowerings of tone. For example, Ariosto, abandoning the Catullan and Ovidian motif of the deceitful and cruel sleep (Catull. 64.56, *Her*. 10.111, 117–18)—Bireno is now himself deceitful and cruel (*OF* 10.23.7–8; 27.5)—ascribes the deep sleep of Olimpia to human and physiological causes ("il travaglio del mare e la paura …") which yield "sì gran sonno, / che gli orsi e i ghiri aver maggior nol ponno" (10.18.7–8, "so sound a sleep, she might have been a bear or a dormouse"). Ariosto exploits Ovidian potential; as in the case of Perseus and Ruggiero, Ariosto is able to become, while being wholly himself, more Ovidian than Ovid.[14]

Iphis and Fiordispina

Another example of identifying a character of the *Furioso* with an Ovidian model is Fiordispina with her lament in *OF* 25.[15] With the story of Fiordispina, Ariosto

resumes the episode which closed the incomplete *Orlando Innamorato* of Boiardo. Fiordispina, daughter of king Marsilio, falls in love with the female warrior Bradamante, having mistaken her for a man due to the fact that she had her hair cut because of a wound (*Inn.* 3.9.26.5–8).[16] So, Fiordispina invites Bradamante on a hunt, and, when they are alone in the woods, she declares herself to her. Bradamante says she is a woman, but the revelation does not reduce the intensity of Fiordispina's passion: she is disconsolate (29–33), bursts into tears, and breaks out into a desperate lament (34–37).

This lament is closely modeled on that of Iphis in *Met.* 9.726–63.[17] The two laments represent versions of the so-called "lesbian panic," a sort of internalized homophobia. The lament of Iphis—a girl raised as a boy, who falls in love with her girlfriend Ianthe—is the first expression of the "trope of impossibility" in Western literature (see Traub 2002: 279).

Iphis despairs because she is the only one to be struck by an unheard-of and monstrous passion. If the gods wanted to destroy her, they should at least have used a natural misfortune; there are no examples of this sort of passion among the animals.

> vixque tenens lacrimas "Quis me manet exitus" inquit,
> "cognita quam nulli, quam prodigiosa novaeque
> cura tenet Veneris? si di mihi parcere vellent,
> parcere debuerant; si non, et perdere vellent,
> naturale malum saltem et de more dedissent.
> nec vaccam vaccae, nec equas amor urit equarum:
> urit oves aries, sequitur sua femina cervum.
> sic et aves coeunt, interque animalia cuncta
> femina femineo conrepta cupidine nulla est … ."
>   (*Met.* 9.726–34)

Scarcely holding back her tears, "Oh, what will be the end of me," she said, "whom a love possesses that no one ever heard of, a strange and monstruous love? If the gods wished to save me they should have saved me; if not, and they wished to ruin me, they should at least have given me some natural woe, within the boundaries of experience. Cows do not love cows, nor mares, mares; but the ram desires the sheep, and his own doe follows the stag. So also birds mate, and in the whole animal world there is no female smitten with love for female … ."

In a similar way, Fiordispina addresses Love: if he wanted to harm her, he should at least have used a customary torment; never, neither among humans nor animals, does a female love another female. Fiordispina closely reworks Ovid's polyptotons (*nec vaccam vaccae, nec equas amor urit equarum* ~ "né a cervie cervia, né all'agnelle agnella"):

> Se pur volevi, Amor, darmi tormento
> che t'increscesse il mio felice stato,
> d'alcun martìr dovevi star contento,
> che fosse ancor negli altri amanti usato.
> Né tra gli uomini mai né tra l'armento,
> che femina ami femina ho trovato:
> non par la donna all'altre donne bella,
> né a cervie cervia, né all'agnelle agnella.
>
> (*OF* 25.35)

If you wanted to torment me, Love, because my happy state offended you, why could you not rest content with those torments which other lovers experience? Neither among humans nor among beasts have I ever come across a woman loving a woman; to a woman another woman does not seem beautiful, nor does a hind to a hind, a ewe to a ewe.

Cretan Iphis thinks of Cretan Pasiphae. Her own love is more monstrous than that of Pasiphae, since the daughter of the Sun at least had loved a male:

> vellem nulla forem! ne non tamen omnia Crete
> monstra ferat, taurum dilexit filia Solis,
> femina nempe marem. meus est furiosior illo,
> si verum profitemur, amor.
>
> (*Met.* 9.735–38)

I wish I were no female! Nevertheless, that Crete might produce all monstrous things, the daughter of the Sun loved a bull—a female to be sure, and male; my passion is more mad than that, if the truth be told.

Fiordispina reworks Ovid's exemplum, and adds two further exempla, even more immediately blameworthy, the incestuous love of Semiramis for her son and that of Myrrha for her father:

> In terra, in aria, in mar, sola son io
> che patisco da te sì duro scempio;
> e questo hai fatto acciò che l'error mio
> sia ne l'imperio tuo ultimo esempio.
> La moglie del re Nino ebbe disio,
> il figlio amando, scelerato ed empio,
> e Mirra il padre, e la Cretense il toro:
> ma gli è più folle il mio, ch'alcun dei loro.
>
> (*OF* 25.36)

By land, sea, and air I alone suffer thus cruelly at your hands—you have done this to make an example of my aberration, the ultimate one in your power. King

Nisus' wife was evil and profane in her love for her son; so was Mirra, in love with her father, and Pasiphae with the bull. But my love is greater folly than any of theirs.

Pasiphae had tried to satisfy her passion through the deception of the wooden cow. But even if Daedalus now would come with all his science, what could he do for her?

> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　tamen illa secuta est
> spem Veneris; tamen illa dolis et imagine vaccae
> passa bovem est, et erat, qui deciperetur, adulter.
> huc licet ex toto sollertia confluat orbe,
> ipse licet revolet ceratis Daedalus alis,
> quid faciet? num me puerum de virgine doctis
> artibus efficiet? num te mutabit, Ianthe?
> 　…
> at non vult natura, potentior omnibus istis,
> quae mihi sola nocet.
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　(*Met*. 9.738–44, 758–59)

Yet she had some hope of her love's fulfillment; yet she enjoyed her bull by a trick and the disguise of the heifer, and it was the lover who was deceived. Though all the ingenuity in the world should be collected here, though Daedalus himself should fly back on waxen wings, what could he do? With all his learned arts could he make me into a boy from a girl? or could he change you, Ianthe?

Fiordispina resumes Iphis' argument literally in the final octave of her lament:

> La femina nel maschio fe' disegno,
> speronne il fine, ed ebbelo, come odo:
> Pasife ne la vacca entrò del legno,
> altre per altri mezzi e vario modo.
> Ma se volasse a me con ogni ingegno
> Dedalo, non potria sciòglier quel nodo
> che fece il mastro troppo diligente,
> Natura d'ogni cosa più possente.
> 　　　　　　　　　　　　　(*OF* 25.37)

These females made design upon the males and achieved the desired consummation, so I am told. Pasiphae went inside the wooden cow, the others achieved their end by other means. But even if Daedalus came flying to me with every artifice at his command, he would be unable to untie the knot made by that all-too-diligent Maker, Nature, who is all-powerful.

There are important differences between the two situations. Iphis is a woman raised and dressed as a male who falls in love with a woman who believes she is

a male, and who reciprocates her love; Iphis will satisfy her passion (through marriage) when she will be miracously transformed into a man. Fiordispina is a woman who falls in love with a woman dressed as a man, and whom she mistakes for a man; Bradamante does not reciprocate Fiordispina's love. She will satisfy her passion when Bradamante is "transformed" into a man—that is, she will be substituted by her twin brother Ricciardetto, a man dressed as a woman dressed as a man. It is difficult to define the exact nature of Iphis' and Fiordispina's desire. What is certain is that neither Iphis nor Fiordispina can grasp the idea that two women together could obtain sexual satisfaction; in their internalized homophobia, both share a phallocentric ideological point of view. "Iphis loved without hope of her love's fulfilment" (*Met.* 9.724 *Iphis amat qua posse frui desperat*), and says that Daedalus would not be able to transform either herself or Ianthe into a male (*Met.* 9.743–44). Nevertheless, Iphis' desire is unequivocally desire for a female peer: Iphis, though raised as a male, does not identify herself as a male, nor does Ianthe have male features that attract her. The impossible transformation into a male that Iphis thinks is necessary could happen to her or to Ianthe regardless. Fiordispina, on the contrary, falls in love with Bradamante, mistaking her for a man, and is attracted by her virile appearance (equipped with a phallic sword) (*OF* 25.28.1–6). During the night they spend in the same bed, Fiordispina does not make advances to Bradamante, but dreams that the woman is transformed "in miglior sesso" ("into a preferable sex," 25.42.8). She is disappointed when, upon awakening, she gropes for Bradamante's nonexistent phallus (25.43.7–8). Fiordispina vainly prays to Mahomet that Bradamante be transformed into a man (a reference to the successful intervention of the goddess Isis in the *Metamorphoses*) (25.44.1–6). After the "transformation" of Bradamante into Ricciardetto, Fiordispina can eventually have access to the phallus she had so much desired (25.67.1–6). Fiordispina's phallocentrism is therefore much more pronounced than that of Iphis. Ariosto reworks Iphis' lament by including it in a rather less subversive ideological context.

Epic Storms

The storm in which Ceyx is shipwrecked in *Met.* 11.474–572 is an important source for two of the main storms in the *Furioso*. The description of the storm in *OF* 18.141–45 presents the usual web of sources (Statius, Pulci, Boiardo), but owes some details to Ovid's storm. In particular, *OF* 18.144.1 "Crebbe il tempo crudel" ("the storm increases in violence") translates *Met.* 11.490 *aspera crescit hiems* ("the storm is increasing in violence"). And the continuation in 19.49.5–6 "altri attende alle trombe, e a tor di nave / l'acque importune, e il mar nel mar rifonde" ("some stood to the pumps, to suck the unwelcome water from the ship and return the sea to the sea") reworks the conceit in *Met.* 11.488 *egerit hic fluctus, aequorque refundit in aequor* ("Here one is bailing out the water and pouring the sea into the sea").

The same Ovidian storm, and the same conceit, are reworked for the storm which dashes Ruggiero against a rock in *OF* 41.8–22 (cf. *Met*. 11.486–88 with *OF* 41.12.5–8).[18] There are many other close parallels between the two scenes. Furthermore, the storm of *Met*. 11 is present in *OF* 40.29: the simile that describes Orlando, Astolfo, and Oliviero climbing the walls of Biserta through the comparison with a ship assaulted by the waves reverses that in Ovid, *Met*. 11.534–58, where the ship assaulted by the waves is compared to the walls of a city assaulted by warriors. That Ariosto returns repeatedly to the Ovidian version of the classic epic motif of the storm illustrates well that he surely felt, as Romizi (1896: 96) phrased it, "closer to Ovid than to any other poet of antiquity."

Notes

1　Among the modern commentaries, especially useful are Segre (1976), Bigi (1982), and Ceserani and Zatti (1997). Translations of the *Orlando Furioso* are from Waldman (1974); translations of the *Memorphoses* from Miller (1921) and of *Heroides* from Showerman–Goold (1977).

2　Giovan Battista Giraldi Cinzio, *Discorso intorno al comporre dei romanzi* (1554), in Guerrieri Crocetti (1973: 56), quoted by Cabani (2008: 13, n. 2).

3　See Javitch (1991: 71–85); cf. also Guthmüller (1997: 125–43), (2005: 530–33).

4　See Rajna (1900: 201 and n. 4). On the episode of the liberation of Angelica, see also Javitch (1976); Shapiro (1983: 119–30); Gareffi (2012).

5　The motif comes from Euripides (fr. 125 N^2).

6　Rajna (1900: 201, n. 4).

7　Where "stringendo segna / di queste belle man l'avorio" may recall Val. Fl. 2.469 *tendunt cur vincula palmas?* (Rajna 1900: 201, n. 4).

8　Cf. also V.Fl. 2.478–79.

9　The Hippogriph had been introduced in Canto 4 in terms that rework those used by Ovid for the winged sons of Boreas, Calais, and Zetes, in *Met*. 6.713 *cetera qui matris, pennas genitoris haberent*, "[twin sons] who had all else of their mother, but their father's wings" ∼ "Non è finto il destrier, ma naturale, / ch'una giumenta generò d'un grifo: / simile al padre avea la piuma e l'ale, / li piedi anteriori, il capo e il grifo; / in tutte l'altre membra parea quale / era la madre, e chiamasi ippogrifo" (*OF* 4.18.1–6, "The horse was no figment—he was real, begotten by a gryphon out of a mare. He had his father's wings and feathers, his forefeet, his head and beak; in all else he took after his mother. He was known as a hippogryph"). On the various sources for the Hippogriph, see Rajna (1900: 114–20); Ascoli (1987: 126, n. 6; 247–49).

10　On the structure of the episode, see Ruggiero (2008). On the story and the character of Olimpia, see above all, in comparison with Ovid, Pavlock (1990: 147–70) and Minutelli (1991), with bibliography; further, Finucci (1992: 145–68); Mac Carthy (2007: 117–34).

11　See the comments by Hanning (1976: 112–13); Minutelli (1991: 405–8).

12　Cf. Romizi (1896: 27). Interesting observations in Pavlock (1990: 157–58); Minutelli (1991: 417–21); cf. also Hanning (1976: 112).

13　Cf. Hanning (1976: 112). See Minutelli (1991: 419–21); see also Pavlock (1990: 158).

14   The close imitation of *Heroides* 10 continues up to *OF* 10.34; see Minutelli (1991).

15   On the story of Fiordispina, see Ferroni (1982) and (2008: 328–33); Finucci (1992: 199–225); Mac Carthy (2007: 146–53); Primo (2007); DeCoste (2009: 76–99). The story of Fiordispina is reworked in the episode of Britomart and Malecasta in Spenser, *Faerie Queen* 3.1; cf. Scarsi (2010: 158–63).

16   On Fiordispina in Boiardo, see DeCoste (2009: 53–67).

17   On the story of Iphis, see Hallett (1997); Pintabone (2002); Raval (2002: 158–67); Butrica (2005: 242–44); Ormand (2005); Robinson (2006); Walker (2006); Boehringer (2007: 232–60); on the version of Nicander (Ant. Lib. 17), see Leitao (1995); Waldner (2009).

18   On this storm, see Ponte (1976).

Further Reading

The House of Sleep in *Met.* 11 and the personification of Invidia in *Met.* 2 are reworked respectively in *OF* 14 (esp. *Met.* 11.592–95 ~ *OF* 14.92; see Rajna 1900: 241–44), and in the first of the fragments of *Cinque Canti*, the Five Cantos (esp. *Met.* 2.760–64 ~ *Cinque Canti* 1.38; 2.765–74 ~ 1.40; 2.775–78 ~ 1.43). For the Five Cantos, see Sheers and Quint (1996).

On Petrarch as a linguistic filter for Ariosto's classical imitations, see Cabani (1992: esp. 100–2) for an Ovidian example. In general, see also Jossa (1996). For some indications about the influence of the contemporary commentaries on Ariosto's classical imitations, see Fumagalli (1994: esp. 554) (Antonius Volscus' 1500 commentary on the *Heroides*). On Boiardo's use of classical sources, see Zampese (1994).

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"Joy and Harmles Pastime"
Milton and the Ovidian Arts of Leisure

Mandy Green

Milton's reputation as a workaholic is an integral part of his self-fashioning as a literary figure. Even as a child John Milton was no stranger to hard work: in his portrait of the artist as a schoolboy of 12 in the *Defensio Secunda*, Milton represented his younger self as undertaking a grueling scheme of private study, rarely going to bed before midnight; and his brother Christopher recollected to John Aubrey that the poor maid had to sit up for him "commonly till 12 or one aclock at night" (Flannagan 1988: 4). Milton pursued such a disciplined regime into manhood. His intellectual temperament was such that, as he described it to his easy-going friend Charles Diodati, once immersed in a project he could scarcely endure any interruption or rest until, as he put it, "I can attain my object and complete some great period, as it were, of my studies" (Flannagan 1988: 1051). To this end, as he looked back in *An Apology for a Pamphlet*, he had "spent and tir'd out almost a whole youth," assiduously preparing himself in "wearisome labours and studious watchings" (*Col.* 3.i.282) that he "might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willing let it die" (*Reason of Church-government*; Flannagan 1988: 922).

All this makes Milton an unlikely champion in the rehabilitation of *otium*; and yet, in Milton's hands, not only does *otium* shed its pejorative associations, but it also becomes not merely a necessary "breathing space" (Flannagan 1988: 861) from which we return "more eager to resume our interrupted tasks" (Flannagan 1988: 859), but rather an essential constituent of the creative process. For scholar-poets, as well as vocational academics, the line between work and play is, of course, notoriously blurred: work and leisure time become unstable and slippery categories—one has the habit of becoming the other. While Milton's academic assignments at Cambridge were seen by him to be exclusively the product of irksome drudgery and toil, and a pointless deflection from his own literary studies, the latter, on the other hand, which flourished in intervals of *otium … Literarium* (*Prol. 6*,

Col. 12.204; Flannagan 1988: 859), were at once a serious pursuit and a form of recreation; and this doubleness, this complication of mood, is intimately bound up with Milton's response to his favorite Latin poet, Ovid.

This chapter has two main purposes: the first is to reassess some of the important aspects of the intriguing relationship between these two poets that have emerged in recent criticism; the second, to suggest how Milton's reading of Ovid fed his imagination and helped to shape his understanding of the relationship between work and play as being a more complex dynamic than one of simple opposition or alternation between two modes of being.

Milton and Ovid

Milton the Puritan and the pagan poet Ovid have always looked an unlikely couple. So often conceived as a monolithic presence, hard-working, sober, severe, and constitutionally middle-aged, Milton would seem to have little in common with the mercurial Ovid, so dubbed the "poet of idleness," and the lightest and most softly sensuous of the Augustan poets. The serious-minded Virgil, more obviously associated with high-minded epic and a poetics of *durus labor* rather than holidays and the delights of leisure time—what Milton called *otia grata (El.* 1.18)—would appear to offer a more congenial poetic model. Yet this tidy antithesis creates an overly schematic division that works to foreground Milton's likeness to Virgil and to play down his affinities with Ovid. Indeed, as Ovid himself protested, his life as a poet should not be dismissed as one of idle vacancy: *Pont.* 1.5.43–44 *non sum qui segnia ducam / otia: mors nobis tempus habetur iners*, "I am not one to lead a life of idle leisure: I regard idleness as death."

Those readers who have recognized a relationship between Milton and Ovid have most often accounted for it as an intense, but short-lived, attraction of opposites: Thomas De Quincey suggestively likened it to "the wedding of male and female opposites" in which Ovid's "festal gaiety, and the brilliant velocity of his *aurora borealis* intellect form[ed] a deep, natural equipoise to the mighty gloom and solemn planetary movement in the mind of the other" (1890: 449). More recently Maggie Kilgour (2012) has developed this analogy further by using Milton's own image of a lasting marriage as a happy union of "most resembling unlikenes, and most unlike resemblance" (*Tetrachordon*; Flannagan 1988: 1033) to reflect the more complex and enduring nature of the relationship that existed between the two. For Milton's sensibility responded to Ovid with an especially heightened intensity. Of all the classical poets, Ovid remained the most powerful imaginative presence informing Milton's poetry from his youthful Latin elegies to *Paradise Lost*, the great achievement of his poetic maturity.

It has long been recognized that Milton's little book of Latin elegies provides an effective measure of his early enthusiasm for Ovid: "To write them," E.K. Rand acknowledged (1922: 111), "he must have known his Ovid virtually by heart,"

not only the *Metamorphoses*, "but *all* the poems of Ovid." Of course, Milton's creative imitation of Ovid in these early elegies should not come as a surprise: Ovid continued to occupy a uniquely important position in the grammar-school curriculum, forming an essential part of the reading and writing program; in keeping with contemporary educational theory and practice, for Milton as for Marlowe, Spenser, and Shakespeare before him, the first lessons in poetry would have been close reading, memorizing, and direct imitations of Ovid. As part of his self-imposed reading program, the youngster had evidently strayed beyond the set texts to consume the rest of Ovid's poetical works. Indeed, Milton's nephew and biographer Edward Philips confirmed that during these late-night studies, the young Milton had been engaged "as well in voluntary Improvements of his own choice as the exact perfecting of his School exercises" (Flannagan 1988: 54).

However, the assumption that these early works are mere poetic exercises, recycling materials in the Ovidian manner, has been effectively dismantled in recent scholarship, which has convincingly demonstrated the extent to which these compositions afforded Milton an imaginative freedom that he rarely allowed himself in his English verses at this time. Charles Martindale (1986: 180) has commented on the unguarded enthusiasm with which Milton embraces the "sensuous world of Ovidian myth" in *Elegia 5*, while Kilgour (2012: 142) has drawn attention to the "holiday spirit" evoked in that poem. In the first and sixth elegies, both verse letters to Diodati, we encounter a youth in "holiday humour," relaxed and at ease, with a confiding manner and an engaging capacity for friendship and good humor. The feelings of alienation and isolation that clouded the young Milton's first impressions of Cambridge and the delight he experienced at being back in London are voiced feelingly through the witty governing paradox of *Elegia* 1. The central conceit playfully defines Milton's experience of exile against that of Ovid: Tomis, the bleak and uncivilized place Ovid had been exiled *to*, is as inimical to cultured life as Cambridge, the place that Milton has been, at least temporarily, excluded *from*; while London, Milton's place of "banishment," is like Rome, the beloved city that Ovid has been forced to forgo, a center of culture which offers a nurturing environment that Cambridge denies to the poet. However, just as this "sunshine holiday" ("L'Allegro") must inevitably end with an eventual return to work and the dreary round of prescribed tasks at Cambridge, so *Elegia* 6, for all its genial wit and accommodating manner, has seemed emblematic of the eventual dedication of his poetic talent to the service of a "graver subject" ("Vacation Exercise" 30) than *elegia levis* ("light elegy," *El*. 6.49) could offer.

This poem divides naturally into two parts, in which wine and water represent opposing sources of poetic inspiration from which flow rival kinds of poetry. In the first section, Milton promotes the idea that the poet must enjoy the pleasures of life, especially feasting and drinking wine, unapologetically—without these poor Ovid could only send *mala carmina* (*El*. 6.19) from exile—but the speaker then turns abruptly to another kind of poet and another kind of poetry, contrasting with

writers of such light verse the poet of a higher destiny who is equipping himself for a graver purpose (*El.* 6.59 – 64):

> Ille quidem parcè Samii pro more magistri
>   Vivat, & innocuos præbeat herba cibos;
> Stet prope fagineo pellucida lympha catillo,
>   Sobriaque è puro pocula fonte bibat.
> Additur huic scelerisque vacans, & casta juventus,
>   Et rigidi mores, & sine labe manus.

He should live a simple, frugal, life after the fashion of the teacher who came from Samos [Pythagoras]; let herbs offer him food that doesn't upset his system, let the purest of water stand near him, in a beech bowl, and let him drink soberly from a pure spring. Such a poet should be required to have a youth chaste and free of crime, and an austere character, and spotless hands. (Flannagan 1988: 197)

However strict the commitment envisaged here, it should not be seen as constituting a wholesale renunciation of all poetry that is "simple, sensuous and passionate" (Flannagan 1988: 984), nor of wine for that matter. After all, Milton, just 21, is himself writing an elegy and in his little book of elegies, this verse-letter will itself be sandwiched between the poem celebrating the coming of spring and another playfully Ovidian piece recording an innocent first love. *Elegia* 6 takes its place with other poems from the 1645 collection that replay scenes of vocational choice between alternative poetic modes and lifestyles, but which retain a provisional character and fail finally to make an exclusive choice between them. Indeed, after a process of "long choosing, and beginning late" (*PL* 9.26), his eventual choice of epic subject would ensure a central place for "unreproved pleasures" ("L'Allegro").

Poetic Vocation

Neither Ovid nor Milton put the education furnished by their fathers to its intended purpose, and both had to justify to themselves and others their dedication to poetry. Ovid's father expected him to enter public service and secure a profitable position in administration or law, while Milton's own father imagined his son putting his talents to good use by entering the church. Mindful of the way Ovid records his father's habitual grumbling that no one ever became rich by being a poet (*Tr.* 4.10.21 – 22 *saepe pater dixit "studium quid inutile temptas? / Maeonides nullas ipse reliquit opes,"* "Often my father said: 'Why do you follow such a worthless pursuit? Even Maeonia's son [Homer] left no wealth'"), Milton pays tribute to his own father's generosity of spirit in *Ad Patrem*. Although reading between the lines we can sense John Milton senior's similar reservations about poetry as *vanas*

inopesque ("idle and unprofitable," 57) and his concern for his son's uncertain prospects, he nevertheless refrained from forcing his hand and compelling him to go *qua via lata patet, qua pronior area lucri, / certaque condendi fulget spes aurea nummi,* ("where the highway is wide and open, where the money is more likely to be, where the certain hope of hoarding money shines golden," 69–70), and he even continued his financial support after Milton had left university.

However, as the sonnet "How soon hath Time" so poignantly testifies, Milton had still to combat his own anxious feelings of belatedness at having so little to show for his efforts compared with the progress of his more "timely-happy" (Sonnet 7.8) contemporaries who were following a more conventional career path. He had also to answer the reproaches of those who, like the unnamed friend in a draft letter (Flannagan 1988: 1049–50), blamed him for indulging an excessive "love of Learning" that delayed his advance in the serious business of life. Milton admitted that, viewed from the outside, he must have seemed to be languishing in idle retirement as if, as he himself put it in his reply, he had "given up my selfe to dreame away my Yeares in the armes of studious retirement like Endymion with the Moone." Yet Milton was determined not to rush this ripening process, having already determined, as he expressed it in an early academic exercise, to secure a reputation founded on *longo & acri studio* ("long and concentrated study") as opposed to the false glitter of a passing celebrity snatched from *properato & præcoci stylo* ("a premature and hastily acquired eloquence," *Prol.* 7, *Col.* 12.248; Flannagan 1988: 867) by those intent on worldly fame, "Naught seeking but the praise of men" (*PL* 3.453). Nevertheless, the untimely death of Edward King, a fellow student at Christ's, brought home to Milton that the self-discipline required "To scorn delights and live laborious days" (*Lycidas*) afforded no guarantee he would be allotted the time necessary for his preparations to come to fruition. Just as Milton's speaker, struck by such a prospect, bitterly resents his "thankles" task, so Ovid, in a comparable mood, had lamented how the poet's tireless studies go unappreciated: *AA* 3.411–12 *nunc hederae sine honore iacent, opertaque doctis / cura vigil Musis nomen inertis habet*, "Now the ivy lies without honor, and the laborious cultivation and sleepless care of the learned Muses is called idleness."

Ovid evolved a poetics that simultaneously reflected and subverted the Roman work ethic. According to prevailing cultural assumptions, poetry was considered a trivial pursuit when set against the public sphere and an active life spent in military service, the law, or politics. While it is regularly noted that Ovid playfully questioned this way of thinking in the *Amores* by appropriating the discourse of strenuous active service to describe the pursuit of love, he also offered a more serious and personal challenge to this value system. In lines directed against *Livor*, an embodiment of all those backbiters who criticize the poet's soft and easy lifestyle and yet are envious of his success, not only does Ovid imply that poetry is no mere pastime but a disciplined art that demands concentrated effort; he also claims it to be a higher calling for a man of his background than the customary professions he had himself repudiated (*Am.* 1.15.1–6). But it is in the lines which follow that Ovid

crystallizes what is for him the inherent distinction between the two spheres of activity—one is limited, the other limitless: 1.15.7–8 *mortale est, quod quaeris, opus. mihi fama perennis / quaeritur, in toto semper ut orbe canar*, "The work you ask of me is mortal; but my quest is everlasting fame, to be ever sung throughout the world."

While Milton's sights were similarly set upon poetic immortality, his own defense of poetry was premised on a fervently patriotic vision of the sacred office of the poet whose poetic powers should be rightfully deployed in the service of a national literature: "to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of vertu, and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune" (Flannagan 1988: 923). Reflecting further that "some recreating intermission of labour, and serious things" were necessary for good health, he recommended that "festival pastimes" be used as a means of promoting cultural pursuits, thus "instructing and bettering the Nation at all opportunities" (Flannagan 1988: 924).

Just as in an *Apology for a Pamphlet* Milton had remembered when "no recreation came … better welcome" than the pleasure of reading Ovid's smooth elegiac poetry (Col. 3.i.302), so too in *Tetrachordon*, when thinking of the soft ease of female companionship, the more mature Milton likened the necessity of "somtime slackning the cords of intense thought and labour" to a schoolboy's holiday. However, he had now developed a deeper understanding of the dynamic interplay between work and the pleasures of a cultivated leisure, promoting such relaxation as essential for renewing the intellectual and imaginative energies of all serious-minded individuals (Flannagan 1988: 1033):

> We cannot therefore always be contemplative, or pragmaticall abroad, but have need of som delightfull intermissions, wherin the enlarg'd soul may leav off a while her severe schooling; and like a glad youth in wandring vacancy, may keep her hollidaies to joy and harmles pastime.

Although Milton's formal apprenticeship to Ovid the elegiac poet ended long before, with the completion of the first book of elegies, the *Metamorphoses* remained a significant imaginative presence informing *Paradise Lost*. We have the testimony of Milton's youngest daughter Deborah that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* remained one of the three favorite works she was most often called upon to read to her blind father during the period of his epic's composition. Cyriack Skinner, one of Milton's amanuenses, makes a significant contribution to the picture by explicitly linking this recreational reading to his habitual working methods: Skinner records that the time "spent in reading" such "choice Poets" was not only "by way of refreshment after the days toyl" but also *"to store his Fancy against Morning"* (Flannagan 1988: 12; emphasis added). Such literary *otium* remained a necessary refreshment for him, like the *otium* of marriage. Ovidian *mollia otia* ("soft ease") and Virgilian *durus labor* ("hard work") are thus no longer seen in exclusive terms as the alternation of two extremes in "grateful vicissitude" (*PL* 6.8); they are conjoined in a dynamic relationship of interdependence, a constantly renewable

source of creative energy, subsumed into the same divine rhythm at the very heart of life, love, and art.

In his study *Milton and the Transformation of Ancient Epic*, Martindale concluded that "Ovid contributed something vital to the structure of Milton's imagination" (1986: 181). In the remaining part of this chapter we shall look at a specific example of the way Milton's reading of Ovid helped him to control the perspective from which the reader views the events of *Paradise Lost*, and to shape his conception of Adam and Eve's relationship, their role in the garden, and the shift between the unfallen and fallen world. But first, we should briefly account for the Ovidian presence in Milton's epic in more general terms.

Ovidian Presences in *Paradise Lost*

Most obviously, the first book of the *Metamorphoses*, with its memorable accounts of the creation of the world and of mankind, the loss of the golden age, and the universal flood, offered a rich source of mythological material for a Christian poet looking to flesh out the bare bones of Genesis. Indeed, the correspondences between the opening book of the *Metamorphoses* and Genesis were felt to be so remarkable that Arthur Golding, author of the first popular translation of the *Metamorphoses*, had demanded: "What man is he but would suppose the author of this book / The first foundation of his work from Moses' writings took?" (2002: 342–43). Reversing the normal direction of dependency between the classical and Christian worlds, these similarities were seen to reveal a mimetic relationship between pagan myth and scriptural truth; accordingly, Walter Ralegh had likened classical myths to "crooked images" that distortedly reflect the "one true history" in the Scriptures (1614: 91).

Believing Milton to be intent upon establishing "the dependent epistemological status of pagan literature, always subordinate for [him] to the truth of sacred scripture or divine revelation," Richard DuRocher has proposed "the more combative, confrontational condition of dialectical imitation" to be the most characteristic mode of allusion to Ovid that operates in *Paradise Lost*, likening it to an "agon between two poetic champions," though one undertaken in "a spirit of admiring antagonism" (1985: 32, 37, 9, 35). More recently, Sarah Annes Brown voiced the customary defense of the epic's "contamination" of sacred truth by the presence of mythological material when she referred to Milton's habit of "invoking the beauty of pagan writings only to put them firmly in their place" (1999: 101). However, Milton's epic does not simply seek to confirm the ontological superiority of Christian substance over pagan shadow; it subsumes the imaginative truth of Ovidian myth in order to create its own psychologically convincing world.

Martindale responded sensitively to the "Ovidian feeling … diffused throughout large parts of *Paradise Lost*," finding it "particularly evident whenever Eve is on the scene" (1986: 191). This impression is certainly borne out by one of the most

famous, or indeed, infamous examples of a metamorphic moment in the poem, as Eve replays the Ovidian tale of Narcissus and his longing for his reflected image in her account to Adam of her first moments of consciousness. From the first annotated edition of *Paradise Lost* by PH [Patrick Hume] in 1695 to the most recent full-length study of Milton and Ovid by Maggie Kilgour (2012), this episode has fascinated, intrigued, and divided readers. Such a self-conscious reenactment of an Ovidian episode is reminiscent of the Elder Seneca's comments on Ovid's own practice of creative imitation, which seemed to be done *non subripiendi causa, sed palam mutuandi, hoc animo ut vellet agnosci*, "with no thought of plagiarism, but meaning that his piece of open borrowing should be noticed" (*Suas*. 3.7). Moreover, as critics such as Kilgour have also noted (2012: 196–228), the myth of Narcissus is not confined to Eve herself, but underlies also, in its most ideal form, the relationship of the Son to the Father, and in its most debased form that of Sin to Satan. In the relationship of the first human couple it holds the potential for a positive and negative outcome: Eve learns to love someone different from herself, but will Adam be able to see beyond his own image in her?

Besides Eve, Satan is the other figure who reenacts Ovidian tales most obviously and frequently, "indeed frenziedly," as Colin Burrow's summary makes clear (2002: 317): "An exile from heaven (and the Ovid of the *Tristia* is never far from his laments against his treatment by his *princeps*), he transforms himself into a small zoo's worth of different animals in his efforts to spy on Adam and Eve … before being forcibly transformed into a snake" in a full-scale Ovidian metamorphosis. The scene that brings Satan and Eve together takes place, of course, on the fatal morning of the Fall.

"Sweet Gardening Labour": Eve and Pomona

Genesis offered no narrative clues as to how Milton might engineer a plausible scenario for Satan to encounter Eve by herself on the morning of the Fall. While in Milton's imaginative fashioning Adam and Eve are most characteristically thought of together hand in hand, there are nevertheless a number of occasions when we are invited to view Eve separately from Adam. The previous occasion on which Eve leaves Adam to garden alone has a direct bearing on that fateful morning. Observing Adam entering upon "studious thoughts abstruse" (8.40), Eve decides that her time would be better spent working in her garden. For Milton's Eden is no decorative backdrop but a luxuriantly fertile garden that requires continuous cultivation.

It is typical of Milton's realizing imagination that he would understand how effortless leisure might soon pall: only the animals in Eden "Rove idle unimploid" (4.617), whereas "Man hath his daily work of body or mind" (4.618) to occupy him. Milton's belief that humanity's original condition contained everything necessary for their dignity and delight led to a unique balance struck between *mollia otia* and *durus labor*. In Milton's paradise, Adam and Eve's "sweet Gardning labour … made

ease / More easie" (4.329–31), but was also essential in a garden whose "wanton growth" (4.629; 9.211) was by its very nature "Tending to wilde" (9.112). Eve, like Adam, takes a full and active part in the "pleasant labour" (4.625) enjoined upon the couple. Indeed, of the two, Eve arguably reflects more fully the image of God the "sovran Planter" (4.691): not only does she share in the divine power to promote growth; like a genuine *Mater … florum* (*Fasti* 5.183) Eve infuses life into the plants of "Her Nurserie" (8.46) simply by the nurturing power of her presence, but she also displays a deeper sense of vocation than Adam, taking perhaps too seriously their duties and responsibilities in the garden.

Eve is closely observed in a range of gardening activities, pruning, propping, and tending the plants. In her diligent and dedicated cultivation of the arts of gardening Eve is said most nearly to resemble Ovid's fair gardener and goddess of fruit trees, Pomona (9.394). The hard-working Pomona displays, like Eve, a practical, "hands-on" approach to gardening, and both are driven by the same desire to improve upon the state of Nature. Ovid observes of Pomona that "amongst the Latin wood-nymphs none was more skilful at cultivating gardens" (*qua nulla Latinas / inter hamadryadas coluit sollertius hortos, Met.* 14.623–24), and a few lines later gives her the credit for her *cultos … hortos* ("well-tended gardens," 14.656). Although Milton's narrator criticizes rigidly regulated gardens as the product of an overly sophisticated or "nice Art" (4.241), he nevertheless commends the aesthetically pleasing effect of the "thick-wov'n Arborets and Flours / Imborderd on each Bank" (9.437–38) that give evidence of Eve's handiwork. In this way, Eve's creative influence on the garden mends the traditional opposition between Nature and Art, and in her gardening capacity, she, like Pomona, is an artist who gives practical expression to the civilizing and refining impulses in mankind that promote beauty.

When Eve takes the lead in planning the day's activities for the first time on the morning of the Fall, it is clear that she has been preoccupied by the way the demands of the eagerly growing garden are outstripping their means to manage it. Unlike Adam, Eve is not content merely to "keep" the garden "from Wilderness" (9.245)—she wants to improve upon it. The initial motivation behind her suggestion that they garden separately is not so much an attempt to wrest control from Adam nor a bid for independence and personal autonomy as an expression of her desire to maximize their impact upon the garden. Thus she institutes a division of labor that will ensure an increase in productivity and efficiency by removing the distraction of amorous "Looks," "smiles," and "Casual discourse" (9.222–23). In the exchange that follows it becomes evident that—like Pomona, for whom her garden was her chief passion (*Met.* 14.634)—Eve assigns a higher priority to their work in the garden than to the love between them.

Interestingly, Eve has a set of priorities oppositely correlative to Adam's. While she would have him "intermix" abstract intellectualizing with "Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute / With conjugal Caresses" (8.54–56), he would find their "Labour" in the garden but "irksome toile" without such delightful

"refreshment" as the "sweet intercourse of / Looks and smiles" (9.235–43) between them. While Adam is happy to maintain this balanced approach to their "daily work of body or mind," it is Eve who threatens to disturb this equilibrium: not, like a long line of epic temptresses, by exploiting her erotic appeal to seduce Adam into idleness, but by overworking. Succumbing to an immoderate work ethic even for the fallen world, Eve displays a driven quality in the gardening debate, the kind "That with superfluous burden loads the day" (Sonnet 21.13). It seems not without significance that amongst his tips for "getting over" love, Ovid had recommended keeping busy, pointedly noting the importance of "down time" as an essential condition for love to flourish: *Rem.* 143–44 *tam Venus otia amat: qui finem quaeris amoris, / cedit amor rebus: res age, tutus eris*, "so Venus delights in leisure: you who seek an end to love, love yields to business: keep yourself busy and you will be safe."

Pomona is also gently reproved for too exclusive a preoccupation with her garden at the expense of human love. Her suitor Vertumnus uses the example of the fruitful marriage of the vine and elm flourishing before them to demonstrate that her devotion to promoting the fruitfulness of her garden is too single-minded, since it precludes any possibility of Pomona's bearing fruit herself (14.661–68).

Milton advertises the striking resemblance between the two gardeners just after the gardening debate. Knowing that this time she will return "deflourd" (9.901) of innocence, the reader is once again invited to watch Eve closely as she parts from Adam's side. Our sense of Eve's vulnerability at this point is intensified by her likeness to Pomona who, Ovid points out, *nec iaculo gravis est, sed adunca dextera falce*, "is not laden with a spear, but carries instead a curved pruning hook in her right hand" (*Met.* 14.628). Eve too is armed only with simple gardening tools and lacks the weapons that protect the militantly virginal Diana and her band as they roam the wilds (9.386–95):

> [Eve] … like a Wood-Nymph light
> *Oread* or *Dryad*, or of *Delia*'s Traine,
> Betook her to the Groves, but *Delia*'s self
> In gate surpass'd and Goddess-like deport,
> Though not as shee with Bow and Quiver armd,
> But with such Gardning Tools as Art yet rude,
> Guiltless of fire had formd, or Angels brought.
> To *Pales*, or *Pomona* thus adornd,
> Likest she seemd, *Pomona* when she fled
> *Vertumnus* …

Eve, we are told, seemed most like "Pomona when she fled / Vertumnus"; this open allusion to the Ovidian tale is charged with disturbing undertones that are deliberately brought into play as Eve's encounter with Satan becomes imminent. As so often in Milton's mythological similes, the real energy of the lines seems to lurk somewhere alongside or beyond what is expressly said. As their outlines

coalesce, the narrator draws Pomona and Eve into the same imaginative space. Indeed, Milton's Ovidian sensibility controls the perspective from which the reader views Eve's encounter with Satan. In representing Satan's assault on Eden and on Eve, Milton plays upon and yet subverts the reader's expectations, which have been programmed by the Ovidian mythic paradigm in which the violation of a virginal landscape is deployed to suggest the rape of a helpless female victim.

A Proper Limit to Labour

Ovid is generally accredited with fixing for Western literature and art the ideal landscape or *locus amoenus*. Such lovely landscapes from a pre-urban golden age of eternal spring have a timeless appeal to the imagination. When looking to visualize the original garden planted by God, Milton self-consciously inserted himself in this Ovidian tradition. His repeated use of the negative formulation "Not that … nor" (4.268ff.) most obviously works to evoke such powerful imaginative spaces even as Eden is held to supersede them. However, the allusion to Enna and the fate of the hapless Proserpina demonstrates Milton's intuitive grasp of how Ovid manipulates the narrative topos of the *locus amoenus* to presage acts of sexual violence so that, as Stephen Hinds so suggestively puts it (2002: 130), "episode after episode takes the form of a 'paradise lost.'" Ovid imbues his settings with an idyllic quality only to ensure that when destructive violence irrupts into a seemingly inviolable pastoral world, it comes with redoubled force.

　　Pomona's flight from marriage (*Met. 14.668 concubitusque fugis*) is figurative rather than literal: 14.635–36 *vim tamen agrestum metuens pomaria claudit / intus et accessus prohibet refugitque viriles*, "Yet fearing the violence of countrymen, she shut herself up inside her orchard, denied access and fled away from men." The enclosed quality of Pomona's garden should suggest safety and protection, but when Vertumnus succeeds in gaining admission to her orchard—albeit in the innocuous guise of an old woman—he has already committed a symbolic act of violation which heightens our sense of her isolation and helplessness. Eve's nuptial bower, "like *Pomona*'s Arbour smil'd / With flourets deck't and fragrant smells" (5.377–79), and yet, in a strangely proleptic passage, it had likewise begun to shed its accustomed associations of peace and security in a curiously similar reversal of the reader's expectations. The garden and the bower within it are set within an untamed landscape, "a Wilderness of sweets" (5.294), but a wilderness nonetheless. The following lines ostensibly establish the remote seclusion proper to Adam and Eve's pastoral retreat, for the narrator guarantees (4.705–8):

> In shadier Bower
> More sacred and sequesterd, though but feignd,
> *Pan* or *Silvanus* never slept, nor Nymph,
> Nor *Faunus* haunted.

But the very act of naming these rustic deities—even though they are invoked in locations that are then dismissed as being both inferior and false in comparison with Milton's true account—inevitably brings to mind the rampant sexual energies of the untamed and wild side of nature, and suggests that Milton was thinking of the circumstances of the beleaguered nymph Pomona, her cultivated garden beset on every side by the threat of intrusion from these unwelcome suitors (*Met.* 14.635–39). Indeed, such an association seems especially likely given that within a hundred lines of the narrator's assurances, Satan will have penetrated "thir blissful Bower" (4.690) and been discovered "Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of *Eve*" (4.800). Satan's evasion of the angelic guard on this occasion, then again on the night of the dream temptation and on the fatal morning of the Fall, helps to instill in readers the apprehensive feeling that Eden is similarly bare of protection and "exposed" (9.340–41) to sudden attack, even while we acknowledge that Eve is "Secure from outward force," since it is from inward compliance with evil that "The danger lies" (9.348–49).

Hinds (2002: 134) has remarked on how "the boundary between literal and symbolic violence" is "inherently unstable" in the *Metamorphoses*. A similarly ominous collapsing of the two is first suggested in *Paradise Lost* by the manner of Satan's abrupt entrance into the garden just after it has been viewed as a *mons Veneris*—"a rural mound … whose hairie sides / With thicket overgrown, grottesque and wilde, / Access deni'd" (4.135–38)—a description that seems particularly telling given that the expression "Access deni'd" had been used by Ovid to describe Pomona's orchard (*Met.* 14.636 *accessus prohibet*). Landscape and female figure merge again when Satan seeks out the "sweet recess of *Eve*" (9.456), reminding readers of other fatally inviting beauty spots and their threatened occupants. Sin's earlier horrific account of her ordeal at being subjected to Death's "forcible and foul" (2.793) embraces comes closer than any Ovidian episode at describing an actual rape, and while Satan stops short of "ravishing" Eve in any literal sense, Milton invites us to toy with the possibility during the run-up to their encounter, as Satan reflects to his evident satisfaction (9.480–81): "behold alone / The Woman, opportune to all attempts." Satan evidently rejoices to happen upon "Eve separate" from Adam (9.422; cf. 424), palpably relishing the sexual charge it affords him (9.455–57):

> Such Pleasure took the Serpent to behold
> This Flourie Plat, the sweet recess of *Eve*
> Thus earlie, thus alone.

In one of the most insistently Ovidian "invitations to view" (Hinds 2002: 136), time is suspended as the unobserved Satan gazes in desire upon Eve busy amongst her flowers with a voyeuristic intensity so great that he momentarily forgets himself and his purpose there.

The etymological connection of Pomona with *pomaria*, enclosed orchards, and with *poma*, the ripe apples ready to be picked, encourages the reader to identify

the wood nymph with the garden she tends. (Apples were a common symbol of erotic love, with plucking an apple, like picking a flower, frequently suggesting the loss of virginity.) These erotic connotations are further intensified when one of the many disguises Vertumnus assumes to seize the joys of looking at Pomona's beauty (*Met.* 14.653) is that of an apple-picker (14.650). Vertumnus himself collapses the distinction between Pomona and the apples ripe for picking in his knowing linkage of the two (14.657): *pomaque mirata est. 'tanto' que 'potentior!' inquit*, "after admiring the apples he said, 'But you are much more tasty!'" This deepening association of Pomona with her *poma* strengthens the force of the verbs *capere* (653) and *legere* (650) and seems to prefigure the outcome of her story: Vertumnus will not remain content with looking; he will pick the fruit. Indeed, when Vertumnus' eloquence fails to make any impression on the nymph, the god was ready to force her will. And yet, as Milton would have expected his readers to know, Pomona never *fled* from Vertumnus—she *yielded* to him of her own accord. In a sudden reversal of expectations, as Vertumnus threw off his final disguise, appearing to Pomona as himself, she experienced an answering desire. The full complexity of the irony attached to Milton's likening of Eve to Pomona at the very moment when she "fled Vertumnus" now becomes apparent.

Satan's winning words make their way "Into the Heart of *Eve*" (9.550), and, rather than taking flight, she voluntarily follows him to the forbidden tree. Milton now offers a subtly nuanced variation on the exclusively sexual understanding of the familiar Ovidian topos of the hunter hunted or flower/fruit picked. While the dream sequence adumbrates the temptation proper, in one crucial respect at least, it differs: Eve recalled to Adam how in her dream her tempter first "pluckt" and "tasted" (5.65) the forbidden fruit before holding it up to her mouth so that she could scarcely resist taking a bite; in the temptation itself the responsibility for this portentous act and its consequences rests with Eve entirely. Satan promises Eve a fast-track promotion whereby she can preempt the gradual ripening process previously outlined by Raphael, and seize immediately in her grasp the fruit of a life by "long obedience tri'd" (7.159). At the climactic moment, Eve is so intent upon the fruit, and what it now seems to offer her, that she becomes completely oblivious to the presence of her tempter. In the event, it is the "rash hand" of Eve herself (9.780) that reaches out to pluck the apple. The fruit thus "harshly pluckt" (10.537) ensures that the alternative possibility for human life remains unrealized. Indeed, human life becomes from that "evil hour" (9.780) onward a matter of uneasy alternatives, of choices made between imperfect conditions.

While Milton, the descendant of the first human pair and the literary descendant of Ovid, recognized hard graft to be his lot in life, he also understood the importance of alternating periods of work with a little refreshing leisure time, advocating, if not a balanced approach, at least some concession to the competing claims of *otium*. According to the testimony of Edward Philips, his uncle was "an Example to those under him," keeping to the strict regime he had imposed "of hard Study, and spare Diet," yet he enjoyed "this advantage" over his charges, that "once in

three Weeks or a Month, he would drop into the Society of some Young Sparks of his Acquaintance" and "with these Gentlemen he would so far make bold with his Body, as now and then to keep a Gawdy day" (Flannagan 1988: 23). Perhaps here too we find on Milton's outlook the continuing influence of Ovid, who had recommended an essential and proper limit to labor (*EP* 1.4.21–22):

> otia corpus alunt, animus quoque pascitur illis:
> inmodicus contra carpit utrumque labor.

> Leisure nourishes the body; the mind too feeds upon it,
> but excessive labor impairs both.

Further Reading

Green (2011) explores how Milton identifies his feelings of alienation at university with Ovid's isolation at Tomis. Green (2009) demonstrates how Milton appropriates narrative structures and literary strategies from the *Metamorphoses* to create a subtly evolving portrait of Eve. Greene (1982) is a stimulating discussion of theories of imitation. Hale (1989) offers perceptive insights into Milton's Latin elegies. Revard (1997) provides an informative discussion of the Latin poems. Barkan (1986: ch. 2) is essential reading for anyone interested in Milton's use of metamorphosis in his poetry. Vickers (1990) is a richly documented and scholarly discussion. Quinones (1972) includes a fascinating essay on Milton's attitude to the pressures of time. Kilgour (2012) furthers our understanding of the transmission and transformation of Ovidian texts.

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23

Ovid Translated
Early Modern Versions of the Metamorphoses

Dan Hooley

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* prompts radical difference-making in its translators. We can blame Ovid for this, for he himself consciously refuses totalizing closure at every point; his manner—always against the grain of generic prototype, always elusive in respect of sentiment and irony—is precariously balanced against the monumentality of his achievement. The *Metamorphoses* is a poem that must be read one way or another, as a collection of more or less instructive tales, as a nearly comprehensive compendium of classical mythology, as preeminent example of pagan impiety and moral turpitude, as humanist indictment of the political and cultural status quo, even as an expression of a certain kind of philosophical truth. Further, any reading of the whole sparks awareness of a "transportable" voice that can serve local purposes quite alien to Ovid's original. Everything is everything in this poem—divine, human, material, literary, "spiritual"—and everywhere too, not least because reading what is what is so much a matter of the receptive space Ovid allows. The fact that generations read Ovid differently is a necessary consequence of his "completing" (*iamque opus exegi*, 15. 871) his poem in the way he has, which is to say consciously handing over his book of changes, and the enigmatic voice in which it is expressed, to the explicitly acknowledged flux of time.

Any author in part directs his or her reception, a process in which agency comes from both sides, but more plainly than others Ovid expressly presents his *vivam* ("I shall live") *per omnia saecula* ("through all the ages," 15.878–79) with a special charge implicit in the poem's very theme, and, from the early days of the allegorized and moralized *Metamorphoses*, readers, constituencies, and framers of ideology have done their part, working changes on this text of changes. The major players in one axis of that almost organic process, the English literary tradition, are not unfamiliar. Drawing energy from the European, largely French, burst of attention to Ovid that Ludwig Traube called the *aetas Ovidiana* in the twelfth and thirteenth

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centuries, Chaucer (*The Book of the Duchess*, *House of Fame*) and John Gower (*Confessio Amantis*) exemplify popular attention to the *Metamorphoses* and other Ovidian works as sources of excerptible, usually amorous, material for retelling. This is not simply Ovid meeting Courtly Love, for, in the hands of Chaucer and Gower, the English Ovid easily transcends the constraints of that tradition. William Caxton's full prose translation, on the other hand, while certainly a product of the medieval popularity of Ovid, renders a medieval French moralized version rather than Ovid's Latin and, while probably never published, represents a more conservative response (Lyne 2002: 150–52), as do the partial versions, or selections, by three Thomases: Hedley (1552), Hacket (1560), and Preend (1565) (Maslen 2000: 19–24; Braden *et al.* 2010: 174). But Arthur Golding, around a century later (1567), while still writing from a continental moralizing tradition, inaugurates something new. Relegating the *Ovidius ethicus*, allegorized, and moralized reception of earlier French reception to a dedicatory epistle and preface (" … and in all are pitthye, apt and pleyne / Instructions which import the prayse of vertues, and the shame / Of vices, with the due rewardes of eyther of the same," 64–66), Golding, Puritan and translator of Calvin, renders an Ovid remarkably free from Christianizing intervention. Even his introductory moralizing, particularly his preface to the reader, does not dictate interpretation. After identifying the "significance" of several of the gods and tales, he turns the reader loose (Pref. 76–82):

> I know theis names too other thynges oft may and must agree:
> In declaration of the which I will not tedious bee,
> But leave them to the Readers will to take in sundry wyse,
> As matter rysing giveth cause constructions too devyse.
> Now when thou readst of God or man, in stone, in beast, or tree
> It is a myrrour for thy self thyne own estate to see.

While obviously echoing the moralizing tradition, Golding clearly shifts responsibility for taking the "lesson" of the text to the reader, illustrating one crucial tenet of *Receptionsaesthetik*: meaning is realized at the point of reception (Martindale 1993). The very foregrounding of Golding's own Christian Puritanism willy-nilly points up the possibility of any number of competing readings. One might, for instance, Golding well knows, read this for the sheer fun of it and take no lesson at all, a point his subtitle to the volume makes explicit: "A Worke Very Pleasaunt and Delectable." Of the many original things Golding does with this Ovid, not the least important is his opening the text to interpretive potential—one reason it played such a decisively formative role in the educations of Spenser and Shakespeare.

The same impulse is clear in Golding's willingness to "English" his Ovid. Many have commented on the idiosyncratic quality lent to the verse by Golding's fourteeners; that meter, with its long, rhyming, seven-foot lines strikes the modern ear as cumbersome and more than a bit homely. But Chapman used the meter for

his Homer, much appreciated by Keats, and Pound famously found that it made for the "most beautiful book in the language," a sentiment frequently quoted but nicely qualified and contextualized by Ron Thomas (1983: 59–116). Pound himself, in fact, contextualizes the statement in his best, how-to voice in *The ABC of Reading* (Pound 1934: 127):

> I am not here citing it for decorative purposes but for the narrative quality. It should be read as natural spoken language. The meter is, I admit, susceptible to bad reading. A bad reader of fourteeners is almost certain to tub-thump. The reader will be well advised to read according to sense and syntax, keep from thumping …

Beyond the "lucid narrative" quality conveyed by Golding's version, Pound admired almost conversely its particularity and specificity of image, and in this too he seems right: as in the description of Phoebus' attendants at the opening of Book 2 (33–39):

> There stoode the springtime with a crowne of fresh and fragrant floures:
> There wayted Sommer naked starke all save a wheaten Hat:
> And Autumne smerde with treading grapes late at the pressing Fat.
> And lastly quaking for the colde, stood Winter all forlorne,
> With rugged heade as white as Dove, and garments all to torne,
> Forladen with Isycles that dangled up and downe
> Uppon his gray and hoarie beard with snowie frozen crowne.

However superficial Pound's reading of and delight in Golding, he is correct in touting the Englishness of the rendering. It can be seen not only in the sometimes homely detail of diction and imagery, as when he decorates Ovid's golden age with fruits of the English countryside (119–20): "Raspis, heppes and hawes, … cornelles, plummes and cherries, / … sloes and apples, nuttes and peares, and lothsome bramble berries … " (Braden, Cummings, and Gillespie 2010), but also in his willingness almost casually to draw out Ovid's more pithy and arch phrases, patch with otiose rhymes, vary caesurae, and enjamb line endings (Jameson 1973: 218), as in (with its galloping rhythm) Phaethon's wild ride (255–60):

> He was so sore astraught for feare, he let the bridels slacke.
> Which when the horses felt lie lose upon their sweathing backe,
> At rovers straight throughout the Ayre by wayes unknowne they ran
> Whereas they never came before since that the world began.
> For looke what way their lawlesse rage by chaunce and fortune drue:
> Without controlment or restraint that way they freely flue.

The quaintness of the overall effect was not lost on Shakespeare, who dipped into Golding for a good deal of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and especially Peter

Quince's farcical play-within-play of Pyramus and Thisbe (Jameson 1973: 218–19; Braden 2009). Shakespeare also turned to Golding, less parodically, for his most extensive adaptation, Prospero's renunciation speech (V.1.33–50) in *The Tempest* (Golding vii. 265–80). It has been shown by Gordon Braden that Shakespeare, here drawing upon Medea's authority over earthly powers, looks into both Ovid's Latin and Golding's English, taking words and phrases from both, as he invokes not only an ancient literary prototype but also contemporary discussions of magic and witchcraft (Braden 2009, 2012). Further, the tradition that Prospero's renunciation of his powers signals Shakespeare's farewell to the *Metamorphoses* might be seen to indicate that for Shakespeare, Golding's fourteenered Ovid was more than a translational link to the literary past, or a variously integrated Ovidianism (Bate 1993; Lyne 2000; Martindale 2000). Simply by dipping into both Ovid and Golding's very English Ovid, Shakespeare registers their difference from one another and their respective historical contingencies. Golding, published when Shakespeare was three and already "antique" by Shakespeare's creative period, localizes this Ovid in an English past colored all around by palpably recent English and personal history. And certainly the Ovidianism of Shakespeare's later plays, *Cymbeline*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*, has about it a dark poignancy (Martindale 2000): if Ovid himself promises literary life *per omnia saecula*, an ever-renewing source for Shakespeares to come, Golding's Ovid is locked into time and grows old with the poet.

But Golding opened doors to other Ovids, not least to the spate of Ovidian-free imitations called epyllia or, more accurately, erotic narrative poems done up in an Ovidian manner. The prevalence and popularity of these poems in the Elizabethan period demonstrate the degree to which Ovid had been freed from his allegorical shackles and employed as stylistic and thematic model (defined broadly to include tenor, a witty and edgy approach to the themes of love and lust; Bate 1993; Burrow 2002) for new creation. Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* and Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* (both 1593, Marlowe's in manuscript) stand as exemplary instances of the kind, but Thomas Lodge (first, in 1589), Thomas Heywood, George Chapman, Michael Drayton, John Marston, Francis Beaumont, and others composed Ovidian epyllia. Of all of these, Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* usefully marks the distance between Golding's Ovid and the Ovidianism of the new, Elizabethan poets. As in his dramatic works, Shakespeare when he turns to Ovid reads from both Golding and the original Latin, but depends on Golding very little for verbal borrowing. Traces have been identified (Baldwin 1950), sometimes a word or phrase, sometimes a sequence of thought, but there is none of Golding's quaint diction or phrasing in the poem. Rather, the extended, highly rhetoricized narrative, wildly popular in its day, is composed primarily of the Venus and Adonis (*Met*. 10) and Salmacis and Hermaphroditus (*Met*. 4) episodes with elements of the Narcissus story employed in the characterization of Adonis. Ovid's Venus, besotted with a young Adonis who

dies too young, becomes a predatory force whose overt lust amplifies Ovidian sexuality to its hottest register (541–58):

> Now quick desire hath caught the yielding prey,
> And glutton-like she feeds, yet never filleth.
> Her lips are conquerors, his lips obey,
> paying what ransom the insulter willeth;
> > Whose vulture though doth pitch the price so high
> > That she will draw his lips' rich treasure dry.
> And having felt the sweetness of the spoil,
> With blindfold fury she begins to forage;
> Her face doth reek and smoke, her blood doth boil,
> And careless lust stirs up a desperate courage,
> > Planting oblivion, beating reason back,
> > Forgetting shame's pure blush and honour's wrack.

Bate (1993) and Burrow (2002) have elaborated on the Elizabethan taste for sexual ambiguity so easily found in Ovid, where desire so frequently crosses lines of gender and convention. Adonis is himself the offspring of the incestuous relationship of Myrrha and Cinyras, and the tale in Ovid is narrated by Orpheus in the context of his own late pederasty and other stories of homosexual love (Bate 1993: 51ff.). Against this background of all the turns that love can take, Shakespeare draws out the particular pathology of female rape, male frigidity and / or self-love (Narcissus is here as well), and even bestiality (the boar is the one who finally penetrates the virginal Adonis). This is not quite how Ovid tells it all, but his own transgressive art feeds the fires of Elizabethan invention. The epyllion, in this instance and others, functions precisely as response to the Ovidian poem; the later adaptation pieces the known elements into new wholes, overtly selecting, rearranging, and embellishing. That the elements are known, and chiefly from Golding for most readers, is a crucial feature of reading and appreciating the Elizabethan creation. In this is the odd paradox that the allegorizing Puritan should be so much the fabric of Ovidian adaptation that is another thing altogether.

As the Elizabethans plundered Golding, they quickly dated him. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in Marlowe's pentameter versions of the *Amores*, the first complete English version. Marlowe's line still has traces of an awkwardness that would disappear from the finished pentameter couplets of the eighteenth century, and the instances of Marlowe's misconstruing Ovid's Latin, even while he sought to mirror it line for line, have found ample critical rebuke. But the playful tenor and economical resolution of the couplets, not to mention the abandonment of any pretense to moral import, set this a world apart from Golding (*All Ovids Elegies* 2.4.1–7):

> I meane not to defend the scapes of any,
> Or justifie my vices being many.
> Here I display my lewd and loose behaviour.
> I loathe, yet after that I loathe, I runne,
> Oh how the burthen irkes, that we should shunne.
> I cannot rule my selfe, but where love please,
> Am driven like a ship upon rough seas.

Marlowe's translation remained unpublished in his lifetime; a partial and posthumously published version was condemned in 1599 and burned either for its apparent relish of Ovid's love-play or its association with the epigrams of John Davies published in the same volume (Stapleton 2010), but a complete edition (*All Ovids Elegies*) emerged shortly thereafter and remained the standard translation for a number of years. Not long after the publication of Marlowe's *Elegies*, George Sandys began his long project of translating the *Metamorphoses*. His first versions may date from as early as 1610, with a complete translation, much of which was composed during his posting to the Virginia colony, published in 1626 (Lyne 2001). In 1632 the translation acquired its final, elaborate trappings of notes, commentary, and illustrations (*Ovids Metamorphosis Englished, Mythologiz'd, and Represented in Figures*); fully monumentalized, it became the standard *Metamorphoses* in English until the eighteenth century. Like Marlowe, Sandys uses the rhyming pentameter couplet, and if he does not have Marlowe's gift for fun nor Golding's idiosyncratic energy, he has a knack for the kind of clear, efficient expression that tends to last. The rise and fall of the English couplet captures the quick pacing of Ovid's lines on Apollo's pursuit of Daphne, while missing their subtler poise and wit (1.533–40):

> No more the God will his intreaties loose;
> But, urg'd by love, with all his force pursues.
> As when a Hare the speedy Gray-hound spyes;
> His feet for prey, shee hers for safety plyes;
> Now bears he up; now, now he hopes to fetch her;
> And, with his snowt extended, strains to catch her:
> Not knowing whether caught or no, shee slips
> Out of his wide-stretcht jawes, and touching lips.

These last lines, for instance, while getting the hurrying enjambment of 537–38 (*ipsis / morsibus* …) with "slips / out … ," just miss the perfect (elision-enabled) word-painting of *tangentiaque ora relinquit* (538). And although Sandys tried where he could to mirror line for line in his version, the balances and compression of Ovid's next line, *sic deus et virgo est, hic spe celer, illa timore*, can't be managed in less than two (541–42):

> The God and Virgin in such strife appeare:
> He, quickened by his hope; She, by her feare …

Sandys' achievement, amply documented (Pearcy 1984; Rubin 1985; Lyne 2001), consists in his largely successful effort to bring Ovid's sense into a current, idiomatic, and unobtrusive English. He admits to this in his opening note to the reader, intending, as he says, to "inform the understanding" and clarify the sense of this poet for more and less learned ("the meere English reader"). Hardly secondary for Sandys was another clarification (1632 [1970]: 8): to "collect out of sundrie Authors the Philosophicall sense of these fables of Ovid, if I may call them his, when most of them are more antient then any extant Author." This latter purpose is the job of his commentary, which, drawing widely on ancient, mediaeval, Renaissance, and even new-world sources (Rubin 1985: 104–77), constructs a largely Christianized, moral, and intellectual "truth" underpinning the verbal surface of the poem (Pearcy 1984). After devoting the majority of his commentary on Book 1 to reconciling Ovidian and Christian creation stories, he moralizes, briefly, Daphne's flight and transformation (Sandys 1632 [1970]: 74).

> Daphne is changed into a never-withering tree, to shew what immortall honour a virgin obtains by preserving her chastity. She is said to be the daughter of Peneus, because the banks of that river abound with laurel; to be beloved of Apollo, in that the fairest grew about his Temple of Delphos; to fly his pursuit, in that they affect the shadow; and to repell the fire of lust, in not being scorched by the Sunne nor Lightning.

For generations of English readers Sandys was the primary vernacular source for Ovid's stories, fully explained and illustrated. Yet the day of the moralized Ovid, source of improving fables, was already passing, ushered out both by Marlowe's *jouissance* and Enlightenment interests in other directions. The several republications of Sandys' 1632 edition, seven between 1638 and 1690, attest to its popularity, while the progressive removal of the introductory matter and allegorical discussion through those republications makes it clear that Sandys had become, for many, less the key to ancient wisdom than the best plain-English source for Ovid's tales (Oakley-Brown 2006: 105).

Pope makes a joke about that while referring to the "wit and courtly squire" (Samuel Molyneux) undertaking, as did Pope himself, one of the books of the 1717 collected translation edited by Samuel Garth ("Sandy's Ghost," 25–28):

> A desk he had of curious work,
> With glitt'ring studs about;
> Within the same did Sandys lurk,
> Tho' Ovid lay without.

And Dryden, whose work constitutes the substance of the Garth collection and who (hardly needing a crib) denied reading Sandys "since I was a boy" (Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 221), clearly depends extensively, sometimes verbatim, on the

earlier translator in his own heroic-couplet versions (Rubin 1985: 80–82; Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 230). Dryden's denial of influence from, and then mixed criticism of, Sandys is not uncharacteristic of many translators, but it serves to mark, especially in Dryden's case, a point of departure: whatever Dryden would make of Ovid, it would have to be in reference to this strong precursor, Sandys (Oakley-Brown 2006).

David Hopkins (1988) tells us that Dryden, from the early 1690s, brooded over the large project of replacing Sandys' translation with a contemporary, composite version, a project that would ultimately be realized by Samuel Garth—depending primarily on Dryden's substantial Ovidian production—17 years after Dryden's death. Garth's edition, published by Jacob Tonson in a competitive market for a public eager for cultural enrichment and attendant social advantages (Oakley-Brown 2006: 95), was matched in the same year by another composite edition produced by George Sewell and Edmund Curll, to which Pope contributed as well. Garth's project, involving a number of notable eighteenth-century lights—Addison, Gay, Pope, Congreve, Nicholas Rowe, and Garth himself among several others less well known today—won that little publishing war and became the standard eighteenth-century translation. Despite the remarkable uniformity of approach in this many-handed volume—contributors followed Dryden's general principle of paraphrase in heroic couplets rather than close translation or broad imitation—the composite nature of the volume sets it apart from its single-authored predecessors and thereby raises questions about what has become of Ovid in the early eighteenth century. There is the pragmatic side. Tonson's various publications were an ongoing commercial success, and his getting a "complete" Ovid to an audience willing to pay for it sets it in a long and still flourishing line of complete *Metamorphoses* designed for popular consumption, the academic classroom, or casual, desultory consultation. The project capitalizes on Dryden's previously published work and presents to Garth the opportunity to offer himself publicly as Dryden's literary successor. On the face of it, too, it is difficult to see, with so many hands involved in its making, a comprehensive and consistent designing intelligence behind this translation (but see Oakley-Brown 2006). Indeed, it might all make for a kind of closural moment in the long story of Ovidian reception. Garth himself in his Preface makes passing reference to Ovid's waning star: " … [Ovid] whom I think is too much run down by the critical Spirit of this Nation." This is not quite the end game, as Elphinstone's notorious complete Martial of 1782 was, but its long afterlife in reprints and the absence of any significant new English Ovidian voice until the twentieth century makes the Garth Ovid a kind of *summa*, for better and worse, a kind of finalizing achievement. The character of that achievement is essentially Dryden's, and it is then to Dryden that one looks to see the stuff of this Ovid that would do for quite a long time—until in fact the explosion of Ovidian interest in the late twentieth century.

Dryden's version of the first book of the *Metamorphoses* came out in *Examen Poeticum* (1693), the third in a series of miscellany collections published by Jacob

Tonson, and it is in the dedication (to Edward, Lord Radcliffe) to that collection that Dryden refers critically to Sandys. Commenting on Chapman's "paraphrastic" translation, he continues (Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 220–21):

> Sure I am that if it be a fault, 'tis much more pardonable than that of those who run into the other extreme so straitly to his author's words that he wants elbow-room to express his elegancies. He leaves him obscure; he leaves him prose where he found him verse. And no better than thus has Ovid been served by the so much admired Sandys. This is the idea which I have remaining of his translation, for I never read him since I was a boy. They who take him upon content, from the praises which their fathers gave him, may inform their judgement by reading him again, and see (if they understand the original) what is become of Ovid's poetry in his version; whether it be not all, or the greatest part of it, evaporated.

For his part, Dryden claims "to have given my author's sense for the most part truly … I have likewise attempted to restore Ovid to his native sweetness, easiness, and smoothness" (Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 221). The clear concern in all this is literary style, as noted and much developed in Pearcy (1984: 101–38). In the rough and tumble of Restoration polemic the claim to sophistication and art was a valued distinction, incompetence in verse-making being the common, blunt tool with which to abuse one's rivals. Well-crafted verse superseded other virtues, and Dryden, having just completed his versions of Persius and Juvenal (1692, dated 1693) and thinking in his long preface to that work about Horace too, found a similar sense of developing sophistication in Horace's gloss on his own improvements on the relatively artless (as Horace construes it) Lucilius. The Romantics put an end to that kind of thinking, and it is easy for us to dismiss this point of pride in the well-turned heroic couplet as superficial. Pearcy (1984) does something like this in juxtaposing Dryden's preoccupation with style against Sandys' effort to communicate an "Adamic truth" (the Ovidian text itself a kind of surface through which the larger meaning could be discerned). But Dryden speaks the language of his day, and arguably sees into the design of Ovid's project more deeply than Pearcy and others allow, precisely in recognizing that there is no larger meaning in Ovid beyond the conception and artifice of Ovid's verbal construction. This represents more than just typical Restoration talk of style and polish; it effectively marks a step out and away from a very long tradition of mediation through allegory and moralization, and from the notion that language encodes essences (truths or otherwise) beyond it. It renders an Ovid we recognize, the mesmerizing wordsmith, transgressor, fashioner of an imaginative world disconcertingly both ours and not ours.

As already noted, Dryden never completed a translation of the *Metamorphoses* His version of *Met.* 1 in *Examen Poeticum*—forestalling Nahum Tate's never to be fully realized plan to publish the whole *Metamorphoses* in three books (Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 205)—included in the same volume the stories of "Iphis and Ianthe" from Book 9 and "Acis, Polyphemus and Galatea" from Book 13. Later, in 1700 (*Fables Ancient and Modern*), he would publish a translation of *Met.* 12, "On the

Pythagorean Philosophy from Bk. 15," and more selected tales from the whole. Precisely how Dryden works out his *agon* with Sandys in remaking Ovid for the modern world has been variously described, but most observe that, in accordance with general principles of translation adumbrated in the "Preface to Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands" (1680), Dryden eschews Sandys' metaphrastic style—closely mirroring the sense of words and lines, sometimes straining English syntax in order to do so—and writes in "paraphrase," seeking to compose an effect in English equivalent to Ovid's Latin. That effort leads him frequently to expand on both Ovid and Sandys, resulting in significantly longer versions. Rubin (1985: 84) observes that Dryden fashions a less dense and more readable English version, often explaining in the text what Sandys would clarify in a note. Significantly more polished in prosodic execution, Dryden strives for "literary" and rhetorical effect, a richer emotional texture, and, frequently, an epigrammatic touch. It is usually pointed out, for approval or criticism, that Dryden's paraphrasing translation domesticates Ovid, quite intentionally making him sound like a post-Restoration Englishman ("if he were living and an Englishman" as Dryden himself put it in the preface to *Silvae* in 1685), whereas Sandys preserves enough of the Latinate diction and phrasing to be "foreignizing" and more transparent to the original.

Either designation is a caricature reflecting a general desire to categorize a little too reductively, and in fact, Dryden's is a complex engagement, seen not least in his ambivalence toward Ovid's own literary manners, particularly in regard to the charge of overwriting (initially voiced by the two Senecas and Quintilian), as he put it in the *Preface to Ovid's Epistles* (1680):

> I will confess that the copiousness of his Wit was such that, he often writ too pointedly for his Subject, and made his persons speak more Eloquently than the Violence of their Passion would admit: so that he is frequently witty of out season: leaving the Imitation of Nature, and the cooler dictates of his Judgment, for the false applause of Fancy … . Seneca's censure will stand against him: Nescivit quod bene cessit relinquere: he never knew how to give over, when he had done well. (Hooker and Swedenberg 1961: 112)

Instancing more detailed criticism along similar lines in Dryden's late *Preface to Fables Ancient and Modern* (1700), Hopkins makes the point that while these convictions seem real enough, Dryden did little to mitigate Ovid's mannerism in his actual translation (Hopkins 2010: 202–37). Dryden's Ovid at least in these regards is every bit as maddeningly elusive in tone as the original. Why this is so, according to Hopkins, is Dryden's recognition of the multiple shades of implicated meaning in instances where, for example, Ovid declines to present scenes of pathos or tragedy straight (2010: 237): "Ovid's refusal to align himself, or the reader, in a position of straightforward empathy with the characters in the drama allows him and us a distance which enables us to see their conduct and thoughts in many different lights—appreciative, critical, quizzical, sympathetic, indulgent, clinical—without any of these predominating." I wouldn't quarrel with that reading, but it is possible

that Hopkins is seeing in Dryden's Ovid more than Dryden himself saw. What the Restoration poet surely did notice, as he tells us, was simply his display of verbal wit, rhetorical overkill, and impatience with conventional boundaries of decorum. These literary manners so alien to traditional Roman epic sensibility, together with the redirecting and complicating effects of Ovid's pervasive use of allusion, are these days widely recognized. What strikes anyone looking back at Dryden's translation is the simple fact that not only did he notice these features of Ovid's narrative but he was concerned about them. Reading the *Metamorphoses* allegorically or as a compilation of entertaining, possibly moralizing tales, as previous translators had, registers neither knowledge nor concern; Dryden changed all that.

In the Preface to *Examen Poeticum*, Dryden allows, as he does elsewhere, that he finds in Ovid a kindred spirit (thus translating along the lines of Roscommon's "friendship" model): "Perhaps this poet is more easy to be translated than some others whom I have lately attempted; perhaps, too, he was more according to my genius" (Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 219). That sympathy may have helped him override his scruples about Ovid's "faults" in translating and thus "copy his character as [he] could" (Hammond and Hopkins 2000: 219):

> He is often luxuriant both in his fancy and expressions, and, as it has lately been observed, not always natural. If wit be pleasantry, he has it to excess … For my own part, I have endeavoured to copy his character what I could in this translation—even perhaps farther than I should have done: to his very faults.

Most readers these days would not call it a fault that Dryden regularly manages to conjure some analogue to Ovid's peculiar touch with poetry. The story of Cinyras and Myrrha (*Met.* 10.298–502), for instance, begins, answering Ovid's own self-conscious play with convention, with a distinctly more ambiguous "warning" to readers about the naughty material ahead than seen in his predecessors, whereas Sandys, too earnestly rendering Ovid's words, recoils rather theatrically:

> I sing of Horror! Daughters, farre o farre
> From hence remove! and You, who fathers are! …

Dryden, surely thinking of Shakespeare's way with Adonis whose parents are this incestuous pair, can be seen, especially in his teasing allusion to Sandys, to settle into a more comfortable emotional and literary distance, highlighting the role of his and Ovid's artistry in presenting the story (Hammond and Hopkins 2005: vv. 5–10):

> I sing of Horrour; and could I prevail,
> You shou'd not hear, or not believe my Tale.
> Yet if the Pleasure of my Song be such,
> That you will hear, and credit me too much,
> Attentive listen to the last Event,
> And with the Sin believe the Punishment.

I want to move on, in closing, to a more general point, one I think is seen as early as Dryden's first published translation from the *Metamorphoses* in *Examen Poeticum* (1680):

> Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
> And heaven's high canopy that covers all,
> One was the face of nature, if a face;
> Rather a rude and indigested mass;
> A lifeless lump, unfashioned and unframed,
> Of jarring seeds, and justly 'Chaos' named.
> No sun was lighted up, the world to view;
> No moon did yet her blunted horns renew;
> Nor yet was earth suspended in the sky.
> Nor poised did on her own foundations lie;
> Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown,
> But earth and air and water were in one.
>
> (1.7–18)

Dryden has composed his scene out of Miltonic and Shakespearean phrases and cadences (Hammond and Hopkins 1995: 230–31). Their effect anchors this Ovidian beginning in a powerful English literary and intellectual tradition that persistently linked cosmic and human affairs in a meaningful dependency. This opening chaos is fraught with old association and sense. So too, this scene is born in the (near) eighteenth century, which is to say that its entire formulation speaks coherence and symmetry even while it describes chaos: the neat patterning of the rhymed couplets, the persistent anaphora of negatives (No/No/Nor/Nor/Nor) introducing orienting features of the very world we know, the embracing closure of "One … earth, air, water … one." Which is not to say that this is merely a domesticated and toothless version of Ovid's dark primeval confusion, but that Dryden—seeming to have felt Ovid "more according to my genius"—articulates Ovidian potential in the symmetries of Restoration language. The answer to incoherence, as Ovid knew and wrote, is form and shape, and both Ovid and Dryden knew that the one was implicit in the other. The entire ensuing fabric of Dryden's versions is made not just of Ovid's Latin but of the puzzle of metamorphosis he presents to the reader and translator: what form does this formation of words take just now? The question may have held some urgency for Dryden, as the prior lines, opening the poem, indicate (1–6):

> Of bodies changed to various forms I sing:
> Ye gods, from whom these miracles did spring,
> Inspire my numbers with celestial heat,
> Till I my long laborious work compete:
> And add perpetual tenor to my rhymes,
> Deduced from nature's birth to Caesar's times.

After the abdication of James II in 1688, Dryden lost his laureateship to the unloved Shadwell, and thereafter had to make his living by his literary work. Most of this writing came to be translation, and it was profitable, but there lingered in Dryden the sense of enforced labor, "my long laborious work," and bitterness toward the new "Caesar." The Dedication to *Examen Poeticum* in fact has a full share of the feeling (Hammond and Hopkins 2005: 208): "No government has ever been, or ever can be, wherein timeservers and blockheads will not be uppermost … " Dryden by 1693 had had enough of kings and caesars, as had Ovid in his day; what remained for both was the "perpetual tenor" of their verse.

Remake the world in words, then, when the world has gone awry. And remaking Ovid's great world-encompassing poem had been Dryden's longstanding project. The lure, financial and otherwise, of translating Virgil intervened after 1693 for three difficult years. But after Virgil, he continued to work, through illness and all, on the miscellaneous material, much of it Ovidian, of his *Fables Ancient and Modern* (1700) nearly until his death. Chaucer, whom Dryden admits in his preface to preferring over Ovid for his creativity and decorum, and Homer, *Iliad* 1, also are given considerable space in the volume. Yet "On the Pythagorean Philosophy" from Ovid's final book was, Dryden writes, a favorite: "I was so taken with the former part of the Fifteenth Book (which is the masterpiece of the whole *Metamorphoses*) that I enjoined myself the pleasing task of rendering it into English" (Pref. 17–21). One can understand why so, if he was in the mood to renounce Ovid's "boyisms" as he was in his Preface; for this is Ovid in his Sunday best. The wise Numa ("a peaceful, pious prince," 6) sets out to "learn the laws / of nature and explore their hidden cause," 8–9), which he does, indirectly, from Pythagoras. In the imagined Numa Dryden may have seen the antitype to the unpopular William (715–16, 719–20):

> A happy monarch sent by heaven to bless
> A salvage nation with soft arts of peace …
> Himself a saint, a goddess was his bride,
> And all the Muses o'er his acts preside.

Ovid does seem to register awareness of the zaniness of Pythagoras' transmigration of souls and its implications for meat-eaters, not least in the overkill of its presentation and the old Platonic trick of distancing authority to third and fourth removes, but this "philosophical" architecture of Ovid's great riff on metamorphosis remains uncompromised—which is to say that the reader need not assume that either Ovid or Dryden accepted this "Pythagorean" disquisition as the truth underlying the changing surface of things, but only that it is possible when looking beneath that surface, to discern a pattern whose fundamental principle is change (262–69).

> Let me further add, that nature knows
> No steadfast station, but or ebbs, or flows;
> Ever in motion, she destroys her old,
> And casts new figures in another mould.
> Ev'n times are in perpetual flux, and run
> Like rivers from their fountain rolling on;
> For time no more than streams is at a stay:
> The flying hour is ever on her way … .

For Dryden, as his own late hour was flying, the only "stay" in all this disturbing and consoling (I would imagine) flux was Ovid's big idea, the *carmen perpetuum*, the ongoing song that never sits still. Dryden, our first modern translator, understood that. John Henderson (1999: 321), channeling an imaginary editor's instructions (think Garth) to translators, also gets there:

> The *Metamorphoses* has a strong agenda, so you have to mean it. Take your own line on what Ovid was pushing, or you're just pushing your pen … . the *Metamorphoses* is asking for our pseudo-science, psychobabble, animatronics, cyberspace … . All we believe in. In particular, I'm sure that the perturbation of our "limits of truth," the borderlines of death and dying, is where the metamorphic repertoire tends outside (outside literariness).

Dryden always did profess his literariness, but wrote more and "outside" too. And so *his* changes: "Of bodies changed to various forms I sing … ."

Further Reading

Although it is not new anymore and is cited by most everyone, Barkan (1986) is still an exhilarating look into the *Metamorphoses* and more beyond it into the Renaissance. Lyne (2001) is an excellent place to start for translations in the early modern period. For good collections of essays that cover English reception, see Binns (1973); Martindale (1988); Hardie (2002); Knox (2009); and, Hardie, Barchiesi, and Hinds (1999). The standard place to start for quick and informed overviews are the various volumes of the *Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*. Braden, Cummings, and Gillespie (2010) and Gillespie and Hopkins (2005) are the relevant volumes for the period covered in this essay. Finally, Martin (1998) is a fine collection of translated selections of Ovid.

For Golding and Sandys, Lyne (2001) is excellent. Rubin (1985) is a traditional analysis of Sandys, and deserves to be more widely known than it is. Oakley-Brown (2006) offers valuable political context and perspective. Pearcy (1984) contains fine scholarship and insights. See also the essays in Hardie (2002) and Knox (2009).

Shakespeare and Ovid is a minor industry, and most collections will have essays that address their interaction. Baldwin (1950) identifies Ovidian and other sources. Good critical treatments are Bate (1993); Martindale (2000); Martindale and Taylor (2004); and Braden (2009, 2012). See also James (2007).

Dryden and Ovid (or almost anyone Dryden translated) is a major industry; a concise orientation will have to do here. The Longman's Dryden (Hammond and Hopkins 1995, 2000, 2005) is the most amply annotated edition of the poems and should be the first place to look when studying the translations. Both Rubin (1985) and Pearcy (1984) contain useful discussions. Tissol (1997) is important for style in Ovid and, among much else, Restoration poetics. Hopkins (2010) collects his major essays, several of which are on Dryden's translation, and contains an updated bibliography for roaming further afield.

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Ovid in Restoration
and Eighteenth-Century England

James M. Horowitz

From the Restoration to the Regency, Ovid was everywhere in eighteenth-century England. The purity of his Latin ensured that students came to his work early, while his verbal wit and sententiousness made him eminently quotable, and the moral essays of Samuel Johnson and the speeches of Edmund Burke are littered with tags from across his verse. While Ovid's works continued to form part of the shared cultural capital of the educated elite, the poems simultaneously enjoyed another, racier life in translation and a wide variety of imitation. Ovid was among the most frequently translated classical poets of the period, a trend inaugurated when the enterprising publisher Jacob Tonson made versions of Ovid a mainstay of his popular series of poetic miscellanies from the 1680s to the 1700s (Miner 1993: 114, n. 1; Gillespie and Cummings 2004; Gillespie and Hopkins 2008). A comprehensive list of translators and imitators of Ovid during these decades and the following century would include a "Who's Who" of the period's best-known authors, including John Dryden, Aphra Behn, William Congreve, Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift, Joseph Addison, John Gay, Henry Fielding, William Cowper, and one of the first published African-American poets, Phillis Wheatley. Partly because no major author claimed Ovid as his peculiar property, as Dryden did with Virgil and Pope with Homer, Ovid was seen as free game by translators of more modest talent, and there was even a minor genre of poetry about translating, or mistranslating, Ovid (Garth 1750; Pope 1954b: 170–76; Prior 1971).

Nor were these translators catering to a specialized audience for neoclassical verse. On the contrary, they were feeding a consistent demand across the century for Ovidian writing, which was consumed with an avidity more often associated with distinctively modern forms like the novel. This is evident in

Richard Brinsley Sheridan's breakout stage comedy of 1775, *The Rivals*, where the book-mad ingénue Lydia Languish, hearing the approach of her nosy guardian Mrs. Malaprop, hurriedly tells her waiting maid to hide her recent acquisitions from the Bath lending library (1975: 1.2.137–41):

> Quick, quick.—Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet—throw *Roderick Random* into the closet—put *the Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*—thrust *Lord Aimworth* under the sopha—cram *Ovid* behind the bolster—there—put *The Man of Feeling* into your pocket[.]

Lydia Languish's immortally funny series of commands puts the Latin poet in the company of a wide variety of fashionable eighteenth-century divertissements, from comic novels (by Tobias Smollett) to light pornography, sentimental fiction, and, with deliberate incongruity, homiletic writing. Yet each of these texts suggests a way in which Ovid could, and had been, interpreted: as comedy, as an incitement to vice, as a shameless tearjerker, and even as a source of Christian instruction. There were Latin poets who achieved considerably higher critical prestige in the eighteenth century, Virgil and Horace preeminently, but none of them would have been discovered under Lydia Languish's pillow, for none were read and enjoyed as popular literature to nearly the same extent as Ovid, or enjoyed in such an extraordinary variety of ways. As a consequence, Ovid's impact on the culture of the age is more eclectic, more diffuse, and is often more difficult to assess than that of his less versatile contemporaries.

In a widely cited article, Richard Hardin (1972) describes a growing skepticism in the Restoration toward the allegorical, often Christian approach to the interpretation of myth that had been a part of the Ovidian tradition since the twelfth century. This declining faith in allegory led, in Hardin's account, to a corresponding neglect of Ovid. In fact, however, as subsequent scholarship has shown, this decline in allegorical interpretation only enabled new ways of reading and imitating Ovid's work. The new disinclination to see Ovid as a moral instructor only called attention to other features of his work that were widely praised and imitated, among them the pictorial vividness of his descriptions, his knowledge of the behavioral effects of strong emotions ("the passions"), and his morally ambiguous interest in female suffering. These are the elements of his style that made Ovid a decisive influence on the culture that produced the early novel. Other aspects of his poetry were singled out for condemnation, especially his predilection for wordplay, sexual frankness, and myths of physical transformation. Here, however, we must be careful to distinguish between critical pronouncements (the censorious gaze of Mrs. Malaprop) and actual reading preferences and imitative practices (the book under Lydia Languish's bolster). In fact, the characteristic response to Ovid in this period was deep ambivalence, amounting almost to collective doublethink, in which authors routinely depreciated Ovid's work in theory at the same time as they emulated it in practice.

The Ambivalence of Ovidian Reception

Ovid was as controversial in the eighteenth century as in any period of his reception—not a surprising fact, given that this was the era that introduced modern forms of literary criticism and mass entertainment, as well as the earliest version of the culture wars (Eagleton 1984; Dejean 1997; Warner 1998). Like Actaeon's hounds, all of Ovid's works were turned against him. Writers of an evangelical tendency in the reform-minded decades of the early century were especially appalled by the erotic poetry, associating it with the promiscuous values of the Restoration, when it had been in vogue. (William Congreve, or his editor, conceded to these changing mores by bowdlerizing his 1709 translation of the third volume of the *Ars Amatoria*, leaving out its concluding advice on sexual positions; Ovid 1709.) The dissenting hymn writer Isaac Watts (1748) even authored a poem on "Burning several Poems of Ovid, Martial, Oldham, and Dryden," conflating the immoral ancients with their Restoration-era followers. One is surprised, then, to find among Watts's posthumously published papers a translation of Ovid's description of the cave of Morpheus (from *Metamorphoses* 11); apparently Watts's attitude toward the Latin poet was more complex than his incendiary lyric suggests (Watts 1779: 263–64). But Watts's double-mindedness is only an extreme example of the ambivalence that we see in all areas of Ovid's eighteenth-century reception. Joseph Addison, arguably the most influential critic of the century, described Ovid as "the fairest subject for Criticism" precisely because of his display of both laudable and deplorable tendencies in the *Metamorphoses*—of invention and descriptive power but also of bathetic wordplay, "a very low kind of Wit" (1914: 135, 137). This unhealthy delight in language's superficial, almost decorative, quality at the expense of its expressive, denotative potential, is repeatedly described by Addison and others as a product of Ovid's stereotypically feminine character.

In the eyes of eighteenth-century commentators, though, Ovid's grossest indulgence was his interest in physical transformation, the very aspect of his poetry that has most inspired writers in our own era. The tale of Byblis' unrequited passion for her brother Caunus, from *Metamorphoses* 9, was translated three times in the 1680s and 1690s, but it is telling that in each case Byblis' final transformation, from a weeping maiden into a babbling brook, is written out or sidelined—in one version silently excised, in the second confined to a single line, and in the third reconceived as a guilty act of suicide (Harvey 1684; Dennis 1692; Oldham 1987). The third translator, the irascible critic and poet John Dennis, justified his emendation by describing, with anti-Catholic fervor, the metamorphoses of Ovid as "those transubstantiating Doctrines, which were taught in those times by that Harmonious Clergy of the credulous Church of Old *Rome*" (1692: n.p.; italics reversed). Twenty years later, Dennis's enemy (and a practicing Catholic), Alexander Pope, would nonetheless organize his 1713 loco-descriptive poem *Windsor-Forest* around a sensual and thrilling Ovidian pastiche, the account of Pan's pursuit of the nymph Lodona (1961:

lines 171–218); but the dominant taste-maker of the following generation, Samuel Johnson, would in turn scornfully reject this passage, complaining in only slightly less strident tones than Dennis about the mechanical tendency of poets to introduce Ovidian metamorphoses into verse on modern subjects: "a new metamorphosis is a ready and puerile expedient" (1958–: 23.1196).

Yet no amount of censure from Johnson could conceal the fact that the two most celebrated poets of the preceding century, Dryden and Pope, were at heart partisans of Ovid's metamorphic invention, irresponsible wordplay, and carnal wit. Over the last two decades of his life (1680–1700), Dryden's prefaces and dedications constitute an intermittent soliloquy on the merit of Ovid's verse. Like Addison and Johnson after him, Dryden laments what he describes as the indecorum and childishness of Ovid's humor: his "wit out of season" and "boyisms," as Dryden memorably puts it in separate contexts (cited in Hopkins 1988a: 169). When Dryden does praise Ovid, it is for his psychological expertise and dramatic power—his mastery of the "passions," as displayed most clearly in the *psychomachias* of the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides* (1956–2000: 1.109–20, 1.54, 1.111, 17.30–31). Yet, despite these mixed reviews Dryden translated more than 4000 lines of Ovid's verse, and seems to have been planning a complete edition of the poet's works before his death (Hopkins 1988b). So it should not surprise us when Dryden admits that it is Ovid rather than Virgil, the poet with whom scholars still tend to associate him, who is most "according to [his] genius" (1956–2000: 4.369). Furthermore, as David Hopkins has shown, Dryden positively luxuriates in Ovid's most tasteless patches, stoking the flames of indecency with his own frequently ribald imagination (Hopkins 1988a).

Like his mentor and fellow Catholic Dryden, Alexander Pope drew heavily on Ovid across his career, while occasionally parroting the fashionable reservations about his stylistic excessiveness, for instance calling him a "mistress whose faults we see, but love her with them all" (1956: 92). Pope was enamored of Ovid in his youth, and many of his first forays into publication came in the form of translations from the *Heroides* and the *Metamorphoses*, works that also left a clear impression on his early original poetry. We have already glanced at the exquisite Ovidian episode that forms a centerpiece to *Windsor-Forest* (1713), and what is now Pope's best-known poem, the masterpiece of satirical fantasy *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, revised 1714 and 1717), is richer still in Ovidian allusions. Pope takes his readers, for instance, to the Cave of Spleen, the subterranean source of fashionable female distempers, which recalls Ovid's Cave of Morpheus (Burrow 1999) but also resembles a hotbed of Ovidian metamorphic fantasy more generally (1954a: 5-canto version 4.47–50, 4.53–54):

> Unnumbered throngs on every side are seen,
> Of bodies changed to various forms by spleen.
> Here living teapots stand, one arm held out,
> One bent; the handle this, and that the spout:
> …
> Men prove with child, as powerful fancy works,
> And maids turn bottles, call aloud for corks.

The adaptation of the opening of the *Metamorphoses* ("bodies changed to various forms") is bathetically undercut by the ludicrous, nursery-rhyme quality of the "living teapots," reminding us that this is a poem of studied triviality ("What mighty contests rise from trivial things, / I sing," 1.2–3). But the procreative imagery of the following lines considerably darkens the mood, introducing a conflation of sexual and consumer desire that is genuinely nightmarish in its manifestations, a quality well captured in Aubrey Beardsley's ornately depraved engraving of this episode from the 1890s. In his descent into the Cave of Spleen, the home of Ovidian shape-shifting, Pope leaves behind the light satirical tone of much of the poem and instead dredges up the combination of horror, awe, and whimsy that typifies the most memorable of Ovid's original transformations. Indeed, despite Pope's reputation as a spokesman for Enlightenment rationalism, "the fact of sheer Ovidian metamorphosis—the literal transformation of one thing to another, like hair into star—seems to have exerted a pull on Pope's imagination" across his career, from his earliest poetry through the urban phantasmagoria of his final major work, *The Dunciad in Four Books* (Byrd 1988: 452). In this reading, Ovidian metamorphosis epitomized for Pope nothing less than the source of all poetic imagination—a "metaphor for metaphor itself" (Byrd 1988: 455; Burrow 1999).

Alongside contempt for Ovid's poetry as showy, improbable, infantile, and enervating, then, we also see that creative authors of the highest stature turned repeatedly to his work, often revising and critiquing it but always engaging with it in intimate and complex ways, often stimulated by the very bawdiness and invention that infuriated the moral and literary censors. There was also an increasing recognition across the period that Ovid, love him or hate him, was part of a distinctly English (or, in some formulations, British) tradition—the favorite poet of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and countless poetasters who helped shape the national literature and the culture of western Europe more broadly. In a way, though, this new recognition of Ovid as a national classic, encouraged by a developing sensitivity to how standards of taste can change over time, actually reinforced the vision of Ovid as the favorite of the young and the unlearned. For that is exactly how even the period's most enlightened historian of English literature, Thomas Warton, characterized his premodern forebears (1774: 494):

> Ovid's metamorphoses [*sic*] just translated by [Arthur] Golding, to instance no farther, disclosed a new world of fiction even to the illiterate. As we had now all the ancient fables in English, learned allusions, whether in a poem or a pageant, were no longer obscure and unintelligible to common readers and common spectators. And here we are led to observe that at this restoration of the classics we were first struck only with their fabulous inventions. We did not attend to their regularity of design and justness of sentiment. A rude age beginning to read these writers imitated their extravagances, not their natural beauties. And these, like other novelties, were pursued to a blameable excess.

Yet, as we have seen, the distinction that Warton draws between a "rude age" that worshiped the "extravagances" of Ovid and a modern Age of Reason, in which

Ovid was only admired or emulated along more consistent and rational lines, is at best a fantasy. As Dryden and Pope well knew, there would always be sources of poetic invention that would run against the prevailing standards of taste, and the very "blameable excess" of Ovid's fancy would never lack for admirers.

Ovidian Realism: The Example of Baucis and Philemon

An increasing number of Ovid's early modern readers and adapters, though, were drawn to his work not for its controversial bounty of metamorphic fancy and verbal play but instead for an ostensibly antithetical quality: its psychological and pictorial realism. This is apparent as early as the 1650s. When the 27-year-old daughter of the Governor of Guernsey, Dorothy Osborne, wanted to express her devotion to her suitor in the winter of 1654, she recalled one of her favorite tales from childhood:

> Doe you remember Arme [another of the Channel Islands] and the little house there[?] shall we goe thither [?] that's next to being out of the worlde[.] there wee might live like Baucis and Philemon, grow old together in our little Cottage and for our Charrity to some shipwrakt stranger obtaine the blessing of dyeing both at the same time. How idly I talk tis because the Storry pleases mee, none in Ovide soe much. I remember I cryed when I read it, mee thought they were perfectest Characters of a con[ten]ted marriage where Piety and Love were all their wealth and in theire poverty feasted the Gods where rich men shutt them out. (1987: 164–65; textual emendations in source)

Osborne's emotional and highly personal response to the story of Baucis and Philemon's enduring love, from *Metamorphoses* 8, is not fundamentally different from how readers would enjoy the tragic novels of Richardson, Rousseau, and Goethe in the following century—by imaginatively entering into the private lives of their characters and honoring their plights with a tribute of tears. If the hospitable and mutually devoted couple in part suggest abstract virtues to Osborne ("Piety," "Love," charity), their story also provides her with a vision of conjugal affection and pastoral retreat that she is only too willing to imagine as plausible: notice that the couple simply "grow old together [and] dye … both at the same time" rather than undergoing any less quotidian metamorphosis, and that the visiting Gods become a flesh-and-blood "shipwrakt stranger." This scenario, part Ovid's and part Osborne's (with perhaps a touch of Lot and his wife), becomes a powerful form of escapist literature, all the more transporting because of its patina of realism.

    Revisions of "Baucis and Philemon" over the following century continue to emphasize its realism both of character and setting. Even Dryden, with all his covert enthusiasm for Ovid's wilder imaginings, responds with sensitivity to the domestic charm of the tale: "I see *Baucis* and *Philemon* as perfectly before me, as if some ancient Painter had drawn them" (cited in Hopkins 1976: 138). This is an interpretive key to Dryden's own translation of the story, published in

1700, where, as David Hopkins has shown in a stunning reading (1976), Dryden embellishes the homely interior of the couple's kitchen with pointillist details, some of them representing uniquely British customs and foodstuffs, so as to create for his compatriots a familiar and invitingly tactile tableau of domestic warmth: "a kettle [of] burnished Gold," "a chine of bacon," and a goose serving as a "wakeful sentry" (2005: lines 56–57, 62, 131). Dryden retains the metamorphoses that conclude the tale, in which the couple and their cottage transform into entwined trees and a neighboring temple, but clearly lavishes the most care on the story's less supernatural elements—"the joys, sorrows, and absurdities of the old couple's life" (Hopkins 1976: 142).

The transformations occupy a more central place in a burlesque of the same tale by Jonathan Swift. In part a satire on ecclesiastical preferment, Swift's "Baucis and Philemon," first printed in 1709, has the humble cottagers metamorphose into a financially comfortable rural parson and his wife, as their cottage grows before their eyes into a stately country church. Swift, like Osborne an enthusiastic reader of Ovid since his childhood, has great fun with the transformation of the cottage's interior, as the rustic household utensils of Dryden's version assume lives of their own (1983: lines 85–88):

> The groaning chair was seen to crawl,
> Like a huge snail half up the wall;
> There stuck aloft, in public view;
> And with a small change, a pulpit grew.

For all of the gleeful inventiveness of this and the poem's other transformations, Swift achieves an eerie sense of familiarity by staying within an everyday cottage "down in *Kent*" (10) for his metaphoric points of reference, like the garden snail that he inflates to Brobdingnagian dimensions. The fantastical vision of the poem thus ends up being surprisingly, even disturbingly, domestic—or perhaps "uncanny" in Freud's paradoxical sense of at once *alien* and *homely*.

The satirical thrust of Swift's burlesque, however, lies in the transformations of the couple themselves, who before a comically abbreviated arboreal metamorphosis undergo a somewhat more common form of change. The formerly humble and hard-working Philemon assumes the self-satisfaction of a sinecured parson: "His talk was now of tithes and dues: / [He] Could smoke his pipe, and read the news" (125–26). If Philemon's transformation is primarily behavioral, his wife's is both internal and superficial, as Swift catalogues with his characteristically thorough knowledge of textiles and female fashion (138–44):

> Instead of homespun coifs were seen
> Good pinners edged with colbertine:
> Her petticoats were transformed apace,
> Became black satin, flounced with lace,
> Plain Goody would no longer down;
> 'Twas Madam, in her grogram gown.

The physical transformations of Ovid's epic here become a less miraculous but no less arresting transformation of character, comportment, and dress, the results of the unprecedented opportunities for social mobility that characterized the eighteenth century and obsessed its cultural commentators.

Nor was Swift the only writer of his era to use the trope of Ovidian metamorphosis, with varying degrees of irony, to describe change that is merely skin-deep, or just as deep as fabric or cosmetics. Ovid was, after all, a self-proclaimed expert on these subjects. In stage comedy and comic verse of the Restoration, metamorphosis is often reimagined as simple dress-up, as in a parody of the *Heroides* from 1681 that updates Jove's rape of Leda in the form of a swan into a consensual act at a costume party: "You don't consider Laeda was betray'd, / By one that courted her in Masquerade" (Radcliffe 1681: 121). In the following century, popular novelists like Eliza Haywood, Samuel Richardson, and Tobias Smollett often use metamorphosis or its variants to describe moments when characters assume the dress associated with another social station, in each case calling attention to both the power and limitations of self-fashioning (Richardson 2001: 55; Haywood 2004: 52; Smollett 2004: 95). What unifies all of these readers and authors, from Osborne to Smollett, is a desire to "domesticate" Ovid, to pare down his mythological tales into emotionally engaging realist dramas with generically familiar or even local settings. The resulting texts introduced his motifs and stories, if not always his narrative style, to a new mass audience unacquainted with Greco-Roman myth, as well as demonstrating to more discerning readers the classical pedigree of new forms of popular entertainment.

The Eighteenth Century: An Age of Heroines?

One item in Ovid's canon, however, did not need to be revised this extensively to achieve a broad, indeed unprecedented popularity in the period. It is a unique feature of Ovid's reception in the eighteenth century that its critics and general readers held his collection of epistolary complaints, the *Heroides*, in higher regard than at any time before or since. Oxford's first professor of poetry, Joseph Trapp, describes them as the poet's strongest work, and a commentator from 1709 states, with what now strikes us as astonishing confidence, that "all that read [Ovid], must allow his Epistles for his masterpiece" (1742: 166; Anon. 1709: iii). Dryden and Tonson's collaborative edition of the *Heroides* remained in print across the century, and helped to sustain a thriving tradition of verse letters with fictional, usually female narrators ("heroic epistles"), inspired to a varying extent by the original 21 Ovidian poems. Some of these epistles draw on Ovid's own speakers, or introduce original characters, but most writers follow Ovid's own lead by borrowing figures from drama or history (Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn were popular choices). By far the most widely read Ovidian poem of the century was Alexander Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*, his 1717 versification of the twelfth-century prioress's real epistolary complaints to

her former lover, the philosopher Peter Abelard (Overton 2007: ch. 5). Like Ovid's original *Heroides*, Pope's poem is oddly equivocal in tone, at once deeply moving and incongruously amusing, often at the expense of its speaker (e.g. in an unintended pun Eloisa associates her bygone lover with the church's "swelling organs"; 1954a: line 272), and it provoked a stream of poetic responses through the 1790s, most assuming the voice of Abelard himself.

Some reasons for the popularity and prestige of the heroic epistle in the eighteenth century are easy to recognize. Unprecedented female literacy and the rise of an efficient postal service meant that there were simply more women writing letters in England than ever before, so on the most obvious level the poems must never have seemed so true to life. The increasingly high premium placed by eighteenth-century readers and critics on sincerity and passion, along with the corresponding distrust of rhetoric, also rendered Ovid's lachrymose epistles his most appealing work—"not art, but nature itself," one reader gushed in the 1780s (Rogers 1782: 164).

This is also a period that was obsessed, in both its literature and its legislation, with the personal and social cost of the seduction and abandonment of women, the subject of most of Ovid's original epistles and their imitations. Tracing responses to the *Heroides* across the century confirms the arguments of cultural historians that the era witnessed a sea change in the perception of gendered sexuality (Dabhoiwala 2012). In the late seventeenth century, when women were still widely seen as the more naturally lascivious gender, and were often held more accountable than men for sexual indiscretions, even in what we would now recognize as clear instances of rape or social necessity, we read that Helen's coyly flirtatious letter to Paris (*Heroides* 17) is an instance of the "extream artifice of Woman-kind" (Ovid 1680: 153). By the late eighteenth century, however, the pendulum had swung far in the other direction, and it was men who were typically characterized as irrepressibly libidinous, while women were increasingly idealized as passive, almost sexless creatures—a view expressed most influentially in Rousseau's educational treatise of 1764, *Émile*. We should not be unduly surprised, then, when we find that by the 1780s Oenone, the Phrygian shepherdess whom Paris abandoned for Helen, and arguably the most innocent character in the *Heroides*, has become the collection's most admired heroine, one enthusiast praising her epistle for its "domestic" and "pastoral" graces and another for its "tenderness and simplicity" (Rogers 1782: 165; Anon. 1781: n.p.).

But eighteenth-century heroic epistles were not limited in scope to male perfidy or the nature of sexual virtue. The form in fact proved surprisingly flexible, for instance being put to political ends. Jacob Tonson's 1680 edition of *Ovid's Epistles* is speckled with coded allusions to an ongoing unrest over the succession of the crown, and after the accession of William and Mary a certain *Young Lady* portrayed the balance of power between the joint monarchs as an exchange of verse letters in *Imitation of the Stile and Manner of Ovid* (Anon. 1691). As a literary form devoted to impassioned complaints about injustice, the heroic epistle was also well suited to representing, and in some cases explicitly denouncing, the slave trade, most

influentially in a tradition of verse-letters written in the voice of a pseudo-historical Amerindian woman married and then sold into slavery by her European lover. In the many epistles from "Yarico to Inkle" from across the century, laments about individual male infidelity typically dilate into broader assaults on the systemic inhumanity of slavery (Felsenstein 1999; Wiseman 2008). But the form was also suitable to satire and personal invective, although here too miscegenation sometimes played a part. A scurrilous American poet ghost-wrote an erotic correspondence between Thomas Jefferson and his slave Sally Hemings (Basker 2002: 572–73), while the early printed accounts of Captain Cook's voyages to the South Seas, which frankly described how Cook's naturalist Joseph Banks had conducted an affair with a Tahitian princess, inspired one reader to adapt *Heroides* 5 into an amorous lament from that abandoned dignitary (Scott-Waring 1774; Overton 2007: 179–80). There were also more lighthearted burlesques of the form, such as heroic epistles between house pets, and one from a lonely Mrs. Gulliver (Anon. 1783; Pope 1954b: 266–81).

Ovidian Fiction and the Female Voice

Some questions about the influence of the *Heroides* remain, however. First, there is the somewhat vexed issue of the relationship between the heroic epistle and the epistolary novel, which flourished across the same decades and shared a fixation with abused women (most influentially in Samuel Richardson's mid-century behemoth *Clarissa*). Did the epistolary novel, or the English novel more generally, in some sense *evolve* from the heroic epistle? Or were both simply responding to the same larger cultural concerns? Critics have approached these questions in a number of ways (Day 1966; Kauffman 1986; Beer 1988; Ballaster 1992; Doody 1997; Starr 2004), but it is worth keeping in mind that a variety of non-Ovidian epistolary forms were also popular in the period—Horatian epistles and political tracts disguised as "letters to a friend," for instance—and that everyone at the time seemingly had something to say about seduction. It is likewise worth recalling that before the 1740s few novelists saw their work as generically distinct from writing in verse: the scandal writer Delarivier Manley, now hailed as one of the founders of the English novel, describes herself in a fictionalized memoir of 1714 as having more "moving strains [than] Ovid" (Manley 1999: 69). Aphra Behn might have made a similar boast about one of the earliest English novels, her *Love-Letters from a Nobleman to his Sister*, published serially from 1684 to 1687. This immensely ambitious work, which begins as an epistolary *roman-à-clef* and develops into a long third-person saga of female sexual adventurism and an elaborate political polemic, alerts its readers to a French, prose source in its title (the anonymous *Love-Letters between a Nun and a Cavalier* first translated into English in 1678) (Ballaster 1992: chs. 2 and 3). But in fact Behn, at least in her first volume, draws far more heavily on the language, imagery, and structure of the *Heroides*—especially on the letters between Paris and Helen,

with their moment-to-moment record of the growth of an adulterous elopement, and "Oenone to Paris," which Behn had translated earlier in the decade.

So, perhaps it is safest to say that early novelists and authors of Ovidian verse epistles were not only aware of each other's work but actively learned and borrowed from one another, aware that they were engaging in complementary artistic projects. If some heroic epistles strike us as "novelistic," many an early novel would have struck readers of the time as Ovidian. The mention of Aphra Behn, though, raises another question: what did female readers and authors make of the *Heroides* and its imitations, with their perennially suffering female narrators, buffeted equally by male duplicity and their own passions? The answer, again, is far from simple. Women adopted the form of the heroic epistle across the century, often in innovative and tonally complex ways. Behn never wrote an original heroic epistle with a female speaker, but she did produce a verse missive from "Ovid to Julia," in which she ventriloquizes not only the great poet himself but also (her modern editor tells us) a contemporary lord whose ill-fated romance with Princess Anne was the implied referent of the poem (Todd 1992). So the *Heroides* seems to have offered Behn a model not only for representing female romantic experience (in the *Love-Letters*) but also for inhabiting a male perspective, as well as for exploring the heavily sexualized politics of the Restoration court. Nor was Behn the final female author of the century to write a heroic epistle with a male speaker: on the contrary, we see a steady stream of examples through the 1790s, including several of the writers who donned the robe of Peter Abelard to respond to Pope's Eloisa (Thomas 1994: 174–88). But literary transvestitism had been a distinguishing feature of the heroic epistle from its creation, so these authors are merely turning the tables on the male poets, from Ovid to Pope, who had confidently adopted the female voice (Williamson 2001).

Some of the century's most affecting heroic epistles were by the socialite, poet, and acclaimed correspondent Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Like her friend-turned-bitter-enemy Alexander Pope, Montagu was a life-long Ovidian, reading and translating swaths of his poetry as a child and composing an epistle from "Julia to Ovid" (although it is unlikely that she knew Behn's little-read "Ovid to Julia"). As she told the collector of anecdotes Joseph Spence decades later, "when I was young I was a vast admirer of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and that was one of the chief reasons that set me upon the thoughts of stealing the Latin language" (cited in Grundy 1972: 420). Montagu's choice of verbs suggests the Promethean thrill that came with "stealing" not only the language of cultural authority but also the voice of an inflammatory male poet. We can recognize this thrill in a verse epistle from the 1720s, loosely inspired by the *Heroides*. Montagu makes the unconventional decision to draw her narrative material not from history or literature but instead from contemporary gossip and personal experience (1977). Montagu adopts the voice of a society woman, Mary Yonge, whose serially unfaithful husband was publicly suing her for divorce after discovering her in an affair of her own. In Montagu's epistle, the justifiably bitter Mrs. Yonge inveighs against not only her husband's

private sins but also the sexual double standard, as enshrined in both public opinion and divorce law: "For Wives ill-us'd no remedy remains, / To daily Racks condemn'd, and to eternal Chains" (lines 23–24). Montagu here communicates her own hard-won knowledge of spousal neglect and social injustice by projecting her own sentiments onto a real-life victim of more lurid circumstances (Grundy 1972), but also by harnessing what Lawrence Lipking describes as the characteristic outspokenness of the Ovidian heroine, whose physical abandonment in turn promotes a rhetorical abandonment or casting aside of decorum (Lipking 1988). If Ovid encouraged Montagu to learn the language of international learning, he also taught her and her epistolary alter egos, as Prospero did Caliban, how to curse.

Some female authors were less attracted than Montagu to the *Heroides* as an expressive model. The long-lasting acclaim that greeted Tonson's *Ovid's Epistles* found one strong dissenting voice in Jane Barker, the wonderfully eccentric Catholic poet, novelist, and personal writer, who in 1688 published an ad hominem address to "Ovid's HEROINES" (1688: 28–29):

> Bright *Shees*, what Glories had your Names acquir'd,
> Had you consum'd those whom your Beauties fir'd,
> Had laugh'd to see them burn, and so retir'd:
> …
> Had you put on the Armour of your scorn,
> (That *Gem* which do's our Beauties most adorn)
> What hardy *Hero* durst have been forsworn.
>
> But since they found such *lenity* in you,
> Their crime so Epidemical do's grow,
> That all have, or do, or would be doing so.

Barker calls for her fellow *"English … Dames"* to reject literary models like the *Heroides* that celebrate female vulnerability and instead to adopt an almost Spenserian militant chastity, arming themselves in the "Armour of [their] scorn." Barker's "counter-complaint," her modern biographer tells us, "expresses contempt for a genre [the heroic epistle] that debases women and for readers who derive voyeuristic pleasure from exhibitions of feminine abjection" (King 2000: 57). But it would be a mistake to assume that Barker thus rejects Ovid's writing more generally as a model for female expression and life decisions. In her autobiographical lyric, *"On the* Apothecary's *Filing my Bills amongst the Doctors,"* we find a curious analogy (1688: 118):

> But I've digressed too far; so must return,
> To make the *Medick Art* my whole Concern;
> …
> In all our Songs its Attributes rehearse,
> Write *Recipes* [medical prescriptions] (as OVID *Law*) in Verse.

Barker compares her own brave decision to practice medicine, and to celebrate that vocation in poetry, to Ovid's own self-proclaimed inability to follow his

father's injunction to study law (*Tr.* 4.10.25–26), as later elaborated by writers from Seneca the Elder to Ben Jonson. Barker thus saw Ovid as both a constraining and an enabling model for female writers and women at large, at once a popularizer of pernicious myths about female desire and a liberated spirit whose own pursuit of happiness could inspire similarly independent-minded women.

This final example of ambivalence in Ovid's eighteenth-century reception is a fitting place to end this survey, for Barker embodies many of the contradictions of her era—a period when literary texts from antiquity continued to exert a titanic influence on all forms of cultural production, even as new ways of thinking about literature and society proliferated in print at a revolutionary rate. Classical authors were often cited as prescriptive models at the same time as their work was mined for precedents that might justify innovations in art and ideas, from the domestic realism of the novel to the early feminism of Mary Wortley Montagu and Jane Barker. It is no surprise, then, that Ovid, the most prolific and versatile Latin poet, should have provoked the most debate, imitation, and (I have argued) influence of any non-Christian writer of antiquity during this period. The Enlightenment may have looked to Ovid's corpus for a reflection of its own values and literary practices—both those it favored and those it rejected—but the nature of that reflective medium, Ovid's endlessly provocative and troubling alliance of fancy, skepticism, wit, and compassion, in turn transformed the character of the Enlightenment itself.

Further Reading

Tillotson (1954) is still the best place to start for an understanding of Ovidian writing in the early eighteenth century, while Love (1981) is helpful for Restoration adaptations of Ovid. Doody (1985), especially chapters 4 and 5, is an unorthodox reading of the eighteenth-century poetic tradition, unusually sensitive to its interest in Ovidian metamorphosis. Trickett (1988) has the most thoughtful account of Ovid's influence on Pope and his circle, with reflections on the popularity of the *Heroides* in the eighteenth century more generally. Miner (1993) is a highly original reading of Dryden's final collection of translations as unified by an Ovidian worldview, and Rothstein (1970) situates Swift's "Baucis and Philemon" in a history of Ovidian reception that includes Dryden and Addison. Hopkins (2010) contains revised versions of several classic and authoritative articles on Dryden and Ovid. Overton (2007) provides a thorough, largely bibliographical study of epistolary poetry in the period, with a close look at the Ovidian heroic epistle in chapter 5, while Beer (1988) offers a far-reaching study of the influence of the *Heroides* and their imitations on the early novel.

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The Influence of Ovid in Opera

Jon Solomon

The genre of musical theater that would eventually be known as opera developed in the late sixteenth century. Aristocratic patronage preconditioned the emergence of *dramma per musica* out of late Renaissance theatrical genres and musical styles, while classical learning, drama, and poetry, including the Ovidian corpus, provided technical models and mythological narratives readily adaptable for the stage (Sternfeld 1988; Ketterer 2003). Poliziano is widely regarded as the first to create a high-profile poetic drama derived at least in part from an Ovidian tale and performed on stage with music (Martelli 1995: 73–101; Sanders 2012: 20). His *Favola di Orfeo*, composed and performed for the Gonzaga court in Mantua around 1480, and therefore preceding the revival of Terence and Plautus in Ferrara, combines the poetic accounts in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (10.1–85 and 11.1–84) and Virgil's *Georgics* (4.315–558) and transforms them into a pastoral drama, the dramatic genre which would flourish into the early eighteenth century as a standard option for dramatists and operatic librettists.

Although there is no corroboration from a contemporary chronicle account and no music survives, Poliziano seems to have devised some sort of sung performance for his pastoral drama. He had studied the antiphonal structures and the vocabulary of song featured in the pastoral poetry of Theocritus and Virgil as well as the ancient differentiation between the tragic, comic, and satyric genres (Benvenuti 1986: 92–103). Servius (*Ecl.* 6.11) makes reference to a theatrical performance, and we know from a detailed anonymous account of an entertainment involving a free adaptation of the Ovidian tale of Cephalus and Procris at a 1475 Bolognese wedding banquet that contemporary performance practice had already combined Greco-Roman mythological characters with song (Cavicchi 1909: 71–85; Pirrotta 2008: 10). The manuscript tradition of Poliziano's *Favola di Orfeo* is problematic in that it includes three different versions: two lyrical versions and a subsequent

dramatic version divided, like an ancient tragedy, into five acts (Sternfeld 1979). Nonetheless, two of the versions offer stage directions for singing in either Italian or Latin: "Orpheo … cantando certi versi alegri che sono de Ovidio accommodati," "Orpheus singing several cheerful verses adapted from Ovid" and *Verbis flebilibus modulatur Orpheus,* "Orpheus sings in doleful words" (Benvenuti 1986: 177, 199).[1] The other specifically identifies the renowned singer Baccio Ugolini, whom Poliziano chose to play the role of Orpheus: "Orpheus, while singing with his lyre atop the mountain the following Latin verses, which are proposed by mister Baccio Ugolini, an actor who played the part of Orpheus, … was interrupted by a shepherd announcing the death of Eurydice," "Orpheo cantando sopra il monte in su la lyra e' seguenti versi latini, li quali a proposito di messer Baccio Ugolino, actor de dicta persona d'Orpheo, … fu interrotto da uno pastore nunciatore della morte de Euridice" (Benvenuti 1986: 174; Bausi 1997: 1.57) A decade later, Duke Francesco requested a repeat performance, this time featuring the Florentine Atalante Migliorotti, who had established a reputation not only for singing but for making and playing the *lira da braccio,* the Renaissance equivalent of Orpheus' "lyre" (Sanders 2012: 20). Fusing literary, intellectual, and musical strains in the late fifteenth century, Poliziano's *Favola di Orfeo* established a Renaissance model for assembling Ovidian and Virgilian mythological subject matter and pastoral settings into a refined dramatic product suitable for court entertainment. And the story of Orpheus and Eurydice would remain at the forefront of operatic innovation in *Euridice* (1600) by Ottavio Rinuccini and Jacopo Peri, *L'Orfeo* (1607) by Alessandro Striggio and Claudio Monteverdi, *Orfeo* (1647) by Francesco Buti and Luigi Rossi, *Orfeo ed Euridice* (1762) by Ranieri de' Calzabigi and Christoph Willibald Gluck, and others (Sternfeld 1988: 174; Buller 1995). Moreover, Poliziano's work was soon imitated by poets and composers who focused specifically on pastoral myths from Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* In 1486 Gian Pietro della Viola offered a performance of his *Rappresentazione di Febo e Pitone o di Dafne* at Mantua, and in 1487 he worked on the *intermedi* (musical interludes) performed between the five acts of Niccolò da Correggio's *La fabula di Caephalo* in Ferrara (Solerti 1969: 1.3).

In the grandiose court *intermedi* of the sixteenth century, Ovidian imagery was often prominently featured. For the 1548 entry of King Henry II of France and Catherine de' Medici into Lyons, four honorific *intermedi* presented allegorical personifications of the Age of Gold, the Age of Silver, the Age of Bronze, and the Age of Iron derived from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1.89–150 (Scève and Cooper 1997: 118–19). The second and third of the 1589 Florentine *intermedi* produced to celebrate the wedding of Grand Duke Ferdinand and Christine of Lorraine featured the contest between the Muses and the Pierides (*Met.* 5.294–678) and Apollo's battle with Python for control of the sanctuary at Delphi (*Met.* 1.438–51) (Nagler 1964: 79–84; Saslow 1996: 153–55). However, in the preface to his 1507 translation of the pseudo-Plutarchian *De musica,* Carlo Valgulio follows the lead of Pollux (*Onomasticon* 4.79) and describes this as the subject of an ancient Greek auletic *nomos* (Palisca 1989: 33; Wallace 2003: 76, 80). The inspiration to recreate ancient Greek music was

one of the technical factors that led to the creation of opera, and these *intermedi* served well as some of the first public experiments presented by Giovanni Bardi and other members of the group now known as the Florentine Camerata, several of whom would present the first "opera" in 1598. Another member was Rinuccini, in whose skillful hands the triumph of Apollo over the Python becomes the triumph of both music and the intellect, for Apollo as the god of the sun represents the Neoplatonic symbol of light, truth, and knowledge. Finally, it seems to have been Jacopo Corsi, Bardi's successor as patron and figurehead of the Camerata, who encouraged Rinuccini to prepare a dramatic text, based on the Ovidian story of Apollo and Daphne, to be set entirely in the experimental musical style imitative of ancient Greek monody (Palisca 1960; 1994: 346–63). At first, Corsi composed some of this "new music" himself, but soon he surrendered the musical setting of the project to the more expressive Jacopo Peri, who then completed composing *Dafne* (1598), a pastoral drama derived from an Ovidian myth and modeled after a classical tragedy but written in Italian and sung throughout from prologue to finale, as Aristotle was thought to have prescribed (*Poet.* 1449b; [Aristotle] *Prob.* 19 [#15 and #48]; Barker 1984: 192–93 and 202–3).

In fact, by singing the Prologue to *Dafne* Ovid himself makes the first stage appearance in the history of opera, consciously altering the light and ironic tones of "his" original at *Met.* 1.452–567 (Hanning 1980: 245–67; Savage 1989). No longer does Apollo gaze at Daphne's disheveled hair and wonder, '*quid, si comantur?*' ("What if it was combed?," 497–98) or promise '*moderatius insequar ipse*' ("I myself will chase more slowly," 510–11). Instead, this dramatic version turns didactic as Ovid promises to teach his lesson in the "ancient style" (Prologue 13–16):

> Seguendo di giovar l'antico stile,
> Con chiaro esempio a dimostrarvi piglia
> Quanto sia, donne e cavalier, periglio
> La potenza d'Amor recarsi à vile.

> As I will be using the ancient style,
> I will demonstrate by clear example
> How perilous it is, ladies and gentlemen,
> To oppose the power of Love.

No doubt Rinuccini's model was the prologue to Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (1.17), and now he becomes a more effective Florentine *praeceptor amoris* by having the original master administer the lesson in person.

In the second scene, in order to emphasize Cupid's cruelty, Rinuccini has the chorus make veiled allusions to the *Metamorphoses*' Narcissus and Echo episode. Here, Narcissus drowned because he "burned with love" ("arse d'amore"), and Echo weeps and is not forgiven because "An angry Cupid does not suffer / Impiety from an ungrateful heart," "Più non soffre Amore irato / L'impieta del cor ingrato."

The insertion of this additional mythological couplet both illustrates the potency of Cupid's ire and certifies the Ovidian pedigree of Rinuccini's lyrical but learned libretto.

Rinuccini set a high standard (Bujić 1991). The typical Baroque opera librettist would be a learned poet and draw on a variety of ancient and intermediate sources (e.g. Anguillara's *Le metamorfosi di Ovidio ridotte in ottava rima*) as well as his own dramatic invention (Carter 1999). This often makes it difficult for us to distinguish their sources. Rinuccini may have derived his famous lament in *L'Arianna* from Ovid (*Heroides* 10), where Ariadne repeatedly calls to Theseus and fears being devoured by wild animals, and/or Catullus (64.202–48), where Ariadne finishes by calling down curses upon Theseus (Bujić 1999; MacNeil 1999: 416, n. 19). Then again, lament numbers, already found in Poliziano's *Orfeo* and the fourth 1589 *intermedio*, had already developed as a standard motif in contemporary libretti (Leopold 1991: 123–45; Sternfeld 1993: 177–83). Another case in point is Alessandro Striggio in his libretto for *L'Orfeo*, for which he derived motifs either indirectly via Poliziano or directly from Virgil and Ovid: for example, in having Orpheus remind Pluto and Proserpina of their love for each other (*Met*. 10.28–29), suggesting that Orpheus killed Eurydice (the second time) for loving her too much (*Met*. 10.60–61), or even transferring to Charon attributes of the 100-eyed Argos (*Met*. 1.621–721).

Florentine interest in pastoral myths branched out into a different Ovidian landscape in Filippo Vitali's *Aretusa* (1620), derived from *Metamorphoses* 5.572–641 (Murata 1984: 122). (Vitali also set Ottavio Persiani's *Narciso et Ecco immortalati* to music now lost.) In this three-act fluminal tragedy, Alpheus as the personified river pursues the reluctant spring nymph Arethusa much as Apollo pursued Daphne in *Dafne*. The choice of subject reflects the contemporary concentration on a particular panel of the *Metamorphoses*, which Ovid begins with the story of Perseus near the end of the fourth book (*Met*. 4.607), leading him to both the story of Perseus and Andromeda (4.670–752) and the aforementioned contest between the Muses and the Pierides (5.294–678). To accomplish this, Ovid has the Muse Calliope recall the story of the rape of Proserpina (5.346–661), within which (5.487–532) and then after which (5.572–641) Arethusa explains her metamorphosis. The stories in these cleverly organized passages served as the classical models for not just the aforementioned works but also the contemporary Florentine-style *Andromeda* by Marigliani/Monteverdi (1620) as well as the numerous Florentine-style Orpheus operas in which Proserpina plays an important role.

Meanwhile, in Rome, the first opera associated with the powerful Barberini family, Giacinto Cornacchioli's *Diana schernita* (1629), is enriched by Giacomo Francesco Parisiani's adaptation of the Actaeon story (*Met*. 3.155–252), and at the conclusion Endymion is metamorphosed into a lily carried to the heavens by the three golden bees emblematic of the Barberini family arms (Walkling 2010). Few members of the audience would fail to see that this neo-Ovidian metamorphosis represented redemption for the innocent mortal victim of philandering pagan gods.

Loreto Vittori wrote the libretto and composed the music to *Galatea* (1639), the first secular opera performed in Naples, which at the time was the largest city in western Europe and a Spanish possession. The operatic narrative, however, was Florentine and predominantly Ovidian in that Neptune delivers the prologue, Venus interferes with the romantic triangle of Acis, Galatea, and Polyphemus, Cupid impersonates Echo, Acis sings a notable lament, and Acis is killed and then metamorphosed into a river. Similarly, the 1638 Ascanio Pio di Savoia/Michelangelo Rossi *Andromeda* was the first opera in Ferrara, and Luigi Rossi's *Orfeo* was the first important opera produced in Paris.

The new form of musical drama flourished in Venice after the Paduan premier of *Harmonia* (1637), a mythologically comprehensive *opera-tornero* which began with Zeus's abduction of Europa (*Met*. 2.846–75), continued with episodes from the Theban books of the *Metamophoses*, and finished with the wedding of Cadmus and Harmonia (Petrobelli 1965). An eyewitness account of the next Venetian opera, the Benedetto Ferrari/Francesco Manelli *Andromeda*, assures us that informed observers and presumably audiences were fascinated to experience Ovidian mythical landscapes created by ingenious set designers (Worsthorne 1954: 168–69; Rosand 1991: 407): "Once the curtain disappeared, the stage seemed like all sea, with such a creative perspective of water and rocks that this naturalism made the audience question, despite the artifice, if they were truly in a theater or on a veritable seashore."

To feature the visually dramatic rescue in Act III, Ferrari chose to employ a common Renaissance conflation, which was to have Pegasus ridden by Perseus (not Bellerophon). Ancient models depicted Perseus flying by means of winged footwear, but now artists usually followed the new iconography created and promulgated by Bernard Salomon and Virgil Solis in their mid-sixteenth-century illustrations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[2] To the audience, of course, it mattered not. The visual excitement of seeing an ancient myth acted out—indeed, recreated—on the stage equipped with miracle-producing machinery, helped establish the popularity of opera in Venice and transformed what had been exclusively the property of noble patronage into a form of musical theater urban populaces would pay to enjoy for over three centuries (Rosand 1991: 59, n. 48). The visual elements of the aforementioned 1638 *Andromeda* were so compelling that even though Rossi's music is lost, 15 illustrations of Francesco Guitti's spectacular settings were published separately (Rossi and Guitti 1639).

In the wake of Rossi's *Orfeo*, the French court under Mazarin and Louis XIV sponsored French-style performances derived from Ovid's more popular subjects, for example, the lavish Pierre Perrin/Robert Cambert pastoral version of Ariadne and the Buti/Francesco Cavalli adaptation of *Metamorphoses* 9.101–238 (*Ercole amante*—1662) designed for the wedding of Louis in 1660, and the Perrin/Cambert adaptation of *Metamorphoses* 14.623–771 (*Pomone*—1671). Cambert next teamed up with Gabriel Gilbert to produce the five-act *Les peines et les plaisirs de l'amour*, dramatizing the story of Apollo and Clymene (*Met*.1.746–79). But the most

influential French *tragédies en musique* adapted from Ovid were those by Philip Quinault and Jean-Baptiste Lully (Hoxby 2007).

In *Cadmus et Hermione* (1673) Quinault complicates the Ovidian romance (*Met.* 3.1–136, 4.561–603) between Cadmus and Hermione/Harmonia by inserting Draco as the man whom Mars wants his daughter to marry (Duron 2008: 44). Moving beyond its Paduan predecessor, *Ermione*, by Pio Enea degli Obizzi and Giovanni Felice Sances, it begins with Apollo slaying the Pythian dragon, proceeds to Cadmus slaying the dragon of Ares/Mars, and continues with Cadmus slaying Draco. Because the analogy between dragon slaying and Louis's successes in the United Provinces had already been established in the chauvinistic prologue, the audience, already awed at the spectacular battles and mechanized monsters, would certainly understand the entire stage play as a musical representation of the power of their *grand monarque*.

Louis himself ordered repeat performances of *Atys* (1676), "the King's opera," a somber *tragédie en musique* that eschewed comic relief, omitted a romantic sub-plot, and culminated in an Ovidian metamorphosis. Although Quinault's source is not identifiable with certainty, it may well have been Ovid's *Fasti* (4.179–372), where Attis is smitten by the wood nymph Sagaritis who was in turn slaughtered by the jealous Cybele, along with *Metamorphoses* (10.104–5), where Attis is meta-morphosed into a pine tree. The *sommeil* ("sleep") scene in the third act clearly derives from Ovid's tale of Ceyx (*Met.* 11.384–748), for it includes not just the god of sleep but his phantasmic companion Morpheus.

Isis (1677) dramatizes the story of Io's transformation into a cow, encounter with Argus, and flight to Egypt, where she ultimately gives birth to Jupiter's son, Epa-phus. In constructing his drama Quinault employs *Metamorphoses* 1.583–746, and, allowing for the usual romantic additions needed to fill out a satisfactory number of principal singing roles, Quinault's libretto follows the Ovidian tale closely. He even imitates Ovid's narrative technique of telling a story within a story, when in the third act he has Mercury lull Argus to sleep by recounting the story of Pan and Syrinx (cf. *Met.* 1.689–712).

Quinault also showed great respect for Ovid's narrative skills in his libretto for *Proserpine* (1680). The linear narrative requirements of theater prevented him from maintaining the integrity of Ovid's story-within-a-story-within-a-story structure, but Quinault instead turns Calliope's story of Alpheus and Arethusa into a tan-gential romance and incorporates Ovid's interconnected description (5.321–55) of Jupiter's recent triumph over the giant Typhoeus. By comparison, Italian librettists earlier in the century separated out individual works from this same interlocked sequence of Ovidian tales, for example, (Giulio Cesare) Monteverdi's *The Rape of Proserpina*, Francesco Andreini's *L'Ingannata Proserpina*, and Vitali's *Arethusa* (1620).

The adjoining passage in the *Metamorphoses* (4.604–5.249), the story of Perseus, Medusa, and Andromeda, provided the subject matter for *Persée* (1682).

Ovid's original version offers, in reverse order, first the rescue of Andromeda and then the slaying of Medusa, the latter of which Quinault's hero accomplishes in a *sommeil* sequence in the third act, the former in the fourth act. But then Quinault follows Ovid's order by saving the great battle between Perseus and Phineus' army for the climactic last act. The narrative follows Quinault's simple pattern of having the heroine betrothed to one person (Phineus) and in love with another (Perseus), who is in turn beloved of a third (Merope). But Merope is a shadowy, multiplex figure in the lists of Greek mythological characters, appearing variously as the wife of Sisyphus, an amour of Orion, and one of the Pleiades (*Fasti* 4.175). She is not part of the Ovidian tale nor connected to Perseus in any way. At *Metamophoses* 1.763, however, immediately after Io's transformation into Isis, Ovid mentions Merops, presumably King of Ethiopia.

Like *Isis*, *Atys*, and *Andromeda*, *Persée* is set in an exotic, oriental location, in this instance mythical Ethiopia. Not coincidentally, the last libretto Quinault prepared for Lully dramatized the tale of Ethiopian *Phaëton* (1683), based on the lengthy story appended to the myth of Egyptian Io and Epaphus (*Met.* 1.747–2.328). Quinault set the action in exotic locales, including a palace in Egypt (Act II), a Temple of Isis (Act III), and, of course, the Palace of the Sun (Act IV), for which set designer Jean Berain recreated a stage version of Ovid's ekphrasis of Vulcan's double doors (*Met.* 2.1–18). That the latter would correspond in the mind of the audience to Versailles, whither "the Sun King" Louis had just moved his court the previous year, made the allegorical aspects of the opera all the more powerful. In the words of the contemporary André Félibien, "As the sun is the emblem of the king and as the poets associate the sun and Apollo, there will be nothing in this superb palace which is not connected to that divinity" (Duro 1997: 201).

Quinault portrayed Phaethon as an ambitious youth unworthy of access to the solar chariot, and his demise was just compensation. The opera ends with the fiery death of Phaethon realized via Jean Berain's impressive machinery, so Quinault / Lully made sure not to include the ending of the Ovidian version in which Phaethon's sisters weep such endless tears that they metamorphose into amber-bearing poplar trees, cousin Cygnus laments his shape into that of a swan, and his father eclipses himself. There could be no mourning for this rebellious, solar imposter. To fill out the cast Quinault added Phaethon's fellow North African, Epaphus, who is loved by Libya. Ovid does not make it clear who Libya's father is. (In Hyginus 140 Libya is the daughter of Cassiopeia and Epaphus; Apollodorus 2.1.3 omits mention of Epaphus' wife.) But because Ovid's Phaethon himself does not know for sure who his own father is, and because Phaethon hugs his mother and begs by his own and Merops' head and (ironically) his sisters' marriages (1.763 *perque suum Meropisque caput taedasque sororum*), Quinault improvises by specifying in the published libretto that Phaethon is the son of the Sun and Clymene while she is married to Merops, King of Egypt,

after the death of a previous wife, by whom he produced Libya. He did the same
with the character Theone, Phaethon's love interest. Quinault tells us she is the
daughter of the multi-form sea god Proteus, but none of our sources inform us
of any Protean progeny. Nonetheless, Proteus' power is demonstrated later in the
Metamorphoses (8.730–37), which Lully translates into music in the seventh scene
of the first act.

The Quinault/Lully operas are largely absent from the modern repertoire,
but the legacy of their Ovidian mythological operas was long lasting. *Persée*, for
example, was reworked for the marriage of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette in
1770. Subsequent French librettists diverged at their peril from their Ovidian
prototypes. After Quinault retired, Lully himself set *Acis et Galatée* (1686), a
pastorale-héroïque derived by librettist Jean Galbert de Campistron from *Metamor-*
phoses 13.750–900. Houdar de la Motte derived the main plot of *Issé*, in which
Apollo disguises himself as a shepherd to seduce the daughter of Macareus, from a
single sentence in the *Metamorphoses* (6.124) describing one of the anti-Olympian
depictions on Arachne's tapestry. Simon-Joseph Pellegrin's *Médée et Jason* (1713)
derived from neither Apollonius' epic nor Euripides' play but Ovid, especially in
the death of the quarreling heroic couple's two sons (*Met.* 7.396). The libretto for
Marin Marais' successful *Alcyone* (1706) was by Houdar de la Motte, who derived
it from Ovid's hitherto rarely adapted story of Ceyx and Alcyone.[3] But this is
where Ovid offers a detailed description of not just a storm at sea, which Marais
tone-paints so effectively, but the Cave of Somnus. Houdar de la Motte included
both in the libretto, and both *tempête* and *sommeil* scenes would help distinguish
post-Lully opera in France (and elsewhere in Europe) with their vivid, descriptive
use of the orchestra.[4] Contemporary, and from an equally difficult source (*Met.*
6.421–674), was Pierre-Charles Roy's successful *Philomèle* (1705).

We note in passing contemporary works written in England and Germany, such
as John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*, performed as a masque for the court of King Charles
II in 1683, and Johann Wolfgang Franck's *Die errettete Unschuld, oder Andromeda und*
Perseus (1675), *Der verliebte Phöbus* (1678), *Die Drey Töchter des Cecrops* (1680)—an
Athenian myth found most conspicuously at *Metamorphoses* 2.708–832—and *Semele*
(1681), from *Met.* 3.253–315 (Braun 1983; Heller 2003; Owens 2006: 76).

The advent and middle of the eighteenth century elsewhere in Europe ush-
ered in numerous attempts at dramatizing Attic drama and the proliferation
of history-dependent *opera seria*, considerably diminishing Ovidian influence[5]
(Cowert 2001). There were exceptions, of course. For the successful 1714 Rome
premier of *Amor d'un ombra e gelosia d'un aura*, Domenico Scarlatti set Carlo
Sigismondo Capece's libretto, and then Paolo Antonio Rolli revised the latter and
Thomas Rosengrave the former for the 1720 London premier of *Narciso*. These
works combined Ovid's account of Narcissus and Echo with that of Cephalus and
Procris (*Met.* 7.694–865) by having Echo disguise herself as a zephyr. Although
opera was not yet particularly popular in England, George Frideric Handel did
set John Gay's *Acis and Galatea* (1718), originally designed as a one-act masque,

and William Congreve's libretto (originally written for John Eccles in 1707) for *Semele* (1743), which first premiered as an oratorio. Handel's *Atalanta* (1736) was an anonymous adaptation of a relatively obscure libretto, Belisario Valeriano's *La caccia in Etolia* (1715). The plot of *Atalanta* was derived from Ovid's account not of the race against Hippomenes (10.560–704), which would be dramatized in Hasse's setting of Pallavicino's libretto performed in Dresden in 1737, but the Calydonian boar hunt (8.268–546). At the Habsburg Viennese court, Pietro Metastasio's style of *opera seria* dominated libretto writing for most of the eighteenth century, but for *Issipile* (1732), one of his few entries in the mythological realm, he cites many sources—Apollonius, Herodotus, Valerius Flaccus, and Statius—in addition to Ovid (Heller 1998: 577, n. 1). Metastasio himself, albeit only in the *argomento* to his mythological tragedy *Didone abbandonata* (1724), a very popular work which was reset and revised nearly 70 times even into the nineteenth century, specifically cites *Fasti* 3.552 (3.545–710) as his ancient source for making Virgil's Gaetulian King Iarbas into the king of the Moors [Mauretania]. As the Imperial Poet in Vienna, Metastasio composed *La Galatea* (1722), one of his many festival works, a genre which still preferred mythological subject matter.

By sponsoring a modified operatic form of Greek tragedy in Carl Heinrich Graun's *Ifigenia in Aulide* (1748), Frederick the Great helped to reintroduce mythological subject matter into mid-century operatic libretti. Since 1683, dramatizations of the story of Phaethon, except for periodic revivals of the Quinault/Lully opera, had been reduced to comedy, burlesque, and masque, most notably the Pritchard/Arne *Fall of Phaeton* (1736). Francesco Vanneschi reversed this trend in 1747 with a not particularly successful London operatic production of his *Fetonte* libretto set by Domenico Paradies, but then Leopold de Villati fully restored the tale to tragic prominence with his libretto set first by Graun for Frederick's court in Berlin in 1750 and then by Niccolò Jommelli for a Stuttgart production in 1753 and finally for the spectacular 1768 inauguration of Carl Theodor's immense Schlosstheater in Ludwigsburg, before Phaethon again plunged into relative operatic obscurity immediately thereafter.

The story of Pyramus and Thisbe was revived by the Paris Opéra's young duo, François Francoeur and François Rebel, who set Ignace de la Serre's tragic libretto *Pirame et Thisbé* (1726) with great success, aided much by Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni's first commissioned set design for the Opéra, which featured, as Ovid prescribed, an oriental flavor.[6] The version of *Piramo e Tisbe* (1768) written by Marco Coltellini, Metastasio's successor at the Habsburg court, was not at all a Florentine-style pastoral but a two-act *intermezzo tragico per musica* in which all three singers commit on-stage suicides—Pyramus, Thisbe, and her mourning father. Part of Coltellini's inspiration may have been contemporary Italian and Germanic interest in Shakespeare, for he issued the *opera seria Amore e Psiche* (1767) and *Piramo e Tisbe* in two consecutive years, both stories being integral to Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Like Metastasio, Giovanni Ambrogio Migliavacca used Acis and Galatea for a *festa teatrale*. Because Haydn's *Acide e Galatea* was performed for the 1763 wedding of the son of Prince Esterházy, Thetis appears at the end to revive the slain Acis[7] (Heartz 1982). Later, Haydn composed his one-act Singspiel *Philemon und Baucis, oder Jupiters Reise auf die Erde* (1773), performed with marionettes in honor of the visit of Maria Theresa to Eszterháza. This Ovidian story was now in the midst of its brief revival that had begun with Roy's 1762 French libretto, and Haydn's version was based on the 1763 drama by the fable writer Gottlieb Konrad Pfeffel (Stechow 1940). The libretto differentiates the divine Jupiter and Mercury by giving them only spoken parts, leaving the singing to pious Philemon and Baucis as well as their non-Ovidian son (Aret) and prospective daughter-in-law Narcissa; the latter two were killed by one of Jupiter's thunderbolts during a musically depicted storm in Act I but revived by Jupiter at the conclusion of the performance.

Spanning Mozart's brief life, we observe that at the time of his death his library included a copy of Michael Lori's German translation of Ovid's *Tristia*, and that his first operatic work was the Ovidian *Apollo et Hyacinthus* (1767) (Deutsch 1965: 601). This *intermezzo* was written for a grammar school, so the text was in Latin, though hardly Ovid's original. To eliminate any suggestion of a homosexual relationship between Apollo and Hyacinth, the author of the libretto, the institution's resident philosopher, Rufinus Widl, added a heterosexual romantic triangle involving Apollo and Zephyr, both of whom love Melia, Princess of Laconia. By the end of the tale, Hyacinth has been metamorphosed into his eponymous flower and Zephyr into his eponymous wind. Lorenzo Da Ponte's *La scuola degli amanti*, better known as *Così fan tutte* (1790), derives ultimately from a lengthy tradition of spousal tests that begins with Ovid's tale of Cephalus and Procris (Gombrich 1954; Steptoe 1981). And at the end of the first act of Da Ponte's *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786), Cherubino is described as "a little Narcissus, a mini-Adonis of love" ("Narcisetto, Adoncino d'amor").

The works of Ovid provided little interest for nineteenth-century opera librettists, who tended to feature historical epics, political dramas, and newly invented fiction. French grand opera and the works of Verdi and Wagner consciously eschewed Baroque-style pastoral settings now considered passé. Nonetheless, Wagner's fascination with mythology led him to offer a profound interpretation of at least one well-known Ovidian myth. In *Eine Mitteilung an meine Freunde* (*A Communication to My Friends*, 1851), Wagner points out the similarities between the Ovidian myth of Semele and his *Lohengrin* of 1850 (Ellis 1892: 334–35):

> Who does not know the story of Zeus and Semele? The god loves a mortal woman, and for sake of this love, approaches her in human shape; but the mortal learns that she does not know her lover in his true state, and, urged by Love's own ardor, demands that her spouse shall show himself physically in the full substance of

his being. Zeus knows that she can never grasp him, that the unveiling of his godhead must destroy her.

He continues the same paragraph by preaching that heroic man will substitute for the failure of god:

> Himself, he suffers by this knowledge, beneath the stern compulsion to fulfill his loved one's dreaded wish. He signs his own death warrant when the fatal splendor of his godlike presence strikes Semele dead.—Was it, forsooth, some priestly fraud that shaped this myth? How insensate, to attempt to argue from the selfish state-religious, caste-like exploitation of the noblest human longing, back to the origin and the genuine meaning of ideals which blossomed from a human fancy that stamped man first as Man! 'Twas no God that sang the meeting of Zeus and Semele, but Man, in his most human of yearnings. Who had taught Man that a God could burn with love toward earthly Woman? For certain, only Man himself.

In the twentieth century, Ovid found new life in experimental operas and occasional pastoral revivals. François Poulenc's *opéra bouffe*, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (1947), was based on an earlier play by Guillaume Apollinaire derived from *Metamorphoses* 3.316–50. Here the androgynous Theban prophet's breasts turn into balloons and float away while she grows a beard, leaves her husband, and produces over 40,000 babies in a single day. Poulenc moved the story from Apollinaire's setting in Zanzibar to Monte Carlo, evoking the imagery of ancient pastoral myth along French Mediterranean shores.

Coming full circle after three centuries, opera librettists and composers created new variations, albeit mostly dependent on intermediary sources, on the stories of Orpheus (Hans Haug's *Orfée*, 1954, and Wilhelm Killmayer's ballet-opera *La tragedia di Orfeo*, 1961, employed Poliziano's version), Ariadne (the Hugo von Hofmannsthal/Richard Strauss *Ariadne auf Naxos*, 1912), Pyramus and Thisbe (Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1960; Robert Convery's two-scene farce, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, 1982), the rape of Persephone (Roberto Lupi's *Persefone*, 1970; the Dominique Fernandez/André Bon *Le rapt de Perséphone*, 1987), and Adonis (the Jon Olon-Scrymgeour/Hugo Weisgall *The Gardens of Adonis*, 1959). Also, in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, adapted indirectly from William Hogarth's paintings, the mad protagonist institutionalized in Bedlam envisions himself as Adonis and mistakes his beloved for Venus.

Freed from both aristocratic and commercial restraints, artists experimented with innovative ways of narrating Ovid's tales on the operatic stage. The Einojuhani Rautavaara/Bengt V. Wall *Apollo ja Marsyas* (1973) created a breezy confrontation between Apollo, who represents popular classical music from Vienna, and the satyr Marsyas (of "Mass Production Ltd."), who plays commercial music and triumphs in the end. Richard Blackford's four-part *Metamorphoses* (1983),

commissioned by the Royal College of Music for its centenary, is a pastiche of Ovidian catastrophes—the rape of Persephone, the ride and fall of Phaethon, the butchery of Tereus, and the gluttony of Erysichthon—capped by the story of the divinely rewarded Baucis and Philemon. Robert Ashley's *Atalanta* (*Acts of God*, 1985) turned Diana's earthly counterpart into an Odalisque, choosing a suitor from an allegorical selection of a painter, a poet, and a musician. Formats varied: Helge Jörns set Rolf Schneider's German libretto for a Berlin chamber production of *Europa und der Stier* (1988), and Claude Prey presented his *Métamorphose d'Echo* in 1965 as a concert performance. Other titles are more obscure, for example, Beat Furrer's *Narcissus* (1994) and the Jan Engelman / Hendrik Andriessen *Philomela* (1950).

This survey will end with Hans Werner Henze's *Venus and Adonis* (1997), a complex one-act work designed by librettist Hans-Ulrich Treichel and derived, appropriately, from Shakespeare's 1593 narrative poem which preceded Rinuccini's first Ovidian operatic libretto, *Dafne* (1598), by just a few years. This modern version adds to Venus, Adonis, and Mars a chorus of madrigalists (representing a Greek chorus) and six dancers, three of whom double the divinities and the other three play the theriomorphic roles of a mare, a stallion, and the murderous wild boar. In addition, the divine protagonists also play the role (à la *Ariadne auf Naxos*) of vocalists rehearsing for an opera about Venus and Adonis. The opera typifies the freedom with which modern composers and librettists may approach the genre while still relying on texts derived from Ovid.

Notes

1   The verses are adapted from *Amores* 3.9.1–2, 5, and 16.
2   http://www.latein-pagina.de/ovid_illustrationen/virgil_solis/buch4/vs4_12.htm (accessed March 20, 2014).
3   Houdar de la Motte and Marais also collaborated on *Sémèle* (1709). Another seldom adapted Ovidian tale is that of Byblis and Caunus (*Met.* 9.450–634), which Lacoste presented as *Biblis* in 1732. Later, Jean-Joseph Cassanéa de Mondonville would insert a version of Bacchus and Erigone (*Met.* 6.125, 10.451)—though the story is more completely told in Apollodorus 3.14.7 and Hyginus *Fab.* 130—in between Venus & Adonis and Cupid & Psyche in his *opéra-ballet*, *Les Fêtes de Paphos* (1758).
4   Pascal Collasse had inserted the musical precedent for a storm scene near the end of the second act of his *Thétis et Pélée* in 1689. It is in Lully's *Persée* (1682) that Mercury sings the first mythological soporific passage to render Medusa vulnerable for Perseus, no doubt inspired by Ovid's Argus passage (*Met.* 1.668–721). In Marais's *Alcyone, sommeil* and *tempête* passages were authentically conjoined, as they are in Ovid.
5   Rex (1983: 392) writes: "*Deucalion et Pirrha*, the libretto being by Poullain de Saint-Foix, the music by Giraud and Berton … was staged on 30 September 1755 at the Royal Academy of Music, where it came and went apparently without anyone bothering to notice it, and it has rested in total obscurity ever since."

6   Other early adaptations include a Schröder/Kusser opera (c. 1694), probably never performed, Leveridge's masque (1716), two French works composed by Montéclair (1716) and Louis Marchand (1732—lost), and then Lampe's London burlesque (1745) and Gluck's 1746 pasticcio *Piramo e Tisbe* written during a brief stay in London.

7   Still another Ovidian *festa teatrale* was Antonio Calegari's setting of Gaetano Sertor's *Deucalione e Pirra*, performed in Padua in 1781.

Further Reading

For other featured operatic protagonists in the *Heroides*, for example Penelope and Dido, see Hoxby (2005: 259). Compare Tate and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in Schmalfeldt (2001: 584–615, esp. 596, n. 31).

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Ovid in Germany

Theodore Ziolkowski

The Early Reception

The reception of Ovid in German-speaking countries reflects quite precisely the situation in other European literatures, varying as it does in an almost predictable regularity with periods of Virgilianism. Following the long *aetas Virgiliana* of the early Middle Ages, Germany witnessed what, since Ludwig Traube, has been termed an *aetas Ovidiana* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Traube 1909–20: 2.113). In that age of courtly chivalry friends exchanged epistolary verses, Ovid's love poetry was revived, Albrecht von Halberstadt produced the first vernacular translation of the *Metamorphoses* into Middle High German (c. 1220), Ovid's works were widely cited, and manuscripts of his oeuvre were catalogued in monastic libraries (Berschin 1990). During the Renaissance / Reformation his popularity was assured by the approval of none other than Martin Luther, who in his table talks (*Tischgespräche*, 1537) called Ovid "a fine poet, who exceeds all others in his ideas [*in sententiis*]" (Luther 1912: iii.459). At mid-century, Philipp Melanchthon, in the preface to his "exposition" (*Enarratio Metamorphoseon Ovidii*, 1554), recommended the *Metamorphoses* for school reading because, "in addition to exemplary lives taken from history this poem contains so much astronomical and natural scientific material, so many names and descriptions of lands, regions, cities, mountains and rivers, that one can learn from it, if one has a knowledgeable commentator at hand, a good part of the lore of geography, astronomy, and nature" (Melanchthon 1853: 502). While printing ensured the spread of Ovid's works, Jörg Wickram modernized Albrecht von Halberstadt's translation (1549), and his love poetry got a new impulse with writers like Jacob Balde and Johannes Secundus. In 1627 the poet-critic Martin Opitz provided the libretto, based on Ovid, for the first German opera, Heinrich Schütz's *Daphne*, while prominent scholars like Daniel Heinsius,

in his study of tragedy (*De tragoediae constitutione*, 1611), praised the elegance of his style and, in 1640, hailed him in his elegy on the poet's birth (*Elegia in natalem P. Ovidii diem*).

During the eighteenth century, as in antiquity, Ovid's reputation again became more ambivalent, as readers weighed his alleged immorality against his aesthetic qualities. Following Johann Joachim Winckelmann's influential "Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture" (*Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst*, 1755), the earlier reign of Latin literature began to wane as a result of what E.M. Butler in her book of that title called "the tyranny of Greece over Germany" (1935). The critic Johann Christoph Gottsched, in his influential "essay at a critical poetics" (*Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst*, 1730), called the *Metamorphoses* "a city of disconnected bourgeois houses" as compared to the royal palace of Homer's *Iliad* (Gottsched 1751: 157–58), while J.G. Sulzer in his *General Theory of the Fine Arts* (*Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*, 1771–74) found that Ovid all too often spoiled majestic thoughts by his treatment, which failed to do justice to their grandeur. The poet Christoph Martin Wieland, in the two cantos of his "Anti-Ovid or the Art of Loving" ("Anti-Ovid oder die Kunst zu lieben," 1752), depicted Ovid as "the master of impudent arts" ("Meister loser Künste"; Wieland 1909: 313). Immanuel Kant in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (*Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen*, 1764) called the *Metamorphoses* "grotesques" ("Fratzen"; Kant 1960: ii, 834). Most writers of the so-called Storm-and-Stress movement had little understanding for Ovid's wit and urbanity. Johann Gottfried Herder, with his insistence on the priority of "nature" over the artificiality of civilization, had nothing but contempt for Ovid's urbanity. In his autobiography Goethe recalls how his mentor Herder tried to spoil his own pleasure in the *Metamorphoses*, arguing that "there is no true and immediate truth in these poems. … rather, everything is an imitation of what was already there and a mannered representation of the sort that might be expected from an overcultivated mind" (Goethe 1948–60: 9.413).

Several artists of the period shared Goethe's admiration. In 1783 the Austrian composer Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf produced 12 symphonies based on specific episodes from the *Metamorphoses* (Fischer 1990). In the Royal Porcelain Manufactory in Berlin, Johann Christoph Kimpfel designed cachepots based on scenes from the work (1791 / 1792). Schiller's early poems are filled with allusions to Ovid. Goethe, as he tells us on the last page of his Italian Journey (*Italienische Reise*), recited lines from Ovid's *Tristia* to himself as he left Rome in April 1788. The leading Romantic critic, Friedrich Schlegel, in his history of European literature (*Geschichte der europaischen Literatur*, 1803–1804), stated that Ovid "excels all other Roman poets in grace, elegance, ease, and fluidity of language and representation" (Schlegel 1958: 133).

But the poets were no match for the weighty scholarly authorities of the nineteenth century. Hegel, in his lectures on aesthetics (*Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, 1821–26), criticizes Ovid's prattling ("Geschwätzigkeit") and regarded

his metamorphoses as "degradations" and "humiliations of the human" because, as punishment for transgressions the gods transformed human beings into lower forms of life (Hegel 1970: 39). Leopold von Ranke esteemed him only for his portrayal of the private life of the Romans. Theodor Mommsen attributed his exile to his "all too flighty life-style" (Mommsen 1881: 5.189–90). Meanwhile Virgil, whose popularity reached new heights worldwide with the nineteenth centennial commemorations of his death in 1882, seemed with his *pietas* and *amor patriae* to offer the appropriate voice for the growing nationalism of the century.

The Ovidianism of the 1920s

It was only in the twentieth century that a major revaluation began to take place, producing a new *aetas Ovidiana*. As World War I destroyed, at least for a time, Germany's self-identification with Virgilian virtues, writers of the 1920s found in Ovid a spirit more closely akin to their own expressionistic sense of change and presence, even though the nineteenth centennial of his birth in 1917 passed virtually unnoticed during the war.

   Already in 1912 Carl Gustav Jung had signaled the mood of the new epoch with his first major work and the one that precipitated the break with his mentor Freud: *Transformations and Symbols of the Libido* (*Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido*). Jung, who enjoyed a sound classical education and throughout his career scoured Greek and Latin texts for his research, mentions Ovid several times in that early work: notably in connection with Bacchus and the Eleusinian cult and with reference to Attis's transformation into a pine tree. But his title makes it amply clear that metamorphosis is a central theme in his thought: specifically the inner transformation of the individual—a transformation exemplified metaphorically by the archetypal myths preserved in the collective unconscious.

   That same year, but presumably without any acquaintance with Jung's work, Franz Kafka appropriated Ovid's term as the title of his own story, *The Metamorphosis* (*Die Verwandlung*). It is not generally recalled that Kafka had a solid knowledge of Latin and the Roman classics. In Prague's Altstädter Gymnasium Kafka benefited from unusually sound training in Latin from a Piarist monk. In addition to seven or eight classroom hours per week, Kafka and other advanced students were required to do a considerable amount of outside reading and to memorize exemplary passages, which they had to declaim every Sunday. Over a period of several years Kafka studied major sections of the *Metamorphoses* and, for his supplementary reading, chose further passages from the same poem as well as from the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In addition, the class read not only an extensive passage from the *Fasti* but also the acclaimed departure from Rome in the *Tristia* as well as the poet's autobiographical account. In sum, Kafka was acquainted at first hand with all of Ovid's works and, notably, with the *Metamorphoses*. The transformation of Gregor Samsa into a huge bug ("ungeheures Ungeziefer") in Kafka's story is

consistent with the various metamorphoses with which Kafka was familiar from Ovid. The story revolves around the dynamics of the family, his family's reaction to his actual—not imaginary!—transformation, and their obvious relief when he finally dies. But given its hidden autobiographical meaning—Kafka's father had the unpleasant habit of referring to his son and his son's friends contemptuously as insects and vermin—Gregor Samsa's story amounts to a Hegelian degradation.

World War I intensified the sense of change and fresh beginning, a sense newly recognized in Ovid's works. In his study of Hellenistic literature (1924), the classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff criticized those colleagues who denigrated Ovid as a simple rhetorician. "Only one further immortal epic poem that can compete in aesthetic value with the *Aeneid* arose under Augustus: Ovid's *Metamorphoses*" (Wilamowitz 1924: 1.241).

Even before Wilamowitz sought to rehabilitate Ovid for the scholarly community, the poets had already rediscovered him. While T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* and Paul Valéry in *La Jeune Parque* were using material from the *Metamorphoses*, two German-language writers in different Swiss cantons also turned to Ovid. In 1922 Hermann Hesse wrote for his fiancée Ruth Wenger a fantastic tale entitled *Pictor's Metamorphoses* (*Piktors Verwandlungen*). (The tale, illustrated with Hesse's own vivid watercolors, was first published in 1925 in a small bibliophile edition.) Hesse, who had not only read Jung's work but also undergone Jungian psychoanalysis in 1916/17 and met Jung personally, was also a solid Latinist. During his first semester at the distinguished Swabian boarding school at Maulbronn, Hesse in his letters frequently cited Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* belonged to his favorite subjects. In the first week (mid-September 1891) he reported to his parents that he needed three notebooks for Ovid alone. Later he confided that he did not especially enjoy his Latin classes but that "it is a delight to read Ovid." Predictably, Ovid soon made his way into the schoolboy's verses, and he enjoyed translating Ovid's lines into German hexameters. Although Hesse's formal schooling ended a few months later when he ran away from Maulbronn, he retained his interest and his ability in the classics for the remainder of his life and included Ovid among the essential works cited decades later in his essay, "A Library of World Literature" ("Eine Bibliothek der Weltliteratur," 1929).

Hesse's tale is simple. When Pictor (an obvious pseudonym for Hesse himself, "the painter") arrives in Paradise, he sees a tree that is simultaneously man and woman. When a serpent emerges from it, he moves on and soon sees another tree—the Tree of Life—that is both sun and moon. (The watercolor, Plate 6, shows a tree with two trunks, each bearing smiling sun and moon faces.) Going on, he notices flowers that sing and laugh, that have large blue eyes and stick out their tongues flirtatiously. Captivated by these sights, he comes upon a bird variegated in multiple colors. When he asks it where to find happiness, the bird laughs and changes successively into a flower, a butterfly, and finally a glittering crystal. (Hesse's watercolors depict these various metamorphoses.) When Pictor seizes the stone, the serpent appears and tells him that it will change him into anything

he wishes but that he must act quickly. Overjoyed, Pictor says the word and is immediately transformed into a tree, an arboreal existence that he enjoys for years. Eventually he notices that, while all the other beings in Paradise undergo constant transformations, he alone is not part of that magical stream of metamorphosis. One day a girl wanders into his part of Paradise, singing and dancing. Sitting down beneath his tree, she leans against the trunk, feels his trembling, and is overcome by a responsive melancholy. At that moment the multicolored bird comes flying up and drops a colorful crystal at the girl's feet. As soon as she takes the magical stone in her hand, Pictor's wish is fulfilled: she sinks down and becomes one with the tree, growing out of his trunk as a strong young branch. Now at last Pictor has found true Paradise, for together with his Victoria his half has become whole, and together they are able to enter the unending flow of transformations that constitute Paradise. Hesse's tale gives vivid narrative and pictorial expression to the Jungian theory of transformation, using in the process his own version of Ovid's tale of Hermaphroditus and the nymph Salmacis. Unlike Kafka's prewar novella, in which transformation represents a Hegelian degradation, Pictor's metamorphosis exemplifies an ascension in the Jungian sense.

While Hesse was writing and illustrating his tale in the Ticino, a short distance away in the Valais Rainer Maria Rilke was composing the 55 sonnets of his *Sonnets to Orpheus* (*Sonette an Orpheus*, published 1923). Unlike Hesse, Rilke received no systematic training in the classics at the two military academies and the business school he attended. But later, when he was studying privately to prepare for the university entrance examinations, he was tutored for a time in Latin. Some of the reading involved Ovid, and by 1895 he was able to translate 36 verses of the Arion episode from Ovid's *Fasti* into elegiac distichs. Even though Rilke was never at ease with Latin, as were Kafka and Hesse, he knew Ovid—a favorite school author of the period—and was exposed to at least some of his work in the original. (There is no evidence that he read Virgil in the original.) Later, other intellectual provocateurs reignited his interest in the Roman poet. In 1905/1906 he served as private secretary to Auguste Rodin. Living on the grounds of Rodin's estate at Meudon, the young poet was daily in the presence of the sculptor's works. Rodin, an admirer of the *Metamorphoses*, created several sculptures based on Ovidian themes—sculptures that Rilke in his lectures on Rodin singled out for particular comment: *Danaid*, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, and *Orpheus and the Maenads*. His interest was rekindled years later when his lover, Merline, presented him at Christmas 1920 with a Latin–French edition of the *Metamorphoses* with a binding that she herself had decorated with watercolors. In his effusive thank-you letter, Rilke told her how happy he was to own "this inexhaustible book" and reported that he was reading the tales of Myrrha and Daphne. When Merline moved to Berlin in the fall of 1921, she left behind in Rilke's study a small reproduction of an early sixteenth-century drawing by Cima da Comegliano depicting Orpheus in repose and singing beneath a tree. This drawing, hanging directly opposite one of the two standing desks at which Rilke worked, was an immediate catalyst for the *Sonnets to Orpheus*.

Rilke's sonnets are to Orpheus, not about him. Only about a dozen of the 55 poems deal explicitly with the figure of the ur-poet. Rilke was seeking to give expression to the ideas of Orphism, a currently popular movement that sought through a grand *coincidentia oppositorum* to overcome the rational separation of inner and outer, past and present, time and space, life and death. In this effort, however, Rilke totally internalized Ovid's Orpheus and made of him an achievable ideal through whose song he could achieve metamorphosis and familiarity with the realms of life and death. The modern disciple may not be able literally to make the descent to the underworld; but through the power of Orphic imagination he can transcend the reality of the present and embrace the beyond. "Go in and out of transformation," Rilke wrote in the final sonnet. "What is your most painful experience? If you find drinking bitter, become wine."

Ovid the Ur-Exile

The Ovidianism of the 1920s faded following the bimillennial commemorations of Virgil's birth in 1930, which were celebrated nowhere more enthusiastically than in Germany. The desire for order and stability following the recent financial disasters and the spirit of nationalism associated with Hitler's Germany were more closely attuned to the Virgilian ethos than to Ovid's praise of playful metamorphosis. What now appealed to writers, in a dramatic shift from the earlier tradition, was not Ovid's poetry but his life as the ur-exile far from Rome on the Black Sea. When the Austrian novelist Hermann Broch was invited in 1935 to give a reading for radio, he proposed a talk called "Literature at the End of a Cultural Era." The talk, deemed inappropriate by the authorities, was never given, and so Broch decided to incorporate his views on cultural decline into a short story. It did not require much deliberation, he reports, to think of parallels between the first pre-Christian century and our own age: "civil war, dictatorship, and a dying off of the old ancient religious forms. Yes, there was even a striking parallel to the phenomenon of emigration—that is, in Tomi, the fishing village on the Black Sea." It was soon pointed out to Broch, untrained in the classics, that Ovid, not Virgil, died in Tomis, and so he altered the plot of his work, which eventually grew into his novel *The Death of Virgil* (*Der Tod des Vergil*, 1945). Tellingly, however, it was Ovid who first occurred to him as the archetypal exile.

When Bertolt Brecht, already exiled from Germany, left Sweden for Finland and the United States, a school edition of Ovid's poems and an old edition of the *Metamorphoses* were among the books selected from his large library to go into the seaman's chest that accompanied him. In his poem "Visit with the Exiled Poets" ("Besuch bei den verbannten Dichtern," 1939) Brecht in a dream enters the hut of the exiled poets, where Ovid greets him at the entrance and whispers: "It would be better if you didn't sit down. You haven't yet died." Again, as in Broch's case, the first exiled poet who came to Brecht's mind is Ovid.

A third writer of that wartime generation, Lion Feuchtwanger, reacted in much the same way in his talk at a 1943 writers' congress in Los Angeles. Recalling a university seminar in which the professor declared that the years of exile might influence a writer's choice of material but not his inner landscape, Feuchtwanger expresses his skepticism of that thesis. "I could not bring myself to believe that the exile of Ovid, Li-Tai-Po, Dante, Heinrich Heine, and Victor Hugo had influenced only the subject materials of these poets." Again, it is striking that the first name that occurs to Feuchtwanger is that of Ovid, who is acknowledged as the exile par excellence, the "ur-exile" whose works, according to one scholar, created a veritable "typology of exile literature" (Froesch 1987: 54).

Paradoxically, the major scholarly work anticipating the revival of Ovid in the West was written in exile by the classicist Hermann Fränkel, who left Germany in the 1930s and spent the remainder of his academic career in the United States. It is striking that, invited to deliver the Sather Classical Lectures at the University of California at Berkeley, he chose a topic on which, as he confides in his preface, he had never previously published a line: *Ovid: A Poet between Two Worlds* (1945). If, he continues, he "enjoyed writing this study more than anything before," that enjoyment and his choice of topic can be attributed at least in part, though he never says so, to a sense of personal identification with the poet who had himself experienced exile almost two thousand years earlier (Fränkel 1969: vii–viii). Even though Fränkel undertook his project explicitly as an attempt to rehabilitate a Roman poet whose reputation had been "under a cloud for more than a hundred years," his work was criticized as being confused about its target audience and hence thought incapable at the time of reaching a more general audience.

While writers in other countries during the 1930s identified Ovid with the theme of exile—for example, Osip Mandelstam in Russia and John Masefield in England—the association was most urgent among German writers who personally experienced exile in their flight from the Nazis.

Virgil maintained his hold for another decade as the postwar world sought to rebuild itself politically and ethically after World War II. As remarked by Robert Graves (who in his poem "Ovid in Defeat" betrays an almost personal animosity toward Ovid): "Whenever a golden age of stable government, full churches, and expanding wealth dawns among the Western nations, Virgil always returns to supreme favour" (Graves 1962: 13)—a view easily borne out by the literature of those years in many languages. There were, to be sure, exceptions. In Romania, where Ovid had long been regarded as a proto-Romanian, such writers as Georg Scherg, Vintila Horia, and Marin Mincu continued to celebrate that association in their plays and novels (Ziolkowski 2005: 112–24). Generally speaking, however, it was only after the grand bimillennial celebrations of Ovid's birth in 1957/58 that Ovid again began to compete with Virgil as the representative classical poet, in Germany as elsewhere.

Ovid East and West

In addition to a flood of scholarly publications, the bimillennial years also saw new literary efforts. But now a shift of emphasis is evident as writers perceive the political implications of Ovid's life. In 1959 the Artemis Press in Zurich circulated as a gift to friends of the house a charming little book by the Swabian poet Josef Eberle, who during the war had to publish under a pseudonym because of his socialist views. Poet laureate of his hometown Rottenburg, he was the author of several volumes of poems in Latin. His *Hours with Ovid* (*Stunden mit Ovid*, 1959) opens with a sketch of the poet's life based on Ovid's elegies, passages of which are gracefully translated into German distichs. The second chapter depicts Ovid's birthplace of Sulmo as Eberle experienced it in 1958 when he attended the international Ovid celebrations there. It goes on to survey the reception of Ovid over the centuries and his rejection, toward the end of the eighteenth century, because of the Rococo spirit in his *Amores* that ill accorded with the Enlightenment. Eberle then analyses the tale of Pygmalion as exemplary for the themes and techniques of the *Metamorphoses*. The penultimate chapter recapitulates the image of Rome that emerges from Ovid's poems and the inevitable grief that its loss caused him. The little book ends with reflections on Ovid's views, and that of Roman literature generally, on immortality—an immortality that in fact the poet achieved long after the grandeur of ancient Rome had receded into the past. Thanks to Eberle's work, which reached a non-scholarly audience, the bimillennial penetrated the literary consciousness in West Germany as profoundly as it did elsewhere.

The Communist parallel to Eberle's work may be seen in the *Elegies from Ovid's Unpublished Works* (*Elegien aus dem Nachlaß des Ovid*, 1963) by Ernst Fischer, the leading Marxist intellectual in Austria during the years following World War II and editor of the Communist newspaper *Neues Österreich*. Fischer's elegies suggest hidden doubts in his hitherto stalwart Stalinism, despite an afterword that makes quite explicit their Marxist basis. He interprets Roman history as a class struggle between aristocrats and plebeians in a Rome corrupted by the gold of Egypt, the riches of the Orient, and a slave economy, where trade and industry prospered at the expense of the peasants and workers. Caesarism and the *pax Augusta* simply camouflaged the decadence of a society in which a ruthless dictator only superficially shared his power with the bureaucracy inherited from the republic. Augustus so successfully depoliticized Rome that it was difficult to attract young people to the service of the state. In this corrupt society, the lives of the two Julias, mother and daughter, were an "individualistic revolt" against the cynical exploitation of sex for politics. Citing Karl Marx's doctoral dissertation on the retreat from the social to the private realm in antiquity, Fischer designates the two Julias and Ovid as the "incarnation of a new age" in which erotics replaced politics and the *Ars Amatoria*

became a manifesto of opposition. When Ovid was relegated to Tomis, he found there a state of "ur-communism." Imagining that Ovid must have written other elegies more personal than the official appeals of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Fischer offers his poems as those elegies from Ovid's unpublished works.

The poems, written in vigorous and graceful elegiac distichs, are divided into three sections. "Rome" conveys a hard-hitting social critique along the lines of the afterword. The poet is grateful for his relegation, which has removed him from the lies, outrage, decline, and betrayals of Rome. Accordingly in his version of Leda and the swan, Leda is portrayed as the victim of a violent and vicious bird, "a bastard of vulture and raven." The second section, "The Scythian Women," comprises Ovid's love elegies (with a seemingly autobiographical intensity) to the woman who has made his exile happy. The concluding section, "The Dream," presents Ovid's/Fischer's dreams for the future, in which a dialogue with the overthrown statue of Augustus turns into an exercise in dialectics between power and freedom, between a Caesar who sacrificed freedom for stability and order and a poet who desires change and liberty.

The bimillennial year saw the publication of a major study by a West German sociologist, Helmut Schelsky, on the postwar youth of Western industrial society—those coming to intellectual maturity between 1945 and 1955—who labeled its German manifestation as "the skeptical generation" (*Die skeptische Generation*, 1957). While Eckart von Naso (1899–1972) does not belong by date of birth to that generation, this conservative dramatist and novelist shares and projects the values of his young contemporaries in his novel *Love Was His Destiny* (*Liebe war sein Schicksal*, 1958), which devotes only a few concluding pages to the period of exile. The novel, in which Ovid's life is embedded in a well-informed political and cultural context, is much better than its kitsch title suggests. To be sure, love—that is, the private rather than the political sphere—constitutes the unifying theme, but several other themes are introduced: notably the reasons for Ovid's exile and the tantalizing suggestion that Ovid, through two of his lovers (a Jewish hetaera and a Roman actress), learns about Hebrew prophecies of the Messiah, their religion of monotheism, and the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, and that he is tempted to write about it. But the theme of proto-Christianity, which parallels ideas that concerned contemporary novelists in Romania, where Ovid is regarded as an early national hero, is not carried through.

During the next two decades Ovid enjoyed a livelier literary life in East Germany than in the West. Hartmut Lange's drama *Staschek, or The Life of Ovid* (*Staschek, oder Das Leben des Ovid*, 1972) specifically incorporates the author's "experiences with the first socialist revolution on German soil," where he witnessed the "expropriation of the expropriators," the land reform and collectivization of agriculture, the cultural revolution, and the violent overthrow of all forms of social intercourse. Lange adapts a Brechtian approach to his material. His Staschek is a proletarian from "east of the Elbe," who has left his former home because of a quarrel with the manager of the cooperative farm where he worked. In the 12 scenes of the play

he wanders through time and space to discover that political reality has always and everywhere been the same: namely, corrupt. In the first scenes, a bleak place where he encounters Vladimir and Estragon still waiting for Godot, he witnesses Cicero's murder. He then meets Horace and accompanies him to Rome, where the poet spends his time penning odes in praise of Maecenas and Octavian. Horace explains the political realities to Staschek: Virgil received his villa in return for his poetic offerings to the ruler, and Horace wants to achieve a similar success. Staschek meets the young Ovid, who unlike the sycophantic Horace and Virgil is bold enough to refuse Maecenas' demand that he undertake a national epic in the manner of Virgil. Ovid takes on Staschek as a copyist and, after the poet's exile, Staschek cleans out his house, then gradually makes his way back through the centuries and the lands to his home on the Elbe, where he discovers in his pockets a manuscript of Ovid's poetry. At first he shreds and discards it as worthless; but then he picks up the scraps again on the chance that they might someday be useful or valuable.

Whereas Lange's tragicomedy uses the past to make a cynical comment on the role of the poet in history, Volker Ebersbach's novel *The Exile of Tomis* (*Der Verbannte von Tomi*, 1984) is an unpoetic fiction about political intrigue during Ovid's first two years at Tomis, making extensive use of details from *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, which Ebersbach—a graduate in classics from the University of Jena who wrote his dissertation on Petronius—knows well at first hand. His Ovid has been exiled because, having been tricked by Augustus's granddaughter Julia into watching her engage in adulterous sex, he was then betrayed by an opportunistic librarian jealous of Ovid's success as a poet. Initially, resisting all efforts at acclimatization at Tomis, he spends his days writing versified appeals to Augustus and letters to his wife and daughter. Eventually he becomes involved in a wholly fictitious plot revolving around intrigues involving the family of the Roman prefect and negotiations with the nearby Getae, who represent a kind of Noble Savage, whose virtues stand in sharp contrast to the degeneracy of a Rome on the point of decline—a contrast that Ebersbach exploits as an analogy for the German Democratic Republic and contemporary West German society.

The East German playwright Heiner Müller, while in California shortly before his death in 1995, bought an English translation of the *Metamorphoses* with the intention of writing a series of theatrical pieces based on its tales. Müller, already noted for his dramatizations and reworkings of themes from ancient Greek literature, kept the volume with him constantly during those last months of his life. Although he never carried out his project, it is safe to assume, on the basis of his other writings, that any play by Müller based on the *Metamorphoses* would have had a political thrust. The insurrectionary message is absolutely clear in Peter Horst Neumann's poem, "Augustus Weather" ("Augustuswetter. Aufforderung zum Tyrannenmord nach zweitausend Jahren," 1999), in which the poet urges the reader to aim well at the emperor sleeping beneath a pine tree. "A sleeping emperor is a good emperor." Neumann leaves it up to the reader which contemporary ruler in the sequence following Augustus—Stalin—Hitler he has in mind.

Postmodern Ovid

A year before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the internationally acclaimed novel by the Austrian author Christoph Ransmayr, *The Last World* (*Die letzte Welt*, 1988) appeared, signaling another shift in emphasis: from the political orientation that had obsessed writers of the past three decades to a postmodern aesthetic approach. In this experimental work Ovid occupies the spiritual center but never appears in person. Indeed, the image of the poet that emerges has little connection with the known facts of his life. Nine years after Ovid's relegation, his young admirer Cotta, having heard reports of the poet's death, sets out to track down the manuscript of the *Metamorphoses* that Ovid is rumored to have left behind in remote Tomis. Unlike many earlier writers, Ransmayr is concerned neither with the reasons for Ovid's relegation nor with his life during his years of exile. Ransmayr's interest is focused entirely on the problematic relationship between fiction and reality as Cotta, in the remote and timeless mining village of Tomis, repeatedly encounters inhabitants whose lives provided Ovid with the material for his poem: the shop owner Fama, his source for local gossip; the deaf-mute weaver Arachne, who has woven into her tapestries stories told to her by Ovid; the discreet local prostitute Echo, who becomes Cotta's confidante; and many others. Cotta concludes that Ovid "liberated the world from people and their systems by telling *every* tale to its ultimate end"—that is, by following every human history to its redeeming transformation back into some natural object. Once he had cleared the earth of all human beings by means of metamorphoses, Ovid simply entered his own narrative and—shades of Hesse's Pictor—rolled down the hillsides as a tiny stone or floated over the tides as a cormorant.

Around the turn of the millennium Ovid emerged in the now reunified Germanies. A feminist fantasy is evident in *The Women of Colchis* (*Die Frauen von Kolchis*, 1996) by the former East German writer Waldtraut Lewin. It revolves around a mild-mannered Roman weaver, Pamphilus, and his wife Tabea, a former prostitute, who go to Colchis to take possession of land offered by Augustus as a lure for the Roman urban proletariat. The neighboring Getae are divided into two camps: the matriarchal women with their magical cultic practices and warlike demeanor, and the weaker men, who seek to overthrow the women and impose their own rule. Pamphilus is abducted by a tribe of Scythian warrior-maidens to teach them the art of weaving and to impregnate them without the aid of their own men, with whom they are in constant conflict. Meanwhile Tabea succumbs to the male Evil Spirit, by whom she becomes pregnant. At the end, and through Pamphilus' mediation, the Scythian women and the Romans reach an agreement: the Romans sell their iron weapons to the Scythians in return for gold that the Scythians don't value; and the "Golden Fleece" is set up in a special temple at which the two peoples can henceforth meet in peace for trade.

Ovid enters the story as the neighbor of Pamphilus and Tabea, a clownlike figure ridiculed by the Romans as a ludicrous nuisance. When Pamphilus is kidnapped by the Scythian women, the poet persuades Tabea to accompany him on a "propaganda tour" of the neighboring farms and villages and to work up enthusiasm for a civilian guard to protect the Roman settlers against the intruders. Lewin's novel stands in the tradition of such recent German feminist re-visions of classical antiquity as Christa Wolf's novels *Kassandra* (1983) and *Medea* (1996) and Christine Brückner's story collection *If you had spoken, Desdemona* (*Wenn du geredet hättest, Desdemona*, 1983), which includes satirical monologues by such figures as Sappho and Clytemnestra. The feminist re-vision almost by definition involves a satirization of the principal male figures, who are reduced to the roles of stud (Pamphilus) and naive fool (Ovid).

The new millennium has seen the publication of two remarkable Ovidian works in German: Durs Grünbein's *The First Year* (*Das erste Jahr*, 2001); and Yoko Tawada's *Opium for Ovid: A Pillow Book by 22 Women* (*Opium für Ovid. Ein Kopfkissenbuch von 22 Frauen*, 2000). Grünbein has created a work virtually unique in modern literature (at least since Ezra Pound's praise of its significance) for its focus on and emulation of Ovid's *Fasti*. Like that work, Grünbein's journal and workbook for the year 2000 takes the calendar year as occasion for poems and reflections on the most varied topics, including incidents from his own life, history, world literature from antiquity to the present, modern science, philosophy, and politics. Tying it all together is a constant awareness of "the large relationships" that informed the great poems of the past, from Virgil and Ovid to Dante. Today's complacent writers, Grünbein censures, do not realize in their ignorance "that the world they describe is separated from Ovid's metamorphosis-cosmos only by the thinnest membranes." Future Ovids, he remarks elsewhere, will have to concern themselves with "the minute transformation artists," by which he means the epidemic viruses—AIDS, Ebola, Hepatitis B, and others—that are transforming the modern world. While Grünbein never mentions the *Fasti*, the model of Ovid's great calendar work is clearly ever present in the mind of this contemporary poet who is bound by powerful ties to Roman antiquity (Albrecht 2003: 290). He states that he is "indebted to Roman literature for the most important lessons about writing," and his poetry betrays the influence of Juvenal (whom he has translated) as well as Horace and other Roman authors.

In 1998 Yoko Tawada, who was born in Tokyo but has studied and lived in Germany since 1979, held the prestigious Chair of Poetics at Tübingen University, for which occasion she delivered a series of three lectures published under the telling title "Metamorphoses" (*Verwandlungen*) and dealing with topics whose Ovidian implications are immediately evident: "Voice of a Bird, or the Problem of Foreignness"; "Script of a Tortoise, or the Problem of Translation"; and "Face of a Fish, or the Problem of Transformation." Her novel, *Opium for Ovid*, differs from any of the works discussed up to this point to the extent that it not only uses Ovidian material

in a modern context but also, as the subtitle implies, combines Eastern and Western literary traditions. The early eleventh-century Japanese *Pillow Book* comprises a pot-pourri of odd facts, stories, observations, whimsical lists, and reminiscences jotted down in some 320 sections by a court attendant to the Empress Sadako. This Asian classic suggests the form of Tawada's work, which is not so much a collection as a cycle of 22 scenes, not stories with a plot, connected by overlapping characters. These dreamy scenes, in which almost no men appear, offer portraits of the inner and outer lives of women as they go about their affairs in contemporary Ham-burg. Having learned about life through books, these women are often confused or disappointed by their confrontation with reality.

While the "plots" have little to do with Ovid's tales, each of the women is named for a figure from the *Metamorphoses*, beginning with Leda and ending with Diana. Some are further characterized by traits based on their mythic models: thus Daphne "stands in the posture of a tree and smiles," and, when Ariadne wakes up, "she feels as though deserted by someone." The hairdresser Thisbe, who reports the gossip from customer to customer, "resembles a slit in the wall" through whom people satisfy their curiosity about others. There are two explicit references to Ovid. After Thetis stays awakes all night reading, she explains her swollen eyes by lying that she cried after quarreling with a friend. "No one was to find out that during this night she had read the *Metamorphoses* from cover to cover."

The curious title is explained in the section about the aspiring film director Pomona, who has become drug-dependent because she takes narcotics simply in anticipation of possible pain. But "dependency" has a broader symbolic meaning for the author. England was once economically dependent on China for its tea supply, she explains. To free itself from that dependency, England adopted a postcolonial strategy: "The opium policy!" The author tells us that her own reasoning is precisely the opposite of Pomona's: rather than anticipating her pain with drugs, she cultivates it almost greedily and transmutes it into the heady intoxication of art, which in turn becomes her antidote or "opium" against the aesthetically colonizing power of Ovid, whose images tend to creep into her writing like a drug. Her novel, which exists for and from literature, ends with the child Diana reading stealthily in bed, who thinks that one day she will be permitted to stay awake reading all day and "shall never again have to get up." Life is transformed wholly into art.

The German reception of Ovid provides a sensitive seismograph for the transfor-mations of German history, from the courtly romances of the thirteenth century by way of the exemplary models of the Renaissance / Reformation and the poetic fantasies of Romanticism down to its politicization, feminization, and aestheticiza-tion in the twentieth century. First, the *Metamorphoses* appealed to the desire for transformation and existential experience before and after World War I. Then, her-alded by the emigré writers as the ur-exile, he was rejected by the propagandists of nationalism during the 1930s and by the spokesmen of stability in the immediate

postwar years. After the bimillennial celebrations of 1957, he was taken up by East German writers to criticize the West and by West German writers for his depiction of social life and love in a changing world. In the unified Germany after 1990, finally, he appealed to postmodern writers for the implications of the *Metamorphoses* concerning the shifting boundaries between fantasy and reality.

Further Reading

Various volumes deal in whole or in part with the reception of Ovid since antiquity, particularly in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. These include (in English) Rand (1925), Martindale (1988), Anderson (1995), Hardie (2002), and Boyd (2002). Few in English, however, target the reception of Ovid in Germany: notably several chapters in Ziolkowski (2005), which provide further information about the works discussed above. In German, several publications deal with Ovid in connection with Ransmayr's *The Last World*: for instance, Vollstedt (1998) and Kiesel and Wöhrle (1990). Otherwise, in addition to the works cited in the chapter, see Riedel (2000) and Ziolkowski (2008).

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Ovid and Russia's Poets of Exile

Andrew Kahn

Ovid is the exemplary figure in Russian treatments of exile from the Romantic period to the end of the Soviet Union. No great Russian poet ever composed a set of elegies on the scale of *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Yet Ovid's exilic books served as a departure point for meditations on exile by a number of canonical poets (rather than prose writers). This chapter will concentrate on three great exiled Ovidians: Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837), Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938), and Joseph Brodsky (1940–96).

Romantic Exile

In the eighteenth century, Russia's neoclassical poets translated and imitated Ovid. Their clear preference was for the fabulist and erotic poet of the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* (Svyiasov 1988: 206–10; Kahn 2013). The taste for Ovid as an exile and autobiographical poet dates to the 1790s. The trend followed a growing awareness of the life of the writer as an aspect of the literary field that developed belatedly during Catherine the Great's reign. By the end of her rule in the 1790s, writers were also on guard against persecution by a former champion turned oppressor. In the gradual change-over between classicism and pre-Romanticism, political ideas of freedom were subsumed into representations of individual freedom and unfettered genius.

Among Russian pre-Romantics, the most significant Ovidian is the elegist S.S. Bobrov (1765–1810), best known for *Tauris* (1798), a narrative poem inspired by James Thomson's *The Seasons* and based on Bobrov's years of residence as a civil servant in the Black Sea region. He was also the author of "A Ballade: The Grave of Ovid, the famed favourite of the Muses" (1792), and is the first Russian

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poet to establish the connection between poet, the topic of exile, transhistorical communion between poets, and the Crimean geography (Bobrov 1971: 85–91). Future poets would turn to these topoi when treating their own exile in Ovidian terms. Bobrov's "Ballade" is replete with Ossianic touches of landscape description and Gothic evocations worthy of Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*. The speaker visits the grave site in order to commune with the spirit of the poet and relive Ovid's experiences. Everything about the terrain terrifies and moves: its remoteness, the tumultuous sea, the high cliffs, the moonlight shining on a landscape once "washed in blood" because of the historical battles over Transcaucasia. This is a landscape ripe for the visitation of a ghost, and the reverie ends with the speaker mentally transported across 18 centuries to Ovid's time. The elegist spares no effort in order to demonstrate his authentic claim, as a fellow "unhappy spirit," a "depressed neighbor," to conjure and commune with his Roman idol and to "pour forth a stream of tears" in "holy tribute" to this spirit. Ovid's ghost speaks of his own spirit as "eternally young," ultimately favored by posterity because his verse lives on. His boast of immortality stands in contrast to expressing pity for Augustus, who may have proclaimed himself a god, but is clearly no longer worshiped and, like Rome, has fallen into oblivion.

The first major poet to extend the afterlife of Ovid in Russia was also the first poet to suffer exile by imperial order. Although a monarchist, Alexander Pushkin's liberal sympathies and subversive wit earned him exile for an unspecified period to southern Russia in July 1820. His political ode "Liberty" (1819) caused offense by putting tyrannical rulers on guard against the people and the revolutionary poets who act as their tribunes. By way of illustration, he cited the regicides of Louis XVI and Tsar Paul I, the reigning tsar's father. Five years in the Crimea turned out to be a boon the authorities never intended. While Lord Byron's poetry and sensational persona most influenced Pushkin's Romanticism (Greenleaf 1994: 108–55), Pushkin gave Ovid priority when he arrived in the Crimea by writing the poetic epistle "To Ovid" ("K Ovidiiu," 1821). His longest lyric poem, the elegy builds on Bobrov's model of how to commune with a poetic shade. Although Pushkin had not excelled as a Latinist at the Lyceum where he was educated, he was well schooled in classical literature, falling back on French translations when reading at length (Iakubovich 1941: 92–103). Imitations of ancient poets comprised one stream of Russian neoclassicism. But classical writers also served other purposes in a country where strong curbs on freedom of speech existed. Dressing up subversive remarks about contemporary politics in classical garb was a technique cultivated by writers of the Pushkin generation, especially the poets allied with the Decembrist cause of political reform that came to a head in an aborted political rebellion of 1825. Russian writers of a more radical cast rarely meant Caligula or Tiberius when they referred to those emperors, and their readers understood these coded allusions to Tsars Alexander I and Nicholas I. By the same token, allusions to heroic figures of the Roman republic denoted exemplary figures admired for political ideals: the Gracchi represented aspirations for the reform of Russia's serf economy, and

Cato stood for Stoic self-sacrifice and an ethos of *pro patria mori* (Kahn 1993: 757). Reading between the lines was hardly difficult; yet censors seem to have exercised leniency and turned a blind eye when writers camouflaged their political criticisms.

In representing his own exile as a variation on Ovidian exile, Pushkin had to balance self-portraiture and elegiac tribute. The poem makes complicated use of rhetorical strategies and psychology in establishing the kinship between poets while also differentiating classic and successor. As the speaker tries on Ovid's mantle for size, his expressions of empathy for Ovid are a refrain against which the melody of Pushkin's hopes for a future unlike Ovid's plays. There is obvious advantage to Pushkin in celebrating and commemorating Ovid, and basking in some reflected glory. There would be obvious disadvantage, however, in suggesting that one's own story were merely a carbon copy of a greater predecessor. While it would be an exaggeration to speak of an anxiety of influence, readers of the poem will perceive that admiration and ambivalence shape its psychology of portraiture and self-portraiture. What Pushkin fears most, an anxiety he expressed in his correspondence at the time, is the possibility of forfeiting contemporary fame, much less later renown. And while association with Ovid clearly adds a certain glamor, he shuns a perfect equivalence that transfers Ovid's rhetoric of poetic decline to himself (Williams 1994: 50–52). For that reason, Pushkin uses the poem to assert that he and Ovid have cognate fates, but also to pull back from an analogy that he hopes will in the fullness of time look plausible but more imperfect than precise. The challenge Pushkin faces is whether, on the one hand, to join the tradition of a great exile with whom he shares an experience, and from whom he needs inspiration; or, on the other hand, to express confidence in the end of exile without diminishing that loyalty to Ovid.

In this spirit, the elegy begins with an extended act of *captatio benevolentiae*. The form of the poem is the Alexandrine couplet, a style perfected by neoclassical French tragedy as the vehicle for dramatic soliloquies that vent strong emotions in perfectly balanced sentences. The choice unites a modern reinvention of the classical with an attempt to capture Ovid's own immediacy of voice by pastiching sections from his *Tristia*. The poem begins by transforming the temporal into the spatial. Although the poets lived millennia apart they now exist in proximity to one another, a sign of the spiritual kinship between the Roman poet and a fellow exile:

> Ovid, I live near the quiet shores
> Of the nation's exiled gods
> For whom you brought and left your ashes.
> These places have made your sad lament famous,
> And the tender voice of your lyre has not gone silent;
> The region is still filled with your speech.
> (Pushkin 1956: 67; trans. A.K.)

Communing with the dead is a commonplace of early Romantic graveyard poetry, and the means of doing so are easily transferable to the spot in the Crimea where

Pushkin chooses to address him. He succeeds in conveying the illusion of a living interlocutor partly by repeatedly addressing Ovid with the second-person pronoun. This is one way in which the section seems to make Ovid seemingly materialize within Pushkin's poem. If we agree with Pushkin's assertion that Ovid, as "the tender voice of the lyre has not gone mute," then we will give Pushkin credit as a worthy successor. The poem operates a double conceit in endowing Ovid factiously with this afterlife; and, secondly, in making this act of perpetuation a measure of Pushkin's own success as a poet. To some degree, Ovid's posthumous existence now depends on Pushkin's success as a new classic. The strategy can be of mutual benefit, then, to both poets. But it requires the later poet to negotiate between the attractions of a typology of exile, represented by Ovid, and his own individual version of it; between the sanction of tradition and authority, and the spirit of innovation essential to the Romantic concept of genius. The question that seems to motivate the fluctuation in tone is whether it is worse to be remembered as an imitator of the famed Ovid than to have been forgotten altogether.

> But should a distant descendant who has learned
> About me come to search in this distant land
> For my lonely trace near the remains of the famed one—
> Leaving behind the cold shelter of the shores of oblivion,
> My grateful shadow will fly to him
> And his recollection of me will be cherished.
>   (Pushkin 1956: 67; trans. A.K.)

Despite genuine sympathy, then, Pushkin modulates degrees of affinity and difference in the second section that follows the initial summary of Ovid's story. Temperamental differences are subtly underscored. Ovid as he is portrayed here is highly emotional, even despondent, whereas Pushkin, "the stern Slav," is a model of self-control who refrains from tears. In its management of their emotions, the poem makes a Romantic out of a classical writer, and a classical writer out of a Romantic. In fact, for all the initial expression of affinity, the poem establishes the relationship as an inverse one, portraying Ovid as pure victim while the Pushkinian speaker characterizes his exile as voluntary; the Roman poet inevitably experienced the hyperborean world of Pontus as harsh while the Russian, as a "son of the north," revels in the "azure skies," viticulture, and relatively mild climate of a (for him) southern region; and while the Roman bristled at the rude manners of the natives, his successor professes to be heartened by the civilizing influence of the Russian empire on the local population.

I would suggest that the message of such ambivalence concerns the awkward-ness of stage-managing exile as a literary state as much as an existential plight. Living up to the model risks one set of dangers, while failing to live up to the

example carries another sanction. On the one hand, the young Russian poet, however promising, tempts accusations of delusion and vanity by placing himself on a par with a canonical classical poet. In literary terms, emulation raises the risk of charges of derivativeness; in moral terms, it might be thought that any later poet whose fate so closely follows a pattern failed to learn a lesson and might at the very least be suspected of sensationalism. Yet to ironize that affinity might lead the poet to misread the seriousness of his own position, and from a position of denial fail to follow Ovid's example in the best way as a touchstone for how any poet, genuinely deprived of freedom, can treat the theme. The answer to such uncertainty, and the consolation, lies in the composition of the poem itself as an act of poetic ancestor veneration and literary tribute. No poet could hope to outdo Ovid as an originator of exile poetry. By making himself a poet in Ovid's image, but not merely a clone, Pushkin has sidestepped the dangers of a strict typology but preserved his value as an exemplary figure. Above all, "To Ovid" is meaningful because it structures poetic relationships as a ratio between successor poets and key predecessors. Posterity signifies a ratio of affinities in which some future poet will stand to Pushkin as he stood to Ovid. By these lights, "To Ovid" looks like self-commemoration that is morally valid rather than merely self-serving, because it envisages commemoration and poetic growth.

Modernist Ovid

One "distant descendant" who was receptive to the "grateful shadows" of both Ovid and Pushkin is Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938), one of the greatest of twentieth-century poets, famed for his use of learned allusion to the Russian and Western poetic traditions. Like Pushkin, and Ovid before him, Mandelstam earned the disfavor of the reigning tyrant through an indiscretion. The satirical "Stalin epigram" which he recited in private led to his denunciation and exile in 1934 and, eventually, death in a transit camp on the way to the Gulag. In his late poetry, and most especially in the *Voronezh Notebooks* written from exile between 1934 and 1937, Mandelstam responded to exile by writing verse in which echoes of Pushkin subtly sketch parallels between their stories of persecution. But Mandelstam's great Ovidian moment came approximately a decade earlier with the poem "Tristia" (from which the Berlin publisher of his second collection in 1923 gave the entire collection its title).

   Mandelstam wrote the poem in the Crimea, in retreat from the Civil War and the devastation of his home city of St. Petersburg (then Petrograd). The Crimea is a region that Mandelstam tends to treat as a mythical land of Colchis in his poetry, the region of Dionysius and also the place of Ovid's exile. In a letter of 1926 to his wife, who had gone south to convalesce, he wrote jokingly, "Why have I despatched

you to the sea like some sort of Ovid?" (Mandelstam 1992: vol. 4, no. 103). In the early 1920s Mandelstam responded to the destruction of the culture of the *ancien régime*, the world swept away by the Russian Revolution, in poems that drew on his classical education, distilling his personal response to fragmentation, erasure, loss, and parting through archetypal figures. In representing the dismemberment of the Judaeo-classical heritage that underpinned Petersburg culture, Mandelstam uses the figure of Orpheus (Terras 1966). In depicting the unbearable anguish of torn loyalties brought about by a state of civil war, episodes from the Trojan cycle were his preferred vehicle. And when he turned to the drama of separation, and of a separation that might be caused by exile or result in exile, he produces his own version of "Tristia." Mandelstam began his important essay "Word and Culture" (1921), a discussion of the relation of culture and political power as well as historical change, by citing the opening lines of Book 1 of *Tristia*. While the cultural vandalism cast a pall on him like the "saddest image of night" (*tristissima noctis imago*), critics have often exaggerated the despondence behind his appropriation of Ovid's lines. Mandelstam attributes the defeatist nostalgia they articulate to skeptics who see no future in the new order. He adopts a cautiously optimistic view on the function of culture as a church in the new, secular state. In the event, Mandelstam proved to be deeply ambivalent about the ends of revolution because he feared the means would always risk being inhuman and inhumane. Of the poems in which he expressed his fears about the human cost of upheaval, "Tristia" remains a most poignant text because it foregrounds individual loss rather than celebrating, as most revolutionary poetry of the period did, collective success.

Named for Ovid's work, and to signify that the poem speaks of "sad things," "Tristia" is one of the most famous elegies in Russian poetry. While the first-person speaker may be a proxy for the poet on the eve of parting from his loved ones, the poem also speaks for all moments of separation that look involuntary and irreparable. Mandelstam's "Tristia" takes place in antiquity and in modernity; its action unfolds against the backdrop of an Acropolis, but the setting could just as easily be St. Petersburg, a neoclassical city guarded by statues of Pallas Athena or Minerva. For his meditation on exiles past, present, and future, Mandelstam employs an eight-line stanza in blank verse with alternating rhyme, and speaks mostly in the present tense. Such a regular structure formalizes the theme of recurrence and inevitability. This is a poem that universalizes exile as a human condition brought about by historical forces against which individuals look helpless, obliged to submit to destiny or behavior determined by their gender roles and historical conditioning:

> I've mastered the great craft of separation
> Amidst the bare unbraided pleas of night,
> Those lingerings while oxen chew their ration,
> The watchful town's last eyelid's shutting tight.
> And I revere that midnight rooster's descant
> when shouldering the wayfarer's sack of wrong

eyes stained with tears were peering at the distance
and women's wailings were the Muses' song.

Who is to tell when hearing "separation"
what kind of parting this may resonate,
foreshadowed by a rooster's exclamation
as candles twist the temple's colonnade;
why at the dawn of some new life, new era
when oxen chew their ration in the stall
that wakeful rooster, a new life's town crier,
flaps its torn wings atop the city wall.
    (Mandlestam 1977: 47, lines 1–8; trans. J. Brodsky)

Whereas Ovid and Pushkin reacted to exile as a fact, "Tristia" expresses dread for
the inevitable partings, temporary and unlimited, deathly and eternal, that war and
revolution cause. Line 2 calls the laments of the night "bare headed" because it is in
this state of disrepair that the subjects, whether families or lovers, will separate; the
vigils of the speaker are final not just because it is the last hour before dawn breaks;
the burden of grief that each bears on fleeing is of the road because departure lies
that way; eyes are reddened by weeping even before they see the future because
the outcome is uncertain.

   A vocabulary of knowledge and certainty, and guessing and anxiety, gives emo-
tional power to the poem's fundamental question about knowing the future. The
question we can draw out of the poem is whether anticipating the sequence of
responses from rising at dawn, packing one's load, saying farewell, weeping and
parting, gives knowledge of how that chain of events will be started; or teach one
to accept its initiation, whenever it comes. "Tristia" begins with a statement that
could be read as a boast by the speaker who lays claim to a command of the science
or art of parting; other words such as "guessing," "peering," and "contingency"
will at an even pace corrode this certainty, which becomes a statement of resig-
nation. Stanza one establishes a contrast between man's knowing, consciousness,
and animal activity where there is no sense of expectation. It also establishes a con-
trast between Ovid's self-conscious statements that he is a poet in decline, with
this speaker's assertion that he is in command of the art of separation, by which
he means the literary art of bidding farewell. Stanza two, which evokes the animal
world and augury, anticipating the blend of haruspicy and traditional Russian div-
ination ritual mentioned in stanza three, poses unanswerable questions. Stability
and reversal are written into the lives of animals and mankind. The animal reac-
tions of the oxen, who follow the diurnal cycle dumbly, cannot share a sense of
expectation, but the syntax of line three implies that they, too, wait; the cockerel, an
emblem of the natural cycle, crows as a matter of course, but beats its wings in des-
peration because it will be killed for a rite of divination; and the cycle of domestic
habit and creativity that turns waiting into weaving becomes in the final stanza an
attempt to ward off unease. Stanza three offers art as a therapy: language and love

poetry bring the continuity of cultural memory and the comfort of knowing that such creativity is portable—the figure in stanza one flees with some belongings, whereas the poet's treasured baggage goes with him.

> And I love the routine weaving-round,
> The spindle's hum, the shuttle's click.
> See where barefoot Delia, like a swansdown,
> Is borne toward us, flying on the wind.
> Oh, the straitened basis of our lives!
> What could be more wretched than the language of bliss?
> Everything has been before and again will come to pass;
> The instant of recognition is all we ever miss.
>
> (Lines 17–24; trans. B. Meares)

The poem follows a process of unlearning in which the speaker's certainty about his art of knowledge collapses, a process of thesis (stanza one), antithesis (stanzas two and three), and synthesis (stanza four) supported by numerous sound links and verbal repetitions between the two outer sections. Line 29 is a final renunciation of the pretense of knowing, transferring them to women who may genuinely do better or, as is more likely, take comfort in an activity that is one craft placed alongside other arts like weaving (vv. 17–18) and dancing (v. 19). This is what women *do* to offset the frustration of not knowing, just as men will be ready to fight once they relinquish attempts to foretell the future.

> So be it: A transparent figure lies
> On a clean dish of porcelain glaze
> As a pegged-out squirrelskin dries;
> Bent over wax, a young woman's gaze.
> It's not for us to divine the Erebus of Greece:
> For women, wax; for me, bronze armor's metal;
> For us the dice are cast as we go forth to battle,
> But women prophesy at their own decease.
>
> (Lines 25–32; trans. B. Meares)

Despite the speaker's claim to having possessed the art of separation, the act of writing the poem is the process of learning that reveals a different truth. Prompted by these circumstances, inspiration leads to the recognition of the limits of perception, an acknowledgment that emotional need drives illusory claims for knowledge, founded on ritual and religion, and finally generates a new need for action rather than contemplation to release the human subject from doubt. Yet the need to cure this perturbation sets apart the human from the animal unconsciousness of the oxen who chew peacefully while men fret and women weep, and the product of that humanity is the distillation of these realizations in the poem.

"Tristia" recasts history in anthropological terms of grief and mourning, and by building outward from the personal viewpoint to that of the universal subject. Time is compartmentalized into discrete activity like the microscopic meditation of the pre-dawn watch, the domestic activity of weaving, the moment of recognition when the individual has insight into the relation of their own circumstance to the general law of history; and, on the other hand, the speaker also confronts the boundless, unknowable future, the present tense of waiting that seems endless through anxiety, the out-of-time feeling of ritual that suspends the clock. It is not for nothing that the poem ends on the verb meaning "to die" in the infinitive embedded syntactically in a third-person impersonal construction. "It is given to us to die" would be trite if it simply acknowledged an existential fact; its emphasis falls more on the psychological recognition that death is part of our potential future determined by a lottery beyond individual control. The tension that builds is between emotional self-possession under the duress of involuntary departure, and increasing awareness that there is no art of knowing the future.

Who is the speaker? While no one can deny that Mandelstam may project his own sorrow, there are no overt biographical details to indicate whether separation from a beloved addressee stimulated him to write the poem. The figure is rather a composite one: the title alludes to Ovid, but the setting refers to the Acropolis and to warfare, which suggests that the speaker is more like a figure from Homeric epic. The speaker may apply ritual necromancy by "reading" the entrails of the cockerel (v. 5) but his eyes are already dry from weeping; through habit he reads the omens without conviction since reason and intuition tell him that the art of prediction is imperfect. The repeated rhyme on the "new life" (*novoi zhizni*), a Christian phrase, also alludes to Dante's *Nuova Vita*, his poetic cycle on courtly love in which Dante never refers to himself. That anonymity may serve as a model for Mandelstam's creation of an impersonal persona, a first-person speaker who experiences the grief of separation yet maintains a distance from his emotions. The repeated references to the cock-crow (vv. 5, 11, 15) also point to the Gospel tale of Christ's betrayal by Judas and Peter, hinting at a Christian framework for the poem from which by inference we gloss the phrase *novaia zhizn* to mean religious rebirth. The resolution of anxiety about separation and reunion comes in the third stanza, which bases hope for reunion on the belief that there are patterns to a life, whether described by the rituals of Greek or of Roman religion. Acts of recognition (*uznavan'ie*) satisfy the poem's original belief that knowledge (*izuchit, znat*) can give us hopes of recurrence. At least for a moment, the faith in a legible key to the future suspends the oscillation between doubt and hope that structures this lyrical monologue. Because the speaker turns grief into a meditation on grief, and because the poem is saturated with allusions to Ovid, Tibullus, Konstantin Batiushkov, and Pushkin, it follows the modernist technique of reviving a literary inheritance through synthesis of old and new. Mandelstam's allusive skill is certainly a match for Ovid's own display of *ingenium*, one reflection of the Roman poet's subtle influence on

Mandelstam's poetic technique and literary playfulness. Overlaid with further references to Homer, Christianity, and Dante, the voices mirror Mandelstam's deep conviction of the organic unity conferred on all great art, Western and Russian, by its rootedness in the biblical and classical traditions. This is the point of the speaker's observation in line 22 that "Everything has been before and again will come to pass." His meanings are clearly multiple: the line may sum up a philosophy of culture that emphasizes continuity; it may boil down a philosophy of history according to which the cycles govern the courses of events over the longer term; it may mean that there is indeed nothing new under the sun and emotions are universal from age to age; it may mean that there are no poetic themes of absolute originality. Ovid was not one of those voices destined to be replayed in Mandelstam's poetry again. But one of his final works, the incomplete "Rome" (1937), is full of shape-shifting images as representations of power that have an Ovidian energy. Exiled to the extremes of the Soviet Empire, Mandelstam can only mean "Rome" to speak for himself and other victims of "free power." The unfettered power of empire is one of the subjects of the next poet, to whom both Ovid and Mandelstam were inspirations.

Ovid for Soviet Times

Poets of the Soviet period courted great risk by voicing any dissenting views. Dressing up contemporary references in antique garb was one of the tropes of the Aesopian language used to disguise subversion (Kreps 1984: 238–45). Numerous poets in the 1960s and 1970s employed ancient allegory to this effect. But Joseph Brodsky's imitations of ancient poets, his poems about ancient figures from Parmenides to Vertumnus, and the abundant allusions to historians and philosophers from Plato to Tacitus, all reflect a prolonged engagement with classical antiquity. For Brodsky, classical writers unfailingly provide a mode for defamiliarizing and ironically commenting on contemporary reality (Nivat 1990: 89–98). His only play *Marbles* (1989) is a classical drama set in ancient Rome. The classics exist in organic relation to his thought, inspiring modern takes on ancient ideas about the relation between power and literature, on the destructiveness of time and on the survival of art, often more as ruin than as whole vision.

   In 1963, anticipating trouble ahead, Brodsky represented exile as a form of ontological nothingness. "Field Elegy," focused on exile and subjectivity, flirts with a *reductio ad absurdum* by arguing that the true exile must be completely disembodied, dispossessed, dematerialized, and desensitized. On this definition, the speaker disqualifies Ovid, saying that the exile is "not he who was full of visions / who began to drown in shallow water, / like Naso alongside twilight waves." A year later, when Brodsky fell foul of the Soviet authorities, he changed his tune about

Ovid. Four Ovidian poems trace an affinity with Ovid as the seminal figure of dis-location and loss, and provide the focus of this discussion (Ichin 1996).

The first in the sequence is "Clutching one's daily ration of exile" ("Szhi-maiushchii paiku izgnaniia," 1964), a poem of 24 lines that bears the date and subscript "25 March 1964, Arkhangelsk, transit prison." Brodsky habitually noted the year of composition. Here the precise date and place convey a documentary aspect: poetry in the present tense and biography are synchronized. Silenced by fear, he recovers his powers of speech and spins a series of metaphors that condense a set of textual allusions. He likens the poet's power of speech to a lamp whose light produces a protective shade (once again the word *ten'*); and then secondarily compares the speech-cum-lamp to a heart that flutters irregularly (perhaps a reference to the heart attack he suffered after his trial), now likened to a bird. Intertextual allusions to Pushkin's use of Ovid inhabit the lines. Brodsky shares his impulse to ascertain immediately whether exile has killed off the poetic impulse and, if not, to test the voice, since poetry is the essential tool of self-preservation. Like Pushkin, Brodsky formulates the antagonism between exile and country as a juxtaposition of north and south. The image of the bird, which serves doubly as a metaphor for the voice of the shadow and for the heart of the poet, recalls Pushkin's "The Gypsies" (1824), a quasi-dramatic narrative poem about the meanings of freedom as a cultural construct, legal principle, and metaphysical idea. Pushkin's narrator compares the longing of the exile's heart for freedom to a little bird that, perched on a branch during a "long night," will hear the voice of God, stir with feeling, and sing in anticipation of spring. Presiding over the work, like the choryphæus of a Greek tragedy, is the Old Man who recounts the story of Ovid, a cautionary tale of the civilized outsider unable to adapt to exile in this environment. Brodsky has transposed this cluster of images to his condensed prison lyric. In the second poem Brodsky overtly compares himself to Ovid. But the reality of his situation complicates his expectations of following the Ovidian script. Although exile is north of Ovid, his imprisonment is in snowy Leningrad and then further north to a wasteland every bit as harsh for him as the Crimea was harsh for Ovid. Yet he ends up incarcerated with petty criminals and drunks, deprived of the noble distress he might wish to claim as a successor to Ovid, "the first parasite" (*pervyi tuneiadets*, parasitism being the official charge). The Soviet equivalence of Ovid's exile is dingy, the landscape maximally unpoetic by contrast with the likes of Bobrov and Pushkin.

By the time of the third poem's composition in 1965, Brodsky was sequestered at a northern extreme of the Soviet Empire. "Ovid's Final Letter to Rome" ("Posled-nee pis'mo Ovidiia v Rim," 1965) appropriates the authority of Ovid himself. While the poem is not overtly Latinizing, certain prosodic effects gesture toward pastiche and the impersonation of an antique style. Although the poem consists of two stan-zas, demarcated by separate rhyme schemes, the repeated enjambment diminishes

the sound of rhyme at line-ending and the poem's layout as a single block of lines approximates the non-rhyming of classical Latin verse. Archaic touches in the lexicon (the Russian words for "decay" and "storm") add to the stylized effect. This single letter from Pontus is intended to speak volumes by implication:

> To you, whose sweet-looking features
> Do not, one supposes, fear decay,
> In my Rome, unchanged, like you,
> From the time of our last meeting
> I write from the seaside. Seaside. Ships
> Hasten here after a storm
> In order to confirm that this is the end of the world.
> Freedom is not to be sought in their holds.
>
> <div align="right">(Trans. A.K.)</div>

The word "parasite" in the previous poem adduced the specific juridical term for Brodsky's supposed crime. This poem obliquely hints at another aspect to the political charges. The young Brodsky was a famous figure in Leningrad poetry circles, a milieu in which a poet's private life was often public knowledge. His relationship with the artist Marina Basmanova dominated his emotional biography in this period. The equal of Tibullus' Delia and Byron's Augusta, she is the dedicatee of some of Brodsky's greatest love lyrics. Brodsky's biographers have been tactful on the subject of their turbulent relationship, but acknowledge that her affair in the 1960s with the poet Dmitrii Bobyshev aggravated the despair Brodsky felt during his exile (Losev 2011: 62–77). In transposing some elements of his own emotional circumstance to an Ovidian frame, Brodsky finds another point of similarity between himself and the Roman poet, whose disgrace seems to have been caused by an indiscretion of some kind or a perception that his erotic writings were a source of moral corruption. At the surface level, using Ovid to mediate their estrangement exhibits the barest discretion required to avoid a charge of coarseness. But the likeness to Ovid is not only a rhetorical dodge. The speaker conveys the poet's nagging worry that the emotional disarray of his life contributed to the trumped-up charge of parasitism, a real possibility about which there has been considerable speculation.

In a way that is characteristic of Brodsky, rather than Ovid, even in the shortest lyric he sets up a paradox by counterpointing the relationship between the psychology of beauty and the psychology of empire. This is a theme that will in different formulations preoccupy him throughout his career (and push him closer to an affinity with Horace). Line 3 in the Russian plays on the verbal root *izmena*, which means "to change'" when used in the transitive verb *izmenit'* as well as "to betray," and "to be changed" when used, as here, in the reflexive form *izmenit'sia*. Because empires crave stability, "Rome" looks eternal but combats change and betrayal at all costs. It remains the same by exiling the poet. Why does the beloved not fear that her beauty will perish? Could she possibly believe that she will remain unchanged and unscathed during his exile? The poem might wish to remind her ironically that the

power of beauty is time-limited. While, like Ovid, he may be helpless to exact justice from an empire, he can admonish her now, and even blight her reputation for all posterity.

Once again, Pushkinian allusions inform the images, showing how the layering of voices can give depth to a short lyric. Pushkin marked the end of his first period of exile in the Crimea with an elegy "To the Sea" ("K moriu," 1824), written in imitation of Childe Harold's "Song to the Sea." The repetition of "from the sea" in line 5 of Brodsky's poem is a clear echo (and possibly also recalls Ovid's own description of writing from aboard ship in *Tristia* 1.11.1–5). The reference to ships (*korabli*) also recalls Pushkin's poem, which he composed on board the boat that transported him away from Crimea. These would have been obvious associations to any of Brodsky's readers. Furthermore, the term "freedom" (*svoboda*) is one of the key words of Pushkin's vocabulary of exile, and occurs in the very first line of "To the Sea" ("Farewell, free natural realm"), which paradoxically bids farewell to the land of exile as a place of freedom. Although Pushkin faced a further period of exile, his elegy extols the newfound creative freedom he found in exile; and whereas he conjured the spirit of Ovid at its inception, in "To the Sea" he extols Napoleon, a Romantic fallen idol and fellow exile whose example of creative energy, on a colossal scale like that of the sea, inspires the poet. Brodsky's epigram establishes an ironic relation to Pushkin's celebrated declaration, suggesting that unlike Pushkin he can find no exit from his predicament.

"Fragment" ("Otryvok," 1965) is the final and longest poem in the sequence, and the fullest endorsement of Brodsky's affinity with his Roman antecedent. Each of the four eight-line stanzas contains a direct address to Ovid, identified throughout by his cognomen "Naso." The first two stanzas open with a refrain "Naso, I am not ready for death." Because his thoughts are disordered by the "Sarmatian cold" (vv. 3–4), he attempts to fix his location in space by superimposing real geography on the Ovidian landscape of exile. Yet the concrete locations never come into focus. His vision remains fixed on the "horizon," "a star," "Orion," and even "death." This prospect hovers between the physically remote and conceptually abstract, intensifying the sense of psychological isolation. Exile is now measured in terms of forgetting and the unnamed. He holds on to the idea that Rome might be a beacon, like a candle, but finally surrenders to the possibility that death is now the only light ahead. Letters sent back home now look pointless, since the speaker surmises that the addressees themselves are just as likely to be dead. If one must write then it would be better to replace "Rome" on the address with "Hades."

In this cycle of poems about exile, Ovid stands as a figure of both identification and counterpoint. Political disfavor and erotic mischance are points in common that invite comparison from Brodsky. Yet, like Pushkin, Brodsky also exhibits caution about affinities. For while he could channel through Ovid intense concern about his future, and proved able to engage with the Ovid–Pushkin theme through subtle allusions, he soon looked beyond Ovid for other models of exile. Many other classical and non-classical figures will come to inhabit Brodsky's verse, with Dante

and W.H. Auden prominent (Bethea 1994: 48–74). Exile and antiquity, more separately than together, will continue to stimulate Brodsky's imagination. Later works include poems informed by Roman themes such as "The Bust of Tiberius" (1981), "North of Delphi" (1991), "Vertumnus" (1990), "Cappadocia" (1994), as well as the essay "Letter to Horace" (1995) (Kahn 2008b). While still a source of myths of transformation, Ovid as a foundational poet of exile never recurs in his work (Burnett 1999: 150). Brodsky professed to find it hard to visualize what he looked like (a game he enjoyed when thinking of poets), and imagined a cross between Paul Newman and James Mason (which might be seen as a compliment) (Ziolkowski 2005: 207). We cannot know for certain whether Brodsky simply felt he had exhausted the connection satisfyingly or wished to conclusively put the poems and memories behind him. When he experienced exile as a permanent event, after being expelled from the Soviet Union in 1972, he studiously avoided the rhetoric of victimization. The "change of empires" from Soviet to American was permanent. "A Lullaby of Cape Cod" (1975) considers the shape of the American empire at whose eastern edge he stands, portraying a poet full of the sights, sounds, and cultural debris of a new life. If any trace of the Soviet hegemony and its imperial classicism remain, it may be in small details such as the image of the basin full of cockroaches (that most Russian of insects) and the "bronze faucet, like Caesar's laureled head."

We have seen that a sense of solidarity, biographical affinity, and literary imitation coalesce in the Russian appreciation of Ovid. There is also the sense of scale and awareness that a poet of the Roman Empire is the appropriate interlocutor or correlative to poets oppressed, but neither cowed nor overshadowed, by the Russian and Soviet Empires. Perhaps Brodsky's finest Ovidian moment took the form of the superb verse-translation he produced of Mandelstam's "Tristia" (Brodsky 2000: 499). In this tour de force of technique and poetic kinship, Brodsky, a Russian poet, performed as an American poet in dialogue with Mandelstam and his sources, including Pushkin and Mandelstam, absorbed seamlessly into the poetry, including now faint echoes of Ovid.

Further Reading

On Russian literature in the eighteenth century, a helpful introduction can be found in Garrard (1973). There is no standard scholarly treatment of the classics in Russia, but for an overview see Wes (1992). All aspects of Pushkin's life and work are discussed in Kahn (2007); on his poetry of exile, Sandler (1989); and on his use of classical figures, also see Kahn (2008a: ch. 7). On Mandelstam's life and exile, see the classic memoir by his widow, Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope Against Hope* (1971); on his poetry and engagement with classical civilization there is no better introduction than Brown (1973), while a fascinating discussion of his syncretic (Hellenic-Judaeo-Christian) cultural philosophy can be found in Cavanagh (1995). The best study of Brodsky's life, writings, and thought can be found in Losev (2011). Brodsky's own thoughts on antiquity, exile, and displacement can be found in rich and highly

rewarding essays such as "Flight to Byzantium" (Brodsky 1987) and "Homage to Marcus Aurelius," "Profile of Clio," and "Letter to Horace" (Brodsky 2011). For a postcolonial reading of Brodsky's writing about empire, see Turoma (2010).

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Alter-Ovid—Contemporary Art on the Hyphen

Jill H. Casid

This is not a story of the fate of the humanistic tradition in academic painting, the dutiful use of Ovid as the "painter's bible" for practices of *ut pictura poesis*, or the rehearsal of rise-and-fall narratives that maintain a distinction between "real" work with Ovid and the ostensible "fade" of Ovid into "allegorical codes or vacuous ornament" (Allen 2002: 337). As a story not just *of* Ovid in art but in the spirit of the decorum, genre, and boundary-busting work of changes to form in the *Metamorphoses*, let me begin instead on a minor sign that I will argue does pervasive performative work in contemporary art practice: the hyphen. A performative sign and visible mark for materializing transformation that gives animating force to language, the hyphen also functions as an invisible grammatical principle— the implied but unseen hyphen—in defiance of the cuts of normative logics such as the severance of art, life, and language. The hyphen as the bar of heavy mingling and radical hybridity does invisible, implicit, and implicating work at the joins of aesthetic, political, and ethical practices of reconnection. The hyphen makes dynamic the politics of pitched battles over territory, biology, sex, gender, and value, that is, the not-at-all-to-be-taken-for-granted distinctions between, for example, the past and the ostensibly surpassed, between human, plant, and animal, between the inanimate and the animate, between feminine, masculine, and that which is beyond binary gender, and between the minor, the marginal, and the major.

A late Latin word that persists in English and literally meaning "together in" or "together under one," the "hyphen" is most familiar as the term for a visible mark that punctuates spacing and forges connection: the short dash, line, or slash that connects two words, names, or concepts together as a compound, the short dashes that break up the syllables of a word, the dashes and slashes that indicate pauses between parts of a sentence and breaks in lines, and the use of the plus

sign as a symbol for compounds. But the hyphen is also the term for charged and contested world-altering linkages not just in syntax but also in geography, geopolitics, and biology, a term for natural and man-made bridges that join movements and migrations of people, animals, plants, and things, and chains of being. As a verb, to hyphen or hyphenate is to join or write in ways that conjoin, intermingle, mix, and transform. As I will argue, to hyphen or hyphenate is to enact on the level of the single word, line, or sentence the kinds of joins and transformative contacts of which Ovid's *Metamorphoses* speaks. But, further, we can see this performative work of hyphenation in the way in which Ovid and particularly the first lines of Book 1 are enlisted to speak on behalf of contemporary art practice that self-consciously sets itself in altering relation to the ancient as a relation to an aesthetics and politics of transformative and reigniting contact between states and elements often held apart.

But, at the same time, Ovid — or rather an "alter-Ovid" — persists in and through modern writing and visual arts practices as the sign for the challenge of what I call the altering practice of the "hyphenate." First used in the early twentieth century as a noun, hyphenate applies to animate material forms that incarnate combinations or more than one identity (but also an excess beyond identity) in a single body or mass. Hyphenates may most recognizably take the form of the transnationals, exiles, and migrants without a single national home or any home; the androgynous, hermaphroditic, and gender-queer; the multiethnic or multiracial in ways that challenge the epidermal schemas of race in black and white; and the strange alliances and affinities of politics and taste that do not map readily onto identity. But the hyphenate is also the name for the incarnations and embodiments and identifications, the subjects and communities to come. That is, one might understand the opening of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a tale in and of the past tense, an overvalued collection of canonical stories of changes that have not only already taken place, but also are somehow over, if not even overdone and better left behind. But as repetition, the telling of bodies changed into different forms may also be seen as the calling in of the hyphenate to come, that is, as a practice of materializing connection that not only works against the bounds of time by crossing them but also promiscuously crosses high and low, center and margin.

Ovid's opening lines, "my intention is to tell of bodies changed / to different forms" (Humphries 1955: 3) is often mobilized as a condensed statement of the transformational energies across Ovid's 15-book poem. The hyphenating slash here indicates the line break, pause, and spacing between "bodies changed" and the state into which they have been altered, that is, "to different forms." But the slash also marks as it further heightens and even extends change into the syntactic space and the temporal duration opened by the slash of line break and pause before change settles. The slash, that is, also works as a kind of underscoring of suspension and even up-ending, making the destination of change — those "different forms" — not frozen and final dead ends but the drama of shape-shifting transition itself performed poetically in and by the spacing of the slash. This formal

device also negotiates on the level of syntax and punctuation the larger aesthetic and political endeavor of the difficult join for divisive times but without any assurance of outcome—and this is its promise.

Under the epigraphic banner of Rolfe Humphries' translation of these first lines of Ovid's Book 1, *Metamorphosis: Titian 2012*, the most lavish and large-scale of contemporary art productions to pitch Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for the present, activates the performative power of the "hyphenate" as a device for the political and aesthetic renegotiation of what it might mean for the arts to be relevant— related to each other, to the public, and to contemporary imperatives. Recruiting the syntax of "bodies changed /" not as a single line but as a dramatically hyphenated spacing or pause to set the stage for the grand public production of the hyphenate of the arts is the gesture by which curator Minna Moore Ede begins her introduction to the Art/Books catalogue for *Titian/Metamorphosis*, produced in association with the Royal Opera House in honor of the collaboration between the Royal Ballet and the National Gallery of Art as the cornerstone for the Festival of Culture in conjunction with the 2012 summer Olympic games (Ede 2013: 13).

Under the sign of Ovid's telling of bodies changed, the London exhibition *Titian/Metamorphosis* endeavored to bring the poetic, visual, and performing arts together as a kind of total art spectacle in order to provide a celebratory frame of justification around what, in a moment of profound economic precariousness, might have appeared questionable, namely a highly charged use of museum reserves and funds raised by a major campaign to invest in what might well seem irrelevant to current imperatives: old master paintings by Italian Renaissance painter Titian produced on commission for the Spanish king Philip II, retelling the story of the violent encounter of Diana and Callisto from Book 2 and of Diana and Actaeon from Book 3 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Rearticulated as an investment in "security," "Diana and Callisto secured for the public" was the banner of the National Gallery's March 2012 press release disclosing the financial details of the purchase.[1] In concert with the National Gallery of Scotland, the National Gallery acquired Titian's *Diana and Callisto* (1556–59) from the Duke of Sutherland. The acquisition aimed to reunite the painting with its companion piece *Diana and Actaeon* acquired in 2009 from the Duke of Sutherland, the private owner of the Bridgewater collection reputed to be the greatest private collection of old master paintings. The "securing" of Titian's *Diana and Callisto* and *Diana and Actaeon* was heralded not just to enhance the permanent display of the National Gallery's *The Death of Actaeon* (acquired back in 1972) but, moreover, to appear to achieve the goal of a kind of completeness: in the British public trust is now concentrated half of the series of six mythological paintings, or what Titian called *poesie* as a term for the visual equivalent of poetry. With the three Titian paintings reunited on public display at great financial cost (or what the *Guardian* headline of March 2012 described as the "£95m Titian pair bought for Britain"),[2] the racked question of the "for" was to be answered not just by the occasion

(the hosting of the Olympic games by Britain) but by the very contested gesture of the join—a task of alliance that was as much political as aesthetic in enlisting the unification of the arts as a means of re-forging the imagined community of the nation amidst the public street protests of Occupy London against the "1%," whose interests such an acquisition might appear not only to consolidate but also enshrine as the glamorous glue of the imaginative work of the "as if" of cross-class (and one might say counter-interest) identification (*Guardian*, UK, July 16, 2013).

At the same time, however, an associated program of intertwined triads was a rather ingenious one in crossing not just the more traditional arts of poetry, ballet, orchestral music, and painting but also the old master with the contemporary (including the genres of interactive live performance art and new media installation), orchestrating a trio of three new ballets (*Machina*, *Trespass*, and *Diana and Actaeon*) with new music by three contemporary composers (Nico Muhly, Mark-Anthony Turnage, and Jonathan Dove) and set designs by three artists (Conrad Shawcross, Mark Wallinger, and Chris Ofili), who were also commissioned to produce new works (*Trophy*, *Diana*, and *Metamorphoses*) that were exhibited alongside the three Titians in the National Gallery exhibition *Metamorphosis: Titian 2012*. As cynical as pumped-up pomp might make one about an old master Titian metamorphosed for the British Olympic year of 2012 and, more generally, about the redressing of the classics in new imperial clothes, a serious reckoning with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in contemporary artistic practice is not the "cruel optimism" of clinging to self-eroding attachments. It is to grapple with ways in which contemporary practice can activate the aesthetic and political volatility of its un-easy joins—not least the ways in which an eruptive "alter-Ovid" within the ostensibly official or faithful persists in producing disruptive inter-mixtures that, in upsetting all purities, may summon altered communities, forms of being, and subjectivities we do not yet know, the as-yet, the altering both-ands and neither-nors, in what quickens in the un-dead of ancient tradition (Berlant 2011).

I now turn to nine diverse instances of visual arts practice that engage the hyphenating energies of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to explore the hyphen as an animating and restructuring principle of affective, political, and psychological reconnection, hybridization, and/or transformation through alterations in the matter of time (particularly relations between historical and mythical pasts and re-enchanted presents), bodies, and worlds (Casid 2012: 140–44).

Hyphenate I

The hyphen makes visible the join but also activates the spacing between bodies as a dramatic field of interplay in which bodies emerge not as static or frozen matter but rather as shifting states and unstable forces.

Commissioned for the National Gallery's exhibition *Metamorphosis: Titian 2012*, Chris Ofili's series of seven large-scale panels makes the hyphen unavoidable in its reiteration across the titles of *Ovid-Bather*, *Ovid-Desire*, *Ovid-Stag*, *Ovid-Actaeon*, *Ovid-Lust*, *Ovid-Windfall*, *Ovid-Destiny*. It is not just the hyphen but the construction "Ovid-" that works to reconceive these entangled stories—the nymph Callisto's rape by Jupiter disguised as the goddess Diana, Diana's discovery of Callisto's pregnancy, Actaeon's fateful look at Diana, and his transformation into a stag torn to pieces by his hounds—as a flattened and, thus, fertile field of figuration in which "Ovid" is not a determining agent above or beyond but an active shaping body among other bodies in the process of alteration. The hyphen that moves across these titles is also literally extended into the artist's book frame for the project's re-display at the Victoria Miro Gallery in the fall of 2012 as *Ovid—Diana & Actaeon* (Ofili 2012). Ofili's rival math of the hyphen as endless addition (Titian 6+1) exposes the insecurity of the "always more" and "never enough" lurking in the necessarily incomplete logics of the Titian acquisition. Ofili's 6+1 deploys an "Ovid-" to provide a visual sign of unstable corporealizing excess. But the hyphenate is also what happens at the level of form on the surface of the linen panels. Let me focus on *Ovid-Desire* (Plate 7). Other panels in the series (particularly *Ovid-Stag* with its dark brown priapic animal goddess, Diana-turned-stag in a lusty embrace of tropical color) attest more obviously to Ofili's learning Ovid from a classicist friend in Trinidad. Ofili's setting of Ovid in the shape-shifting magical landscape of the Caribbean island is not a poaching relocation but a tactical geopolitical and aesthetic repositioning of Ovid as already in Trinidad as a vital link across the global south that connects the transculturating land- and seascapes of the Mediterranean world to those of the Atlantic (Ede 2013: 131).

But *Ovid-Desire* most seductively and perversely crosses high and low in its combination of painting and drawing, of the fixed media of final execution (oil paint) and the fugitive media of the preparatory sketch (pastel and charcoal), and of the old master format of the Renaissance cycle of grand-scale paintings with the high modernism of Matisse. *Ovid-Desire* foregrounds two figures locked in a dancing dip that tips the high (and the ancient popular, such as the multi-breasted sculptural objects of the goddess Artemis) right down to the "low" in various senses (including an emphasis on the "south" of the body).[3] Blushing echoes of the Rococo palette suffuse the lines and Orientalist decentering compositional strategies, decorative decadence, and agonistic androgyny of fin-de-siècle aestheticism in the ghost of something like Aubrey Beardsley's *The Peacock Skirt*. The painting takes a dive toward the black face of transatlantic minstrelsy and the camp divinity of the pompadours of drag figures like Divine in John Waters's film *Divine Waters*, undressed in a cascading profusion of bulbous pink prosthetic quasi-breasts and/or testicular balls that form an under- or anti-skirt that is the bawdy body of something not just shape-shifting but representing the absurdity of the shapeless. The obvious intrusion of the hyphen in the instigating stimulus of *Ovid-Desire* challenges the

imagined unity or purity of bodies and nature, not forcing the state of hybridity but, rather, insisting on any "state" as an energetic and unresolved interaction of forces.

Hyphenate II

The small mark of the hyphen may not just do grand aesthetic-ideological work but also dilate expansively in ways that make the uneasy activity of the join a labor that mobilizes scale to challenge and exceed totalization.

Produced on commission in 2002 for the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall as part of the series of annual projects funded by the multinational Unilever Corporation, Anish Kapoor's *Marsyas* dilates the hyphen as a formal aspect of sculptural work turned engineering feat to span the cavernous expanse of the Tate Modern's entry hall.[4] Most obviously resembling a giant trumpet, Kapoor's *Marsyas* spectacularly condenses Ovid's tale of Marsyas with its hyphenation of its parts—at once the pipe played fatally by the satyr Marsyas who, losing to Apollo, is punished for his audacity by being flayed alive, the internal organs exposed, the skin turned inside out as a river of blood, and the piped body as not closed but rather opened as multiple orifices (the mouth that blows on the pipe, the ear that hears and judges who outplays whom, and the body itself cut open to become a wind-sack). As Julian Stallabrass has argued (2002: 53), the "fleshy apertures" of this massive pipe-cum-orifice(s) stretched taut between three hoops (one blocking the main entrance, one at the opposite end, and a third aimed downward at the approximate mid-point), may well be appropriated for use as a "publicist's megaphone" for an artist in the service of the Tate Modern as cultural institution and the Unilever Corporation. But the inflaming red and un-encompassable scale of what Kapoor insists on calling the "skin" of the vast expanse of red PVC material turns the colored body at the center of the Unilever empire of "consumer goods" (consolidated by the Anglo-Dutch merger of two colonial companies—the British Lever Brothers, concentrated particularly in soap, and the Dutch Margarine Unie specializing in margarine) into the hyphenate of global capital (Kapoor 2002). A lurid Leviathan body-machine of labor and its groomings, pleasures, and tortures, from the technologies of the self to those of engineering and art, Kapoor's *Marsyas* hyphenates the global as a practice of occupying space to make unavoidable and yet beyond mastery from any viewpoint the terrifyingly slippery, neo-imperial S/M conjunction of lubricants, rubber, skin-whitening products, and the unsettled ghosts of colonial histories that are far from over (from forced labor in the Belgian Congo in the early twentieth century to Unilever's admission to the dumping of mercury in India at the beginning of the twenty-first). If the dilated open of the hyphen may be activated as the publicist's megaphone, it may also be blown as the protest amplification of the activist's human microphone.

Hyphenate III

The hyphen performs not just by yoking seeming opposites but also as an agent of estranging doubling in the un-homing repetition of the ostensibly same.

Staged by the gallery wall-hanging of two identical human-scaled vertical mirrors, not touching but with a small spacing between their edges, the late Felix Gonzalez-Torres's *"Untitled" (Orpheus, Twice)* (1991) (Figure 28.1) resets the scene for a reenactment of the fatal look at the center of the myth of Orpheus

Figure 28.1   Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *"Untitled" (Orpheus, Twice)* (1991). Mirror, 75 × 55 in. Overall two parts: 75 × 25-1/2 in. each. Private collection. Photo: Peter Muscato. © The Felix Gonzalez-Torres Foundation. Courtesy Andrea Rosen Gallery.

(whose gaze back at Eurydice does not confirm her presence but, rather, seals her loss) in the site of reflection more obviously associated with the myth of Narcissus who becomes entranced by his own mirror reflection in a pool. Asking why "twice," Jennie Hirsch emphasizes the way in which, by positioning two mirrors next to one another along the wall as if in sequence, Gonzalez-Torres's double mirrors may prompt the viewer to pass from one to the other, reminding, as reflection one gives way to reflection two, that the tragedy of the Orpheus tale may well be loss as double and redoubling (Hirsch 2011: 135–58). While Hirsch, emphasizing gender, opens with the spectator seeing "her" reflection in the mirrors, Robert Storr (1996) insists on the mirrors as "traps for the mind and heart" that do not just memorialize the 1991 loss of Gonzalez-Torres's lover Ross Laycock to AIDS, or seem to restage Jean Cocteau's 1950 film version of *Orpheus* in which the mirror is the portal to the Underworld from which the poet fails to rescue not Eurydice but his male lover. Rather, the piercing tricks of this repetition of the minimalist gesture of two seemingly abstract rectangles become, in Storr's account of the gallery scene, animate and corporeal as a stage set for encounters between "perfect strangers"—that is, not just estranging "self" as a doubled reflection but mingling those mirror doublings alongside reflections of the bodies of other spectators. The prompt of this hyphenation of the gallery as cruising scene is a rogue one. The hyphenation of the double mirrors implicates spectators in the turbulent doublings of sameness and difference—that do not stay put on particular positions or bodies. The love of likeness attributed to the homo becomes the staging ground for a volatile mirror scene that makes further complex the misrecognitions of the Lacanian mirror stage. In the double mirrors of Gonzalez-Torres's *Orpheus, Twice*, the mis-prisions of identity ripple in recombinant alteration with the promiscuous reflections more reminiscent of the commingling effects of the disco ball, the behind-the-bar, and the bathroom. The power of hyphenation as unhoming likeness queers by making reflection on the fugitive pursuit of pleasure and the interlacing of love with loss a drama (or even trauma) from which no one is spared.

Hyphenate IV

To hyphen is also to radically re-vision, to re-vise texts, textures, discourses, and images from the inside, to not just connect or make openings but also to unhook elements and reweave in ways that reposition visual art practice as in-process event. By interweaving what may be marked and yet resists full or direct figuration, to hyphen is to make the ethics and politics of appearance a matter of catalyzing an altering circuit of relations of affect and phantasy, the conduction of unmetabolized trauma but also the potential for "jouissance" between the artwork, the spectator, and subjectivities, communities, and life-worlds in co-formation and altering emergence.

To hyphen is to practice what feminist-artist-clinical psychologist-psychoanalyst-theorist Bracha L. Ettinger theorizes as the trans-subjective, trans-textual co-poeïsis

of the art object as event (Ettinger 2004: 69–93). This process of co-emergence in which all are altered in the matrix of encounter facilitated by the work of art takes its name from Ettinger's neo-logistic hyphening on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as "metramorphosis" (Pollock 2004: 5–65). Replacing the "meta" of the abstraction of the beyond with the in-between of the "metra" (Greek for uterus or womb), to hyphen weaves the traces of the unspeakable and unrepresentable of the traumas of history, critical interventions into the discourse of Freudian psychoanalysis and the Oedipal construction of subjectivity, classical myth, the prehistory of the subject (early childhood but also prenatal), and feminist ethico-aesthetics (Ettinger 2006). But the hyphening of metramorphosis is not to produce a static hybridized textile. Rather it is to set not Orpheus but Eurydice in motion as the figure for a dynamically weaving field of resonances, as the animating principle for a space of emergence that Ettinger calls the "matrixial encounter-event" (Ettinger 2004). Derived from the Greek for both womb and mother, what is astonishing about Ettinger's deft hyphenation is that, rather than a displacement of the phallus by the feminine "matrixial" as dutifully reproductive mother-wife, the matrixial encounter-event is already imminent in and as the broader field of possibility and practice, but with the accent on ongoing process (Butler 2004: 95–100). Indeed, Ettinger has been working through the *Eurydice series* since the early 1990s with a mixed-media process that takes the charged photographic remnants of the personal and also "official" archive of trauma (such as the photographs that position us on the other side of the barbed wire or the slats of the detention camps and train carriages from those consigned to death), which Ettinger photocopies but interrupts before the ink-dust has resolved. The paper is woven into the canvas by colored oil paint applied most often in brush strokes that build up a cross-hatched but predominantly horizontal weave that recharges the photograph as transport station rather than document to be possessed, making the surface contact of photographic print remnant, photocopic ink-dust, paint, and canvas an affective and inter-psychic threshold of encounter. Produced as part of the more recent phase of this practice (2001–06), I take no. 47 of the *Eurydice series* (Figure 28.2) as especially provocative. Its astonishingly lush and erotic mix of fuchsias and purples with deep reds might seem anathema to the solemnities of reckoning with the transmission of trauma, and that is precisely its hyphenating pink point. Ettinger sets the loved, desired, wounded, ostensibly lost Eurydice—who is precisely not mother or pregnant in any literal sense—in motion as the name for altering relations to the trauma-archive or -crypt of photographs that purport to bear witness to the undigested injuries transmitted indirectly from parent to child, culture to subject. Eurydice is not the victim of history but a hyphenating yearning as process without end or final resolution that turns the activity of the spectator into what she calls a "wit(h)nessing" (Pollock 2008: 229–35). The interpellating "h" of the conjunctive "with" converts uni-directionality into a dynamic field of altering relation in which to wit(h)ness with is neither to foreclose as an act of witness ostensibly completed or to redeem by seeing but, rather, a practice of the hyphen that enfolds

Figure 28.2   Bracha L. Ettinger, *Eurydice series* no. 47 (2001–2006). Oil on paper on canvas, 23.3 × 27.7 cm. Private collection. © Bracha L. Ettinger. Courtesy of the artist.

us in encounter with what might seem taboo after Auschwitz: the *jouissance* of the aesthetic as a route to ethics—not a strict, abstract, black-and-white aesthetics of either/or cutting binary choices but an aesthetics that is not afraid to enjoy the flaming and florid erotics of color.

Hyphenate V

To hyphen is also to alter the matter and mattering of time as active, altering relation to pasts that have not been surpassed, that persist as the not-lost, but not fully materialized ghost presences in the folds of past, present, and future.

To turn to the haunting black-white-and-grey watercolors of Patricia Cronin's project *Harriet Hosmer: Lost and Found* (2006–07), a catalogue raisonné (2007) and exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum (2009) dedicated to the life and art practice of nineteenth-century American expatriate sculptor Harriet Hosmer (lover of Lady

Ashburton and at the center of what Henry James called her "marmorean flock"), is to complicate the queer weave of feminist ethico-aesthetic practice (Cronin 2009). There is a seeming anachronism to this return to neoclassical white marble sculpture on the themes of heroic suffering and often punished femininity by what might be dismissed as the disciplinary academic devices of a constrained version of authority and authorization best discarded—the catalogue raisonné, the watercolor sketch, the fusion of life and work in the concept of the artistic corpus or oeuvre, figural representation on the basis of training in working from live models and the cast but on the basis of an idealization of the antique. But on the other side of the encounter with the complexities of the archive re-volatilized by the liquid, rippling interplay of ghostly abstraction and figuration, the tragic and the erotic, the ostensibly normative of tradition and the minor, avant-garde, or even "Bohemian," what emerges is another route to the queerness of what is not exactly history, the as-yet in the life-work of a woman artist who, though financially successful, critically acclaimed, and even infamous in her day, risks persisting only as a scratching-post riposte to the question posed by Linda Nochlin: "Why have there been no great women artists?" (1971/1988: 147–58). While much of Hosmer's work is literally lost, I take Cronin's treatment of Hosmer's 1854 marble bust of Medusa (Figure 28.3) in the collection of Dartmouth College's Hood Museum of Art as paradigmatic of a practice which is not exactly retrieval of what has been lost or the return of what Hosmer (or, for that matter, what Medusa) never had. Book 4 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* tells the story of Medusa's transformation by Minerva from the most beautiful of the Gorgon sisters raped by Neptune to snake-headed Gorgon who can turn men to stone and, at the same time, the repellent blazon of the serpent-head on the breast-plate of the goddess. What might seem from the story to be inevitable cutting either/or choices, of beauty as vulnerable embodiment or the power to make and transform (including the art practice of conversion of bodies to stone), affinities between women or relations to men, access to the gaze or femininity that would seem to be contingent on the modesty of averted eyes, to name only a few of the key themes, becomes, in the hyphenating translation of the sexy-soft solidity of Hosmer's sculptural reworking of Ovid's Medusa in Cronin's delicate yet masterfully managed watercolor, a means to negotiate the both/and of a live relation to Hosmer that is also not afraid to mix attraction to the residual heat of Hosmer's attraction to Medusa with the electric crackle of rivalry in a lived relation to what is not past.

Hyphenate VI

To hyphen in and with time as dynamic relation to the classical that refuses to resolve either into the neo- (that would insist on a real or originary classicism) or the post- (in the sense of not just after but also over) is to complicate the modern and modernism as something in excess of a foil to the postmodern.

Figure 28.3 Patricia Cronin, *Medusa* (2006). From *Harriet Hosmer, Lost and Found*, watercolor on paper, 15 × 12 in. © Patricia Cronin. Courtesy of the artist.

One might argue that British portrait photographer Madame Yevonde's staged tableaux of the 1930s, which employed the elaborate multi-layer process of Vivex color photography (involving three-color negative plates) and based its effects on elaborate studio-based lighting, costume, and props, is precisely not modernism. Take her "Goddess" series (1935) of society women posed with the attributes of not just goddesses but also the mortals seduced in the more familiar of the Ovidian metamorphoses, such as *Baroness Gagern as Europa* with her arms round a bull's head stand-in for Jupiter's disguise. This is work that finds no easy position in narratives that predicate photography's relation to modernism on "straight" black and white photography, a drive toward abstraction, processes from solarization to montage to collage that distort the "figure," or on its place within a particular

avant-garde movement (futurism, Dada, or surrealism). But it is not just, as Douglas Crimp has argued, that there is another modernism which may share the criticality presumed to be the contribution of postmodernism (1993: 2–31). Rather, there is also the way in which works such as *Mrs. Michael Balcon as Minerva* (1935) (Plate 8) do the kind of estranging work to the portrait apparently more characteristic of the fugitive femininity of, for instance, Cindy Sherman's "Society Portraits" (2008) of aging *grandes dames*. What makes the work resonate now is not that Madame Yevonde is a Cindy Sherman before the fact or that we inevitably see Yevonde's work through the prism of later practice, but that there is already within this work an alter-modernism that takes Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as vital to the consequential play of and with position as pose. As Simon Doonan writes (2009: 88), in *Mrs. Michael Balcon as Minerva* the all-angles toughness of the pose with helmet on the head and gun in hand against the background of a horse's head destabilizes any sense of passive, dutiful wife or inert classical pretense with its "sinister," "punk rock" effects that just "works effortlessly." And yet "effortless" might also be understood as a placeholder for the compelling illusion of the hyphenating fold that makes past present and present past, that takes advantage of the contacts of resemblance to set off the trigger of re-cognition of what is both anachronistic in past and present and what may be, in Walter Benjamin's terms, emergent in the contact of emergency. "Sinister" might also describe the rise of fascism that is not just 1935. This hyphenating fold of time alters and estranges the seeming fixities of position, pushing us to look again at our relation to the labor of being and becoming (as in Madame Yevonde, the self-supporting suffragette-turned-photographer, and Mrs. Michael Balcon, born Aileen Freda Leatherman in Middlesex of Polish–Jewish immigrant parents, raised in South Africa, and living in London as the wife of film producer Michael Balcon).

Hyphenate VII

To hyphen as a practice of altering the binary oppositions of male and female, to incarnate transgender as live and livable embodiment is also to alter the matter of time, to prolong metamorphosis or suspend it from the temporality of the instantaneous change to matter of durational effort, from the demonstrated tour-de-force, however extraordinary, to also the grueling repetitions of daily practice that make the live stunt and the more banal feat of living possible.

Artist-Competitive-Body-Builder-Working-Stunt-Person-and-Personal-Trainer Heather Cassils works in the United States as a Canadian with special visa status as an "Alien of Extraordinary Ability," an immigration-authority designation that is hard not to extend to transgender embodiment that Cassils makes palpable in the endurance performance *Tiresias* (Figure 28.4), conceived in 2010 and performed at multiple performance events over the last few years, including the ANTI-festival

Figure 28.4   Heather Cassils, *Tiresias* (2010). Performance still. Photo by Heather Cassils and Robert Crouch. Courtesy of Ronald Feldman Fine Art.

in Kuopio, Finland on the theme of "Nature-Body-Sex" in Fall 2012. Taking its title name and animating premise from the blinded seer Tiresias of Book 3 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Cassils replays the trials of Tiresias who, having lived seven years as a woman before changing back into a man (both times by striking copulating snakes) and, thus, having "known Venus" in both ways, is enjoined to resolve the quarrel between Jupiter and Juno as to whether men or women have more pleasure in sex. Damned to blindness for upholding Jupiter's judgment that women gain more from sex, Tiresias is compensated with the power to foresee the future. Cassils' test implicates the audience in the unresolved questions of sexual difference in terms of how bodies appear, how and what they feel, and

how and what they are able to perform or endure as a competitive terrain of the "more." Wearing contact lenses that simulate the effects of cataracts, Cassils' gaze is occluded not by the one-time strike of an angry god but by the effects more commonly associated with the gradual aging of the body. In tension with this transfixing stare of a body mutable, but not in any idealized way, is the centerpiece ice sculpture carved in the perfected articulation of the muscular shape of a neoclassical male torso. To the prerecorded sounds of the slow drip of water, the audacity of this act is that a naked Cassils can stand with chest against the ice long enough to melt it by the catalytic contact of her own body heat, or withstand frostbite long enough for the ice sculpture to melt (since it is placed on a clear plexiglass mount in the well-above freezing temperatures of the performance space). The performance's length of time inevitably varies and, just as there are no guarantees of its duration, besides the literal melting of the ice, there is no denouement, for the hyphening of metamorphosis or change as extended duration is to press against the very etymology of "duration" (from the Latin for hardening). If masculinity is still tied to what gets hard and femininity to what gets wet and melts, then the question-reframing and position-complicating feat of Cassils' *Tiresias* is the both/and of a performance that incarnates a transgender body as an endurance performance of a hardening which is also a melting, potentially re-visioning the "trans" of transgender as not a divisive, cutting passage from one side to another (male or female, hard or wet) but as the extended flexures of the both extraordinary and banal ways in which bodies (even if not as exquisitely trained or capable as Cassils') do both.

Hyphenate VIII

To hyphen is to intervene not just in the hybridizing recombination of existing forms, the trans-generation of new forms that exceed those from which they stem, or the violation of the bounds of species to create crossings that upset the presumed boundaries and hier-archies of an anthropocentric system. To hyphen is also to open a space for the emergence of not just altered bio-forms as outcomes without precedent but also alterations in the processes and "organs" of bio-generation.

Here I turn to the figure of the chimera by way of Aziz+Cucher, and their *Chimera #2* (1998) (Figure 28.5), a large digital photographic print from their *Transmorphica* series and its neologistic troping on Ovidian metamorphosis to emphasize a horizon beyond that of their reading of Ovid's tales.[5] As I develop elsewhere, the chimera is not just that hybrid she-beast, the fire-breathing, multi-headed lion-goat-serpent of Book 9; it is also a figuration with fire at the frontiers of science, fear, and desire where matter continues to take shape. As the monster bodies of transgenic hybrids, from the "geep," a mouse with a human ear growing on its back, and the "oncomouse," genetically rendered susceptible to cancer, to
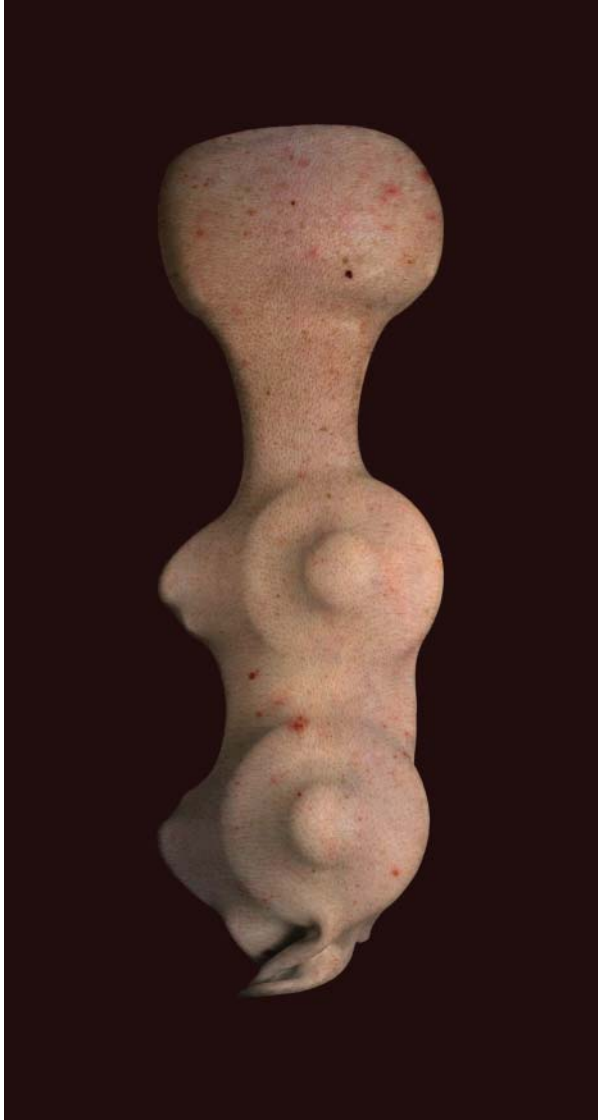
Figure 28.5   Aziz+Cucher, *Chimera #2* (1998). Transmorphica series. Durst lambda print, 60 in. × 30 in. © Aziz + Cucher. Courtesy of Anthony Aziz.

genetically modified "Frankenfood," the chimera often appears without ground in the sense of precedent; it is radically decontextualized as a being without belonging, or as a spoiling, anti-natural, artificial, and impure incarnation that is antagonistic or even destructive counter to the environmental. Thus, the chimera might seem antithetical to nature. But the chimera is also a rogue figure for our current condition of performing in and with the hyphens, reconnecting what

was never really severed but also opening up generation itself. Aziz+Cucher's *Chimera #2* opens an aesthetic and ethical space for reckoning with the affective and visceral response to the material animation of myth and metaphor, to the substantial alterations today to the very generation of life (Casid 2011: 61–83).

Hyphenate IX

To hyphen may also be the performative working out of an implicit ethics, a practice or exercise of the how-to that does not begin with a priori concepts of the good (such as the "good life" or the "good death") or end with their normative extraction but, rather, negotiates them in the midst of the flow of life, death, and change. To hyphen, in all its promiscuity, interconnection, and play, is a practice of love, an ars amatoria for care in a situation of precariousness.

For dOCUMENTA 13, the major international art fair held in Kassel, Germany in 2012, German artist Kristina Buch planted an ephemeral garden into which she daily released hatched butterflies she raised in her temporary apartment in Kassel during the months preceding the actual exhibition. Called *The Lover* (Figure 28.6) in

Figure 28.6   Kristina Buch, *The Lover*. dOCUMENTA 13, Kassel, 2012, open-air installation on the Friedrichsplatz. © Kristina Buch. Courtesy of Outset.

reference to Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, but crossing those instructions in love with a living figure for metamorphosis already in nature, the butterfly, Buch's open-air installation and micro-environment in the public square of the Friedrichsplatz refocuses the bioethical questions centered on the dramas of how life is conceived onto the much quieter uncertainty of the everyday.[6] While positioned as an open-air installation in the Friedrichsplatz, the actual scene of raising the butterflies was not made available to visitors. Indeed, the very structure of the garden's planting with surrounding hedges of prickly nestles and thistles made the garden not only a place that could not be apprehended at a distance but also a living micro-environment that had to be negotiated with care. While *Art in America's* review called the piece "Kristina Buch's Constant Garden" to emphasize its durational nature, what is most stingingly poignant is not that the prickly protective barrier of indigenous plants represented the ready, familiar appropriation of environmentalism as nativist preservation, not that the garden as a living laboratory site tended by the artist did not persist beyond the temporal parameters of the exhibition, and not that the only quasi-art objects to remain were the chrysalides of the departed butterflies that Buch collected and displayed in the exhibition. Rather, it is the persistence of the demands of the inconstant, the question of how to practice love or care not just for what one imagines one has created but care for life and care for death in the changing stream beyond our control.

This is not an ending. Through an emergent "alter-Ovid," practices of contemporary art that activate the performative powers of the hyphen produce an open system awaiting extension and revision: nine hyphenates plus, minus, or multiplied—

Notes

1   http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about-us/press-and-media/press-and-media/press-releases/diana-and-callisto-secured (accessed March 21, 2014).

2   http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2012/mar/01/titian-95m-pair-national-gallery (accessed March 21, 2014).

3   See M. Herbert, "Chris Ofili, Victoria Miro, London, U.K.," *Frieze* 152. January–February. http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/chris-ofili/ (accessed March 21, 2014).

4   http://anishkapoor.com//page.php/156/Marsyas.html (accessed March 21, 2014).

5   See also http://www.azizcucher.net/critical-text/lecture-by-aziz-cucher-as-part-of-the-series-wissensknste-at-the-hamburger-banhof-museum-fr-gegenwart-berlin-november-2001 (accessed March 21, 2014).

6   See B. Degner, "Kristina Buch, Documenta (13), Kassel, 2012." June 29, 2013. http://www.outset.org.uk/projects/kristina-buch-the-lover-documenta-13/; and A. Walleston, "Kristina Buch's Constant Garden," *Art in America*. June 26. http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-opinion/news/2012-06-26/kristina-buch-documenta-13/ (accessed March 21, 2014).

Further Reading

The question of Ovid's reception in contemporary art raises, as it also problematizes, three main approaches to the history of art and modern and contemporary art's relation to classical antiquity. The iconographic tendency hinges on the question of the condensation and even reduction of classical mythology and narrative to a set of recognizable visual conventions and tropes. On the classification of works according to their iconography and the related categorization of works of art according to a taxonomy of symbols, see, for example, Reid (1993) and Impelluso (2003). Changes in the reception of classical antiquity are pivotal to narratives of the rise and fall of the humanist tradition in art (see, for example, Allen 2002), the problematic of modernism's break with academic tradition (see, for instance, Green and Daehner 2011), and postmodernism's reopening of a relation to classicism (see Wallace and Hirsh 2011). Lastly, the ways in which Ovid's *Metamorphoses* may be read to thematize art-making, spectatorship, and the dynamic relations of animate and inanimate, art object and living human and animal bodies also provides a way of thinking critically and interpretively about the metacritical and theoretical function of artworks and of addressing issues of gender, sexuality, and subjectivity. While such studies have tended to focus on particular myths, such as that of Narcissus and Pygmalion (see James 2011; Lomas 2011), other studies such as Warner (2004) take up mutation more generally. A longer version of this chapter is also forthcoming.

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Contemporary Poetry
After After Ovid

Sarah Annes Brown

Ovid's return to favor at the end of the twentieth century was accompanied by a flowering of Ovidian poetry, most of it written in response to the *Metamorphoses*. Two volumes which exemplify Ovid's ascendancy are Ted Hughes's *Tales from Ovid* (1997) and Hofmann and Lasdun's edited collection, *After Ovid* (1996). Another significant contribution to the field was Carol Ann Duffy's *The World's Wife* (1999), although only a few of the women who talk back in this volume are unambiguously Ovidian. My contention in this chapter is that these, and other, outstanding late twentieth-century translations and adaptations helped establish Ovid as a frame of reference which could, at least as far as people who read and wrote poetry were concerned, be taken for granted again. Thus, now, the best modern readers, like the best early modern ones, would be more likely to find—and more likely to look for—Ovidian allusions tucked away in unexpected places, not just in volumes with his name on the cover. This next Ovidian wave, that created by the generation of poets writing after *After Ovid*, is the focus of this chapter.

Often in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a character will change completely but retain just one key feature, moral or physical, a single clue to his or her past identity. Some recent collections of poetry have a similar relationship with their Ovidian source material. Rather than finding Ovid on every page, his presence may, at least at first, only be visible in a single poem. But such poems can function as clues to a more pervasive Ovidian presence. One example of this turn toward a subtler Ovidianism is Maureen Almond's *Oyster Baby* (2002). Almond is perhaps best known for her adaptations of Horace within a modern Teeside setting. But in *Oyster Baby* Ovid is at least as important a presence. Whereas a few poems are direct reworkings of tales from the *Metamorphoses*, Ovidianism emerges still more interestingly in other parts of the collection, albeit more

uncertainly. As Almond comments (2009: 21), "I believe that by attempting to capture the 'soul' of an ancient text rather than its literal translation, we can sometimes reach a deeper understanding both of that ancient world and of the parallel world of our own time." "Eurydice the Second" is the most obviously Ovidian poem, here a witty reinvention of the myth in which the familiar Orpheus narrative is reversed: it begins with traumatic loss, then moves to the moment when Eurydice is rescued, and only finally alludes to the bite which causes her death, the beginning rather than the end of the story in *Metamorphoses* 10. And here Eurydice is lost because Almond's self-absorbed Orpheus *doesn't* look back:

> He lost her on the Piccadilly Line,
> an easy mistake, but careless,
> given they were still on honeymoon.

The poem ends where Ovid's tale begins, with her death. But this is the "slow, slow dying" of a failed marriage.[1] The musician's power of fascination, which gives Orpheus the potential to raise her from the dead in the original story, is here itself a killing quality, the brutal charm which enables a bullying husband to keep hold of a submissive wife:

> After that she kept in step with him,
> walked in his shadow
> as the tube snaked off into blackness
> For he was a charmer,
> and hers was a slow, slow dying.

There is a nicely Ovidian touch in the way Almond's metamorphosis of the story allows the original to gleam through briefly in the verb "snaked," reminding us of the bite that kills Eurydice. The reversal of the original narrative is matched by a dynamic of rebound and reflection in the poem, as here, where her steps are retraced in a backwards movement which transforms laughter into tears:

> And his cold-echo laugh dragged her back,
> bounced off the platform like tears.

In this palinode to Ovid it is hard to differentiate between Orpheus and the Underworld, for her return to her husband reads much like an account of her second, final death in the *Metamorphoses* (10.56); her movement is involuntary and the atmosphere is one of foreboding.

Less clearly and directly Ovidian is the poem "Hermetical." Its context is obscure, though it might, as much of the collection deals with the effects of aging on individuals and relationships, be read as an invitation to a long-term partner to reinvent their relationship. It opens:

> This hairy thing we've made
> with its sharp horns
> and clumsy feet:
> I don't recognize it.

Almond seems to expect her readers to be able to decode covert allusions to Ovid, for the next stanza hints at an Ovidian metamorphosis:

> You cover it in bark,
> try to drive it backwards
> but it won't work.

The final stanza begins with the suggestion:

> I could write poetry,
> you could make things from reeds.

Two parallel stories in *Metamorphoses* 1, those of Apollo and Daphne and Pan and Syrinx, seem to come together here. However, the female characters have been sidelined, referenced only by "bark" and "reeds," leaving the narrator to play Apollo's role and her partner that of Pan. This doesn't bode well for the relationship, if we remember that Pan and Apollo were rivals, not friends; the narrator describes the creation of panpipes with rather disdainful vagueness, as though he were engaging in occupational therapy. The presumed husband is allowed to reply in the next poem, "Pan's Song," which ends:

> Under this ten o'clock shadow
> there's a certain panache,
> a desire to be mischievous again.

There is a rather Ovidian hidden "Pan" in "panache" which brings out the pathos in the situation of the narrator's goatish, aging partner. The dash and style he aspires to, his vaunted panache, hides the "ache" of disappointment.

Many other covertly Ovidian narratives are used to evoke this, or a similar, relationship over the course of *Oyster Baby*; the Ovidian subtext adds complexity, and the pleasure of recognition for the initiated reader. "Chaos," for example, reworks the opening of the *Metamorphoses* in order to depict a relationship of dysfunctional, unproductive dependency:

> My cold fights your hot,
> your moist my dry.
> Hard grinds against soft,
> resolving nothing;
> yet we cannot be set apart,
> distinguished one from the other.

But an alternative explanation for this dynamic of opposition and merging is available, that between the translator and the translated text. Ovid and Almond's different versions of chaos coexist in the mind of the reader, effecting a moment, not of formlessness, but of creation through a balance between union and separation.

Ovid flickers in and out of Anglo-Welsh poet Deryn Rees-Jones's *Quiver* (2004) in a similarly tantalizing way.[2] Although presented as a collection of discrete poems, *Quiver* is also a kind of verse-novel. As in *Oyster Baby*, although it is possible to identify unambiguous allusions to the *Metamorphoses*, Ovidianism emerges still more interestingly in other parts of the volume, albeit more uncertainly. Only the title poem—"Quiver" as distinct from *Quiver*—which is placed a third of the way through the collection, is derived from Ovid. It is a response to Titian's famous painting *Diana and Actaeon*. At first "Quiver," a meditation on a work of art, seems to have little to do with the strange science-fictional storyline of *Quiver*, and its status as a discrete set piece seems to be reinforced by the fact that it is one of just three poems in the collection to be printed in italics, setting it apart. However, on closer inspection it becomes clear that the poem's themes resonate throughout the entire volume.

Rees-Jones seems to expect her readers to know Ovid already and be willing to invest time in seeking him out for themselves. The title poem may appear to be set apart from the rest of the story, but in fact gives the reader clues as to how to read the whole collection. A central motif in the poem "Quiver" is a complication of identity. Figures from Titian's painting blur into one another, as well as into characters from different tales in the *Metamorphoses*. They also bleed into other characters from *Quiver*'s frame narrative, and even into figures from the real world: Ovid, Rees-Jones, and the reader. This indeterminacy connects with the poem's title. As Brigley remarks (2006: 22), "Although a quiver is a case for arrows, a source of power and weaponry, it also refers to the action of shaking, trembling or shivering." A further complication of identity in both "Quiver" and *Quiver* relates to pregnancy, and its relationship with both divine creation and poetic inspiration.

Rees-Jones draws the reader's attention to one of Diana's nymphs, perhaps the one washing the goddess's feet, as we are told that she:

> *peered into the bathing pool,*
> *seeing the stag by her own face,*
> *pregnant now, though she doesn't know it.*

She is named as "Faith," and described as the "mother of all invention," a hint at the many links the collection forges between maternity and creativity. Her interest in Actaeon may be an oblique pointer to his part in her pregnancy. However, one cannot meaningfully make all the poem's details coalesce into a coherent narrative, and Faith also seems designed to recall two of Zeus' conquests: Callisto, the nymph

whose pregnancy incurred Diana's wrath, and Io, who is transformed into a cow and scratches her name in the sand.

Rees-Jones's collection, like the *Metamorphoses* itself, invites the reader to fill in its various gaps, and choose which patterns to spot (or create) in its complex weave. One of the most obtrusive features of the poem "Quiver" is the way Actaeon's dogs are given the names of famous feminist heroines (cf. *Met.* 3.206–25)—Aphra, Germaine, Christabel, Simone, and Sappho, for example. There seems to be a tension between Rees-Jones's depiction of Faith, who is said to have loved Actaeon, and these iconic female figures who, as Actaeon's dogs, follow but then murder the hunter. Faith's name connects her with Fay, the poet-heroine of *Quiver*, and thus with the author herself. Perhaps we could follow a hint given at *Tristia* 2.103–8, in which the narrator's "error" is compared with Actaeon's inadvertent trespass, and see the hunter as an avatar of Ovid, a poet whose relationship with feminist readers has sometimes been a troubled one, but who is able to connect with Rees-Jones and merge with her to create something new, something which comes from her, yet acquires astonishing autonomy, and may be either a baby or a text. This connection between maternity and writing is suggested in the description of how the pregnant Faith:

> With a miraculous stirring divorced from her body
> scratches out words with a stick on the floor.

In an earlier poem in the collection, "Ghosts," Rees-Jones also seems to touch on the sometimes fraught relationship between poets and their influences:

> The dead are with us still
> however we love or lose them.
> Where do they live, the ghosts we try to kill?
> The dead are with us. Still
> they wear us as they will,
> sing us like a nursery rhyme, a hymn,
> make something inside us irretrievably small
> however we love or lose them.

This description of ghosts maps readily onto sources, whom writers may "try to kill" out of an anxiety of influence, and who have the power to make a writer lose confidence and feel irretrievably small. Except of course that there is also an ambiguity here, similar to that created by W.H. Auden when, in "In Memory of W.B. Yeats," he wrote "poetry makes nothing happen." The dead don't necessarily diminish us, but add to us, create something new, when they "make something inside us," particularly as the image is suggestive of pregnancy. This is a similar tension to that which makes Actaeon-as-Ovid a focus for both murderous hatred and

desire in "Quiver." Looking again at "Quiver," in the light both of *Quiver* as a whole and of Titian's painting, another interpretation emerges. "Faith" has been identified as the nymph attending to Diana, but some facets of the description suggest other nymphs; she is described taking off her dress, revealing the *"narrow triangle of her unmarked back,"* and looking at Actaeon with longing. These snippets of information seem to point to quite different nymphs, and "Quiver" ends with a description of how Faith:

> holds up a mirror to the goddess,
> looks at herself, behind her, through it,
> and on.

The whole collection is a kind of hall of mirrors, beginning and ending with an unidentified woman, pierced with an arrow. The manner of her death also suggests love, via Cupid's arrow, and thus procreation. If the "feminist" hunting dogs imply anxiety about a strong male influence, here Ovid-as-Actaeon, the meshing of poetry and pregnancy implies, by contrast, that the relationship between a poet and her source, her male Muse, could be productive as well as tense. Female sexual pleasure and creativity are elided in the line *"as she felt his body as a line of pleasure,"* hinting at an almost erotic satisfaction in the fusion between herself and her inspiration which creates each line of poetry. This procreative charge is picked up in the final line of her poem about writer's block, "Wonderland," an injunction apparently spoken by her friend Erica: "Pick up your pen and write." But it also perhaps echoes another poem about writer's block, the first sonnet of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, in which the pains of writing and childbirth are compared: "Thus, great with child to speak, and helpless in my throes, / Biting my truant pen, beating myself for spite—/ 'Fool,' said my Muse to me, 'look in thy heart and write'."

The final lines of Rees-Jones's "The Lantern Festival" cleverly extend the conceit:

> A life flutters and turns inside me.
> Elsewhere I've started to imagine.
> Words spill across an empty page.

The fluttering, turning life could of course be a baby in the womb but might also suggest the riffled pages of a book. But in "Quiver" itself the transformative effects of pregnancy are also aligned with Actaeon's miraculous metamorphosis. The water which Diana splashes on Actaeon in Ovid is metamorphosed in "Quiver," becoming the sign of a woman's transformation into a mother, silvery stretch marks. Faith:

> *covets most the watermark streaks,*
> *stretchmarks on a mother's skin.*

A few lines later the word "spillage" suggests semen, particularly as Faith is imme-
diately described taking off her clothes, as though trying to arouse Actaeon:[3]

> *Faith,*
> *let's call her that, who wanted nothing more*
> *than the spillage of silver.*

The merging of Actaeon-as-Ovid and Faith-as-Fay is mirrored both in Faith's
pregnancy and in the way Fay, the narrator, creates a collection in which the
inheritance of Ovid may be traced, like a father's features in a child. Some of
these traces may be fugitive and uncertain. In the poem which precedes "Quiver,"
"Good Cop, Bad Cop," we are told that one policeman drinks coffee with a
"dash of cold water," a barely perceptible anticipation of Actaeon's punishment.
One of the factors that makes this recent Ovidian wave so pleasurable, so
intriguing, is the genuine uncertainty it produces in the reader. Is it farfetched
to read, in the poem "Tail," traces of Titian's painting of Actaeon and Diana,
even before we have reached "Quiver" itself, in which the painting is directly
alluded to?

> He's watched me for two days, this plainclothes policeman
> with uncertain eyes, a paunch, a greying crop:
>
> he's familiar, now, with that over-the-shoulder, don't-
> hurt-me look, the way I throw it to the middle-distance,
>
> unaware, on visits to the library, friends,
> how space between us now is documented, marked.
>
> He marvels at my knack of disappearing into doors,
> how with the half-turn of the head
>
> I can transform the everyday so swiftly.

The projectile glance, the strong sense of a drama created in the space between
the antagonists, the suggestion of torsion and then of transformation, could all
be suggestive of the dynamics within Titian's painting. (And, for the reader who
does think of Titian, at least on rereading, the word "Tail" will take on its usual
meaning, as well as its secondary connotations within the context of detection.)
Even if my own response, my triggered memory of Titian, is eccentric, it still rests
on something which is unambiguously present in the poem, a serious engagement
with Ovidian motifs.

Rees-Jones's fluent, confident Ovidianism continually dares the reader to
exhume more subtle traces of the *Metamorphoses*. The first poem, "The Cemetery,"

begins with an account of Faith learning to run. The description weaves together song, new life, creation, light and dark, a spark, and the earth poised in space:

> I've learnt to run, like an adult learns to sing,
> the arpeggios of the body's muscles,
> the biomechanisms of the human scale,
> forcing a life to be suddenly spoken,
> a finger pressed to an ivory key, a note that issues
> from an opened mouth, as if God or the gods
> were already there …
> …   I've learnt to take tarmac under my shoe,
> to feel the spark between muscle and sinew
> pushing the globe on its tilted axis …
> as you travel through light and a briskness of shadow,
> suddenly animal.

There are several echoes here—or invitations to find echoes—of the very opening of the *Metamorphoses* (1.1–30), where Ovid describes the creation of the world, blending that narrative with the creation of the poem itself, his *carmen*. Here, appropriately given Rees-Jones's own conflation of childbirth and poetry, it is the body rather than the world whose creative flux is compared with song. Another link is the uncertainty over who is responsible for the creation. Rees-Jones equivocates with her reference to "God or the gods," as Ovid does when he describes the creator as *quisquis fuit ille deorum,* "whoever of the gods it was" (1.32). In these lines there is a sense of something being shaped out of chaos, of the landscape (which is simultaneously the poet's mindscape) being ordered by song:

> Yet, through the wreckage of doggerel …
> a blackbird opens its feathery throat
> pulling the sky and the skyline closer
> so hedgerow and barbed wire and railing,
>
> The crunch of my footsteps on glistening paths,
> Rise up together, clash and unite.

But what happens next is a reversal of Ovid, who now goes on to describe the creation of man, the only animal who can lift his face upright to the sky, as opposed to the animals who look at the ground. Faith, by contrast, stumbles to the ground as she discovers a corpse; death and a fall replace the creation of new life looking upwards:

> when suddenly I stumble, hit the ground,
> become myself stretched out among the graves,
> the frost, a plot of orange dirt. Slumped beside me
> …   a woman's ruined body.

Whereas Ovid's earth was formerly *rudis*, unwrought (1.87), and now has human forms, the corpse discovered by Faith has been carved into death:

> There at the mouth, carved like a seraph's,
> a dash, a dart, an outpost of blood.

Such patterns of reversal characterize the volume's relationship with Ovid, a relationship which is hinted at rather than advertised on the cover, and which is playful, combative — and fruitful.

Actaeon is also the key myth for Robin Robertson, in his 2006 collection *Swithering*, a Scottish word that is aptly Ovidian, for it means both to waver and to change shape; as Robertson comments, it is very distinct from English "dithering," as "in its vernacular use, 'swithering' means a profound and violent uncertainty" (Vincenz n.d.). For Robertson, as for Rees-Jones, one of the attractions of the myth seems to be its engagement with the shifting and unstable nature of identity. In "The Death of Actaeon" Robertson picks up on hints of parity, even of a bond, between the myth's apparent antagonists, Actaeon and Diana. The first hint of this reflexivity comes when he describes her pool as a potential mirror, a "distant speck of glass." Then the reader is wrong-footed by an unexpected shift in perspective as we move between the stanzas:

> as she raises her arms to unbind the knot,
> shake loose her hair
> and stretch
>
> Arms outspread,
> one step at a time,
> he inched down.

It is as though the two figures, both with outspread arms, are mirror images of each other, and this idea of reflection is reinforced when Robertson declares that "the glass split" when Diana and the handmaidens first realized they were being watched. In a particularly subtle and effective addition to Ovid, Robertson describes how Actaeon's hounds "hid his body with their own," an ironic echo of Ovid's account of how her nymphs protectively try to "hide her [Diana's] body with their own." The way in which Diana towers over her nymphs is also glanced at when Robertson writes that "his horned head reared, streaming, from the ruck / as if a god was being born." Actaeon's labile identity is not only confused with that of his tormentor. Robertson follows Ovid's example in his exile poetry, and identifies the hunter with himself. In "Actaeon: The Early Years" he recasts the myth as a narrative about a boy's strained relationship with his mother:

> He learnt that desire for intimacy
> was a transgression.

The goddess's outrage, the sense that a taboo has been violated, translates easily into incest anxiety:

> From the top of the monkey puzzle, lit by the arced bow
> of a new moon, he saw her, lying there in the bath: the white
> face-mask first, then the rest. That hair. She must have
> screamed as she covered her breasts because her face
> chipped open, like her favourite porcelain fawn, the one
> the cleaner broke. The hole at the muzzle like a smile, almost.

Although the mother mirrors Diana, she also resembles a deer, the "porcelain fawn." This sense of hunter and prey, goddess and animal, merging together is strengthened by the way Robertson uses the word "muzzle." It suggests an animal, and, because the ornament had been broken, we may visualise the "hole" as a wound, perhaps created by a bullet. Yet at the same time as we are invited to look at a face distorted by horror, or even mutilated by violence, we may also feel we are looking at the weapon which has caused the wound. For "muzzle" suggests a rifle as well as a mouth, and the hole may refer to the barrel of a gun.

The poet's association with Actaeon creates ripples in the rest of the collection, not apparent at first reading. In "At Dawn" the narrator describes how he enters a ruined croft where he discovers talismans suggesting that he has been bewitched, as well as strange traces of himself:

> a biscuit-tin of human hair
> and a urine sample
> with my name and date of birth.

One item in this curious collection is "the lopped head of a roe deer, / its throat full of wire." The implication, given the hints of sympathetic magic here, is that there is a correspondence between the narrator and the deer. However in "Bow," toward the end of the collection, he has himself become the hunter, in a poem in which death and desire make uneasy bedfellows. The narrator draws "to full stretch" like a bow, but also like Robertson's own Diana and Actaeon; then sexual penetration and the fatal thrust of an arrow are elided:

> The flight is loosed, the flesh
> Invites the storm; I will
> Drive into your heart
> Up to the feathers.

A connection is implied between female genitalia and a wound, a move which might send us back to "Diana and Actaeon," and indeed to Ovid, and make us start to read the account of Actaeon's death as a mythological anticipation of Freud's theories of castration anxiety. Nancy Vickers describes the way the myth seems to

encode anxieties about both incest and castration (1981: 273): "It is a glance into a mirror—witness the repeated pairing of this myth with that of Narcissus ... that produces an unlike and deeply threatening image." The myth, like Freud's idea of the trauma of a boy confronted by the female's lack of a penis and filled with fears that he may be similarly "castrated," combines the idea of a sudden glimpse of female flesh with horror and violence. Ovid's reference to the way the hounds tore Actaeon apart until "till there was no place left for further wounds" (*Met*. 3.237) takes on a different resonance when his wounded body (through the additional detail about the hounds trying to conceal him) is associated with Diana. A bilingual pun, mirroring the possible play on words invoked by "muzzle," and reinforcing the idea of the female body as a site of peril, is available. "Flesh," within the context of a poem about arrows, might invoke its homonym, *flèche*, "arrow" in French.

The way in which the poems in these volumes use the *Metamorphoses* to speak to one another, in ways not at first apparent, is an authentically Ovidian effect which, paradoxically, is less easily captured by a translation (even an adaptation) of Ovid, such as Ted Hughes's versions, than by this kind of far more fugitive and diffuse response. The sense of surprise and discovery experienced by the reader of Ovid who suddenly spots that Cinyras' liaison with his own creation, his daughter, resembles the situation of his ancestor Pygmalion, can best be replicated by a modern poet who changes Ovid *in nova*, into something completely new. Otherwise there will be no surprise.

Josephine Balmer's *The Word for Sorrow* (2009a) is a similarly bold response to Ovid, although here it is the *Tristia*, rather than the *Metamorphoses*, which provides the springboard. Although Balmer's own presence is strongly felt in the collection, Ovid's experience of exile is mapped not onto her own life but onto that of "Geoffrey," a soldier who fought in Gallipoli, and who once owned Balmer's own Latin dictionary.[4] Loose translations and other responses to poems from the *Tristia* are interspersed with poems from the perspective of Geoffrey, another exile facing hardship. This contrapuntal pattern can itself be seen as a metamorphosis of one of Ovid's metamorphoses—those which leave one feature unchanged—in that the reader is invited to find hints and traces of Ovid's exile to Tomis in Geoffrey's poems, and vice versa. A translation is itself of course a kind of metamorphosis, and the title of Balmer's collection both translates Ovid's *Tristia* and comments on what she has done. Balmer seems driven by an urge to connect, to discover potential points of contact between the two men's experiences which can then be reinforced through her own poetry. She explains, for example, in the preface (2009a: xiv), "Old newspaper photos of the regiment lined up on the now demolished Malvern Road railway station in Cheltenham just before leaving for the East, suggested parallels with Ovid's famous poem describing his last night before exile."

The cross-contamination between the voices of Geoffrey and Ovid is apparent in the very first poem, "Naso's Book Back in Rome." Because we know from the preface that Balmer bought Geoffrey's Latin dictionary at a village fete, we may

read this poem as though spoken with a double voice, even though Geoffrey would not have sent his own book back home in the way Ovid sent his poems:

> Go on without me, book, but with my blessing,
> back to our home town, the exile trespassing
> (for you're not forbidden, banned where I am barred
> though scuffed, as black—and white—as my bereaved heart)
> but if your page is smeared, words left undefined,
> those blots are from tears, and now the tears are mine.
> Go on, retrace my paths.

The use of the word "scuffed," suggestive of shoes and skirting boards, might help conjure up schoolboy Geoffrey, as well as the phrase "words left undefined," reminding us of his dictionary. Balmer makes one small but telling adjustment to the Latin at this point. Ovid writes (*Tr* 1.1.13–14): *Neve liturarum pudeat; qui viderit illas / de lacrimis factas sentiet esse meis*, "Be not ashamed of blots; he who sees them will feel that they were caused by my tears." It is by no means clear in Balmer, as it is in Ovid, that the blots are from the writer's tears; in fact it is implied that they are not, that they have been coopted but not shed by the narrating voice, as though in reference to the fact this is a version of Ovid rather than the original. She continues with a cleverly crafted twist on Ovid's own fondness for puns involving poetic "feet," drawing our attention to her own propensity to create meaning through gaps and differences:

> tread the streets for me,
> between the lines, in the cracks, set my feet free.

In the context of this translation, the injunction "retrace my paths" seems itself to have multiple meanings, referring to the *Tristia* making the journey from Tomis back to Rome, to Geoffrey following Ovid into exile, and to Balmer tracking the lives and writings of both men, and translating the exile poetry. Balmer frequently thus references the act of translation in her adjustments to Ovid. In her loose adaptation of *Tristia* 3.1, "Naso Off the Shelf," Ovid's fantasy of his volume traveling to Rome becomes a repetition, a meditation on the translator's art which also takes us back to the famous opening of the *Metamorphoses*:

> I dreamt my book went home again,
> Transformed, reformed, shuddering
> Like Proteus on the turn, changing shape.

The beginning of *Tristia* 3.3 is perhaps always going to be a comment on translation, once translated:

> If on this page you detect some new hand, fresh script
> I have dictated, don't fret: for I am sick—
> sick, here at the end of the unknown world, half dead.

Here, though, there is a further voice in play, for Balmer tweaks her lexis to put us in mind of Geoffrey the soldier: "Here there's no rest-home, rations fit for invalid." Although Ovid's own reference to Pythagoras, and being reborn as a barbarian, are missing from Balmer's version, Ovid's prophecy is fulfilled in her translation through half-turning him into a soldier from an even more benighted outpost than Tomis.

This urge to weave Ovid and his poems into the web of someone else's life, whether a fictional character (like Rees-Jones's Faith) or real (like Balmer's Geoffrey), is shared by the American poet Averill Curdy. She metamorphoses Ovid's poems of change and exile, rehousing them, through a process of Pygathorean metempsychosis, in the body and experiences of George Sandys (1577–1644), who himself metamorphosed Ovid through his translations. The opening of her long poem "Ovid in America" echoes Ovid's own playful confusion between a person and his text in *Amores* 1.1 and *Tristia* 1.1. A pun transforms the text, the page, into a boy, a servant carrying his master back to London:

> This page is small yet stout enough
> To bear me whole upon it to you
> All the way in London. I may expand
> Myself at leisure then fold it tight,
> A sanctuary.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses* seems to insinuate itself into Sandys' America. As the plants turn human, so Sandys himself is metamorphosed into a tree planted in the ground:

> At breakfast I have pinched the plantlets
> Insinuated by a maple's winged seed overnight;
> It unclasps twin leaves, pale hands
> Loosening the soil of my rest.

The metamorphosis is in fact a complete reversal of identities, for the seed grows shoots, here described as hands, which tend, in their turn, to the transformed, transplanted Sandys. This tendency to deconstruct oppositions, to reverse power relations, is similar to that displayed by both Rees-Jones and Robertson, and perhaps reflects the difficulty of distinguishing between agent and object in the act of translation or adaptation. In a further metamorphosis of the *Metamorphoses*, the formless marsh is revealed to be a version of Ovid's chaos, which also gives birth to *nova*, new forms:

> The estuary, a nursery of strange devices,
> Throws off new forms so promiscuously
> I wonder how the world holds any more shape
> Than a dream?

Like the narrator of Ovid's exile poetry, Sandys is himself undergoing a kind of transformation, that of aging. As well as taking the metamorphosis a step further than Ovid does, with the addition of a mild pun on "wing" to Ovid's observation that his dark hair is becoming white like a swan's feathers (*Tr.* 4.8.12), Curdy of course introduces a further locus of metamorphosis, turning Sandys into Ovid. The verb *imitantur*, used by Ovid to describe the process whereby his hair grows to resemble white feathers, may be missing here, yet the poem is itself an imitation:

> no marvels
> Except those which the mirror surprises in all of us,
> The swan-white wing at my temple,
> I do not know what to hope for:
> That you do not see me, or that you do,
> But as though I were pinned under glass.

Curdy's Sandys also describes the horrors of attacks from Native Americans in metamorphic terms, in particular echoing Ovid's description of an assembly petrified by the head of Medusa (*Met.* 5.177–209):

> Bodies stung into postures,
> Penitence, Weariness, Surprise, & cardinal
> In red caps, red garlands of red roses
> Wrapped around white throats, white
> As bacon fat.

The queasy blend of wit, beauty, and banality in this description of men with their throats cut and scalped seems to echo a moment of similarly inventive horror (although in fact these gory lines are generally thought to be a later addition to Ovid's text) from the long description of the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs at *Metamorphoses* 12.434–38, in which a man's brain is compared with cottage cheese:

> fracta volubilitas capitis latissima, perque os
> perque cavas nares oculosque auresque cerebrum
> molle fluit veluti concretum vimine querno
> lac solet, utve liquor rari sub pondere cribri
> manat et exprimitur per densa foramina spissus.

And through his mouth, through hollow nostrils, eyes, and ears oozed the soft brains, as when curdled milk drips through oaken withes, or a thick liquid trickles through a coarse sieve weighted down, and is squeezed out through the crowded apertures.

And perhaps Curdy had this detail in her mind when she described how Sandys dissects a frog, "I trim the brief cloudburst of its brain, / Which has the texture of cheese under my knife," particularly as Ovid plays an odd role in the translator's experiments:

> If I put Ovid between it & the window,
> Tickle its hinderparts with acid, it leaps
> Towards the light, avoiding the book.

Finally, we are perhaps reminded that Curdy's Sandys is himself being subjected to the same process he had visited on Ovid:

> A year—& through branches light comes,
> A pilgrim out of March from a farther world.
> There is a flaw in the air. I breathed it
> From the swamp, a kiss of damp
> Translated to a plague that would remote me.

He senses death in the air, but his use of the verb "translate," emphasized through its placement at the beginning of the line, is telling. It is tempting to translate the "farther world" into our own time, and the "pilgrim out of March" who comes from that world as the modern poet—named for another spring month. The swamp was earlier described as a nursery of new forms, and here it becomes associated with the transformative potential of translation. Curdy continues:

> Then by psalms I could enter
> Purged & reborn & singing in a tongue
> Not mine *I know not where to go*. (I know.)

This sends us back to Ovid's exile experience, his poem about trying to write in the Getic language, and also of course suggests Sandys' faith in a Christian afterlife. But it also doubly resonates with the act of translation, reminding us how Sandys made Ovid sing in a tongue not his own, and also how, as the subject of this poem, he has himself been "reborn" and made to sing, not in a completely different language, but certainly through the voice of another.

   The idea of a fusion between Ovid and his later followers is present in many of the poems considered here, and the prevalence of this theme perhaps invites a different reading of Maureen Almond's "Hermetical." Rather than being an invocation of a middle-aged relationship, the poem could be read as an address to Ovid, as an articulation of dissatisfaction over the poem they have created between them, "with its clumsy feet." Seen in this light, Almond's poem echoes Deleuze's striking description of the processes of philosophy (1995: 6): "I suppose the main way I coped with it at the time was to see the history of

philosophy as a sort of buggery, or (it comes to the same thing), immaculate conception. I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous." That this reading seems to be available reflects a common pattern which emerges in the works of all these poets writing after *After Ovid*, though perhaps most strongly in the works of Balmer, Curdy, and Rees-Jones. This is a particular attentiveness to the poet's own relationship with Ovid, a tendency to make that relationship itself a subject for poetry.

The fact that this relationship often seems to be figured as erotic or procreative is hardly surprising, perhaps. There are plenty of earlier discussions that acknowledge the erotic potential of the relationship between a writer and his source. T.S. Eliot, for example, describes how a living author may be struck by "a peculiar personal intimacy with another, probably a dead author … his first passion of this sort …" (1919: 39). Other commentators have emphasized the potential for both fertility and aggression in this relationship. For Derrida, "in the translation the original becomes larger, it grows rather than reproduces itself … like a child" (2007: 213). George Steiner, on the other hand, brings metaphors of aggressive penetration to the fore (1975: 323): "invasive and exhaustive … the most violent, deliberately extreme act of hermeneutic penetration and appropriation."

When I referred to the relationship between a modern writer and *his* source earlier, I did so deliberately, as so many critical discussions of such erotic contacts emphasize, either explictly or implictly, the homoerotic, the queer. It is interesting that the potentially erotic moments I identify in this chapter incline, by contrast, to the heteronormative, for they figure the relationship between a female poet and her male influence, using the dynamics of sexual tension and power play, procreation and marital friction to reinvigorate twenty-first-century Ovidianism. A final locus for eroticism might be suggested by West's description of literary translation (2010: 2): "I will argue that the process of literary translation, a process of intense engagement with another's words, a process of intense reading, can be considered erotic if and when it is construed as the longing for full understanding of another's speech." The critic could be described in similar terms: intensely engaged and longing to understand. And certainly the teasing uncertainty of so many twenty-first-century Ovidian voices, their refusal to display their wares too blatantly, adds to their allure for the desiring Ovidian critic.

Notes

1 Compare Harrison (2004).
2 For a useful analysis, see Phillips (2004).
3 Guy-Bray (2006: 62) discusses imagery suggestive of penetration and insemination in relation to poetic influence.
4 Balmer discusses the book in (2009b: 59–62).

Further Reading

Discussions of twentieth-century poetic responses to Ovid include Kennedy (2002) and the final chapter of Brown (1999). Another useful overview is offered in Harrison (2004), which includes a discussion of Almond's *Oyster Baby*. Balmer (2012) offers some interesting reflections on her practice as a female translator of classical texts. Ovid continues to inspire new poems, published too late to be included in this chapter. *Metamorphosis: Poems Inspired by Titian* (2012) includes further recent responses to Ovid by 14 leading contemporary poets, and is introduced by Nicholas Penny, Director of the National Gallery. The title of Averill Curdy's *Song and Error* (2013) reveals its debt to Ovid, and Clare Pollard, in *Ovid's Heroines* (2013), offers a confident, modern translation of the *Heroides*.

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Ovid's "Biography"
Novels of Ovid's Exile

Rainer Godel

Introduction

During the twentieth century, when exile was a central issue of international politics, it is not surprising that Ovid's biography became a recurring topic in literature. The Roman poet has been considered the "ur-exile" (Ziolkowski 2005: 102; 2009: 456), the prototype of an exiled poet, or a striking "metaphor of exile" (Claassen 1999: 238). However, the twentieth century also brought multiple forms of exile—be it exile from colonial sway, from authoritarian regimes, or from the Nazi fascist terror. In the light of the worldwide refugee camps of the late twentieth century, the experience of exile was no longer a fate of a cultural or political elite who claimed Ovid as their most famous predecessor (Hexter 2010: 603). Nevertheless, the last 30 years have seen a "resurrection" of Ovid (Walde 2007), a specific interest in Ovid's "biography" and especially in his exile years.[1]

Ovid's disappearance to Tomis on the edge of the Roman empire and, therewith, the lack of any objective knowledge of the last years of his life, have often ignited attempts to tell the story of what really happened during his exile. This interest in Ovid's fate informed four different literary motifs throughout the twentieth century: First, the political narrative of a dictator forcing a libertine artist to leave his country; second, the search for the unknown reasons for Ovid's *relegatio* (much speculation has been made both in scholarship and in literature about Ovid's *error*); third, the story of a gifted poet, "the advocate of words over things" (Ziolkowski 2005: 223), who, by means of his public disappearance, reenacts a basic theme of his works, the idea of changing appearances; and, finally, the idea that exile and the separation from one's own roots facilitate the

search for truly important values such as faith, morality, or a new concept of the self.

This chapter focuses on arguably the three most important novels on Ovid's biography during the last 50 years: Vintilă Horia's *God Was Born in Exile* (orig. *Dieu est né en exile,* 1960), David Malouf's *An Imaginary Life* (1978), and Christoph Ransmayr's *The Last World* (orig. *Die letzte Welt*, 1988), all of which use more than one of these motifs.

Much research has been done in recent years on both the contemporary reception of Ovid in general and the novels examined in this chapter. Ziolkowski's groundbreaking study, *Ovid and the Moderns* (2005), remains the most comprehensive and convincing survey of Ovid in the modern era. Other handbooks and edited volumes—most recently by Ingleheart (2011), which focuses on two thousand years of reception, and Gallagher (2009), who concentrates on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—deal with what Katharina Volk has called the contemporary "Ovid novel" (Volk 2012: 10). Of the three novels by Horia, Malouf, and Ransmayr, that by the Austrian Ransmayr has attracted worldwide attention, whereas Horia's novel—although awarded the Prix Goncourt in 1960—has only recently come to prominence in research.

I argue that it is characteristic of these three novels that they highlight the question of whether and how metaphysics can explain the world. Whereas both Horia and Malouf replace the historical Ovid's skepticism with the search for a new myth that informs a new meaning of life for the exiled poet, Ransmayr radicalizes the fictitious construction of myth by demonstrating that every mythology-based metaphysics is a narrative construction. Ransmayr asks what the functions of the narrative construction of metaphysics are. Whereas both Horia and Malouf present alternative religions which stabilize the protagonist's worldview, Ransmayr demonstrates that the process of creating a stable worldview is always based upon what one might call "poetry."

Vintilă Horia, *God Was Born in Exile*

Vintilă Horia's *God was Born in Exile* draws upon Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. But in contrast to Ovid's exilic poetry, this novel does not show its protagonist in despair because of his lost home and cultural roots, but depicts his search for a new religion, which replaces Ovid's skepticism. Horia's protagonist searches for a new metaphysics after he discovers that he lacks meaning in life. Religion (in this case a proto-Christianity) and myth are eventually functionally equivalent, providing a consistent and reliable way of perceiving the world.

The Romanian-born Horia (1915–92) published the novel in French in 1960. It was printed with a preface by Daniel-Rops, a member of the French Academy, and was awarded the highly prestigious Prix Goncourt, an award Horia returned because of the massive criticism he encountered when his alleged membership in

the Romanian fascist Iron Guard and several fascist and anti-Semitic articles that he had written in the 1930s were made known. Horia had served in the Romanian embassy in Vienna in the late 1930s, yet was forced to leave Europe during World War II and to emigrate to Argentina, finally returning to Franco's Spain in 1953 and living in exile in France and Spain until his death in 1992 (Ziolkowski 2005: 118).

In his preface Daniel-Rops reads the novel in Christian and biographical terms. Referring to Horia's own experience of exile, he stresses that the author "knew the unending, pitiless horrors of exile. And yet this experience was to yield the purest and deepest part of his inspiration" (viii–ix). Daniel-Rops further elaborates on the idea that exile can be closely connected with undergoing "great spiritual experiences" (ix). In this vein he equates Horia with Ovid: "Very soon the idea of identifying himself so to speak with his model, to tell of his own experience, took possession of him" (ix). What does this experience consist of, according to Daniel-Rops? It is not surprising that a Christian member of the French Academy stresses the proto-Christian experience Horia ascribes to his fictitious Ovid: "And thus little by little Ovid, the trifling poet, the skeptic, feels his way to another truth which soon becomes *the* Truth" (xi). Daniel-Rops declares the search by "Ovid" for the one Christian God to be the main topic of the novel. Yet this proto-Christian reading neglects a major factor largely ignored by critics: the political background of this novel. I argue that through the idea of a Christian metaphysics Horia's Ovid is connected with a hidden right-wing agenda.

The novel consists of Ovid's fictional diary in eight chapters that cover the last eight years of his exile. While at the start Ovid repeatedly complains about the *relegatio* he considers unjust, he searches for integration in Tomi[2] and among the Getae. During a trip to the Getic lands initiated by his housekeeper Dakia, he gets to know the peaceful character of the inhabitants and their religious faith. Deeply impressed by their monotheistic religion, which contrasts with his skeptical nihilism, he encounters the Greek physician Theodore who proclaims the future Messiah. Ovid suddenly realizes that his life in exile enables him to gain a new understanding of the world and of his own life. "And I know that God too was born in exile" (241). Yet Ovid's plan to move from Tomi to the Getic lands fails due to his age and sickness. Weakened and dying, Ovid returns to Tomi.

His quest for a monotheistic, proto-Christian substitute for the lost Roman gods implies a search for a new political order to replace Rome's militaristic imperialism. This order is, according to Horia, to be found in proto-Romanian society and politics. This double replacement—religious and political—requires the assumption that "the poetry of the hypotext is portrayed as insincere, compliant,

pro-Augustan, and is contrasted with the genuine, anti-Augustan prose of the present text" (Matzner 2011: 309). Horia's novel presupposes that the historical texts by Ovid do not represent Ovid's real thinking as presented in his "diary." Tomi, for instance, is not reconstituted as the Ovidian "externalisation of internal misery" (Claassen 1999: 190).

This dichotomy allows the author to reverse the historical values and assumptions in order to depict Ovid as someone searching for Christianity, which, in the end, represents the only "true" religion. This reversal implies a reevaluation of the basic situation of exile. Exile is no longer associated with feelings of loss and despair but is considered a fortunate opportunity to experience freedom: "I am free to write in secret as I think and as I live—quite simply" (14). Encountering Roman deserters who live in the unoccupied country (which later became Romania), Ovid is told that happiness for these people consists in being "master of my days and nights; and because no one forces me to kill men. I am free. What does one want more?" (82). Outside Roman dominion, freedom alone seems to suffice; remarkably, it is however a "negative freedom," to use Kant's term, not the positive freedom to jointly create a society.

How is the Roman Empire characterized in this novel? Horia's Rome and proto-Romanian society clearly allude to the contemporary context of the novel: the Cold War and atmosphere of fear and hostility which determines all perceptions and actions, and with the constant threat of war and mutual annihilation. The relationship between the Romans and the Getae reflects the psychological issues of the Cold War era (97–98): "One must avoid war, no doubt, but who can advise the Getae that our intentions are peaceful and also persuade the Romans that the Getae do not intend to attack Rome? The truth is that we fear each other . . . . It is a vicious circle, from which there is no issue."

Is there a solution to this issue in Horia's novel? "People could live in peace if they were not afraid of each other. Fear makes us speak different languages. Life becomes an unending war, life *is* war and more so every day. People forge weapons instead of inventing words of peace" (69). As Anne-Marie Monluçon has convincingly argued (2002: 178), the intent of this novel is not to depict the "totalitarian" regimes of the 1930s and 1940s but the political situation of the years when Horia wrote this novel. Moreover, the anti-communist and (formerly) fascist Romanian author points at Soviet communism and Stalinism (Monluçon 2002: 178) and their import to Romania in the 1950s. Free thinking, freedom of speech, and the unrestricted pursuit of happiness inform the self-description of the free Getae and the Roman refugees and constitute the counterpoint to Roman imperialism and state terror. Thus, I suggest, it makes sense to identify the Getae with the West of the Cold War era and the Romans with the assumed communist threat.

Ovid in Horia's novel undergoes a transformation from a representative of Rome who recognizes the threat of Roman politics and imperialism to someone who searches for new meaning and new faith in life. The new, assumedly Christian, faith represented in the claims for peace and liberty quoted above is closely connected with a dubious political agenda. I do not agree with Ziolkowski's thesis (1997: 349) that the national and ethical issues stand at the fore compared to political allegory and religious speculation. A proto-Christian metaphysics here is understood as the basis of a new political order which uses central concepts of nationalist propaganda.

A central theme is the search for truth, the true self, and the true religion: "It was only after my arrival when I was uprooted from my past and all the falsehood of which it was full that I made the discovery of myself" (19). A new religious identity takes over the function once fulfilled by the Roman gods. Ovid's starting point is his nihilism. Of the gods depicted in his *Metamorphoses* he says: "Their cruelty bespeaks their nonexistence" (6); "the gods do not exist" (8). The God of Christianity, on the other hand, is peaceful, and, following the protagonist's logic, this peaceful Christian God must exist. However, what Horia presents is a Cold War-era Ovidian Christianity which answers the quest for new norms and a new metaphysics in a world seemingly deprived of values and ruled by fear and terror. Horia's Ovid searches for a faith to stabilize his worldview in a world in which all values seem to be lost. He searches to replace what myths once supplied, a stable metaphysical framework, with a consolidating eschatological perspective. The core symbol ascribed to early Christianity, the fish, is the object of Ovid's central dream, from which he gains the hope for a better life, without fear of death, and belief in a better life after death. Ovid first finds those ideas in the Getic religion when a Getic woman tells him: "We are not afraid of [death]" (104). This religion features an eschatological prophecy of a hope for the future, "something … which will restore to mankind the freshness of a new beginning" (133–34). This proto-Messianic expectation includes motifs from Christian theology such as the promised happiness in God—"Those who exist will experience nothing but joy, for they will dwell in the light of God, and His light is goodness" (153)—a discussion of the Trinity, Jesus' birth in a crib in Palestine in misery and poverty, the star guiding to Christ's birthplace, and finally an allusion to the three Magi (202ff.). Ovid names Theodore's report of what he has noticed in Palestine "the most amazing story I have ever heard" (202).

On the political level, the novel responds to the Cold War despair with Christian morality and with the idea of a future peace and happiness. Belief in the Christian God is a precondition for a peaceful life: "A people that believes in its gods and respects their laws does not set out to conquer other peoples" (129). And, as Ovid reports, such a nation already exists. It is the proto-Romanian Dacians or Getae: "Their desire is not to deprive other peoples of liberty but to preserve their own, wholly bent as they are on the supreme ideal that no Dacian forgets

for a moment: eternal happiness beyond the bounds of this perishable body, symbol of what is sorrowful and ephemeral" (140; cf. Bonjour 1982). Thus, it is Ovid's exile in the Getic country that enables him to encounter a new God who symbolizes renewal. Values are completely reversed. Malicious deeds of the emperor turn out to have good results: "Thanks to him (Augustus, R.G.) I know myself. His cruelty sent me to Tomi and launched me on the quest of another God" (185).

Although this "renewal" seems at first glance to be a Christian motif related only to a seemingly harmless Romanian nationalism (in the light of the Soviet influence on 1950s Romania; see Ziolkowski 2005: 118–19, who considers Horia's novel "a paean to his native land"), one must not forget that some of the novel's key concepts were also core concepts of fascism. One would probably go too far to insinuate that the idea of a Christian "renewal" allowed Horia to gild a fascist ideological concept with a Christian color. However, one should not ignore the fact that the "new future order" of which Horia's Ovid is convinced—"the new man who is preparing to be born again out of the ashes of the age" (269)—bears distinct similarities to the "new order" the fascist regimes of the 1930s envisioned for a future mankind. Searching for or even breeding "the new man" from the loss and desolation after World War I was a core concept of fascist ideology. Moreover, the idea of combining religious or pseudo-religious patterns with political intentions clearly hints at how fascist (especially Nazi) ideology hid their criminal goals (Michaud 2004). Here again is Horia's Ovid (283–84): "We need new words, a new vision of life and a new religion in order to make it possible to invent a new language and express what the men of today are experiencing in their hearts, but which their ignorance prevents them from expressing in words and judgments."

Hope for Horia's Ovid does not originate in democracy and its values of participation and equal rights. Hope comes from a new order, a new man, a new religion with only one reigning authority. To avoid misunderstandings: I neither suggest that the novel espouses fascist ideals nor do I want to compare Christianity to inhuman politics; yet one should not underestimate that Horia's Ovid, in his search for salvation, finds ideas that bear similarities to the promises made by fascist regimes in the 1930s and the 1940s.

David Malouf, *An Imaginary Life*

Malouf's Ovid finds himself on a quest similar to that of Horia's protagonist. He does not, however, find proto-Christianity, but a form of natural religion that reminds some scholars of a "new age religion" or shamanism (Ziolkowski 1997: 356; 2005: 164, 185), and others of Australian Aboriginal religion (Morton 1999: 3; Matzner 2011: 318f.). This novel has occasioned widely divergent interpretations,

ranging from psychoanalytic Jungian (Bishop 1982) to existentialist (Neilsen 1990), from a "declaration of homosexual desire" (Indyk 1993: 13) to postcolonial or even anti-colonial discourse (Griffiths 1993; see Morton 1999: 3 for a survey of opinions).

Critics regularly find significance in Malouf's heritage. His Lebanese father had immigrated to Australia, where Malouf was born in 1934. The highly acclaimed *An Imaginary Life*, published in 1978 (and soon thereafter translated into several languages), was Malouf's second novel after the autobiographical *Johnno* (1975). Malouf maintains in his "Afterword" that it is "neither historical novel nor biography, but a fiction with its roots in possible event" (153). Whereas some consider this sentence to permit an allegorical reading (e.g. McDonald 1988: 45), one can also argue that it refers to a well-known poetological topos, namely that the possible and not reality is the realm of literature.

For Malouf, as for Horia, the "dawn of Christianity" (Ziolkowski 2005: 126) provides inspiration for the author, yet the two novels find antithetical solutions. Both protagonists search for metaphysical ideals that they hope will provide a stable perception of the world. However, while Horia's Ovid eventually finds a proto-Christian faith (that partly seems to be mixed with post-fascist ideas), Malouf's Ovid focuses on the relationship of the self with an all-embracing concept of nature.

Malouf's novel bears the character of a fictitious letter written by Ovid in exile to posterity (18), which pretends to tell the true story of Ovid's final years when he was exiled to Tomis, here a small, barbarian village that is the polar opposite of civilized Rome (Matzner 2011: 319). Ovid believes he recognizes his imaginary childhood companion in a wild child he encounters in the wilderness around Tomis. The Getae capture the wild boy, whom Ovid attempts to educate by gradually integrating him into the village's society. But it is the boy who teaches Ovid another way of thinking about nature and the role of beings in nature. The situation escalates when Ryzak, the head man of the village, eventually dies of a mysterious illness. Ovid and the Child escape from threatening persecution across the river Danube, where Ovid finds a kind of harmony with nature and eventually dies.

The experience of exile is represented here even more drastically than in Ovid's poetry. Malouf's Ovid feels the "desolateness of this place" and finds himself "at the ends of the world" (15). However, he recognizes that he describes exile in largely psychological terms: "But I am describing a state of mind, no place. I am in exile here" (16). Malouf's Ovid searches for something to replace the myth he had abandoned with his *Metamorphoses*; he is looking for a new "religion" which assumes the function of myths: stabilizing the understanding of the world and the role one plays within it.

The inhabitants of Tomis seem to practice a shamanistic religion, whereas Ovid eventually succeeds in absorbing a Rousseau-like natural religion he is taught by the

Child. In contrast to eighteenth-century theories of the natural state of mankind to which Malouf refers in his afterword (especially Itard; 155), Ovid here finally encounters a natural state without any social interaction. In the end Ovid is alone, accompanied only by the Child. The last five sentences of the novel all begin with the first person personal pronoun (152). Death, isolation, and happiness—due to the idea that a mystic unity with nature has finally been reached—end a story that began with three divergent efforts at integration (Matzner 2011: 315): Ovid attempts to integrate himself into the tribal setting of Tomis, the Child is introduced into human society (which could also be read as the Child's exile among human beings; Bishop 1982: 424), and Ovid departs to the wilderness from which the Child emerged. Two of these attempts fail: neither Ovid nor the Child is fully integrated into Getic culture. Integration, reconciliation with one's own fate, and the acceptance of a stable system of metaphysical values function only when apart from any civilization. The norms Ovid recovers are only spiritual ideas; he does not need a metaphysically based morality which regulates social interaction when there is no society left in the final stage of Ovid's life. Space and time do not matter anymore (144). Ovid experiences a spiritual form of myth, a world that makes sense only because it loses its relationship with reality. Ovid travels "beyond the cultivated farms and villas" (9) and beyond any human company to a place where the Ister river whispers, *"I am the border beyond which you must go if you are to find your true life, your true death at last"* (136). The conflict between Ovid's alleged skepticism and the belief the gods demand of him (*"Let us into your lives. Believe in us. Believe,"* 24) is eventually dissolved in favor of an imagined mythical certitude. Yet Ovid's path to this self-contented metaphysics requires two divergent points that contrast with his satisfaction in the end.

The function of the childhood memory awakened by the wild child is to reconstitute a feeling of harmony. This, however, requires the dissolution of the basic dichotomies of a common worldview. Only when the protagonist is no longer able to separate reality from dream—"Unable to tell myself: this is a dream" (18)—only when he considers imagination more influential than skeptical thought—"what he imagines is much more powerful than the facts" (75)—only when he finds "another meaning" that does not rely on rationally understanding language (24), can a stable metaphysics evolve. In the end, this metaphysics emerges from its paradoxical opposite, from the denial of a language which provides a reasonable meaning, from a denial of rational distinctions, from transgressing "beyond the limits of our speech, even in silence" (136).

Language does not support a stable and reliable worldview. In exile, Ovid's Latin does not even suffice for basic communication. He speaks Getic only deficiently, as it seems this language requires a deeper understanding of Getic mythology. Ovid himself is "rendered dumb" (17). Nor does a third language provide reliable guidance since the protagonist is only a learner: From the Child he learns

the "language of nature" to understand animals and plants and to imitate their sounds. This is a language in which signifier and signified coincide, "a language beyond tongues" (63). This language finally enables Ovid to understand the Child, but only at the cost of construing an unusual identity of speaker and object: "He is being the bird" (92). Only a complete reevaluation renders possible the new meta-physical order based upon living in harmony with nature. This includes valorizing the situation of exile; the extreme distance from all human society enables Ovid to find peace. Thus, when he decides to accept his exile and maintains, "I shall never go back to Rome" (94), Ovid has accepted the basic precondition for finding a new foundational myth by constructing an understanding of the self which focuses upon self-realization: "We are free at last to believe in *ourselves*. Since there are no rules, we must make some" (26). This idea of liberty differs from that depicted in Horia's novel. Malouf's Ovid lives and finally dies in a world where one constructs a self-centered myth which is said to enable human beings to grasp the world: "[you have] drawn them [the gods] up out of your soul's need for them and dreamed them into the landscape to make them shine" (29). Pantheism (or Panentheism of ancient Neoplatonism) is replaced by what one might call "Panegoism," including a radical rejection of the rational and skeptical means that were considered to have destroyed Roman mythology: "I must drive out my old self and let the universe in. The creatures will come creeping back—not as gods transmogrified, but as themselves" (96).

Like Horia, Malouf depicts a new mythology. Malouf's myth includes the assumption that truth and nature are identical, or at least that only the complete transition to nature and rejection of society provide a true understanding of the world. The gods are replaced by a mystified nature and rationality is replaced by a "new energy" (148). Not only does the center turn out to be the periphery and vice versa (Matzner 2011: 321), simply being in exile beyond any civilization and society enables Malouf's Ovid to cope with the issues of identity. Returning to the state of childhood characterized by pre-rationality and pre-society is the first step on Ovid's path to a new self. Malouf states in his "Afterword" that the novel is set "in an age, the dawn of the Christian era, in which mysterious forces were felt to be at work and thinking had not yet settled into a rational mode" (154). He considers Ovid a figure who "has to discover a real belief" (cited by Monluçon 2002: 182). Ovid achieves the sense of plentitude and immeasurable happiness that foreshadows "the new era that will come to its crisis" (19; cf. Ziolkowski 2005: 127).

Christoph Ransmayr, *The Last World*

Unlike Horia and Malouf, Ransmayr does not pretend that Ovid tells the true and hitherto untold story of his exile. On the contrary, Ovid himself—called

Naso in this novel—does not have his say. His fate remains unclear; the poet has disappeared. Instead, Ransmayr adapts and radicalizes Ovid's poetic stance through ambiguously applied cross-references from the *Metamorphoses* and motifs from Ovid's exilic poetry (Vollstedt 1998). He constructs a fictional realm that is pointedly not another fictitious biography, but rather challenges the reader to deal with multiple—and sometimes contradictory—layers of meaning. Ransmayr both transforms Ovid's strategy of narratively playing with the construction of identity and develops his own poetics of memory, thereby demonstrating the possible functions and ambitions of literature. He does not depict Ovid's quest for a new mythology to replace lost faith in the Roman gods; his narrative shows how myths are constructed.

An Austrian, Ransmayr was born in 1954. After studying philosophy and ethnology at Vienna University, he began his career writing mainly travel reports. In the 1980s, he was asked by Hans Magnus Enzensberger to contribute a new translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to the highly acclaimed series "Die andere Bibliothek" (Franz Greno, Nördlingen). This plan soon changed, as is seen in the first draft "Entwurf zu einem Roman" and the first short prose piece "Das Labyrinth" (Wilhelmy 2004: 283 f.; Godel 2009). Ransmayr decided to write a novel focusing on Ovid's exile, which was published in 1988, and has since been translated into numerous languages.

As Ziolkowski (2005: 177) rightly points out, "Ransmayr is concerned neither with the reasons for Ovid's relegation nor with his life during his years of exile." The protagonist Cotta, named after one of Ovid's addressees in the *Epistulae ex Ponto,* undertakes a quest for the exiled Naso and his *Metamorphoses.* Cotta does not find the poet but rather inhabitants of Tomi who remember Naso and the stories he had supposedly told them. Moreover, he sees stories knotted into their tapestry and carved in stone. Cotta attempts to reconstruct the *Metamorphoses* through the inhabitants' memories—Echo's narration, Arachne's carpets, Pythagoras' stone columns—and from the lives of the inhabitants who seem to impersonate motifs from Naso. Every character expresses an individual memory and its narration. Ransmayr radicalizes Ovid's narrative strategies by constructing several intermingled levels of narration (Kaiser 2010: 331). The *Metamorphoses* are not found in the form of a book but in the characters themselves, in the stories they tell, in the movies they watch, and in the metamorphoses some of them undergo. Naso's stories are transformed into a world; the myth is transformed into a narrated reality. However, neither Cotta nor the readers of Ransmayr's book are able to discern if they hear or read the characters' own imagination or a retelling of Naso's stories: "Had Naso opened a different window into the realm of his imagination for each of his listeners, told each one only the stories that he or she had wanted to hear or was capable of hearing? Echo had testified to a *Book of Stones*, Arachne to a *Book of Birds*" (150; cf. Fröhlich 2001: 92; Schmitz-Emans 2004: 128). As in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Ransmayr's novel contains approximately 40 "embedded" narrators

(Volk 2012: 75). Thus, the questions are, both for Cotta and for the reader: How reliable is their memory? What is the function of literature fed by these individual memories in the construction of a reliable world?

In *The Last World*, Roman mythology no longer functions as a reliable set of values to explain the origin and organization of the world (Godel 2009). It consists, similar to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, of a collection of stories that do not provide a single answer to all questions of faith and mythology. The novel provides neither a consistent mythological system nor reliable references to "historical" time. It is set in an ahistorical, fictitious time that combines elements from antiquity with Christian churches and modern elements such as film projectors and microphones. By blending historical characters into modern contexts, Ransmayr generates a chronotope (Bakhtin 2008), a mixture of space and time, which cannot be attributed to a specific period or a constant area (Wilhelmy 2004: 279, 310). Cotta enters this realm in his travel to Tomi.

While Cotta's cruise to the "middle of nowhere" (4) begins in April, the voyage's circumstances soon place the protagonist beyond a comprehensible time frame. The structuring rhythm of sleep and wakening is canceled ("No one slept," 4), as is the alternation of the seasons: "But these days, Rome was farther away than usual. Because in Tomi, people had turned from the world to celebrate the end of a two-year winter" (5). Cotta experiences this as a loss of reliable structures for perceiving the world: "Times and seasons laid their names aside, intermingled, fused" (184).

Nature, however, changes rapidly in Tomi. The pace of floral, fauna, and geological evolution accelerates, and new landscapes suddenly arise. Cotta finally recognizes that "the place he occupied was neither in the town of iron nor in the eternal city, but rather that he had stumbled into some middle world where the laws of logic no longer seemed valid" (167). He lands in a world where temporal continuity and chronology are structured according to the unreliable laws of memory, a world where everything and everyone can be changed, transformed, metamorphosed. This is a world of fiction and, moreover, a world that demonstrates how fictitious myths are constructed. Yet it is also a world of exile for the poet and the one who searches for him (166):

> Like many fugitives of the state who conformed to the language and the customs and in time even to the mind-set of the subjugated, barbaric societies in which they sought refuge from merciless Rome, Cotta too had so completely adapted himself to life in the town of iron that he was hardly distinguishable from its inhabitants now.

Exile requires the refugee to adapt to a world without reliable structures, to adapt to a world of change that is built by mythological narration. Memory plays a decisive role in this process of deconstructing time frames. As Cotta arrives in Tomi, the narrator relates his first optical perception: "Molding oranges, cargo from the *Trivia*, rolled across the dock—memories of Italy's gardens" (4).

The transformed state of the fruit signals the time that has passed. Multiple memories structure the plot, but, as this quote illustrates, they do not provide a constant, reliable picture.

Although the characters' memories constitute the "last world," they do not create a stable perception of the present (the time experienced by Cotta). The link between the past (which is remembered) and the imaginative construction of the future omits the present. The mythological narrations provided by the characters neither explain nor illustrate the world. Instead they provide a paradoxical memory of the future: "Out of a hail of stones, Echo shouted, the new human race will be born after the all-destroying flood to come—Naso read this future to her from the fire one winter day" (126). Echo narrates from memory a story told by Naso, "the last tale from the *Book of Stones* Cotta would hear from Echo" (121). Her story sets the myth of the Aegina ant men (*Met.* 7.517–660) in the future. She "described the coming flood for him as precisely as if it were a catastrophe from the past" (121; Vollstedt 1998: 73f.). The etiology, presenting an explanation for the listeners' (and readers') present in Ovid, is transformed into a prognosis of the future: "yet Cotta hardly believed his ears as she shouted to him that he would now hear the story of the imminent end of the world, a revelation of the future" (121). At the end stands "the true, the genuine human race," "creeping from the slime of a race that had perished of its own wolfish rapacity, stupidity, and thirst for power," "a brood of mineral-like hardness" (126), "without a language of love, but likewise without any stirrings of hate, sympathy, or grief" (127). However, the future is bound to the non-time of fiction. Even the end of the world and the emergence of a new human race are presented from the characters' vantage points and do not provide a reliable metaphysical foundation for understanding the world.

Time seems endless, and no valid explanation of a metaphysical order seems to exist. Ransmayr's novel does not provide a consistent metaphysical basis for the perception of the world or the self. It does not provide what the protagonists in Horia's and Malouf's novels find. Even the carnival parade with mythological figures impersonated by the people from Tomi is only "a pale shadow of the myths in which Roman imagination had rioted and spent itself" (70). The parade is only a pastiche, a mimicry without any satirical intent, just one more story about myths which can be inverted. It is not by chance that Pythagoras, who provides the last (but perhaps not the final) explanation in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, turns out in Ransmayr's novel to be a senile Greek refugee whom several people consider insane (Wilhelmy 2004: 286–89). "No path led, it seemed, into this old man's realm" (11). Even the final attempt to generate meaning is taken back to a reflection not on the content of myths, but on how they emerge. Neither Cotta nor the novel's readers find a simple solution or a simple meaning.

This novel does invite readers to reflect on the conditions of memory and narration. The distance from the usual mode of reading, termed the "de-automating of readers' response" (Spitz 2004: 166), provides an understanding of how narration contributes to creating myths: "what has been feigned in poetry presents itself as

an immediate reality" (Kaiser 2010: 348). At the end of the novel, the protagonist hears, in the midst of rapid transformations, his name. He detects his self, yet only as an echo.

But Ransmayr does not allow his protagonist to create a new myth as a foundation for his faith. The text demonstrates how individual memory constructs images, narrations, and fictions that reverberate in expectations, hopes, and fears for the future. Narration takes on one of the core functions of mythology enunciated by Ernst Cassirer (1955: 57f.), namely the origin of future expectations. The power of fiction to transgress time stands at the novel's center. Rather than simply telling stories, this textual structure directs readers' attention to why and how stories are told, thus making the functions of myth visible. In the "Ovidian Repertory" which concludes the novel, Ransmayr depicts two opposing transformations of myths. In two columns, he contrasts the "Ancient" and the "Last world," giving short resumés of the characters of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and his own novel. The Repertory demonstrates how fiction can deviate from public memories, tell new stories, and transform well-known stories considered the cradle of two thousand years of occidental heritage. The Repertory collects potential stories and points to many more that could also be told.

Thus, *The Last World* provides insights into how stories are told and how biographies are written. Even writing biographies is subject to the laws of fiction which enable us to generate a new understanding of the world. Yet it seems more important to rely on the question of how fiction may possibly create a world.

Notes

1   Whether or not the large quantity of literary texts dealing with Ovid or Ovidian topics since the 1980s justifies the proclamation of a new Ovidian age (Holzberg 1998: 11) does not need to be discussed here (see also Ziolkowski's critique, 1997: 345).
2   Both in Horia's and in Ransmayr's novel, the place of Ovid's exile is named Tomi, not Tomis.

Further Reading

Other modern fictional biographies of Ovid are Jane Alison's *The Love-Artist* (2001), Marin Mincu's *Il diario di Ovidio* (1997), and David Wishart's *Ovid* (1995).

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Ovid and the Cinema
An Introduction

Martin M. Winkler

In Book 8 of the *Metamorphoses* (183–235) Ovid immortalized Daedalus and his son Icarus, the first human aviators in the Western imagination, as exemplars of man's ingenuity and daring. They also became the mythical ancestors of all technological innovators. From the late nineteenth century until today, the cinema has been the most influential mass medium technically, commercially, and artistically. So it is not surprising that the earliest human flight should have been associated with this new form of narrative in moving images. After all, the close affinities between verbal and visual storytelling had been well known in classical Greece and Rome (cf. Winkler 2009). The ancient cultures have been one of the most versatile sources of inspiration to filmmakers. One of the most remarkable of these sources is Ovid. Many of the myths to which he gave definitive shape have been adapted to the screen, most frequently in modernized versions. The Orpheus and Eurydice myth is among Ovid's most enduring tales, especially in the cinema. Jean Cocteau's *Orpheus* (*Orphée*, 1950) and Marcel Camus's *Orfeu Negro* (*Black Orpheus*, 1959) are milestones of film history.[1] But films whose plots contain thematic parallels to Ovid exist as well. This chapter is intended to point out Ovid's importance for film history, much in the manner in which a teaser trailer whets audiences' appetites for a full-fledged epic—even if the real thing is unlikely to be coming soon to a bookstore or scholarly journal near you.

Ovid and the Birth of Film Theory

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, poet, dramatist, and novelist Gabriele D'Annunzio was Italy's greatest man of letters. He was born in

Pescara, a town in the Abruzzi Mountains about 40 miles from Ovid's birthplace, modern Sulmona. D'Annunzio was keenly aware of his creative affinities with his Augustan forebear: "I write more easily in verse than in prose: it's one of so many points of contact that I have in common with my great predecessor from the Abruzzi: Ovid."[2] D'Annunzio also had some interest in cinema, although he believed himself superior to this new art with its distasteful mass appeal: "D'Annunzio was the first and most influential figure to formulate what looked like a full-fledged idea of cinema" (Bertellini 2002: 43). This idea was shaped by D'Annunzio's love for Ovid, especially the *Metamorphoses* (Oliva 2002: 282, 284):

> "I thought that from the cinema a delightful art could be born, one whose essential element was the 'wondrous.' Ovid's *Metamorphoses*! There is a true subject for the cinema! Technically, there is no limit to the representation of marvels or dreams . . . . I never stop thinking of Daphne's delicate arm, changed into a leafy branch. The true and unique virtue of the Cinema is metamorphosis; and I'm telling you that Ovid is its poet."

Was D'Annunzio right when he credited (in 1914) Ovid with anticipating the cinema? A number of silent films were based on subject matter drawn directly from Ovid. (Not all of them survive.) But a more important affinity exists as well. Handsome Narcissus, who is looking at his reflection in the water and falling in love with his own image, elicits this apostrophe from the narrator of his story (*Met.* 3.432–35): "Credulous fool, why do you long—in vain!—to seize such elusive phantom images? What you seek out nowhere exists . . . . What you see is the shadow of a reflected image: it has no substance of its own . . ." To us, this is an astonishing parallel to the cinematic image: non-existing shadows, especially when in black and white, are moving on a two-dimensional surface but look real. They are images deriving from the reflection of reality that has been transmitted through a lens onto the surface of a filmstrip.

The Cinema's Pygmalion Complex

When filmed by the camera and projected onto a screen, static photographs come to life. This is the fundamental cinematic metamorphosis of images. Its first grand master was Georges Méliès in France, a creative artist of boundless imagination and a gleeful joy of discovery. Méliès repeatedly told stories that are set in antiquity or otherwise take up classical themes and figures. His entire output amounted to several hundred films, many now lost. If we consider them as a coherent body of work, we find one large epic of metamorphoses. Méliès's films, most famously *A Trip to the Moon* (1902) and *The Impossible Voyage* (1904), are the earliest epic quests in cinema history. Near the end of his career Méliès reflected: "a specialty of mine

has been the creation, in cinematography, of the most extravagant impossibilities" (quoted from Solomon 2011: 235). With an adjustment to verse, these words could describe Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid was not the inventor of mythic metamorphoses as Méliès was of cinematic ones, but Ovid *did* establish the popularity of mythic metamorphoses in Western literature and the visual arts. Ovid and Méliès: kindred sprits? Probably. One of them was the greatest poet in tales of change in literature, while the other invented the means to show its process on our screens: from textual narratives and unmoving images in painting, drawing, sculpture, and photography to moving images.

Early filmmakers had to resort to deception, usually through editing or dissolves, in order to show or pretend to be showing what they could not otherwise put on the screen. A particular example whose origins are in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is among the most famous: Pygmalion and the ivory statue he fashions and falls in love with (*Met.* 10.243–97). Pygmalion prays to Venus, and his statue comes to life: "He kissed it, and it could be seen to soften … it became a body!" (281, 289). In the postclassical tradition but not in Ovid, the lady's name is Galatea or Galathea. As has been well said: "The dream of motion haunts the visual arts from the classical period to the present day. Myths of enchanted images and moving statues can be traced through the history of Western art" (Nead 2007: 45). Before the cinema, British painter Edward Byrne-Jones told the story of Pygmalion in four sequential paintings, collectively called *Pygmalion and the Image* (1875–78; cf. Nead 2007: 62–65, with illustrations).

"It might be suggested that the invention of the movies involved a 'Pygmalion complex'" (Païni 2010: 335). This surprising statement by an art historian may at first strike us as an overstatement, but we should remember that, given the frequent appearances of Pygmalion and his beloved in the arts, the art—and the business—of the moving image could not lag behind. The catalogue advertising *A Modern Galatea* (1904–1905) informed prospective exhibitors that this film was meant to satisfy "the present rage, at the variety theatres, for Living Pictures of statuary and other works of art" (quoted from Nead 2007: 78). As early as 1898, Méliès had made the first-ever *Pygmalion and Galatea* film, now lost. Others were soon to follow. So we may safely accept the explanation preceding the art historian's statement just quoted (Païni 2010: 335): "Thanks to Georges Méliès, the movies exploited the legend of Pygmalion and Galatea right from the start, unwittingly offering a hermeneutic perspective on the medium's own birth, namely the passage of inanimate to animated, from motionless volumes to changing shapes, from 'marble to celluloid.'" Just as classical scholars are virtually unanimous in their view that Ovid's Pygmalion is an intentional analogy to the poet himself, so Méliès and later filmmakers are Ovid's and Pygmalion's descendants.

What hath Ovid wrought? Well may we ask. In the twentieth century alone, his tale about Pygmalion has had a hugely successful new life (cf. Gross 1992; Joshua 2001; Hersey 2008; Stoichita 2008), thanks primarily to George Bernard Shaw's play

Pygmalion (1912), its classic film adaptation by Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard (1938), and the worldwide phenomenon of Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's *My Fair Lady* (1956), filmed by George Cukor in 1964. The Pygmalion archetype in turn revived the Svengali archetype from George du Maurier's novel *Trilby* (1894). Theme and variations: Pygmalion and similar creators have inspired or influenced a large number of films (James 2011).

Metamorphosis: Animation and CGI

The very nature of animation is transformation. Sequential drawings of two-dimensional representations of the three-dimensional world instill images with a life force—in Latin, *anima*—and so enable these drawings to move. In addition, anybody and anything can morph into something else.[3] Ovid's *Metamorphoses* duly influenced film animation. Prolific Japanese illustrator and animator Takashi Yanase directed a feature-length film of five tales from Ovid (Actaeon; Orpheus and Eurydice; Mercury, Aglauros, and Envy; Perseus and Pegasus; Phaethon). It was released in 1978 as *Metamorphoses*. But the film did poorly and underwent its own metamorphoses. It was shortened, had its stories partly rearranged, and received a new music track and English narration, read by Peter Ustinov ("And now, sir, I'm going to make a few changes around here"). The title became *Winds of Change*. There may have been a third version, apparently unreleased internationally, whose title, *Hoshi no Orpheus*, translates as *Orpheus of the Stars*. In the appearance of some of its characters and in its mixture of saccharine cuteness with kiddie-level scariness, the film is indebted to *Fantasia* (1940), the classic Disney feature that contained a romantic fairytale sequence based on Greek mythology. The Canadian television series *Mythic Warriors: Guardians of the Legend* (1998–2000), exclusively devoted to classical myths and featuring tales based chiefly on Homer and Ovid, dealt in one episode with Daedalus and Icarus. Icarus is a close friend of Hercules in *Hercules: The Animated Series* (1998), a spin-off from the Disney cartoon feature *Hercules* of the year before. This is mythologically impossible, but it shows the infinite adaptability of myth.

Metamorphosis is a fluid process in which a body takes on a different form. On the screen, it is all motion, one shape turning into another. Literary metamorphoses imply mental images of such motion; they are *motion pictures* in our minds. Ovid's affinity to painting is one of the chief characteristics of his art and has found frequent commentators. But today we can broaden our understanding of Ovid's verbal art and its visual qualities by adducing the realm of moving images, as D'Annunzio had done. Ovid is not only like a painter but also like a filmmaker, as his comment on Narcissus' obsession with his non-existing reflection has already told us. Ovid's epic tells stories in ways that resemble the ancient visual arts and anticipate the modern art of moving images. In particular, metamorphosis brings a character's mental or emotional state to the surface and so makes it visible: "It

distills and makes manifest human experience . . . . It regularly makes essence visible, plain, clear" (Solodow 1988: 197).

A recent film may serve as illustration. Ovid tells three stories of a young man called Cygnus ("Swan") being changed into the bird whose name he bears (*Met.* 2.367–80, 7.371–79, and 12.72–145). Darren Aronofsky's film *Black Swan* (2010) tells the story of a high-strung young ballerina, who gets the chance to play the White Swan and the Black Swan in Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*. The ballet contains metamorphoses on two levels: its plot hinges on a sorcerer's spell that changes a princess into a swan at night and back to human shape during the day, and the dancers playing the swans are given movements that simulate those of the animals they dance. The gradual metamorphosis of the protagonist in *Black Swan* remains incomplete, for her transformation does not go beyond the stage in which she is part human and part animal. But the metamorphosis we observe on the screen is the sort of physical embodiment of her emotional state that we read of in Ovid.

The choreographer has voiced serious doubts about the inexperienced dancer's ability to be the demonic Black Swan. The physical demands of her role and its emotional toll on her fragile psyche bring her perilously close to a nervous breakdown. At various points she discovers disturbing changes in herself: webbed toes, small black feathers protruding from her skin. Is she now, under all that psychological strain, actually turning into the Black Swan? So it seems, because there are no indications that what the dancer discovers about herself are images revealing a subjective inner state. It all looks realistic. Opening night brings the climax. Rallying her last resources, the dancer whirls onto the stage, and we watch her change from a human moving like a swan into a creature part-human and part-animal. Her neck and head resemble a swan's and her arms become huge black wings, but her legs remain human. She turns into the Black Swan because she has willed herself into this process. Her change fully conforms to Ovid's approach to metamorphosis: "Ovid … is particularly drawn to describing in-between states, usually during the process of transformation" (Solodow 1988: 186). All the anguish the ballerina has been suffering pays off, for she triumphs before her audience.

Director Aronofsky triumphs as well, chiefly because of the convincing way in which he shows this metamorphosis, made possible by state-of-the-art computer technology. Its early moments are presented so realistically that at first we do not doubt that such a thing is even possible. We willingly suspend our disbelief and accept the impossible. The dancer's change into the Black Swan occurs from an objective—that is, apparently factual—viewpoint. After she has completed her metamorphosis and her dance and takes a bow, Aronofsky cuts to an extreme long shot of her from the ballet audience's point of view. Now we see her in human shape. This shot tells us that the metamorphosis we just witnessed was not real and that the same is true for its earlier stages. All the swanlike features on the dancer's body had been manifestations of her inner state, made visible to her and to us. Two states, reality and subjectivity, have fused into realistic images of unreality.

Figure 31.1   Darren Aronofsky, *Black Swan* (2010). Fox Searchlight Pictures.

The long shot mentioned above, however, preserves the fusion of both states. We see her in fully human shape as she takes her bow, but her two shadows on the wall display large wings (Figure 31.1). The moment signals to us how intense the dancer's emotional state must have been, for it lingers as an image even after she has completed her dance. The content of her mind is still swan-like, rendered visible in the shadows cast by her fully human body. *Black Swan* may well contain the most gripping metamorphosis of a human into an animal that today the screen can present.

The Narrative Labyrinth

When Ovid announces that his epic will treat tales of change from the creation of the world down to his own time (*Met*. 1.3–4), he appears to promise a linear or chronological account. But Ovid frequently abandons linear progression in favor of something more complex. Williams (2009) has even spoken of "the chaotic operation of time within the *Metamorphoses* (157)."[4]

Readers of the *Metamorphoses* notice this side of Ovid's epic almost immediately, for stories are contained within or framed by other stories. Narrative complexity began with Homer's *Odyssey*, but in Ovid it reaches levels unrivaled until the Greek novel. Terms like "chaotic" or "erratic," however, are too pejorative to do Ovid justice. Rather, "clever" describes his technique more accurately. While complex narratives are now common in modern and postmodern fiction, they were anticipated by, and received important impulses from, European cinema of the 1950s. Jean-Luc Godard, one of the most influential directors of the French New Wave, has observed: "A story should have a beginning, a middle, and an end, but not necessarily in that order," and his own films "proceed by montage rather than story" (MacCabe 2003: 326). The late work of Luis Buñuel, cinema's great Surrealist, frequently goes off on narrative or chronological tangents and does not shy away from

leaving stories or parts of stories untold, just as Ovid repeatedly mentions or hints at versions of myths that he will not tell (Tarrant 2005: 87).

So we can agree with another scholar's conclusion, drawn in the mid-1950s, about how Scylla, up on a high tower, follows the movements of King Minos with her eyes (*Met.* 8.14–22): "Now here, now there, darts the eye of the poet's imagination. It does not always follow a story consecutively." But we must dissent from what this scholar goes on to say about the non-sequential order in which Ovid describes the reemergence of the earth after the Flood (*Met.* 1.330–47): "the poet is showing us jumbled lantern slides, not a film" (Wilkinson 1955: 170.) Not so. The poet *is* showing us a film, not one that adheres to the traditional way of narrative progression but one that anticipates modern cinema with its rapid editing and non-linear telling. Such a procedure struck film traditionalists as illogical, but it became prominent with the New Wave. Ovid's procedure has baffled some classical scholars. He is more modern than they are.

Postmodern Ovid and the Cinema

In AD 8 Emperor Augustus banished Ovid to Tomi or Tomis, modern Constantza in Romania. In his novel *The Last World*, Austrian essayist and novelist Christoph Ransmayr envisions Tomi as a surrealistic place between the times.[5] Ransmayr's title is a literal translation of Ovid's phrase *ultimus orbis* (*Tr.* 1.1.127–28). The town's inhabitants become doubles, as it were, of several mythical characters in Ovid's epic and undergo bodily metamorphoses. Much of the novel's fascination derives from Ransmayr's use of anachronisms: "His novels are memories of the future of the past" (Breitenstein 1998: 14).

As primitive, repellent, or nightmarish as the Roman Empire under Augustus may be depicted, the retro-futuristic world of Ransmayr's Tomi is not wholly alien to us. Modern technology already exists, most prominently the cinema. To have accorded it such preeminence may be Ransmayr's masterstroke, for film is the most effective means to disseminate Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid's Cyparissus was a handsome youth whom Apollo loved and who was changed into a cypress tree after killing the god's favorite stag by mistake (*Met.* 10.106–42). Ransmayr's Cyparis, as he is now called, is radically different (Ransmayr, 1990: 11 = 2009: 15):

> Cyparis the Lilliputian … drove along the shore, two duns harnessed to his covered wagon, and with his whip he traced menacing, mad figures in the air, screaming at Tomi the names of heroes and beautiful women. This was how, still from afar, the dwarf announced pleasure, pain, and grief, and all the passions of the films whose light he would beam on the peeling whitewashed walls of the slaughterhouse in the darkness of the days ahead. Cyparis the projectionist was coming.

The traveling film projectionist is a reminiscence of the early days of silent cinema, when just such exhibitors brought the new art of light and shadow to remote areas.

The canvas of Cyparis' wagon is decorated with a painting of the death of Actaeon (*Met.* 3.131–252), a suitably bloody story to whet the inhabitants' appetite for the suspenseful delights they may expect whenever Cyparis shows up. The effect he has on his spectators is comparable to the one Ovid has had on his readers for about two millennia (Ransmayr 1990: 12–13 = 2009: 17):

> Everything he said was a story . . . . His machine—Cyparis could hitch human destinies to it and transpose them whirring into the bustling world, into life. And so each year, under the dwarf's deft hands, there appeared on Tereus' [the butcher's] wall a world that, to the people of the town of iron, seemed so distant from their own, so unattainable and magical, that for weeks after Cyparis had disappeared into the vastness of time, their only stories were versions and recountings of the films whose light had now gone out.

This is a concise description of the fascination that all stories exert, whether in words or images. Stories that work this well also convey their authors' or tellers' own delight in their tales. That such was the case for Ovid can hardly be doubted. It is also true for Cyparis, who gets entangled in the world of imagination and metamorphosis because he cannot resist the power of his films (Ransmayr 1990: 13 = 2009: 17–18): "At times he thought he recognized in their pantomime the power of his own unrecognizable longings."

Cyparis shows the story of Ceyx and Alcyone and an epic trilogy about Hector's death and the fall of Troy, the life and death of Hercules, and the story of Orpheus' death. All occur in the *Metamorphoses*.[6] They are also staples of cinema. The versions shown have apparently become just as spectacular and melodramatic as we know real epic cinema to be: "The films were tragedies, bombastically flamboyant versions of the fall of three heroes" (Ransmayr 1990: 62 = 2009: 80).

However, things change for Cyparis as they had for Ovid. The trilogy on the fall of famous heroes parallels Ovid's own fate. Ransmayr makes the analogy of the poet and the projectionist explicit (1990: 66 = 2009: 84): "Cyparis the projectionist left the town of iron that afternoon just as Naso had once left San Lorenzo and Rome: eyed by rows of the curious, eclipsed by his fate, and with that unmistakable, distracted look on his face of someone who knows he will never come back." If Ovid did not come back, his epic, however, always does, not least in visual metamorphoses.

Teacher of Love

Ovid, author of famous or infamous erotic poetry, once characterized himself as "Cupid's teacher" (*AA* 1.17) and as a "playful writer of tender love stories" (*Tr.* 3.3.73). A twentieth-century scholar has gone so far as to call him the "playboy of the Roman world" (so the title of Knox 1998). Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, too, are full

of love stories, not always tender ones. Thrilling action on the one hand—love, romance, marriage, seduction—and sex on the other—all this can be found in Ovid's epic; all this is at the heart of the cinema. Ovid's *Amores* 2.4 virtually anticipates François Truffaut's *The Man Who Loved Women* (1977). And Ovid furnished filmmakers with one irresistible title: *The Art of Love* (*Ars amatoria*).

Ovid appeared on the screen in a starring role in 1983. Italian actor Massimo Girotti played him in Polish writer-director Walerian Borowczyk's *The Art of Love*, an erotic film about Ovid's *Ars amatoria*. Borowczyk once said in defense of erotic art: "Erotic films show the fascination that physical love exerts on us" (quoted from Thompson 2008: 163). Ovid and Borowczyk: the master of Roman erotica and a modern visual poet in tune with ancient and other classics of erotic literature. Is this then a meeting of true minds? Is Borowczyk an *Ovidius redivivus*?

Regrettably, no. His film, set in AD 8, is mainly a series of vignettes that illustrate quotations from Ovid's *Ars amatoria*. They are linked to a rather thin plot involving an upper-class married couple not found in Ovid or Roman history. A conspiracy against Augustus is also brewing. Borowczyk relies chiefly on nudity filmed in soft focus, but genuinely erotic moments are rare. Some scenes, especially of forced sexual encounters, are tasteless. But a measure of care has gone into the creation of a Roman ambience. Mosaics and a number of Pompeian wall paintings, for example, have been imported into the city of Rome. A rather bizarre three-dimensional Vertumnus (*Met.* 14.623–771), modeled on Giuseppe Arcimboldo's famous painting, at one point is brought into a banquet hall but soon suffers destruction. Certain stereotypes about the Romans, including the straight-arm salute, are also on view. An orgy contains close-ups on the lower bodies of female participants that directly contravene what Ovid recommends about privacy and the avoidance of blatant nudity (*AA* 2.609–18).

Borowczyk's Ovid is a teacher of love quite literally. "Ovid's classes are always full," one of his students comments. Ovid lectures to young men in a large hall, mainly by quoting from the *Ars amatoria*. On a podium he sits behind or stands near a desk with a bust of Homer (Figure 31.2). A large statue of the Medici Venus watches over the proceedings from the background, and a table anachronistically displays a small model of the Colosseum. When not in the classroom, Ovid wanders about Rome, quoting from himself in voice-over. His students repeatedly quote him, too ("My teacher Ovid says . . . "). Occasionally Ovid addresses the viewer, speaking directly into the camera. For instance, "I will not lie and say that Apollo is my inspiration . . . . The voice of experience writes my lines. So follow, if you will, this confessed expert. What I say to you is the truth." After this quotation from Ovid's proem (*AA* 1.25–34), most of Ovid's main points from the *Ars amatoria* are included in abbreviated form. Almost all of Ovid's mythical tales, allusions, or references are omitted. Since Borowczyk did not have the means to make an epic, anything that would call for great expense has been omitted, so we see no circus, no arena, no triumph. Ovid's famous line about the reason why girls

Figure 31.2   Walerian Borowczyk, *The Art of Love* (1983). 2T Produzione Film / Sever in Films.

like to go to the theater—they want to watch and be watched (1.99)—is applied to an art gallery.

One of Ovid's mythological tales from the *Ars*, however, is reenacted on the screen, that of Pasiphae (1.289–326; also at *Met.* 9.735–40). Ovid introduces the story to his students, then Borowczyk cuts to an amorously languishing woman who appears to be reading this very myth. She drops her scroll, and Borowczyk cuts to a visual reenactment. Soldiers are wheeling a hollow-cow contraption onto a field, in which a large bull is grazing. A naked woman climbs into the cow. The bull does what bulls do. (I omit tawdry details, some of them in close-up.) Borowczyk now introduces a twist, for we also see, in close-up, a human wearing a bronze bull's head—an anticipation of the not yet existing Minotaur? The man approaches the cow from behind. Eventually he lifts his mask and is revealed to be none other than Ovid in the lecture hall. Various levels—lecture, reading, reenactment—are intertwined. At the end, the outermost level (Ovid's) is fused with the innermost one (the visual tale). Is this a sophisticated narrative technique? Borowczyk presumably wanted it to be a highlight, for Ovid's students laugh at the revelation. Viewers will more likely be baffled.

Book 3 of Ovid's *Ars* is addressed to women: advice on how to love and comport themselves for and with their lovers. In the film, a bunch of women and girls eager for such instruction storm Ovid's lecture hall, eject the males, and take their places. Ovid, of course, delivers. But there is a second interruption. Soldiers close down the hall and arrest Ovid and the women. The poet's exile is imminent. The next scene, somewhat bewilderingly, shows Rome in flames. Is this an anticipation of the famous fire of AD 64 under Emperor Nero? Borowczyk seems to be falling back

on one of the hoariest stereotypes of Roman decadence, one that foreshadows an inevitable decline and fall.

Borowczyk gives *The Art of Love* an ending that resurrects and then kills Ovid in the twentieth century. A cut following on the fire in ancient Rome takes us to modern Italy. A young woman, who is awakening from a dream in her car by the side of a highway ("I was having a nightmare"), turns out to be the modern incarnation of the ancient Roman wife. Now she is a well-known historian of Roman art. From a newspaper article we learn that she has been working with a famous archaeologist at Pompeii and had fallen under his erotic spell. One of his male students killed him when he saw the older man's unhealthy influence on her, for the professor had taken "too big a role in her imagination." A photograph accompanying the article shows us the archaeologist. It is Ovid under a modern name.

Ovid and the Metamorphoses of Language and Culture

A fascinating film about the early Renaissance turns to Ovid in connection with the linguistic metamorphosis of Latin into Italian. Roberto Rossellini and his writers integrated Ovid into *The Age of the Medici* (*L'età di Cosimo de' Medici*; 1972–73). This almost four-and-a-half-hour account of Florentine political and intellectual culture, made for public Italian television, is "one of the most truly beautiful movies we are likely to experience" (Gallagher 1998: 639). At one point Cosimo de' Medici, Leon Battista Alberti, and a few others debate the value and usefulness of Greek and Latin and contrast the classical languages with the vernacular. Alberti observes that Latin has lost its perfection over time and that the classical authors and orators would not have striven for such perfection had they been able to reach only the highly educated. He concludes that the vernacular is no less worthy and suggests a contest to determine whether the well-educated or the commoner can better praise love, passion, and beauty. A street scene follows, and lines from Ovid are first heard in Latin and then in a loose Italian translation. They are taken, in abbreviated form, from the end of *Amores* 2.4, a catalogue of the different kinds of beautiful women who could be found in Ovid's Rome. The list culminates with the speaker's confession that, regardless of their appearance, he loves and desires them all (39–48). The film follows this with a discussion about ancient Roman and contemporary Florentine ladies. One of the men, just as dedicated to the pursuit of lovely ladies as Ovid or his speaker had been, compares the Florentines with the Romans. He calls the former "Venus' sisters" but is told off: "the women about whom your Ovid's verses are singing are certainly not the women of Florence. Ovid would not have known how to sing the praises of Florentine women."

The scenes here summarized are illuminating, clever, and amusing. The discussion of the relative merits of classical and Renaissance cultures leads to the charming juxtaposition of Roman and Florentine women as embodiments of both cultures, so it is appropriate that Ovid, the most famous ancient poet to

praise female beauty, should have been adduced in this context. But if Ovid is, as it were, part of the contest Alberti has proposed, he is not its winner. The classical ladies, praised in Ovid's Latin, yield to the Florentines, extolled in Italian, for the culmination of the second scene comes with a recitation from Dante. His sonnet *Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare* ("So Kind and Honorable She Appears") from chapter 26 of *La Vita Nuova* is a paean to the speaker's beloved. For the Florentines, Ovid must yield to Dante, just as the civilization of Rome did to that of Florence. But it is remarkable that Ovid and not Virgil or Horace, as we might have expected, is called upon to represent the Augustan height of classical civilization, the precursor of Renaissance Florence. The point could hardly have been made more elegantly.

Ovid in Outer Space

Most adaptations of Ovid's tale of Daedalus and Icarus in word and image have concentrated on the son, not the father. From a dramatic point of view Icarus, who crashes, is more fascinating than Daedalus, who flies and lands safely. The cinema with all its narrative urgency—after all, directors call out "Action!" on the set—has turned to Icarus in a variety of ways. Most films update the ancient myth to contemporary settings. Some emphasize family problems, especially between father and son. A quirky feature film with bittersweet romance, car chases, and allusions to other films is Robert Altman's *Brewster McCloud* (1970), in which a young loner who lives inside the Houston Astrodome builds himself a pair of wings with help from a fairy godmother. Alan Parker's *Birdy* (1985) combines a young misfit's obsession with becoming a bird—he even fashions wings for himself and attempts to fly, unsuccessfully although not fatally—with the psychological fallout of the Vietnam War.

Icarus' appearances in science fiction films, however, tell us that Ovid and the *Metamorphoses* have lost none of their fascination. Icarus symbolizes our imagination and, well, flights of fancy. If birds' feathers joined by wax and harnessed to human shoulders were the first sign of daring inventiveness, space flight is its closest analogy today. The fact that what humans invent can easily turn against them is now a major concern about advanced technology. So Icarus is more important to us than Daedalus, as the cinema has been showing us. Peter Watkins, best known for his nuclear-apocalypse film *The War Game* (1965), directed the futuristic *The Gladiators* (or *The Peace Game*) in 1969; it features an Icarus Machine in the context of the televised deadly sports conducted within the international totalitarian society that the world has turned into. Lee Tamahori's James Bond thriller *Die Another Day* (2002) features a deadly space weapon called Icarus, while the television and Internet series *Stargate Universe* (2009–11) contains an Icarus Base in outer space. Icarus I

and II are spacecraft in Danny Boyle's *Sunshine* (2007). Physicist Brian Greene's sci-fi children's book *Icarus at the Edge of Time* (2008), about a boy exploring a black hole, was turned into a 40-minute video in 2010, for which Philip Glass composed an original score. But Icarus is also a filmmaker of sorts. An American company calls itself *Icarus Films*; its advertising slogan claims that it distributes "innovative and provocative" international documentaries. The British *Icarus Films* is a video editing and production company.

Franklin J. Schaffner's *Planet of the Apes* (1968) imagined mankind's last flight. The spacecraft that crash-landed in a strange land was not named, but eventually it came to be called *Liberty 1* or *Icarus*. Only the latter name stuck. Schaffner's film generated several sequels and a remake, a television series, various comic books, and other pop-culture paraphernalia. By the time a "prequel" came to be released—Rupert Wyatt's *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* (2011)—the spaceship's Ovidian name had become fully accepted. A television news headline referring to the original flight now proclaims: "Icarus Enters Mars Atmosphere." Ovid's Icarus did not get very far; our Icarus flies farther than anyone else. But still crashes. Would Ovid be proud?

If D'Annunzio was right about metamorphosis and if there is a Pygmalion Complex, then we are right in reaching a certain conclusion. Ovid had the cinema in mind.[7] Even if we do not want to go that far, a related conclusion seems unavoidable. The art of visual metamorphosis, the *ars cinematographica*, is an Ovidian art: *ars Ovidiana*. It exemplifies the "universal contiguity" that essayist, novelist, and cinephile Italo Calvino once attributed to Ovid's work (Calvino 1987: 146–62).

Notes

1   On Cocteau's film see Winkler (2009: 281–94), with numerous references. On Camus's see Fredericksmeyer (2007) and Brown (2010). The remake of Camus's film by Carlos Diegues (*Orfeu*, 1999) was superfluous. Dumont (2009: 136–39) lists film, television, and video adaptations of the myth made between 1906 and 2002.

2   Oliva (2002: 288). D'Annunzio alludes to *Tristia* 4.10.26.

3   A historical survey in Harryhausen and Dalton (2008).

4   Anderson (1989) examines Ovid's intentionally misleading set-up of the transformation pattern. Cf. Zissos and Gildenhard (1999: esp. 31 and 46).

5   I have previously discussed this novel from a theoretical perspective in Winkler (1992: 33–34).

6   Ceyx and Alcyone: *Met.* 11.416–746; Troy: *Met.* 12.5–13.622; Hercules: *Met.* 9.13–272; Orpheus: *Met.* 10.1–85 and 11.1–66. The story of Orpheus is also told by Virgil, *Georgics* 4.453–527. It is safe to assume that Ovid's version, coming from a popular epic, has been more influential.

7   So the main title of Fondermann (2008).

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