

## Reading Ovid

*Reading Ovid* presents a selection of stories from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the most famous and influential collection of Greek and Roman myths in the world. It includes well-known stories like those of Daedalus and Icarus, Pygmalion, Narcissus and King Midas. The book is designed for those who have completed an introductory course in Latin and aims to help such users to enjoy the story-telling, character-drawing and language of one of the world's most delightful and influential poets. The text is accompanied by full vocabulary, grammar and notes, with assistance based on two widely used beginners' courses, *Reading Latin* and *Wheelock's Latin*. Essays at the end of each passage are designed to point up important detail and to show how the logic of each story unfolds, while study sections offer ways of thinking further about the passage. No other intermediate text is so carefully designed to make reading Ovid a pleasure.

PETER JONES is well known as an author, journalist, lecturer and publiciser of classics. He is co-founder of the charity *Friends of Classics* and regularly contributes columns, reviews and features on classical topics in the national media in the UK. His books include *Learn Latin* (1998), *An Intelligent Person's Guide to Classics* (2002) and (with Keith Sidwell) *Reading Latin* (1986).

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Peter Jones

Frontmatter

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## Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>List of maps</i>	viii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	x
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Metamorphōsēs and this selection</i>	1
<i>Ovid's life</i>	2
<i>Some features of this selection</i>	5
<i>Ovid's gods</i>	7
<i>Women and woods</i>	7
<i>Amor and rape in Ovid</i>	8
<i>Ovid and epic</i>	10
<i>Irony and paradox</i>	11
<i>Style</i>	12
<i>Some assessments</i>	13
<i>After-life</i>	15
<i>Glossary of technical literary terms</i>	17
<i>Notes for the reader</i>	19
<i>Translating Ovid</i>	22
<i>Metre</i>	23
<i>Suggestions for further reading</i>	27
<i>Maps</i>	29
<b>Passages</b>	
1. Deucalion and Pyrrha, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 1.348–415	33
2. Cupid, Apollo and Daphne, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 1.452–567	45
3. Io (and Syrinx), <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 1.583–746	61
4. Phaethon, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 2.150–216, 227–38, 260–71, 301–39	77
5. Diana and Actaeon, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 3. 138–252	91
6. Juno and Semele, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 3.253–315	102

vi	Contents	
		<hr/>
	7. Tiresias, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 3.316–38	109
	8. Echo and Narcissus, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 3.339–510	113
	9. Pyramus and Thisbe, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 4.55–166	130
	10. Arethusia, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 5.572–641	142
	11. Minerva and Arachne, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 6.1–145	149
	12. Cephalus and Procris, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 7.694–756, 796–862	162
	13. Minos, Ariadne, Daedalus and Icarus, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 8.152–235	175
	14. Baucis and Philemon, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 8.626–724	185
	15. Byblis, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 9.517–665	196
	16. Orpheus, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 10.8–63, 11.1–66	210
	17. Pygmalion, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 10.243–97	222
	18. Venus and Adonis, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 10.519–739	228
	19. Midas, <i>Metamorphōsēs</i> 11.100–45	250
	<i>Total learning vocabulary</i>	255
	<i>Grammar index</i>	271

## Illustrations

- 1 Francesco Mosca, 'Diana and Actaeon'. Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello. Photo: author. 101
- 2 Picture of spinning on Ithaca. From A. B. Wace and F. H. Stubbings, *A Companion to Homer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), Plate 35(b). 151
- 3 Daedalus and Icarus. Wall-painting from Pompeii. A. S. Hollis (ed.), *Ovid: Metamorphoses Book VIII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), Plate IV. 181
- 4 Titian, *Venus and Adonis*. Derechos reservados © Museo Nacional del Prado – Madrid. 248
- 5 Rubens, *Venus and Adonis*. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Harry Payne Bingham, 1937 (37.162). Photograph © 1983 The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 249

## Maps

1	Mainland Greece	29
2	The Western Aegean and Asia Minor	30
3	The Central and Eastern Mediterranean	31



## Preface

This selection of stories from Ovid's *Metamorphōsēs* is designed for those who have completed a beginners' course in Latin. Its purpose is restricted and unsophisticated: to help such users, who will have read little or no Ovid, to enjoy the story-telling, character-drawing and language of one of the world's most delightful and influential poets. Assistance given with vocabulary and grammar is based on two widely used beginners' courses, *Reading Latin* and *Wheelock's Latin* (for details, see *Vocabulary, grammar and notes* below).

My general principle is to supply help on a need-to-know basis for the story in hand. The **Vocabulary, grammar and notes** and **Learning vocabularies** accompanying the text speak for themselves. The **Comment** at the end of each passage is an occasionally embellished paraphrase whose main purpose is to point up important detail and show how the logic of each story unfolds. I make no apology for this. With the minimal amount of time today's students have for learning the language, the demands of translation alone can be so heavy that it is all too easy to miss the wood for the trees and hamper the whole purpose of the exercise – pleasure, one of the most useful things in the world. The **Study sections** offer ways of thinking further about the passage.

My debt to W. S. Anderson's excellent *Ovid's Metamorphoses Books 1–5* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997) and *Ovid's Metamorphoses Books 6–10* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972) will be obvious. The translations by David Raeburn, *Ovid: Metamorphoses: A New Verse Translation* (Penguin Classics, 2004, brilliantly readable) and A. D. Melville, *Ovid Metamorphoses* (Oxford World's Classics, 1986, with a first-rate Introduction by E. J. Kenney) made stimulating companions. Arthur Golding's *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (1565, used by Shakespeare, the spelling modernised for Penguin Classics, 2002) remains peerless.

My best thanks go to Andrew Morley for the maps.

Peter Jones  
Newcastle upon Tyne, July 2005

## Abbreviations

1f., 2m., etc. refer to the declension and gender of a noun

1/2/3/4 and 3/4 (which some grammars call 5) refer to the conjugation of a verb

abl.	ablative	part.	participle
abs.	absolute	pass.	passive
acc.	accusative	perf./pf.	perfect
act.	active	pl.	plural
adj.	adjective	plupf./plup.	pluperfect
adv.	adverb	p.p.	principal part
cf.	<i>cōnfer</i> , 'compare'	prep.	preposition
comp.	comparative	pres.	present
conj.	conjugation, conjugated	prim.	primary
		pron.	pronoun
dat.	dative	q.	question
decl.	declension	rel.	relative
dep.	deponent	s.	singular
dir.	direct	sc.	<i>scilicet</i> , 'presumably'
f.	feminine	sec.	secondary
fut.	future	seq.	sequence
gen.	genitive	sp.	speech
imper.	imperative	subj.	subjunctive
impf./imperf.	imperfect	sup.	superlative
indecl.	indeclinable	trans.	transitive
ind.	indicative	tr.	translate
indir.	indirect	vb.	verb
inf.	infinitive	voc.	vocative
intrans.	intransitive		
irr.	irregular		
l(l)	line(s)		
lit.	literally		
m.	masculine		
m./f.	masculine/feminine		
neg.	negative		
n.	neuter		
nom.	nominative		

[x]