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).
Reading Ovid

Stories from the *Metamorphōsēs*

PETER JONES
Contents

List of illustrations page vii
List of maps viii
Preface ix
List of abbreviations x

Introduction
Metamorphōsēs and this selection 1
Ovid's life 2
Some features of this selection 5
Ovid's gods 7
Women and woods 7
Amor and rape in Ovid 8
Ovid and epic 10
Irony and paradox 11
Style 12
Some assessments 13
After-life 15

Glossary of technical literary terms 17
Notes for the reader 19
Translating Ovid 22
Metre 23
Suggestions for further reading 27
Maps 29

Passages
1. Deucalion and Pyrrha, Metamorphōsēs 1.348–415 33
2. Cupid, Apollo and Daphne, Metamorphōsēs 1.452–567 45
3. Io (and Syrinx), Metamorphōsēs 1.583–746 61
5. Diana and Actaeon, Metamorphōsēs 3.138–252 91
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Contents</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tiresias, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 3.316–38</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Echo and Narcissus, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 3.339–510</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Pyramus and Thisbe, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 4.55–166</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Arethusa, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 5.572–641</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Minerva and Arachne, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 6.1–145</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Minos, Ariadne, Daedalus and Icarus, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.152–235</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Baucis and Philemon, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 8.626–724</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Orpheus, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 10.8–63, 11.1–66</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Pygmalion, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 10.243–97</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Venus and Adonis, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 10.519–739</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Midas, <em>Metamorphōsēs</em> 11.100–45</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Total learning vocabulary* 255

*Grammar index* 271
Illustrations

1 Francesco Mosca, 'Diana and Actaeon'. Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello. Photo: author. 101


4 Titian, *Venus and Adonis*. Derechos reservados © Museo Nacional del Prado – Madrid. 248

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