

A COMMENTARY ON OVID'S
METAMORPHOSES

Volume 1: General Introduction and Books 1–6

Comprising fifteen books and over two hundred and fifty myths, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is one of the longest extant Latin poems from the ancient world and one of the most influential works in Western culture. It is an epic on desire and transgression that became a gateway to the entire world of pagan mythology and visual imagination. This, the first complete commentary in English, covers all aspects of the text – from textual interpretation to poetics, imagination, and ideology – and will be useful as a teaching aid and an orientation for those who are interested in the text and its reception. Historically, the poem's audience includes readers interested in opera and ballet, psychology and sexuality, myth and painting, feminism and posthumanism, vegetarianism and metempsychosis (to name just a few outside the area of Classical Studies).

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Volume 1: General Introduction and Books 1–6

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Preface

Alessandro Barchiesi

This commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is a revised version of the work published in Italian by the Fondazione Lorenzo Valla (5 vols., between 2005 and 2015), with five commentators covering three books each. The original work also included a facing Italian translation by Ludovica Koch and Gioachino Chiarini and a fascinating essay by Charles Segal ('Il corpo e l'io nelle "Metamorfosi" di Ovidio'). We dedicate this publication to him (he did not live to see the publication of the Italian first volume) and to Ted Kenney, who passed away in December 2019 (the last month before the current plague). They are both, in their own different ways, examples of resilience and true humanism.

The commentaries have been revised and updated, although one of them on a limited scale: I did not dare to alter Kenney's work after his death, but his notes and introduction on books 7–9 incorporate a number of revisions he made subsequent to the publication of the Italian volume (2011). The other four commentators have engaged in a more extensive rewriting.

The Valla project was based on the important OCT critical edition by Richard Tarrant (2004): the Latin text is not included in this publication since readers may want to use our work as a companion to that widely available critical edition. At times the commentators here diverge from the text printed by Tarrant, and their choices are recorded in a 'Note on the Text' introducing every triad of books.

The goal has not changed: we hope to offer guidance on the poem as a literary work to many different readers, keeping in mind the exciting reality that many people today are coming to the *Metamorphoses* from the most diverse backgrounds and paths. Whether they are interested in the history of Latin poetry or in the lush Caribbean myths of Chris Ofili, in mutations of gender and species or the transmigration of souls, we hope to have provided some orientation.

I thank my companions on this long journey for their patience and inspiration.

Bibliographical Note

Alessandro Barchiesi

Useful points of entry for the study of the poem, and Ovid's works in general, are Hardie 2002b and Boyd 2002; there are a number of online resources, among which the most lasting one at the time of writing seems to be that curated by Ulrich Schmitzer, www.kirke.hu-berlin.de; note also the Oxford Bibliographies online resource by K. S. Myers (2010). The writings of Italo Calvino have been especially influential on contemporary responses to Ovid (see Calvino 1988, 2000; see also Pianezzola 1992).

A history of English translations is in itself very instructive; one should begin with John Dryden's translation, edited in 1717 by Sir Samuel Garth (reprinted in 1998 with a preface by G. Tissol; see Hopkins 1988). Very influential translations have been produced by George Sandys (*Ovid's Metamorphoses Englished, Mythologiz'd, and represented in figures* (1632)) as well as Arthur Golding (1565–7; modern editions: *Shakespeare's Ovid*, ed. W. H. D. Rouse (London, 1961); *Ovid's Metamorphoses: The Arthur Golding Version*, ed. J. F. Nims (New York, 1965)). There is an impressive number of recent English versions, some of them very stimulating: A. D. Melville, *Ovid: Metamorphoses* (Oxford, 1986, repr. 1998); A. Mandelbaum, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid* (New York, 1993); D. R. Slavitt, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid Translated Freely into Verse* (Baltimore, 1994); M. Simpson, *The Metamorphoses of Ovid* (Amherst, 2001); and C. Martin, *Ovid: Metamorphoses* (New York and London, 2004); D. Raeburn, *Ovid: Metamorphoses* (London, 2004), with an important foreword by D. Feeney. A new classic for a postmodern Ovid is the anthology by various poets edited by M. Hofmann and J. Lasdun, *After Ovid: New Metamorphoses* (London, 1994), followed by the powerful personal anthology by Ted Hughes (*Tales from Ovid* (London, 1997)). The impressive dramaturgical adaptation by Mary Zimmerman is accessible also as a text: M. Zimmerman and D. R. Slavitt, *Ovid: Metamorphoses*, Evanston, 2002. A Spanish translation with a rich

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introduction: C. Alvarez and R. M. Iglesias, *Ovidio. Metamorfosis* (Madrid, 1995).

In addition to the Companions edited by Hardie 2002a and Boyd 2002, helpful compact introductions to the author are Schmitzer 2001 and Holzberg 2002 (a revised English version of the German original, *Ovid. Dichter und Werk* (Munich, 1997)), both with a rich bibliography; Fantham 2004 (a clear and accessible guide to the epic); Volk 2010; L. Fulkerson, *Ovid: A Poet on the Margins* (London and New York, 2016); L. Morgan, *Ovid: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2020). For orientation on recent Ovidian research, one could start with Hardie, Barchiesi and Hinds 1999; Knox 2006; V. Rimell, 'After Ovid, after Theory', *IJCT* 26 (2019), 446–69.

The Pauly-Wissowa entry by Walter Kraus is re-edited and updated in von Albrecht and Zinn 1968: 67–166. In Italian, there is a clear and helpful profile of Ovid by S. Mariotti written in 1957 and reprinted in Mariotti, *Scritti di filologia classica* (Rome, 2000), 123–53; exemplary, too, is Hinds' short entry on Ovid in the third edition of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*; among short articles that have had a major impact (dealing with the poem and also its reception history), I would pick Eliot 1985, Hinds 1987, Richlin 1992 and Morgan 2003. On the poet as editor of his own work, see F. K. A. Martelli, *Ovid's Revisions* (Cambridge, 2013).

Among short compact introductions to the poem one should single out E. J. Kenney's prefatory essay in the World's Classics edition (Oxford, 1986) (Kenney's notes are also thought-provoking, despite the shortness of the text); in German, a helpful compact edition is in the Tusculum series, with full index, bibliography and a postface by N. Holzberg 2017. In the older generation of general introductions note especially E. K. Rand, *Ovid and His Influence* (London, 1926); L. P. Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled* (Cambridge, 1955); J. Barsby, *Ovid* (Oxford, 1978); Mack 1988. As a detailed introduction to the poem, Galinsky 1975 has not really been replaced, and should be reprinted; see also the detailed reading and companion by L. Fratantuono, *Madness Transformed* (Lanham, 2011).

Methodologically important monographs include Fränkel 1945; Due 1974; Solodow 1988; Fabre-Serris 1995; Wheeler 1999; I. Ziogas, *Law and Love in Ovid* (Oxford, 2021). A list of books that have changed the course of Ovidian studies should include at least Segal 1969a and 1991; Rosati 1983; Ahl 1985; Hinds 1987; Pianezzola 1999; and Hardie 2002b. The short papers by one of the leading figures in Ovidian studies, Michael von Albrecht, are mostly accessible in the collection *Das Buch der Verwandlungen. Ovid-Interpretationen* (Düsseldorf and Zürich 2000) (it

would be good to have a similar collection for another leader in the re-evaluation of Ovid, E. J. Kenney). The impact of feminism and gender studies has been felt especially since Richlin 1992 and Keith 2000; one angle that is becoming important in recent studies is the related issue of 'the gaze', cf. Salzman-Mitchell 2005; H. Lovatt, *The Epic Gaze* (Cambridge, 2013). Another is space: cf. S. Bach, *Espace et structure dans les Métamorphoses d'Ovide* (Bordeaux, 2020).

Specific studies of models and sources: A. Zingerle, *Ovidius und sein Verhältnis zu den Vorgängern und gleichzeitigen Römischen Dichtern* (Innsbruck, 1896) (= Hildesheim 1967); Hinds 1987 and 1998 (various poetic models); Ziogas 2013; Baldo 1995 (Virgilian echoes); Boyd 2017 (Homer).

In the history of learned editions, turning points are marked by N. Heinsius (Amsterdam, 1652 and 1659) and P. Burman (Amsterdam, 1727). Modern research on the text first found a platform in the rich critical apparatus provided by Hugo Magnus (Berlin, 1914). Instantly criticised, the edition by Magnus was superseded only much later, by the Teubner edition constructed with impressive speed and energy by W. S. Anderson (Leipzig and Stuttgart, 1977; second edition 1982; revised reprints: 1993, 2001 (Munich and Leipzig)). This edition, too, has been much criticised, and a stronger working text is now provided by Tarrant 2004, to which the present commentary text is intended as a companion. Discussions will of course continue: the text of Tarrant, his choices and his apparatus, are helpfully discussed in review articles by Galasso 2006, Possanza 2005, Liberman 2004 and Heyworth 2007, who offer material useful for this commentary.

Text without apparatus, but based on critical choices and revisions, is offered by G. P. Goold (Loeb, 2 vols., Cambridge, MA and London, 1977–84), and by Galasso 2000.

Galasso 2000 (in Italian) is probably the best complete commentary on the poem by a single scholar, for clarity and selectivity. The richest is of course the omnivorous commentary by F. Bömer (6 vols., Heidelberg, 1969–86), a work both fundamental and eccentric, thorough in collection of data, reactionary and unpredictable in its cultural orientation. Updates and rich indexing are provided by U. Schmitzer (Heidelberg, 2006): Bömer's work is not superseded by any competitor for its wealth of mythological and linguistic comments. The notes on books 1–5 and 6–10 offered by Anderson 1997 and 1972, respectively, are always worth consulting: the work is fortunately complementary to Bömer, not so rich in its scholarly apparatus, but relevant for those interested in teaching the

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text. Anderson provides very little on Greek models, for example, but unlike some of his predecessors, he shows a genuine interest in the poem as a work of literature, particularly with regard to issues of character, psychology and morality. Looking back to the tradition of early modern commentaries, one work that offers a recuperation of the entire exegetical tradition, often with original contributions, is the German commentary initiated by Moriz Haupt and later reworked many times until the final revision by Michael von Albrecht (von Albrecht 1966). Indispensable commentaries on individual books, often with significant general introductions, are Lee 1953 on book 1, Hollis 1970 on book 8, Hopkinson 2000 on book 13 and K. S. Myers, *Ovid: Metamorphoses Book XIV* (Cambridge University Press, 2010) on book 14.

Some of the richest collective volumes, conference proceedings and bimillenary volumes include Herescu 1958; *Atti del convegno internazionale ovidiano* (Rome, 1959); von Albrecht and Zinn 1968; Binns 1973; Papponetti 1997; W. Schubert, *Ovid. Werk und Wirkung. Festgabe für Michael von Albrecht* (Frankfurt, 1999); Hardie, Barchiesi and Hinds 1999. We are beginning to see the results of the bimillenary of Ovid's death, for example, P. Fedeli and G. Rosati (eds.), *Ovidio 2017: prospettive per il terzo millennio: atti del Convegno Internazionale (Sulmona, 3–6 aprile 2017)* (Teramo, 2017); Luis Rivero García et al. (eds.), *Vivam! Estudios sobre la obra de Ovidio. Studies on Ovid's Poetry* (Huelva, 2018); L. Galasso (ed.), *La fortuna di Ovidio*. *Aevum antiquum* n. s. 18 (Milan, 2018); F. Ghedini, *Il poeta del mito. Ovidio e il suo tempo* (Rome, 2018); F. Ghedini (ed.), *Ovidio. Amori miti e altre storie. Catalogo della mostra* (Naples, 2018); F. Bessone and S. Stroppa (eds.), *Lettori latini e italiani di Ovidio* (Pisa and Rome, 2019); L. Nicolini and A. Bonandini (eds.), *Omnia mutantur* (Genoa, 2019) (particularly welcome for its renewed emphasis on style, a rather marginal issue in recent Ovidian studies).

The area with the most intensive growth is that of reception, influence and survival. Ovid's poem has become a test case for the methods and interests of reception and translation studies. Collective volumes, in addition to those cited in the previous paragraph (and to most of the bimillenary volumes), include R. Chevallier (ed.), *Présence d'Ovide* (Paris, 1982); J. M. Frécaut and D. Porte (eds.), *Journées ovidiennes de Parménie* (Brussels, 1985); Martindale 1988 (a real watershed in reception studies); G. Papponetti, *Ovidio, poeta della memoria* (Rome, 1991); M. Picone and B. Zimmermann (eds.), *Ovidius redivivus* (Stuttgart, 1994); H. Walter and H. J. Hörn, *Die Rezeption der Metamorphosen Ovids in der Neuzeit* (Berlin, 1995); I. Gallo and L. Nicastri (eds.), *Aetates Ovidianae* (Naples,

1995). A good collection of reception moments can be found in the anthology by W. Stroh, *Ovid im Urteil der Nachwelt* (Darmstadt, 1969). Note also R. Brewer, *Ovid's Metamorphoses and European Culture* (Boston, MA, 1933–41); M. Giebel, *Ovid. Mit Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (Hamburg, 1991); K. Smolak, 'Der verbannte Dichter. Identifizierung mit Ovid in Mittelalter und Neuzeit', *Wiener Studien* 14 (1980), 158–91. It is enough to look at Ziolkowski 2005 to realise the importance of Ovid in the twentieth and early twenty-first century: very few classical authors, figures such as Homer, Thucydides, Plato and Virgil, could have been the subject of such a rich overview. After Ziolkowski, the new impulse has come from antagonistic revisions of Ovid by women authors, cf. F. Cox, *Ovid's Presence in Contemporary Women Writers* (Oxford, 2020).

Introductions to basic aspects of the manuscript tradition: the updated overview in the introduction to Tarrant 2004, and the Ovid chapter, also by Tarrant, in L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1993); note also J. Richmond, 'Manuscript Traditions and the Transmission of Ovid's Works', in Boyd 2002: 443–83, and the rich examples from Ovid's textual transmission in R. Tarrant, *Texts, Editors and Readers* (Cambridge, 2016). Manuscript catalogue: F. Munari, *Catalogue of the MSS of Ovid's Metamorphoses*, BICS Suppl. 4 (London, 1957) (with supplements in F. Coulson, 'Addenda to Munari's catalogues of the Manuscripts of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', *RHT*, 25 (1995), 91–127; more references in Tarrant 2004: vi n. 7).

On the problem of the so-called Lactantian summaries, B. Otis, 'The Argumenta of the So-Called Lactantius', *HSCPh* 47 (1936), 131–63; R. J. Tarrant, 'The *Narrationes* of "Lactantius" and the Transmission of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', in O. Pecere and M. Reeve (eds.), *Formative Stages of Classical Traditions* (Spoleto, 1995), 83–115; Cameron 2004.

On the important role of N. Heinsius in shaping the modern text of Ovid, see especially E. J. Kenney, *The Classical Text* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1974), 57–63; M. Reeve, 'Heinsius' Manuscripts of Ovid', *RhM* 117 (1974), 133–66 and 119 (1976), 65–78; R. J. Tarrant, 'Nicolaas Heinsius and the Rhetoric of Textual Criticism', in Hardie, Barchiesi and Hinds 1999: 286–300.

On other general questions about transmission and survival: R. Sabbadini, *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci ne' secoli XIV e XV*, 2 vols. (Florence, 1967); D. A. Slater, *Towards a Text of the Metamorphosis of Ovid* (Oxford, 1927); R. T. Bruère, 'The Manuscript Tradition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', *HSCPh* 50 (1939), 95–122; F. W. Lenz, *Ovid's*

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On the impact of the poem on Roman imperial culture and imagination: in addition to the many collective volumes and companions quoted above, see also G. Mazzoli, *Seneca e la poesia* (Milan, 1970), 238–47; R. Jakobi, *Der Einfluss Ovids auf den Tragiker Seneca* (Berlin, 1988); Degl'Innocenti Pierini 1990; O. Zwierlein, *Die Ovid- und Vergil-Revision in tiberischer Zeit*, Vol. 1: *Prolegomena* (Berlin, 1999) (a controversial study on interpolations); J.-M. Claassen, *Displaced Persons: The Literature of Exile from Cicero to Boethius* (Madison, WI, 1999); the special issue of the journal *Arethusa* 35 (2002); S. Hinds, 'Martial's Ovid/Ovid's Martial', *JRS* 97 (2007), 113–54; Hinds 2011 (Senecan tragedy).

On Ovid and medieval culture, a starting point is F. Munari, *Ovid im Mittelalter* (Zürich and Stuttgart, 1960); fundamental, too, is B. Munk Olsen, *L'étude des auteurs classiques latins aux XI et XII siècles*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1982–9); Munk Olsen, *La Réception de la littérature classique au Moyen Age* (Copenhagen, 1995); a good first introduction is M. von Albrecht, *Storia della letteratura latina*, Vol. 2 (Turin, 1995), 818–25.

On the whole medieval tradition, with special emphasis on *vitae*, *accessus* and schooling: S. Battaglia, 'La tradizione di Ovidio nel medioevo', *Filologia Romanza* 11 (1959), 185–224; B. Bischoff, 'Eine mittelalterliche Ovid-Legende', *Historische Jahrbücher* 71 (1952), 268–73; F. Coulson, 'Hitherto unedited Medieval and Renaissance Lives of Ovid (I)', *Mediaeval Studies* 49 (1987), 152–207; Coulson 1991; F. Coulson and B. Roy, *Incipitarium Ovidianum* (Turnhout, 2000); F. Ghisalberti, *Giovanni di Garlandia, Integumenta Ovidii, poemetto inedito del secolo XIII* (Messina and Milan, 1933); F. Ghisalberti, 'Medieval Biographies of Ovid', *JWCI* 9 (1946), 10–59; G. Glauche, *Schullektüre im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1970); R. Glendinning, 'Pyramus and Thisbe in the Medieval Classroom', *Speculum* 61 (1986), 51–78; Hexter 1986; Hexter 1987; Hexter, 'Medieval Articulations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: From Lactantian Segmentation to Arnulfian Allegory', in M. Desmond (ed.), *Ovid in Medieval Culture* (Binghamton, 1988), 63–82; Hexter, 'Ovid's Body', in J. L. Porter (ed.), *Constructions of the Classical Body* (Ann Arbor, 1999), 327–54; R. B. C. Huygens (ed.), *Accessus ad auctores* (Leiden, 1970); P. Klopsch, *Pseudo-Ovidius: De vetula* (Leiden, 1967); R. Levine, 'Exploiting Ovid: Medieval Allegories of the *Metamorphoses*', *Medioevo Romano* 14 (1989), 197–213; R. H. Lucas, 'Medieval French Translations of the Classics to 1500', *Speculum* 45 (1970), 225–53; M. Manitius,

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Single authors and phases in the literary production of medieval Europe (a selective list, with emphasis on important approaches): *Ovide moralisé*, ed. C. de Boer (Amsterdam, 1954); P. Bersuire, *Ovidius moralizatus*, ed. J. Engels (Utrecht, 1962); T. Walsingham, *De archana deorum*, ed. R. A. van Kluyve (Durham, NC, 1968); G. Boccaccio, *Genealogie deorum gentilium*, ed. V. Romano (Bari, 1951); A. Arrathoon (ed.), *Chaucer and the Cult of Fiction*, (Rochester, NY, 1986); C. Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1995); G. A. Bond, 'Locus amoris: The Poetry of Baudri of Bourgueil and the Formation of the Ovidian Subculture', *Traditio* 42 (1986), 143–93; R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth: Mythology and Its Interpretations in Medieval French Literature* (Stanford, 1997); T. Bouché, 'Ovide et Jean de Meun', *Le Moyen Âge* 83 (1977), 71–87; H. Braet, 'Note sur Marie de France et Ovide', in J. de Caluwé (ed.), *Mélanges Jeanne Wathelet-Willem* (Liège, 1978); V. Branca, 'L'Atteone del Boccaccio fra allegoria cristiana, evemerismo trasfigurante, narrativa esemplare, visualizzazione rinascimentale', *Studi sul Boccaccio* 24 (1996), 193–208; K. Brownlee and W. Stephens (eds.), *Discourses of Authority in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Hanover and London, 1989); P. Cheney and F. De Armas, *European Literary Careers* (Toronto, Buffalo and London, 2002); M. Desmond (ed.), *Christine de Pizan and the Categories of Difference* (Minneapolis and London, 1998); K. Eisenbichler and A. A. Iannucci (eds.), *Petrarch's Triumphs* (Ottawa, 1990); A. G. Elliott, 'Orpheus in Catalonia: A Note on Ovid's Influence', *CF* 32 (1978), 3–15; A. G. Elliott, 'Accessus ad auctores: Twelfth-Century Introductions to Ovid', *Allegorica* 5 (1980), 6–48; J. M. Fyler, *Chaucer and Ovid* (New Haven, CT and London, 1979); F. Ghisalberti, 'Arnolfo d'Orléans, un cultore di Ovidio nel sec. XII', *Memorie Reale Istituto Lombardo di Scienze e Lettere* 4 (1932), 157–234; P. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London, 1985); P. Godman and O. Murray (eds.), *Latin Poetry and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1990);

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