XIX. Ovid's *Carmen Perpetuum*

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There are two schools of thought about the unity of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The one finds the poem a disjointed succession of disparate, unrelated, and irrational incidents, not to be read through lightly, but which has, from time to time, served poets and other readers as a treasury upon which to draw.[1] The feeling of the other school is most tangibly represented by a recent translator[2] who reports that although he had originally intended to take liberties with the poem, rendering the individual stories in different metres, he found this impossible because the texture made the *Metamorphoses* all of a piece. Much the same opinion was expressed four and a half centuries ago by Raphael Regius as he cursed the ineptitude and hardihood of an unnamed predecessor who "quarundam ineptiarum interpositione ea . . . separare conatus sit quae . . . tam eleganter fuerant copulata."[3] Both the Renaissance editor and the modern translator, therefore, testify to perceiving a dominant unity. They typify the second school.

The realities of the poem actually lend considerable support to the negative position. The stories are many, frequently quite unrelated in content and presuppositions, and ought, in combination, to form little more than a catalog of names, small details, and brief actions, unlikely to create any impression at all of purpose or direction. Nonetheless, the majority of critics, like the editor and the translator, would appear to find a degree of genuine artistic unity which makes the poem seem natural, coherent, and convincing as a literary entity. The chief difficulty of these critics seems to lie in finding the source of the impression

[1] See in particular Gilbert Highet, *Poets in a Landscape* (London 1957) 190 and J. W. Duff, *A Literary History of Rome . . . to the Close of the Golden Age*[3] (New York 1953) 436.

[2] Rolfe Humphries, *Ovid: Metamorphoses* (Bloomington, Ind. 1955) ix.

[3] Quoted from Regius' note upon *Met.* 1.4 in *P. Ouidii Metamorphosis cum integris ac emendatissimis Raphaelis Regii enarrationibus* . . . (Venice: Bevilaqua 1493). He is presumably referring to the *argumenta* of the so-called Lactantius inserted between stories in several earlier printings, particularly those which contain the text edited by Bonus Accursius.

which they receive, for their explanations of the unity vary rather widely.

The sources commonly cited, although with shifting emphases, include: (1) a general similarity of theme; (2) the personality and outlook of the poet himself; (3) the basically chronological arrangement of the materials; and (4) the unfolding of the stories, one from another, through transitional devices. The latter two points have probably received the greatest notice, if only because Ovid himself drew attention to them, once in the introduction to the *Metamorphoses* (1.3–4)[4]:

> . . . primaque ab origine mundi
> ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen,

and again in a retrospective moment in the *Tristia* (2.559–60):

> . . . prima surgens ab origine mundi
> in tua deduxi tempora, Caesar, opus.

The verb *deduco* in both contexts contains a suggestion of continuity, but the phrase "perpetuum . . . carmen" in the first passage crystallizes the point: the poem was not intended to be merely a succession of separate narratives in chronological order, but rather, one continuous structure.[5]

[4] The *Metamorphoses* is quoted and lines are cited from the *editio maior* of R. Ehwald (Leipzig 1915); the *Fasti* is quoted from vol. 1 of the edition by J. G. Frazer (London 1929); and the *Tristia*, from the edition by S. G. Owen (Oxford 1915).

The following works are cited in the text or the footnotes of this article by the author's surname and page references: L. Castiglioni, *Studi intorno alle fonti e alla composizione delle Metamorfosi di Ovidio* (Pisa 1906); M. Marjorie Crump, *The Epyllion from Theocritus to Ovid* (Oxford 1931); H. Fränkel, *Ovid: A Poet between Two Worlds* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1945); J. J. Hartman, *De Ovidio poeta commentatio* (Leyden 1905); H. Herter, "Ovids Kunstprinzip in den *Metamorphosen*," *AJP* 69 (1948) 129–48; W. Klimmer, *Die Anordnung des Stoffes in den ersten vier Büchern von Ovids Metamorphosen* (Diss. Erlangen 1932); G. Lafaye, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide et leurs modèles grecs* (Paris 1904); Liebau, "De consilio artificioso quod in componendo Metamorphosium carmine secutus sit P. Ovidius Naso" (Progr. Elberfeld 1846); E. Martini, "Ovid und seine Bedeutung für die römische Poesie," *Epitymbion Heinrich Swoboda dargebracht* (Reichenberg 1927) 165–94; F. J. Miller, "Ovid's Methods of Ordering and Transition in the *Metamorphoses*," *CJ* 16 (1921) 464–76; B. Otis, "Ovid and the Augustans," *TAPA* 69 (1938) 188–229; E. K. Rand, *Ovid and his Influence* (Boston 1925); M. Schanz–C. Hosius (cited as "Schanz"), *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, 2d pt., 4th ed. (Munich 1935); W. Y. Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age* (Oxford 1892); L. P. Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled* (Cambridge 1955); and F. A. Wright, *Three Roman Poets* (New York 1938).

[5] When he remarks in the *Fasti* (1.62) that he has treated certain prefatory matters once and for all so that their later restatement need not force him "seriem rerum scindere," he is presumably thinking of a less tightly unified structure; but the words

The purpose of the present paper is to examine representative connective devices in an attempt to evaluate their contributions to the total impression of unity—to see how they help to accomplish the purpose of the poet who was assembling, as Quintilian (*Inst.* 4.1.77) remarks, "res diversissimas in speciem unius corporis." Their effectiveness, it will be suggested, lies not in the overriding force of any single device, but rather in the cumulative influence of them all. This perhaps explains why most critics find unity in the poem, but without sure agreement upon the reason for its existence.

1. Theme and Author

Ovid himself several times makes it clear that the *Metamorphoses* is built around the theme of transformation. His opening words (*Met.* 1.1–2) say as much:

> In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas
> corpora . . .

Another brief description appears twice, in *Tr.* 1.1.117 and 3.14.19 ("sunt . . . mutatae, ter quinque volumina, formae"), and yet another in *Tr.* 1.7.13 ("carmina mutatas hominum dicentia formas"). And there is a much more elaborate philosophic summary of the presuppositions of the poem, placed in the mouth of Pythagoras. This rationale is stated first in *Met.* 15.165–72, then is amplified *ibid.* 176–452, and is finally restated, *ibid.* 453–62, in terms of reasons for abstention from meat.[6] These passages are all acceptable sketches of the purported content and theme. The stories do, in general, contain metamorphoses, either as a basic presupposition (e.g. the tales of Europa, of Arachne, and of the apotheosis of Caesar); or else the transformations are pendants (e.g. in the stories of Phaethon and of Meleager, whose sisters are changed, and in that of Ceres and Proserpina in which only what may be called by-standers are subject to change).[7] Surely meta-

of Cicero (*Nat. D.* 1.4.9), "quaedam continuatio seriesque rerum, ut alia ex alia nexa et omnes inter se aptae conligataeque videantur," are sufficient warning about pressing this point. Ovid's "seriem rerum scindere" may well represent about the same idea as a phrase like "expositionem continuam interrumpere," or even Livy's (41.15.7) "interrumpere tenorem rerum."

[6] Otis (225–7) discusses this passage and its significance for the entire poem.

[7] For other examples see Wilkinson (145); by contrast, for the importance of metamorphosis in the Aglaurus story, see Klimmer (40).

morphosis is the ostensible theme of the poem. Liebau is no doubt slightly too emphatic when he says (7) "nihil poetam in hoc carmine tradidisse, nisi quod cum transformatione cohaereat"; but Crump more certainly oversteps the evidence in claiming (197–8) that Ovid, as he constructed the poem, did not feel bound by the title. His inclusion of a philosophical justification of the concept of metamorphosis underscores the obligation he felt towards his stated theme.[8] This is true whether that passage be regarded as a logical outgrowth of the structure of the entire poem, or as part of a more or less essential frame, or as a preface to the apotheosis of Caesar, or merely as a rather ill-conceived and loosely appended apology.

But the treatment of *mutatae formae* is not the only source of uniformity in the stories. Crump (203–16) argues persuasively that more than fifty are epyllia and concludes (214) that Ovid intended to write essentially a collection of epyllia. Perhaps this was not Ovid's actual intention, but the wide use of the epyllion in the *Metamorphoses* is beyond doubt.

However, neither uniformity of subject matter, nor of form, would lend genuine unity. The unity of a handful of sand is provided by the hand and not by the individual grains. The unity is mechanical even though the mineral content of the components is such that they are appropriately held side by side. Again, as Martini (171) phrases it, a chain of connected hills is not a mountain. Similarly a collection of stories on a theme is likely to remain only a collection of stories bound together, unless something about its construction and arrangement unifies it. And there is a more serious difficulty. The uniformity with recurring subjects that can be cataloged[9] (e.g. pursued maidens, insolent mortals, and transformations from human shapes into those of birds or beasts), can easily lead to unbearable monotony. Ovid, therefore, expended much energy upon various devices to avoid monotony. Among these were the digression inherent in the epyllion, the use of frame stories, and countless shifts in the

[8] Further comments upon the philosophical passages in the fifteenth book are to be found, e.g., in Crump (211); Fränkel (109–10); D. A. Slater, "Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*," *Occasional Publications of the Classical Assoc.*, 1 (1913), especially 6–12; and Herter (147).

[9] For a handy classification of the transformations by kinds, see Lafaye, "Appendix A" (245–9).

viewpoints and scope of his narratives.[10] In other words, uniformity of subject or type is so far from creating unity in a collection that it is likely rather to produce boredom, hence defeat the author's desire to hold his reader. This makes it hard to agree with the position of Sellar (352) that it is the idea of the transformation of human beings which gives unity and continuity to the great mass of stories. There must surely be other considerations.

Now some of the same objections arise against the notion that it is the person of Ovid which lends a dominant unity to the poem. Rand can remark (68) that while every book is different, every one is also the same; and in a sense this is true, for character after character thinks and argues as Ovid himself would think and argue in like circumstances, and whoever it may be who tells a story in some frame setting, the same Ovid is obviously the narrator. There is generally the same humor, the same graphic quality, and the same facile sweep of narration in most sections of the work.

This argument seems weak at first glance, but it gains cogency by the fact that it is really not quite the same Ovid who writes and speaks throughout. The poet loses interest and pretty obviously grows weary as he toils through the last four books, and they are the books which critics commonly regard as farthest from the best.[11] Perhaps it is fair to say that Ovid's enthusiasm for his subject is one of the best binders for the *Metamorphoses*. In the section in which that enthusiasm flags, the chronological ordering of stories and the other binders which are used with either greater appropriateness or more experience than before cannot conceal its loss or compensate for it.

The basic weakness of either a theme or the poet's personality as actual means of integrating discursive materials like those to be found in the *Metamorphoses* is particularly observable in the *Fasti*. These aetiological stories are almost more of a kind than the tales of the *Metamorphoses*, and patently one and the same poet told them (intruding his own person sufficiently to interview many

[10] Cf. e.g., Castiglioni (328–30); Lafaye (79–80, but also 74–5); Martini (172 and 188–9); and Rand (65–8). Likewise see Klimmer (30–2 and 36).

[11] Typical comments upon the altered character of the final books may be found in Crump (210–11); Fränkel (101–10 and 221, note 79); Wilkinson (238); and Wright (240).

of the divinities); further, as before, he announced his theme clearly in his very first lines (*Fast.* 1.1–2):

> Tempora cum causis Latium digesta per annum
> lapsaque sub terras ortaque signa canam.

The insertion of astronomical data identifies the days of the month and so logically determines the order in which the stories appear, but in effect it merely serves to distribute them in random order so far as their content is concerned. This distribution lacks the *post hoc——propter hoc* unifying force which operates in the apparently historical sequences of the *Metamorphoses*. Cohesiveness is lost,[12] therefore, and the narratives are more readily detachable, whereas in the *Metamorphoses* it is sometimes hard to determine which is the true first line, or last line, of a story. The coherence of the *Metamorphoses* would therefore seem to lie, by default, in its chronological arrangement and in the use of transitions to link the several parts—in the details to which Ovid drew attention in his introduction.

II. Chronology and Groups

If a transition can be defined as "a device for transferring an audience's thinking from one subject or section of a subject to another," it should become apparent from even a casual inspection that Ovid accomplishes this generally by two means: (1) the arrangement and grouping of his stories; and (2) connecting passages which may be anything from a single word to a special, ornately constructed bridge of several lines. In a sense the entire poem actually proves to be one long transition from early times to late, just as the poet says it is. But there is a second, concurrent transition, for the reader's attention is likewise transferred from largely the acts of the gods in the first six books to the exploits of the heroes in the middle portion (*Met.* 7–14, if Aeneas be counted as the last of them), and finally to those of selected legendary or historical mortals in the concluding book and a half.

To be sure, both transitions are more apparent than real. There is an acceptable chronological sequence from the Creation to the time of Deucalion (*Met.* 1.5–451) and a second from the

[12] Cf. Herter (145); Wilkinson (241–2); and Schanz (231).

building of Troy to the end of the poem (11.194–15.879), but other arrangements would have been possible for the topics in the middle books without damage to the over-all feeling for the passage of time,[13] and many of the subordinate stories are inserted without attention to any conceivable age or setting in history. Similarly the actions of gods, heroes, and men are only partly separated. The misadventure of Pyramus and Thisbe, e.g., obvious mortals who are neither helped nor hindered tangibly by the gods until after death (cf. 4.164), appears early in the poem, whereas the stories of Virbius and of the arrival of Aesculapius naturally form part of the final book. However, it must be granted that the gods are normally either the protagonists of the first section or else the dominant figures of the background, whereas Pythagoras and the somewhat more concrete Roman personages appear at the end, thereby creating the impression of a shift in topic. This topical arrangement (cf. Herter 138) is likely to be a derivative from the chronological order which would naturally arrange gods before heroes and heroes before the more clearly historical men, but that need not lessen its influence upon the mind of the reader.

Whether or not it is actually derivative when it is applied to the entire poem is not entirely certain. Ovid, however, employed it frequently, and one must suspect with conscious artistry, in several sections of the *Metamorphoses* where he groups tales upon the basis of subject matter or in terms of a theme which is gradually developed.

Sometimes the ostensible reason for the existence of a group is a frame story. This is true, e.g., of the tales related by the daughters of Minyas (4.1–415); by Minerva and Arachne (6.1–145); by Achelous and Lelex (8.547–9.97); and by Orpheus (10.106–739).[14] But while the external frame may appear to be only a

[13] Cf. Lafaye (80–1); Fränkel (75); Otis (224); Schanz (238) and Wilkinson 147–8). Actually marking the divisions is largely arbitrary and the product of definition. Crump (274), followed by Herter (138) and Wilkinson (148), starts the final group at *Met.* 11.194 (i.e. with the building of the walls of Troy), in order to cut the work into three more or less equal sections. Klimmer (44) calls *Met.* 2.832 the terminus of the section in which the gods predominate, whereas Crump, hence the other authorities (*locc. citt.*), places the division after *Met.* 6.420.

[14] Lafaye (249–50) provides a handy list of the "contained" or "framed" stories to be found throughout the poem. Cf. also his remarks on 84–8, and see Miller (467–70) on some of the more conspicuous groups within frames.

Crump (274) divides the body of the text into seven subject groups which, of

mechanical device which, like a fence or border, holds together the stories it surrounds, sometimes it actually justifies the collocation of tales by providing motives for the narrators as they speak. This produces a setting in which one story follows naturally as well as physically after another. Minerva, e.g., is a divinity; so her weaving illustrates the valuable achievements of the gods (6.70–102). Furthermore, as a goddess, she must (since Arachne is only a mortal) reveal some trace of fair play; hence in a supplementary set of scenes she warns her opponent of the perils inherent in challenging any goddess (*ibid.* 87–100). These scenes Ovid very clearly labels (*ibid.* 83–5) as *exempla*:

> Ut tamen exemplis intellegat aemula laudis,
> quos pretium speret pro tam furialibus ausis,
> quattuor in partes certamina quattuor addit . . .

The insolent Arachne reveals an appropriate contrasting bias as she portrays (*ibid.* 103–28) the disreputable loves of the gods, which Ovid (*ibid.* 131) styles "caelestia crimina." This is not the only passage in which Ovid marks his categories, for he says (10.152–4) that Orpheus' songs contain:

> . . . pueros . . .
> dilectos superis inconcessisque puellas
> ignibus attonitas . . .

And these are indeed the topics.[15]

Occasionally, of course, there is no formal frame to unite a fairly obvious group. Observe in particular the inherently similar tales assembled in 1.452–746, containing a triad of pursued maidens—Daphne, Io, and Syrinx—the tales of human insolence which begin with the report about Pyreneus (5.273–93)

course, do not necessarily begin or end with the "dramatic" groups here considered. Klimmer (66–7) clearly starts out with about the same divisions but does not extend his study beyond Book 4. Liebau (5), by contrast, sees traces of a contrary policy, i.e. the separation of similar stories to avoid monotony.

[15] Although there is little to be charged against Atalanta and her lover except their profanation of the shrine subsequent to Hippomenes' ingratitude towards Venus, the Pygmalion story is prima facie the only misfit in the collection. Fränkel (96) may be right in suggesting that he had married what may be called his "spiritual daughter," but Pygmalion's love developed under such extraordinary circumstances that, even without Fränkel's interpretation of the incident, he seems appropriate company for the rather pretty Ganymede, Hyacinth, and Adonis who are *pueri* beloved of the gods.

and end with the flaying of Marsyas (6.382–400),[16] and the three love stories juxtaposed in 9.450–10.85.

But more important, perhaps, than the framed or unframed groups of similar tales are those which show a marked progression in the themes treated. In these, adjacent stories represent gradations in viewpoint or the development of an idea. The first group of this sort is the set of narratives which proceed from the Creation to the safe-survival of Deucalion and Pyrrha (1.5–451)—for not only is this a succession of events in time, but also it illustrates a clear concept of increasing wickedness and violence to be punished or suppressed. In a sense, of course, this general notion underlies the first eleven books, as Otis has suggested (224–5), reaching its climax in the stories of the unnatural passions of Byblis, Myrrha, and Alcyone. But the longer thread sometimes grows tenuous under the impact of Ovid's variation in emphases and points of view, whereas it is hard to deny the intended lesson of the first half of the first book.

Near the center of the work (*Met.* 8.562–9.97) comes a cluster of stories told by Achelous and Lelex, a cluster which represents very typically the drift of a conversation. The point of departure is Theseus' inquiry about certain islands which, Achelous declares, had once been nymphs but had subsequently been transformed. This provokes a natural skepticism in Pirithous. Lelex answers him by relating the story of Philemon and Baucis as evidence that transformations are possible. Theseus wants to hear more; so Achelous resumes the argument that metamorphoses can occur by reminiscing about the ability of Proteus and, in particular, of Erysichthon's daughter to assume successive new shapes. This leads naturally to the fact that Achelous himself could do the same, hence to the account of his battle with Hercules which is the first episode of Book 9.

In another group, the stories related (4.55–388) by the daughters of Minyas, topical gradations can likewise be found. These tales, seemingly juxtaposed only by their frame (i.e. they happen

[16] The story of Syrinx is enclosed within that of Io, but basically the tales are three adjacent variations upon a single theme. In the second group some individual stories receive slight *encadrement*, i.e. the Pierides tell of Pyreneus, while mourners for Niobe's children tell of the Lycian peasants and of Marsyas, but again, while the general group contains variations upon a common theme, there is no frame to enclose the entire set. Cf. Liebau (14); and Otis (225) who finds the poem framed by the two philosophical passages (1.1–88 and 15.75–478).

to be told in succession by the sisters), all portray love that is somehow frustrated or obstructed. The first tale[17] and the prologue to the second portray *both* parties as willing lovers, i.e. Pyramus and Thisbe (the star-crossed lovers) and Mars and Venus (the caught adulterers), despite all other contrasts, desired each other. In the second major story the Sun's beloved, Leucothoe, was frightened and had to be won over. In the postlude Clytie, though desirous, could not win the love of the Sun; so, in the third story, the eager Salmacis found her beloved Hermaphroditus entirely disinterested when she accosted him. Mechanically, Ovid juxtaposed these stories by putting them on the lips of three sisters, but the progression from a beloved who was entirely interested, to a beloved who was reluctant, to a beloved who was entirely disinterested lends inner appropriateness to the order in which they appear, as does the fact that the prologue to the central story reflects elements from the first, and the postlude anticipates elements of the third. (There are other connectives among these stories; they will be discussed below, p. 232.)

This kind of development contributes effectively to what Otis (220, note 106) calls the "continuity . . . of mood and subject."[18] The chronological ordering is an obvious device, likely to be noticed by almost anyone upon a first reading. The subtle gradations in the stories, arranged carefully within frames or subject-groups, are likely to be felt more forcefully in the course of subsequent readings.

III. Transitional Devices

Three of the groups accorded some attention immediately above, i.e. the tales of human insolence (5.273–6.400), those which center about the person of Achelous (8.562–9.97), and the three love stories (9.450–10.85) deserve further attention, for each starts in one book and ends in another. They represent Ovid's second obvious means for binding together the parts of the *Metamorphoses*, i.e. the employment of connecting passages. And these three pairs of books are not unique, for actually all the other

[17] For this discussion the three principal stories are taken to be those of (1) Pyramus and Thisbe, (2) Leucothoe and the Sun, and (3) Salmacis and Hermaphroditus. The adultery of Mars and Venus is regarded as an introduction to the second.

[18] Cf. Crump (204–16) and Klimmer (e.g. 44 and 61) for the unity of subject within numerous groups and sub-groups.

pairs are in some measure so joined, although Ovid never resorts to a fixed pattern, hence varies the nature of the unions considerably. Note the links not already mentioned: Phaethon's fatal adventure joins Books 1 and 2 (1.762–2.332); the rape of Europa and the vestigial account of Cadmus' search, Books 2 and 3 (2.833–3.9); episodes in the spread of Bacchic worship, Books 3 and 4 (3.577–4.415); the adventures of Perseus, Books 4 and 5 (4.607–5.249); the birth of the Argonauts, Calais and Zetes, and the story of Jason and Medea, Books 6 and 7 (6.675–7.452); the visit of Cephalus to Aeacus, Books 7 and 8 (7.490–8.5); the visit of Hymen successively to the weddings of Iphis and Ianthe and of Orpheus and Eurydice, Books 9 and 10 (9.666–10.71)[19]; the career of Orpheus, Books 10 and 11 (10.1–11.84); the Trojan War, Books 11, 12, and 13 (11.749–13.398); two episodes in the career of Glaucus, Books 13 and 14 (13.898–14.74); and early Roman history through the succession of Numa, Books 14 and 15 (14.772–15.11).[20]

Some of these links are much more convincing than others. The Phaethon story is one unit with only its point of departure, the question of the boy's paternity, developed in the first book; all the rest of the story appears in the second. The careers of Perseus and Orpheus are likewise effective as binders. But the fact that Cadmus looked for Europa, or that Calais and Zetes joined the Argonauts, or, particularly, that Hymen visited the wedding of Orpheus after that of Iphis (cf. above, note 19), can provide only a scant token of unity.

Each book, then, is tied to its neighbor by a story or a group of stories which starts in one and ends in the other, hence binds the two together. The same type of linkage exists between many pairs of the individual narratives. The story of Actaeon is made to follow that of the founding of Thebes by a bridge passage which recounts the happiness of Cadmus over the establishment of the city and how Actaeon's fate was the first thing to mar it (3.131–42); similarly a few lines (7.453–6) about how Minos' threats marred

[19] Ovid's binders are notably weak at this particular point, perhaps because he felt obliged to do something but had never hit upon an idea which had strongly appealed to him. The first two love stories look like remnants that did not fit readily into other contexts, and to join the two books through the slight person of Hymen seems rather forced.

[20] Cf. in particular J. Tolkiehn, "Die Bucheinteilung der Metamorphosen Ovids," *Sokrates* 96 (1915) 315–19, but also Lafaye (82) and Klimmer (11 and 25–7).

Aegeus' happiness over the rediscovery of his son link the account of Theseus' return and that of Minos' warfare; and the story of Ceyx and Alcyone is attached to that of the wolf which ravaged Peleus' flocks through the suggestion (11.410–4) that Ceyx was disturbed by his brother's difficulties and so felt obliged to consult the oracle for some remedy. In all of these one finds an introduction which refers to the preceding story and which establishes the point of departure for the new tale.[21]

There is no need to consider these links in detail, for they have often been discussed,[22] nor for that matter the rather frequent use of verbal connectives like *at* (9.101), *sed* (7.162), *nam* (11.217), *quoque* (6.317), and *tamen* (15.547) to introduce contrasting or similar stories. Their use is obvious. So also is the employment of chronological conjunctions like *interea* (11.410), *cum* (12.169), and *dum* (11.1) for the same purpose. Typical of this sort of linking is the passage which opens the fourth book. Basically, as noted above, a history of the spread of the Bacchic cult joins this book to its predecessor. However, while the actions of Pentheus close the third book (511–731) and those of the Minyeides open the fourth (1–415), a brief tag at the end of the third book (732–3) states that the fate of Pentheus had inspired faithfulness in worship among the women of Thebes. This paves the way for a contrast in *Met.* 4.1–2:

> At non Alcithoë Minyeïas orgia censet
> accipienda dei . . .

From this one word, in counterpoise against a two-line tag, unfolds half of the narrative of the fourth book.

Such transitions have naturally been much admired and studied,[23] although the praise has not been unanimous. Quintilian (*Inst.* 4.1.77) was right in saying that they are often too clever, although perhaps their objectionableness stems rather

[21] Hartman (47–8) points out the device of following one story by another of sadder nature.

[22] E.g. by Castiglioni (365–74); Klimmer (*passim*); Lafaye (82–4); Liebau (11–15); Miller (470–3); and briefly by Wilkinson (148). For the use of verbal connectives, see e.g. Hartman (44–5) on *nam*; Klimmer (25) on *tandem*; and Miller (470–1) on *interea* and *dum*.

[23] See especially Herter (136–7 with notes 21–2), but also the excerpt from Raphael Regius quoted above (p. 218); H. N. Fowler, *A History of Roman Literature* (New York 1903) 151; Liebau (15); Sellar (360); and Wright (233).

from the fact that Ovid is by nature an opportunist. He was so ready to seize upon any device which came to hand[24] that he inevitably used many that trouble critics with a sober taste.

IV. Verbal Reminiscences

More subtle, and perhaps much more effective in the long run, is the use of verbal reminiscences and other echoes of detail. They appear very frequently.[25] In *Met.* 12.627–8 Agamemnon, who did not wish to arbitrate between Ajax and Ulysses, "duces mediis considere castris / iussit." The execution of the order in *Met.* 13.1 ("Consedere duces . . .") echoes the original wording. Further, the brief account of Cadmus' search for Europa is not the only connective between Book 2 and Book 3. Various echoes are to be found, both in the matter and in the words. The earlier book closes with the vivid picture of the bull swimming away while his prize clings fearfully to his back. The reader instinctively wonders about the sequel to all this. That sequel is suggested in 3.1–2:

> Iamque deus posita fallacis imagine tauri
> se confessus erat Dictaeaque rura tenebat . . .

These lines recall momentarily the animal that had been the center of the previous action, but observe also that the words "deus . . . tauri" in 3.1 reflect in chiastic order "tauri / . . . deus" from 2.869–70 (cf. below, note 29).

A typical echo of detail is discernible also in an ornate structure of connectives which joins Book 7 and Book 8. The immediate union is secured through the incident of Cephalus' visit to Aegina (7.490–8.5); the broader binding, through the military activity of Minos and other events involving him (7.453–8.235), but there is a more subtle connection suggested by the role of the dawn in the story of Cephalus. Admittedly it was the goddess Aurora whose love for him crossed the path of his happiness and her role might therefore be expected to be prominent, but her figure disappears after providing the motivating forces in Cephalus' narrative (and after she had assisted in the test of his wife's loyalty). Thereupon the tale continues as if she had never been mentioned. Tragedy,

[24] Cf. Wilkinson (265).

[25] Cf. Fränkel (77–8 with note on 211). For stories linked by amazement or admonition see *Met.* 15.552–621 and cf. Hartman (58–9) and Miller (475).

however, came to him at dawn, as he invoked the cooling wind (7.804–815 and 835–7) and then chanced to kill his own beloved Procris. And in the brief account of his departure (8.1–5), his last appearance in the *Metamorphoses*, the sea-breeze at dawn carried his ships away homeward. It seems a deliberate choice on Ovid's part that whereas the invocation of one breeze at an earlier dawn had brought grief, now *placidi austri*, at the final dawn, brought him to his home sooner than expected.[26] Certainly, had the figure of the goddess Aurora been retained throughout the story, it would have been appropriate for her to do some small favor in behalf of her now chastened and saddened beloved; the swift sailing at dawn can be a token of that favor.

To be sure, reminiscences of this sort need not all have been planned by the poet; some can have grown out of the opportunities inherent in the action. The favorable wind, e.g., may originally have been intended only as the counterpart of the contrary breeze of the previous morning (7.658–64), the one which had detained Cephalus in Aeacus' company, hence had provided the setting for accounts of several personal experiences. Again, it is natural enough that winds should figure in the story of Cephalus who was a grandson of Aeolus. But there are sufficient details of this sort in other parts of the poem to make it a likely assumption that Ovid sought to interweave them as he wrote.

Another example is to be found in *Met.* 1. The precise connection between the slaying of the Python and the story of Daphne (1.416–567)[27] lies in the remark that the oak-leaf was the sign of victory at the Pythian games since (*ibid.* 450) "nondum laurus erat." As the reader scans the lines at the transition he naturally sees these words (*ibid.* 449–52):

> . . . aesculeae . . . frondis . . .
> nondum laurus erat . . .
> . . . de qualibet arbore Phoebus.
> . . . amor Phoebi Daphne . . .

Quite apart from the intellectual content of these phrases, then, the very sight of the words could be expected to conjure up the succession of ideas Ovid desired, particularly for the reader who

[26] Fränkel (215–6) finds a triple *entendre* in the details of this passage.
[27] Cf. Klimmer (21) and see below (p. 236).

knew his Greek[28] and who observed in successive lines "arbore Phoebus" and "Phoebi Daphne"—not actual phrases in context, but collocations of words to direct his thoughts.

Such verbal reminiscences appropriately relate to the development of the ideas, i.e. similar subject matter encourages similar phraseology. But they are probably chiefly used when Ovid wants to use them. In neither line quoted from the Europa passage does the genitive *tauri* qualify the nominative *deus* directly.[29] The poet is not saying the same thing twice, although he is speaking of the same deity in the same disguise. Ovid is perfectly able to echo a situation without repeating words. There is a marked resemblance in setting, e.g., for the frame to the stories which center around Achelous (8.562–9.97) and for the account of Nessus' destruction (9.98–133). Achelous' guests were delayed by floodwaters (8.549–59) while the waves of the flooding Evenus (9.104–5) halted Hercules. Despite the obvious similarity of situation, the two passages share almost no words in common.[30] Ovid perhaps felt he had sufficient other connectives for introducing the story of Nessus. The reader would remember the earlier river at flood stage, and would feel the link with the first story of Book 9 as he read of a second person who fought Hercules and who had quarrelled with him about the same woman (Deianeira).

For a final example of the use of a word to bind two stories more closely (and a passage in which similarity of subject calls for the word) the tales told by the daughters of Minyas can again be examined. The first two major stories are of especial interest here.[31] The entire group is held together by its outer frame (as

[28] Cf. Fränkel (223, note 85).

[29] The essential contexts show the complete syntactic separation of the words:

> . . . ausa est . . . regia virgo
> . . . tergo considere tauri:
> cum deus a terra . . .
> . . . vestigia ponit in undis . . . (2.868–71)
>
> Iamque deus posita fallacis imagine tauri
> se confessus erat . . . (3.1–2)

[30] The variation is typified by the fact that Achelous (8.549) is "imbre tumens," whereas Evenus (9.105) is "imbris hiemalibus auctus."

[31] See above, note 17. Cf. Fränkel (214–5) for *copia* as a pivotal word in the story of Narcissus and Echo, and (222, note 83) for the role of stone in the story of Perseus (especially *Met.* 5.160–235).

noted above, p. 227) and by the fact that they are all love stories. It is appropriate, therefore, that the key to the first story (Pyramus and Thisbe) should lie in the word *amor*. This is sounded, like an ominous musical note, six times. It is always in the nominative and always with the ictus upon the ultima, almost as if ringing a death knell while the ill-fated decisions come step by step:

(1) tempore crevit *amor* (*Met.* 4.60)
(2) quid non sentit *amor* (*ibid.* 68)
(3) audacem faciebat *amor* (*ibid.* 96)
(4) . . . 'tua te manus' inquit '*amor*que
perdidit, infelix! est et mihi fortis in unum
(5) hoc manus, est et *amor* . . . (*ibid.* 148–50)
(6) . . . quos certus *amor*, quos hora novissima iunxit (*ibid.* 156)

"Certus amor" had destroyed Pyramus and Thisbe. The second story (Leucothoe and the Sun) begins with much the same note (*ibid.* 169–70):

> Hunc quoque, siderea qui temperat omnia luce,
> cepit amor Solem . . .

The conjunction *quoque* implies that what follows matches what precedes, but fully as effective to establish this is the repetition, in the nominative, of the old keyword, *amor*—"cepit amor Solem."

v. Multiple Links

It should be apparent that many of the stories already examined are linked together by more than one device. It may even be correct to say that a thorough investigation would show that there is never just a single quotable reason why any two narratives are placed side by side or seem to belong in juxtaposition. Since Ovid's inspiration was probably flagging in the last books, it is perhaps fair to assume that what he does to join pairs of those books is the product of his basic method of working. In any event, the successive pairs show a generous multiplicity of cohesive devices.

The last five books form the longest section of the poem in obvious chronological arrangement, a section which begins at 11.194 (the building of the walls of Troy) and which extends to

the end of the poem. Within this large passage the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth books are united by the story of Troy. These are general connectives. When one looks to the details, he finds that *Met.* 11 (749–95) ends with the transformation of Aesacus into a diving-bird; the first major action of *Met.* 12 (1–71)[32] is the Greek expedition in reprisal for Paris' abduction of Helen. Note that Aesacus and Paris are both sons of Priam; this means that actions of Priam's sons link the two books. But there is an even more minute connection. Whereas the loss of Aesacus by transformation ends Book 11, the first three lines of Book 12 report the natural sequel that Priam and Hector mourned for him. Further, some of Ovid's readers would also recognize a linking by irony: Aesacus tries to die but cannot achieve death (11.786); his father and brother unknowingly regard him as dead and needlessly mourn his passing (12.1–3).

Manifold again are the links between Books 12 and 13. The major topic in *Met.* 12 (580–628) is the death of Achilles; the first in *Met.* 13, the dispute over his arms (1–398). But just as Priam's grief for Aesacus occupies the first lines of the twelfth book, so the dispute over the arms is briefly anticipated in the same book, although the long form of the account appears in the thirteenth. In the short form (12.622–8) Ovid speaks of the other claimants to the arms, tells that Agamemnon could not decide between Ajax and Ulysses, and says that he called a council to settle the dispute. This is compact preparation for the detailed version which follows. The verbal echo at this point, involving *duces* and forms of *consido* has already been discussed (above, p. 230).

Books 13 and 14 are connected, broadly speaking, by the career of Aeneas from the fall of Troy to his deification (13.623–14.608); more narrowly by the story of Glaucus (13.898–14.74). His transformation into a sea deity closes the former book; his request for Circe's aid opens the latter. Actually, again, the appeal to Circe is anticipated in the earlier book, for in 13.968 Ovid says, "prodigiosa petit Titanidos atria Circes." The first

[32] I have marked the division after "sanguine senserunt" in *Met.* 12.71, on the grounds that while the fate of Cygnus is logically only a detail in the action around Troy, in interest it is an entirely new episode. As remarked above (p. 223), it is often hard to identify the end of a story since normally Ovid was careful to avoid neat and obvious stopping points.

ten lines of Book 14 give the geography of this journey, noting at the end (9–10) that he

> . . . adiit . . . atria
> Sole satae Circes vanarum plena ferarum.

There are at least five links here: the repetition of the noun *atria*, the double version of Glaucus' trip, the course of his entire career, the narrative of Aeneas' career, and the succession of events from the founding of Troy down to Roman times.

The connection between the last two books is relatively simple. They belong to the general chronological succession, Book 14 closing with the deification of Romulus and of his wife Hersilia. Book 15 opens naturally with the naming of his successor. All the additional connective needed is represented (15.1) by the temporal adverb *interea*. Here if anywhere, Ovid must have felt, he could rely upon a known chronological sequence of events to hold his stories together.

VI. Conclusion

Further examples of such manifold links could be adduced from all parts of the poem, but already the profusion is bewildering to contemplate and to describe. Its existence is surely not accidental. Ovid understood that if he failed to achieve a convincing show of unity, the *Metamorphoses*, far from being a *carmen perpetuum*, would fall apart into so many separate stories. He also no doubt realized that different readers would respond to different devices. A few would find an underlying uniformity of subject matter or form enough; a few others would be attracted and persuaded by the one fluent poet who speaks throughout; a few more would be satisfied by the chronological arrangement; some would appreciate grouping by themes; others would feel the force of verbal reminiscences; and some would need the more obvious transitional passages and phrases. He seems to have reasoned much as his own Byblis when she remarked (9.608–9) that

> . . . si singula duram
> flectere non poterant, potuissent omnia, mentem.

And this sort of reasoning is likely to have been correct. If chronological ordering were the only device to unify the stories, it would soon lose its force, since the actual placing of many of the

incidents is quite arbitrary. General identity of theme could no more bind this poem together than it can the *Fasti*; nor could the person of the poet. And surely the linking passages could not give either genuine unity or a lasting illusion of it, for a reader would soon laugh at what Miller (471) called the "stepping-stone" technique. This places the story of Daphne after the story of the slaying of the Python (on the basis of the oak-leaf garlands won at the Pythian games) and ties the Tereus–Procne–Philomela sequence of tales to the story of Niobe (on the grounds that Athens did not send sympathy because it was being besieged —a siege lifted through the efforts of Tereus).

But when subtle verbal reminiscences reinforce these artificial links, and when the chronological sequences and theme-grouping make stories appropriate in each other's context, the linking passages are actually no longer of the essence and the reader is less conscious of these and other devices which happen to be inherently weak. This is the value of the multiplicity of unifying forces. This is how they lend solidarity to the poem. Ovid can be said to have succeeded in his effort much as a capable architect succeeds when he designs an arch in which the stones are held in place not only by mortar, but also by their very weight, thrust, and position, and who so uses their gradations in color and texture and mass that they seem naturally to belong, one beside another, in the very order in which they appear.