



- OVID'S LIFE AND EARLY WORKS
- THE METAMORPHOSES









- OVID IS ONE OF THE MOST CHARMING AND ENGAGING PERSONALITIES TO EMERGE FROM ANCIENT LITERATURE
- URBANE, WITTY, NAUGHTY-AND-NICE
- AND THE MOST TALENTED, NATURAL POET ROME EVER CREATED









- OVID GREW UP DURING THE VERY LAST YEARS OF THE ROMAN REVOLUTION (131-31 BCE)
- HE NEVER REALLY KNEW REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT, ONLY THE RULE OF AUGUSTUS (31 BCE - 14 CE)
- THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF THE *PAX ROMANA* (31 BCE 180 CE)









- BUT IF FREEDOM WAS GONE, LIFE WAS STILL VERY GOOD FOR THE ROMANS
- ROME WAS THE CENTER OF THE WORLD: RICH, SOPHISTICATED, FUN
- IT WAS THE GREATEST PARTY TOWN
 ANTIQUITY HAD EVER SEEN
- AND OVID WAS ITS TOASTMASTER!









- TO JUDGE FROM HIS POETRY, OVID LED A VERY BUSY PUBLIC LIFE, BUT NOT ONE OF SERVICE TO THE STATE
- HE ATTENDED MANY PARTIES, HAD LOTS OF FRIENDS AND MISTRESSES, EVEN AMONG AUGUSTUS' COURT
- HE OPENLY TALKS ABOUT ALL THIS IN HIS POETRY









- HIS FIRST PUBLISHED WORK IS CALLED AMORES ("LOVE AFFAIRS")
- A SERIES OF SHORT POEMS ABOUT HIS LIFE:
 - -HIS MISTRESS REJECTS HIM
 - -SHE FLIRTS WITH HER HUSBAND IN FRONT OF HIM
 - HER HAIR FALLS OUT AFTER HE WARNS
 HER NOT TO DYE IT BLONDE









- AMORES WAS A SMASH HIT AMONG THE ROMAN READING PUBLIC
- SO OVID WROTE A SEQUEL: ARS
 AMATORIA ("HOW TO BE A LOVER")
- IN THIS WORK OVID PURPORTS TO BE THE MASTER OF LOVE AND TEACHES MEN HOW TO HUNT FOR "GIRL"









- IN ARS AMATORIA, OVID DISPENSES ALL SORTS OF ADVICE ON DATING:
 - -GO TO TRIUMPHAL PROCESSIONS WHERE "GIRL" TENDS TO COLLECT
 - -ACT LIKE YOU KNOW WHO PEOPLE ARE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T
 - -SAY YOU'RE SICK ON HER BIRTHDAY SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND MONEY
 - -BRUSH YOUR TEETH









- LATE IN HIS REIGN, AUGUSTUS EXILED OVID FROM ROME
- HE SENT HIM TO **TOMIS**, A PLACE ON THE COAST OF THE BLACK SEA, JUST OUTSIDE THE ROMAN EMPIRE
- OVID CITES TWO REASONS FOR HIS BANISHMENT: *CARMEN ET ERROR* ("A SONG AND AN INDISCRETION")









- OVID SPENT THE LAST DECADE OF HIS LIFE IN TOMIS AND NEVER RETURNED TO ROME
- HE WROTE ONE LAST VOLUME OF POEMS, *Tristia* ("Sadnesses"), BEGGING TO BE RECALLED HOME
- BUT TIBERIUS, WHO SUCCEEDED AUGUSTUS, NEVER LET HIM RETURN









- THE LAST WORK OVID PUBLISHED WHEN HE WAS STILL IN ROME WAS THE METAMORPHOSES ("CHANGES")
- IS THIS THE CARMEN OR IS ARS AMATORIA THE CARMEN?
- SUBJECT MATTER WOULD INDICATE IT WAS ARS AMATORIA, BUT TIMING SUGGESTS THE METAMORPHOSES









- ON THE SURFACE, METAMORPHOSES
 LOOKS LIKE A HARMLESS COLLECTION
 OF STORIES ABOUT MYTHOLOGICAL
 CHARACTERS WHO TRANSFORM
- BUT CLOSER INSPECTION REVEALS A MORE INSIDIOUS AGENDA
- OVID TREATS THE CHARACTERS —
 GODS INCLUDED IN MODERN WAYS









- THE THEME OF *METAMORPHOSES* IS THE OMNIPRESENT MOTIF OF "CHANGE" IN CLASSICAL MYTH
- THE 15 BOOKS INCLUDE OVER 100 MYTHS AND IN EVERY ONE AT LEAST ONE CHARACTER CHANGES FORM
- SOME MYTHS ARE LONG, SOME ARE VERY SHORT









- MOST OFTEN, HUMAN CHARACTERS TRANSFORM INTO NATURAL FEATURES: ROCKS, SPRINGS, TREES
- SEEN ONE WAY, *METAMORPHOSES* IS A CREATION STORY
- LIKE A VERY DETAILED VERSION OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS









- IT IS, AFTER ALL, AN EPIC ABOUT GODS WHOM SOME (LIKE AUGUSTUS) STILL WORSHIPPED
- IT MAY SAY "GENESIS" ON THE COVER BUT IT'S MORE "KAMA SUTRA" INSIDE
- E.G. THE MYTH OF **APOLLO** AND **DAPHNE** ("LAUREL") IN *THE METAMORPHOSES*, BOOK 1.488-513









APOLLO

LOVES AT FIRST SIGHT; HE WANTS TO MARRY DAPHNE,

HE HOPES FOR WHAT HE WANTS — ALL WISHFUL THINKING! —

IS FOOLED BY HIS OWN ORACLES. AS STUBBLE

BURNS WHEN THE GRAIN IS HARVESTED, AS HEDGES

CATCH FIRE FROM TORCHES THAT A PASSER-BY









HAS BROUGHT TOO NEAR, OR LEFT BEHIND IN THE MORNING,

SO THE GOD BURNED, WITH ALL HIS HEART, AND BURNING

Nourished that futile love of his by hoping.

HE SEES THE LONG HAIR HANGING DOWN HER NECK









UNCARED FOR, SAYS, "BUT WHAT IF IT WERE COMBED?"

HE GAZES AT HER EYES — THEY SHINE LIKE STARS!

HE GAZES AT HER LIPS, AND KNOWS THAT GAZING

IS NOT ENOUGH. HE MARVELS AT HER FINGERS,

HER HANDS, HER WRISTS, HER ARMS, BARE TO THE SHOULDER,









AND WHAT HE DOES NOT SEE HE THINKS IS BETTER.

BUT STILL SHE FLEES HIM, SWIFTER THAN THE WIND,

AND WHEN HE CALLS SHE DOES NOT EVEN LISTEN:

"DON'T RUN AWAY, DEAR NYMPH! DAUGHTER OF PENEUS,









DON'T RUN AWAY! I AM NO ENEMY,

ONLY YOUR FOLLOWER: DON'T RUN AWAY!

THE LAMB FLEES FROM THE WOLF, THE DEER THE LION,

THE DOVE, ON TREMBLING WING, FLEES FROM THE EAGLE.

ALL CREATURES FLEE THEIR FOES. BUT I, WHO FOLLOW,









AM NOT A FOE AT ALL. LOVE MAKES ME FOLLOW,

UNHAPPY FELLOW THAT I AM, AND FEARFUL

YOU MAY FALL DOWN, PERHAPS, OR HAVE THE BRIARS

MAKE SCRATCHES ON THOSE LOVELY LEGS, UNWORTHY

TO BE HURT SO, AND I WOULD BE THE REASON.









THE GROUND IS ROUGH HERE. RUN A LITTLE SLOWER,

AND I WILL RUN, I PROMISE, A LITTLE SLOWER.

OR WAIT A MINUTE: BE A LITTLE CURIOUS

JUST WHO IT IS YOU CHARM. I AM NO SHEPHERD,

NO MOUNTAIN-DWELLER, I AM NOT A PLOUGHBOY,









UNCOUTH AND STINKING OF CATTLE. YOU FOOLISH GIRL,

YOU DON'T KNOW WHO IT IS YOU RUN AWAY FROM,

THAT MUST BE WHY YOU RUN. I AM LORD OF DELPHI

AND TENEDOS AND CLAROS AND PATARA.

JOVE IS MY FATHER. I AM THE REVEALER









OF PRESENT, PAST AND FUTURE; THROUGH MY POWER

THE LYRE AND SONG MAKE HARMONY; MY ARROW

IS SURE IN AIM - THERE IS ONLY ONE ARROW SURER,

THE ONE THAT WOUNDS MY HEART. THE POWER OF HEALING

IS MY DISCOVERY; I AM CALLED THE HEALER









THROUGH ALL THE WORLD: ALL HERBS ARE SUBJECT TO ME.

ALAS FOR ME, LOVE IS INCURABLE

WITH ANY HERB; THE ARTS WHICH CURE THE OTHERS

DO ME, THEIR LORD, NO GOOD!"

HE WOULD HAVE SAID

MUCH MORE THAN THIS, BUT DAPHNE, FRIGHTENED, LEFT HIM









WITH MANY WORDS UNSAID, AND SHE WAS LOVELY

EVEN IN FLIGHT, HER LIMBS BARE IN THE WIND,

HER GARMENTS FLUTTERING, AND HER SOFT HAIR STREAMING,

MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER. BUT APOLLO,

Too young a god to waste his time in Coaxing,

CAME FOLLOWING FAST...









- IN THE END, DAPHNE CHANGES INTO A TREE TO AVOID APOLLO
- OVID'S ADVICE SEEMS TO BE: "WHEN A GIRL SAYS 'I'D RATHER BE A TREE THAN DATE YOU," LET HER GO!"
- MORE IMPORTANT, CAN THIS RANDY TEENAGER ATTEMPTING DATE(-TREE) RAPE EVEN BE CALLED A "GOD"?









- IN SUM, *THE METAMORPHOSES* IS THE FINAL PERFECTION OF HELLENISTIC LITERATURE
- LEARNED AND SENSUAL, SHORT AND LONG, FULL OF PATHOS AND HUMOR
- IT'S SOMETHING CALLIMACHUS AND APOLLONIUS COULD AGREE TO LIKE!!
- BUT DID AUGUSTUS LIKE IT?



