

## Issue 2019: Re-inventing Ovid's Metamorphoses, 1300–1700

Groningen

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Jan L. de Jong

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The importance of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a source for the visual arts and literature of the early modern period has long been recognized. There is an ongoing discussion, however, on the role of Ovid's text in the process of reception, because individual representations, especially in the visual arts, often show 'deviations' from Ovid's narrative. How can these 'deviations' be explained? Bodo Guthmüller has stressed that many artists (and writers) did not use the original Latin text of the *Metamorphoses*, or not even a fairly accurate translation, but free adaptations, either in Latin or in the vernacular languages. This may be true, but it is not sufficient to explain the whole process of reception, especially not the creativity which seems to be at the core of the artistic and literary inventions.

The inventions of the early modern artists and writers can be explained from the observation that artists and writers did not feel obliged to follow their textual sources verbatim (be it Ovid's Latin text, vernacular translations, free adaptations, or abbreviations/ *argumenta*) and that they were not convinced that a precise rendition would guarantee the best result. Writers were trained in rhetorical and poetical methods of textual variation, creating narrative *evidentia*, and in other methods of re-interpretation and re-use of all kinds of texts and topics. Furthermore, they were aware of the different requirements of the various genres of literature and media as for example tragedy, comedy, epos, elegy or lyrical poetry. Painters and other visual artists were trained in techniques of the 'invention' of images, either on the base of texts or pictorial traditions. They were conscious of the fact that visual representations require other elements and devices than textual narratives, and they felt free to apply them. Moreover, they were well acquainted with pictorial traditions and their use. This is certainly relevant in the case of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, because extended sets of images were available via the numerous editions, translations, versions and abbreviations that were illustrated with woodcuts or engravings (e.g. by Salomon, Solis, Van der Borch, Van de Passe, Tempesta and Goltzius). However, it is the question to which degree and in which ways these pictorial examples were used, and if they were actually decisive for the various inventions of the early modern artists. At any rate, the artists were also aware that in the case of pictorial traditions, creative variation was an important principle, and that various media (such as large oil paintings, sculptures, bronze plaques, small woodcuts, or garden architecture) required different artistic devices and compositions.

In this volume of *Intersections* we want to study the phenomenon of creative invention with regard to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. We want to detect and single out elements in the artistic and literary reception of the *Metamorphoses* that differ from Ovid's narrative, and to study the whatabouts of these differences, especially with respect to underlying literary and artistic problems, challenges, principles, and techniques, the requirements of the various literary and artistic media and genres, and the role of the cultural, ideological, religious, and gendered contexts in which these artefacts and writings were created. What elements, devices, perspectives, and interpretative markers were used that do not occur in Ovid, what aspects were brought to the fore or emphasized, and how is this to be explained? Special questions may regard the role of the nude and the erotic in visual representations, and of allegorical and moral interpretations in literary works and visual representations as well.

Please submit a one-page abstract (ca. 300 words) and a short curriculum vitae (max. two pages) to both editors, before February 15, 2018:

Karl Enenkel, Medieval and Early Modern Latin Philology, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster: [kenen\\_01@uni-muenster.de](mailto:kenen_01@uni-muenster.de)

and

Jan L. de Jong, History of Early Modern Art, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen: [j.l.de.jong@rug.nl](mailto:j.l.de.jong@rug.nl)

Applicants will be notified before March 15, 2018. Depending on funding, a one day workshop is planned to take place in Groningen, on March 29, 2019. Final chapters are due by June 1, 2019.

Reference:

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