METAMORPHOSIS AS A LITERARY DEVICE

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ABSTRACT

METAMORPHOSIS AS A LITERARY DEVICE

By

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This study is an attempt to understand the use of metamorphosis in the belles lettres of western Europe. In an effort to arrive at such an understanding, the works of many of the best known writers have been considered: Ovid, Apuleius, Dante, Ariosto, Spenser, Milton, and Kafka, in addition, somewhat less competent workers have been studied: the author of La Queste del Saint Graal. Gower, Vercors, and Garnett, as well as the medieval students of allegory. These studies have produced certain conclusions.

The concept of metamorphosis has its roots in the animistic thinking and worship of primitive man, as well as in observation of the phases of the moon, the changing seasons, the emergence of chick from egg, the development of fruit from blossom. In its earliest form, it was probably the mythic expression of religious ritual and teaching.

Very early, however, metamorphosis was conceived of as a possible divine reward or punishment for qualities of a human soul. In metamorphosis as punishment, particularly, we see the growth of the idea that the change consists of the complete realization of the sin, the ultimate development of the qualities that brought about the punishment. Closely allied is the Platonic and neoplatonic doctrine that the soul imposes her form on the body. These ideas have been at the root of most uses of metamorphosis as a device of belles lettres.

In considering individual works of literature in which metamorphosis has been an important device, the student is confronted by the puzzle of Ovid's Metamorphoses. Ovid has left few clues as to his purpose in writing this "epic," nor do we know whether he intended most or all of his stories to have a double meaning, since he was using ancient myths as his material. If we turn, however, to a story which was almost entirely original with Ovid, we are entitled to seek for its meaning. Such a story is that of Pygmalion where may be found a glorification of chaste love. In the light of this story, it is possible to conclude that Ovid did indeed intend double meanings, statements of psychological truth, in many, perhaps all, of his tales.

Whether Ovid did so intend or not, his work was read in this light throughout the middle ages and as late as the seventeenth century. Medieval scholars, from Fulgentius to Berchorius, sought to interpret Ovid's stories philosophically, scientifically, and especially as expressions of Christian truth. The lengthiest and most elaborate of these interpretative studies is the Ovide Moralisé of the fourteenth century.

About two hundred years after Ovid and quite probably influenced by him, was the Golden Ass of Lucius Apuleius. In this bawdy tale with its underlying mystical lesson, the hero incurs the wrath of Isis by turning himself inwardly into an ass, indulging his asinine qualities. She causes his outward form to change to fit his inward form. When, at the end of a year of trials, he has made himself inwardly human, she bestows the grace which permits him to become a man again.

Later authors who used essentially this same concept include Dante, Ariosto, Spenser, and Milton. The device was used interestingly by the author of La Queste del Saint Graal and, not too successfully, by Gower in the Vox Clamantis.

After the seventeenth century, metamorphosis seems to disappear from the belles letters of western Europe. In the twentieth century, however, it has

reappeared. It is suggested that the scientific thinking of the intervening centuries (with its rigid categorizations) combined with the new prose (with its emphasis on logical clarity of expression) and with a basically optimistic rationalism to discourage parabolic expression in general and the figure of metamorphosis in particular. It is further suggested that the failure of rationalism to achieve its goals, the bewilderment of modern man, has tended to express itself in parabolic writing generally, and that modern scientific thought (emphasizing as it does man's animal nature and the obscure shading between different forms of life) has permitted metamorphosis to be one of the figures used.

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INTRODUCTION

Metamorphosis as a Literary Device

> Is there some fascination, subtler than meets the eye in the idea of metamorphosis which haunts the folklore of almost all nations? The lively imagination of primitive peoples invents a story to account for a natural feature which looks like something else, or for a name which sounds like something else. The resemblance between human character and that of various animals may also give rise to legends. But why should they appeal to sophisticated people? Whence the success of Garnett's Lady into Fox?[1]

In this study I shall attempt to provide at least a partial answer to Mr. Wilkinson's question. In so doing, I shall be concerned with metamorphosis only as it appears as a device of the belles lettres of western Europe. Folklore, fairytale, and myth will be considered only as they serve as background material for belles lettres.

Before proceeding further, it would be well to define metamorphosis as I shall use the term. Metamorphosis exists when there is an actual change of physical form. Heightening of already existent features such as takes place when one of Homer's

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[1] L. P. Wilkinson, Ovid Recalled, Cambridge, 1955, p. 161.

heroes is filled with divine grace is not metamorphosis; neither is the revelation of previously concealed characteristics such as the sight of Duessa's fox-like rear in The Faerie Queene (I, ix, 46-47). Nymph into tree, maiden into spider, man into pig, statue into woman--these are metamorphoses.

After a brief consideration of the sort of mythic thinking which probably encouraged the development of the idea of metamorphosis, I shall turn to the most famous of all works concerned with metamorphosis, Ovid's Metamorphoses. After consideration of the book as a whole, we will follow a few of Ovid's stories through their interpretation in the middle ages. We will then turn to the use of metamorphosis in the works of later literary artists, including Apuleius, Dante, Gower, Spenser, and Milton, and three twentieth century authors. Ultimately, I hope to show that the history of metamorphosis as a literary device is, like the history of allegory in general, double. On one side it is the history of the attempts of scholars and theologians to discover a "real" meaning behind absurd but compelling tales; on the other, it is the history of the deliberate use of a device through which complex ideas may be presented more vividly than they can be presented in "literal" terms. It is, then my contention that the

literary use of metamorphosis is a form of allegory and that part of its fascination is the fascination of allegory, the charm of discovered complexity beneath apparent simplicity, the charm of metamorphorical statement, sometimes "truer" than literal statement.

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS OF THE IDEA OF METAMORPHOSIS

The idea of metamorphosis, the notion that one form of existence may change or be changed into another, is a primitive one. It developed at a time when man's sense of himself as part of all life was stronger than his sense of separation, when not only animals and birds, but trees and rivers, even rocks were living personalities, manifestations of the mysterious forces of life.

To the primitive mind there was nothing intrinsically impossible in the interchange of one form for another. Any observant eye could see the egg become a bird, the caterpillar a butterfly, the "dead" tree a mass of bloom, the flower an apple. In addition, in the totemistic stage of development, the members of a tribe were in their own thinking brothers to, sometimes interchangeable with, the animal or plant that was their totem. It was both food and friend, sacred as both.

> Totemism, it is found, is the utterance of two kinds of unity and solidarity, that of man with his group of fellow men, and that of the human group with some group of plants or animals. . . . Totemistic thinking knows no god; it creates sanctities but not divinities. These animal and

> plant group-sanctities live on in the plant and animal forms the mystery-god can assume at will.[1]

From this totemistic unity-in-diversity developed the varying manifestations of the year-spirit or earth-daimon who was snake or bull or goat, or all three in succession. He or she was the totem animal. He was also the spirit of the tribe, the idealized young warrior or the old man who must die that the tribe might remain strong. She was Earth the blooming maiden, Earth the mother of all living, Earth the receiver of the dead--the dead who would bring new life to the tribe in the sacred and mysterious and endless cycle of blossom, fruit, and harvest.

Examples of such many-bodied sanctities abound in ancient art. The chimaera, for instance, is snake, goat, lion, the year passing from deathlike winter to leaping spring to the richness of harvest. The sphynx--woman, eagle, lion--was almost certainly a tribal spirit before she became the monster of Greek legend. It is easy to understand, given the limitations of the plastic arts, that an effort to show a changeable creature might result in what looked like a monster to an age which had forgotten the earlier sanctities. In literature, however, the creature could remain changeable. Homer's Proteus, the

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[1]Jane E. Harrison, Epilegomena and Themis, New York, 1962, p. 546.

shepherd of seals, becomes a lion, a serpent, a leopard, a boar, running water, and a tall tree in full leaf--all symbols of strength and fertility. To Homer, Proteus is merely another minor god, but in his metamorphoses he remains a year-daimon, much older than any of Homer's Olympians. He is Dionysus or Tammuz; he is Spenser's Adonis, "Eterne in Mutabilite." The Greeks of Homer's day had forgotten the sacred meanings of divine metamorphosis. Consequently, Homer's attitude toward Proteus's changes is, like his attitude to all the divine shape-changing he mentions, mildly mocking. His deities change when it suits their convenience, not according to some divine plan.

When the earth-daimon began to yield to the moon-goddess as ruler over the seasons, there came into art the representation of the moon's changing phases--the new moon with horns like a cow's, the full moon with shining eye, the old moon wasting away. She is Cadmus's unbroken heifer; she is Io-Isis, the cow-horned goddess; she is Hera, the cow-eyed; she is Pasiphaë, mother of the Minotaur. In her cycle she repeats the Mother's cycle of virginity, motherhood and old age and is an unending example of mutability.

It is probable that a vast number of the stories of shape-changing so abundant in myth and folk-tale originate in half-remembered stories of fertility-daimones or

moon-goddesses, in misinterpretations of ancient carvings and vase paintings, or in attempts to explain ritual that had ceased to be meaningful. It has been pointed out, for instance, that in the story of Adam and Eve we have almost all the elements of an ancient fertility ritual. There is the sacred fruit tree, the sacred earth-snake, the nymph or goddess, and the man who receives her bounty. It seems quite likely that some early priest of a patriarchal sky-god deliberately reduced Eve to the erring wife and turned the serpent into a devil just as the Christian fathers later turned into a devil the goat-Dionysus.[2] It is equally likely that the story of Acteon's metamorphosis into a stag grew from some pictorial representation of the slaying of a sacred stag, conceived also as kouros, or of a young man dressed in the skin of a stag, the totem of his tribe.

The combination of a sense of the unity of life and the half-remembered animal forms of early deities accounts for many of the metamorphoses to be found in classical mythology and in early literary works. When Athena, for instance, takes on the form of a crow, she is only reverting to one of her many shapes earlier than the anthropomorphized one with which Homer is familiar, but Homer has forgotten this. His Athena changes shape as

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[2]Robert Graves, The White Goddess: A Grammar of Poetic Myth (Vintage Books), New York, 1948, p. 276n.

casually as does Merlin and with as little aura of religious awe. She simply has a convenient magical power, as does Circe. Circe, once the sacred sow, now with no apparent purpose turns men into swine. In a similar way, Daphne's metamorphosis into a laurel may be seen as a reversion to one of the early forms of the goddess-as-virgin, but Ovid does not know this. By his time, the laurel had been too long associated with Olympian Apollo.

Tales of metamorphosis, however, were not simply misinterpretations of myth and ritual or convenient magic for poets. Quite early, the stories were used to point a moral. Sometimes the metamorphosis is a form of reward or punishment. Rewards seem to have very little relationship with the situation which brought them about, a deity turns his favorite into a star without regard to the personal qualities that made him a favorite. The story of Philemon and Baucis (Ovid, Metamorphoses, Loeb Classical Library, 1960, VII, 631ff) is the only one that occurs to me as a possible exception.

In tales of punishment, on the other hand, the punishment frequently takes the form of an exaggeration of the very qualities which brought it about, an idea which Dante adopted most successfully in the Inferno. In the Old Testament, Lot's wife became a pillar of salt (Genesis, xix, 26) because she disobeyed the divine injunction not to look back at Sodom. In looking back,

she allowed her interest in things worldly and evil to supersede her devotion to spiritual truth. Thus, she had rejected true life, the life of the spirit. She became incapable of movement, her very substance the essence of sterility.

Similar tales abound in Greek mythology. When Lycaön (Ovid, I, 237) becomes a wolf, he is punished for impiety, but his punishment is to be turned into the outward form of the animal he most resembles. Because he is notably fierce and lawless, he becomes the wild and ravening wolf. Arachne, whom hubris led to challenge Athena's skill at spinning (Ovid, VI, 5ff) becomes a spider whose only noticeable characteristic is spinning. The offending human being is not only punished for his offense against divine law, but his punishment consists of the ultimate development of his offense. In this idea lies the seed of the most interesting literary uses of the concept of metamorphosis, wherein the change in bodily form becomes a metaphor for a change in spiritual reality.

CHAPTER II

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES

When we turn from generalizations about fables of metamorphosis to the most widely known literary work using such fables, Ovid's Metamorphoses,[1] we find those generalizations at first of little use. In the first 415 lines of the Metamorphoses, Ovid moves from a solemn account of creation to a jocular description of Mount Olympus, where the upper class gods dwell (with their good Roman Penates) along the main street. He goes from the grim story of Lycaon, through the exuberant account of the flood, to the tender tale of Deucalion and Pyrrha, which ends in the tongue-in-cheek solemnity of rocks turning into a new race of human beings.

Then, the preliminaries are out of the way, and we are off at a gallop--from Apollo, panting after Daphne and idiotically imploring her to run more slowly (I, 504-524), to Apollo seated in majesty in his gleaming palace (II, 1-30); from the pathos of Io's terror of her own cow face and moo (II, 637-641) to the burlesque of Mercury

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[1] Ovid, Metamorphoses (Frank Justus Miller, tr.), Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass., 1921. All line references are to this edition. Translations, unless otherwise noted, are my own.

telling, like Ovid, a tale of metamorphosis and putting his audience to sleep (I, 689ff). We meet unabashed lust, young love, conjugal devotion, conjugal jealousy; we meet envy, generosity, and pride of place.

When we have begun to feel at home with Ovid's style--witty, gently mocking, tender or disapproving, but always human--we come upon the solemn, heroic story of the apotheosis of Hercules (IX, 159ff). This may be Ovid's warning of what is to come, for, in the twelfth book, the style heightens. From then onward, we are expected to glory in deeds of war, look with pious eyes at the building of Rome, take the gods seriously, and enter wholeheartedly into a paean to Augustus. The reader's befuddled reaction has been well expressed by Sir Harold Hicolson:

> The difficulty in appreciating at its true value this compendium of Myths, Ancient and Modern is that we are unable to assess Ovid's own point of view. Was he poking covert fun at his gods and goddesses? Was he collecting an anthology of those already fading fables? Or was he just using the stories as vehicles for his fluent narrative pen? It is hard to believe that a man so convivial, urban and disrespectful can have approached these myths with any reverence. It is as if some bright young man of the twenties had composed a long poem in fifteen books, in which he had woven such disparate themes as the Garden of Eden, the Ten Commandments, Samson and Delilah, King Alfred and the cakes, Drake's drum and the death of Nelson. We should be at a loss to decide whether he was writing ironically, allegorically, symbolically, or simply with some perverted antiquarian purpose. We should be perplexed by our inability to define his state of mind.2

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[2]Sir Harold Nicolson in a review of Rex Warner's Men and Gods, Observer, June 24, 1950, quoted in Wilkinson, p. 151.

When the confusion of the first reading settles into a pattern of confusions, the problems presented by the Metamorphoses are these: First, why did Ovid choose to tell tales of metamorphosis? Second, why does the work change its tone so decidedly and, for us, so disastrously in the last four books? Third, since, in the sophisticated Rome of Augustus, it is highly unlikely that he or his readers believed in the literal existence of these gods or in the possibility of these transformations, are the stories perhaps allegorical? Was Ovid using metamorphosis to express philosophical truths?

The first question is probably easiest to answer. Ovid chose tales of metamorphosis, at least partly, because they were popular in the first century, B.C. The Alexandrians, Callimachus and Nicander, had written linked stories of metamorphosis which were widely popular and with which Ovid was undoubtedly familiar. The theme of metamorphosis had been used by several Hellenistic poets, including Boeus and Macer (who was Ovid's friend), and there was a recent Metamorphosis in elegaics by Parthenius. There were, in addition, a number of treatments of individual stories, such as the Ciris and Alcyone of Cicero and the Zmyrna of Cinna. The genre was popular. Ovid's contribution was to link the stories in

loose chronological order, an idea that he may have borrowed from the first two books of Callimachus's Aetia.[3]

The problem of the change in tone, while more complex, can also be explained. If, having conceived the notion of linking his stories chronologically from creation's first dawn to his own day, Ovid really looked upon his work as a kind of epic, then at some point the work must rise to epic dignity. It is entirely possible that Ovid himself may have regretted his failure to attain that dignity more often. If he were to attain it at all, where better than in the treatment of Roman legend and history? Not only did he have the example of Vergil before him, but he would be a foolhardy poet indeed who would treat those themes lightly under Augustus. There is another possibility, however. If Ovid considered his tales of metamorphosis as veiled statements of philosophic truth, would he not have felt that the tone was already so high that there was no need for explanation or apology for the tone of the last few books?

Two points in the last and loftiest book have particularly concerned commentators: the exposition of the Pythagorean doctrine, which occupies more than four hundred lines (XV, 60ff), and the exposition of Augustus's right to godhead (XV, 745-761). Pythagorean teachings

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[3]Wilkinson, pp. 145-155.

(the constant mutation of forms, the transmigration of souls, and the wickedness of killing animals or eating meat) were undergoing something of a popular revival in Rome at about the time Ovid was writing the Metamorphoses.[4] How easy it is to imagine Ovid's sympathy for this not-too-mystical mysticism with its humanitarian overtones. His dislike for blood sports comes through in the Actaeon story:

> Mons erat infectus variarum caede ferarum,
> iamque dies medius rerum contraxerat umbras
> et sol ex aequo meta distabat utraque, cum
> iuvenis placido per devia lustra vagantes
> participes operum compellat Hyantius ore:
> "lina madent, comites, ferrumque cruore ferarum,
> fortunamque dies habuit satis. . . ."
>
> There was a mountain stained by the slaughter of many different wild animals. Now midday shortens the shadows, and the sun is equidistant from both horizons. The young Hyantius spoke in friendly voice to his companions in the work as they wandered through hidden lairs. "The nets are dripping, Comrades, and so are our weapons with the blood of animals. The day has given us good fortune enough . . . ." (III, 143ff).

The opening line is stronger in Latin than in English because, not only is caede (slaughter) more "loaded" than venatio, the usual word for hunting, but infectus carries not only the sense of dyed or stained, but that of poisoned. It would have been easy enough to say that the young hunters had had a successful morning without such strong references to blood and slaughter. Ovid is purposely painting an offensive picture.

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[4]Herman Fränkel, Ovid: A Poet Between Two Worlds Berkely and Los Angeles, 1945, pp. 108-109.

His was a sympathetic nature. It enabled him to write feelingly of the hare flying, panic stricken, before the hound (I, 533-538), of the bullock seeing the axe descend at a festival sacrifice (XV, 150-155), just as he knew the grief of an old man seeing his once strong arms grown flabby (XV, 229-231) and the agony of Medea torn between passion and filial love (VII, 7-21). The humanitarian side of Pythagorean philosophy would have been congenial to him whether or not he accepted its theories of transmigration. Even those, however, may not have seemed impossibly farfetched to a poet who was intrigued with stories of metamorphosis and mutability, especially if, as Fränkel suggests, he was particularly concerned with the elusiveness of the sense of identity. If he did, in fact, view his tales as veiled statements of psychic reality, he may have been as seriously interested in theories of mutability as Spenser was.

The other problem passage, the paean to Augustus, is indeed offensive to modern ears:

> Caesar in urbe sua deus est; quem Marte togaque
> praecipuum non bella magis finita triumphis
> resque domi gestae properataque gloria rerum
> in sidus vertere novum stellamque comantem,
> quam sua progenies; neque enim de Caesaris actis
> ullum maius opus, quam quod pater exstitit huius:
> scilicet aequoreos plus est domuisse Britannos
> perque papyriferi septemflua flumina Nili
> victrices egisse rates Numidasque rebelles
> Cinyphiumque Iubam Mithridateisque tumentem
> nominibus Pontum populo adiescisse Quirini
> et multos meruisse, aliquos egisse triumphos,
> quam tantum genuisse virum, quo praeside rerum
> humano generi, super, favistis abunde!

> ne foret hic igitur mortali semine cretus,
> ille deus faciendus erat (XV, 746-761).
>
> Caesar is god in his own city. Him, illustrious in war and peace, not so much his wars triumphantly achieved, his civic deeds accomplished, and his glory quickly won, changed to a new heavenly body, a flaming star; but still more his offspring deified him. For there is no work among all Caesar's achievements greater than this, that he became the father of this our Emperor. Is it indeed a greater thing to have subdued the sea-girt Britons, to have led his victorious fleet up the seven-mouthed stream of the papyrus-bearing Nile, to have added the rebellious Numidians, Libyan Juba, and Pontus, swelling with threats of the mighty name of Mithridates, to the sway of the people of Quirinus, to have celebrated some triumphs and to have earned many more--than to have begotten so great a man? With him as ruler of the world, you have indeed, O heavenly ones, showered rich blessings upon the human race! So then, that his son might not be born of mortal seed, Caesar must needs be made a god. (Translation by F. J. Miller in the Loeb edition already cited, pp. 417-419).

"Though," as Wilkinson exclaims, "all the world knew that Augustus' father was Gaius Octavius, and Julius only his adoptive father! Flattery could hardly go further, and when all allowance is made for differences of convention, we cannot help being alienated."[5] Indeed, we cannot. But is Ovid's fulsome flattery not to be explained, if not excused, by the very probable assumption that, by this time, word of Augustus's displeasure had already reached him through members of the court, many of whom were his friends? Was the passage not a desperate attempt to avert the wrath to come, possibly death itself?

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[5]Wilkinson, p. 225.

That this was his intention is made more probable by the defiant lines that follow soon after, particularly if one equates Jove with Augustus as Ovid had twice previously done.

> Iamque opus exegi, quid nec Jovis ira nec ignis
> nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
> cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
> ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi:
> parte tamen meliore me super alta perennis
> astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum,
> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,
> siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.
>
> And now my work is done, which neither the wrath of Jove, nor fire, nor sword, nor devouring time will be able to destroy. When it will may come that day which has power over only this body and put an end to the length of my uncertain life: Still, in my better part, I shall be carried, immortal, beyond the high stars, and my name will never perish. Wherever Roman power extends over the subject world, I shall be upon men's lips, and, if there is any truth in poets' prophecies, through all ages shall I live in fame (XV, 871ff).

Notice how seriously Ovid appears to take this work of fable. Now that it is completed, he need not fear death, for he can expect poetic immortality. With all due allowance for poetic hyperbole and the euphoria of the artist who has just finished a work, it seems impossible that Ovid could have written thus of a work which he considered only a light entertainment.

The heightened tone of the last four books, then may be explained by four factors: the demands of epic; the necessity for treating Roman history (legendary or real) seriously; the loftiness of Pythagorean philosophy,

with which Ovid had a natural sympathy; and the sense of impending doom which Ovid most probably felt during the composition of at least the last book. It is possible, however, that commentators have failed to realize how seriously Ovid intended his tales of metamorphosis and have, therefore, felt a change of tone which Ovid himself would not have felt.

And so we come to question three: Was Ovid using his myths to express some serious philosophical, religious, or psychological truth or truths? Was he, in fact, writing allegorically? We can, of course, never be certain, but the possibility increases in credibility when we recall that he did interpret figuratively the myth of Danaë in the Amores,[6] interpreting the shower of gold as plentiful gifts to buy love. Certainly, the custom of interpreting myth allegorically was as least as old as Plato, and would have been familiar to Ovid and his contemporaries. Nevertheless, although we know that all Ovid's works were widely read both in his own day and in the subsequent years, we have no record of what his contemporaries thought of the myths in the Metamorphoses. But we do know that, as early as the third century A.D., Plotinus explained certain of the myths as figurative expressions

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[6]Ovid, Amores, III, viii, 29-34, in E. J. Kenney (ed.), Amores, Medicamina Faciei Femincae, Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris, Oxford, 1961.

of neoplatonic truth, and, in the fifth century, Fulgentius used some of them in his work of Christian interpretation of mythology. Throughout the high middle ages, of course, the Metamorphoses were read as veiled expressions of Christian and philosophic truth, so much so that some people believed that Ovid had been a magician who had actually had foreknowledge of Christianity. Most of these medieval interpretations seem unconvincing to the modern mind,[7] but they are evidence of the fascination, similar to the fascination of a puzzle, that the book exerted and continued to exert into the sixteenth century, when Nicholas Valois, in his Grande Olympe, interpreted it as a work of alchemy.[8]

Although the Metamorphoses continued to be read, admired, and freely drawn upon as source material throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I have been unable to discover any new attempt to ferret out its underlying theme or themes. In the nineteenth century, Ovid's reputation was at its lowest ebb since the tenth century; there was even some question whether he was a

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[7]One of the more curious of these works is a Metamorphoses for the use of nuns in which the stories are explained in such a way as to permit the good ladies to read them without danger to their morals. The goddesses become nuns; gods, members of the clergy. Their "marriages" are merely common meetings. See L. K. Born, "Ovid and Allegory," Speculum, IX (1934), 362-379.

[8]E. K. Rand, Ovid and His Influence, New York, 1963, pp. 135, 140-141.

true poet. Recently, however, scholars have begun to take a renewed interest in the Metamorphoses and to try to decide what, if anything, was Ovid's underlying theme. L. P. Wilkinson, who is the author of the latest study, acknowledges no seriousness of purpose:

> It is tempting, especially to the Teutonic mentality, to intellectualize these myths; . . . but we must not force such interpretations on stories which, whatever their mythological origin are surely told by Ovid for their own sake, and for the psychological paradoxes which intrigued him. . . . The essential thing was that the reader should glide easily on without pausing to reflect. For his purpose in writing was clearly to entrance . . . , and nothing more.9

E. K. Rand, on the other hand, emphasizes the element of mockery to be found in so many of the stories. He feels that Ovid "deserves a prize for ridiculing an outworn theology with a fine pungency beside which Lucian's diatribes seem primitive and tame."[10] Rand also sees, as do I, a resemblance between the Metamorphoses and the Canterbury Tales, but he does not go at any length into the elements which make up this resemblance.

A third scholar, Hermann Fränkel, is inclined to attribute to Ovid a serious purpose, albeit a partly unconscious one. He feels that Ovid was concerned with the sense of individual identity, and particularly, with the

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[9]Wilkinson, pp. 150, 212.

[10]Rand, pp. 58-75.

loss of that sense.[11] He also tends to read into the separate legends general psychological observations. He sees the Deucalion story, for instance, as a statement that "humble and tender believers in the good are able to modify rigidity and enliven numb coldness."[12] Similarly, he sees the Pygmalion story as a celebration of the power of affection to warm frigidity into response, as well as a praise of creative art as an escape from "the defects of reality."[13]

Although these scholars differ in their conclusions, there seems to be an area of agreement among them. That is, they all believe that Ovid is interested in the complexities of the human psyche, that he is, like Chaucer in the Canterbury Tales, attempting a sort of comédie humaine. Even Wilkinson, after stating that Ovid's purpose was purely entertainment, says, "Ovid's method is to take the traditional story and 'play it straight,' to imagine what would, as a matter of fact, have happened in the circumstances, human nature being what it is, and gods and demigods only human in their emotions."[14]

It is, in fact, this very concern with humanity that furnishes most of the compelling interest of the

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[11]Herman Fränkel, Ovid: A Poet Between Two Worlds, in toto.

[12]Ibid., pp. 77-78.

[13]Ibid., p. 96.

[14]Wilkinson, p. 159.

Metamorphoses. Ovid moves from Jupiter, a sort of super-Squire Western, to Juno, his formidable grande dame of a spouse. He shows us the jealous, greedy Aglauros (II, 740ff), and the frightened, grieving Alcyone (XI, 415ff). His treatments of young men are particularly knowledgeable, whether one turns to the young Apollo, lording it over Cupid because he has just killed the Python (I, 750ff), or to Phaeton carrying his hurt pride to his mother before approaching his father with a boy's combination of awe and arrogance (II, 1ff), or, indeed, to Narcissus, self-absorbed, dreaming, carelessly cruel. Mercury in the Herse story (II, 714ff) is the Roman dandy, preparing to bedazzle a particularly pretty village maiden. Tereus (IV, 425ff) is the savage warrior, hiding his barbarous lusts under a smiling, civilized demeanour.

The women, however, are also treated with insight and understanding: Atalanta, fearful lest she should win the race (X, 656ff), Minerva graciously postponing her own business to listen to the muses (V, 33-36) are sides of the same femininity. Enmeshed in and decorated by the marvelous transformations and the trappings of mythology, are timeless tales of the human heart in all its varied manifestations of good and evil. Ovid wished to entertain, of course. Which poet does not? But he was also attempting to show us humanity in its weaknesses and strengths and, perhaps, in the last book, to show its

highest manifestation, Roman civilization under the empire.

But was this all? Or were the metamorphoses more than a convenient literary vehicle? Were they perhaps important in themselves? It seems unlikely that we shall ever know how seriously Ovid considered the potentially figurative qualities of the metamorphoses. In choosing a popular story form on which to string his pictures of humanity, he was choosing, of course, a unifying device, just as Chaucer was in choosing the pilgrimage to hold together the diverse characters of the Canterbury Tales with their equally diverse stories. Like Chaucer, also, Ovid tends to group together stories with similar themes, as if he were trying to look at a problem from several points of view.

Sometimes, indeed the machinery creaks, as in the tale of Phaeton where the transformation of Phaeton's sisters (II, 340ff) seems obviously dragged in to justify the interesting father-son confrontation of the major story. At other times, as in Latona's transformation of rude peasants into frogs (VI 339ff) he is apparently using an aetiological tale as an excuse to paint an interesting portrait of the main character. The Daphne and Narcissus stories have attracted varying interpretations for centuries, but, whatever Ovid may have intended them to convey, they were very old indeed when

he used them. It is unlikely that we shall ever be sure what his intention was, although his combining of the Narcissus tale with that of Echo is suggestive.[15]

If we turn, however, to a story which seems to be almost entirely Ovid's own, we are entitled to draw conclusions about his intentions. Such a story is that of Pygmalion (X, 243ff). The tale follows a brief treatment of the origin of prostitution (X, 238-242), in which the Propoetides, having denied the divinity of Venus, are caused by that wrathful goddess to make common property of their bodies and reputations:

> utque pudor cessit, sanguisque induruit oris,
> in rigidum parvo silicem discrimine versae.
>
> and as their shame ceased, and the blood
> hardened in their faces, they were turned,
> with small difference, into rigid stones (X,
> 241-242).

Having lost their ability to blush, having hardened into inhumanity, they most properly became stones. In our story, the process is reversed. Pygmalion brings life, signalled by a blush, to his marble maiden.

Pygmalion had become disgusted with the Propoetides's shameless behaviour and, turning away from human girls, had carved for himself a beautiful statue. She was maidenly in aspect, looking like one who, potentially passionate, is yet too modest to express that passion.

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[15]For a full treatment of the possibilities of this combination see Fränkel, pp. 82-85.

Pygmalion, of course, fell in love, and at the festival of Venus, that is at the time when her divinity was most explicitly acknowledged, he prayed to have a wife like his ivory girl. Pygmalion's prayer was answered; the maiden warmed to life beneath his caresses:

> ut rediit, simulacra suae petit ille puellae
> incumbensque toro dedit oscula: visa tepere est;
> admovet os iterum, manibus quoque pectora temptat:
> temptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore
> subsidit digitis ceditque, ut Hymettia sole
> cera remollescit tractataque pollice multas
> flectitur in facies ipsoque fit utilis usu.
> dum stupet et dubie gaudet fallique veretur,
> rursus amans rursusque manu sua vota retractat.
> corpus erat! saliunt temptatae pollice venae.
> tum vero Paphius plenissima concipit heros
> verba, quibus Veneri grates agat, oraque tandem
> ore suo non falsa premit, dataque oscula virgo
> sensit et erubuit timidumque ad lumina lumen
> attollens pariter cum caelo vidit amantem.
>
> When he returned, he went to the image of his maiden and, bending over the couch, gave her a kiss; she seemed to be warm; he gave her another kiss, and touched her breasts with his hands. What he touched grew soft; the ivory ceased to be hard; it sank and yielded under his fingers as Hymettian wax softens in the sun and, moulded by the thumb, is easily shaped to many forms, made useful by use itself. The lover is amazed and rejoices, still doubting, fears to be deceived. Again, and yet again, he tests his hopes with his hand. It is a body; the veins are throbbing beneath his touching finger. Then, indeed, the Paphian hero expressed in fullest words his thanks to Venus and pressed his lips to the maiden's living lips. The maiden felt the kiss he gave her and blushed. Timidly lifting her eyes to the light, she saw, at the same time, the sky and her lover (X, 280-294).

Pygmalion and his ivory maiden were promptly married and, presumably, lived happily ever after. Certainly, they produced, in nine months, a son.

It is hard to believe that the juxtaposition of these tales was fortuitous. That Ovid is contrasting the inhuman existence of those who treat sexuality with irreverence to the delights enjoyed by those who truly love seems almost irrefutable. That he is also suggesting that the artist can make his own reality is highly possible.[16] Here, certainly, Ovid is using metamorphosis as a device to make more effective his presentation of a psychological principle.

Just as Chaucer could hardly have failed to be aware of the equation his readers might make between a pilgrimage and man's life, Ovid could hardly have failed to be aware of the possible double meanings of many of his tales. The tale of Pygmalion, in particular, seems almost certainly intended as an allegory. May we not conclude, then, that Ovid, who consciously used metamorphosis to make a psychological point in at least one of his tales, probably did so in many others? Possibly, Actaeon is the hunter hunted; perhaps Narcissus is an example of the stultifying effects of self-absorption; perhaps Daphne does exemplify the vegetable existence of those who turn away from the intellect.

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[16] I am indebted for most of this interpretation to H. Fränkel, pp. 93-96.

CHAPTER III

SOME MEDIEVAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THREE METAMORPHOSES

Whatever the purpose Ovid may have had in mind besides that of charming his readers, it was not long before scholars and philosophers were solemnly expounding their interpretations of his stories. As early as the late second century, Clement of Alexandria was using the Narcissus story as a warning against vanity, and in the third century, Plotinus used it as a figure for the descent of the soul into the body.[1] In the late fifth century, Fulgentius, a Christian scholar, used Ovid's version of the myth of Daphne and Apollo in his vast work of interpretation, Viri Clarissimi Mythologiarum.[2]

After Fulgentius comes a period of about seven hundred years during which Ovid's popularity would appear

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[1] Louise Vinge, The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early 19th Century, Lund, 1967, pp. 35-40.

[2] The edition referred to here is Augustino van Staveren (ed.), Auctores Mythographi Latini, Amsterdam, 1742. Some evidence of Ovid's continued popularity may be seen in the fact that Fulgentius, unlike some later commentators, does not feel the necessity to retell Ovid's stories. That he would tell the story if necessary is shown by his treatment of the Cupid and Psyche episode in The Golden Ass of Apuleius.

to have been slight. By the end of the eleventh century, however, Ovid was being widely read and quoted. With the twelfth century begins the so-called Aetas Ovidiana which was to last for three hundred years. In the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries appeared two major works of interpretation, the Allegoria Super Ovidii Metamorphosia of Arnulf of Orleans[3] and the Integumenta Ovidii of John of Garland,[4] the former in prose, the latter in verse. These two works were so successful that they were bound, separately or together, with copies of the Metamorphoses well into the eighteenth century, usually without acknowledgment. They have particular importance for us, also, because they served as source material for that monumental work of the fourteenth century, the Ovide Moralisé.[5] The last work with which we shall be particularly concerned, a work of the late fourteenth century, is the fifteenth book of the Reductorium Morale of Petrus Berchorius

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[3]See F. Ghisalberti, Arnolfo d'Orleans: Un Cultore di Ovidio nel secolo XII, Milano, 1932.

[4]Giovanni di Garlandia, Integumenta Ovidii (poemetta inedito del secolo XII a cura di Fausto Ghisalberti), Messina-Milano, 1933.

[5]Ovide Moralisé: Poème du commencement du quatorzième siècle, publié d'après tous les manuscrits connus par C. De Boer, Amsterdam, 1915, 1936.

(Pierre Bersuire), "De formis figurisque deorum," ordinarily referred to as the Ovidius Moralizatus.[6]

One of the first points to strike a modern reader looking into these medieval commentaries is each author's evident fear that his work would be condemned by the church. Such a fear was reasonable, for, throughout the middle ages, many powerful churchmen felt that pagan authors were dangerous purveyors of evil beliefs or, at best, a waste of time better devoted to study of the scriptures. Fulgentius solved the problem by leaving the decision to his superior, Catus the Presbyter, to whom the work was dedicated, saying:

> . . . si ab his lector melius sapit, deum praeferat, qui potiora concessit. sin vere ab his minus aliquid desipit, ipsum praeferat, qui ista contribuit. Ergo & haec non nostra sunt, sed ejus donum: & quae ampliora eveniunt, non hominis, sed divinum est largimentum. Sicut enim livoris nota est, silere, quod noveram; ita non crimen est, enarrare, quod senseram.
>
> . . . if by reason of these [interpretations] a reader knows more of good, let him praise God who granted that ability; if, however, he becomes more foolish because of them, let him blame the one who put them together. For these things are not ours, but His gift, and what enrichment results is the bounty, not of man, but of God. If, indeed, some evil is seen, let what I have renewed be suppressed; if, on the other hand, there is no evil, let that which I have devised be published in full (p. 663).

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[6] Petrus Berchorius, Reductorium Morale, Liber XV, cap. ii-xv, "Ovidius Moralizatus," Naar de Parijse druk van 1509, Utrecht, 1962.

John of Garland and Arnulf of Orleans maintained that not only was the study of classical poets conducive to a pure literary style, but also that there was much philosophical truth to be found in their works. The Ovide Moralisé begins with more than forty lines defending the notion that one may learn from Ovid's stories to do good and avoid evil; while even as late as 1567, Golding must insist, in his preface to his English translation of the Metamorphoses, that he who is made worse by the stories has approached them with the wrong attitude. He who reads them with a pure mind will find moral uplift:

> As for example, in the tale of Daphne turned to Bay
> A mirror of virginitie appeare unto us may,
> Which yielding neyther untoo feare, nor force,
> nor flatterye,
> Doth purchace everlasting fame and immortalitye.[7]

In choosing the story of Daphne as his "example," Golding joins a long line of people who have found the tale fascinating and attempted to seek out its hidden meaning. Fulgentius was the first we know of; Robert Graves and Joseph Campbell are among the most recent.[8] This myth, like most of those Ovid used, seems to be very old. Graves suggests that it may derive from an ancient conflict between invading worshippers of a sky god

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[7] W. H. D. Rouse, Shakespeare's Ovid: Being Arthur Golding's Translation of the Metamorphoses, Carbondale, Illinois, 1961, p. 2.

[8] For the tale as Ovid told it and the full interpretations of various medieval scholars, see Appendix I, p. 174, and Appendix II in full.

and the defenders of a sacred grove of laurels, devoted to the worship of the mother-goddess.[9] As Ovid tells it, the story is full of human emotion--the tenderness of a father who cannot deny a coaxing daughter, the boastfulness of an adolescent boy, the ludicrously combined selfishness and unselfishness of calf-love. Fulgentius, however, is concerned with none of this. He wishes only to identify and explain the significance of the major characters, seeking etymological or naturalistic interpretations. Daphne, for instance, is the daughter of Peneus because laurels grow abundantly by that stream. Occasionally, he may light upon a philosophical interpretation, as that the Python killed by Apollo is false belief dispelled by the clear light of reason.

Writing seven hundred years later, Arnulf of Orleans is more obviously seeking Christian truth in the story. Daphne has become Chastity personified, Apollo, Wisdom. The sweet-scented, evergreen laurel is the crown of the saints who, by living in wisdom and chastity, have achieved eternal bliss. The interpretation given by John of Garland does not differ significantly from that of Arnulf. Arnulf, in fact, quoted a line from John's "Daphne" in a rescension of his own work. Such an interpretation, it may be observed, while Christian, would not have been alien

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[9]Robert Graves, The Greek Myths (Pelican Edition), Baltimore, Md., 1955, 21.8.

to many of Ovid's contemporaries who were devotees of the various ascetic mystery religions.

In all three of the works considered so far, the myths are alluded to briefly, as though the author could assume that his readers were familiar with them, and each author usually contents himself with a single allegorical interpretation. When we come to the Ovide Moralisé, however, the situation is different. Writing in the vernacular, the author must assume that his readers have little or no knowledge of Latin literature. Writing in the great age of allegoresis, he is challenged to make as many interpretations as his fertile mind can conceive. Therefore, he translates the myth in its entirety, adding a bit here and there, then proceeds to make six interpretations, each more elaborate than its predecessor. The Ovide has been abused as dull and absurd. It was, however, very popular in its day, and, if one approaches it sympathetically, it is easy to see why. The stories were new to many readers; the style was informal, swift, and sparked with a good deal of charming word play. As for the interpretations, I question whether it is any more absurd to see Daphne as a type of the Virgin Mary than to see her as a figure for female frigidity, retreating to the "father-image."[10] Each age finds in myth what it

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[10]Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, New York, 1949, makes such an interpretation, p. 62. See also Fränkel's Ovid, pp. 78-79.

needs to find there: the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were seeking Christian revelation.

The last important medieval interpretation of the Daphne story is that of the Dominican friar, Petrus Berchorius (Pierre Bersuire). It is, in reality, a sermon. Ovid's phrases are analyzed as though they were part of the text for the day; authorities are quoted; there is even a particularly gory little exemplum. Although the interpretation is labored and, it seems to me, even more far-fetched than that of the Ovide, the work breathes the vitality of sincere conviction as Berchorius inveighs against those who become puffed up with pride or who seek worldly glory, while he proclaims the joys of the truly Christian soul. In this work, the laurel becomes the cross; the lyre, praise of God; the arrows, the word of God and the holy prophets.

As popular as the Daphne-Apollo myth, probably even more often used as a theme in literature and emblematic art, was the myth of Narcissus and Echo. Ovid's version is a combination of two originally separate stories: Narcissus's transformation into a flower (which may have been originally the myth of a year-daimon) and Echo's transformation into a bodiless voice (an aetiological story). Ovid was, so far as we know, the first to combine the tales, making Echo's fading away a consequence of Narcissus's rejection of her love. Robert Graves suggests

that the idea may have occurred to Ovid as a result of a misinterpretation of an icon intended to represent Orestes mocked by his mother's ghost after a vain attempt to cleanse his murderer's guilt in a sacred pool.[11] To me, it seems more likely that Ovid was intrigued by the logical connection between the beautiful boy seduced by his visual reflection and the beautiful nymph whose voice is only an auditory reflection. In any case, Ovid's happy combination has provided an endless source of poetic treatment and allegoresis.

Although, in the extant manuscripts, Fulgentius does not treat the Narcissus myth, Plotinus, in the third century, had interpreted it, and he was followed by a number of neoplatonists.[12] For the neoplatonists, Narcissus's infatuation is a figure for the soul's love for the false beauty of this world, as a consequence of which it loses itself in the deceptive waters of earthly delight, becoming as frail as a flower.

In the twelfth century, the Narcissus myth was used in the songs of _trouvères_, _troubadours_, and _minnesänger_ as a warning not to break the laws of courtly love as the coldhearted Narcissus had done. His punishment in answer to the prayer of a rejected suitor is seen as just, although the punishing god is more often Amor than

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[11] Graves, _Greek Myths_, 85.1.

[12] Vinge, pp. 37-41.

Nemesis. In other songs and poems, the story is taken as an example of the sufferings of hopeless infatuation. Narcissus pining away before the pool where lies his unattainable image becomes a figure for any lover dying for want of his highborn, unattainable lady. For neither the neoplatonists nor the poets, however, is Echo important.

Scholarly interpreters read the story in quite a different manner. Narcissus becomes the symbol of pride or ambition. He is the victim of illusion, mistaking the false for the real. Echo becomes reputation, good repute, though the physical explanation that the voice resounds more noticeably in certain types of places is often brought in. The flower is used, as it is in the Bible, as a figure for the brevity of worldly good and as beauty without fruit. Arnulf of Orleans (twelfth century) says:

> Re vera per Narcissum arroganciam accipere possumus, que multis placet si et illi placet arroganti. Per Echo hominis bonam famam, que arrogantem amaret et benedicendo extolleret nisi se cunctis preferendo bonam famam contempneret. Quia igitur contempta fuit, latuit nichil boni dicendo de eo. Et mutata in lapidem dicitur quia in locis saxosis melius resonat echo quam alibi. Narcissus vero umbram suam dicitur amavisse quia excellenciam suam cunctis rebus pretulit. Unde deceptus deficiendo cum iam nullius haberetur momenti, mutatis est in florem id est in rem inutilem, quia cito evanuit ad modum floris.
>
> Actually, for Narcissus we may understand arrogance, which is pleasing to many and even to the arrogant one himself; for Echo a good reputation among men that would love the arrogant one and extol him by speaking well of him, if he, by preferring himself above all, did not disdain good repute. Because she was thus disdained, she hid, saying nothing good

> about him. And she is said to be turned into a rock because echo resounds better in rocky places than elsewhere. Narcissus truly is said to have loved his own reflection because he preferred his own excellence above all things. Wasting away thus deceived and having no more force, he was changed into a flower, that is, into a useless thing, for he disappeared quickly after the manner of a flower (p. 209).

John of Garland, writing at almost the same time, gives a physical explanation of Echo, but he reads Narcissus as greed rather than arrogance, greed for the glories of this world "que velut umbra fluunt" (which flow away like shadows, p. 49).

Guillaume de Lorris in the early thirteenth century Roman de la Rose, not surprisingly, adopts the poetic interpretation of Narcissus as one who was punished for his cold heart. He uses the story as a warning to cold-hearted ladies, but says that he did not fear to approach Narcissus' fountain, since he had never broken love's laws.[13] Writing his continuation of the Roman, Jean de Meun uses two different interpretations. Like some of the trouvères, he uses Narcissus as an example of the peril of fastening the affections on an unattainable object,[14] an interpretation which Spenser was to adopt. Earlier (ll. 20409ff) he warns of Narcissus's well as the

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[13] Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Le Roman de la Rose, publié par Félix Lecoy, Paris, 1965, ll. 142ff.

[14] Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Le Roman de la Rose, publié d'après tous les manuscrits par Ernest Langlois, Paris, 1922, ll 20,817ff.

as the fountain of earthly love as opposed to heavenly love, following in the footsteps of Plotinus in seeing Narcissus as the victim of a love of this world.

When, in the fourteenth century, we come to the Ovide Moralisé, we find the author drawing upon both the poetic and the moralistic interpretations of his predecessors. In his translation of the Ovidian tale, he follows Guillaume de Lorris, seeing Narcissus as the justly punished offender against Amor, for he was "Plains d'orgueil et d'outrecuidance" (full of pride and disdain, l. 1336). In his explication, however, he draws on Arnulf, reading Echo as Good Repute and adding an interpretation of Juno as the world which can be fooled by good repute (ll. 1464ff). Narcissus is punished for pride in his own beauty, beauty that is transient as a flower. In his pride, Narcissus commits the sin of the fallen angels. He also sins by preferring earthly to heavenly beauty, and so he is damned (ll. 1854ff).

Berchorius, at the very end of the fourteenth century, sees Narcissus as pride in earthly things, the same pride for which he had reproached Apollo in his treatment of the Daphne myth. Those, he says, who take pride in their own beauty, whether of body, mind, or fortune, come to despise others. Thus, they turn away from the true glory of heaven to the shadowy glories of this world (pp. 70-71). Echo, he says, was a loquacious nymph who encouraged adultery.

She is like those noisy flatterers who surround great prelates and priests, returning their words as if they were blessings. She is also like a discontented woman who must always have the last word (p. 71). It was probably Berchorius's interpretation that Golding had in mind when he wrote:

> Narcissus is of scornfulnesse and pryde a myrror clere,
> Where Beawties fading vanities most plainly appere.
> And Echo in the selfsame tale dooth kindly represent
> The lewd behavour of a bawd and his due punishment. (p. 3)

The third myth which will concern us is that of Pygmalion, whose ivory statue became a live woman. The story as Ovid told it is of particular interest for several reasons: First, it is one of the very few "upward" metamorphoses in Ovid's work. The changing of stones into men in the Deucalion myth and the changing of serpent's teeth into warriors in the stories of Cadmus and Jason are the only other examples of the metamorphosis of an inanimate object into a human being, and in none of these does Ovid dwell on the metamorphosis with quite such loving attention to detail as in the bringing to life of Pygmalion's ivory image.

Second, this tale is unusual in that it seems to be almost entirely original with Ovid. There would appear to have been two legends current, the heroes of which were

named Pygmalion.[15] One, mentioned by Porphyrius, concerns a certain king of Syria who executed a series of high priests for eating the remains of animal sacrifices, for there was a ban on animal food.[16] There is no metamorphosis here, but the king's rigid abstention from the eating of meat may possibly have suggested to Ovid his own Pygmalion's abstention from sex. The second myth, rather more widely referred to, concerns a certain Phoenician king who became enamoured of a statue of Aphrodite, had it carried to his couch and there attempted to embrace it so as to have sexual intercourse. The resemblance between this tale and that of Ovid is obvious, but the differences are even more so. Not only does Ovid introduce the metamorphosis, but he makes his Pygmalion an artist instead of a king, thus enabling the statue to be Pygmalion's own work, a work of art more beautiful than a work of nature; and, instead of the atmosphere of perversion which surrounds the old tale, Ovid's story breathes healthy sexuality. Pygmalion, though he attempts to deceive himself by pretending his statue is alive, is not content until she actually is alive and his love can result in a son.

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[15] Pauly-Wissowa, Realencyclopädie der Classichen Alterumwissenschaft, Vol. 23.

[16] This story, which bears a remarkable resemblance to Lamb's Dissertation on Roast Pig may be found in translation in Porphyry, On Abstinence from Animal Food (Thomas Taylor, tr.), London, 1965.

In addition to the claims to especial interest intrinsic in the tale itself, there is a third element of interest for our purposes: so far as I have been able to discover, the mythographers of the middle ages paid almost no attention to it. Fulgentius does not mention it, nor does John of Garland, nor Berchorius, while the Ovide Moralisé translates the story without comment. Only Arnulf of Orleans makes an explanation, and that of the briefest:

> Statua Pigmalionis de eburnea in vivam mulierem. Re vera, Pigmalion mirabilis artifex eburnam fecit statuam cuius amorem concipiens ea cepit abuti ad modum vero mulieris.
>
> Pygmalion's ivory statue into a live woman. In reality, Pygmalion, a wonderful craftsman, made an ivory statue for whose love he conceived a desire, and he began to misuse it as if it were a real woman (p. 223).

This brief, unromantic interpretation, applicable more nearly to the tale of the Phoenoician king than to Ovid's story, was repeated as late as the fifteenth century by Thomas of Walsingham.[17] It seems possible that the Ovididan tale with its emphasis on warm and beating blood; chill, white ivory transformed into blushing flesh, was too overtly a celebration of the transformation of female frigidity into happy responsiveness to be acceptable to the celibate scholars who were the allegorists. Whatever the cause, it is not until Jean de Meun (c. 1367)

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[17] Thomas of Walsingham, De Archana Deorum (R. A. van Kluyve, ed.), Durham, N.C., 1968, p. 154.

reaches the climax of his plea for mutually pleasing, progenerative, sexuality that we find a treatment of Ovid's Pygmalion.

Near the end of the Roman de la Rose (Langlois edition, ll. 20817ff), just as the assault on the castle has begun, just as the lover is about to achieve his desire, Jean compares the beauty of the beloved to that of Pygmalion's image. Then he launches into a retelling of the story, elaborating on Ovid for 367 lines. Jean's Pygmalion compares his madness to that of Narcissus, then strikes a blow at courtly love by comparing himself with those gentlemen who serve their ladies devotedly without so much as a kiss as reward. He believes that his mad passion is Venus's punishment for his insulting celibacy and swears never to offend again, if he can but have his love. When the statue has become a woman, Jean gives us his prescription for happiness in love:

> Or est Pygmalions aaise,
> Or n'est il riens qui li desplaise
> Car riens qu'il vueille el ne refuse;
> S'il opose, el se rent concluse,
> S'ele comande, il obeist
> Pour reins ne la contradeist
> D'accomplir li tout son desir.
> Or peut o s'amie gesir
> Qu'el n'en fait ne dangier ne plainte.
>
> Now Pygmalion is happy.
> Now there is nothing to displease him,
> For nought that he wished would she refuse
> If he questions, she offers herself in answer.[18]

[18] "Oposer" and "conclure" are technical terms in argumentation. See Girard Paré, Les Idées et les Lettres au XIII siecle: Le Roman de la Rose, Montreal, 1947, pp. 32-34.

If she commands, he obeys
Not for anything would he gainsay her
In accomplishing all her desire.
Now can he lie with his love
Nor is she cold or complaining.

Jean, the poet of healthy sexuality, has understood Ovid's celebration of it. For both poets, love is heterosexual, tender, mutual, and procreative. What better foreshadowing might Jean have found for the winning of the rose than the warming and softening of Pygmalion's ivory maiden?

CHAPTER IV

THE METAMORPHOSES OF APULEIUS

In the middle years of the second century, that is, about one hundred and fifty years after Ovid completed his Metamorphoses there appeared another book with a similar title, Apulei Madaurensis Metamorphoseon, or The Metamorphoses of Apuleius of Madaura subsequently and widely known as The Golden Ass. In this work, Apuleius purports to tell of the adventures which befell him when, as a young man just out of school, he travelled in Thessaly, the land of magic. There he had a fiery love affair with a slave girl, the servant of a witch. With her connivance he stole from the witch a box of ointment which he believed would turn him into an owl. Instead, he became an ass, and in this form lived for a year, moving from one lurid escapade to another. At the end of the year, he was vouchsafed a vision of the goddess, Isis, and allowed to eat a bunch of roses which reversed the metamorphosis. Thereafter, a chastened and devout man, he became a priest of both Isis and Osiris and led a serene and godly life.

Because certain episodes in The Golden Ass can be read as mockeries of Christianity, some of the Fathers would have destroyed all copies of the work. Apparently

taking the tale literally, they accused Apuleius of being a magician, an agent of the devil. For others, however, he was a noble pagan philosopher, from whom much good might be derived.[1] Partly, no doubt, through the efforts of these good men, possibly more often by the efforts of those who took an earthier delight in this collection of bawdy tales, the work was preserved to delight such diverse readers as Boccaccio, Spenser, and Robert Graves.

That Apuleius intended the book as religious instruction has been generally, though not universally, believed. Adlington, in his introduction to his own translation says:

> Now since this book of Lucius is a figure of man's life, and toucheth the nature and manners of mortal men, egging them forward from their asinal form to their human and perfect shape, beside the pleasant and delectable jests therein contained, I trust if my simple translation be nothing accepted, yet the matter itself shall be esteemed by such as not only delight to please their fancies in reading the same, but also take a pattern thereby to regenerate their minds from brutish and beastly custom.2

Yet the current editor of Adlington's translation can say: "In the Metamorphoses . . . the author's religious and philosophical views take a less important place than in most of his other works . . . ,"[3] having failed, apparently,

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[1]Jack Lindsay, Introduction to his translation of The Golden Ass, Bloomington, Indiana, 1962, p. 26.

[2]Apuleius, The Golden Ass, Being the Metamorphoses of Lucius Apuleius, with an English translation by W. Adlington (1566), revised by S. Gaselee, Cambridge, Mass., 1965, pp. xvii-xviii. All references to the Latin will be to this edition, cited as GA.

[3]Ibid., p. vi.

to realize that Apuleius's religious and philosophical views are the subject matter of the book. Even Robert Graves, whose identification of the ass as a symbol of the god, Set, is most helpful, has not apparently recognized the richness of the figure. In the following pages I offer what I think is a more complete interpretation.

Lucius Apuleius, Roman gentleman, barrister, and priest of both Isis and Osiris, lived at a time when the religious life of the Mediterranean world was going through great changes, coincidental with and, in part, caused by the unquestioned dominance of the Roman Empire. The great state religions were increasingly observed in form only, having lost for various reasons, much of their emotional appeal. The mystery religions, on the other hand, flourished, providing, as they did, a sense of union with the deity, guidelines for the proper conduct of this life, and hope for happy immortality after earthly death.

> What we witness is not a decay of religion but rather a new orientation of the religious consciousness. Two main trends are, I think, evident: on the one hand a movement, alike in Egypt and in the Graeco-Roman world generally, away from the established cults of antiquity, which were communal in character, towards a more personal relationship to the deity, on the other a syncretism which by constantly identifying different deities tended to reduce them all to varying manifestations of one divine principle. . . .[4]

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[4] H. Idris Bell, Cults and Creeds in Graeco-Roman Egypt, Liverpool, 1953, p. 65.

Both the syncretism and the deep personal emotion are well illustrated in Lucius's invocation of his goddess in Book XI of The Golden Ass. Exhausted and despairing, Lucius has fallen asleep on a lonely stretch of sandy beach, but he is startled awake by the sudden light of the rising full moon:

> Circa primam ferme noctis vigiliam, experrectus pavore subito, video praemicantis lunae candore nimio completum orbem commodum marinis emergentem fluctibus, nanctusque opacae noctis silentiosa secreta, certus etiam summatem deam praecipua maiestate pollere resque prorsus humanas ipsius regi providentia, nec tantum pecuina et ferina, verum inanima etiam divino eius luminis numinisque nutu vegetari, ipsa etiam corpora terra caelo marique nunc incrementis consequenter augeri, nunc detrimentis obsequenter imminui, fato scilicet iam meis tot tantisque cladibus satiato et spem salutis, licet tardam, subministrante, augustum specimen deae praesentis statui deprecari, confestimque discussa pigra quiete alacer exsurgo meque protinus purificandi studio marino lavacro trado, septiesque submerso fluctibus capite, quod eum numerum praecipue religionibus aptissimum divinus ille Pythagoras prodidit, laetus et alacer deam praepotentem lacrimoso vultu sic apprecabar:
> "Regina caeli, sive tu Ceres alma frugum parens originalis, quae, repertu laetata filliae, vetustae glandis ferino remoto pabulo, miti commonstrato cibo, nunc Eleusianiam glebam percolis; seu tu caelestis Venus, quae primis rerum exordiis sexuum diversitatem generato amore sociasti et aeterna subole humano genere propagato nunc circumfluo Paphi sacrario coleris; seu Phoebi soror, quae partu fetarum medelis lenientibus recreato populos tantos educasti praeclaris que nunc veneraris delubris Ephesi; seu nocturnis ululatibus horrenda Proserpina triformi facie larvales impetus comprimens terraeque claustra cohibens, lucos diversos inerrans vario cultu propitiaris: ista luce feminea collustrans cuncta moenia at udis ignibus nutriens laeta semina et solis ambagibus dispensans incerta lumina--quoquo nomine, quoquo ritu, quaqua facie te fas est invocare: tu meis iam nunc extremis aerumnis subsiste, tu fortunam collapsam affirma, tu saevis

exanclatis casibus pausam pacemque tribue; sit satis laborum, sit satis periculorum. Depelle quadripedis diram faciem, redde me conspectui meorum, redde me meo Lucio: ac si quod offensum numen inexorabili me saevitia premit, mori saltem liceat, si non licet vivere."

It is just about the first watch of the night when, awakened by a sudden trembling, I see the full moon, most brilliantly shining and just at that moment rising out of the waves of the sea. And the thought comes that in the secret silences of the deep night that greatest goddess rules with exceeding great majesty. For I know that all the affairs of humanity are governed by her providence and not only domestic and wild animals but indeed inanimate objects wax strong through the divinity of her light and the permission of her godhead. Indeed the very bodies of earth, sky, and sea she causes to increase as she grows, to decrease as she diminishes. If Fate might now be satiated at last by my many and great sufferings and a hope of salvation be at last permitted, I determine, with her aid, to pray to the august sign of the present goddess. At once, throwing off drowsiness, I arise, quickly but calmly, and eager for purification, go where I can bathe in the sea. Seven times I submerge my head beneath the waves, because the divine Pythagoras declared that number to be best suited for holiness. Joyous and lively, with tears on my face, I pray to the mighty goddess:

"Queen of heaven, whether you wish to be invoked as Ceres, original fostering mother of crops, who--joyous at the recovery of your daughter--abolished the brutish acorn diet of our ancestors and now cultivate with care the fields of Eleusis, showing the way to mellower foods; or whether as celestial Venus, who in the beginning of the world ordained that the sexes be bound together in love, creating the eternal fruiting of humanity, and who now dwell in the temples of sea-girt Paphos; or whether as the sister of Phoebus who, in softening the pangs of birth, have saved so many people, now above all adored in the sacred groves of Ephesus; or whether as Proserpina, terrible for the howlings of the night-time, whose triple face makes powerless the attack of ghosts and holds shut the earth, who wander in many groves and are worshipped in differing rites: With this, your womanly light, illumining the whole world, and with moist warmth nourishing the joyous seeds and, in accordance with the wanderings of the sun, shedding your changing radiance--by whatever

> name, by whatever rite, by whatever form it is lawful to invoke you: May you now, at last, cause to cease my dreadful troubles, may you strengthen my fallen fortune, give pause and peace to my long-drawn-out and fearsome trials. May there be an end to labor, an end to dangers. Dispel this dreadful four-footed shape, return me to the sight of my family, restore me to Lucius: but if some offended divinity pursues me with inexorable savagery, may I be permitted to die, if I am not permitted to live." (G.A., XI, 1-3)

Lucius prays alone, with no formal ritual other than the seven-fold wetting of his head; he prays as one who expects to be heard, "laetus et alacer." He prays, not only to the visible moon but to the moon as "augustum specimen deae praesantis," and he prays to that goddess in four of her aspects: queen of sexual love, queen of chastity, mother of crops, and ruler of the dead. For him, she is a listening presence who may manifest herself in many ways and who will reply to the cry of one of her children as easily as to the invocation of a whole community.

When his prayer is ended, Lucius has a vision of the goddess in all her majesty. She tells him her true name, Isis, and explains how he may get the roses that will return him to manhood. Following her instructions, Lucius does indeed become a man, but a better and happier man than he had been before. The rest of the book is a sort of thanksgiving hymn for this change.

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to read the Eleventh Book of The Golden Ass without realizing that Apuleius is describing a conversion as deep, as

complete, as personal as that of St. Augustine or of Saul of Tarsus. This sort of religious experience seems to express itself naturally, as C. S. Lewis has pointed out,[5] in figurative language. Among the figures which might spring naturally to mind, the change of physical appearance to indicate the deeper change of soul is easy to understand. But why the ass? Why not a dog, a wolf, a bear?

In the very first lines of The Golden Ass Lucius introduces himself and refers to the three spots where his family has roots. These are: "Hymettos Attica et Isthmos Ephyraea et Taenaros Spartiaca," "Attic Hymettos, The Corinthian Isthmus, and Spartan Taenarus" (G.A. I, i). These are the locations of well-known entrances to the lower world, caves of the Great Goddess.[6] With this information Lucius suggests that he comes from a family devoted to the worship of the goddess. That he worshipped her as the Egyptian Isis he tells us himself at the time of his vision, but we could be fairly sure of that earlier because of Apuleius's North African birth. In the Second Century and for another two hundred years thereafter, the

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[5]C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition, New York, 1958, pp. 56-66.

[6]Robert Graves, The Transformations of Lucius, Otherwise Known as The Golden Ass, A New Translation from Apuleius, New York, 1951, p. xix.

worship of Isis and Osiris was dominant there.[7] But, as the story opens, we find Lucius no grave worshipper in a great religion, but a gay, cocksure young man delighted to be in Thessaly, for there he can hope to have personal experience of magic; and magic fascinates him. This is what Robert Graves calls the magic of the left hand, what the medieval world named "black" magic. It is part of the kingdom of the Great Goddess--as what is not? But it is her kingdom in her Hecate aspect, the aspect of the hag who rules the ghosts of the dead and the horrifying, mysterious noises of midnight. As such, it is avoided by the wise.

Lucius is twice warned. Almost immediately after entering Thessaly, he encounters Aristomenes and learns of the disaster which has befallen that gentleman as the result of meddling, even at second hand, with a witch. Only a few days later, he meets his mother's foster-sister, Byrrhaena, and is warned by her to beware of his hostess, the witch Pamphile. Since Byrrhaena refers to Lucius's mother as "Salvia," "The saved one," it is tempting to try to find some connection between that name and hers, which would appear to mean "Fire-scattering," but whether or not these names are meant to suggest the goddess, the setting of the warning is clearly intended

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[7] E. A. W. Budge, The Egyptian Religion of Ressurection: Osiris, New Hyde Park, N.Y., 1961, pp. 282-306.

to do so. Byrrhaena and Lucius are standing before a great statue showing Diana, hunting dogs in leash, by the side of a forest pool. Peering through the underbrush, reflected in the pool, is the face of Acteon, from whose forehead the horns have already sprouted. Clearly, here is the goddess-as-virgin punishing the overly-curious. Since the effect of Byrrhaena's warning is to hurry Lucius away resolved to seduce Pamphile's maid as a way to learn Pamphile's secrets, it is ironic that the warning takes place before the goddess of chastity.

Having twice ignored warnings, Lucius does indeed seduce--with a great deal of pleasure on both sides--the charming maid, Fotis. As an added delight for their nightly transports, they crown each other with roses, thus employing for their lechery the symbol of the grace of the great goddess herself.

So pleasant, so mutual, is the seduction that Lucius becomes completely subject to Fotis: he has no wish to attend to the affairs that brought him to Thessaly; he has no wish to return home to his family duties; he can not even accept an invitation to a dinner-party without asking permission of Fotis. Lucius, the gentleman, has allowed his lust to make him subject to a slave.

One might say that at this point in the story, Lucius has, metaphorically, made an ass of himself. He has displayed stubbornness and undue curiosity as well

as unbridled lust. All these were commonly accepted attributes of the ass. He has also become the slave of a slave, as a real ass might be. Still he retains his human shape. Even when he stupidly becomes the butt of practical jokers in the elaborate festival of laughter, reminding us of Saturn's ass which was the symbol of foolishness in similar festivals, he shows no outward change. But when he steals Pamphile's ointment, he has taken the final, the irrevocable step.

In this scene, Pamphile, the witch, seems to become a figure of the goddess-as-Hecate for, using her magic secrets "to which ghosts are obedient, by which are stars disturbed, gods weakened, the elements made subservient" (G.A., III, 15), she becomes an owl, Hecate's sacred bird and the bird of wisdom. Having watched awestruck, Lucius recovers his wits enough to persuade Fotis to steal the ointment for him. What is his dismay, however, to find that he has become, not an owl, but an ass.

The ass, in Egyptian religion, was a symbol of Set, the god of evil, of ill-luck, of winter weather, the god who had grievously offended the majesty of the goddess Isis by treacherously murdering Osiris, by attempting to rape the goddess, and by attempting to steal the kingdom of her son, Horus.[8] Lucius has also greatly offended:

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[8] Ibid., p. 46. See also Graves, The Golden Ass, pp. xiii-xv.

by losing his manly independence, yielding completely to lust, he has offended against the chastity of the goddess as virgin; by using the sacred rose in his sordid affair, he has offended against her as queen of love; by attempting to steal wisdom, he has offended against the goddess as Hecate. He has followed the pattern of behaviour shown by the ass-god, Set. When Apuleius turned Lucius into an ass, he was expressing several ideas in one figure. Lucius has made himself into an animal by yielding to an unthinking lust to the point of forgetting his human dignity and responsibilities. By his treacherous and foolhardy attempt to steal wisdom, he has made himself into a particular animal, the hateful symbol of the hateful god.

The transformation into an ass, however, is but the beginning of Lucius's saga. He must be so chastened by his experience that he can become again a man. This reverse metamorphosis can be achieved only by eating roses, i.e., by partaking of divine grace. In various ways, including once his own fear, Lucius is prevented from getting roses until the rose season has passed, so that he must spend a whole year in his asinine body waiting for the return of spring.[9] Throughout this period

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[9]Robert Graves has pointed out that these twelve months are analogous to the twelve-month period of probation undergone by the would-be initiate and symbolised by the twelve stoles worn at initiation. The Golden Ass, p. xv.

however, though she withholds the roses of grace, Isis keeps a protective eye on Lucius.

We find the first evidence of her presence when Lucius overhears the story of Cupid and Psyche in the robbers' cave. Apuleius sets the stage carefully here so that the significance will be felt, if not immediately understood. The dark cave in the mountain, the firelight, the hag and the still-virgin bride bring inevitably to mind the oldest worship, that of the earth-mother, who dwelt in a sacred cave lit by a sacred fire, and whose double nature was both mother and daughter. In the fairy tale itself we can see, with Graves, a symbolic tale of the achievement of divinity through Eros in the Platonic sense. It is possible also to read the tale as a pretty fable of the vicissitudes of marriage, or, indeed, simply as a fairy-tale with the usual happy ending. It is, of course, all these things at once, but at the deepest level it is the story of a soul struggling for and achieving, through the rites of initiation, eternal and blissful union with its deity.

In the form that Apuleius himself first heard this story, the fairy bridegroom probably was a magic shape-changer, a serpent who became by night a man. This seems to have been the situation in the Hindu folk tales from

which this version is presumed to derive.[10] Apuleius, however suppressed this metamorphosis, retaining only the hint of it in the Delphic oracle's pronouncement, a hint which serves to remind us of Eros's majesty and might in Orphic theology:

> Montis in excelsi scopulo, rex, siste puellam
> Ornatam mundo funerei thalami:
> Nec speres generum mortali stirpe creatum,
> Sed saevum atque ferum viperumque malum,
> Quod pinnis volitans super aethera cuncta fatigat
> Flammaque et ferro singula debilitat
> Quod tremit ipse Iovis, quo numina terrificantur,
> Fluminaque horrescunt et Stygiae tenebrae.
>
> On the rocky peak of the highest mountain, King,
> place the girl
> Adorned with ornaments fit for a deadly marriage bed;
> Nor hope to have a bridegroom of mortal lineage;
> Instead, a savage, wild, and viperous evil
> Who, wings whirling through the aether,
> With flame and sword wears out all things,
> Whom Jove himself fears greatly, by whom the gods
> are terrified,
> Whom even rivers and the Stygian shadows abhor.
> (G.A., IV, 33)

To have retained the bridegroom's traditional shape-changing would have been to make less impressive the double metamorphosis that was the core of Apuleius's "dark conceit." He was too good an artist to commit that error.

We have seen that Lucius was probably a devotee of Isis when the story began, though probably not yet an initiate. In "Cupid and Psyche," Psyche achieves a similar status when she becomes Cupid's bride but may

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[10] R. M. Dawkins (ed. and trans.), Modern Greek Folk-tales, Chapter 12; W. A. Clouston (ed.), Popular Tales and Fictions: Their Migrations and Transformations, Vol. I, pp. 205ff.

not see him. Like Lucius, Psyche is solemnly warned not to attempt to see more than is permitted. Like Lucius, she succumbs to curiosity and wanders in misery. Finally, she yields herself unreservedly to the goddess. Then, with Cupid's secret aid, she performs four seemingly impossible tasks. These tasks are suggestive of initiation rites invoking the goddess as ruler of earth, sun, water, and death. When they have been successfully completed, Cupid and Psyche are married on Olympus and dwell forever there with their daughter, Voluptas. Isis is saying to Lucius, as Apuleius is saying to his knowing readers, "Bear well your year of trial and punishment, and you too will achieve your desire."

Shortly after the telling of the tale of "Cupid and Psyche," Charite, the kidnapped bride, is rescued by her husband, Tlepolemus, and returns home, riding in triumph on the back of the ass-Lucius. She is happily greeted by "pompam cerneres omnis sexus et omnis aetatis novumque et Hercule memorandum spectamen, virginem asino triumphantem," "a parade of both sexes and all ages to see a new and, by Hercules, memorable sight, a virgin triumphant on an ass" (VII, 13). The chaste virgin is in complete control of the lusts of the flesh symbolized by the ass. We are in the presence of the goddess as chastity.

We may again see Isis's presence when Lucius hears the story of Charite's tragic marriage. Apuleius has foreshadowed this tragedy by calling the young husband Tlepolemus, for that was the name of a Homeric hero whose widow avenged his death by killing Helen.[11] Charite, whose name, derived from Greek χγριδ (grace), means not only "dear" in both senses but also "highly respected," is greatly desired by Tlepolemus's brother-in-arms, Tryasyllus. The latter, whose name means "bold one" but also "foolhardy" and "presumptuous" pretends, however, to be Tlepolemus's true friend. One day, he and Tlepolemus go hunting together, although Charite has begged Tlepolemus to hunt no animal armed with tusks or horns, just as Venus had warned Adonis not to hunt any animal which might stand and fight. They encounter a wild boar, the animal that killed Adonis. Thrasyllus treacherously hamstrings Tlepolemus's horse, so that he falls into the path of the boar and is killed. Thus, we have Charite-Tlepolemus = Venus-Adonis = Isis-Osiris. Thrasyllus, the "brother-in-arms," becomes a figure for the treacherous Set. When, after learning the truth of Tlepolemus's death, Charite revenges him by blinding Thrasyllus, Isis is revenging on Set the murder of Osiris.

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[11]Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, 114, o.

In each of these two incidents, one of Lucius's faults has been reproved. When Charite rides the ass home, lust has been conquered; in the punishment of Thrasyllus, we have the punishment of foolhardiness and presumption.

Throughout his year of trials, Lucius is miraculously rescued from one misfortune after another, and throughout the year he seems to become increasingly human. When, in Book X, he has become the "trained" pet and showpiece, he is human in all but form, but this very humanity makes his animal form more bitter to endure. It is then that he prays to his goddess as Jonah prayed, "out of the depths." Like Jonah, he is heard. He sees a vision of Isis, garbed in mystic splendour, and she tells him how to approach her priest in next day's festival procession and acquire the roses.

Once the roses are eaten, the ass becomes a man. Divine grace has enabled Lucius to throw off his brute self and become truly human. It is worth noting, however, that he has not become again the man he was when the story began. The jaunty, curious, pleasure-loving young man has become a serious, patient, chaste and abstemious one, who rejoices daily in the knowledge that he has found favor with his divinity. Thus we have another example of the paradox of the fortunate fall. Humanity, impatient to become godlike, falls into bestiality, then through

divine grace, rises to new heights. The myth is as old as religion, as new as individual experience. Apuleius used his tale of metamorphosis to express his own experience of the myth, because the animal figure was at once the completest expression of the sacred truth and the means of hiding it from the uninitiate:

> To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables; so that they may indeed see and not perceive, and may indeed hear and not understand; lest they should turn again and be forgiven (Mark 4:11).

The outsider could read The Golden Ass as an entertaining fantasy. The initiate, however, would understand the metamorphosis into an ass as the punishment for sin which consists in the complete experience of the sin, and he would see the year of trial as a period of purification, after which the sinner might, through divine grace, become a true man: wise, pure, and virtuous, assured of blessed immortality.

The plot of The Golden Ass was not new, in general outline. Robert Graves mentions two earlier works, The Ass, by Lucius of Patra, and Lucius, or the Ass, by Lucian of Samosata. S. Gaselee, in his introduction to the Loeb Library edition, questions Lucian's authorship, but not Apuleius's debt. Both editors agree that the earlier works are merely dirty stories, lacking in all charm and grace. Apuleius greatly improved his material, changing some tales to make them less offensive and adding several

new ones, including the stories of Aristomenes and Thelyphron and the folk tale of "Cupid and Psyche." Several incidents among the adventures Lucius claims as his own are new also: the festival of laughter, the "hoodooing" of the baker, and most importantly, Lucius's vision of Isis and subsequent conversion. Most of the stories appear to be drawn from "the various collections of facetiae which were common in the later Greek and Roman literature," as Gaselee tells us, and were "almost universally of more than doubtful morality."[12]

In addition to his debt to the ass-stories and to the collections of bawdy tales, Apuleius seems to show a considerable debt to Ovid. We know that Ovid was popular with his successors and was chosen as a model of style by post-Augustan poets.[13] We also know that Apuleius took pride in having an excellent education:

> Sapientis viri super mensam celebre dictum est: 'prima, inquit, creterra ad sitim pertinet, secunda ad hilaritatem, tertia ad voluptatem, quarta ad insaniam.' Verum enimvero Musarum creterra versa vice quanto crebrior quantoque meracior, tanto proprior ad animi sanitatem. prima creterra litteratoris rudimento excitat, secunda grammatici doctrina instravit, tertia rhetoris eloquentia armat. hactenus a plerisque potatur. ego et alias creterras Athenis bibi: poeticae comptam, geometriae limpidam, musicae dulcem, dialecticae austerulam, iam vero

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[12]R. Graves, The Golden Ass, pp. xvii-xviii; Apuleius, G.A., pp. vii-viii.

[13]Wilkinson, pp. 366-368.

> universae philosophiae inexplebilem scilicet [et] nectaream.14

> There is a famed saying of a wise man about the pleasures of the table: 'The first wine-bowl quenches thirst, the second begets jollity, the third stirs up desire, the fourth sends mad. But the bowls of the Muses have an opposite effect. The more you drink and the stronger the draught, the better is it for the good of your soul. The first bowl, given you by the elementary teacher, rescues you from ignorance; the second, proffered by the teacher of literature, sets you up with learning; the third, brought by the rhetorician, arms you with eloquence.
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> These three draughts are enough for most men. But I have drunk other cups at Athens: the imaginative draught of poetry, the clear one of geometry, the sweet one of music, the austere one of dialectic, and the nectar of universal philosophy, of which one can never have enough.15

It is most probable, then, that Apuleius would have been acquainted with Ovid's Metamorphoses.

In The Golden Ass there are at least fifteen references to myths treated by Ovid, and, while it is possible that Apuleius was familiar with them from other, individual, sources, it seems much more likely that he knew them from Ovid, where they were all available. In addition to the references to myth, there are several passages that, stylistically, are reminscent of Ovid. The descriptions of the magical ointments, preparations,

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[14]Apuleius, Florida, XX from Apulei Platonici Madaurensis, Opera Quae Supersunt, Vol. II, Fasc. 2 (Recenscit Rudolf Helm), Berlin, 1959, p. 40.

[15]Jack Lindsay's translation in his Introduction to his edition of The Golden Ass, Bloomington, Indiana, 1962, p. 6.

and incantations of the witch, Pamphile, with her "miranda secreta, quibus obaudiunt manes, turbantur sidera, coguntur numina, serviunt elementa," "woundrous secrets, to which the souls of the dead are obedient, by which the stars are troubled, divine powers weakened, and the elements made subservient" (G.A., III, 15, 16), appears to owe much to Ovid's Circe:

> ignotosque deos ignoto carmine adorat quo solet et niveae vultum confundere Lunae et patrio capiti bilbulas subtexere nubes. tum quoque cantato densetur carmine caelum et nebulas exhalat humus. . . .
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> And with unknown songs she worshipped unknown gods. By which she used both to overspread the white-faced moon and to cover with moisture-laden clouds her father's head. Indeed, when the song was sung, was the sky darkened and the clouds gave forth moisture. . . . (XIV, 366-370).

Again, when Apuleius is about to describe Tlepolemus's death, he seems to call on our memory of Ovid's version of Adonis's death by causing Charite to beg Tlepolemus to hunt nothing fiercer than wild goats, as Venus had begged Adonis to avoid all savage beasts:

> Hos tu, care mihi, cumque his genus omne ferarum quod non terga fugae, sed pugnae pectora praebet, effuge, ne virtus tua sit damnosa duobus!
>
> Flee from these [lions], my dear one and from every kind of wild animal which, instead of turning its back in flight, presents its breast to fight, lest your courage be the ruin of us both (Met., X. 705-707).

Tlepolemus was to hunt, with beaters, ". . . feras, si quid tamen in capreis feritatis est; nec enim Charite maritum suum quaerere pateibatur bestias armatas dente

vel cornu," "savage animals, if indeed there is savagery in goats, for Charite had begged her husband to avoid beasts armed with teeth or tusk," (G.A., VIII, 4).

Again, when Jupiter addresses Cupid, he accuses him, among other transgressions, of having caused Jupiter to transform his majesty "into serpents, fires, wild animals, birds and bulls,"

> in serptentes, in ignes, in feras, in aves et gregalia pecua serenos vultus meos sordide reformando . . . . (G.A., VI, 22).

One is inevitably reminded of the impudent stories Arachne wove into her web in Book VI of the Metamorphoses:

> Maeonis elusam designat imagine tauri
> Europam; . . .
> fecit et Asterien aquila luctante teneri
> fecit olorinis Ledam recubare sub alis;
> . . .
> aureus ut Danaen, Asopida luserit ignis
> Mnemosynen pastor, varius Deoida serpens.
>
> She shows Europa, cheated by the likeness of a bull
> and she made Asterie, held by the struggling eagle
> She made Leda supine beneath the swan's wings,
> How he tricked Danaë as a golden shower, Asopida as a fire,
> Mnemosyne as a shepherd, Deo's daughter as a many-colored serpent (VI, 103-114)

Other examples might be adduced, but these are sufficient to suggest that Ovid's Metamorphoses influenced Apuleius's treatment of his material in The Golden Ass in several ways. It is indeed possible that it was from reading Ovid that Apuleius conceived the notion of using a tale of metamorphosis to convey the double or multiple meanings of a psychological experience.

CHAPTER V

SOME EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF METAMORPHOSIS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

In spite of the widespread interest in finding religious and philosophical interpretations for Ovid's Metamorphoses throughout the high Middle Ages, there would seem to have been surprisingly few attempts to use metamorphosis as a device of belles lettres. The French and English romances are, indeed, replete with shape-changers --Merlin, for instance, can change himself and others at will--but most of these transformations are mere fairy-tale machinery, ghostly survivors of a forgotten mythology.[1] One of the major characters in Guillaume de Palerne[2] is a young prince, changed into a wolf and restored, at the story's end, to his former state; but there is no indication that there was anything wolflike in his personality to dictate the change. Indeed, from his

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[1]The transformation of Bercilak into the Green Knight in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight occurs as a possible exception to this statement. I feel, however, that this cannot be considered true metamorphosis. The green knight keeps his man's shape, though enlarged.

[2]Charles W. Dunn, The Foundling and the Werewolf: A Literary-Historical Study of "Guillaume de Palerne," Toronto, 1960.

actions throughout the tale, he might better have been a sheep dog. Marie de France also tells the story of a werewolf in Bisclavret,[3] but again the character could have had the form of any wild animal just as conveniently. In Marie's other tale of metamorphosis, the charming Yonec, a version of the Lohengrin theme, the hero is a large bird, only because that is the tradition, and he can apparently resume his human shape at will.

The only examples of apparently conscious use of metamorphosis as metaphor in romance occur in the rather late (thirteenth century) Queste del Saint Graal.[4] There are three of these passages, each concerned, not too surprisingly, with the deceitful shape-changing of the devil. They are borderline cases, for, of course, the devil, as a supernatural being in the landscape of romance, is closely akin to a wicked enchanter or bad fairy and can assume any shape he wills. Nevertheless, the forms he assumes here have significance.

Perceval, having lost two horses and having been bested in battle, gives himself up to grief and rage until he falls into an exhausted sleep. At midnight, the devil appears to him in the form of a lady and offers to give him a horse in return for his promise to do her a

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[3]Marie de France, Lais (Jean Rychner, ed.), Bris, 1966, pp. 61ff and 103ff.

[4]Albert Pauphilet (ed.), La Queste del Saint Graal, Paris, 1949.

service when she demands it. This promise made, she leads from the forest a huge, black stallion. This stallion, which is also the devil, starts to gallop as soon as Perceval is in the saddle and runs so uncontrollably that Perceval is almost plunged into a mighty stream to be drowned. Perceval's fright prompts him to cross himself and pray, whereupon the horse throws him from the saddle and dives into the water in a thunder of smoke and flames.

Perceval awakens next morning alone on a craggy island, far from other land. He helps a lioness to rescue her cub from a serpent, killing the serpent. He dreams of two ladies, one young and fair, the other old and ugly. The young one rides a lion, the old one a serpent. Again, Perceval kills the serpent.

The unknown Cistercian monk who wrote La Queste del Saint Graal, never content to allow his readers to interpret symbolism for themselves, next arranges for a holy hermit to arrive in a boat, fittingly draped in shining white, to explain that the lady of the lion is ecclesia, she of the serpent, synagogia. Therefore, Perceval has twice aided the New Law to triumph over the Old Law.

When the hermit has departed, another boat comes skimming over the waves, but this one is draped in black. From it there steps a beautiful lady. Perceval, whose

intelligence is not his greatest virtue, misses the significance of the black drapery and welcomes the lady. She provides him with food and strong wine, to which he is unaccustomed, and so bewitches him that the chaste Perceval begs for her love, promising to become her man. At the last moment, as he is entering her silken bed, he glimpses his sword and the cross on its hilt and comes to his senses, crossing himself and calling on God. At once, there is a mighty storm, and the boat departs amid clouds and flames, with the lady calling back that he has betrayed her.

Twice in these episodes the devil appears as a woman, once as a black stallion. For the author, whose main concern throughout his work is the praise of celibacy as the duty of true knights of Christ, woman, offering all the pleasures of the flesh, woman deceitfully urging a man on to any passion whatever, would obviously be a form of the devil. The horse, probably a descendent of Plato's horses of passion in the Phaedrus, is passion itself, whether of hate, grief, or sexual love. Dark, strong, and uncontrollable, it makes a man forget that way of reason so necessary to salvation. Perceval, in giving up his heart to rage and grief, has made it vulnerable to the temptations of the devil. In yielding to one passion, he has prepared himself to yield to all. He is saved by the teachings of the church (the lion) and by his faith

in God. The machinery creaks a bit in these episodes, as it does throughout the Queste, but the author is at least attempting to use a sophisticated metaphoric device.

The following century affords two clear examples of the artistic use of metamorphosis, Dante's Inferno (c.1315) and Book I of Gower's Vox Clamantis (c. 1385). Although Gower is later in time, he is so much less expert that we might do well to look first at his work. The whole of the first book of the Vox Clamantis is concerned with the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 and is composed of three dream visions, the first of which is a dream of animals. It is apparent throughout this book that Gower was thoroughly familiar with his Ovid, and it is probable that he believed himself to be emulating the Metamorphoses in his account of this dream of men transformed into animals. Unlike Ovid, however, but like the author of the Queste, he is unable to leave his readers to make what they will of his metamorphoses. Instead he prefaces the tale with a brief "argument," explaining his intentions:

> In huius opusculi principio intendit compositor describere qualiter seruiles rustici impetuose contra ingenuos et nobilis regni insurrexerunt. Et quia res huismodo velut monstrum detestabilis fuit et horribilis, fingit se per sompnium vidisse diversas vulgi turmas in diversas species bestiarum domesticarum transmutatas: dicit tamen quod ille bestie domestice, a sua deuiantes nature, crudelitates ferarum sibi presumpserunt. De causis vero, ex quibus inter homines talia contingunt enormia, tractat vlterius secundum distincciones libelli

> istius, qui in septem dividitur partes, prout inferius locis suis euidencius apparebit.5
>
> In the beginning of this work, the author intends to describe how the lowly peasants violently revolted against the freemen and nobles of the realm. And since an event of this kind was as loathsome and horrible as a monster, he reports that in a dream he saw different throngs of the rabble transformed into different kinds of domestic animals. He says, moreover, that those domestic animals deviated from their true nature and took on the barbarousness of wild beasts.6

Thus, from the first Gower deprives the reader of one of the joys of allegory, the pleasure of discovery.

In the dream vision of the animals there are seven episodes, the first four of which tell us a good deal about Gower himself, for the peasants become asses, oxen, swine, and dogs. The last three are less obvious: household servants become cats, while some unnamed group become foxes; another group turns into birds, wild and domestic; a third becomes flies and other noxious insects. Every group develops a fierce nature, seeking to bite, claw, and kill. Each develops physical traits indicative of its unnatural savagery: sharp unicorn horns for the asses; bears' paws and lions' tails for the oxen; eagles' beaks for the cocks. All the animals abandon their accustomed food, seeking such delicate foods and wines

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[5]John Gower, Vox Clamantis, in The Works of John Gower (G. C. Macauley, ed.), Oxford, 1902. Vol. IV, p. 3.

[6]Eric W. Stockton's translation from his edition of The Major Latin Works of John Gower, Seattle, 1962, p. 49.

as were enjoyed by the nobility, or human flesh. All want soft beds in castles.

The metaphor is clear enough, even without Gower's explanation: the peasants have abandoned humanity in seeking to overturn the established order. They are behaving "like animals," but not like the domestic animals which they rather resembled in more peaceful times. They have become fierce monsters. The metaphor fails to convince, however, for several reasons. First, after the ox, ass, swine, and dogs, the animal forms bear little, if any relationship to the previous characteristics of the peasants. Second, when transformed, they all act the same, seeking human food, soft beds, and slaughter. Third, in the seventh vision Gower apparently tires of the metaphor and alludes to his characters as men; yet he never reverses the metamorphosis, so that in the end it is unclear whether we are dealing with men or beasts. One suspects that, in Gower's view, this was unimportant, there being only a thin line of demarcation between a peasant and a brute, but it is artistically unsatisfactory.

When we turn from Gower to Dante, we turn from fumbling awkwardness to a work of consummate artistry. Dante's handling of his metamorphoses in the Inferno is as sure and as effective as his handling of all his other figures throughout the Divina Commedia. Like

Gower, he has read his Ovid, to whom he refers explicitly in Canto XXV, lines 97-102,[7] and in Canto IV, line 90, as the third among the group of four great poets. Unlike Gower, he has absorbed Ovid's technique. He makes no effort to explain his figures, but presents them, leaving to the reader the challenge of interpretation.

The first of these figures to be considered is the last in Dante's order of presentation, the transformed Lucifer frozen in the very bottom of Hell. Lucifer, the most beautiful of the seraphim, godlike of countenance, snowy of wing, has rebelled against God Himself. Because he hates God to the extent of his potentiality for love, he finds himself permanently placed at the spot in the universe furthest removed from the warmth of God's love, encased to the waist in the ice which results from that lack of love. Frustration, grief, and rage have filled his heart, so that he weeps continuously even as he gnaws and claws Brutus, Cassius, and Judas Iscariot. His alienation from God's love, his rage and grief have changed his outward form. His seraphic countenance has become three hideous faces, a travesty of the trinity. One face is red, one black, one yellowish white, showing respectively his hatred, his ignorance, and his impotence.[8]

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[7]Dante, Inferno (John D. Sinclair, tr. and ed.), Galaxy Edition, New York, 1961, p. 310.

[8]Sinclair, p. 430.

His six seraphic wings are six monstrously large sails, featherless and hideous like the wings of a bat. Though he waves them continually, they are powerless to move him from his icy place. His whole body is covered with coarse hair, to which Vergil clings as he climbs. Thus has Lucifer, Son of the Morning, been transformed by his own rebellious hatred into a monster. Because he wished to be God, he has become, with his triple face, a parody of God; because he has turned from love to hate, he has turned from beauty to ugliness; because he has rejected "the love that moves the sun and the other stars," not all his wing beating can bring him movement.

Hideous the monster may be, and evil, but he is essentially impotent. There is no question of his moving from his icy seat to roam the world or even to rule Hell. Because the devil is impotent, it is not he who causes the sufferings of the damned human souls who share Hell with him. According to Dante, they cause their own suffering. Whatever character trait has separated the soul from God is not only the cause but the form of the soul's punishment. Therefore, it is logical that those who have shown disrespect for their own bodies, who have reft their souls violently from their bodies, should be permanently shorn of their human shapes.

These souls, of course, are the suicides. They have the shapes of dark, twisted, fruitless trees. They

can speak only when wounded, but they are always wounded, for the harpies perch on their branches and gnaw at their leaves. Thus, the suicide who in life, was gnawed by fear, remorse, or despair until he wounded himself to the death, is, in death, gnawed by the hideous embodiments of fear, remorse, and despair, forever wounded. But the body which suffers is not a human body, for in insulting their bodies, these men have lost their right to them.[9]

Dante's third metamorphosis, that of the thieves, is equally striking. It is really double: first a six-footed "serpent" attaches itself to a man-form, and the two mingle so as to become one monstrous shape; a second serpent bites a man in the navel. Then:

> Lo trafitto 'l miro, ma nulla disse;
> anzi, co' pie fermati, sbadigliava
> pur come sonno o febbre l'assalisse.
> elli 'l serpente, e quei lui riguardava;
> l'un per la piaga, e l'altro per la bocca
> fummavan forte, e'l fummo si scontrave.
>
> The struck one looked at him in wonder, but said nothing, only stood still and yawned like one attacked by sleepiness or fever. He was looking at the serpent and the serpent at him; one from his wound, the other from his mouth was smoking heavily, and the smokes met (XXV, 88-93).

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[9]An interesting bit of evidence of Dante's belief in a divinely fixed order is provided by the manner of the suicide-trees' planting. Because they arrive in Hell helter-skelter, not waiting for their assigned deaths, Minos has them thrown, helter-skelter, into the seventh level, to sprout where they lie.

In this eerie atmosphere, the metamorphosis takes place. Gradually, in silence, eyes fixed on each other, the two exchange forms. The man's legs become a tail, the serpent's tail splits into legs. Arms become forepaws; forepaws arms. At last, he who was a man runs off on all fours; he who was a serpent rises and spits after him, rejoicing to have "Buoso run on all fours, as I have done." And one understands that the forms will be reversed again at the first opportunity.

Sinclair remarks that the serpent with its "traditional subtlety, furtiveness, malice, and deadliness," is a fitting image for thievery.[10] It is also true that, in the middle ages, a man's property was looked upon as part of his own personality, so that he who stole property stole a part of the owner. It is fitting that these man-serpents will spend eternity stealing each other's bodies, only to have them stolen back again.

Between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries, then, we have three interesting examples of the use of metamorphosis as a metaphor, expressing complex ideas in a single figure. The first of these, the devil's changes of form in La Queste del Saint Graal, while closer to fairy tale than to myth, yet expresses the author's fear and hatred of sexuality and, indeed, of any passion. The

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[10]Sinclair, p. 316.

second, Gower's peasants into monsters in the Vox Clamantis, though inept, is an attempt to express horror at the overthrow of a divinely ordained order, a horror so great that ordinary language could not express it. Last, and by far the most interesting, is Dante's use of metamorphosis to express three ideas: the sacredness of the human body, along with the sinfulness of despair; the sacredness of property, along with the malice of covetousness; and the ultimate horror of hate as the separation from God. Although Dante drew the idea of the bleeding tree from Book III of the Aneid and that of the man turned into a serpent from the transformation of Cadmus in Book IV of the Metamorphoses, he has adapted them to his own purpose, so that the metaphors are entirely his own. In each metamorphosis, the body has changed to conform to the shape of the sinning soul.

Though it is unlikely that we shall ever know whether the author of the Queste had read Ovid, it is of interest that both Gower and Dante had done so and that each turned to his Metamorphoses when seeking to express the inexpressible. Whether or not they conceived of Ovid's use of metamorphosis as an allegorical one--and it is likely they did so conceive it--they at least saw its possibilities for such use. In this use of metamorphosis they were soon to be followed by Ariosto and two of the greatest poets of the English language, Spenser and Milton.

CHAPTER VI

ARIOSTO'S USE OF METAMORPHOSIS

Benedotto Croce suggests that Ariosto's Orlando Furioso (1516) is neither a praise of chivalry nor a criticism of it, neither an intricately worked allegory nor a simple entertainment: it is, he feels, Ariosto's attempt at mimesis, at reflecting the whole of life in all its variety. Thus, we can find therein true love and treachery, high chastity and bawdiness, courage and cowardice, solemnity and hilarity--all bound together in harmony by Ariosto's gently ironic style.[1] It is not surprising then, that we should find also three cantos of the Orlando (VI-VIII) devoted almost exclusively to that form of reality which is the psychomachia, the inward struggle between virtue and vice, between reason and concupiscence, which occupies so large a place in the minds of the middle ages and the Renaissance, indeed, in the minds of civilized men.

Writers who attempt to portray the psychomachia seem to fall naturally into figurative language, using

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[1]Benedetto Croce, Ariosto, Shakespeare E. Corneille, Terza edizione Riveduta, Bari, 1944, pp. 4-41.

personation, type, and symbol to express psychological events and truths. Ariosto is no exception, nor is it surprising to find that metamorphosis is one of the modes he found useful.

Early in Canto VI (Stanza xvii)[2] we find Ruggiero clinging dangerously, but obstinately, to his flying hippogriff. Ruggiero, as the ancestor of Ippolito da Este, to whom the Orlando is dedicated, is as nearly the hero of the work as any one character can be so termed. As such, he must be brought to perfection as a chevalier, but his character is at first much too fiery for perfect virtue.

Previous to the episode with which we are concerned, his valiant lady-love, Bradamante, has rescued him from a magician's castle, where he has been held in a sort of "protective custody" to keep him out of the dangers of battle. Released, the impetuous Ruggiero, siezes the Magician's steed, the hippogriff (a monster with the body of a horse at the rear, a lion at the front, the wings, claws, and beak of a giant eagle), and leaps into the saddle. He is unable to control the fiery animal, which flies into the air and whirls Ruggiero swiftly out of Bradamante's sight.

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[2]The edition used is Ludovico Ariosto, Orlando Furioso (a cura di Lanfranco Caretti), Milano-Napoli, 1954.

When the hippogriff at last alights, the hot and breathless Ruggiero finds himself in a typical locus amoenus. He is on an island, far past the gates of Hercules, where there are

> culte pianure e delicate colli
> chiare acque, ombrose ripe e prati molli
>
> level fields and gentle hills
> clear water, shady banks, and soft meadows (VI, xx).

Here are palms, myrtles, cedars, and orange trees in fruit and flower. Nightingales sing in the shade; red roses bloom, and white lilies; the breeze is cool; and deer graze without fear. Ariosto is alerting us to our entrance to that "other world" where the events of the soul take place.

Once off the hippogriff, Ruggiero ties the beast to a branch of a myrtle tree and goes to wash his burning face in a clear stream nearby. What is his amazement to hear the tree begin to hiss like a green log burning, then break into human speech. Quickly recovering himself, Ruggiero enters courteously into conversation with the myrtle tree and learns its sad secret. The tree is all that remains of Astolfo, heir to the King of England and a paladin of France.

Astolfo, young, handsome, and careless, had been walking with his comrades by the sea when he came upon the beautiful nymph, Alcina, amusing herself by calling to her a variety of fish. Pleased with Astolfo's appearance,

Alcina invited him to play at fishing with her. Then, promising to show him mermaids, she led him to a small island just offshore. The island, however, was in reality a balena, commonly translated as whale, but in this instance, probably a dolphin.[3] The dolphin swam furiously away with Alcina and Astolfo on its back and landed them next day on Alcina's island.

There, Astolfo became Alcina's lover, ruler of her kingdom. He was surrounded by every luxury, his every wish fulfilled. It seemed to him that he was truly in Paradise; like Lucius when he was about to become an ass, he forgot everything but his lust. As he says himself,

> Io mi godea le delicate membra:
> pareami aver qui tutto il ben raccolto
> che fra i mortali in più parti si smembra,
> a chi più et a chi meno e a nessun molto;
> né di Francia né d'altro mi rimembra:
> stavomi sempre a contemplar quel volto:
> ogni pensiero, ogni mio bel disegno
> in lei finia, nè passava oltre il segno.
>
> I took endless delight in her delicate body:
> I seemed to have there all the good things
> Which are usually divided among mortals,
> To this one more, to that one less, to none very much;
> I remembered neither France nor anything else:
> I lived always in the present moment
> My every thought, every desire
> Finished in her, not passing beyond her nod.
> (VI, xlvii)

Soon, however, Astolfo's happiness ended abruptly. Alcina took a new lover, and, in order to prevent

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[3]See note to stanza xl, Canto VI, in Lanfranco Caretti, "Nota critica al Testo dell' 'Orlando Furioso'" in Ariosto, Opere Minore (a cura di Cesare Segre), Milano-Napoli, 1954, p. 872.

Astolfo from telling of her lascivious ways, turned him into a myrtle tree.

Astolfo tells Ruggiero that the beautiful Alcina is sister to the Fata Morgana (Morgan le Fay of Arthurian legend), and that the two are wicked, given to every sort of vice. The two have usurped the rule of the island from their elder sister, Logistilla, its lawful ruler. Astolfo is far from the first to be seduced, then abandoned. The island is full of discarded lovers changed into animals, rocks, pools, or trees so that they cannot report Alcina's perfidy. Astolfo, too, is normally speechless, but he is enabled to speak when injured by the plungings of the hippogriff.[4]

Astolfo explains to Ruggiero that Alcina and her wicked sister, La Fata Morgana, rule most of the island, only a small portion behind a rugged mountain being still in the control of the virtuous Logistilla. He warns Ruggiero that it is almost impossible to elude Alcina's wiles and that the way to the safety of Logistilla's kingdom is rugged and beset by dangers.

Ruggiero thanks him courteously, and, swearing by his love for Bradamante to help Astolfo if possible, sets out toward Logistilla's kingdom. When he is in sight of Alcina's shining palace, the road divides, and

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[4]Cf. Virgil, Aeneid, III, 22ff. and Dante, Inferno, XIII, 22ff.

he dutifully leaves the broad, flat road to the castle to take the righthand fork that leads up the mountain. His way is contested, however, by fierce monsters, some with the bodies of men and the faces of cats and monkeys, some with goats' feet, some centaurs; some are young, some old, some naked, others wrapped in skins. This motley crew forces Ruggiero, in spite of his vigorous defense, ever closer to Alcina's castle. He thinks of flying over them on the hippogriff, but is afraid to mount that wild animal after his previous experience. At last, he is brought to the gate of the castle. Two beautiful ladies, riding snow white unicorns, escort him into the castle, where he is welcomed and served by "wanton maidens" dressed in green and crowned with young leaves.

Inside the castle walls is a garden of love where young people amuse themselves with music, poetry, and dalliance. Beltà and Leggiadria (the two lovely young ladies) pray Ruggiero's aid against a giantess who prevents their using part of their land. Her name is Erifilla, and she is long-toothed, sharp-nailed, the mother of many sons as wicked as herself, the motly crew Ruggiero had previously encountered. Ruggiero does, indeed, conquer the giantess, whose steed is a wolf, although he does not kill her.

Thereafter, Ruggiero returns to the castle, becomes violently enamoured of the beautiful Alcina, and succumbs to the charm of life in her castle. He and the other dwellers there live only for luxury and delight--feasting, bathing, jousting, and dancing.

Meanwhile, the chaste and shining maiden, Bradamante, has set out to search for her love. Her search is interrupted, however, by Melissa, a good enchantress, who tells Bradamante where Ruggiero is, but convinces her that she, Melissa, is the better equipped to retrieve Ruggiero. Accordingly, Melissa, taking Bradamante's magic ring, journeys to Alcina's island where she finds Ruggiero alone. He is dressed in soft, rich clothing, worked in gold. He wears a splendid necklace. On his once virile arms are shining bracelets. From his ears hang loops of gold. He has become a soft, effeminate person, a recreant knight.

> Non era in lui di sano altro che'l nome;
> corrotto tutto il resto, e più che mezzo
> Così Ruggier fu ritrovato, tanto
> da l'esser suo mutato per incanto.
>
> Nothing of him remained healthy except his name;
> All the rest was corrupt, more than half.
> Thus was Ruggiero found
> So greatly changed from himself by enchantment.
> (VII, lv)

The horrified Melissa reproaches Ruggiero and reminds him of his faithful Bradamante. Then, with the aid of the ring, she shows him the true Alcina, not beautiful but haglike, and the true castle, rotten and

wasted. Ruggiero, with Melissa's aid, escapes from Alcina's castle on one of Alcina's horses, Melissa having undertaken to keep and train the hippogriff. Conquering this time the crew of guardians, he betakes himself safely to Logistilla's kingdom.

When Alcina and her followers sally forth to capture and return Ruggiero to the castle, they leave the castle undefended, and Melissa takes advantage of their absence to return Alcina's former lovers to their human shapes and send them back to their homes with their promises to stay there. Among these is Astolfo whom Ruggiero had particularly asked her to help, returning the magic ring that she might better succeed. She gives Astolfo his arms, including his golden lance, and he returns to France, where he gains much honor.

The most useful key to the underlying meaning of this tale may be the cue-names which I think Ariosto used throughout. In the order of their appearance the characters are: (1) Ruggiero, whose name is akin both to French rouge (red) and Italian ruggire (to roar), so that we have all the violent connotations of red hair, fire, ruddy (sanguine) complexion, etc., with suggestions of a sun-hero; (2) Astolfo, whose name seems to be related to the Latin Stola, a feminine garment, figuratively said to be worn by men who were voluptuaries; (3) Alcina, whose name seems to be related to Latin

cinaedus (wanton) and cinedo (Italian for a male prostitute); (4) Erifilla, whose name is but an Italianized version of Eriphyla, who, Greek legend tells us, betrayed her husband, Polynices, for a magic golden necklace; (5) Logistilla, whose name derives from logos both in the sense of reason and in that of word of God; (6) Bradamante, whose name would seem to combine amante (lover or loving) with brado (wild in the sense of natural or unspoiled); and (7) Melissa, whose name is particularly interesting.

Milissa (Queen Bee) as a name for a revered female personage would seem to derive from remotest antiquity. From earliest times the bee, with its cleanly and industrious habits and its seemingly miraculous production of honey, was connected in religious ritual with numerous goddesses and with their priestesses. Demeter and Persephone, for instance, sometimes were represented as bees, and one title of the Delphic priestess was Δελφις Μελισσα, Queen Bee of Delphi.[5] There was, in addition, the bee-nymph, Melissa, who, along with the goat-nymph, Amalthea, nursed the infant Zeus in his Cretan cave, feeding him goat's milk and honey.[6]

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[5]Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der Classichen Alterum-Wissenschaft, Stuttgart, 1931, pp. 524-530.

[6]Ibid. See also J. E. Harrison, Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion, Cambridge, 1903, pp. 442-443; and Graves, The Greek Myths, 7.3.

If, as seems probable, these identifications were known to Ariosto, then the identification with the Delphic oracle might have for him the connotation of the ability to foretell the future, and this Melissa does for Bradamante in Canto III. Delphi's connection with Apollo might suggest that light of truth which dispels error,[7] as Melissa shows Ruggiero the truth about Alcina and her castle.

The idea of Melissa as nurse to the infant Zeus might quite easily bring to mind the spiritual nourishment of a young hero, that is, instruction in the ways of righteousness, and this, also, Melissa provides when she lectures Ruggiero in Alcina's garden and sends him off to her doublet, Logistilla. She also undertakes to school the hippogriff which is, as I shall show later, Ruggiero's passionate nature.

The form of Zeus's nourishment, milk and honey, might easily bring also to Ariosto's mind the many Old Testament references to the promised land as a land "flowing with milk and honey" glosed in the Glossa Ordinaria[8] as

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[7]See Fulgentius's interpretation of the Apollo-Python story, Appendix II, p. 190.

[8]Glossa Ordinaria, Lib. Levit, Caput XX, vers 24, in J. P. Migne (ed.), Patrologiae: Cursus Completus, Tomus 113, Paris, 1879.

> Deliciis beatitudinis, quibus nihil suavius, nihil dulcius, et sine omne labore et dolore erunt. . . .
>
> With blessed delights, than which nothing is softer, nothing sweeter, and they are without any labor or pain. . . .

Melissa proffers, therefore, the delights of Paradise and perhaps also those ordinances of God described in Psalm XVIII (Vulgate) as "dulciora super mel et favum," "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb." In all these interpretations, Melissa is an appropriate name for one who is the proponent of wisdom and virtue, the conqueror of error, and the enemy of mindless passion. That she is also Divine Grace may be suggested by her ability to rescue Ruggiero when Bradamante, who has become a type of Chastity, cannot do so. Without Divine Grace, Chastity cannot prevail against Lust.

The cue names, however, are just that--cue names. The personages who bear them are rather more complex than their names would indicate. Ruggiero and Astolfo are both courteous and brave, truly preux knights, Paladins of Charlemagne's kingdom. Bradamante, also, is brave, a valiant fighter. She is a chaste maiden and a loyal lover, desiring for Ruggiero fame and honor in contrast to Atlante, the magician, who seeks only to prolong Ruggiero's life.

Alcina also is a complex character, having some of the attributes of Aphrodite, some of Circe, some of

Luxuria, and some of Morgan le Fay. Ariosto tells us that she is Morgan's twin sister, that is, he--or rather, Boiardo, who originated the character--has split the figure of Morgan, leaving with La Fata Morgana the traditional treachery and malice, giving to Alcina the wantonness, along with the practice of keeping her lovers in happy imprisonment.[9] Morgan, the enchantress, could transform men's appearance, and that is but a step from Circe, who transforms men into animals. We are reminded that both Morgan and Circe are debased forms of the Great Goddess in all her bewildering variety--ever virgin, ever wanton, old as the world, young as the spring, ever kind, ever cruel, ever generous, ever greedy. Of this goddess, Aphrodite was, of course, one manifestation, so it is appropriate that Alcina should be found fishing. Aphrodite, the Foamborn, was the goddess of fishes (considered an Aphrodisiac food) and was connected particularly with the dolphin whose lustiness was a byword. But the figure of Aphrodite had also degenerated, by Ariosto's time into that of Luxuria, the wine-bibbing, lavishly-clothed figure portrayed by Prudentius,[10] so that the silken garments worn at Alcina's court are appropriate,

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[9]R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes, New York, 1949, pp. 118-119.

[10]Prudentius, Psychomachia in Prudentius (Loeb Library), Cambridge, Mass., 1962, Vol. I. (11.310-344).

as are the careless ease of the life there and the indulgence in time-wasting pleasure. They suggest Luxuria, that concern for ease which diverts knights from the pursuit of honor and fame.

It is interesting to notice also that Alcina's name carries overtones of unnatural passions and of prostitution, as opposed to the natural love suggested by Bradamante's name. To become Alcina's lover is to prostitute one's manhood or to pervert it, devoting to bodily pleasure the virility which a true knight devotes to honorable combat.

Erifilla also presents an interesting combination of characteristics. She wears rich armor--gold, ornamented with emeralds and sapphires, rubies and jacinth. On her shield is painted a swollen, poisonous toad. She is a giantess of awesome proportions whose teeth are long, whose bite is poisonous, whose nails are as sharp and dangerous as a bear's claws. Instead of a horse, she rides a huge, fierce wolf. When one remembers the wolf's connection in the medieval mind with fraud and violence and its use by Dante in the opening of the Inferno,[11] one is inclined to see in Erifilla a figure for Avarice advancing itself by fraud and violence. If, as I suspect, her vicious sons are the deadly and venial sins, then she

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[11]For a full discussion of this symbol, see H. F. Dunbar, Symbolism in Medieval Thought and its Consummation in the Divine Comedy, New York, 1961.

seems almost certainly to be Avarice, Cupiditas, "Radix enim omnium malorum est cupiditas" (for cupidity is the root of all evils, 1 Timothy, VI, 10). Nor can we forget that lupa is both Latin and Italian for prostitute, the person who uses sexual desire for gain, an idea which would reinforce this interpretation.

The derivation of the name would also seem to bear out this interpretation, but the figure of Erifilla is not quite so simple. The original Eriphyla desired the gold necklace, not for its monetary value, but for its magical ability to preserve her beauty from decay. She may be, therefore, more a figure for vanity or false pride than for cupidity, though there is still an element of treachery or fraud. The reading of Pride is strengthened when we see that Ariosto twice mentions Erifilla's pride: she rides "al fiero incontro," (to the proud encounter, VII, vi), and Ruggiero lifts her proud head, "la tests superba" (VII, vii), when he has defeated her. Even her role as mother of sins might strengthen the reading of Pride, for in Ecclesiasticus X, 14-15, we read:

> Initium superbiae hominis apostatare a Deo;
> quoniam abeo qui fecit illum recessit cor ejus,
> quoniam initium omnis peccati est superbia. . . .
>
> The beginning of man's pride is a falling away
> from God
> for his heart draws away from him who made him,
> for the beginning of every sin is pride. . . .

The toad on her shield, also, is swollen with poison as one is "swollen with pride." Bloomfield, however, lists three other qualities as symbolized by the toad: Envy, Anger, and Avarice.[12] If we equate Anger with Hate, these are among the qualities depicted on the outer wall of the garden of Love in the Roman de la Rose (ll. 129ff) as enemies of love and so are suited to Erifilla as an enemy to Alcina's court. The toad is also a symbol of the forces of death and darkness[13] and so particularly suited to oppose Ruggiero if he is partially a sun-hero.

I would suggest that Erifilla, with her wolf and toad, combines all these ideas, but with the emphasis on Pride and Avarice. She suggests in her single person Dante's lion and wolf who (along with the leopard) block his path to repentance (Inferno, I, 30-60). The lion and the wolf are the sins of middle and old age; therefore, although in the flower of his youth, Ruggiero may have succumbed to the sin of the leopard, represented by Alcina, he is able to defeat Pride and Avarice represented by Erifilla. Yet he does not kill Erifilla. There remains the possibility that he will have to fight her again.

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[12]Morton W. Bloomfield, The Seven Deadly Sins, East Lansing, Michigan, 1952, pp. 245-247.

[13]J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, New York, 1962, pp. 109, 151, 326.

In addition to his cue-named personages, Ariosto has in this episode two personified abstractions, Beltà (Beauty) and Leggiadria (Graciousness). These two charming damsels appear outside the castle gates riding snow white unicorns. Immediately, the villainous crowd disperses, and Ruggiero, blushing, meekly follows the two ladies through the castle's golden gate. Both in dispersing the attackers and in conquering Ruggiero, Beauty and Graciousness have accomplished what force could not. The two lovely ladies are attended within the castle by "lascive donzelle," wanton damsels, dressed in green and crowned with young leaves, signifying, I believe, the natural generative forces of youth and spring which increase the natural powers of Beltà and Leggedria. It is these two personages, also who beseech Ruggiero's aid against Erifilla, for Beauty and Graciousness are the natural enemies of Avarice, Pride, Envy, and Hate as Luxuria is not.

As the various human personages in this episode bear multiple connotations, so do the animals. We have seen those of the toad, wolf, and dolphin, but there remain the unicorns and the hippogriff. The unicorn would seem to have been most commonly a beneficent and highly moral figure in the art of the middle ages; indeed,

sometimes it is a figure for Christ.[14] Its gentleness and chastity are both emphasized. The image is ambiguous, however, for in earliest times, it would appear that the unicorn's fierce strength and sexual prowess (of which the single horn is an obvious symbol) were his major characteristics. Indeed, the powdered horn of his closest relative in the real world, the rhinoceros, was considered an aphrodisiac.[15] The unicorn's well-known weakness for virgins emphasizes the ambiguity of the figure, for the very word virginity, like chastity, is a reminder of its opposite. We are at liberty then to see the snow white unicorns either as chastity conquered by beauty and graciousness or as virility made the servant of feminine charm, or one may conclude, as I do, that Ariosto had both concepts more or less consciously in mind.

The hippogriff, Atlante's magic steed, is, as his name suggests, a hybrid. He is half-horse, half griffin. His front, or griffin, half is lion-headed and lion-bodied with eagle's beaks, claws, and wings. His hind half is a stallion. He combines, therefore, the characteristics of three widely used images for strength, high courage, and virility: the lion, the eagle, and the

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[14] T. H. White, The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts, New York, 1960, pp. 20-21.

[15] R. Graves, The White Goddess, Ch. XIV.

warhorse. Ruggiero, like Perceval in La Queste del Saint Graal, is unable to control his steed; instead, he is swept away to a far off land, so that one is reminded again of Plato's horse of passion which must be controlled by reason. This interpretation is strengthened when, at the close of the episode, Melissa undertakes to school the hippogriff and takes him with her to Logistilla's castle. It is appropriate that the fiery Ruggiero should be swept into trouble by those same masculine virtues and passions which, when controlled by reason, will make him a perfect knight, just as it is appropriate that Astolfo, the voluptuary, should be swept away by lust. Ariosto is reminding us that any passion is dangerous when not controlled by reason and religion.

The fable, then, is double. Two preux knights are swept by uncontrolled passion into the kingdom of Luxuria. The two are saved by the Grace of God, through his word and through reason. The kingdom is on an island, a microcosm of the earth in all its beauty ruled by wickedness and treachery in the persona of La Fata Morgana and by sensuality in the persona of Alcina. Even their rule is contested by Avarice and Pride in the persona of Erifilla. Only a small portion of the island is ruled by Virtue and Reason in the persona of Logistilla, who is the friend of Melissa, the nurse of Virtue. That small portion can be reached only by climbing a rugged mountain

and crossing a swift river, and the way is made more difficult by the assaults of fierce monsters. These monsters bear many of the attributes of beasts, many of Dionysiac revellers. They are the sins to which mankind is prone, the sins that reduce man to beast, and once again we have the identification of the goat-Dionysus with Evil.

If one is successful in eluding the clutches of Alcina, if one can conquer Erifilla, if one can repel the attacks of her monstrous sons, one finds in Logistilla's kingdom Salvamento (VII, lvii) which means both safety and salvation. It is, however, impossible to achieve the journey to salvamento without the aid of Melissa.

The two young heroes are swept by their very youth with its natural passions into the sin of sensual delight. But this sin has natural time limits. Age brings reform if nothing else can. Or, as Ariosto expresses it, Alcina tires of each lover in turn. But Luxuria has deprived the lovers of their true humanity, so that they are said to be turned into animals, rocks, fountains, etc. Thus, Astolfo becomes a myrtle tree. The myrtle tree, however, is not simply plant-likeness or non-humanity. The myrtle is the tree of death, as Vergil knew and as Milton reminds us in the opening lines of Lycidas. It

is also the tree of love, sacred to Aphrodite.[16] As the tree of love and death and as a fragrant evergreen, it is also the tree of immortality, most particularly connected with the dying-reviving year-king. If we think of death as the death of the soul, it is most appropriate that Astolfo, the king's son, having given up reason, the soul's prime attribute, for the sake of lust, should be changed into a tree sacred to death and Aphrodite, to be transformed into a human being again only by the Grace of God. Ariosto, like Apuleius and Dante, has used metamorphosis as a metaphor for spiritual experience.

Ruggiero, although he is apparently as guilty as Astolfo, is not really so. When Mercilla finds him, he is, indeed, a recreant knight, but he is able to feel remorse when she upbraids him (VII, lxv), and, with the aid of her ring of truth, he is able to see the ugliness of Alcina's kingdom. Because his soul is not yet dead, he retains his human form. The metamorphosis here seems to be the outward and visible sign of an inner and spiritual death, from which resurrection can come only by the intervention of God in the person of His emissary, Melissa. It serves as a warning to those who, like Ruggiero are still spiritually alive enough to repent.

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[16]Graves, White Goddess, p. 282.

CHAPTER VII

METAMORPHOSIS IN THE FAERIE QUEENE

The sixteenth century, which had early (1516) seen Ariosto's Orlando Furioso with its knowing use of metamorphosis in the transformation of Astolfo, was to see in its closing decade the publication of another work in which metamorphosis was an important device, Spenser's Faerie Queene (1590). In this "continued allegory, or darke conceit," as Spenser wrote, ". . . the general ende of all the book is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline."[1] To this end Spenser presents in the completed portion of The Faerie Queene portraits of six virtues (Holiness, Temperance, Chastity, Friendship, Justice, and Courtesy), bringing to the task not only his poetic imagination but all his vast store of learning. In the work there are echoes of the Odyssey, Ovid's Metamorphoses, the Roman de la Rose, the Arthurian romances, and of course and primarily, the Orlando Furioso.

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[1] "A Letter of the Authors" prefaced to The Faerie Queene in The Complete Poetical Works of Spenser (R. E. Neil Dodge, ed.), Cambridge, Mass., 1908, p. 136. All textual references to The Faerie Queene are to this edition.

Although we have no real evidence that Spenser knew Dante, there are certain resemblances between the Faerie Queene and the Divina Commedia which indicate a similarity in the mental process of the two poets. The chief of these is the tremendous preoccupation with light and vision which runs through both works. For Dante, from the time he emerges from the "selva oscura" to the moment when his eyes are dazzled by the multifoliate rose which is the glory of God, darkness and night are danger and evil, starlight, sunlight, morning are hopeful and good. For Spenser, also, nightfall and darkness bring sadness or dismay, terror or evil, while he greets dawn with joy. The happy scenes, such as the welcoming of the Redcrosse Knight to Una's castle (I, xii) are drenched in sunlight in which flowers glow and knightly armor gleams.

In both works, this light symbolism is allied with a preoccupation with sight and appearance. Throughout the Divina Commedia, whenever a personage is described, the appearance fits precisely the qualities of that personage, whether we turn to Geryon with his kind face and scorpion's tale in the figure of Fraud or to Matilda's youthful gait and innocent smile in the Earthly Paradise. Spenser's characters also define their natures in their appearance, so that the evil personages must

somehow disguise themselves if they are not to be found out. Errour does so by avoiding the full light, which is truth:

> For light she hated as the deadly bale,
> Ay wont in desert darkness to remaine,
> Where plain none might her see, nor she see any plaine (I, i, 16).

In an allied symbolism, Spenser gives other evil characters the power to change their outward appearance, so that they seem to be what they are not: Archimago appears to be a pious hermit; Duessa appears to be a beautiful lady; but eventually, the light of truth will show them as they are, as Duessa is shown filthy and deformed, "a loathly wrinkled hag" when Una orders her to be stripped (I, ix 45-49).

Akin to false appearance is the inability to see clearly. As Irwin Panofsky has pointed out,[2] blindness, except for the blindness of Homer, was throughout the middle ages symbolic of evil. So we have Blind Devotion, mother of Abessa (I, iii), Aveugle, son of Night, father of the three pagans, Sansloy, Sansjoy, and Sansfoy (I, v), and Malbecco, the half-blind, miserly cuckold (III, ix-x).

With all this concern with clarity of vision and honesty of form, it is not surprising that Spenser, like Dante, should use metamorphosis to show character, for

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[2]Irwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, New York and Evanston, 1962, pp. 107-110.

in metamorphosis, as both poets used it, the body, the outward appearance, changes to conform with the reality of the soul. Spenser, in fact, uses this device in several ways. He uses well-known examples from classical antiquity to emphasize the underlying reality of an episode; he uses metamorphoses derived from these and from the works of previous artists to show inwardness of character or philosophical truth; and, for one character, Malbecco, he contrives a metamorphosis which is entirely original.

Approaching the metamorphoses in the order named, we have first the allusions to mythology: Britomart's comparison of herself to Narcissus, the painted scenes in Busyrane's castle, the flowers in the garden of Adonis, and the decorations in Castle Joyous.

The first of these occurs in Book III, Canto I when Britomart, having conquered six knights who had set upon the Redcrosse Knight, is led with him into Castle Joyous, the home of the Lady of Delight, Malecasta. The name of the castle, reminiscent as it is of Lancelot's "Joyeux Garde" accords well with the name of its mistress, Malecasta (Unchastity). Malecasta is served by six knights: Gardante (Looking), Parlante (Talking), Jocante (Joking or Playing), Basciante (Kissing), Bacchante (Drinking), and Noctante (Nighting; spending the night together)--the actions and circumstances

whereby chastity is endangered. Castle Joyous, then, is the castle of unlawful love, so that it is appropriate that the first of its furnishings to greet Britomart's eye is a tapestry encircling the great hall and depicting Venus's seduction of Adonis, his death, and his transformation into a flower. The transformation, however, seems the least important part of the tapestry. Spenser mentions it in three lines, but he devotes two complete stanzas to the seductive arts where with Venus did "steale his needlesse hart away/ And joyd his love in secret unespyde" (III, i, 37). The Adonis story here is used to reinforce the atmosphere of seduction and unlawful, secret love.

The second allusion to classical metamorphosis comes in Canto II. Britomart's nurse, having discovered that Britomart is in love with an image she has seen in her father's magic crystal, comforts her and assures her that hers is lawful love, nothing to be ashamed of. Britomart, she says, is not like Myrrha and Biblis, whose love was incestuous, nor yet is she like Pasiphaë, whose love for a bull was against "kynd." "But," says Britomart in effect, "I'm as bad as Narcissus, for I love a shadow." The nurse stoutly replies:

> 'Nought like,' quoth shee, 'for that same wretched boy
> Was of him selfe the ydle paramour,
> Both love and lover, without hope of joy;
> For which he faded to a watry flowre (III, ii, 45).

Britomart may love a shadow, but it is the shadow of a real knight, with a real body which may be enjoyed, if only the knight can be found. Spenser, in his legend of chastity, is affirming the virtue of natural, lawful love. Lawless love, in the normal sense of unchastity, he had disposed of in Canto I when Britomart, aided by the Redcrosse Knight had fought her way out of Malecasta's castle, even though slightly wounded by Gardante. Now, he turns to Ovid's metamorphoses to remind us of more offensive forms of lawless love; incest, with Myrrha and Biblis; bestiality, with Pasiphaë; and, with Narcissus, self-love which can know no real satisfaction. Britomart in this book is not only the knight of chastity, she is also the literary daughter of Ariosto's Bradamante, that other figure of chastity whose name means "natural love." For Spenser, chastity is not celibacy; it is fidelity to one love, lawful, that is married or marriageable, and most especially not "against kynd." Narcissus's self-infatuation is as unnatural as is Pasiphë's love for the bull.

Later (III, vi, 45), Spenser uses Narcissus and Adonis again, as well as Hyacinthus and "sad Amaranthus." This time, however, the emphasis is on their rebirth as flowers after untimely death, for in this canto we are in the Garden of Adonis, ruled by Venus Generatrix. The garden is the nursery of all life and the place to which

all flesh returns, for, Spenser emphasizes, nothing is ever lost or really destroyed. All matter is but changed "and often altered to and froe" (III, vi, 37). Narcissus, Hyacinthus, and Amaranthus are not dead, but are living flowers and are in some sense still alive in their human shapes, as Adonis is in his--invisible, but "eterne in mutabilite."

The fourth and last of these classical allusions comes in Canto XI, when Britomart has entered the castle of Busyrane, intent upon rescuing Amoret from his enchantments. Busyrane had spirited Amoret away on her wedding night, using a show of jest and play to prevent the other guests from becoming alarmed. Now, Amoret is imprisoned deep in his dungeon, and he seeks to gain her love.

When Britomart first approached the castle with Amoret's husband, Scudamour, she was appalled to see that it was surrounded by a curtain of fire,

> And turning backe to Scudamour, thus sayd:
> 'What monstrous enmity provoke we heare,
> Foolhardy as 'th' Earthes children, the which made
> Batteill against the gods? So we a god invade
> (III, xi, 22).

She was right to feel dismay, for she was about to "invade" a very great god indeed, Cupid, the god of courtly love. Busyrane's castle is that god's abode. In fact, as I read the canto, the enchanter, Busyrane is Courtly Love, or, perhaps, even Cupid himself. His very

name, combining Busiris and Siren[3] combines seductiveness and treachery with cruelty, the qualities which the chaste Spenser would see in courtly love or in the god of courtly love.

The most important furnishing in the outer room of Busyrane's castle is an altar on which stands an image of Cupid, shining gold body, great varicolored wings, blindfolded, arrows in hand, one foot triumphantly on the neck of a dying dragon. This is the god, and the castle is his temple. It is fitting, therefore, that the outer hall should be decorated in a style that would turn worhsippers' thoughts to the greatness of the god. These decorations are tapestries woven in silk and gold, depicting Cupid's triumphs: the many times Zeus became an animal to seduce a human maiden or a nymph and the similar ignominies of Apollo, Neptune, Saturn, Mars, and Venus, as well as the abasements of "kings, Queenes, lords, ladies, knights, and damsels gent" (III, xi, 46). Only a part of these humiliations involve metamorphosis, but they all show the abasement of gods and men beneath the power of Cupid. This is clear when we see Jupiter turned to a ram, a bull, a golden shower, while Cupid plays on Zeus's throne, saying,

> Lo! now the hevens obey to me alone
> And take me for their Jove, whiles Jove to earth
> is gone (III, xi, 35).

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[3]Alice Blitch, "Etymon and Image in the Faerie Queene," unpublished doctoral thesis, Michigan State University, 1965, pp. 125-126.

Intermingled with the scenes of great gods subjugated by Cupid's power are the scenes of the sad fates of his lesser victims, demigods and men: Daphne turned into a tree, Hyacinthus and Coronis into flowers. Cupid's power knows no limits, as his heart knows no mercy. The golden tapestry is both a celebration of the greatness of the god and a warning to Britomart that she is engaging in combat a very mighty power. Having conquered with ease simple Unchastity, having thrust aside Unnatural Love, the valiant Britomart is about to meet her greatest challenge, Courtly Love, wherein Chastity may be entrapped by a romantic misconception just as Amoret, the virgin bride, was entrapped by Busyrane.

When we turn from direct allusions to classical instances of metamorphosis to Spenser's own metamorphoses derived from previous works, we come first to the episode of Fradubio and Fraelissa (I, ii). In the previous canto, the Redcrosse Knight and Una have been separated. In this canto, Redcrosse, wandering alone, has been challenged by and has killed the Saracen, Sansfoy, and has taken over the guardianship of Sansfoy's beautiful companion, Fidessa. Fidessa has spun him a tale to appeal to his chivalry and has responded to his amorous overtures with "coy lookes," so that he is utterly beguiled, never guessing that she is the wicked Duessa in disguise.

When, tired with the heat of the day, Redcrosse and Fidessa rest in the shade of a great tree, Redcrosse thinks to please the lady by breaking branches to make a wreath for her hair, but scarcely has he plucked a bough when the broken bark begins to bleed and a piteous voice begins to cry for mercy:

> . . . 'O spare with guilty hands to teare
> My tender sides in this rough rynd embard,
> But fly, ah! fly far hence away, for feare
> Least to you hap that happened to me heare,
> And to this wretched lady, my deare love;
> O too deare love, love bought with death too deare!'
> (I, ii, 31)

When Redcrosse has recovered somewhat from shock, he inquires the identity of the speaker within the tree and learns the wretched story of Fradubio and his lady, Fraelissa. Fradubio, riding with Fraelissa, had encountered another knight, also accompanied by a beautiful lady. The two knights quarrelled over whose lady was more beautiful and came to blows. Fradubio killed the unknown knight and thus came into possession of the second lady. Then, beloved of two fair damsels, he sought to determine which was the fairer and playfully declared that the chosen one should have a crown of roses. But the second lady was, in reality, the ubiquitous Duessa in masquerade. Using her magic arts, she caused Fraelissa to appear so ugly that Fradubio believed Fraelissa to be a witch, fit only to be slain.

Duessa stayed his hand, however, and they left Fraelissa "where she now is turned to treen mould" (I, ii, 39).

Thereafter, Fradubio became Duessa's happy lover, until one morning he chanced to see her bathing at the hour of prime when her true form was revealed. She was filthy, foul, old, misshapen. Horrified, Fradubio sought means to free himself from her, but she, perceiving his changed feeling, took advantage of his falling asleep to smear his body with magic ointments and convey him to the side of the tree-Fraelissa. There, she turned him also into a tree, unable of course to move, but still able to suffer.

When Redcrosse has heard this tale, he asks how long the enchantment will last. "Till we be bathed in a living well," is the reply (I, iii, 43). Redcrosse volunteers to find the well, but Fradubio answers that the time is not yet. The knight thrusts the bleeding bough into the ground, closes the wounded bark with clay, and turns back to Fidessa.

We are, in this episode, once more in the presence of the bleeding tree, enabled to speak when wounded. This motif appears first, as we have seen, in the Aeneid (III, 22ff) when Aeneas attempts to break myrtle branches for a sacrificial altar. It appears again in the Divina Commedia (Inf, XIII, 22ff) in the wood of the suicides; and it appears yet again in Orlando Furioso in the

episode of Alcina's island (Cantos VI, VII, and VIII) which we have considered in the previous chapter. Whether Spenser knew Dante's treatment of this motif is open to question, but he did, of course, know both Ariosto's and Vergil's. His emphasis on Redcrosse's horror at hearing the tree speak is, indeed, more reminiscent of Vergil than of Ariosto, as is his mention of the blood drops that welled from the wound. In all three previous works, the tree speaks to protest being wounded, as it does in this episode. In Vergil and Ariosto, however, it then issues a warning, while in Dante's version there is no warning. It seems likely, therefore, that Ariosto's Astolfo incident reminded Spenser of Vergil's Polydorus incident, which he then followed closely in his own introduction to the Fradubio story, though the lengthy tale itself is more like Ariosto's. We may perhaps go one step further and suggest that, since both Vergil and Ariosto specify that their tree is a myrtle, it is likely that Spenser's unnamed tree is also a myrtle, the tree of death.

In interpreting this incident we are helped, as we were with the similar incident in Orlando, by certain cue names: Fradubio (Brother Doubtful), for instance, wavers between two loves, the one truly beautiful, the other only seeming so. Even when he has recognized Duessa's true ugliness, however, he hesitates to break away from her.

Duessa, the wicked enchantress, plays many parts in the Faerie Queene, but she is always true to her name, Doubleness or Falsity. In this episode she has taken the name of Fidessa, Faith. She is

> . . . clad in scarlet red,
> Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay;
> And like a Persian mitre on her hed
> She wore, with crowns and ownches garnished
> (I, iii, 13).

The new name, coupled with her rich apparel which suggests the cardinal's red robes and the bishop's mitre, shows her to be here a figure for the outward show of faith where there is no inner faith, with a suggestion of the Roman church, the Faith. Sansfoy, Fidessa's companion, is of course "Without Faith," an appropriate companion for the hypocritical, double dealing, Fidessa-Duessa.

Fraelissa's name is something of a problem. She is interpreted by Dodge (p. 817) as "Such true faith as is possible to a doubter." If we accept this interpretation, the name is probably a pun on frail, the spelling suggested by that of Fradubio.

The situation, then, is this: Redcrosse has lost Una (Truth) through the weakness of his own faith in her and through his inability to look beyond appearances. Wandering without her, he is confronted by two figures, the proud Saracen, Sansfoy, and the outwardly beautiful Fidessa. Sansfoy attacks boldly, encounters equal boldness and superior strength and is killed. Fidessa,

however, uses beauty, charm, and guile to seduce Redcrosse, and he succumbs to her wiles, just as he has fallen victim to every false appearance that he has so far met. He has never stopped to investigate whether what he sees is truth or seeming. He is spiritually half blind. This is the weakness he and Fradubio share, just as a heated temperament was the shared fault of Ruggiero and Astolfo.

At this dangerous moment, Redcrosse is vouchsafed a warning, just as Ruggiero in a similar situation was warned by Astolfo. He finds the tree-Fradubio, who had also abandoned his true lady and succumbed to Duessa's charms. Fradubio had been the devoted lover of Fraelissa before he accepted the companionship of Duessa. Then, torn between the beauties of his first love, a weak but true faith, and the seeming beauties of his faithless new love, he succumbed to the latter and found temporary happiness.

The morning light, however, as so often in Spenser, brought a realization of truth. At the hour of prime, Fradubio saw Duessa for what she was--foul, deformed. Still, true to his name, he hesitated. Instead of breaking away at once, he cast about for "safe opportunitie" (I, ii, 41). He allowed himself to fall asleep and, as he lay "drowned in sleepie night," (I, ii, 42), the witch worked her charms and turned him into a tree--

helpless, immobile, but still suffering, in a sort of Hell, from which he can be redeemed only by the water of life.

Fradubio's transformation is clear, but why was the innocent Fraelissa turned into a tree? First, we should notice that Spenser nowhere says that Duessa worked the transformation, simply "she now is turned to treen mould." I would suggest that Fradubio, all unwitting, worked the metamorphosis, for his frail faith was dependent upon him for life. When he turned away, Fraelissa became as spiritually impotent as a tree.

In the first book as a whole, devoted to the perfection of the Redcrosse knight as Holinesse, this incident serves as a warning abainst Doubt, of course, but also against the tendency to accept outward show too easily. Redcrosse has allowed himself to suspect the chastity and fidelity of Una, so that he has wandered away from her. Without her, he is vulnerable to Fidessa's wiles. Although he is warned by Doubt himself in the person of Fradubio, he turns again to Fidessa. He is obviously about to experience Fradubio's fate, just as Ruggiero was about to experience Astolfo's when Melissa found him in Alcina's garden. But, although Redcrosse is led into the House of Pride by Duessa, although he has a terrible battle with Sansjoy, although he is held prisoner in the dungeon of the giant, Orgoglio,

he is finally rescued by Arthur, as Ruggiero was rescued by Melissa. He is then taken to the counterpart of Logistilla's kingdom, Coelia's castle. There he is instructed by Faith, Hope, and Charity, learns patience and repentance, becomes in fact the true knight of Holinesse. Thus perfected, he is able to fight the Great Dragon, who is Evil or the Devil. Even thus perfected, however, Holinesse would have lost the fight to Evil had he not at two crucial moments been bathed in the water of a sacred well. The first well is the Water of Life, which can restore the dead (probably the sacrament of baptism); the second flows from the Tree of Life and can cure all wounds (probably Holy Communion). If Spenser had completed The Faerie Queene, it is probable that Fradubio and Fraelissa would also have been bathed in water from these sacred wells and would have been restored to their former state, strengthened by their experience of Doubt and Deceit.

Spenser's next derived metamorphoses form a cluster about the figure of Acrasia, the wicked enchantress, opponent of Sir Guyon (Temperance) in Book II. Acrasia is, as her opposition to Guyon would indicate, a figure for Intemperance, but she denotes a special kind of intemperance, overindulgence in the pleasures of the senses, most particularly in sexual delights, the indulgence which results in exhaustion or debility--

Acrasia is the literary descendant of Alcina and, like Alcina, can trace her ancestry to Luxuria, Morgan le Fay, Circe and, ultimately, the great goddess, in her role as inciter of lust, but not in that of Mother of Life. It is not surprising, then, that Acrasia's domain is a "wandering island" (II, i, 51) nor that she practices various kinds of evil magic, including transformations.

The first of the cluster of metamorphoses with which we are concerned, however, is not directly Acrasia's. Rather, it is the work of her equally sterile other self, Diana Ever-Virgin. Sir Guyon and his Palmer have come upon the dying Amavia in time for her to tell them her tragic story. Amavia's husband has been killed by the treacherous Acrasia's magic, and the griefstricken Amavia has plunged a knife into her own breast. As she dies, the babe in her arms dabbles his hands in her blood.

When Sir Guyon attempts to wash the blood from the babe's hands in the waters of a nearby well, he is unable to do so. The palmer explains that the well can not be defiled. It springs from a stone which once was a nymph, a follower of chaste Diana. Pursued, almost caught, by Faunus, the nymph had prayed to Diana that she might die a maid, and as she sat, "Welling out streames of teares, and quite dismayed/ With stony feare of that rude rustick mate," Diana heard and "Transformed her to a stone from stedfast virgin's state" (II, ii, 8).

> Lo! now she is that stone, from whose two heads,
> As from two weeping eyes, fresh streames do flow,
> Yet colde through feare and old conceived dreads;
> And yet the stone her semblance seems to show,
> Shapt like a maide, that such ye may her know,
> And yet her vertues in her water byde;
> For it is chaste and pure, as purest snow,
> Ne lets her waves with any filth be dyde,
> But ever like her selfe unstayned hath been tryed.
> (II, ii, 9)

It is easy to recognize here the myths of Daphne and Apollo, Syrinx and Pan, and a plethora of other tales of chaste maidens, pursued by lecherous gods or satyrs and metamorphosed at the last minute into vegetation, rocks, or pools.

Spenser makes the most of this metamorphosis. The maiden's rocklike chastity and "stony feare" dictate that she become a stone; her weeping eyes that the stone should be the source of a double spring; her fearful virginity that the waters should be cold, clear, and pure. I can not avoid, however, the feeling that Spenser viewed such formidable chastity with ambivalence. Admirable it might be, but what was the result? A formation that was hard, cold, and, ultimately, useless.

The second metamorphosis in this group is that of the sirens, who attempt to lure Guyon to their abode as he sails toward Acrasia's island. According to Spenser, they had been five fair ladies who were transformed because of the hubris they showed in challenging the muses to a singing contest. This is a very old tradition,

much older than Homer,[4] but in Homer and the classical tradition generally, the challenging sisters were changed into bird-women, whose sweet singing lured sailors to their deaths. In the tradition, also, the number of the sirens may be two, three, or nine, rather than five. Spenser has made the sisters five and has turned them into fish-women, mermaids. He was not the first to picture the sirens as mermaids, for Cirlot dates as earlier than the tenth century fish-tailed sirens on the tympanum of the Chapel of St. Michael d'Aiguilhe at Le Puy[5] and lists numerous other such representations. In view of Spenser's classical education, however, his choice of the post-classical mermaid, rather than the classical bird-woman, is interesting.

According to Cirlot, such mermaid figures

> may well be representations of the inferior forces in woman, or of woman as the inferior, as in the case of lamias; or they could also be symbolic of the corrupt imagination enticed toward base ends or towards the primitive strata of life, or of the torment of desire leading to self-destruction, for their abnormal bodies cannot satisfy the passions that are aroused by their enchanting music and by their beauty of face and bosom.6

If this or similar symbolism was in Spenser's mind, then we have the five sisters (possibly related to the five senses) setting themselves up as superior to Jove's

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[4]Graves, Greek Myths, 154.3.

[5]Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, p. 283.

[6]Ibid.

daughters, the muses--that is, to the arts and sciences, daughters of Reason. For their hubris they lose a portion of their human form (significantly, the portion which can afford complete sensual satisfaction) and take on a part of the outward form of Lust itself, Aphrodite's fish. Such a reading explains Spenser's placing the Sirens among the hazards Guyon must survive on his voyage to Acrasia's island, for to succumb to the sirens' sweet voices would bt to forget his purpose, to lose himself in the senses. Instead of successfully harrowing the luxurious Hell which is Acrasia's island and bringing Acrasia, captive, away, he would have been conquered by Acrasia in the persons of her servants, the senses, or the Sirens.

The third metamorphosis in this group is divided into two parts. When Guyon and the palmer first land on Acrasia's island, they are attacked by fierce-looking, monstrous animals (II, xii, 39), but the animals are quelled by the sight of the palmer's wand and slink away. Later, after Guyon and the palmer have captured Acrasia and destroyed the Bower of Bliss, they return, leading Acrasia, across the island toward their boat; but their passage is contested by the same group of monstrous animals, seeking to rescue Acrasia. When the palmer has calmed them, Guyon asks "What meante those beastes" (II, xii, 84). The palmer replies that these were Acrasia's former lovers, changed into "figures hideous/ According

to their minds like monstrous" (II, xii, 85). We are again in the presence of Circe, who takes advantage of men's appetites to turn them into beasts. Spenser's handling of the reverse metamorphosis is, however, unusual.

When the beasts are returned to their human forms, some are filled with shame for their previous misdeeds, some with wrath toward Acrasia,

> but one above the rest in speciall,
> That had an hog been late, hight Grille by name,
> Repyned greatly, and did him miscall,
> That had from hoggish forme him brought to naturall (II, xii, 86).

Sir Guyon is shocked, but the palmer knows that some men are animals at heart and not worth saving,

> . . . The donghill kind
> Delightes in filth and fowle incontinence:
> Let Gryll be Gryll, and have his hoggish minde;
> But let us hence depart, whilst wether serves and winde (II, xii, 87).

Spenser's last derived metamorphosis, strongly reminiscent of that of Lycaön (Ovid, Met., I, 198-237), is the transformation of Adicia in Book V, Canto VIII. In this canto, Arthur, who is Magnificence itself, the lover of the Faerie Queene, and the embodiment of the valor of England, joins with Artegall, the knight of Justice, to defeat the wicked designs of the Souldan. The Souldan has been guilty of attempting to subvert the crown and dignity of Queen Mercilla by making war on her and by bribing her knights. Mercilla is both Queen

Elizabeth and England's glory here, but, more importantly, she embodies Justice as Mercy, as her name indicates. The Souldan has been read as Philip of Spain, but he is also a figure for power unregulated by faith and social law. Otherwise, his marriage would not make sense, for he is married to a woman worse than himself, the Lady Adicia. This lady, whose name obviously derives from a-dike, that is, without Natural Law or Justice

> Counsels him, through confidence of might,
> To breake all bonds of law and rules of right,
> For she herselfe professeth mortall foe
> To Justice, and against her still doth fight,
> Working to all that love her deadly woe,
> And making all her knights and people to do so
> (V, vii, 20).

It is the Lady Adicia who breaks one of the most ancient of human laws, the sanctity of the person of the messenger, when she turns Mercilla's messenger, Samient, out of doors, then sets two knights to follow and rape her. Artegall and Arthur, having defeated the two pagan knights and having heard Samient's story, determine to punish both the Souldan and his lady. Accordingly, Artegall, in the armor of one of the pagan knights, gains entrance to the castle with Samient, while Arthur challenges the Souldan.

Although the Souldan's chariot is so fiercely armed with axle blades that Arthur cannot get near enough to strike a blow, he yet causes the Souldan's death. He uncovers his magic shield, the gleam of which maddens the

Souldan's horses. In their mad flight, the Souldan is torn to bits.

Enraged by her lord's defeat, Adicia rushes like a cow maddened by the loss of her calf, upon the innocent Samient. But Samient is in the care of Artegall, and he wrenches the knife from Adicia's hand. Thus deprived of her unjust revenge, Adicia goes completely mad, and

> As a mad bytch, when as the franticke fit
> Her burning tongue with rage inflamed hath
> Doth run at random, and with furious bit
> Snatching at every thing, doth wreake her wrath
> On man and beast that commeth in her path.
> There they doe say that she transformed was
> Into a tygre . . .

Because she has the soul of a lawless and cruel beast, she is changed into a tiger, just as the lawless and murderous Lycaön was transformed into a wolf.

Thus, we have the Souldan, who is irresponsible power, that is power unregulated by either the Christian faith or social responsibility, married, that is, inevitably linked, to Injustice. He is the opponent of true sovereignty, exemplified by Mercilla, whose name is Mercy, and whose servant is Artegall, the knight of Justice. The Souldan is destroyed by Arthur, the highest development of godfearing, law abiding chivalry. It is possible that his ungovernable horses, which tear the Souldan apart are another appearance of Plato's steeds of passion: the passions which have caused him to ride

roughshod over the rights of others have been his own undoing.

When he is destroyed, Adicia is no longer able to work her will and, in her frustrated passion shows herself for what she is. She becomes outwardly what she has always been inwardly, a ravening beast. Notice, however, that she is not destroyed. She still lives to ravage the countryside, for injustice lives in men's minds even when recognized as evil.

The last of the metamorphoses in the Faerie Queene to be considered is the most original and interesting of all, for here we have a personage, a personality, gradually transformed into a personified abstraction. Malbecco ceases to be Malbecco and becomes Jealousy.

The Malbecco incident, which occupies Cantos IX and X of Book III, is only loosely connected with the adventures of Britomart, the heroine of the book; she appears briefly, then rides away again. It is, however, most appropriate to the subject of the book, which is Chastity, for Spenser is concerned with one of the causes of unchastity: a husband's inability to provide his wife with physical satisfaction, to pay the "marriage debt."

As the episode opens, Sir Satyrane, Sir Paridell, and the Squyre of Dames have sought lodging for the night at a castle and been refused. The squire explains that the owner of the castle is a "cancred, crabbed carle,"

a miser whose mind is on his "heapes of evill gotten masse." This miser is married to a young beauty who "does joy to play emongst her peares/ And to be free from hard restraint and jealous feares" (III, ix, 3-4). The husband, however, is old

> . . . and withered like hay,
> Unfit faire ladies service to supply,
> The privie guilt whereof makes him alway
> Suspect her truth, and keepe continuall spy
> Upon her with his other blincked eye (III, ix, 5).

The old husband's name is Malbecco, a most appropriate one both as comment on the present situation and as foreshadowing of future developments, for the literal meaning of becco is he-goat, the figurative, cuckold. The he-goat has always been a popular symbol for rampant lust. He is "a lascivious and butting animal who is always burning for coition. His eyes are transverse slits because he is so randy."[6] Malbecco, however, is a bad goat, because he is "withered like hay." In the light of Panofsky's comments on blindness,[7] it is not surprising that Bad Goat also has one blind eye.

Despairing of gaining lodging in the castle, Sir Satyrane, Sir Paridell, and the Squire of Dames retreat to a nearby shed for pigs to escape the stormy night. Britomart happens along and, after fruitlessly trying the castle, turns also to the shed. When she insists on

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[6]T. H. White, The Bestiary, p. 74.

[7]Panofsky, Studies in Iconology, pp. 95-128.

entering the already crowded shed, she and Paridell fight, but Satyrane soon makes peace between them, so that they determine to join forces to get into the castle.

When Malbecco is convinced that they are about to set fire to his gates, he hastens down to let them in. Grudgingly, he provides supper and allows his wife to join them. Throughout the meal, he glares suspiciously at Satyrane, who is seated opposite, but ignores Paridell, who is on his blind side.

Paridell takes advantage of Malbecco's blindness to flirt outrageously with Hellenore, and Hellenore responds with shocking enthusiasm. Meanwhile, table talk provides the information that Paridell is a descendant of that Paris who abducted Helen, while Hellenore is descended from that same Helen. Thus Spenser sets up the equivalence between this episode and the Paris-Helen-Menelaus story. It is no surprise then that Paridell on the following morning should plead his wounds from his fight with Britomart as an excuse to remain a guest in the castle while Britomart, Satyrane, and the Squire of Dames ride away.

In spite of Malbecco's efforts to keep constant watch over his wife, Hellenore and Paridell lay their plans, and one evening Hellenore manages to get at her husband's stored riches, seize a part, and set fire to the rest. In the ensuing confusion, she flies into

Paridell's arms, shrieking rape. Torn between dismay over his burning treasure and dismay over his stolen wife, Malbecco dashes uselessly back and forth, but finally elects to save his treasure, so that Paridell and Hellenore get safely away.

When the flames are quenched, Malbecco falls into grief and rage over his lost Hellenore and, at last, resolves to go forth to seek her. Taking a portion of his treasure along, he sets forth. He has gone only a short way when he comes upon Braggadochio and his squire, Trompart. Mistaking the blustering, cowardly Braggadochio for a true knight, Malbecco prays his aid, and Braggadochio promises it. There is a little extra insight into Malbecco's character here, for he offers to pay Braggadochio, although a man with any understanding of true knighthood would have known such an offer was an insult.

As the three proceed, they meet Paridell. Malbecco hails him, but Braggadochio is too busy mending a "broken" harness to offer a challenge. Paridell cheerfully admits to Malbecco that he has deserted Hellenore in the forest, then rides away toward fresh adventures. Malbecco, Braggadochio, and Trompart go into the forest to seek Hellenore, but first Trompart persuades Malbecco to bury his treasure for safekeeping.

Meanwhile, the deserted Hellenore has taken up with a band of satyrs who have taken her home with them "To milk their gotes, and make them cheese and bredd/ And every one as commune good her handeled" (III, X, 36). Shortly after entering the forest, Malbecco, Braggadochio, and Trompart come within earshot of this satyr band, who are making such a hubbub that Malbecco faints from fright, while Braggadochio and Trompart run away.

When he has recovered from his faint, Malbecco spies on the satyrs as they dance with Hellenore, then, at dusk, follows them home. He hides among the goats, running on hands and feet, helped in the deception by "his faire hornes." From his hiding place he watches Hellenore in the arms of a satyr

> Who all the night did minde his joyous play.
> Nine times he heard him come aloft ere day,
> That all his heart with gealosy did swell
> (III, x, 48).

At last, Hellenore and the satyr fall asleep, and Malbecco, creeping to Hellenore's side, begs her to come away with him. She refuses curtly and, though he begs until day-break, continues to refuse. The downcast Malbecco creeps out with the herd, butted and mauled by them as he goes, and runs back to where his treasure is buried. Of course, those two confidence men, Braggadochio and Trompart, have made away with the gold.

Then Malbecco becomes quite mad. He runs with staring eye and "upstart haire," runs over hill and dale, bank and bush.

> Grief, and despight, and gealosy and scorne
> Did all the way him follow hard behynd
> And he himselfe himselfe loath'd so forlorne,
> So shamefully forlorne of womankynd;
> That, as a snake, still lurked in his wounded mynd
> (III, x, 55).

Still running, he comes to a steep cliff and throws himself over it on to the rocks below. But he has become so wasted that he is too light to be hurt by the fall. Crawling on crooked claws, he creeps into a cave. There he remains to this day, never daring to sleep for fear of falling rock, never at peace for the noise of the billows that beat about the cliff. His food is frogs and toads "which in his cold complexion doe breed/ a filthy blood" which causes inward pain like that of death.

> Yet can he never dye, but dying lives,
> And doth himselfe with sorrow new sustaine,
> That death and life attonce unto him gives,
> And painefull pleasure turnes to pleasing paine.
> There dwels he ever, miserable swaine,
> Hateful both to him selfe and every wight,
> Where he, through privy griefe and horrour vaine,
> Is woxen so deform'd, that he has quight
> Forgot he was a man, and Gelosy is hight
> (III, x, 60).

In this broadly comic episode, Spenser contrasts the havoc wrought by the unnatural marriage of Malbecco and Hellenore with the propriety of natural instinct, the Bad Goat with true goats in the persons of Sir Satyrane and the whole band of satyrs. Sir Satyrane, who is half

satyr by birth, wholly so by training, yet knows instinctively what is the nature of woman and what is due to a fair lady. When he first hears of Malbecco's jealous watch over Hellenore (III, ix, 6), he smiles and says that a man must be mad to think he can control by watchfulness a woman who is determined to deceive him. A woman is held by "fast good-will with gentle courtesyes/ and timely service to her pleasures meet" (III, ix, 7). The forest satyrs know as much; and, instinctively, they recognize Hellenore as the natural partner of their unbridled lust, just as earlier (I, vi) they had recognized Una's true purity and worshipped her as a goddess.

Malbecco, on the other hand, is not only sexually impotent, but the victim of deformed instincts that tell him all the wrong things. He is metaphorically as well as literally blind. He suspects the honest Sir Satyrane of having designs upon Hellenore, but he fails to notice Paridell's manoeuvers. He mistakes the bag of wind, Braggadochio, for a true knight, yet hopes to buy his knightly aid. He is willing, nay eager, to regain the much-used Hellenore, as if she were a stolen gold piece. Most amazing of all, he believes in Trompart's honesty and allows himself to be persuaded to leave that which he loves best in the world, his treasure, buried where Trompart can steal it.

Spenser knew long before the Better Business Bureau that avarice marks the natural victim for the tricks of the confidence man. Avarice is, indeed, Malbecco's most important characteristic. His jealous guarding of his beautiful young wife is but the shadow of the jealousy with which he guards his treasure. He is unable to enjoy the natural delights of her body as he is unable to enjoy the natural pleasure of spending his gold. He clasps to himself both the woman and the treasure, though he can get little good of either, and he torments himself with unfounded fear of loss even as he is robbed by those he trusts.

When he has had to recognize the loss of his two dearest possessions, he has also had to recognize the loss of his human dignity among the goats and the loss of confidence in his own judgment. Then, it is self-loathing that, like a snake, lurks in his "wounded mynd." It is self-loathing that eats him away until there is nothing left of him but his self-loathing--his jealousy, for what we call jealousy is but a manifestation of a lack of self-love, self-respect. It is born of "secret guilt." Malbecco has become his dominant emotion.

His outward form may be that of a snake. Certainly, Spenser means to suggest that it is with his talk of eating toads and breeding venom. This outer form would be appropriate, for, according to the Bestiary, snakes

are cunning, secretive, venomous, troubled with bad eyesight, and very longlived, sometimes, indeed immortal.[8] Jealousy seeks to keep through cunning what is not freely given; it "creeps by secret approaches;" it breeds poison within the heart; it sees unclearly, mistaking good for evil, evil for good, and it is very hard to kill. It is indeed a "hatefull, hellish snake . . . that turnest love divine to joylesse dread. . . . the vilest of the passions of the mind" (III, xi, 1). Yet Spenser never actually says that Malbecco has become a snake, merely that he has "waxen so deform'd, that he has quight/ Forgot he was a man, and Gelosy is hight." That the deformity is a metaphor for the inner disintegration is incontrovertible, but the exact nature of the outward form is left to the reader's imagination.

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[8] T. H. White, Bestiary, pp. 165ff.

CHAPTER VIII

PARADISE LOST

After Spenser's use of it in the Faerie Queene, the next important example of the use of metamorphosis as a literary device occurs in Milton's Paradise Lost (1667). Here, Satan, the glorious if rebellious angel, becomes a hissing snake. Milton's plan, apparently, was to show the gradual deterioration of Satan's character, using the Platonic idea that the soul impresses her form on the body, so that Satan's fading beauty and, eventually, animal form would indicate his moral degeneration. The idea was a bold one, but beset with difficulties: first, there was some question whether heavenly beings had bodies or were pure spirit. If they were pure spirit, how could a body be metamorphosed? Second, there was the difficulty of Satan's traditional role as a shape-changer. If he could change at will, how would the real metamorphosis be different? Third, once the metamorphosis was achieved, would not Satan be helpless? How then, to account for continued sin and evil in the world?

Milton overcame the first difficulty by carefully stating the nature of angelic substance. Angels do, indeed, have bodies, and, as Raphael explains in Book V, those bodies must be fed, but they are "so soft, so uncompounded," their essence so pure that they can assume whatever size, shape, or sex the owners wish, as well as any degree of brightness, simply by rearranging themselves.[1] This explains why some of the pagan gods, who were really fallen angels, were worshipped as goddesses. Shortly after this explanation, Milton gives us an example of the angels' ability to change size (I, 752ff) when the host of fallen angels, finding themselves too crowded in the great hall of Pandemonium, shrink to the size of fairies seen by moonlight--perhaps no physical size at all.

He overcomes the second difficulty by making clear that although angels can change shape, they have a true form, from which their deviations are voluntary and temporary. It is the involuntary changes of this true shape which constitutes the metamorphosis. It is in his true shape and size that we first find Satan (I, 192ff), and it is this shape which gradually changes as Satan's deeds and thoughts grow more foul.

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[1]John Milton, Paradise Lost in J. H. Hanford (ed.), The Poems of John Milton, New York, 1953, I, 422ff. All line references to Paradise Lost are to this edition.

After nine days' stupor in Hell's lake of fire, Satan lifts his head to speak to Beëlzebub. His eyes blaze, sparkling, and his body stretches "many a rood," as great as that of any fabled giant. That he is changed from his heavenly beauty by his fall we can assume, for he laments that Beëlzebub is so changed, yet, he is vast and flashing-eyed. When, later, he stands among his troops, announcing his determination to continue war in spite of their recent defeat, he is a most impressive figure:

> . . . He above the rest
> In shape and gesture proudly eminent
> Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
> All her original brightness, nor appeared
> Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
> Of glory obscured . . .
> . . . Care
> Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows,
> Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
> Waiting revenge (I, 590-604).

He seems to love his followers; he weeps for their pain and their loyalty; he is still full of a sense of injured merit and of determination to win back to Heaven. It is at this moment, however, that he makes his first step toward serpentdom, for he declares that they must now prepare to win by fraud or guile what they could not win by force. As we learn from Genesis 2 and as we have seen in connection with Dante's serpent-thieves, fraud and guile are the traditional attributes of the serpent.

Having undertaken the dangerous task of surveying the newly-created world, Satan essays to leave Hell;

but at its gate he meets an obstruction which may be construed as a warning of what will happen to him if he pursues his announced plan. The gate is locked, and the key is in the possession of a monstrous creature, half woman, half serpent, whose huge tail ends in a deadly sting. She, we learn, is Sin. Before the rebellion, she had sprung, "shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed" (II, 757) from Satan's forehead, the embodiment of his rebellious thought. His incestuous love for her had brought forth the monster, Death, and her incestuous union with that monster had resulted in a litter of hideous dogs, the individual sins. Their birth had been so painful and prolonged that it had transformed her lower body into that of a serpent. The monster, Sin, literary relative of Spenser's "Errour" and of the Python of the medieval allegorists, is entrusted with the key to Hell. This was an error in judgment on the part of Milton's God, if He really meant to keep Satan in Hell, for Sin is all too quickly persuaded to open the triple gates when Satan promises to bring her to Earth, where she and Death may dwell at ease. By trafficking with this serpent-woman, by bribing her, using guile to cause her to disobey God as he will later do to the innocent Eve, Satan has increased by another step his own inward resemblance to a serpent.

Having escaped from Hell, Satan makes his laborious way to the sun, there to ask guidance toward Earth from Uriel, the sun's resident angel (III, 634ff). In order that Uriel may not suspect who is asking his aid, Satan takes advantage of his ethereal nature to put on the appearance of a "stripling cherub," all youth and eagerness, with flowing curls and many-colored, gold-sprinkled wings. He deceives Uriel into giving him directions, for, says Milton, he is the first example of Hypocrisy, which can deceive all but God. Thus, Satan's powers as a shape changer, misused for wrongful purposes, bring him again nearer to his serpent form, for the serpent of Genesis hypocritically pretends to wish only good to Eve.

Leaving the sun, Satan makes his journey toward Earth, but he turns to address the sun as he leaves. This apostrophe, one of the most moving passages in Paradise Lost, is really a soliloquy, in which the fallen angel struggles with his misery, his desire for repentance, and in the honesty of self-knowledge, recognizes his unconquerable pride and makes his choice: "Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell," but, even if forgiven, I would rebel again; therefore, "Evil, be thou my good" (IV, 32ff). From this point on, Satan's degeneration is rapid.

Arriving at Eden (IV, 131ff), Satan overleaps the wall of Paradise, "the first grand thief," and sits in

the shape of a bird of prey, a cormorant, on the Tree of Life. Milton points out that, ironically, he sits on that tree plotting death, when one bite of its fruit would have saved him. This raises an interesting question: does Milton mean that Satan is destined for physical death? or is he suggesting that the fruit of the Tree of Life might yet have enabled Satan to repent? In any case, Satan ignores the fruit while he spies out the land.

When he sees Adam and Eve moving in beauty, love, and innocence through the garden (IV, 358ff), Satan's better nature makes another effort to assert itself. He wonders at their beauty and grace, feels that he could love them, grieves that he plans to destroy their happiness. But, he says, I offer you all I have, Hell, and "if no better place/ Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge/ on you who wrong me not." Thus, he attempts to transfer the guilt for their future unhappiness to the god he hates. Then, stifling pity, he continues:

> And should I at your harmless innocence
> Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
> Honor and empire with revenge enlarged,
> By conquering this new World, compels me now
> To do what else though damned I should abhor
> (IV, 386-392).

Thus, he is the first to plead public necessity as an excuse for cruelty. He has indulged in another form of hypocrisy.

His last bit of tenderness stifled, Satan has become, metaphorically, coldblooded. He sets about his business

briskly, coming by night to Eve's ear (IV, 799ff), where he squats in the shape of a toad, attempting to poison her sleeping mind. Poison, like guile, is a serpent's weapon. He is discovered by the guardian angels, and, touched by Ithuriel's apear, springs back to his own form, for false semblance must always disappear at the touch of "heavenly temper."

Although at this point he is without pity, he is still not without courage. He speaks proudly to his captors and challenges Gabriel when they meet. He is put to flight only by the express will of God. We learn, however, that his outward appearance has changed still more for the worse, for the guardian angels do not recognize him. Says Zephon, "thou resemblest now/ Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul." Nor is Satan without regret for his former beauty, though he is too proud to show it:

> So spake the Cherub, and his grave rebuke
> Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
> Invincible. Abashed the Devil stood,
> And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
> Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
> His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
> His luster visibly impaired; yet seemed
> Undaunted (IV, 844-851).

Such pride in beauty and brightness makes all the more understandable Satan's repugnance when he must mingle his substance with that of the snake. Repugnant or not, however, the deed must be done.

Having regained entry to Paradise (IX, 69ff), Satan decides that Eve would be most susceptible to temptation if she thought one of her familiar friends, the animals, had eaten of the forbidden fruit with beneficial results. He therefore determines to enter into an animal and cause that creature to perform his task. Because the serpent was the "subltlest beast of all the field," he chose to enter the serpent, so that he would not arouse suspicion if he showed unusual intelligence.

Before entering into the serpent, however, Satan meditates on the beauty of the earth and on his own changed being which will not permit him to enjoy that beauty. Only in destroying does he find ease, in the cruelty of bringing to others misery like his own, and in the thought of wrecking in one day what the Almighty had taken six to create. No pity for doomed mankind enters here, no regret for the beauties of Paradise; his only hesitation is caused by the repugnance he feels at mixing his proud essence with the body of a beast:

> O foul descent! that I who erst contended
> With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
> Into a beast, and mixed with bestial slime,
> This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
> That to the height of deity aspired;
> But what will not Ambition and revenge
> Descend to? (IX, 163-169).

In the form of a black mist, he prowls the garden until he finds and enters into the body of the serpent. Filled with cruelty and thoughts of revenge, with

loathing for the means of this task, he becomes incarnate--a horrible travesty of the pitiful and loving incarnation of Christ. Now Satan's inward self has become a snake: he is cold and pitiless, guileful, hypocritical, and he has crawled in slime, as the snake crawls in earth. Still, his outward form is that of a ravaged angel.

His deed done, his goal accomplished, Satan lurks in the shrubbery, eavesdropping as Adam and Eve discuss their doom. Gathering that his own punishment is not yet, he returns in triumph to Hell (X, 325ff), pausing on the way to congratulate Sin on the broad causeway she and Death have built between Hell and Earth. Entering Pandemonium in the likeness of a lowly soldier angel, he makes his way unnoticed to the throne. Then, he puts on again his majesty. His shining head and star-bright body appear "clad/ With what permissive glory since his fall/ Was left him, or false glitter," and he rises to address his hosts.

"Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers," he begins, then tells of perils past, of triumphs won, laughs at the thought of punishment, invites the hosts to join with him in full bliss. When he pauses for "Their universal shout and high applause," what he hears is hissing. Then he feels his body change:

> His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
> His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
> Each other, till supplanted down he fell
> A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
> Reluctant, but in vain: a greater power
> Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,
> According to his doom (X, 511-518).

He and all his followers have become serpents. Then, filled with hunger and thirst, they turn to a newsprung grove where hang fruits like those on the Tree of Knowledge. Eagerly they bite, only to find their mouths filled with ashes, yet, driven inexorably, they bite again and again, falling over and over again, though Man fell only once.

Thus Satan who, by his cruelty, hate, and, most expecially, his guile, had made himself spiritually a serpent before ever entering the body of the true serpent, was most appropriately punished by being transformed into a serpent at the moment of his triumph. Satan, the shape-changer, is powerless to avert his change of shape. His followers, who by their approval made themselves his accomplices, were also fittingly transformed. The outward form has been made to conform to the inner reality. Neither Satan nor his followers, however, remained serpents, but were permitted to regain their own forms. Yearly, however, they undergo the metamorphosis as a reminder of the power of God, against Whom they have sinned.

There is, for me, a certain lack of satisfaction in this metamorphosis. One cannot help comparing it with Dante's handling of a similar theme. In both poets' treatments, the metamorphosis is a metaphor for an almost inexpressible spiritual reality. In both treatments, the Devil by his own chosen actions and emotions makes himself first spiritually, then physically, into a monster. In the Inferno, however, the devil metamorphosed is no longer a power. It is man's infatuation with his own vices that cuts him off from God. In Paradise Lost, Satan, Sin, and Death must be left active and free to range the world until such time as God shall deem it proper to close the account. For Milton, Satan must remain the Adversary. In Milton's theology this was doubtless sound, but, as metaphor, the temporary metamorphosis is much less satisfactory than Dante's permanent one.

CHAPTER IX

THREE WORKS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

After Paradise Lost, metamorphosis disappears from western belles lettres for more than two hundred years. With the twentieth century, however, we find it used in three widely-read pieces of fiction: Kafka's Die Verwandlung (Metamorphosis), 1916; Garnett's Lady into Fox, 1924; and Vercors's Sylva, 1961. Why the two hundred year gap should exist is as much a mystery as why an ancient device should have been revived. In considering the individual works, however, we may come to some tentative explanations.

Although the earliest of these works, Kafka's short story, Die Vervandlung,[1] has been the object of fifty years of critical study, there has been no definitive analysis, for each critic seems to find a different meaning in the tale. Paul Goodman, for instance, sees it as the suicidal fantasy of a paranoid neurotic with

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[1]Franz Kafka, Die Verwandlung, London, 1967. Metamorphosis also takes place in Ionesco's Rhinoceros, but the work does not seem to me of sufficient interest to justify analysis.

repressed homosexual urges,[2] while Johannes Pfeiffer hesitates between the conviction that the story is a presentation of the reality that "through the desperation . . . of a life that has stumbled into an impasse, there is a sight of the hidden light for which we all stretch out our hands. . . ." and the worry lest it is "only an experiment in portrayal" and serves the needs of a "hidden desire for torment."[3]

In Die Verwandlung, Gregor Samsa awakens, as Kafka's heroes often do, into "the nightmare world which is always just below the surface."[4] After a troubled sleep, he has regained consciousness only to find that he has become a giant insect. His brown, segmented belly is so steep that the quilt is about to slide from the bed, and his rotund body is surrounded by small legs that wave wildly without his conscious control. His mouth is a toothless, sucking beak.

At first, Gregor refuses to believe the reality he sees. He wishes only to pull himself from bed, eat his breakfast, catch a train, take up his job again. When his mother timidly knocks to remind him that he is late, he assures her that he will soon be on his way,

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[2]Paul Goodman, Kafka's Prayer, New York, 1947, pp. 147, 157.

[3]Johannes Pfeiffer, "The Metamorphosis," in Ronald Gray (ed.), Kafka: A Collection of Critical Essays, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1962, p. 59.

[4]Idris Parry, "Kafka, Gogol and Nathanael West." in R. Gray, Kafka, pp. 85-86.

noticing as he does so that his voice sounds oddly squeaky. A few minutes later, when the Chief Clerk arrives to question him, nobody can understand what Gregor says. His voice has become that of an insect, perhaps a locust or cricket, high metallic, unintelligible.

Still unaware, still unwilling to be aware, of what has actually happened to him, Gregor laboriously pulls himself upright, gets to the door in that position, manages to turn the key with his jaws, and opens the door of his room to attempt to explain matters to the Chief Clerk. He is shocked to see the man back off, turn, and leap down the stairs, screaming as he goes.

Gregor retreats to his room, where he is cared for by his sister. She gives him a bowl of his favorite drink, milk, but he finds it offensive. Then, she provides an assortment of the foods available in the house, and, to his own surprise, Gregor finds that he prefers decayed cheese, half-rotten vegetables, and leftover bones to fresh food.

Gradually, Gregor becomes less and less a member of the family, more and more an alien monster. This is partly his own doing, partly the doing of the family. His sister, for instance, seeing that he needs to crawl over the walls and ceilings, thinks to remove his furniture to provide him more space. His mother pro-

tests that he may miss his own furniture, and Gregor realizes that this is true. Yet his attempt to protect the furniture serves only to frighten his mother and sister and to excite his father into an attempt to kill him. Before he can escape, he has been seriously wounded.

Thereafter, Gregor eats less and less, although he is very hungry, and he spends almost all his time in the darkest corner of his room, hidden under a sofa. Yet, on one occasion, he is drawn forth: when the lodgers his parents have taken in to help defray expenses hear the sister playing her violin, they invite the family into the living room. The sound of the music draws Gregor, too, into the room. As he hears the violin play, he feels as if the way were being opened to the food he craves. At this moment, when fulfillment of some sort seems near, the lodgers suddenly become aware of the monster and, when the ensuing hysterical scene is over, the sister announces that the family must get rid of "it." "It" is no longer Gregor; "it" is an alien and burdensome monster; they are all too worn out to cope with "its" presence. Exhausted and in pain, Gregor returns to his room, withdraws slowly into a stupor, and finally, as the dawn breaks, dies.

Thereafter, his body is swept away by the charwoman while the family determine to take the day off and ride out into the country. During the ride, the parents become aware of what an attractive young woman Grete, the sister, has become--marriagable. The story ends as she rises and stretches her young body.

In attempting to interpret this moving but mysterious tale, one is drawn into looking into various aspects of Kafka's own life. His relationship to his father, we know, was of overwhelming importance to him.[5] Certainly, the belligerent, almost murderous father is important in this tale, and Kafka, writing in 1919, three years after its publication, could say to his father, "My writing was all about you."[6] In the same letter, Kafka imagines that his father is answering him, and he becomes for the moment an insect. The father says:

> There is chivalrous fighting, in which the forces of independent opponents are measured against each other . . . . And there is the fighting of vermin, which not only sting but at the same time suck the blood too to sustain their own life . . . . And that is what you are.[7]

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[5]See especially, Franz Kafka, "Letter to his Father," in Dearest Father (Max Brod, ed., Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins, tr.,) New York, 1954, pp. 138ff.

[6]Ibid., p. 177.

[7]Ibid., p. 195.

Even earlier (about 1909), Kafka had played with the idea of transforming a man into an insect. In "Wedding Preparations in the Country,"[8] his hero, Eduard Raban, unwilling to join in a forthcoming celebration, reminds himself that he has had as a child a trick of sending his body into situations, leaving his mind and heart behind. He will do the same now. He will become a stag beetle or a cockchafer and pretend to hibernate while his body goes to the wedding.

In other stories, Kafka uses animals to make clear his vision of the human condition. Perhaps it is wilful blindness that prevents men from recognizing the ways of deity, as the dogs refuse to see human beings in "Investigations of a Dog;" the endless, hopeless search for security is presented in "The Burrow."[9] So we are justified in suspecting that the giant insect in our story has parabolic significance.

Such background information is interesting, but it helps very little in understanding Die Verwandlung as a work of art complete in itself. Why is Gregor Samsa a giant beetle? Since Kafka is careful to show the situation only from Gregor's point of view, we will never be sure of the answer, for Gregor himself

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[8]In Dearest Father, pp. 6-7.

[9]Both in Franz Kafka, Metamorphosis and Other Stories (Willa and Edwin Muir, tr.), Penguin Books, pp. 83ff and 127ff.

does not know it. Perhaps he has been transformed by his unremitting attention to daily details in the busy hierarchical world of a salesman or by his subjugation of his personality to the needs of his family as an ant or a bee is devoted mindlessly to the wellbeing of the nest or the hive. On the other hand, perhaps he has become an alien creature because he has ceased to be a member of the family. While working ceaselessly for the family's wellbeing, he is a lonely outcast, nostalgically remembering the evening conversations about the dining table, but absorbed only in his bills of sale and his woodworking. Significantly, even the photograph he cherishes is not that of sister or sweetheart, nor even of a girl he knows. It is clipped from an illustrated paper. Perhaps his insect form is indicative of his alienation from all humanity. Perhaps again, it is the father's dislike and contempt, displayed throughout the story, which have changed Gregor into the creature his father believes him to be. In my opinion, the metamorphosis, a richly complex figure is meant to suggest all these ideas and to suggest them simultaneously, but the importance of the metamorphosis seems to lie, not in its cause, but in its effect. The beetle--Gregor changes within himself to conform to his outward shape.

The metamorphosis in Kafka's story differs from those we have previously studied in that the physical

change is complete when the story opens. What the reader is concerned with is Gregor's attempts to cope with his nightmarish condition. One of the devices Kafka uses most effectively to emphasize these efforts is that of light symbolism. Gregor first awakes into a morning of heavy fog. While he struggles to avoid realization of what has happened to him, the fog remains, but when, after heroic effort, he opens his door and faces his family, sees and is seen, the day brightens. Thereafter, however, as Gregor, in a well-meaning attempt to avoid troubling his family, retreats further and further from them, his vision slowly dims. Eventually, he sees the world outside his window as gray sky blended with gray land. The fog has returned, but it is from within Gregor.

As Gregor retreats more and more from his family, as he progressively eats less and less, he comes to spend almost all his time in the darkest corner of his room. At first, he has hovered near the parlour door of an evening when the lamplight shone underneath, but eventually, even when the door is left open, he lies in the dark in the far corner of his room. At the climax of the story, Gregor is drawn once more into the light. This time, it is lamplight, humanity's defense against the night, that draws him, along with the sound of conversation and, especially, of music.

Feeling that he can not be quite a monster when the music moves him so, Gregor, almost unconsciously, creeps through the door into the lighted room, only to cause a scene of horror. When he hears his sister announce that "it" must go, he acknowledges inwardly the rightness of her judgment, withdraws painfully into the dark and into a stupor. As the first light of dawn enters the room, he dies. When Gregor is dead, swept out with the trash, the daylight is bright; the spring sun shines.

Food symbolism is also important, though more difficult to interpret. Grete, the sister, at first brings Gregor bread and milk--healthy, human food--but Gregor is nauseated by the dish. When she returns with other food, it is molding cheese and rotting vegetables that Gregor eats with pleasure. Daily thereafter, his appetite lessens--when he dies it is at least partly of starvation--but we never know what is the food he needs. The charwoman calls him a dungbeetle, and perhaps she is right. Yet the nearest Gregor feels to the food he craves is when he hears his sister's music. In his retreat to the dark, in his preference for spoiled food, Gregor has become a true beetle, but the soul of the man he once was is still alive enough to want to hear the music, and it is that man's soul which surrenders to death to remove the burden of his presence from his family.

Not only, however, does Gregor change. His family change too. The father, inimical, belligerent, but ineffectual, becomes a self-important wage-earner, the true head of the house. The mother, a helpless, asthmatic, neurotic, who yet loves Gregor, learns to help with the wage-earning and to be glad when Gregor is dead. Grete, at first the most understanding of all the family and the kindest, becomes less and less gentle, less and less concerned, until, near the end of the story, she is shaking her fist at Gregor as the father had done when the story started.

As the story ends, Gregor has made his final sacrifice for the family. In learning to die, he has removed the alien personality. The other members of the family, however, have learned to live. As they fare forth for a bright spring day in the country, even the mother has come alive and can look with love and wonder at her blooming daughter and think of the start of a new cycle of life. Each person has reacted as his own nature compelled him to the burden of Gregor, but they are as one in their relief at his death.

In this story, Kafka may have used metamorphosis as a figure for the plight of the alienated, the different, whether the man of genius or the victim of great misfortune. Such a person is as much of an

encumbrance on normally healthy human beings as would be a giant cockroach. The emotional changes within the victim prepare him for the death which is the only gift he can bring to those he loves. Those who receive his gift, however, are the tribe, ceaselessly affirming the goodness of life.

Shortly after the publication of Kafka's story, a second work of metamorphosis appeared, David Garnett's Lady Into Fox (1924). This novelette was widely admired at the time of its publication and received, in addition to enthusiastic reviews, the Hawthornden and the James Tait Black memorial prizes. It was praised by Virginia Woolf, George Moore, H. G. Wells, and Joseph Conrad.

As a work of art, indeed, Lady Into Fox is almost flawless. There is not a wasted paragraph, not even a wasted word in the tale. On page 5, Mrs. Tebrick becomes a fox; on page 90, Mrs. Tebrick is dead. In the intervening pages, we have all the story, told in a quiet, slightly formal style, calculated to allay the reader's disbelief and to make all the more effective the marvellous events recounted.

The plot of the tale is this: Mrs. Tebrick, née Silvia Fox, has grown up in an isolated manor, far removed from human society. Her guardians and instructors have been her uncle, a Canon, and her governess, for her mother died very young and her father is

bedridden. How she met Mr. Tebrick we are not sure, but it was probably through her uncle, the Canon.

Mrs. Tebrick, at the time of her marriage, is a remarkably beautiful woman--small, delicate of hand and foot, brownskinned and dark haired, though the hair shows a glint of red. Her manner is reserved "almost to shyness,"[10] but she is self-possessed and wellbred. There is no history of unusual behavior in childhood, if one excepts her vomiting at the age of ten, upon being "blooded" after her first fox hunt. She has, however, ridden to hounds since her marriage in order to please her husband.

This, then, is the lady whom we discover as the story opens strolling with her new husband in the autumn woods. There is the sound of baying hounds, and Mr. Tebrick starts hurrying toward an opening from which they will be able to see the hunt go by. Mrs. Tebrick seems to hold back and, suddenly, she cries out, snatching her hand from his. Looking back, Mr. Tebrick sees only a bright red fox where his wife should have been.

Believing that he recognizes his wife's glance in the vixen's eyes, Mr. Tebrick gathers the animal into his arms where she weeps copiously and exchanges kisses with him. Smuggling her under his jacket, he

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[10]David Garnett, Lady Into Fox, New York, 1966, p. 4.

carries her back to the manor house, though not without arousing the two house dogs, who scent fox and bark furiously. Mr. Tebrick deposits the vixen in his bedroom, then descends the stairs to dismiss his servants with a trumped-up tale and to shoot the dogs. Thereafter, he is alone with his fox-wife.

At first, Silvia is more woman than vixen. She indicates her desire for clothing. She wishes to be carried to avoid walking on all fours. She sits at table and drinks tea from a saucer, eating bread and butter from Mr. Tebrick's hand. Her first concession to her animal nature, indeed, comes as a concomitant of her womanliness. In her eagerness to help her husband go properly about the housekeeping, she gets down onto her four feet to follow him freely about the house and indicate his mistakes with gestures.

It is not long, however, before the fox begins to be the dominant force in the vixen's nature. When Mr. Tebrick reads aloud, he discovers that she is more interested in watching the movements of their pet dove than in hearing the story. When she goes outdoors for the first time, she delights in frightening the ducks on the pond, although she does not yet attempt to harm them. But a little later, when Mr. Tebrick allows her the opportunity to kill a hare, she does so as soon as his back is turned and eats the animal--hair, bones,

and all. Nevertheless, Silvia remains part woman, seeking to soothe her husband's feelings by listening to his music, playing cards, or gazing at stereoptican slides.

At last, however, she grows frantic to leave the house and become part of the wild life in the surrounding woodland. Neither affection nor walls will hold her. Mr. Tebrick, recognizing something of her anguish, still tries to protect her from herself. On one occasion, he catches her as she attempts to leap over the garden wall, and she falls, neck twisted under her, apparently dead. Half-mad with grief, Mr. Tebrick weeps and curses, goes into the house to fetch a razor. But when he returns, ready to kill himself over the body of his vixen, the body has disappeared. The live fox is trapped in the fowl yard, where she has run as soon as he left her.

Eventually, Mr. Tebrick is unable to withstand Silvia's obvious distress and, himself, opens the gate for her. She runs off, and, though he searches, he is unable to find her again until she willingly shows herself in the spring. She leads him to her burrow where she has five charming cubs. Thereafter, Mr. Tebrick becomes one with the fox family. He knows each cub as an individual. He plays with them,

hunts with them, learns the ways of the wild. At last, he is living more in the woods with the foxes than in the world of men.

When he recognizes the dog fox which is the father of the cubs, he asks himself whether there is any difference between the love he feels for Silvia and her cubs and the love the fox feels. After all, each would lay down his life for the family, and each finds his greatest happiness in their company. Again, looking at the cubs at play, he considers the nature of sin. The cubs, he thinks, are quite innocent, for they can be only as God made them. Only man can sin. He would wish to lose his manhood and become like the animals.

Nevertheless, he cannot conquer his human concern about the future of the vixen and her cubs. This very concern causes him to spend more and more time with them, until he is hardly returning to the world of men at all, except for food supplies. By this time, he actually runs like an animal, hunched over, touching his hands frequently to the ground. Most nights, he sleeps on the ground, where he can protect the burrow.

One morning, however, he awakens, cold and faint with hunger. Mist fills the valleys. Autumn has returned. The foxes have disappeared, and the chilled, starving Tebrick returns to his house. It is only

hours later that he hears the beat of horses' hooves and the baying of hounds and realizes that the first hunt of the season has begun.

In a panic, Tebrick opens his hedges to provide scapeholes for foxes, fixing bars across the gates to keep out horsemen. The hunt draws nearer. Suddenly, he sees Silvia, just ahead of the pack of hounds. She runs through the gate and leaps into his arms. The hounds, however, are upon her and bear her with Mr. Tebrick to earth. There is one wild scream, as of a woman in despair. When the huntsmen succeed in beating off the hounds, the vixen is dead and Mr. Tebrick badly wounded. He is for some months quite mad, but eventually recovers.

The tale, though short and apparently simple, is highly effective, with a strong emotional impact. When one seeks to determine the reason for this impact, however, it is difficult to do so. The first question that occurs is whether the tale is one of madness. Perhaps Mr. Tebrick's neighbors were right all along when they said he was mad. Perhaps his wife really had run away, and the fox he cared for so lovingly was only a fox.

The story, however, is too circumstantial for such an interpretation. The fox's behaviour, at least at first, is too unfoxlike. The metamorphosis must be

taken as real. The body of Silvia Fox Tebrick did indeed become the body of a fox, and, in the months that followed, her soul became more and more foxlike, until she was, apparently, as much an animal as if she had been born one. But there is the scream with which she dies. The witnesses say it was a woman's scream.

If Lady Into Fox is not the story of a madman's delusion, what is it? Vincent Starrett, in his introduction to the present edition, calls it a parable and a fable, but he adds that it is told "without obvious allegorical significance."[11] Garnett himself makes the usual author's disclaimer of any parabolic intent:

> The story was written not as a fantasy, or as an allegory, but for its own sake. It was not until many years later that it occurred to me that the subject was a reductio ad absurdam of marital fidelity.[12]

In spite of the disclaimer, one cannot avoid the feelings that the story is parabolic, that such an obviously absurd tale could not arouse such strong emotional response if its characters and events were not somehow symbolic of the human condition. In attempting to define or to uncover this symbolism, one's mind returns again and again to one of the early

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[11]Vincent Starrett, Introduction to the Present Edition (f 5/v).

[12]Author's Note to the Present Edition (f 6/r).

scenes: Mr. Tebrick, having shut the new made vixen in his bedroom, descends to the courtyard and calmly, methodically, ruthlessly, kills his two dogs, both pets of long standing, the one having belonged to Silvia before her marriage, the other to Mr. Tebrick.

Granted that it is practically inconvenient, even perhaps impossible, for a fox to live where there are dogs, the notion of an English country gentleman's shooting his faithful pets without even a quiver of regret is startling. If, however, we turn to the Bestiary or to the more modern Dictionary of Symbols, we find a clue to what may be the meaning of this scene. The dog, we learn, is a symbol of fidelity and, particularly, of faithful guardianship. He is, indeed, often used as a figure of the priesthood, for priests are the faithful guardians of the souls of their flocks.[13]

The fox, on the other hand, is noted for his wily, untrustworthy nature, particularly his habit of "playing dead," and is often a symbol for the devil, that wily thief, against whose depradations the priest faithfully acts as watchdog.[14] Does this traditional wiliness in the cause of evil not explain Garnett's emphasis on the increasing untrustworthiness of the

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[13]T. H. White, Bestiary, pp. 61 ff, and Cirlot, Dictionary, p. 80.

[14]Bestiary, p. 53; Dictionary, p. 108.

fox-woman? Mr. Tebrick first becomes aware that he must get rid of the pet dove, for he cannot trust Silvia not to kill it at the first opportunity, though he could so trust any trained dog. Later, when she has almost broken his heart by pretending death, Mr. Tebrick is crushed by his realization of her deceitfulness, not being, Garnett says, like so many men, accustomed to a deceitful wife.

Consideration of the figures of dog and fox leads to still another obvious difference between them. The dog is the trained companion of man, his wild origins all but forgotten. The fox is all wildness, a creature of the forest and of instinct.

It seems possible, therefore, that, in killing his dogs, Mr. Tebrick is destroying civilized restraints, whether in the form of ideas of marital fidelity or religious principles, in an effort to protect and to remain himself faithful to a wife who has taken on the form of untutored nature, freedom from the restraints of civilization. That she is also a form of Evil is apparent as we watch Mr. Tebrick's degeneration as he associates with her. He becomes less and less human until, at the end of the story, he is an unwashed, half-starved, crouching savage whose separation from his obsession sends him into outright madness.

If this were all the story, however, one would come away from the reading with a sense of revulsion. That one does not is the result of Garnett's realization that no situation is as simple as this sort of analysis would indicate. Throughout the tale, Silvia retains much of her charm. She is affectionate and anxious to please. She is motherly. Throughout, there are hints that the woman trapped inside the animal is grieving and wishing to escape. Her single scream of despair as the hounds find her throat may be her cry of despair that now she can never do so.

The last (1961) of our modern examples of the use of metamorphosis is Sylva, a novel by the French novelist and philosopher, Vercors. In this apparently slight work, Vercors tells a charming tale of a young fox changed into a young woman, reversing the direction of Garnett's metamorphosis. Instead of lady-into-fox, we have fox-into-lady: Albert Richwock, a young bachelor, returning at twilight to his isolated country home, hears the hunt in full cry at the edge of his field. The hounds are obviously about to make the kill. Suddenly, the barking ceases; the hounds have lost the scent; and at Richwick's feet, half caught in his hedge, lies a naked woman. She is scratched and bleeding, bruised, and dirty, but when Richwick tries to pick her up she struggles and bares her

teeth. She is too exhausted to escape, however, and Richwick bears her to his house to bathe and tend her, observing in the process that she is young and delicately made, with tawny skin, high cheekbones, almond eyes, and a mass of golden-red hair. Unwilling though he is to believe it, what Richwick bears in his arms was, ten minutes earlier, a fox.

The remainder of the novel is concerned with the process by which the vixen in woman's body becomes a real woman, with the process balanced against the gradual dehumanization of another character, a woman who is using drugs to escape her intellect and emotions. Step by step, we watch the taming process as the young Sylva is "housebroken," taught to eat at table and to wear clothes. When she has learned these things, however, she is still at heart a fox, longing to escape to her native woods and dismayed to find she is no longer accepted there.

Gradually, the fox-woman learns more and more. She speaks in simple sentences and performs simple household duties, but her words and actions are all connected with satisfying some physical desire. There is no indication that she thinks in any sort of abstract way or questions her world. She is affectionate, but in the way a cat is affectionate, seeking only protection and companionship, with some sexual overtones.

It is not until she is forced to recognize herself in a mirror that she becomes self aware; and it is not until she realizes that she and her guardians must die, as her dog has died, that she questions the universe. It is then that she becomes fully human, capable of human love, and in her rebellious cry for knowledge, capable of reason.

Vercors does not end the story here, however. Sylva becomes pregnant and gives birth, not to a human child, but to a fox cub.

Fortunately for our purposes, Vercors has discussed this novel at length in an exchange of letters with his friend, Paul Misraki.[15] These letters make clear that Vercors, who has been long concerned with the problem of what constitutes humanity, what, if anything, divides man from the other mammals, has given us in Sylva a parable of the human condition as he perceives it.

As Vercors puts the problem, the usual definition of man as an upright mammal possessed of intelligence and an articulated language does not really define, for many animals reason, some quite adstractly, and numerous birds and apes have articulated languages. Nor does the use of tools really

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[15]Vercors et Paul Misraki, Les Chemins de l'Etre (Une Discussion), Paris, 1965.

separate man from the beasts. Many kinds of animals use a simple tool. In fact, some animals excell some human beings in the very qualities we are accustomed to assume mark humanity. It is the uses to which intelligence, language, and tools are put which distinguish the human being. Man is the only animal to seek to understand himself, his world, and the reason for his existence.

> Prenons donc l'homme à sa limite la plus primitive, celle où il se distingue à peine de l'anthropoide Le pygmeé de nos jours peut encore nous en donner une image, puisque dans presques tous les domaines, il est inférieur à certains animaux: moins éducable que l'éléphant, moins adroit que le chimpanzé, moins ingénieux d'apparence que le castor constructeur de villages, de digues, de canaux et d'écluses. Ceci confirme bien que ce n'est pas dans ces divers domaines que l'homme se distingue essentiellement des animaux. Mais il est une chose que fait le pygmée et que nul animal ne fit jamais; il lance au ciel des imprécations.
>
> Take man at his most primitive, when he can hardly be distinguished from the ape. The modern pigmy can still give us an image of him, since in almost every domain, he is inferior to certain animals; less teachable than the elephant, less adroit than the chimpanzee, apparently less ingenious than the beaver, builder of villages, dikes, canals, and locks. This confirms indeed that it is not in these diverse domains that man is essentially distinguished from the animals. But there is one thing the pigmy does that no animal ever does: he shouts imprecations at heaven.[16]

To pray or to curse is for Vercors the most obvious example of the kind of mental activity which does distinguish man from the animals, for to do either is to conceive of the possibility that the order of things can

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[16]Vercors, Plus ou Moins Homme, Paris, 1950, p. 19.

be changed. Man sees the world as separate from himself. He feels his own ignorance, in particular his ignorance about his own existence, and he rebels at that ignorance. He actively wills to know.

In Sylva's transformation in a moment of complete terror from fox to woman, then, we have a metaphor for the first wrenching away of man from his simple life as an unthinking part of nature. In her response to training, there is a parallel to the learned responses of members of the most primitive societies forced into cooperation for the sake of a common food supply. In her hysterical and destructive response to recognizing her own individuality when she recognizes herself in the mirror, there is the loneliness and fear of Neanderthal man recognizing his naked weakness through the glances and gestures of others. But, though Sylva has broken from the forest, the world of animals, though she has learned to live and cooperate with others, though she has recognized her own individuality, she has not taken the last step into full humanity.

This comes when, recognizing painfully that her former playmate, the dog, can not be made to play again, she makes the mental leap to ask about her other playmate, Bonney (Richwick), then moves on to ask, "Et Sylva?" It is the rebellion against the realization that one day both she and Bonney will die that turns her into a truly

loving woman, and it is this same rebellion that causes her to ask "Et pourquoi qu'on existe, tout ca?" (Why does anything exist? p. 271) and "Mais alors, quoi, on ne sait rien?" (But then, don't we know anything? p. 272) Sylva has become a questioning, reasoning, loving human being.

Why then, does Vercors tell us that her baby was a fox. Because, I think, he wants to make his point that humanity is a mental, not a physical state. That the metamophosis was incomplete, that Sylva still has the reproductive system of a vixen, is unimportant beside her emotional and mental womanhood. Perhaps, also, Vercors would remind us that each newborn infant is the animal man once was and must learn, in the process of growing up, to be a human being.

Although in this chapter three tales have been studied together, they are not all the same type. Die Verwandlung and Lady Into Fox are, in the final analysis, hermetic. What the concept of insecthood meant to Kafka we shall never know precisely, just as we cannot be sure what the idea of foxiness or of animality in general means to Garnett. Each of us is free to find his own meaning in these works. Sylva, on the other hand, resembles somewhat a medieval piece in that there are hints throughout, becoming at times almost explicit explanations, of Vercors's essential

concern, and our interpretation is confirmed by a study of the author's other works. Kafka and Garnett, it seems to me, have worked somewhat in the tradition of the Symbolists. Vercors has drawn from a much earlier tradition.

Nevertheless, when we first consider the three modern examples of metamorphosis as a literary device, it seems that they resemble each other more closely than any one of them resembles the majority of the previous works we have studied. For the most part, early authors agree in presenting the change of form as the climax of a psychic process. Lucius has made himself inwardly an ass long before his body turns into that of an ass. Astolfo has lost the life of reason, subjecting himself to that lustfulness which can be the death of the soul, before he is turned into the tree of death. Milton carefully shows Satan's inward resemblance to a serpent before Satan's outward form becomes serpentine. All the early authors, with the exception of Ovid, perhaps, in certain episodes of the Metamorphosis, seem to follow the Platonic concept that the soul imprints herself to some degree on the body, or, as Spenser puts it:

> So, every spirit as it is most pure,
> And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
> So it the fairer body doth procure

> To habit in, and it more fairly dight
> With cheareful grace and amiable sight.
> For of the soule the body forme doth take:
> For soule is forme and doth the bodie make.[17]

Spenser, of course, is thinking only of human bodies. It is but an extension of the idea, however, to say that the soul which has become animal-like or plant-like could turn the body into that of an animal or a plant. It is because his soul is wolf-like that Lycaon becomes a wolf; it is because his soul is asinine that Lucius becomes an ass.

In the three modern stories, on the other hand, either metamorphosis has taken place before the story begins, as in Kafka, or it happens very early in the tale, as in Garnett and Vercors, and we are given no opportunity to make a real judgment as to the qualities of soul that may have brought it about. Instead, our attention is directed to the gradual inner changes that result from the metamorphosis. The soul, one might say, is, in these stories, formed by the body.

In keeping with the two different philosophical points of view are the two different methods of presenting the physical process of metamorphosis. In the modern stories there is no mention of process. Gregor Samsa awakens one morning to find that he is a cockroach;

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[17]Edmund Spenser, "An Hymne in Honour of Beautie," in The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition (Greenlaw et al) Baltimore, 1943, VII, 207, ll. 127-33.

Silvia Tebrick becomes, between one breath and the next, a fox; Vercors's Silva is a fox as she starts through the hedge, a woman as she emerges from it. Metamorphosis is instantaneous.

In the earlier stories, however, the process of bodily change is often presented in great detail. Daphne first feels numbness, then the growth of bark on her sides, then her hair changing to leaves. Lucius tells us how first his hair coarsens, then his skin thickens, next his fingers and toes become hooves, while from the end of his back grows a great tail, and so on, until he is the complete ass. Dante's man-serpents, too, change form gradually, as does Milton's Satan:

> His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
> His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
> Each other, till supplanted down he fell
> A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
> Reluctant, but in vain . . . .[18]

There is another, more subtle, difference between the two sets of stories. In the earlier works, the essential consciousness or self remains unchanged. The Io who has a cow's body is the same Io that Jupiter seduced. Lucius inside the ass is still Lucius. In Die Verwandlung, however, Gregor Samsa develops more and more nearly the consciousness of an insect; in Garnett's tale, Silvia develops more and more nearly

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[18] Paradise Lost, X, 511-515.

the instincts of a fox; in Vercors's work, Sylva becomes a human being. In Kafka and Garnett, however, the inner change, is not quite complete: Gregor Samsa is still drawn to the music, is capable of self-sacrifice: Silvia screams like a woman. The body changes the soul, though it does not do so absolutely. Sylva, on the other hand, although physically still part fox, has acquired completely the soul of a woman.

In their apparent reasonlessness, their suddenness, and their subsequent spiritual effects, the modern metamorphoses resemble more closely the rare upward change of the classical authors than the more common downward change into animal or plant. We are not told what Gregor has done, if anything, to cause his transformation. Silvia Tebrick has apparently done nothing to cause hers, nor has the fox which became Sylva. One thinks of Deucalion and Pyhrra and the stones which become men at the command of the goddess. Certainly, the stones had done nothing to precipitate this change. Nor had Pygmalion's ivory statue done anything to cause her transformation. It was simply the will of Venus. But in the lengthiest and most circumstantial treatment of upward metamorphosis, Lucius's transformation from ass to man in the Golden Ass, Lucius has done something to permit, if not actually to cause, the change.

Throughout the latter part of the book, he becomes more and more nearly human in both his virtues and his vices. He no longer seeks to couple with mares, but has an affair with a noble lady. He eats human food. When, by running away rather than submit to the public embrace of a murderess, he rejects vice and seeks instead the cleansing sea, he has made it possible for Isis to show herself to him and bestow that grace which effects the final transformation.

Looking at the other early upward transformations in the light of this one, it becomes apparent that in each case, someone has indeed acted to permit the power of deity to act. It is the simple piety of Deucalion and Pyhrra which the goddess rewards by giving them companions. It is Pygmalion's purehearted worship and his gentle wooing of his ivory maiden which induce Venus to make the statue into warm and loving flesh. The objects have been made human because of the actions of human beings, just as Fraelissa was turned into a tree by Fradubio's neglect.

In the early metamorphosis, then, each change can be considered the work of a human being's heart or soul, made physically evident by the will of a deity or some other outward force. In the modern stories there is no mention of a deity who might effect the transformation, although some outward force seems to

be implicit in each story. It is possible that there was some psychological force at work also. That two of the victims of metamorphosis are named so similarly may, perhaps, give us a clue to what that force was. Sylva or Sylvia derives, of course, from the Latin sylva, a woodland, with all its connotations of wildness or savagery, a double meaning which Dante delights in in the "selva selvaggia" of the opening of the Inferno. We have seen how Garnett opposes the dog as a figure for civilization and good to the fox as a symbol for untamed nature and evil. Vercors considers his vixen a woman when she has achieved the ability to love and reason like a woman, when she has the qualities a medieval philosopher would attribute to the soul. Is it not possible, then, that in both these stories we are dealing with the Platonic concept of the dichotomy between soul and body, between the "higher" or spiritual part of man and the "lower" or animal part?

With this possibility in mind, we can return to Die Verwandlung and ask whether it is not a devotion to the life of the body, to the minutiae of this world's business, which has transformed Gregor Samsa into an insect. The animal part of him, that part which craves dung, has all but destroyed the spiritual part. Yet the soul is not quite dead. It reaches out for music,

the "food of the soul," and allows the body to die in a heroic gesture of self-sacrifice. The modern stories, like the earlier ones, are tales of spiritual experience.

The question, however, remains: Why does anybody use a device which is patently absurd, not only to the modern reader but to any educated man after the Fourth Century, B. C.?[19] First, I think, it is necessary that an author wish to express instantaneously a complex of ideas which cannot be so effectively presented if they follow one ofter the other in logical order. These ideas will usually have to do with psychic experience, for such experience is difficult to convey in the language of logic. It is this desire which leads often to the use of simile and metaphor. When we say that a girl is like a flower or a man like a lion, we are drawing upon a common store of concepts to express in the one case the beauty, freshness, and fragility that are shared by the girl and the flower, in the other, the valour, nobility, and generosity supposed to be shared by the man and the lion. We are also saying, by implication, that the emotional experience of being in the girl's presence is like that of looking at a flower, that the presence of the man effects us as would the presence of a lion.

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[19]See, for example, Plato's mockery of the idea that Deity would engage in such games in The Republic, II, 379-381. (F. M. Cornford, tr., The Republic of Plato, pp. 72-74.)

When, moving one step further, into metaphor, we say, "The girl is a flower," we suggest that the qualities the two share are more important than their differences. It is at this point that a second element must enter, the visual imagination. For the artist of strong visual imagination, the statement, "She is a flower," brings to mind a picture in which the slender body becomes a stem, the arms, leaves, the rosy face a blossom. The statement, "He is a lion," calls to mind a real lion with mane, tail, and claws.

In addition to the desire to express a complex of ideas in one bold figure, and in addition to a strong visual imagination, one must have, I believe, a sense of the unity of living things, so that the idea of one form of life being interchanged with another is not totally absurd.

In the mind of primitive man, all creation seems to be alive. A rock, a tree, a bird or animal, is not simply living but possessed of personality. One apologizes to the tree before hewing it down; one weeps while harvesting the wheat; one attempts to placate the spirit of the slain bear. To such a mind, the possibility that a rock should become a man is not inherently impossible, for it possesses already some of man's characteristics. Although this animistic way

of thinking may be laughed at by the sophisticated, it has great strength, and it persisted, side by side with philosophy, throughout the middle ages. One need only to glance at a bestiary where all sorts of intellect, virtue and vice are attributed to animals to see how persistent such ideas are, and St. Francis's Canticle of the Sun is an example of how beautiful this thinking can be:

> Praised be my Lord for brother fire,
> By that which Thou lightest up the dark.
> And fair is he and gay and mighty and strong.[20]

The animism became less and less important in the great centuries of the "new science" and the triumph of reason may help to explain the disappearance after 1700 of metamorphosis in literature, although the declining popularity of all forms of parabolic writing was obviously also an important factor. Literature, particularly prose, aimed at logical clarity of expression rather than dreamy emotionalism. This emphasis on logical clarity accompanies, is perhaps an outgrowth of, the kind of scientific theory exemplified by Linnaeus, with his ordering of species, geni, and phyla, which renders impossible the idea of moving from one rigidly defined category to another.

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[20]St. Francis of Assisi, Canticle of the Sun (P. Robinson, tr.) in Karl F. Thompson (ed.), Classics of Western Thought, New York and Burlingame, II, 53.

With the work of Darwin, Freud, and their followers, however, science has brought in through the back door the concept it had tossed out through the front, though, of course, in somewhat altered form. Modern man may not attribute human characteristics to animals (though many still do), but he is very much aware of the animal characteristics of people. Although he may not consciously hold the beliefs of primitive animism, the idea that one form of life flows into another and that the instincts and desires of human beings differ little from those of the other animals is a part of his thinking. We are all aware that under our civilized exterior sleeps and dreams a very primitive animal indeed and that he sometimes threatens to awake. As early as 1927, Hermann Hesse was writing:

> And so the Steppenwolf had two natures, a human and a wolfish one. This was his fate, and it may be that it was not a very exceptional one. There must have been many men who have had a good deal of the dog or the fox, of the fish or the serpent in them . . . .[21]

That the animal is there we know; that he threatens our hard-won humanity we fear.

The increased awareness of our animal nature has influenced the literary mind as has scientific inquiry

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[21]Hermann Hesse, Steppenwolf (Basil Creighton, tr., Joseph Mileck, Horst Frenz, eds.), New York, 1963, pp. 41-42.

and speculation about the blurred boundaries between forms of life and even, in the case of viruses, between life and non-life. But there has also been another influence at work. The relatively optimistic view of man prevalent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with its emphasis on the invincibility of reason, the perfectability of man, the inevitability of progress, the view which produced Dickens and Zola, Defoe and Flaubert, with their underlying assumption that, with a little better management, all might yet be well--this view has disappeared from serious literature. Instead, the artist of the twentieth century, who has seen the triumph of evil, whether in the form of a Hitler or of a soulless bureaucracy, has returned to something like the world view of the Platonists and the Christian philosophers. He looks upon the human condition with fear and pessimism, pinning whatever hopes he has to the triumph of the individual soul over its besetting circumstance.

In his effort to analyze, to understand, to express his view of the human predicament, he may find himself seeking to escape from the details of the here and now, from the "accidents" as a medieval philosopher would have said, into the world of essential being. In so doing, he returns, perhaps without the consciousl realization of what he is

doing, to the antique modes. Kafka, for instance, uses cue-names and the quest motif, as well as the dream vision, in both The Trial and The Castle as he struggles to come to terms with death and the existence of God in a senseless world. Camus's stranger is an Everyman forced out of his animal stupor into spiritual awareness. Golding uses a locus amoenus, an island-other-world, as the scene for his dismal realization of man's essential evil, and he uses a near-metamorphosis in the murder scene, where Simon (a figure for spiritual truth) becomes in the boys' eyes a beast.[22]

A renewed sense of the reality of evil has joined with an awareness of man's double nature, the struggle within between beast and angel to require the use of that figurative language which always seems to be necessary when one describes the psychomachia. The antique modes have become useful again, nor is it surprising that, among those modes, the startling figure of metamorphosis has found a place.

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[22]Franz Kafka, The Trial, New York, 1956, and The Castle, New York, 1966; Albert Camus, L'Étranger, New York, 1955; William Golding, Lord of the Flies, New York, 1959.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

OVID'S VERSIONS OF THREE MYTHS

APPENDIX I

OVID'S VERSIONS OF THREE MYTHS

DAPHNE (I, 452 ff)

Primus amor Phoebi Daphne Peneia, quem non
fors ignara dedit, sed saeva Cupidinis ira,
Delius hunc nuper, victa serpente superbus,
viderat adducto flectentem cornua nervo
"quid" que "tibi, lascive puer, cum fortibus armis?"
dixerat: "ista decent umeros gestamina nostros,
qui dare certa ferae, dare vulnera possumus hosti,
qui modo pestifero toto iugera ventre prementem
stravimus innumeris tumidum Pythona sagittis.
tu face nescio quos esto contentus amores
inritare tua, nec laudes adsere nostras!"
filius huic Veneris "figat tuus omnia, Phoebe,
te meus arcus" ait; "quantoque animalia cedunt
cuncta deo, tanto minor est tua gloria nostra."
dixit et eliso percussis aere pennis
impiger umbrosa Parnasi constitit arce
eque sagittifera prompsit duo tela pharetra
diversorum operum: fugat hoc, facit illud amorem;
quod facit, auratum est et cuspide fulget acuta,
quod fugat, obtusum est et habet sub harundine plumbum.
hoc deus in nympha Peneide fixit, at illo
laesit Apollineas traiecta per ossa medullas;
protinus alter amat, fugit altera nomen amantis
silvarum latebris capitivarumque ferarum
exuviis gaudens innuptaeque aemula Phoebes:
vitta coercebat positos sine lege capillos.
multi illam petiere, illa aversata petentes
impatiens expersque viri nemora avia lustrat
nec, quid Hymen, quid Amor, quid sint conubia curat.
saepe pater dixit: "generum mihi, filia, debes,"
saepe pater dixit: "debes mihi, nata, nepotes";
illa velut crimen taedas exosa iugales
pulchra verecundo suffunditur ora rubore
inque patris blandis haerens cervice lacertis
"da mihi perpetua, genitor carissime," dixit
"virginitate frui! dedit hoc pater ante Dianae."

ille quidem obsequitur, sed te decor iste quod optas
esse vetat, votoque tuo tua forma repugnat:
Phoebus amat visaeque cupit conubia Daphnes,
quodque cupit, sperat, suaque illum oracula fallunt,
utque leves stipulae demptis adolentur aristis,
ut facibus saepes ardent, quas forte viator
vel nimis admovit vel iam sub luce reliquit,
sic deus in flammas abiit, sic pectore toto
uritur et sterilem sperando nutrit amorem.
spectat inornatos collo pendere capillos
et "quid, si comantur?" ait. videt igne micantes
sideribus similes oculos, videt oscula, quae non
est vidisse satis; laudat digitosque manusque
bracchiaque et nudos media plus parte lacertos;
si qua latent, meliora putat. fugit ocior aura
illa levi neque ad haec revocantis verba resistit:
"nympha, precor, Penei, mane! non insequor hostis;
nympha, mane! sic agna lupum, sic cerva leonem,
sic aquilam penna fugiunt trepidante columbae,
hostes quaeque suos: amor est mihi causa sequendi!
me miserum! ne prona cadas indignave laedi
crura notent sentes et sim tibi causa doloris!
aspera, qua properas, loca sunt: moderatius, oro,
curre fugamque inhibe, moderatius insequar ipse.
cui placeas, inquire tamen: non incola montis,
non ego sum pastor, non hic armenta gregresque
horridus observo. nescis, temeraria, nescis,
quem fugias, ideoque fugis: mihi Delphica tellus
et Claros et Tenedos Patareaque regia servit;
Iuppiter est genitor; per me, quod eritque fuitque
estque, patet; per me concordant carmina nervis.
certa quidem nostra est, nostra tamen una sagitta
certior, in vacuo quae vulnera pectore fecit!
inventum medicina meum est, opiferque per orbem
dicor, et herbarum subiecta potentia nobis.
ei mihi, quod nullis amor est sanabilis herbis
nec prosunt domino, quae prosunt omnibus, artes!"

Plura locuturum timido Peneia cursu
fugit cumque ipso verba inperfecta reliquit,
tum quoque visa decens; nudabant corpora venti,
obviaque adversas vibrabant flamina vestes,
et levis impulsos retro dabat aura capillos,
auctaque forma fuga est. sed enim non sustinet ultra
perdere blanditias iuvenis deus, utque movebat
ipse amor, admisso sequitur vestigia passu.
ut canis in vacuo leporem cum Gallicus arvo
vidit, et hic praedam pedibus petit, ille salutem;
alter inhaesuro similis iam iamque tenere
sperat et extento stringit vestigia rostro,
alter in ambiguo est, an sit conprensus, et ipsis
morsibus eripitur tangentiaque ora relinquit:

sic deus et virgo est hic spe celer, illa timore.
qui tamen insequitur pennis adiutus Amoris,
ocior est requiemque negat tergoque fugacis
inminet et crinem sparsum cervicibus adflat.
viribus absumptis expalluit illa citaeque
victa labore fugae spectans Peneidas undas
"fer, pater," inquit "opem! si flumina numen habetis,
qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram!"
vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus,
mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro,
in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt,
pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret,
ora cacumen habet: remanet nitor unus in illa.

Hanc quoque Phoebus amat positaque in stipite dextra
sentit adhuc trepidare novo sub cortice pectus
conplexusque suis ramos ut membra lacertis
oscula dat ligno; refugit tamen oscula lignum.
cui deus "at, quoniam coniunx mea non potes esse,
arbor eris certe" dixit "mea! semper habebunt
te coma, te citharae, te nostrae, laure, pharetrae;
tu ducibus Latiis aderis cum laeta Triumphum
vox canet et visent longas Capitolia pompas;
postibus Augustis eadem fidissima custos
ante fores stabis mediamque tuebere quercum,
utque meum intonsis caput est iuvenale capillis,
tu quoque perpetuos semper gere frondis honores!"
finierat Paean: factis modo laurea ramis
adnuit utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen.

Daphne, Peneus's daughter, was Phoebus's first love,
a love caused, not by unknowing chance, but by the
savage wrath of Cupid. The Delian, filled with pride
over the conquered serpent, recently had seen Cupid
flexing his tight-strung bow. "Naughty boy," he said,
"What are you doing with such mighty arms? Such burdens
befit my shoulders, I who can give battle to wild
animals, wounds to enemies, I who have but now laid
dead, swollen with my arrows, the huge Python
of disease-breeding belly. Be satisfied to light
some sort of love-fires with your torch. Don't lay
claim to my honors." Venus's son replied, "Your
arrow may pierce all animals, Phoebus, but mine will
pierce you, and, by as much as all animals are less
than a god, by so much is your glory less than mine."
Then, striking through the air with beating wings,
he quickly arrived at the shady peak of Parnassus.
From his quiverful of arrows, he drew two darts of
opposite purposes. One puts love to flight, the other

causes love. The one that causes love is golden and its sharp gold point gleams. The one which drives love away is blunt and has lead at the end of its shaft.

This latter the god struck into the nymph, Peneus's daughter; with the former he struck to Apollo's marrow, right through the bones. At once, he loved; she fled the name of love, rejoicing in the depths of the forests and in the hides of captured animals, emulating the virgin Phoebe. A headband controlled her unordered locks. Many sought her, but she, averse to suitors, impatient, and wanting nothing to do with men, wandered the pathless groves--nor did she heed the existence of Hymen or Cupid or the state of marriage. Often her father said, "You owe me a son-in-law, Daughter." Often her father said, "Daughter, you owe me grandsons." She, detesting the nuptial torches like something criminal, reddened for shame over her pretty face. Clinging with her soft arms around her father's neck, she said, "Dearest Father, let me enjoy perpetual virginity. Her father has already granted this to Diana."

He yielded indeed, but your beauty, Daphne, forbade your hope, your appearance was not suited to your prayer. Phoebus loves, at first sight desires to marry, Daphne, and what he desires he hopes for. His own prophecies betray him. And just as the stubble is kindled, as hedges burn with the torches put too near by a traveller, one who leaves at daybreak, so the god lived in flames, so in his heart he was burned, and so, hoping, he fed hopeless love. He looks at the unarrayed hair hanging on the neck, and "What if it were arrayed?" he says. He looks at her eyes shining like stars, at her lips, to look at which is not enough. He praises her fingers, her hands and lower arms and the half-bare upper arms, and what is hidden he deems better. She flees him swifter than the fleeting breeze, nor does she turn back to his recalling words. "Nymph, I pray you, Daughter of Peneus, wait! I am not an enemy who follow. Nymph, wait! So does the lamb flee the wolf, the doe the lion, so doves, wings fluttering, flee the eagle, so every animal its foes. But love causes me to follow you. Oh, miserable me. You might fall down and, guiltless, be hurt. The briars might scratch your legs, and I should have caused you pain. It's rough country you're running through. Run away a little more slowly, I beg, and I will pursue more slowly. Just ask who your suitor is. Through me the lyre-strings harmonize in song. Mine is sure, even though a surer arrow has wounded my carefree heart. Mine is the discovery of medicine, and I am called help-bringer by all the world. Ah me,

that love can be healed by no healthful herbs, that the arts which heal others do not heal their lord.

Peneus's daughter took her frightened flight from more talk and left him with his words unfinished; even now, she seems to be disappearing. The winds were baring her body, opposing winds fluttering her clinging clothes. A light breeze blew her hair behind her. Flight increased her beauty.

But the youthful god holds back no longer, wasting blandishments. So moved was he by love that he followed her track at top speed. Just as, when a Gallic hound sees a hare in an open field he seeks, running, his prey, while the hare runs for safety. The dog, just about to fasten his teeth, now, now hopes to grab, and with outstretched muzzle grazes the tail. The other, in doubt lest he be caught and, snatched from the very teeth, escapes the just-touching jaws. Thus the god and the virgin are sped, he by hope, she by fear. He, however, aided by the wings of love, is swifter. He denies her rest, he is almost over her fleeing back. He breathes on the hair spread on her neck.

Her strength gone, she turns pale, exhausted by the labor of her swift flight. Seeing her father's waters, she cries, "Father, If your stream is divine, make me so that no one desires me. Change, my beauty!" Hardly was her prayer finished when a heavy numbness seized her legs; her soft sides were encircled by thin bark; her hair turned into leaves, her arms grew into branches. Her foot, just now so swift, was sluggishly rooted, her face was a treetop. Only her sleek beauty remained.

Still Phoebus loves her and, putting his right hand on the trunk, he feels the heart still beating beneath the bark. Twining his arms around the branches as if they were arms, he kisses the wood, but it draws away from the kiss. At this the god said, "Although you can not be my bride, you shall certainly be my tree. My hair, my lyre, my quiver, O Laurel, will bear thee. You will cling around Roman generals when the joyful voice sing the Triumph and long processions climb the Capitoline hill. At the gates of Augustus, a most faithful guardian, you will stand before the doors guarding the oak in the middle. And, as my head is that of a youth with uncut hair, so you shall wear your leaves in perpetual beauty. Apollo ceased, and the laurel nodded consent with her newly-made branches, so that her top seemed to moved like a head.

Narcissus (III, 344 ff)

. . . enixa est utero pulcherrima pleno
infantem nymphe, iam tunc qui posset amari,
Narcissumque vocat. de quo consultus, an esset
tempora maturae visurus longa senectae,
fatidicus vates "si se non noverit" inquit.
vana diu visa est vox auguris: exitus illam
resque probat litique genus novitasque furoris.
namque ter ad quinon unum Cephisisus annum
addiderat poteratque puer iuvenisque videri:
multi illum iuvenes, multae cupiere puellae;
sed fuit in tenera tam dura superbia forma,
nulli illum iuvenes, nullae tetigere puellae.
adspicit hunc trepidos agitantem in retia cervos
vocalis nymphe, quae nec reticere loquenti
nec prior ipsa loqui didicit, resonabilis Echo.
Corpus adhuc Echo, non vox erat et tamen usum
garrula non alium, quam nunc habet, oris habebat,
reddere de multis ut verba novissima posset.
fecerat hoc Iuno, quia, cum deprendere posset
sub Iove saepe suo numphas in monte iacentis,
illa deam longo prudens sermone tenebat,
dum fugerent nymphae. postquam hoc Saturnia
sensit,
"huius" ait "linguae, qua sum delusa, potestas
parva tibi dabitur vocisque brevissimus usus,"
reque minas firmat. tamen haec in fine loquendi
ingeminat voces auditaque verba reportat.
ergo ubi narcissum per devia rura vagantem
vidit et incaluit, sequitur vestigia furtim,
quoque magis sequitur, flamma propiore calescit,
non aliter quam cum summis circumlita taedis
admotas rapiunt vivacia sulphura flammas.
a quotiens voluit blandis accedere dictis
et mollis adhibere preces! natura repugnat
nec sinit, incipiat, sed, quod sinit, illa parata est
exspectare sonos, ad quos sua verba remittat.
forte puer comitum seductus ab agmine fido
dixerat: "ecquis adest?" et "adest" responderat
Echo.
hic stupet, utque aciem partes dimittit in omnis,
voce "veni!" magna clamat: vocat illa vocantem.
respicit et rursus nullo veniente "quid" inquit
"me fugis?" et totidem, quot dixit, verba recepit.
perstat et alternae deceptus imagine vocis
"huc coeamus" ait, nullique libentius umquam
responsura sono "coeamus" rettulit Echo
et verbis favet ipsa suis egressaque silva
ibat, ut iniceret sperato bracchia collo;
ille fugit fugiensque "manus conplexibus aufer!
ante" ait "emoriar, quam sit tibi copia nostri";

rettulit illa nihil nisi "sit tibi copia nostri!"
spreta latet silvis pudibundaque frondibus ora
protegit et solis ex illo vivit in antris;
sed tamen haeret amor crescitque dolore repulsae;
et tenuant vigiles corpus miserabile curae
adducitque cutem macies et in aera sucus
corporis omnis abit; vox tantum atque ossa supersunt;
vox manet, ossa ferunt lapidis traxisse figuram.
inde latet silvis nulloque in monte videtur,
omnibus auditur: sonus est, qui vivit in illa.
Sic hanc, sic alias undis aut montibus ortas
lusetat hic nymphas, sic coetus ante viriles;
inde manus aliquis despectus ad aethera tollens
"sic amet ipse licet, sic non potiatur amato!"
dixerat: adsensit precibus Rhamnusia iustis.
fons erat inlimis, nitidis argenteus undis,
quem neque pastores neque pastae monte capellae
contigerant aliudve pecus, quem nulla volucris
nec fera turbarat nec lapsus ab arbore ramus;
gramen erat circa, quod proximus umor alebat,
silvaque sole locum passura tempescere nullo.
hic puer et studio venandi lassus et aestu
procubuit faciemque loci fontemque secutus,
dumque sitim desare cupit, sitis altera crevit,
dumque bibit, visae correptus imagine formae
spem sine corpore amat, corpus putat esse, quod umbra
est.
adstupet ipse sibi vultuque inmotus eodem
haeret, ut e Pario formatum marmore signum;
spectat humi positus geminum, sua lumina, sidus
et dignos Baccho, dignos et Apolline crines
inpubesque genas et eburnea colla decusque
oris et in niveo mixtum candore ruborem,
cunctaque miratur, quibus est mirabilis ipse:
se cupit inprudens et, qui probat, ipse probatur,
dumque petit, petitur, pariterque accendit et ardet.
inrita fallaci quotiens dedit oscula fonti,
in medias quotiens visum captantia collum
bracchia mersit aquas nec se deprendit in illis:
quid videat, nescit; sed quod videt, uritur illo,
atque oculos idem, qui decipit, incitat error.
credule, quid frstra simulacra fugacia captas?
quod petis est nusquam; quod amas, avertere, perdes!
ista repercussae, quam cernis, imaginis umbra est:
nil habet ista sui; tecum venitque manetque;
tecum discedet, si tu discedere possis!
Non illum Cereris, non illum cura quietis
abstrahere inde potest, sed opaca fusus in herba
spectat inexpleto mendacem lumine formam
perque oculos perit ipse suos; paullumque levatus
ad circumstantes tendens sua bracchia silvas
"ecquis, io silvae, crudelius" inquit "amavit?

scitis enim et multis latebra opportuna fuistis.
ecquem, cum vestrae tot agantur saecula vitae,
qui sic tabuerit, longo meministis in aevo?
et placet et video; sed quod videoque placetque,
non tamen invenio: tantus tenet error amantem.
quoque magis doleam, nec nos mare separat ingens
nec via nec montes nec clausis moenia portis;
exigua prohibemur aqua! cupit ipse teneri:
nam quotiens liquidis porreximus oscula lymphis,
hic totiens ad me resupino nititur ore.
posse putes tangi: minimum est, quod amantibus obstat.
quisquis est, hic es! quid me, puer unice, fallis
quove petitus abis? certe nec forma nec aetas
est mea, quam fugias, et amarunt me quoque
nymphae!
spem mihi nescio quam vultu promittis amico,
cumque ego porrexi tibi bracchia, porrigis ultro,
cum risi, adrides; lacrimas quoque saepe notavi
me lacrimante tuas; nutu quoque signa remittis
et, quantum motu formosi suspicor oris,
verba refers aures non pervenientia nostras!
iste ego sum: sensi, nec me mea fallit imago;
uror amore mei: flammas moveoque feroque.
quid faciam? roger anne rogem? quid deinde rogabo?
quod cupio mecum est: inopem me copia fecit.
o utinam a nostro secedere corpore possem!
votum in amante novum, vellem, quod amamus, abesset.
iamque dolor vires adimit, nec tempora vitae
longa meae superant, primoque exstinguor in aeve.
nec mihi mors gravis est posituro morte dolores,
hic qui diligitur, vellem diuturnior esset;
nunc duo concordes anima moriemur in una."
Dixit et ad faciem rediit male sanus eandem
et lacrimis turbavit aquas, obscureque moto
reddita forma lacu est; quam cum vidisset adire,
"quo refugis? remane nec me, crudelis, amantem
desere!" clamavit; "liceat, quod tangere non est,
adspicere et misero praebere alimenta furori!"
dumque dolet, summa vestem deduxit ab ora
nudaque marmoreis percussit pectora palmis.
pectora traxerunt roseum percussa ruborem,
non aliter quam poma solent, quae candida parte,
parte rubent, aut ut variis solet uva racemis
ducere purpureum nondum matura colorem.
quae simul adspexit liquefacta rursus in unda,
non tulit ulterius, sed ut intabescere flavae
igne levi cerae matutinaeque pruinae
sole tepente solent, sic attenuatus amore
liquitur et tecto paullatim carpitur igni;
et neque iam color est mixto candore rubori,
nec vigor et vires et quae modo visa placebant,
nec corpus remanet, quodam quod amaverat Echo.

quae tamen ut vidit quamvis irata memorque
indoluit, quotiensque puer miserabilis "eheu"
dixerat, haec resonis iterabit vocibus "eheu";
cumque suos manibus percusserat ille lacertos,
haec quoque reddebat sonitum plangoris eundem.
ultima vox solitam fuit haec spectantis in undam:
"heu frustra dilecte puer!" totidemque remisit
verba locus, doctoque vale "vale" inquit et Echo.
ille caput viridi fessum submisit in herba,
lumina mors clausit domini mirantia formam:
tum quoque se, postquam est inferna dede receptus,
in Stygia spectabat aqua. Planxere sorores
naides et sectos fratri posuere capillos,
planxerunt dryades; plangentibus absonat Echo.
iamque rogum quassasque faces feretrumque parabant:
nusquam corpus erat; croceum pro corpore florem
inveniunt foliis medium cingentibus albis.

From her full womb the beautiful nymph gave birth
to an infant, even then worthy of love, and she called
him Narcissus. She consulted the fate-speaking prophet
about him, whether he would have a long maturity and
old age. "If he does not know himself, "he replied.
Vain did the voice of the augur seem
for a long time. The event proved it, however,
as did the manner of his death and the strangeness
of his madness. When the son of Cephisus was sixteen
years old and might seem to be either a boy or a man,
many youths, many maidens desired him; but within
that slender form was a pride so rigid that he was
touched by neither youth nor maiden. The sounding
nymph saw him when he was driving frightened deer
into his nets--she who can neither withhold speech,
nor herself speak the first word, resonant Echo.

At that time Echo was a body, not just a voice, but,
although talkative, she had no other use of speech
than she has now; she could repeat out of many words
only the last. June had done this because often,
when she might have surprised nymphs lying with her
Jove on the mountain, Echo would skilfully hold the
goddess in long talk, while the nymphs fled. After-
wards Saturnia realized this and said, "Little power
will be yours from this tongue, by which I have been
deluded, and only the briefest use of your voice."

Events proved her threat. Echo does, however, repeat
the ends of speeches and carries back voices and
the words she hears. Therefore, when she saw Narcissus
wandering about through the countryside and began

to burn with desire, she furtively followed in his footsteps, and the more she followed, the hotter burned her flame, just as quickburning sulfur smeared around the top of a torch catches fire when flames are brought near.

Ah, how often she wishes to approach him with pleasing words and to offer him soft prayers. Her nature forbids this, nor does it permit her to begin, but what it does permit she is prepared for: to await sounds to which she may return her words. It happened that the boy, having strayed from the right path of his companions, said, "Is anyone here?" and "Here", replied Echo. He is amazed and, casting sharp glances in all directions, calls in a loud voice, "Come". She repeats the call. He looks back and, no one coming behind him, he asks, "Why do you fly from me?" and again he receives the words he speaks. He stands still, deceived by the semblance of another voice, and says, "Here let us meet," and Echo, never to reply more willingly to any sound, returned "Let us meet!" And, to help her words, she herself goes out of the woods, hoping to twine her arms about his neck. He flees and, fleeing, says, "Take away your embracing hand! Rather will I die than that my riches should become yours." She replies only, "My riches should become yours."

Scorned, she hides in the wood, covers her shamed face with foliage, and lives from then on in solitary caves. But still her love remains fixed and grows with the pain of refusal; sleepless care wastes her miserable body, her flesh becomes lean, and all the moisture of her body goes away into the air. Only her voice and her bones survive. The voice remains; the bones, having lost their shape, become stones. From thence forth she lurks in the woods and is seen no more on the mountain. She is the sound which dwells in the woods.

Thus did this Narcissus mock her, thus had he mocked other nymphs from the waters and mountains, thus also companies of men. Then, raising his hands to heaven, one of the despised ones said, "Thus may he love, thus may he not be able to be loved!" Nemesis assented to the just prayer.

There was a clear pool, with waters shining silvery, which neither shepherds nor sheep pastured on the mountain came near, nor did any other cattle; which neither bird nor wild beast disturbed, nor a limb fallen from a tree; there was grass around it, nourished

by the nearby water, and never did the wood allow the sun to pass through to heat the place. Here, weary with hunting and the heat, Narcissus leans down, drawn by the beauty of the place and the fountain. While he seeks to quench his thirst another thirst grows. As he drinks, he is struck by the sight of a beautiful form. He loves a bodiless hope; he believes to be a body what is only a shadow. He himself is astounded by himself and remains motionless, with the same expression, as if he were a figure made of Parian marble. He saw the constellation of the twins brought to earth, his eyes, and his curls, worthy of Bacchus, worthy of Apollo, his hairless cheeks, ivory neck, and the great beauty of his mouth, and the blush mingled with snowy white. The whole he admires for that for which he is himself admired. Unknowingly, he desires himself, and he who praises is himself what he praises. Even as he seeks, he is sought. Equally, he burns and causes to burn.

How often he gives, in vain, kisses to the deceiving fountain; how often he plunges his arms into it seeking the neck he sees, without catching himself within them. Whom he sees he does not know, but what he sees causes him to burn, and the very eyes with which he used to deceive cause him to be deceived. Oh credulous one, what vain, fleeting semblance do you capture? What you seek is nowhere; what you love, if you turn, you lose. What you see is the shadow of a reflection. It is nothing in itself. With you it comes, with you it goes; with you it will depart, if you can depart.

No concern for food or rest can draw him from thence. Stretched on the shady grass, he gazes with greedy eyes on the lying form, and with his eyes he kills himself. Rising a little and holding out his arms to the surrounding trees, he asks, "Has any one, O Woods, loved more cruelly? You know, for you have been the convenient hiding place for many. Your life lasts through centuries, do you remember anyone through the long ages who has thus pined away? I am charmed and I see, but that which I see and which charms me I can not come to--such an error holds my love. And I grieve more that neither a great ocean separates us nor a road, nor mountains, nor the closed gates of city walls. We are forbidden by a little water.

He himself desires to be embraced, for whenever I hold out my kiss to the water, he always strains toward me with backflung face. You would think he could be touched, so small a thing it is that separates

us lovers. Whoever it is, come here! Peerless boy, why do you elude me? Where do you go when I seek you? Certainly neither my appearance nor my age is such that you should flee, and many nymphs have loved me! Some little hope you promise with your friendly face. When I hold out my arms to you, you hold out yours; when I smile, you smile at me. I have often seen your tears when I weep. You answer my nod with a nod, and, from the motion of your beautiful lips I believe you reply to me in words that can not reach my ears.

"I am he! I know! I am deceived by my own image. I burn with love of myself. I kindle the flames and suffer from them too. What shall I do? Shall I woo or be wooed? Why woo at all? What I desire is mine. Wealth makes me poor! Oh, that it were possible to leave my body! And--a new prayer for a lover-- I wish that what I love were absent from me. And now grief is draining away my strength; not for long will my life endure. I shall die in my first age. Nor is death important to me, for in death my troubles are put aside. I wish that he whom I love could live longer, but now we two will die together in one breath."

He spoke, then, maddened, turned again to the same image. With his tears he disturbed the waters so that their motion obscured the image. When he saw it disappear, he called, "Where do you flee? Stay, do not desert your lover, cruel one; let me look at what I may not touch, and with that food nourish my unhappy passion." As he grieves he folds back the top of his tunic and beats his bare breast with hands like marble. The blows gave to his breast a rosy glow rather like apples which are often part white, part red, or like unripe grapes on the branch, which take on a purplish color. When he saw that reflected in the waters, he could bear no more, but--as wax melts before a gentle fire, as the morning frost melts in the warmth of the sun--so he melts, wasted away with love, consumed, little by little, by his inward fire.

And now, no longer is his color a mixture of white and red, nor remains strength, vigor, nor pleasing visage, nor even the body which formerly Echo had loved. She, when she sees this, though she is still angry and unforgetful, feels pity. As often as the miserable boy said, "Alas!" She repeated with answering voice, "Alas!" When he beats at his arms with his hands, she also returns the same plaintive sounds. With his last voice, gazing into the familiar

pool, he said, "Alas, boy, loved in vain." The place sent back the same words, and when he said, "Farewell," "Farewell," said Echo. He lays his tired head down on the green grass, and death closes the eyes that have marvelled at the beauty of their own lord. Even, after he had been received into the halls of Hades, he gazed at himself in the waters of the Styx. His naiad sisters wept and cut their hair for their brother. The dryads wept, and Echo repeated the sound of their weeping. And now they were preparing the funeral pyre and the waving torches, but nowhere was there a body. Instead of the body they found a flower whose yellow center was surrounded by white petals.

Pygmalion (X, 243 ff.)

"Quas quia Pygmalion aevum per crimen agentis
viderat, offensus vitis, quae plurima menti
femineae natura dedit, sine coniuge caelebs
vivebat thalamique diu consorte carebat.
interea niveum mira feliciter arte
sculpsit ebur formamque dedit, qua femina nasci
nulla potest, operisque sui concepit amorem.
virginis est verae facies, quam vivere credas,
et, si non obstet reverentia, velle moveri:
ars adeo latet arte sua. miratur et haurit
pectore Pygmalion simulati corporis ignes.
saepe manus operi temptantes admovet, an sit
corpus an illud ebur, nec adhuc ebur esse fatetur.
oscula dat reddique putat loquiturque tenetque
et credit tactis digitos insidere membris
et metuit, pressos veniat ne livor in artus,
et modo blanditias adhibet, modo grata puellis
munera fert illi conchas teretesque lapillos
et parvas volucres et flores mille colorum
liliaque pictasque pilas et ab arbore lapsas
Heliadum lacrimas; ornat quoque vestibus artus,
dat digitis gemmas, dat longa monilia collo,
aure leves bacae, redimicula pectore pendent:
cuncta decent; nec nuda minus formosa videtur.
conlocat hanc stratis concha Sidonide tinctis
apellatque tori sociam adclinataque colla
mollibus in plumis, tamquam sensura, reponit.

"Festa dies Veneris tota celeberrima Cypro
venerat, et pandis inductae cornibus aurum
conciderant ictae nivea cervice iuvencae,
turaque fumabant, cum munere functus ad aras
constitit et timide 'si di dare cuncta potestis,
sit coniunx, opto,' non ausus 'eburnea virgo'

dicere, Pygmalion 'similis mea' dixit 'eburnae.'
sensit, ut ipsa suis aderat Venus aurea festis,
vota quid illa velint et, amici numinis oment,
flamma ter accensa est apicemque per aera duxit.
ut rediit, simulacra suae petit ille puellae
incumbensque toro dedit oscula: visa tepere est;
admovet os iterum, manibus quoque pectora temptat:
temptatum mollescit ebur positoque rigore
subsidit digitis ceditque, ut Hymettia sole
cera remollescit tractataque pollice multas
flectitur in facies ipsoque fit utilis usu.
dum stupet et dubie gaudet fallique veretur,
rursus amans rursusque manu sua vota retractat.
corpus erat! saliunt temptatae pollice venae.
tum vero Paphius plenissima concipit heros
verba, quibus Veneri grates agat, oraque tandem
ore suo non falsa premit, dataque oscula virgo
sensit et erubuit timidumque ad lumina lumen
attollens pariter cum caelo vidit amantem.
coniugio, quod fecit, adest dea, iamque coactis
cornibus in plenum noviens lunaribus orbem
illa Paphon genuit, de qua tenet insula nomen.

Because Pygmalion had seen these women spending their lives in sin, repelled by the wickedness which nature had given in such full measure to the minds of women, he lived celibate, without a wife, without a companion for his bed. Meanwhile, with felicitous art he carved snowy ivory and gave it such beauty as no woman can be born with. Then for his own work he begins to feel love. The face is that of a true virgin, whom you would believe to be alive and, if not deterred by modesty, desirous of passion. Art thus hides his art. Pygmalion looks in wonder, and his heart burns for this seeming body.

Often he touches the work to try whether it be flesh or ivory, nor yet does he confess that it is ivory. He gives kisses and believes them to be returned. He speaks to her and holds her and believes the limbs to sink under his fingers as he touches them, then fears lest he leave bruises.

Now he addresses her with love-words, now brings her gifts pleasing to girls--shells and smooth pebbles, small birds and varicolored flowers, lilies, painted balls, and the tears of the Heliades. He decorates the limbs with clothing, puts jewels on the fingers and a long necklace about the neck. Pearls hang

from her ears, chains across her breast. All these are beautiful, but she seems no less beautiful nude. He lays her on a couch draped with Tyrian cloth, calls her the companion of his couch, and places her reclining neck on soft feather pillows, as if she could feel.

The feast day of Venus came, greatly celebrated in Cyprus. Heifers with spreading gold horns fell, struck on their snowy necks; and the altars smoked. Having poured out his gift, Pygmalion approached the altar saying timidly, "If, Gods, you can give all things, let my wife be, I pray"--and not daring to say, "the ivory virgin"--said, "like my ivory girl." Golden Venus, for she had come to her own feast, knew what that prayer concealed, and, as an omen of her friendly deity, she made the flame to leap up three times, high in the air.

When he returned home he sought the image of his maiden and, leaning over the couch, gave her a kiss. She seemed to be warm. He kissed her again and touched her breast with his hands. The ivory softened to his touch and, losing its rigidity, yielded and sank beneath his fingers just as the wax of Hymettos softens under the sun and, pulled by the thumb, is bent into many shapes, made useful by use itself. Amazed, he rejoices, still doubting, fears to be mistaken. Again and again, the lover tries his hopes with his hand. It was flesh! The veins pulsed beneath his testing finger.

Then indeed did the Paphian hero conceive fullest words with which to give thanks to Venus as he touched with his lips lips no longer false. The virgin feels his kisses and blushes. Then, timidly lifting her eyes to the light, she sees at the same time, the sky and her lover.

The goddess came to their wedding, and when the moon had joined her horns into a full circle nine times, that Paphos was born from whom the island takes its name.

APPENDIX II

SOME MEDIEVAL ALLEGORIZATIONS OF THE DAPHNE MYTH

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I. Fulgentius:

(xi) Apollinem Solem dici voluerunt: ἀπολλωγ enim Graece perdens dicitur, quod fervore suo omnen succum virentium decoquendo perdat herbarum. Hunc etiam divinationis deum voluerunt, sive quod Sol omnia obscura manifestat in lucem, seu quod in suo processu & occasu ejus orbita multimodos significationum monstret effectus Sol vero dicitur aut ex eo quod solus sit, aut quod solite per dies surgat & occidat. Huic quoque quadrigam scribunt illam ob caussam, quod aut quadripartitis temporum varietatibus anni circul peragat aut quod quadrifido limite diei metiatur spatium.

They supposed Apollo to be the name of the sun; indeed, he was called Apollo the Destroyer by the Greeks, because all the sap of green plants is destroyed by his heat, being boiled away. They considered him the god of divination whether because the sun makes dark things clear with its light, or because, by advancing and retreating, his orbit seems to effect many things of significance. He is truly called Sol either because he is alone [solus] or from the fact that he is accustomed [solire] to rise and set each day. They also write him as a quadrigam, for the reason either that with the differences of the four sorts of weather he passes through the circle of the year, or because the space of a day is measured in four parts.

(xiii) In hujus etiam tutelam laurum adscribunt, unde etiam eum amasse Daphnen dicunt, Penei fluminis filiam. Et unde laurus nasci posset, nisi de fluvialibus aquis? Maxime quia ejusdem Penei fluminis ripae

lauro abundare dicuntur. At vero amica Apollinis ob hanc rem vocitata est, quia illi, qui de interpretatione somniorum scripserunt, ut Antiphon, Philocrus, & Artemon, & Serapion Ascalonites, promittant in libris suis, laurum si dormientibus ad caput poseris, vera somnia esse visuros.

They assigned the laurel also to his [Apollo's] protection, and because of this, they said that he had loved Daphne, the daughter of Peneus. And whence might the laurel be born, if not from river waters? Especially as the shores of the River Peneus are said to have an abundance of laurels. Moreover, indeed, the laurel is wont to be called the love of Apollo, because those men who wrote about the interpretation of dreams, such as Antiphon, Philocrus, and Artemon, and Serapion Ascalonites, claim in their books that laurel, if you will place it on sleepers' heads, brings about true dreams.

(xvi) Arcum vero huic sagittasque conscribunt, sive quod de circulo ejus radii in modum sagittarum exsiliant, seu quod suorum radiorum manifestatione omnem dubietatis scindat caliginem, unde etiam Pythonem sagittis intermisse fertur: πξφὼ enim Graece credulitas dicitur. Et quia omnis falsa credulitas sicut serpentes luce manifestante deprimitur, Pythonem eum intermisse dicunt.

A bow and arrows they ascribe to him [Apollo], whether because rays go out like arrows from his sphere, or because every fog is dried up by the shining forth of his rays; whence, indeed, he is made to kill the Python with his arrows. For the Python is called credulity by the Greeks, and, because any false belief, which is like a serpent, is dispelled by the shining forth of light, Python is said by them to be killed.

II. Arnulf of Orleans:

Terra in Phitonem serpentem quem Apollo sagitta suis occidit. Per Phitonem noxium terre humorem habemus quem sol sagittis id est radiis suis dessicat. Vel Phiton est falsa credulitas, quam Apollo id est Sapiens ratione sua exterminat. Apollo enim exterminans interpretatur: exterminat enim et dividit tenebras per lucem. Sic et sapiens falsam credulitatem exterminat a veritate, vel etiam fallaciam que potest haberi per Phitonem serpentem

fallacem. Sed inde rediens Apollo id est Sapiens aliquando superbit, et quasi iustificans se, Cupidinem deum amoris negligit.

Earth [changed into] the serpent, Python, which Apollo killed with his arrows. For Python we have noxious humors from the earth which the sun dries up with its arrows, that is its rays. Or Python is false belief, which Apollo, that is Wisdom, destroys with reason. Certainly, Apollo may be interpreted as the destroyer: he does in truth destroy and put apart shadows with his light. And just so does Wisdom destroy with truth false belief, or indeed, deceit, for it is possible to understand the serpent, Python, as deceit. But, returning thence, Apollo, that is Wisdon, later became prideful and, as if it were his right, neglected Cupid, the god of love.

Sed Cupido eum arcu sagittat id est stimulis carnis sue eum calefigat. Sed tamen ille non amat nisi virginem Danem, quam tamen consequi non potest donec ea sit mutata in laurum. Virgines enim de virginitate sua in hoc seculo non merentur coronam nisi post suam mutationem id est post mortem eam accipiunt. Sed tunc habent lauream coronam quam in hac vita meruerunt. Dane ideo filia Penei dei fluvii fingitur quia aqua est frigida, et pudicicia est filia frigiditatis sicut impudicicia caloris.

But Cupid shot him with an arrow from his bow, that is, he caused him to burn with fleshly desires. But still he loved only the virgin Daphne, whom, however, he was unable to overtake. At last, she was turned into a laurel. Virgins, indeed, do not deserve a crown in this life for their virginity, but only after their change, that is after death. But then they have the laurel crown which in this life they won. This same Daphne is fabled to be the daughter of Peneus, the god of the river, because water is cold, and modesty is the daughter of coldness, just as shamelessness is of heat.

III. John of Garland (ll. 91-6):

Phebus Phitonem superat, sapiensque malignum,
Fallacemque virum sub ratione premit.
Mentibus hec arbor sapientum virgo virescit
Que quamvis fugiat victa labore viret.
Est virgo Phebi Sapientia facta corona
Laurus, quam cupida mente requirit homo.

Phoebus conquers the Python; so the wise man conquers evil. He forces poisonous deceit to submit to reason. In the minds of the wise, this tree, as a virgin flourishes, for no matter how she may flee, when conquered laboriously, she grows green. She is the virgin of Phoebus, Wisdom made into a crown, the laurel which men seek with greedy mind.

IV. Ovide Moralisé (ll. 2952-2964):

Souvent avient, je n'en dout mie,
Que tez aide et conseille autrui
Qui ne set pas conseillier lui,
Et, puis qu'oms est d'amours espris
Ja tant ne sera de grant pris,
De grant sens ne de bones mours,
Qu'il n'asotisse par amours.
Amours les amoreus assote:
Li plus sage n'i voient gote,
Si ne se sevent conseillier.
Trop me puis d'amour merveillier,
Dont ce vient et que ce puet estre
Qu'amours fet les plus sages pestre,
Puisqu'il les tient pris en sa corde.

There are often people, I don't doubt,
Who thus help and counsel others,
Who don't know how to advise themselves.
And when a man is captured by love,
Then, no matter how worthy he may be,
How sensible and well-conducted,
He makes a fool of himself for love.
Love makes fools of lovers:
The wisest then see not a speck
And don't know how to counsel themselves.
Greatly can I marvel at love
By whom it is made possible
That love makes even the wisest run
When he holds them with his rein.

(ll. 3065-75)

- Or m'estuet ceste fable espondre.
Dirai quel sens i puet repondre.
Dané fille Penei iere.
Peneus est une riviere
Ou de loriers grant copie a.
Phebus, qui d'amours la pria,
C'est li solaus, si con moi samble,
La cui chalours, mellee ensamble

L'umoistour, fet multeplier
Ces arbres et actefier.

Now, I must expound this fable.
I shall tell what meaning may be hidden there.
Daphne was the daughter of Peneus.
Peneus is a stream
Where there are a great plenty of laurels.
Phoebus, who prayed for her love,
Is the sun, it seems to me,
Whose warmth, mixed with the moisture,
Makes the trees multiply and thrive.

(ll. 3076-3108)

- Autre sentence i puet avoir,
Par istoire acordable avoir.
Dané fu une damoisele,
Jente, joenne, avenant et bele,
Riche et de grant nobilité,
Qui vault vivre en virginité
Sans violer son pucelage,
Mes la biauté de son visage
Esmut maint a s'amour requerre.
Dané pour nulle riens en terre
Ne s'asentist a home amer,
N'a son pucelage entamer.
Phebus, par proiere et par dons,
La tempta primes en pardons,
Qu'ains tant ne la pot esmouvoir
Qu'il peus a s'acointance avoir
Pour promettre ne pour proier.
Aprez la cuida forcier
Et tolir li son pucélage,
Mes la pucele simple et sage,
Qui se lessast ançois larder
Fuioit, pour son honnor garder,
Que cil ne la deshonnorast,
Et malgre sien la desflorast.
Tant se traveilla, tant corut
La bele, qu'en fuiant morut,
Ains que cil l'eust desfloree.
Sous un lorier fu enterree.
Pour ce fu la fable trouvee
Qu'ele fu en lorier muee,
Pour ce qu'elle fu vierge et pure,
Si tint cuer et cors sans ordure,
Tout son temps et tout son aé,
En la verdour de chasteé.

There may be another meaning there;
It is easy to see this as history.
Daphne was a young lady,
Gentle, young, charming, and beautiful,
Rich and of high noble blood,
Who wished to live in virginity
Without violating her maidenhood,
But the beauty of her face
Caused many to seek her love.
Daphne, for nothing in the world,
Would agree to love a man
Or to stain her maidenhood.
Phoebus, by prayer and by gifts
First tempted her in vain,
For in this way he could not persuade her
To let him know her [in the Biblical sense]
Neither by promise nor by prayer.
Then he thought to force her
And to steal her maidenhood.
But the maiden, simple and good,
Who caused him so to burn,
Fled to guard her honor
Lest he dishonor her
And, in spite of her, deflower her.
So hard she struggled, so hard she ran,
The beauty, that in fleeing, she died
Before he could deflower her.
She was buried under a laurel.
For that reason the fable was made
That she was changed into a laurel,
Because she was a virgin and pure
And kept body and heart free of filth
Throughout her life
In the greenness of chastity.

(ll. 3109-3214)

- Mes or donons a ceste fable
Autre sentence profitable.
Par Dané, qui tout son aé
Vault vivre en pure chasteé
N'onc ne vault estre corrompue,
Est virginitez entendue,
Qui de corruption n'a cure.
- Dané fu fille de froidure,
Que l'en note par la riviere:
Tant soit froide de grant maniere,
Que nulle naturel chalour
Ne puisse esmouvoir a folour
Cele qui chastement veult vivre.

Dané voloit Dyane ensivre,
C'est la lune sans obscurté,
En nete vie et en purté.
Apollo l'ama longuement,
C'est Phebus, que l'Integument
Selonc la paienne creence,
Apele dieu de sapience,
Qui tout enseigne et endouctrine:
Solaus, qui art et enlumine,
C'est sapience et charité,
Qui doit estre en virginité.
Je ne tieng pas la vierge a sage
Qui son cors garde, et de corage
Est corrumpue ne faussee:
Nete doit estre la pensee,
Et pour Dieu charitablement
Doit vivre chaste, ou autrement
Je ne pris riens sa continence,
Quant la pensee a desirance
De faire les charneulz pechiez,
Dont li cors seroit entechiez,
Si'il en avoit ne leu ne tens.
Je ne croi mie ne n'entens
Que teulz virginitez soit sainte:
Ou, se la volentez est fainte,
C'aucune par ypocrisie,
Pour estre loee et prisie,
Pour un petit de gloire vaine,
Pour aquerre loenge humaine,
Eschive charnel compaignie,
Cele n'est pas bien enseignie.
Ce dist la Devine Escripture,
Ne de teulz vierges n'a Dieus cure.
Ce n'est pas vertus, ains est guile.
De teulz dist Dieus, en l'Evangile,
Que lor lumieres son estaintes,
Lor oeuvres son fausses et faintes,
Plaines de fole vanité
Vides de bone charité.
Cele qui son vessiel a vuit,
Quant vendra a la miennuit,
C'est au grant jour du Jugement,
Se trouvera dolentement
Des noces a l'Espous fors close,
Quant Dieus avra la porte close,
Qui ore est ouverte et atant.
Ja Dieus ne nous haïsse tant
Que de ses noces nous fors cloe!
Qu'Anemis n'i tende la poe,
Pour mener en l'infernal cage,
Ou li dampné sont en fernage!

Dané, qui si isnelement
Fuioit charnel atouchement
Et pui fu en arbre muee,
C'est: que cuer et cors et pensee
Doit garder enterinement,
Sans nul charnel esmouvement,
Sans pensé de corruption
Et sans nulle interruption,
Qui veult estre vierge parfaite,
Et lors sera elle arbre faite,
Que nulz vens ne puet eslocier,
Car si con li vens, pour hocier,
Ne puet le fort arbre mouvoir,
Ne doit flescir ne esmouvoir
Vierge cuer en nulle maniere
Dons ne promesse ne proiere,
Qui tout sont vent de vanité,
A perdre sa virginité.
Dané fu muee en lorier
Plus qu'en chesne ne en cerisier
N'en nul autre arbre qu l'en voie,
Quar si com li loriers verdoie
Et nul temps ne pert sa verdure,
Ne pour chalour ne por froidure,
Ains verdoie en toute saison
Sans fruit faire, ausi par raison
Doit virginitez verdoier
Et vivre sans fructefier,
Qu'onques n'avint ne n'avendra,
Qui viergement se contendra,
Qu'il puisse fere engendreure,
Fors cele qui contre nature
Enfanta son pere et son mestre,
Dieu, qui de la Vierge volt nestre,
Qui sagement en charité
Gardera sa virginité,
Et parseverer i porra
Jusqu'a la fin. Dieus li donra,
En signe et en non de victoire,
En sa grant delitable gloire,
Coronne que les vierges ont
Qui ou ciel coronnees sont.

But now let us give to this fable
Another profitable meaning.
By Daphne, who all her life
Wished to live in pure chastity
And never wished to be corrupted,
Is to be understood Virginity,
Which does not desire corruption.
Daphne was the daughter of Coldness
Which the river denotes.

So very cool shall she be
Who desires to live in chastity
That no natural warmth shall move her to folly.

Daphne wished to be a follower of Diana
 - That is the moon, clearly.
In clean life and in purity.
Apollo loved her for a long time.
That is Phoebus, whom the Integumenta,
According to Pagan belief,
Calls the god of wisdom
Who teaches everything;
The sun, which burns and illuminates,
Is wisdom and charity
Which ought to be in Virginity.
I don't believe that virgin is virtuous
Who keeps her body safe, but at heart
Is corrupt and false:
Thought should be clean,
And, for the sake of God, one should
Live charitably in chastity. Otherwise,
I do not value the continence
Of one whose thoughts are desirous
Of committing fleshly sins,
By which his body would be besmirched,
Except that he lacks the time or place.
I do not believe or understand
That such virginity may be holy;
Or, if the will is weak,
So that hypocritically
For the sake of praise and glory
One eschews fleshly companionship,
Such a one is not well-taught.
So says Holy Scripture;
Nor does God value such virginity.
Of such God says, in The Evangelist,
That their lights are put out,
Their works are false and weak,
Full of foolish vanity,
Void of virtuous charity.
She who has emptied her vessel,
When midnight comes,
That is, on the Great Day of Judgment,
Will find herself grieving,
Shut out from the Bridegroom's wedding
When God will have closed the door
Which now stands open and waiting.
May God not so hate us
That he shuts us out from this wedding!
May the Enemy not tempt to sin
To lead us into the infernal prison
Where the damned are in a furnace!

Daphne, who so swiftly
Fled carnal stain
and then was changed into a tree,
Signifies that heart, body, and thought
Ought to keep whole
Without any fleshly emotion,
Without thought of corruption
And without interruption.
Whoever wills to be a perfect virgin
Will then be made a tree
That no wind can dislodge;
For, just as the wind, by blows
Cannot move the strong tree,
Neither should gifts, nor promises, nor pleas,
Which are all the wind of vanity,
Move in any way the virgin heart
To lose her virginity.

(ll. 3215-3261)

- Autre sentence i puis poser,
Par Dané puis prendre et gloser
Cele glorieuse Pucele,
Vierge pure avenant et bele,
Que Dieus eslut premierement
Sor toutes autres plainement,
Que Jesus, ou tous biens habonde,
Li filz Dieu, lumiere dou monde,
Solauz qui tout home enlumine,
Mestree qui toute descepline,
Tout art et toute sapience
A trouvee et toute science,
Mires qui set toutes les cures
Et d'erbes toutes les natures,
Qui puet tout malade et tout mort
Saner et resourdere de mort,
Rois dou ciel, de terre et de mer,
Et rois d'enfer, pot tant amer
Qu'a lui se volt charnelment joindre,
Si se lessa navrer et poindre
Au cuer d'amoureuse pointure,
Pour l'amour d'umaine nature.
Cele benoite Marie,
Vierge mere en cui se marie
Plentureuse virginitez
Et vierge plentureusetez,
Cele benoite Marie,

Fu vierge en sa conception
Et vierge en son enfantement
Vierge aprez pardurablement,
Cele pucele vierge et pure
C'est li loriers plains de verdure,
Dont li filz Dieu se coronna,
Quar la vierge l'avironna
En son cors, ou il volt descendre
Et char humaine et mortel prendre,
Cele qui Dieu plot, et Dieu fist
Tant qu'en sa haute court l'assist
En gloire pardurablement,
Ou el regne o lui dignement,
Cele dont la harpe apoline,
C'est la fois comune et devine,
Fait pardurable remembrance,
C'est cele par cui Dieus avance
Et essauce en sa haute gloire
Ceulz qui dou monde ont la victoire.

- I can put another meaning there.
For Daphne, I take and glose
That Glorious Maiden,
A Virgin, pure, charming and beautiful,
Whom God chose plainly
As first over all others;
Whom Jesus, in whom all good abounds,
The Son of God, light of the world,
The sun which enlightens every man,
The master who invented every discipline,
Every art and all wisdom and all knowledge,
Healer, who knows every cure
And the nature of all herbs,
Who is able to heal and to bring from the dead
Every sick man and every dead one,
King of the sky, of the earth and the sea,
And king of Hell,
Could love so much
That he wished to join himself to her flesh
So that he let himself be wounded and stabbed
To the heart by the loving arrow,
For the love of human kind.
This blessed Mary,
Virgin mother in whom mingle
Abundant virginity
And virgin abundance,
She who, without sin,
Was virgin in conceiving
And virgin in childbearing,
Virgin afterwards forever,
This maiden, virgin and pure

Is the laurel, full of verdure,
With which the son of God is crowned;
For the virgin surrounded him
With her body, when he wished to descend
And take on human, mortal flesh,
She who pleased God, and God so arranged
That she sits in his high court
In glory eternally,
Where she reigns with him in dignity.
She of whom the Apolline harp,
That is, the common, divine faith,
Keeps eternal remembrance
Is she by whom God brings forward
And bathes in his high glory
Those who have victory over the world.

(ll. 3261-3407)

- Or vous dirai que senefie
La tence et la contreversie
De Phebus et dou dieu d'amours,
De lor vaillance et de lor mours.
De ceste ist la solucion
D'une doutable question
Que l'en seult faire et proposer,
Qui bien set la fable exposer:
C'est: qui est de greignor vaillance,
Ou bone amours, ou sapience?
Ces deus choses sont proprement
En Dieu, qui, sans devisement,
Sans discort et sans difference,
Est bone amours et sapience.
Quar, quanqu'a en la deité
Tout est un, sans diverseté,
Mes quant a l'effait et a l'oeuvre
Que sapience et amours oeuvre,
Et quant a nostre cognoissance,
I samble il avoir differance.
La sapience proprement
Fist home et le monde ensement,
Mes homs pecha par sa folour,
Si fu mis a mortel dolour
Et dampnez pardurablement,
Et, se dieus piteablement
Et l'amours qu'il avoit vers homme
n'i eust ouvré, c'est la somme,
Mieux venist qu'ains homs ne fust fais
Qu'il se fust puis vers Dieu mesfais
Por mortel dampnement encourre.
L'amour Dieu, por home secourre,
Dou dars de bone amour ploia

Sapience, et l'envoia
Au monde en humaine figure,
Pour soi joindre a nostre nature.
Cupido, cil qui nous avoie
Et nous monstre la droite voie
De bone amour, a mon avis,
C'est Dieus, li rois de paradis,
Qui en amours nous endouctrine,
Se nous tenons bien sa doctrine.
Bien nous moustre signe d'amer,
Quant ciel et terre, monde et mer
Et toutes les riens qu'il y a
Pour nostre avancement cria.
Bien nous ama Dieus, sans doutance,
Quant il nous fist a sa samblance,
A sa samblance et a s'image,
Et pour nous traire de servage,
De paine et de mortel dolour,
Ou homs s'iert mis par sa folour,
Fist sa sapience descendre
En terre et char humaine prendre,
Si fist sa char a mort livrer,
Pour nous garir et delivrer
De mort et de l'infernal cage,
Et dou souverain heritage
Nous faire hoirs et parconeors.
Nostre Dieus, nostre Sauvaors,
Bien nous ama, bien nous ot chiers,
C'est Cupido, li bons archiers,
Que bien set ses dars empener,
Pour les amoureus assener.
Li Dart sont li comandement
De la loy, qui diversement
Sont fet et de divers ouvraigne:
L'une partie nous enseigne
A amer, et l'autre a hair,
L'un a suivre et l'autre a fuir;
La pointe est la compunction
Dou cuer, et droite entention
Doit estre la hanste apelee;
La fleche doit estre empenee
De deus penons, pour courre droit;
Li penon, qui garde i prendroit,
Sont dui devin comandement,
Aus quelz deus especialment
La lois et li prophete pendent;
Tuit cil qui loiaument entendent
A ces deus comandemans faire
Sevent bien de ces fleches traire.
L'un des penons, si com j'entens,
Est qu'en toute hore et en tout temps,
De cuer et d'ame et de desir,

Devons fere le Dieu plesir,
Et lui sor toutes riens amer
De fin cuer et pur, sans amer,
Com nostre pere et nostre mestre:
C'est li penons qui siet a destre.
L'autres que chascuns doit son prime
Amer autant con soi meisme,
Si ne face vers lui desloi.
Bien acomplira cil la loi
Que nostre sires a donnee,
Qui si a sa fleche empenee.
Ceste fleche a non charité;
De ceste vient par vérité
Tous biens et toute cortoisie;
Ceste fuit toute vilonie,
Tout mal, toute desloiauté;
Ceste aime toute loiauté.
Cil qui de ceste pointe est poins,
Amer le convient en touz poins
Toute raison, toute mesure,
Si n'a de nul outrage cure.
De ceste fleche vault ferir
Dieus son fil, quant, por nos garir
Vault son benoit fil offrir
Pour nous a paine et mort souffrir.
Bien nous monstra d'amours la voie
Charitez est, se Dieus me voie,
La meillour et la plus certaine
Des fleches et la souveraine.
Que ceste fleche a, bien le soi,
Il est en Dieu et Dieus en soi,
Quar Dieus meisme est charité
En tesmoing de l'auctorité,
Et cil cui ceste fleche faut
A de tous autres biens defaut.
Poi puet prisier sa sapience,
Sa dignite ne sa poissence,
Quar sans vertu de charité
Sont tuit autre bien vanité.
Charitez est l'enbrasant flame
Dont Dieus en s'amour nous enflame;
C'est le brandons et c'est la fleche
Dont Dieus nous embrase et acroche.
Autre fleche toute contraire
Trait li archiers de put afaire,
Li deables, li anemis,
S'en a pluisors en paine mis.
Cele fleche est torte et noeuse,
Rebousche et aspre et eschardeuse;
Cele est de haine entoschie.
L'ame qui de cele est touchie

Het tout bien et toute mesure,
Toute raison, toute droiture,
Toute honor, toute loiauté
S'aime toute desloiauté,
Tout pechié, toute vilonie,
Tout tort et toute felonie,
Toute ordure et toute vilté,
Tout mal et toute iniquité.
Envie a ceste fleche non,
Si sont contraire li penon
De ceste a cele devant dite.

Now, I shall tell you the meaning
Of the dispute and controversy
Between Phoebus and the god of love
About their valour and their superiority.
From this comes the solution
To a difficult question
That one should ask
Who wishes to explain it well:
That is: which is of greater value,
Love or wisdom?
These two things are attributes
Of God, who, without division,
Without discord and without difference,
Is true love and wisdom.
For, in the Deity
All is one, without diversity;
But within the creature, the work
That wisdom and love perform
Seems to our minds to be different.
Wisdom, properly speaking,
Made both man and the world,
But man, in his madness, sinned
And was put into mortal sadness
And damned eternally.
And, if God had not pity,
And if the love of man
Had not worked in him
It would have been better that man were not made
Than that he had sinned and wronged God
So that he incurred mortal damnation.
The love of God, in order to save man
Struck Wisdom with the arrow of true love
And sent Him to earth in human form
To combine himself with our nature.
Cupid, who guides us
And shows us the right way of love,
In my opinion, is God, the king of Paradise,
Who teaches us love
If we attend well to his teaching.
Well does he show his love to us

When sky and earth, the world and the sea
And everything that is
He has created for our good.
Well did God love us, without doubt,
When He made us in his semblance and image,
And, in order to take us out of the servitude,
The pain and the mortal grief
Where Man had put himself by his folly,
Caused his Wisdom to descend
To earth and take on human flesh,
Then to deliver up his flesh to death
To heal us and deliver us
From death and the infernal prison
And to make us heirs and co-owners of the
Kingdom.

Our God, our Saviour
Who loved us well and held us very dear,
Is Cupid, the good archer,
Who well knows how to feather his arrows
To direct the ways of those who love.
The arrows are the commandments of the Law
Which are of different workmanship:
The one part teaches us to love,
The other to hate;
The one to follow, the other to flee;
The point is the heart's penitence
And the shaft should be named right purpose;
The arrow must be feathered with two feathers
In order to fly straight.
The two feathers, put there as a guide,
Are the two divine commandments
Upon which especially
Hang all the law and the prophets:
All those who apply themselves loyally
To following these two commandments
Know well how to draw their arrows.
The first of the feathers, as I understand,
Is that at every hour and in all weathers
We ought to do the will of God
With heart and soul and will,
And to love him with a pure heart,
Void of evil,
As our father and our master:
This is the feather which is on the right.
The other is that each one ought
To love his neighbor as much as himself,
And never to sin against him.
He who has his arrow thus feathered
Will accomplish well
The law that our lord gave.
This arrow is named charity,

Whence comes, indeed,
All good things and all courtesy;
This arrow flees all villainy,
All evil, all disloyalty;
It loves all loyalty.
He who is pierced by this arrow
Must love all reason, all moderation
And never wish to sin.
God struck His Son with this arrow
When, in order to save us,
He wished to offer his blessed Son
To suffer pain and death for us.
Well did He show us the way of love.
Charity is, as surely as God sees me,
The best, the most certain,
The king of arrows.
He who has this arrow, I know well,
Is in God, and God in him,
For God himself is charity,
As authority witnesses,
And he who lacks this arrow
Lacks all other good things.
Of little worth are his wisdom,
His dignity, and his power
For, without the virtue of charity,
All other goods are vanity.
Charity is the inflaming fire
By which God makes us burn with love;
Charity is the brand and the arrow
With which God makes us burn and
Another arrow, quite different,
Is drawn by the archer of evil
The devil, the enemy,
And with it he has brought pain to many.
This arrow is twisted and knotty,
Blunt, painful and poisonous;
It has been dipped in hate.
The soul which is touched by this arrow
Hates all reason, all moderation,
All good, all right
All honor, all loyalty,
And it loves every disloyalty,
Every sin, every villainy
Every wrong and felony
Every filth, every iniquity, every evil.
Envy is the name of this arrow,
And the feathers are the opposite
Of the ones I told about before.

Berchorius (Fa VII):

Iste phoebus significat quosdam de virtutibus gloriantes in saeculo vel in claustro. Serpens significat carnem quae venene deliciarum suarum premit & occupat totum mundum. quia multi sunt qui quando possunt praeualere contra serpentem id est carnem venenosam exinde superbiunt/ intantum quod cupidinem deum amoris. id est amorem carnis & sectatores ipsius abhorrent & vilipendunt non considerantes propriam fragiliatem sed gloriantes se habere castitatem. Sed volens deus tales humiliare sagittis carnalis amoris vulnerari permittit: & ad amandum mulierum delicias eos laxat: ut sic suae carnis conditionem cognoscant: & alios non contemnant. Sicut fecit de Petro qui alios contemnens dixerat. Etsi omnes scandalizati fuerint sed non ego. Qui tamen deo permittente vilius cecidit quam aliquis aliorum excepto iuda. Deus enim sicut Iudith VI. dicitur praesumentes de se & de sua virtute gloriantes humiliat. Vel dic quod Phoebus significat mundanae gloriae appetitores: qui quando phitonem occidunt id est aliquod laudabile opus faciunt: summe superbiunt & gloriantur: & alios contemnunt. Daphne puella pulcherrima est mundana gloria quae a talibus adamatur ita quod ipsam quantum possunt insequuntur sicut patet de multis militibus qui pro ista habenda vadunt ad huerras/ & torneamenta. De clericis qui pro ista dimittunt patriam & delectamenta. De hyprocritis qui pro ista patiuntur poenitentiam & tormenta. De ambitiosis qui pro ista puella tanta adhibent blandimenta. Nihil enim eis delectabilius quam illa puella. nihil eis speciosius quam sua forma nihil suis membris appetibilius. Sicut enim phoebus prae desiderio membrorum daphnes pulchritudinem notabat ipsamque ad sui amorem humiliter appellabat. Unde Ouidius Ibidem. inornatos collo pendere capillos Et quid si comantur: ait: videt igne micantes Sideribus similies oculos: videt oscula quae non est vidisse satis. laudat digitosque manusque Brachiaque et nudos media plus parte lacertos. Si qua latent meliora putat. Et infra Nudabant corpora venti: Obuiaque aduersas vibrabant flamina vestes. Et levis impulsos retro dabat aura capillos aucta fuga forma est. Et sequitur. Nympha precor peneia mane. Sic et isti de quibus supra: mundanam gloriam insequuntur & affectant Ista enim habet diuersa membra appetibilia scilicet caput id est altitudinem honoris: brachia id est amplexum amoris: ventrem id est affectus deliciarum oculos id est affectus scientarum: capillos id est successus diuitiarum. Ista enim phoebe

id est vane gloriosis placent: ista summe desiderant & affectant. Sed pro certo de dispositione fit quod ista daphne mundi gloria tales sui amatores immoderatos fugiat & contemnat. Ecclesiastic. XI. Si se quutus fueris non appraehendes Hugo dicit quod haec est gloriae gloriosa proprietas quod appetitores fugiat & optet contemptores. Deinde dicit Ouidius quod ipsa daphne pulcherrima nimis fatigata fugiendo phoebum qui eam corrumpere volebat volens virginitatem seruare: rogauit tellurem id est deam terrae: vt istam pulchritudinem auferret sibi quae erat causa & occasio tanti doloris: et sic ista dea: eius mesertus mutauit eam in laurum. Nam subito pedes eius qui laeues erant eonuersi sunt in radicem: pellis in corticem: brachia in ramos. Et sic laurus effecta: phoebi cupidinem euasit & Virginitatem quam vouerat custodiuit. Unde textus. Vix prece finita torpor grauis occupat artus Mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro. In frondes crines: in ramos brachia crescunt. Pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret: Ora cacumen habent: remanet nitor unus in illa. Phoebus iste potest significare diabolum: daphne animam christianam quia procul-dubio istam virginem: animam scilicet per tentationes non cessat allicere vt eam per malum consensum subiuget & subiiciat & per peccatum destruat & corrumpat Sed ipsa debet fugere occasiones peccati: temptationes vitando: & debet regare deam terrae id est Christum vt eam de manibus eius eripiat: formam aliam sibi dando. Et sic pro certo debet fieri laurus id est religiosa persona virtuosa & perfecta. pedes bonorum gressuum radicaliter figendo: corticem poenitenciae induendo & ramos bonarum affectionum acquirendo: & virorem honestae conuersationis nunquam deponendo: Sic enim mutata istius phoebi cupidinem non timebit & integritatem mentis & corporis retinebit. Ioannis XX. Conuersa est retrorsum & vidit Iesum Vel dic allegorice de multis virginibus quae pulchritudinem corporis propter quam insectantur ne peccato depraedentur iugiter deponunt. Sic dicitur accidisse in anglia de quadam moniali quam cum rex terrae vellet haberer & ipsam incessanter rogaret: petiit illa quid erat in ipsa quod ipse tantum diligeret: Rex vero asseruit pulchritudinem oculorum: illa autem domum pergens oculos eruit & regi ut sedaret eius concupiscentiam transmisit Ista enim audierat illus ecclesisti XXI. Quasi a facie colubri fuge peccata Laurus autem alio modo dicitur daphne pro eo facto quod daphne in laurum est mutata arbor quam enim sibi phoebus appropriauit quam osculatus & amplexatus tenerrime adamauit ipsam specialibus priuilegiis

insignuit. Voluit quod de lauro sibi fierent coronae Cytharae & sagittae. Voluit quod victores lauro coronarentur. Voluit quod lauro domus imperatorum & quercus & aliae arbores vicinae a fulmini tuerentur quia teste Plinio: sola laurus inter arbores non fulminatur. Voluit insuper quod coma illius numquam deponeretur sed quod viror eius perpetuo videretur sicut dicit Ouidius. Hanc quoque phoebus amat. Cui deus. at quoniam coniunx mea non potes esse: Arbor eris certe mea dixit: semper habebunt te coma: te citharae te nostrae laure pharetrae. Utque meum intonsis caput est iuuenile capillis: Tu quoque perpetuae semper gere frondis honorem. Ista laurus significat crucem quae pro certo phoebo id est Christo soli iustitieae fuerat dedicata & ab eo corporaliter amplexata Ista debet esse nobis pro corona honoris. & gloriationis pro cithera laudis & gratiarum actionis: pro sagitta verbi dei & sanctae praedicationis pro gloria victoriae cuiuscunque temptationis. pro tutela fulminis diuinae sententiae & aeternae damnationis: & quod plus est pro amore aeternae gloriae & futurae saluationis. Ista enim habentur in cruce sicut dicit Chrisostomus. Crux Christianorum spes: prauorum victoria: caecorum dux: conuersorum via: claudorum baculus: pauperum consolatio: arbor resurrectionis: lignum vitae eternae.

Phoebus here is a figure for those who glory in their virtues whether in the world or in the cloister. The serpent signifies the flesh, which, with the poison of its delights, subdues and takes possession of all the world. There are certainly many men who, when they have been able to prevail over the serpent, that is, the poisonous flesh, afterward become filled with pride, in the same way as Apollo did toward Cupid, the god of love. They hate and vilify fleshly love and those who seek it, not remembering their own weakness, but glorying in the possession of chastity. But God, wishing to humble such persons, permits them to be wounded by the arrows of carnal desire; and he lays them open to lasciviousness and the desire for women so that they may recognize their own fleshly state and not condemn others. So he did in the case of Peter who, despising others, had said, "Even though everyone should be ashamed because of you, yet would not I." Yet he, by God's will, fell lower than any of the others except Judas. Indeed, as it is said in the sixth chapter of Judith, God humiliates the presumptious and those who glory in their own strength.

Or, you may say, Phoebus signifies those who are eager for the glories of this world. When they kill the Python, they have done some laudable deed. They become extremely proud and boastful and contemptuous of others. Daphne, the beautiful girl, is worldly glory, which is exceedingly loved by such people. In the same way, that they follow her as fast as they can refers to many knights who, desiring worldly glory, go about to wars and tournaments; to clerics who, for its sake, abandon their native land and its pleasures; to hypocrites who, for the same reason, make public displays of penitence and sufferings; to the ambitious who, for the sake of this maiden, make use of so much flattery. For, to these people nothing is more delightful than that girl, nothing is more beautiful than her form, nothing more desirable than her limbs. So Phoebus, because of his ardent desire, noticed the beauty of Daphne's limbs and, because of his love, called her humbly to him. Thus Ovid says, in the same passage: her unarranged hair hanging on her neck and, What if it were combed? he says. He sees her eyes shining like fiery stars. He sees her mouth for which seeing is not enough. He praises her fingers, hand, lower arm, and her more than half bare upper arm. And he believes that what is hidden is even better. Later, the winds bared her body and contrary breezes fluttered her clothes. Light airs blew her hair behind her. Her beauty was increased in flight. He follows. The nymph prays to the God, Peneus. Just so are those mentioned above. They run after the glory of this world and strive for it. It has, in truth, different desirable parts. For instance, the head is high honor; the arms are the embrace of love; the belly is the enjoyment of sensual delights; the eyes are the delight in knowledge; the hair is the following after riches. She is indeed pleasing to Phoebus, that is, to those who enjoy vainglory. They greatly desire and long for her. But, by the certain arrangement of God, it comes about that Daphne, this world's glory, flees from her immoderate suitors and despises them (Ecclesiasticus XI). If you have followed but do not understand, Hugo says that the most glorious quality of glory is that she should flee those who desire her and choose those who despise her.

Next, Ovid says that this same most beautiful Daphne, exhausted by her flight from Phoebus, who wished to violate her while she wanted to save her virginity, prayed to the Earth, that is, to the goddess of the earth, that she would take away that beauty which

was the cause and occasion for so much grief. So the goddess, out of compassion, changed her into a laurel. For, suddenly, her feet, formerly fleet, were turned into roots, her skin into bark, her arms into branches. Thus made into a laurel she escaped Phoebus's desire and preserved that virginity she had vowed.

The text says that immediately after her prayer was finished a heaviness came over her limbs. Her soft body was encircled by bark. Her hair grew into leaves, her arms into branches. Her foot, formerly so swift, was fixed by sluggish roots. Her face was a tree-top. Only her beauty remained. Phoebus here may signify the devil, Daphne a Christian soul (because without doubt the soul is a virgin). The soul, you know, never ceases to be allured by temptations that may cause her to be subdued and cast down by consenting to evil and corrupted and destroyed by sin. But she must flee the occasions of sin, avoiding temptation, and must pray the goddess of the earth, that is, Christ, that he snatch her away from sin's hands, by giving her a different form. And thus certainly she must be made into a laurel; that is, a religious character, virtuous and perfect, fixing her feet like roots in the way of righteousness, putting on the bark of penitence, acquiring the branches of right desires, and never putting off the fresh greenness of honorable associations. Indeed, thus changed, she will not fear the desire of Phoebus and will retain her integrity of mind and body. (John XX: She turned back and saw Jesus).

Or one may speak allegorically of many virgins who put aside bodily beauty because of which they are pursued, lest they be permanently ravaged by sin. This is said to have befallen a certain nun in Germany whom the king of the country wished to possess and whom he constantly importuned. She asked him what it was about her that so pleased him. The king declared, truly, that it was the beauty of her eyes. She, then, proceeding home, dug out her eyes and sent them to the king to assuage his desire. She certainly had heard Ecclesiasticus XXI: Flee from sin as if from the face of a serpent.

The laurel may be said to be Daphne in still another way in that Daphne changed into a laurel the very tree that Phoebus took for his own, which he loved exceedingly, kissed and hugged most tenderly, and singled out by special privileges. He willed that

from the laurel only should be made the wreaths of his lyre and arrows. He commanded that victors should be crowned with laurel. He commanded that the house of the emperors, the oak and the other neighboring trees be guarded by the laurel from ligtning. For Pliny attests: the laurel, alone among trees is not struck by lightning. He ordered, above all, that she should never shed her foliage, but that instead her freshness should be seen perpetually--so says Ovid. The tree also Phoebus loves. The god said, though you can not be my wife, you shall certainly be my tree; our lyres and quivers will always bear your foliage, Laurel. And, as my head is youthful with uncut hair, you also shall wear the honor of perpetual leaves. Here, the laurel signifies the cross which certainly by Phoebus, that is, by Christ was consecrated to righteousness alone and by him bodily embraced. This ought to be to us for a crown of honor and thanksgiving, for a lyre of praise and of deeds of grace. The arrows are the words of God and of the holy prophecies, the glory of victory over any temptation whatever. The protection against lightning is against divine judgment and eternal damnation. And, what is more [the gift] through love of eternal glory and future salvation. These things indeed are contained in the cross as Chrysotom says: The cross is the hope of Christians, the victory of the crippled, the leader of the blind, the way of the converted, the staff of the lame, the consolation of the poor, the tree of resurrection, the wood of eternal life.

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