8

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Landscape with figures: aesthetics of place in the *Metamorphoses* and its tradition

In Ovid's Cave of Sleep, three shape-shifting spirits (pre-eminent among the thousand sons of Somnus) fashion and enact dreams for kings and leaders: one has the power to assume human forms, one the forms of beasts, and a third, of diverse art (*diuersae artis*), the forms of 'earth, rocks, water, trees, all lifeless things' (*Met.* 11.642–3). As in Somnus' subterranean dreamworks, so in the epic *Metamorphoses* at large one of the privileged ingredients of Ovidian myth-making is the deployment of elements of natural setting: the poem constitutes a significant intervention in the history of landscape. Briefly put, Ovid's contribution to this history is to appropriate and renew the highly rhetorical and idealized tradition of landscape description as he inherits it, to enhance its self-consciousness, to mythologize its origins and accumulated generic associations, to extend the kinds of action which it stages, to exploit its potential for interplay between verbal and visual imagination, and to add a specifically cosmological accent by describing a metamorphic world in which the setting may always be more than just a setting. Partly because of the potency of his own appropriations, and partly because of the circumstances of transmission and survival which give him such prestige as a bearer of the classical tradition to medieval and early modern Europe, Ovid becomes a key collaborator in shaping aesthetics of landscape in later literature, as also in later visual art.[1]

Rhetoric, stereotype, archetype

> . . . *Not that fair field*
> *Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers*
> *Her self a fairer flower by gloomy Dis*

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[1] Landscape noted in general treatments of *Met.*: Wilkinson (1955) 177–84; Viarre (1964) 90–6; Bernbeck (1967) 56–64; Galinsky (1975) 97–8; Fabre-Serris (1995) 266–76.

> *Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain*
> *To seek her through the world*; nor that sweet grove
> Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
> Castalian spring, *might with this Paradise*
> *Of Eden strive* . . .
>
> (Milton, *Paradise Lost* 4.268–75)

Ovid's impact on western traditions of rhetorical landscape description has rarely been so paradoxically attested as in the climax of this famous set-piece encounter with the Garden of Eden, which draws attention to a cultural inheritance by claiming to reject or supersede it.[2] The ideal landscape, blessed with preternatural copiousness, its constituent elements predictable but admitting of infinite variations of detail, and configured more to the requirements of rhetoric than to the proprieties of climate and season: such is the pattern shared by Milton's Eden and by Ovid's 'fair field of Enna' (*Met.* 5.385–95), invoked above both as synecdoche for the tradition and as specific model:

> haud procul Hennaeis lacus est a moenibus altae,
> nomine Pergus, aquae: non illo plura Caystros
> carmina cycnorum labentibus edit in undis.
> silua coronat aquas cingens latus omne suisque
> frondibus ut uelo Phoebeos submouet ictus;
> frigora dant rami, Tyrios humus umida flores:
> perpetuum uer est. quo dum Proserpina luco
> ludit et aut uiolas aut candida lilia carpit . . .
> paene simul uisa est dilectaque raptaque Diti.

Not far from Henna's walls there is a lake of deep water, Pergus by name: not even Cayster's gliding streams produce more songs of swans. A wood crowns the waters ringing every side, and with its foliage as with an awning keeps off Phoebus' beams. The branches yield coolness, the moist ground yields purple flowers, and always it is spring. Within this grove while Proserpina was playing, and gathering either violets or white lilies . . . almost at once Dis saw, desired and carried her away.

In the classic discussion in his *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, E. R. Curtius pares down to its essentials this rhetorical stylization of the lovely landscape in the Western tradition:

> . . . a beautiful, shaded natural site. Its minimum ingredients comprise a tree (or several trees), a meadow, and a spring or brook. Birdsong and flowers may be added. The most elaborate examples also add a breeze.[3]

[2] Cf. Kermode (1973) 264 and 284.

[3] Curtius (1953) 195. Cf. Schönbeck (1962).

If it be added that still water (i.e. pools or lakes) is as characteristic as running water (springs or brooks), and that the shade may come not just from a grove but from a cave (cf. *P.L.* 4.257–8 'umbrageous grots and caves | of cool recess'), some such menu can indeed be felt to underlie both the amplitude of Milton's description (*P.L.* 4.214–68) and the relative brevity of Ovid's.

No less essential to the sense of pattern is its sense of itself *as* a pattern. When Milton compares his Eden with Ovid's Enna, he self-consciously grounds his landscape description in a literary tradition of landscape descriptions. So too, in turn, when Ovid compares the water and singing birds of his Ennan landscape with the water and singing birds of the Cayster, he is invoking a template for his own landscape hardly less ancient for him than his is for Milton: the originary Greek location of the rape of Persephone/Proserpina (in Asia Minor rather than Sicily) in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.[4]

The potency of Milton's evocation of the tradition of the ideal landscape comes in part from the fact that he is describing, in his and his readers' terms, the first of all the world's landscapes. The pattern at large derives its mythic quality from the fact that it is typically associated with, or implicitly derived from, settings which are primal or supernatural in terms of time or place, and associated in some way with divine presence: the Golden Age; the Elysian Fields; Mount Helicon. For Ovid to endow his Enna, seasonally, with 'perpetual spring' (*Met.* 5.391 *perpetuum uer est*) is to give it an archetypally Golden-Age climate – an archetype in which Milton reinvests through allusion to the Ovidian half-line at *P.L.* 4.268, directly before his overt mention of Enna. Indeed, Milton's locution ('while universal Pan . . . | led on *the eternal spring*') may serve to reconnect *Met.* 5.391 with Ovid's own earlier phrasing of the Golden-Age archetype at *Met.* 1.107 *uer erat aeternum*. As for *Met.* 5.391 itself, its own investment in the archetype is by no means inert: 'perpetual spring' is precisely what will disappear from Enna, and from the earth as a whole, as a result of the rape of Proserpina: this myth is on its most common ancient reading an *aition* for the earth's seasonal cycle of vegetative growth, decay and rebirth.

This nexus of vernal reference in Ovid and Milton is symptomatic of what Curtius shows to be a pervasive negotiation between the natural and the supernatural inscribed in the landcape tradition, from Homer's Phaeacia ('a land of faery') onwards.[5] And when in due course the ideal landscape finds a home in a new and 'lower' genre, becoming the characteristic setting for poetic (and erotic) competition in Theocritean and Virgilian bucolic, that

[4] Hinds (1987) 26–7, 44–7.

[5] Curtius (1953) 185 for the quotation.

supernatural charge will endure as one of the main elements which gives to bucolic or pastoral poetry its sense of idealized ambience apart from the quotidian realities of life in a rural economy.

At some point soon before or after Ovid, the ideal landscape pattern begins to attract a name: *locus amoenus* (pleasant place, pleasance). An often-quoted passage in Horace's *Ars poetica*, deploring 'purple passages' of set-piece description, is open to two contrary interpretations in this regard (14–19):

> inceptis grauibus plerumque et magna professis
> purpureus, late qui splendeat, unus et alter
> adsuitur pannus, cum lucus et ara Dianae
> *et properantis aquae per amoenos ambitus agros,*
> aut flumen Rhenum aut pluuius describitur arcus.
> *sed nunc non erat his locus . . .*

Serious and ambitious designs often have a purple patch or two sewn on to give distinction – the description of a grove and altar of Diana, the winding of a stream rushing through pleasant fields, the river Rhine, a rainbow. But in that context there is not a place for them.

Either line 17 shows a formative moment in the prehistory of the technical term *locus amoenus*, or the term already exists and is sufficiently familiar to be obliquely evoked and even punned on (*lucus . . . per amoenos agros . . . non erat his locus*). And so too with the opening sentence of Virgil's description of the Elysian Fields (*Aen.* 6.638–9),

> deuenere *locos laetos et amoena uirecta*
> fortunatorum nemorum sedesque beatas

They reached the joyful places, the pleasant glades of fortunate woods, home of the blest.

– which to Servius at least, writing with hindsight, is a textbook instance of the term.[6]

Whether or not the ideal landscape yet has a formal place in contemporary taxonomies of style, the Horatian passage points to the fact that poets, like rhetoricians, have by Ovid's time a deeply ingrained habit of reifying the vivid description in general as a characteristic ornament or interruption of narrative or speech. Often but not always, what is in question when such

[6] To Servius on *Aen.* 6.638 and on 5.734 (quoted on p. 147) *amoena loca* carry a history of learned discussion going back to Varro: Maltby (1991) s.v. *amoenus*. The phrase is much used by Cicero, but never in a technical context comparable to Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.27 later: see *TLL* 1.1962–3, esp. 1962.57–67. Very suggestive for the idea of 'metaformular' awareness of the *locus amoenus* in Augustan poetry is Thomas (1982) 17, 24–6, 127–9.

overlapping terms as *enargeia*, *illustratio*, *descriptio* and (a survival into modern usage) *ekphrasis* are invoked is the set-piece description or praise of a place, and that often but not always an ideal place.[7] Furthermore, when a description of place interrupts or punctuates a narrative, as characteristically in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and other epics, it has available a stereotyped entry formula to set it apart from its surrounding context, often couched in a 'timeless' present. *locus est* or more commonly *est locus* is the default opening ('there is a place . . .'), as in the first instance of the pattern in extant Latin poetry at Ennius, *Ann.* 20 (reprised by Virgil at *Aen.* 1.530),

est locus Hesperiam quam mortales perhibebant[8]

or as in a famous Virgilian instance even earlier in the *Aeneid* (1.159)

est in secessu longo locus . . .

typically picked up by a resumptive demonstrative or relative at the point of transition from description back into narrative (thus *huc* at *Aen.* 1.170). The initial *est locus* – which may lurk as a(nother) metaformular pun within Horace's *sed nunc non erat his locus*[9] – is regularly varied by the naming of the place or object described: *est specus*, *est nemus*, *stagnum est*, *fons erat*.

In the *Metamorphoses*, as in more sporadic examples in his non-epic works, Ovid brings to this 'ecphrastic' configuration something of the sensibility of an elegist, at once accentuating the formal scheme and opening it up to epigrammatic play. The rhetorical arrangement of the landscape elements may be stylized to the point of self-reference, as in *Fast.* 2.215 *campus erat, campi claudebant ultima colles* (a plain there was, a plain closed off by hills), where *claudebant* refers as readily to the stichic as to the topographical enclosure. Expectations of the entry formula may be manipulated in various ways: through postposition, as in *Fast.* 2.435–6 *monte sub Esquilio multis incaeduus annis | Iunonis magnae nomine lucus erat* (under the Esquiline mount, unfelled for many a year, named for great Juno a grove there was); through delegation to a character in *oratio obliqua*, as in *Met.* 4.772–3 *narrat Agenorides gelido sub Atlante iacentem | esse*

[7] Rhetorical terms for vivid description: Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.32 (citing Cicero); Vasaly (1993) 19–20, 89–91; Bartsch (1989) 7–10; Laird (1996) 91–4. *Ekphrasis* (ecphrasis) is nowadays used only for the set-piece description of landscapes (occasionally) and art objects (more usually; cf. now Webb (1999)); it has lost the broader range which it had in its Second Sophistic heyday.

[8] 'There is a place which mortals called Hesperia . . .'; (below) 'there is in a deep inlet a place . . . hither'; '. . . a cave/grove/pond/spring'.

[9] Laird (1996) 92.

locum . . . (Perseus tells how lying beneath cold Atlas there is a place . . .); through punning invocation of the default in the specific variation, as found at both ends of the Enna set piece quoted earlier: *Met.* 5.385 *haud procul Hennaeis lacus est* . . ., 391 *quo* . . . *luco*.[10] One of the first set-piece local descriptions in Ovid's career (*Her.* 12.67–9) offers one of his most mannered touches, an 'editorial' disruption of the 'timeless' ecphrastic present (by Medea, the poem's speaking voice, describing the scene of her and Jason's tryst in Colchis):[11]

est nemus et piceis et frondibus ilicis atrum;
uix illuc radiis solis adire licet.
sunt in eo – fuerant certe – delubra Dianae

There is a grove, dark with pines and ilex fronds; thither the rays of the sun can scarcely find a way. There is in it – at any rate there *was* – a shrine of Diana

The subversion of the formula is immediately underscored as Medea returns to her direct address to Jason: *Her.* 12.71 *an exciderunt mecum loca?* 'Has the location (= the *est locus*) fallen from your memory along with me?'

Ovid applies the same kind of interest in formular play to the particular distillation of local description which is (or, if you will, which becomes) the *locus amoenus*. Since Curtius a passage from *Met.* 10 has been a by-word here.[12] An *est locus*-type opening describes the landscape in which the Ur-poet Orpheus sits down, like a pastoral shepherd, to sing the songs of love and loss which will occupy the rest of Ovid's book. However, a crucial element is lacking to the standard setting: shade (88 *umbra loco deerat*). Orpheus' famous telekinetic powers put him in a unique position to address this problem. Using his lyre to summon to the spot a forest of twenty-seven species, meticulously catalogued by Ovid (*Met.* 10.90–106), he supplies the missing element, in effect adjusting the real world to fit the proprieties of the rhetorical one: 90 *umbra loco venit*.[13] The very amplitude of the grove thus summoned is itself part of the passage's rhetorical self-consciousness; such amplitude also becomes part of the Ovidian legacy to later traditions of landscape description.

Orpheus' fictive status as humankind's originary bard opens up a novel way of reading his virtuoso creation of shade at *Met.* 10.86–90: not as a belated play upon a well-established poetic *topos* or commonplace, but as an account of the *first invention* of the ideal landscape. Such a 'myth of origin' could illuminate Ovid's approach elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses* too. By

[10] Contrast Ovid's twin Enna ecphrasis at *Fast.* 4.427 *ualle sub umbrosa* locus est.

[11] Barchiesi (1992) on *Her.* 2.131–2.

[12] Curtius (1953) 194–5.

[13] 88 'shade was lacking to the place'; 90 (with a bold dative) 'shade came to the place'.

far the most notable concentration of landscape descriptions anywhere in Ovid occurs in the poem's first five books: Daphne, Io, Callisto, Actaeon, Narcissus and Echo, Pyramus and Thisbe, Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, the Muses, Proserpina, Arethusa – all these act out their stories in essentially interchangeable *loca amoena*. Ovid's framing of his epic as, in effect, a narrative recreation of the history of the universe allows him to recapitulate within its boundaries the history of the ideal landscape at large: thus, just as all *loca amoena* in the Greco-Roman tradition can be referred back *inter*textually to the *topoi* of the Golden Age, so all the closely-packed *loca amoena* of *Met.* 1–5 can be referred back *intra*textually to the *topoi* in Ovid's own recreation of the Golden Age in *Met.* 1.107–12. In such a perspective, it seems significant that the geographical location described in the poem's very first post-Golden Age *locus amoenus*, at *Met.* 1.568ff., is Tempe, the Thessalian home of Daphne's father Peneus, but also a real-world archetype of the perfect landscape: by Ovid's time *tempe* has passed into both the Greek and Latin languages as a common noun meaning 'a beautiful sequestered vale'.[14]

Part of what is distinctive about Ovid's engagement with the ideal landscape tradition in the *Metamorphoses*, then, is a strong in-built aetiological dimension: not only does he play with the stereotype, but (in keeping with the cosmic ambitions of the *Metamorphoses* as a whole) he shows a marked and repeated interest in locating and exploiting its mythic archetypes. Another place rich in this kind of aetiological potential is Arcadia, in mythological terms the oldest land in the world, and in literary historical terms the place constructed by Virgil as an archetypal milieu of pastoral.[15] In the contemporary *Fasti*, the dual associations of Arcadia as originary landscape and originary timescape impinge suggestively on a recurrent rural idyll of early Rome, through the immigrant figures of Carmentis and Evander. In the *Metamorphoses*, Arcadia comes up most strikingly in a myth treated in parallel in *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, the tale of Callisto, daughter of Lycaon and mother of the eponymous Arcas.

Although the Callisto myth does not constitute the earliest appearance of Arcadia in the *Metamorphoses* (as well as in Lycaon's own story we glimpse it, as a pastoral locale, in the nested myth of Pan and Syrinx), the refurbishment of the earth's landscapes necessitated by the cosmic conflagration of Phaethon allows Jupiter to *recreate*, as something both familiar and new, the

[14] *LSJ* s.v.; McKeown (1989) on *Am.* 1.1.15–16.

[15] Ovid's Arcadia as 'older than the moon': *Fast.* 1.469–70, with Bömer (1957–8) ad loc. Virgil's Arcadia as an archetypal pastoral milieu (even when stripped of added Renaissance associations): Hardie (1998) 25 and 61 (with bibl.).

archetypal Arcadian *locus amoenus* in which he will visit his erotic violence upon the nymph (2.405–8):

> . . . Arcadiae tamen est inpensior illi
> cura suae: fontesque et nondum audentia labi
> flumina restituit, dat terrae gramina, frondes
> arboribus, laesasque iubet reuirescere siluas.

Yet his own Arcadia is his more pressing care. He restores its springs and rivers, fearing as yet to flow; he gives grass to the ground, leaves to the trees, and bids the damaged woods grow green again.

As so often in the *Metamorphoses* (and not least in the book which begins with the 'cosmic icon' of the doors of the Sun's palace), the job of demiurge seems here to be interchangeable with that of (metamorphic) poet: like Orpheus later, Jupiter is here giving us what the imminent narrative needs, viz. a *locus amoenus* with all the usual fixings. As with Orpheus, Jupiter's manipulation of 'real' space tends to read as mimicry of the ecphrastic manipulation of rhetorical space, rather than *vice versa*.

This episode of divine scene-making complements and sharpens a second moment of meta-description later in the episode. We are still in Arcadia; and Diana and her nymphs are approaching a watered grove. This could be a cue for a set-piece description. Instead, the following (2.455–8):

> nacta nemus gelidum dea, quo cum murmure labens
> ibat et attritas uersabat riuus harenas.
> *ut loca laudauit*, summas pede contigit undas;
> *his quoque laudatis* 'procul est' ait 'arbiter omnis' . . .

The goddess reached a cool grove, through which a stream flowed its murmuring way and rolled about its well-worn sands. *When she had praised the place*, she dipped her foot in the waters. *Having praised these too*, she said 'No spy is near . . .'

A *locus amoenus*; but the self-conscious twist is that, before immersing herself in it, Diana herself *praises* it, step by step. The goddess rhetoricizes the moment of her own entry into the landscape, and thus usurps the poet's expected function: the italicized phrasing functions in a quasi-technical way to represent the set-piece *laudes* which are the poet's and rhetorician's stock-in-trade in such a context.[16] As it happens, the equivalent moment in Ovid's cross-referential version of the Callisto myth in the Fasti shows just what the

[16] *laus locorum*: Quint. *Inst.* 3.7.27; Persius 1.70–1 (prob. echoing Hor. *Ars poet.* 16–17). Contrast *Pont.* 1.3.51–4 on the 'unpraisability' of the grim landscape of Ovid's exile.

Metamorphoses passage might have looked like, had the poet done his own rhetorical work there too (*Fast.* 2.165–7):

> ut tetigit lucum (densa niger ilice lucus,
> in medio gelidae fons erat altus aquae),
> 'hic' ait 'in silua, virgo Tegeaea, lauemur!'

> When she had touched the grove (a grove there was, dark with thick ilex; in its midst a deep spring of cool water), she said 'Here in the wood, maid of Tegea, let us bathe!'

The deftly compressed ecphrasis, rendered the more emphatic by parenthetic postposition, constitutes a kind of authorial reclamation of and gloss on the twin version's displaced set-piece *laudes*. There is a further hint of meta-formular wit too: when read against the implied speech of the goddess in the *Metamorphoses* (*ut loca laudauit*), the *Fasti*'s Diana has claims to be a rhetor too, but one who (like a good slender elegist) merely 'touches on' her descriptive theme: *ut tetigit lucum*.[17]

Desire, violence, embodiment

There is a characteristic tension in the landscapes of the *Metamorphoses* between the beautiful setting and the sufferings which befall most of the characters who inhabit or enter it: in this sense, episode after episode takes the form of a 'paradise lost'. Ovid himself thematizes this tension in the case of the Persephone myth in *Met.* 5, by framing it as a (double-nested) narrative performed in the lovely environs of the newly-sprung Hippocrene by Muses whose joy in the security of that landscape (yet another of the poem's originary *loca amoena*) has recently been soured by an attempted rape perpetrated by Pyreneus. The Muses' own brush with sexual danger (which at first seems like an otiose digression) at once echoes and 'motivates' not only their mythic song's theme of violated chastity, but also its strongly marked emphasis upon the ideal landscape as the site in which that violence is enacted.

It is not surprising that modern readings should oscillate between seeing the poem's violence as redeemed by its stylized beauty, especially as distilled in its landscapes, and seeing its beauty as fatally corrupted by its violence.[18] A *Metamorphoses* whose violent myths unfolded in a dystopia might feel very different (think of the bleak ambience of myth in Ovid's own exile poetry);[19] a *Metamorphoses* in whose *loca amoena* all mythic action was benign might feel very different. Many critics have seen a generic tension here: a combination of idyllic setting and idyllic action is more or less what pastoral offers, and Ovid's perversion of the latter is what makes his landscapes anti-pastoral.[20] True, up to a point. And yet even in the classic Virgilian form of pastoral itself the idyll is often out of the reach of the bucolic protagonists, lost, deferred or called into question; arguably the sense of a threat to harmony immanent in a harmonious setting is a constitutive feature of the landscape tradition at large.

In the case of Ovid's landscapes the violence is most often sexual, perpetrated within plots of courtship perverted or gone wrong; this is itself a kind of transformation of the gentle songs of erotic competition to which the pastoral landscape characteristically plays host. The emphasis on courtship reflects a mythic habit of locating myths of desire in desirable places which is at least as old as the myth of Persephone, and which comes to be programmed etymologically into the term *locus amoenus* itself through various kinds of derivation of *amoenus* from *amor*: thus Isidore, claiming the (pre-Ovidian) authority of Varro, *amoena loca Varro dicta ait eo quod solum amorem praestant et ad se amanda adliciant* (*Etym.* 14.8.33: Varro says that *amoena loca* are so called because they furnish only love (*amor*), and lure people into loving them).[21]

One context in which desire and violence come together is in an association of the poem's landscapes with the hunt.[22] Many of the figures who come to grief in these settings are acting out an age-old mythic paradigm whereby the hunter becomes the prey: either through literal reversal, as with Actaeon, or metaphorically, as with Daphne. Strikingly recurrent is the situation of predation upon a virgin devotee of Diana, whose embrace of the hunt constitutes a rejection of sexuality: Daphne, Syrinx, Callisto, Arethusa.[23] Here the 'hunter hunted' *topos* is at its most cruelly ironic, as the opposites in the nymph's world-view collapse into one another and (in an actualization of the venatic imagery so common in amatory poetry up to and including Ovid's own *Ars amatoria*) she becomes the sexual quarry of a predatory divine male.

Inasmuch as the ideal landscape pattern functions in the *Metamorphoses* as a recurrent setting for episodes of erotic desire and violence, such landscapes come to provide a narratological 'cue' for such action, especially

[17] *OLD tango* 10; note too Ovid's characteristic *locus/lucus* play.
[18] Segal (1969) 12 for the first position; Segal (1969) 92–3 and, more urgently, Richlin (1992) for the second.
[19] e.g. *Trist.* 3.9, *Ibis* passim. Actual recent adaptations of the *Met.* itself to modern urban dystopia are Shakar (1996), a novel, and Iizuka (1999), a play; the former does locate a kind of beauty in its denatured cityscapes.
[20] Segal (1969) 74–85; qualifications in Parry (1964) 275, 280.
[21] Maltby (1991) s.v. *amoenus* for this and related passages.
[22] Parry (1964) esp. 269–74; Davis (1983).
[23] Davis (1983) 43–71, incl. discussion of two pointed anti-types, Salmacis and Pomona.

in the poem's first five books. In effect, this marks an intensification of an expectation already long programmed into the traditions of myth and landscape. Ovid may even editorialize on such an expectation back in *Ars amatoria* 3, in which Procris, relying on an informant, mistakes for a female rival (*Aura*) the refreshing breeze (*aura*) praised by her husband as he takes his siesta in an ideal landscape (ecphrastically described at *Ars am.* 3.687–96). In a sense, Procris' misinterpretation comes about because she is such a *good* reader of the landscape pattern, who knows exactly what kind of action to expect therein. As Ovid puts it (719), *credere quae iubeant,* locus est *et nomen et index*. What factors urge belief in her husband's erotic tryst? The informant; the name (Aura); and, metapoetically, the landscape's rhetorical *mise en scène* itself, the *locus est*-ness of the *locus amoenus*.

A suggestive line of work has consolidated this idea of narratological expectation by eliciting a strong *figurative* collusion in the *Metamorphoses* between landscape and action: on this reading the poem's plots of desire and predation are symbolically reflected and refracted in the very landscape elements themselves.[24] As to desire, this is partly a matter of the sheer emphasis upon sensuousness in the characteristic deployment of the ideal landscape. Thus C. P. Segal:

> In such an atmosphere the amorous pursuer will usually gain his ends, for the landscape itself is on his side. Midday heat, pleasant groves, water – the usual components of such settings – themselves imply the primacy of the senses over the mind.

As to predation, this can be felt to be inscribed in the ideal landscape's potential to turn frightening and uncontrollable when (as with the wilderness into which Jupiter invites Io at *Met.* 1.590–1) its groves thicken into pathless forests, its shade into darkness, its inherent numinousness into menace.[25] Segal again:

> [Ovidian landscapes] symbolize not only an inner world of free desires, but also a mysterious outer world where men meet an unwelcome and unexpected fate. They are akin to the sheltered pastoral bower; but they are also the ancestors of the dangerous wild wood of later literature.

However a landscape need not be palpably threatening in order to convey symbolic dangers of sex and violence: the most peaceful setting may

[24] Parry (1964) esp. 275–80; Segal (1969) (quotations at 8 and 15).
[25] On inherent numinousness cf. Ov. *Fast.* 3.295–6 *lucus Auentino suberat niger ilicis umbra, | quo posses uiso dicere 'numen inest'* (There was a grove under the Aventine dark with ilex-shade; at sight of it you could say, 'There is a divine presence here'); Isid. *Etym.* 17.6.6 *nemus a numinibus nuncupatum, quia pagani ibi idola constituerant* (*nemus* gets its name from *numina*, because, in times past, pagans set up their idols in groves).

hint at trouble to come. When Euripides' Hippolytus dedicates to Artemis 'a garland which I fashioned from an untouched meadow, where neither shepherd thinks it right to feed his flocks nor the iron has yet come . . . , and Reverence [*Aidos*] cultivates it with streams of river water' (*Hipp.* 73–8), he lays symbolic claim to an ideology of abstinence; but in that act of plucking the flowers for the virgin goddess's garland he also accesses a repressed sexual dimension in the setting which presages his own undoing. Ovid echoes this passage's symbolism of abstinence in the clear and untouched pool to which he brings Narcissus, another extreme virgin, intensifying it into an emblem of Narcissus' selfishness and disengagement from pastoral society (*Met.* 3.407–10):

> fons erat inlimis, nitidis argenteus undis,
> quem neque pastores neque pastae monte capellae
> contigerant aliudue pecus, quem nulla uolucris
> nec fera turbarat nec lapsus ab arbore ramus.

> There was a limpid pool, its waters silvery and bright, which no shepherds had ever touched, nor feeding mountain-goats, nor any other herd; which neither bird nor beast nor falling branch had ever disturbed.

This time the symbolic sequel is unmistakable. When Narcissus is touched by the desire and disappointment from which his solipsism has previously protected him, he violates the pool's clear surface with his own tears (474–6); the resultant break-up of his reflection anticipates his own imminent metamorphic erasure.

Such symbolism is especially potent when, as in the case of Narcissus' pool, the landscape itself undergoes a modification which in some way (pre)figures or doubles the crisis which takes place in it. One thinks here above all of the plucking of flowers from meadows (just touched on above). Flowers are traditionally associated both with virginal purity and with its vulnerability:[26] a strong symbolic nexus links the literal culling or harvesting of the earth's fruits on the one hand, and the sexual defloration or affectively charged death of a virgin on the other – nowhere more so than in the Persephone myth, its derivatives and its cognates, from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* to Moschus' *Europa*, Ovid's twin Proserpinas,[27] Milton's 'her self a fairer flower . . . ' (by implication, a reference to Eve as well as to Proserpine)[28] and beyond.

[26] Segal (1969) 33–8.
[27] Hinds (1987), 60 and 78–82; 88–90 on the associated pomegranate-plucking at *Met.* 5.535–6.
[28] [Carey and] Fowler (1968) on *P.L.* 4.270, comparing too 9.432 of Eve: 'her self, though fairest unsupported flower'.

An aspect of landscape symbolism peculiar to this poem (or at any rate to metamorphic myth) is the capacity of supernatural transformation to cause the symbolic and the literal to collapse fully into one another.[29] We have just seen a disturbance in a secluded pool operating as an emblem of Narcissus' sexual crisis. However, the symbolic stakes are even higher in the case of Cyane, the Sicilian water-nymph who in *Met.* 5 attempts to halt the abduction of Proserpina by standing up in her own pool to obstruct the chariot of Dis. The god's response is swift (421–4):

> . . . in gurgitis ima
> contortum ualido sceptrum regale lacerto
> condidit; icta uiam tellus in Tartara fecit
> et pronos currus medio cratere recepit.

Brandishing his royal sceptre with mighty arm he plunged it deep into the pool. The smitten earth made a path to Tartarus and received the down-plunging chariot in the midst of the abyss.

The penetration is of Cyane's pool rather than of Cyane herself. But the conventional symbiosis between a water-nymph and the element which she inhabits renders the boundary here between symbolic and literal violence inherently insecure (425–7):

> at Cyane, raptamque deam contemptaque fontis
> iura sui maerens, inconsolabile uulnus
> mente gerit tacita . . .

But Cyane, grieving for the abduction of the goddess and for the outrage to her own fountain's rights, bore a wound beyond consoling in the silence of her heart . . .

In some ways this is the closest the *Metamorphoses* ever comes to describing the physical horror of actual rape. Cyane's 'wound' is specified by enjambment as a mental one, and *raptam deam* in 425 refers not to herself but to Proserpina; yet Ovid's affective phrasing leaves little room for doubt that more than a body of water has been violated here. As if to close off the possibility of restricting the trauma to the symbolic level, the episode now culminates in Cyane's supernatural dissolution into tears, which fuses her and her pool forever.

In the world of the *Metamorphoses*, the setting is always potentially more than just a setting:[30] any water, tree or bloom may not only symbolize or memorialize erotic victimhood, but actually embody a victim him- or herself.

[29] Cf. the bibl. on metaphor and metamorphosis cited on p. 176 n. 26.
[30] Barkan (1986) 89.

On one level this finds an epistemological context in the metamorphic principles of universal contiguity and flux expounded by Pythagoras in *Met.* 15 – which he applies, *inter alia*, to elements of landscape (261–355). But within the poem's mythic texture such an epistemology is all too closely bound up with the rupture of actual bodies; so that to plunge into *any* pool, to pluck *any* flower is to risk repeating an originary act of violence visited upon a now-metamorphosed victim. Such, precisely, is the experience of Dryope, for whom an innocent gathering of some lotus blossoms within a *locus amoenus* nightmarishly reopens the wound (and the story) of the nymph Lotis, who had lost her human form in fleeing the sexual predation of Priapus (*Met.* 9.344–5). The lesson which Dryope bequeaths to her unborn son, before being herself metamorphosed into another similarly vulnerable tree, is a paralysing one (380–1):

> stagna tamen timeat, nec carpat ab arbore flores,
> et frutices omnes corpus putet esse dearum.

Let him beware of pools, never pluck blossoms from trees, and think every bush to be the flesh of a goddess.

If all the figures who move through the landscapes of the poem were to acknowledge and experience this metamorphic logic (they do not), the whole economy of mythic setting and mythic action would collapse, and no character would ever enter a *locus amoenus* again.

For another Ovidian perspective on the embodiment of mythic victims in the landscape, we may turn to the contemporary *Fasti.* Here the goddess Flora presents herself as the proud owner of an originary flower-garden, from whose stunning variety of blooms derives all colour on the earth. Not uniquely among inhabitants of Ovidian landscapes, Flora experiences her garden *rhetorically*. Her own set-piece description (*est mihi . . . hortus*) is immediately followed by a disavowal of ability to compass her floral wealth in language (*Fast.* 5.213–14):

> saepe ego digestos uolui numerare colores
> nec potui: numero copia maior erat

Often did I wish to count the colours thus arranged, but could not: the resources were beyond measure

– where *digestos*, *colores*, *numero* and *copia* all resonate with the technical language of rhetorical and poetic style. More specifically, however, she presents herself as a metamorphic demiurge, claiming as her own work all the famous mythological transfigurations of wounded victims (the male ones, anyway) into floral form (221–8): Hyacinthus, Narcissus, Crocus, Attis,

Adonis. She seems entirely untroubled in her floral sublimation of these ephebic sufferings; in metaliterary terms the episode figures the stories of poignant death and transformation, evocatively for Ovid's pair-poem, as so many blooms on a poetic 'garland' of metamorphic song. Is this comfortable aestheticization to be ascribed to the poet of the *Metamorphoses* himself? Yes and no. Ovid certainly countenances some self-identification with the floral goddess, playfully associating her fragrance (in an implicit pun which becomes a favourite of Renaissance Ovidianism) with his own eponymous 'nose' for poetry (375–8 *floreat* ... *carmen Nasonis* 'that Naso's poem may flourish'; cf. *nasus*, *nasutus*).[31] But what abides from this episode's implied cross-reference to the *Metamorphoses* is the *contrast* between the insouciance of Flora's catalogue of floral victims and the depth of pathos visited upon the stories of many of those same blooms in the *Metamorphoses*. A more troubled form of aestheticism, then, in the latter case – but perhaps aestheticism none the less.

Art, vision, spectacle

Ovid has often, and justly, been described as a 'visual' poet; and seldom is the appeal to visuality stronger than in his set-piece landscape descriptions. It is not that such descriptions break new ground in their recreation of particular slices of nature, as apprehended by the eye (or by any other sensory organ): as with any other ancient poet (except perhaps Lucretius) the topography, however attractive, remains generic, specifications of light, colour and spatial relation are conventional ('shady', 'red and white', 'in a circle', 'on the right'), and the botany on display (whether or not 'perpetual spring' is invoked) is seasonally and climatically promiscuous. Rather the point is that Ovid's landscape descriptions characteristically involve *invitations to view*, whether channelled through the perceptions of characters who enter a setting ('s/he saw ...'), or more implicitly prompted by strong visual themes in the plots enacted therein (e.g. permutations of forbidden sight, desiring gaze and deluded vision in the highly charged landscapes where Actaeon, Narcissus and Pentheus meet their respective fates in the course of a single book).[32]

Furthermore, the invitation to view is often enhanced by specific analogies from visual art and architecture, in a way which both figures and externalizes the landscape's characteristic appeal to a constructed or *stylized* version of

[31] Newlands (1995) 109–10 (garland); Barchiesi (1997a) 134 (Naso pun).
[32] Leach (1988) 460–4 on *Met.* 3; Rosati (1983) 136–52 on a 'poetica della spettacolarità' in the *Met.* at large.

nature.[33] Consider for example the woodland grotto which constitutes the site of Actaeon's inadvertent voyeurism (*Met.* 3.157–60):

> ... in extremo est antrum nemorale recessu
> arte laboratum nulla: simulauerat artem
> ingenio natura suo; nam pumice uiuo
> et leuibus tofis natiuum duxerat arcum.

In the [valley's] most secret nook there is a sylvan cave, wrought by no artist's hand. But nature by her own talent had imitated art; for she had carved a natural arch from the living rock and soft tufa.

Such interplay as this between nature and art is not unique to Ovid; but it is perhaps especially marked in a poem which so frequently associates the work of the cosmic demiurge with that of poets (including the poet of the *Met.* himself), artists and other image-makers.[34]

These two aspects of Ovidian visuality (thematization of viewing, and appeal to visual art) come together at the pool of Narcissus, which endures for the reader (as for countless artists) as a visual experience in large part because Narcissus himself is represented as spending so long looking at it. So too the invitation to view along with Narcissus is sharpened when the poet has recourse to an analogy from sculptural art to describe how the youth appears to himself in the water (3.418–19):

> adstupet ipse sibi uultuque immotus eodem
> haeret, ut e Pario formatum marmore signum.

Spellbound by himself, he hangs there motionless in the same expression, like a statue shaped from Parian marble.

The *imago* in the pool (416) becomes a different kind of *imago* as Narcissus the viewer is immobilized (and himself objectified) by the spectacle of himself as art object; this thickening of the thematics of the gaze conditions and aestheticizes our own perception not just of Narcissus but also of the landscape which has made him its own.[35]

Among all landscape elements the pool, as a place where light is gathered and redirected, perhaps offers an especial stimulus to the visual imagination. Another episode in which a pool-scape, a beautiful youth and a desiring

[33] English 'landscape' is itself in earliest use a term used by painters: *OED* s.v.; Cosgrove (1984) 9, 16–18.
[34] Solodow (1988) 210–14.
[35] A suggestive intertext: Callistratus' ecphrastic description (*Stat.* 5; 3rd or 4th cent. AD) of a marble statue of Narcissus displayed by a woodland pool, with Elsner (1996b), esp. 250 on the passage as 'initially ambivalent about whether it is an ekphrasis of a landscape or of a work of art'.

gaze come together (perhaps the most sensuous in the whole poem) is that of Salmacis and Hermaphroditus. This time the water is translucent rather than reflective, and the youth is the object of another's gaze rather than of his own. But once again the invitation to view along with the characters is insistent, and once again the desiring gaze crystallizes at a crucial moment into an image of artistic connoisseurship – as, under the eyes of Salmacis, Hermaphroditus dives into the pool (4.353–5):

> desilit in latices alternaque bracchia ducens
> in liquidis translucet aquis, ut eburnea si quis
> signa tegat claro uel candida lilia uitro.

He dives into the waters and, swimming with alternate strokes, gleams in the limpid flow, as if one should encase ivory figures or white lilies in translucent glass.

As with the image applied to Narcissus, the object of the gaze is immobilized and aestheticized into a statue; but this time the water itself, figured as a precious glass envelope, has been transformed into art too. And the second half of the image further accentuates the interplay of landscape and art through its notable imagistic double-shift or transumption: desired youth into flower; flower into displayed art object.

In the *loca amoena* inhabited by Narcissus and Hermaphroditus, the stylization of visuality into art freezes the action, rendering the character (temporarily, in the case of Hermaphroditus) as static as the landscape he inhabits. However there is another way too in which the appeal to visuality can translate into an appeal to art: through the figuration of landscape as theatre.

The previous sections of this chapter have highlighted the way in which the ideal landscape functions in the *Metamorphoses* as a recurrent setting for (intensified) action, often further demarcated as such by an *est locus* formula which (in narratological terms) 'builds' the setting before inserting characters and plot into it. Add the kinds of appeal to visuality and to art just discussed, and the ideal landscape's strong literary historical association with pastoral competition and performance, and it is not surprising if this sense of a recurrent setting sometimes sorts itself into a specific image of the stage, thus mobilizing the mythological action as a sort of drama or theatrical spectacle.

Such an impulse is not exclusive to Ovid but belongs to the rhetorical landscape tradition at large. Thus it is that the massed trees of ideal groves before and after Ovid will sometimes sort themselves into the elevations or curves

of theatre architecture (even as theatrical shapes and functions change). Here is the approach to Milton's Paradise (*P.L.* 4.137–42),

> . . . and over head up grew
> Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
> Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
> *A sylvan scene*, and as the ranks ascend
> Shade above shade, *a woody theatre*
> *Of stateliest view* . . .

a description which, within English poetry, evokes the 'stately theatre' of a wooded landscape at Spenser, *Faerie Queene* III v 39,[36] but also locates its point of rhetorical origin in the *siluis scaena coruscis | desuper* (backdrop of shimmering woods on high) of Virgil's dramatically configured Libyan harbour (*Aen.* 1.164).

The *Metamorphoses*' contribution is to adumbrate a distinctively Roman modification. In the set-piece description of Enna (p. 123 above), the grove which fringes the waters is said to shade them from the sun *ut uelo*, as if with an awning; the specification of the trees as forming a circle (*cingens latus omne*) renders that awning not theatrical but amphitheatrical – appropriately for the violent action which is about to be 'staged' beneath it.[37] In the Pentheus episode, opened up to metatheatrical effects by its allusion to Euripides' *Bacchae*,[38] the tree-girt plain where Pentheus encounters the Bacchic orgies is explicitly configured as a site for spectatorship from every side (*Met.* 3.709 *spectabilis undique*) – with Pentheus as a viewer who is fated himself to become a grisly spectacle. Both the configuration of the space and the climactic action which takes place therein – dismemberment, narrated with a further intensification of the language of the gaze (724–5 *ostendens, adspice, uisis*) – conspire to suggest, again, not so much the stage as the arena. However both theatricality and amphitheatricality find their clearest imagistic expression in the disruption of the landscape in which the doomed Orpheus performs his enchanting song to a 'theatre' of birds, animals and trees (11.22 *Orphei* . . . *theatri*). The *locus amoenus* here is quite literally demolished as marauding maenads tear up trees and turf (29); and, in a startlingly contemporary simile which compares the imminent murder of the bard to a morning kill in a staged hunting show, the performance imagery slides into amphitheatricality (25–7):

[36] Cf. also *F.Q.* VI x 6; [Carey and] Fowler (1968) on *P.L.* 4.138–43.
[37] *OLD* s.v. *velum* 3; Hinds (1987) 33–5.
[38] Ovidian 'metatheatre': Curley (1999); Gildenhard and Zissos (1999), esp. 170–6.

> . . . structoque utrimque theatro
> ceu matutina ceruus periturus harena
> praeda canum est . . .

. . . as when in the amphitheatre's morning sand a doomed stag falls prey to hounds.

The Roman *uenatio* thus evoked, combining as it does spectacle with a stylization of the woodland hunt, resonates at once jarringly and aptly with the *Metamorphoses*' characteristic articulation of the dangers of an untamed landscape.[39]

Painting, grotto, garden

A long-standing tradition of scholarship uses both the general visuality of Ovid's imagination and his ecphrastic invocations of visual art (most notably in the tapestry-weaving contest of *Met.* 6) to argue for the actual influence of works of painting or sculpture upon his mythological narratives;[40] and part of this has involved seeking the origin of Ovidian landscape settings in the taste for landscape and landscaped myth in contemporary Roman wall painting.[41] This unidirectional model of influence is now beginning to be replaced (or at least supplemented) by a more structural approach, which considers elements of parallelism and exchange between literary and painted landscapes in broader contexts of Roman aesthetic and cultural history.[42] The painted landscapes of Ovid's time are, like Ovid's own, rhetorically organized and governed by convention; they too contain elements of actual art and architecture which set off and render self-conscious their own artificiality; they too exploit a sense of numinousness, and show a grounding in a version of pastoral (especially in segments which modern critics characterize in terms of a 'sacral-idyllic' style); they too vary the inland grove with (equally formular) maritime schemes;[43] they too show an interest in landscape as a setting for archetypally Greek mythological action, and at times specifically in landscape as a *recurrent* setting for mythological action.

[39] Disturbing associations with Rome's 'fatal charades': see further on 'make-believe and violence' in chapter 2, pp. 39–42; and cf. Feldherr (1997) 42–4 on amphitheatricality in the Actaeon episode, a landmark discussion.

[40] Survey and critique by Viarre (1964), 29–140, useful though impressionistic; Solodow (1988) 224–6.

[41] Grimal (1938).

[42] Leach (1988); Bergmann (1992).

[43] Maritime landscapes in the *Met.* are esp. (and aptly) concentrated where Aeneas' voyage moves the epic from Troy to Italy, in the Galatea/Scylla digression: cf. Segal (1969) 58–62.

A more structural or dialogic approach to relationships between Roman literature and art need not exclude new forms of positivism:[44] this may be the opportunity to turn the old question of painting's influence upon the *Metamorphoses* directly on its head, and to ask more energetically what influence the *Metamorphoses* itself may have exerted upon Roman painting in the later first century AD.

Consider a Vespasianic open-air fountain complex at the Pompeian 'House of Loreius Tiburtinus' (II 2.2), whose decoration includes twin panel-like frescoes of *Narcissus* and *Pyramus & Thisbe*, each depicted in a landscape: such a pairing is inconceivable without the *Metamorphoses*.[45] The story of the failed rendez-vous of Pyramus and Thisbe (of which four painted representations survive at Pompeii) has no known or likely currency at all outside the East until Ovid.[46] As for the Narcissus myth, while versions do circulate prior to and independently of Ovid, it would be perverse not to connect with the *Metamorphoses* an evident explosion of iconographic interest at Pompeii (some 50 paintings, including several of Narcisssus *and* Echo, apparently first linked by Ovid).[47]

It should be stressed, however, that to posit Ovidian influence on such an installation is not *necessarily* to posit (as above) new iconographic types 'scripted' in the wake of the *Metamorphoses*. Even if, individually, each of these two paintings were straight reproductions (with or without the landscape setting) from a standard Greek image repertoire, there could still be an Ovidian impulse behind the home-owner's or designer's *selection* of these mythic subjects over a host of others, and their *combination* into a compositional unit. (This is a point which can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the consideration of Ovidian influence upon painted myths which are *not* Ovidian near-exclusives.) And viewers might read the mythic juxtaposition in the light of their reading of Ovid whether the allusion was originally intended or not. Greek art, like Greek poetry, necessarily acquires new meanings when reframed and consumed in Roman contexts.[48]

[44] *Pace* Leach (1988) 9 and 467.

[45] On this *euripus*, which also boasts Muse-statuettes and other paraphernalia of connoisseurship, cf. Zanker (1998) 145–56, with Plates 10.1–2 ('panels', in colour) and figs. 73–80; also Salza Prina Ricotti (1987) 169–72 on the identification of the area with the paired frescoes as a garden dining-room. The Vespasianic remodel of II 2.2, including these paintings (signed by a 'Lucius'), is in Zanker's view hack-work: this could strengthen the possibility that the *Met.* is by this date a routine source for visual art.

[46] *LIMC* s.v. on the Pompeian images, related and rich in Ovidian specifics. Pyramus in the East: Knox (1989).

[47] So *LIMC* s.v. 'Narkissos'. Pompeian Narcissi appear first in 'fourth style' work; nearly all are Vespasianic.

[48] Cf. the essays by Bettina Bergmann, Elaine Gazda and Ann Kuttner in Jones et al. (1995).

What makes this relatively neglected line of enquiry intuitively attractive is the extraordinary impact of the *Metamorphoses* upon painting and other visual arts *since* antiquity: the poem has exercised a larger and more pervasive influence upon the illustration of pagan themes than any other classical work, and early printed editions and paraphrases often designate it 'the painters' bible'.[49] Chapter 20 in this volume addresses this huge topic; all that needs to be emphasized in the context of the present chapter is the considerable importance of the interaction of *myth and landscape* in the artistic reception of the *Metamorphoses*.[50] In any given period, school or *oeuvre* there are of course a host of stylistic and iconographic reasons unconnected with the *Metamorphoses* which help to bring about and to shape this interaction; but it is not unreasonable to see Ovid's own emphases, encountered both directly and through the mediation of translators, adapters and book-illustrators, as a major catalyst. Given that by far the largest concentration of *loca amoena* in the poem occurs in the first five books, this involves some projection of the characteristic ambience of *Met.* 1–5 on to the poem as a whole: one may perhaps adduce a general tendency for the readerly reception of a very long work to be skewed disproportionately towards its earlier parts. In line with the pervasiveness of the emphasis upon landscape in the painterly reception of the *Metamorphoses* is the fact that some Renaissance book-illustrators of the poem draw garden backgrounds even for episodes where the text gives no warrant.[51]

For a glimpse of the interaction of Ovidian myth and Ovidian landscape in Renaissance painting, let us turn to Venice and to the '*poesie*', as he himself termed them, of Titian. Figures 1 and 2 reproduce *Diana and Actaeon* and *Diana and Callisto* (1556–9), two canvasses planned and still displayed as a pair. The Ovidianism of the Actaeon painting has received much attention;[52] in particular Panofsky's classic account of the artist's specific response to the interplay of art and nature in Diana's grotto at *Met.* 3.155–64 (key verses quoted on p. 137 above) merits quotation:

> Titian . . . took his clue from Ovid's description; but he reversed the accent. Instead of depicting a cave where the 'genius of nature' had imitated art, he depicted an architectural setting where art had followed the 'genius of nature'. For him and his contemporaries a Gothic vault, combined with a rusticated pier, was the man-made equivalent of what Ovid describes as a structure 'produced by nature in imitation of art'. And the ruined state of this structure,

[49] Barkan (1986); Panofsky (1969) 140.
[50] An important area also for Virgil-reception: Liversidge (1997) 99–101.
[51] Hunt (1986) 43.
[52] Panofsky (1969) 154–8 (quotation at 158); Barkan (1986) 200–1; Martindale (1993) 61–3; Sharrock (1996) 112.

Figure 1 Titian, *Diana and Actaeon*.

> together with the inclination of the basin . . . , gives the impression that nature is reclaiming her own.

The incorporation into the pier of a stag's skull, the tracery of whose horns 'echoes' both the branching of the trees and the ribbing of the vault, not only deepens the dialogue between nature and art, but also adds a very Ovidian emphasis upon the interplay of setting and action: this iconographic hint transcends the pictorial moment to foreshadow Actaeon's imminent future (i.e. as a dead stag), and also effects a proleptic incorporation of the young man's metamorphic body *into* the setting where he is about to lose his human form.

Now consider the *Diana and Actaeon* in dialogue with its Ovidian pair-painting *Diana and Callisto*. The two subjects are of course inherently linked within Greco-Roman tradition as part of a set of myths about the inviolability of Diana's virginity. However, when that tradition passes through the filter of the *Metamorphoses*, what results is a peculiar intensification of existing

Figure 2 Titian, *Diana and Callisto.*

structural patterns, drawing these two stories more than ever before into the same imaginative space – and that space is, above all, a *locus amoenus*. An enhanced Ovidian sense of the grounding of myth in a recurrent landscape is what (directly or through intermediaries)[53] gives energy to Titian's pairing of Actaeon and Callisto, in which the very water seems to flow from one painting into the other, and in which everything – subject, iconography, composition, colour palette – is framed as virtuoso dialogue. It is almost superfluous for Titian to annotate the interplay between the two canvasses by including deer in bas-relief on the fountain in the Callisto painting, one of them fleeing from a huntress;[54] it is almost superfluous for the young Rembrandt to take the Ovidianism to its logical conclusion by playfully combining Titian's

[53] See Panofsky (1969) 140–1 and n.5 on the fifteen illustrated editions, translations and paraphrases of the *Met.* published at Venice in Titian's lifetime, including one in 1553 by his friend Lodovico Dolce; figs. 166–7 with 169–70 for Venetian book-illustrations of Actaeon and Callisto in stereotyped landscapes.

[54] Wethey (1975) 74.

twinned subjects on a single (1635) canvas, in which Actaeon and Callisto are confronted by Diana at the same time, in the same grove, and by the same pool.[55] The farther from Ovid's own account the interpenetration of the two landscapes proceeds, the more potently does it bear witness to the mythic legacy programmed by the Ovidian *locus amoenus*.

'All gardening is landscape-painting', runs an aphorism by Pope,[56] and a significant component in the early modern reception of Ovidian landscape is to be found in the actual gardens of the sixteenth century and later. We may take our bearings here from Roy Strong's suggestive invocation of the humanist vision of the garden as 'a place for fantasy about the classical world'.[57] The influence of Virgil in this area is great; but for a sense of magic in landscape the *Metamorphoses* reigns supreme, invoked both in its mythic particulars and as a synecdoche for the exuberance of classical paganism in general. Thus, on a 1645 visit to the gardens of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli, the diarist (and keen gardener) John Evelyn observed 'a long and spacious walk, full of fountains, under which is historicized the whole Ovidian Metamorphosis in *mezzo relievo* rarely sculptured'. John Dixon Hunt persuasively extends this habit of Ovidian reference to take in the interplay between nature and art characteristic of the Renaissance landscape gardener's way with water, rock and plant, often rendered explicitly metamorphic through tricks of plumbing: at the Villa d'Este stone mimics water and water stone in fountains shaped like staircases; elsewhere feats of hydraulic engineering cause visitors to be ambushed by random jets of water (the so-called *giochi d'acqua*), and (notably at Pratolino) garden sculptures to sing and move.[58]

Hunt lays especial emphasis on the power of water to create an atmosphere of Ovidian magic. Water, moving as well as still, will tend to be what most insistently draws the eye in a landscape; water is also, both in its fluidity and in its power to reflect and distort, the quintessentially metamorphic element. It would be interesting to know what proportion of all artistic visualizations of the *Metamorphoses* centre on water, from painting to garden art to Mary Zimmerman's remarkable theatrical adaptation of the poem in 1998–9 for a stage literally made of water.[59] Zimmerman's experiment returns us to the question of the Ovidian *locus amoenus* as a theatre, and this is another reason to set her work in dialogue with the art of the Renaissance landscaper: Hunt locates the Ovidianism of his fountains, grottoes and mythological sculptures (both animated and still) within a broader

[55] Panofsky (1969) 160 with fig. 171 on this Rembrandt in the collection of Prince Salm-Salm at Anholt.

[56] Quoted in Hunt (1992) 106. [57] Strong (1979) 16.

[58] Hunt (1986) 42–58; quotation of Evelyn at 43.

[59] *Metamorphoses*: Lookingglass Theatre Company, Chicago 1998–9; toured Berkeley/Seattle/L.A. 1999–2000.

context of self-conscious theatricality in the configuration of the Renaissance garden.[60]

A lost Elizabethan garden at Nonsuch Palace, Surrey, allows us to revisit Diana's grotto at *Met.* 3.155–64, this time under the heading of garden art. A traveller in 1599 describes a 'grove called after Diana' containing 'a rock out of which natural water springs into a basin, and on this was portrayed with great art and life-like execution the story of how the three goddesses took their bath naked and sprayed Actaeon with water.' Add that eye-witnesses mention a further aquatic device nearby, identified by Strong as a trick fountain for ambushing the unwary, and the implication of the visitor at Nonsuch in the 'garden theatre' of the Actaeon myth seems complete.[61]

This example affords a final transition back to antiquity. Already in the second century AD, the idea of treating *Met.* 3.155–64 as the blueprint for a fountain sculpture in a manmade grotto is in play: not in a garden, but in the indoor pool of an atrium; and not in an actual sculptural group, but in the elaborate ecphrastic imagining of such a group in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius. The passage in question (2.4), which allusively (re)inverts Ovid's *simulauerat artem natura* (*Met.* 3.157–8) in its own *ars aemula naturae* (art rivalling nature), constitutes a rich reading of Ovid's woodland pool, developing and complicating its conversations about nature and art, setting and spectatorship, verbal and visual representation.[62]

More broadly, the elaborate gardens of the Renaissance can serve as a reminder that Ovid's own experiments in the landscaping of myth and the mythologizing of landscape occurred in a culture which was itself no stranger to the stylization of landscape, not just in poetry and painting, but also in the interventions of actual garden design.[63] The Younger Pliny's discussions of his own property (avidly read by the landscape architects of the Renaissance) give an especially strong sense of Roman self-consciousness about interplay between nature and art in the planned garden – including, in a description of the prospect at his Tuscan villa, the idea of garden as amphitheatre.[64]

It may be noted that the Ovidian *Narcissus* and *Pyramus & Thisbe* decorating the fountain complex at the House of Loreius Tiburtinus are themselves, strictly speaking, elements of garden design; and (like Hunt's Renaissance examples) garden design which seems to find in the interplay

[60] Hunt (1986) 59–72, esp. 59.

[61] Strong (1979) 66–9. 'Three goddesses': other sources indicate (more correctly no doubt) Diana and two nymphs.

[62] See Slater (1998), a rich exploration.

[63] Cf. Rosati (1983) 70–7; Bergmann (1991); Kuttner (1999b), esp. 7–11 (with bibl.); *OLD* s.vv. *topia*, *topiarius*.

[64] Plin. *Ep.* 2.17 and 5.6 (*amphitheatrum aliquod immensum* at 5.6.7); on Renaissance readers Hunt (1986) 11–12.

of nature, art, myth and water-plumbing a peculiarly apt way to evoke the *Metamorphoses*. A different kind of garden Ovidianism can be glimpsed in Statius, *Siluae* 2.3, a playful poem which invents a myth to account for a strikingly shaped plane tree overhanging a pool in the real-life city garden of Atedius Melior. What Statius creates for his addressee is a classically Ovidian tale of the amorous pursuit of a Naiad, her refuge (with Diana's help) in the pool, and the god Pan's symbolic commemoration of his desire in the tree; the specifically Roman geography of Melior's property gives the myth a flavour of *Fasti* as well as of *Metamorphoses*. This is, of course, only a poetic conceit; but it shows with some vividness how an Ovidian sensibility *might* reshape a Roman's sense of landscape in general and actual landscape gardening in particular.

However, without the powerful Renaissance synecdoche which so often allows the *Metamorphoses* to stand in, not just for all classical myth, but for the whole classical world, a quest for particular Ovidian allusions in the actual gardens of ancient Rome (where retrievable) will probably yield only limited results. Instead, let us sketch a broader attempt to relate the Ovidian *locus amoenus* to the Roman construction and consumption of landscape at large.[65] Like Statius' more extended celebrations of rich private homes (*Silu.* 1.3 and 2.2),[66] *Siluae* 2.3 communicates a sense of the garden landscape as status symbol: the money lavished on it reflects the owner's wealth, the mythological allusions (whether in-built or supplied by the poet) his taste and education, and the very existence of the garden the élite leisure (*otium*) which he has to enjoy it. The possession of a mythological landscape painting sends the same kinds of message about taste and membership of an affluent and cultivated class. And at some level it may be possible to extend this sociology to the consumer of a poetic *locus amoenus* too.

Early in this chapter the etymologization of the *locus amoenus* as a place of love, *amor*, was noted; but it is symptomatic that a complementary etymology, attributed by Servius to Varro and by Isidore to Verrius Flaccus, derives it from the absence of agricultural *munia* ('functions', 'duties') with which it is often (though not always) associated: *'amoena' sunt loca solius uoluptatis plena, quasi 'amunia', unde nullus fructus exsoluitur* (*loca amoena* are places full of pleasure only, as it were *amunia* ['without function'], whence no produce is rendered).[67] This distinctly moralizing emphasis upon uselessness is of course just another way of describing *otium*; they are two

[65] Literature, leisure and landscape: cf. in general Williams (1973), esp. 13–34, 120–6; in Roman antiquity D'Arms (1970), esp. 46–8 and 132–3 on *amoenitas*; Connors (2000), esp. 499 on Martial 3.58.

[66] Myers (2000).

[67] Serv. *Aen.* 5.734. Cf. Serv. *Aen.* 6.638 (Varro); Isid. *Etym.* 14.8.33 (Verrius Flaccus); Maltby (1991) s.v.

sides of the same coin. The aestheticization of landscape, whether in the consumption of gardens, paintings or verse, is a distinctive prerogative of the leisured. Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for the enduring appeal of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a poem is that, despite all the mythopoeic emphasis upon crises visited upon fragile humans and other beings in its landscapes, the timeless beauty of those settings, the sense of them as a special, privileged space for the imagination, has for most readers lingered on, erasing or (perhaps in the end the same thing) stylizing the sufferings, and encouraging a kind of transcendent aestheticism. Such an embrace of beauty may always imply a measure of self-delusion, but it is not on that account hard to understand. Ovid himself was to miss the beauty of the Ovidian landscape in exile at Tomis (*Trist.* 3.10.75–6):

> aspiceres nudos sine fronde, sine arbore, campos:
> heu loca felici non adeunda uiro!

> You might behold naked fields, without leaf, without tree – a place, alas, to which no happy or productive man should come.

This couplet, in negating it, touches on much of what is precious in the *locus amoenus*:[68] the appeal to a shared, familiar, and specifically visualized arrangement of shade and foliage; a sense of the symbolic charge linking setting and inhabitant; an implicit belief in the mutual dependence of natural fertility and the fertility of the human imagination which describes it.

Let us return in this connection to E. R. Curtius, who first gave modern academic description to the rhetorical stylization of the lovely landscape in the western tradition, and who is himself in some ways the ultimate consumer of this cultural artefact. Curtius' quest for this, as for other *topoi*, was quite avowedly driven by a desire to identify a shared sense of beauty and culture unifying the Western tradition, as at once a bulwark against and a refuge from the ugliness of the Germany in which he stood in 1933:[69] his twentieth-century quest for the *locus amoenus* thus re-enacts an idealism and a belief in the power of beauty inherent to the *locus amoenus* pattern itself.

The problem is perhaps that such an appeal to transcendent beauty is more often apt to lull a sense of moral urgency than to stimulate it. And so it may

[68] The hexameter allusively recreates one of the rare dystopias in the *Met.* itself, the abode of Hunger at 8.789: Hinds (1985) 27 and n.39. Cf. Tomis as *locus ... inamabilis* ('an unlovely place', i.e. the opposite of *amoenus*) at *Trist.* 5.7.43–4, with the *Met.*'s Underworld at 4.477, and Gareth Williams' discussion in chapter 14 below.

[69] Curtius (1953) vii–x, with 70–1 and 79–83 for his adoption of *topos* as a key term; cf. Martindale (1993) 24–5; Said (1993) 47; OCD^3 s.v. 'topos'.

be for the history of the reception of the Ovidian *locus amoenus*. Despite some recent readings which would find the poem's beauty corrupted beyond redemption by its stories of injustice and violence, the aestheticizing valence in the landscapes of the *Metamorphoses* has proved largely irresistible, at once symptomatic and determinative of the consumption of all pleasure and pain enacted therein, for good or for ill

> Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade.
> (Marvell, *The Garden* 47–8)

FURTHER READING

On the *locus amoenus* pattern the seminal discussion is Curtius (1953), chapter 10 'The ideal landscape'. On vivid description as a category for ancient rhetoricians see Vasaly (1993) and Bartsch (1989), esp. chapter 1; the boundary between such description and narrative is theorized (with bibl.) by Fowler (2000) chapter 3. On the *est locus* formula see (with bibl.) Hinds (1987) 36–8 and nn., within an extended treatment of the landscape of Enna in *Met.* 5.

On interplay between landscape and action in the *Met.* Hugh Parry's succinct article (1964) is developed in different directions by Segal (1969) and Davis (1983). As to metamorphic 'embodiment' in landscape, Ovidian scholarship is now in dialogue with current discussions of the body as a site for constructions of and anxieties about identity, and as the *locus* for violence and desire: see Philip Hardie's overview of work on 'the self' in Hardie, Barchiesi, Hinds (1999) 5–9; also Keith (2000), esp. chapters 3 and 5; and Alison Sharrock's chapter 6 of this volume, with bibl. Richlin (1992) confronts both interpretative and ethical issues raised by the aestheticization of sexual violence in the *Met.*

On visuality in the *Met.* the major treatment is Rosati (1983); for the poem's overt appeals to visual art see Solodow (1988), chapter 6. The study of spectacle is a growing area of interest in Roman cultural studies: for the *Met.* see Philip Hardie's section on 'cultures of display' in chapter 2 of this volume; Feldherr (1997), esp. 42–4.

For the reception of the *Met.* in art, see Christopher Allen's chapter 20 of this volume with 'further reading'; on Titian see Panofsky (1969), chapter 6 'Titian and Ovid'; Barkan (1986), 175–206; and Martindale (1993) 60–4. For the *Met.* in Renaissance garden art see Hunt (1986), chapter 4 'Ovid in the garden'. The *Met.* receives limited attention in Leach's ambitious comparative study of literary and painted landscape at Rome (1988): 343–4, 348–52, 440–67. Recent work on actual Roman landscapes (esp. in villas, gardens and parks) has stepped up the level of dialogue between literary, art-historical and sociological approaches, and awaits an Ovidian dimension: exemplary are Bergmann (1991), and Kuttner (1999a). On the sociology of landscape at large Williams (1973) remains fundamental.

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