DOI: 10.13137/2464-8760/34129 *Incontri di filologia classica XXI (2021-2022), 79-123*

MAXWELL STOCKER

The Punishment Scenes on Minerva's Tapestry in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (VI 87-100): Allusion, Integration, and Metadiscourse

Abstract
This article provides a range of new insights into the quartet of punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry in the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest in Book VI of Ovid's Metamorphoses. *The article firstly provides a comprehensive description of the mythological and literary history of the contents of each of the four punishment scenes in turn. It then examines the intricate internal architecture of Minerva's tapestry, which has been overlooked in existing scholarship. It discusses how the four punishment scenes relate to each other, their conceptual and physical layout on the tapestry itself, and why Ovid chose those particular mythological stories as the contents of the punishment scenes. The article then elaborates on the contributions of these new insights to broader interpretations of the episode as a whole.*

Keywords
Metamorphoses*, Arachne, mythology*

Riassunto
Il presente contributo fornisce una serie di nuove intuizioni sul quartetto di scene di punizione trapunte sull'arazzo di Minerva, all'interno del concorso di tessitura Arachne-Minerva raccontato nel libro VI delle Metamorfosi *di Ovidio. L'articolo fornisce in primo luogo una descrizione completa della storia mitologica e letteraria di ciascuna delle quattro scene di punizione, quindi esamina l'intricata architettura interna dell'arazzo di Minerva (generalmente trascurata negli studi) e discute come le quattro scene di punizione si relazionino tra loro, per poi analizzarne la disposizione concettuale e fisica sull'arazzo stesso, così da comprendere il motivo della scelta ovidiana. Queste nuove intuizioni vengono quindi rielaborate in modo da fornire una esegesi complessiva dell'episodio.*

Parole chiave
Metamorfosi*, Aracne, mitologia*

University of St Andrews ms406@st-andrews.ac.uk

This article undertakes a close reading of the four punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry in the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (VI 87-100)[1]. Previous scholarship on the intensely studied myth of Minerva and Arachne has advanced a variety of interpretations of the weaving contest. It has examined how this episode fits into the *Metamorphoses* as a whole; the similarities, differences, and general relationship between the two tapestries and how this informs the audience's interpretation of the episode; why the scenes on Arachne's tapestry were chosen and how they relate to Arachne's punishment; and how the weaving contest relates to the other contests narrated throughout Books V and VI of the *Metamorphoses*[2]. More targeted studies have explored how Ovid integrates

[1] I am grateful to Tom Harrison, Gianfranco Agosti, David Larmour, and Peter I. Barta for their help and advice at various stages of this project. All translations are my own.

[2] For an overview of the most important secondary works, see Yoong 2015, 1-8, with references. For previous scholarship on the role of Arachne in this myth and in classical mythology in general, Segal 1971; Leach 1974; Lateiner 1984; Ahl 1985; Harries 1990; Jop-

Minerva's tapestry into the weaving contest, the ways in which the tapestry reflects its Augustan political context, Ovid's metapoetic discourse in his ekphrasis of the tapestry, Ovid's characterisation of Minerva and Arachne as poetic weavers, and Ovid's mobilisation of the interplay between the internal and external audiences who are viewing the tapestry[3]. In view of the key importance of this episode for our understanding of the *Metamorphoses* as a whole, extraordinarily little attention has been given to the quartet of punishment scenes which frame Minerva's tapestry, with many commentaries and guidebooks on the *Metamorphoses* wrongly claiming that the myths in Minerva's punishment scenes are unknown or poorly understood[4]. In particular, these punishment scenes have received much less attention in the secondary literature than have Arachne's tapestry and other aspects of the weaving contest. Almost none of the most important recent works have examined the references and allusions and the nature of the choices made by Ovid in his construction of Minerva's punishment scenes. O'Bryhim's relatively brief treatment of this topic misses a large number of the allusions and intertexts present in the episode, and does not tackle the broader implications of the punishment scenes for our understanding of Book VI in its cultural and literary-historical context[5]. At best, this topic has been treated tangentially in the context of larger studies. The often-cited commentaries of Bömer and Rosati also miss a number of important points, and do not consider broader questions of the internal structure of the tapestry and how the punishment scenes relate to one another, and to other myths in the *Metamorphoses* and elsewhere[6].

The myths depicted in the four punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry have long been noted for their obscurity, and for their largely unexplored allusions and

lin 1991; Janan 1994; Vostral 1995; Scheid and Svenbro 1996; Segal 1998; Kruger 2001; Fantham 2004; Oliensis 2004; Feldherr 2010; Heath 2011; McAuley 2012.

[3] On Augustan political propaganda, see further Zanker 1988; Powell 1992; Galinsky 1996, 2005; Miller 2009; Newby 2016. I use the term 'Graeco-Roman' to refer to the cultural division between the classical world and lands which, by the time of Ovid, had historically been either outside, or on the periphery, of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman culture. The poet continuously constructs and develops this division in various ways throughout his narration of the myth of Minerva and Arachne. The usage of the term 'Graeco-Roman' in this article specifically denotes the Greek, Etruscan, and Roman cultural and mythological milieu to which the various components of this myth allude. Many of the referenced myths and traditions incorporate settings and characters which, during the prior history of Greek literature, were geographically and culturally distinct from the Hellenic and Roman worlds. See further Wheeler 2000, 48-60; Solodow 2014, 185-186.

[4] See, for example, Janan 2009, 109.

[5] See O'Bryhim 2014.

[6] See Bömer 1969; Rosati 2009.

interconnections[7]. The description of Minerva's tapestry is packed with references to unfamiliar myths narrated at a quick pace, and there has been no systematic study of the obscure mythical stories and figures depicted on the tapestry. Therefore, this article supplements and elaborates on existing scholarship by exploring the wider mythological context of Minerva's tapestry. This article examines the cultural, thematic, and mythological allusions present in each of the punishment scenes on the tapestry, how the scenes relate to each other, and the reasons why these four scenes were chosen by Ovid[8]. By slowing down the reader's observation of the tapestry through a close reading, the article discusses the associations and references made in each scene, and analyses the cultural and political resonances of the details mentioned by Ovid, connecting them to possible sources, and indicating their significance. This article reveals the intricate internal architecture of the four punishment scenes, and unpicks and explains the densely layered references and allusions in Minerva's tapestry as a productive addition to the secondary literature on the myth of Minerva and Arachne. I then consider the ways in which this new close reading contributes to literary-theoretical approaches to this episode, and how it illuminates wider readings of the weaving contest as a whole. This close reading will sharpen and deepen our understanding of Minerva's tapestry within the myth itself and in the broader sociopolitical context of the *Metamorphoses*. This systematic study of the literary allusions and references made in the four punishment scenes will also provide a useful point of departure for future studies of the myth of Minerva and Arachne.

Minerva's tapestry contains a multi-layered patchwork of stories which are connected to each other; those stories in turn allude to other stories in the broader mythological tradition, and they also connect to other stories elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*. There is a resulting web of narratives and sub-narratives within Minerva's tapestry itself, between Minerva's tapestry and the broader weaving contest, between Minerva's tapestry and the *Metamorphoses* as a whole, and between Minerva's tapestry and broader Greek and Roman mythological traditions. This web is highly complex, and is interconnected in a variety of ways. The meaning found in mythology resides not in the isolated elements which enter into the composition of a myth, but in the way those elements are combined. It is therefore essential to investigate thoroughly the mythological traditions from which Ovid draws in his composition of each of the punishment scenes, and the allusions and

[7] On the myth of Minerva and Arachne, see Ahl 1985; Fantham 2004; Feldherr 2010; Heath 2011; Harries 1990; Janan 1994; Joplin 1991; Kruger 2001; Lateiner 1984; Leach 1974; McAuley 2012; Oliensis 2004; Segal 1971; Segal 1998; Scheid and Svenbro 1996; Vostral 1995.

[8] Line numbers accord to Anderson 1972.

references made in each scene. In Minerva's tapestry, the four punishment scenes which surround the central image of the contest between Minerva and Neptune over the naming of Athens (VI 70-82) are as follows:

1. Myth of Rhodope and Haemus (VI 87-89)
2. Myth of Juno and Gerana (VI 90-92)
3. Myth of Juno and Antigone of Troy (VI 93-97)
4. Myth of the Daughters of Kinyras (VI 98-100)

1. *Scene One: Myth of Rhodope and Haemus* (*VI 87-89*).

> Threiciam Rhodopen habet angulus unus et Haemum
> nunc gelidi montes, mortalia corpora quondam,
> nomina summorum sibi qui tribuere deorum.
>
> *One corner has Thracian Rhodope and Haemus,*
> *now icy mountains, once mortal bodies,*
> *who assigned to themselves the names of the highest gods.*

The first punishment scene in the ekphrasis depicts Rhodope and Haemus, a Thracian king and queen who were punished by being transformed into mountains for appropriating the names of Jupiter and Juno to describe themselves. The Thracian mountains were associated with ice and snow from the Homeric poems onwards, and Mount Haemus features in mythological contexts from the early fifth century BCE in the fragments of Pherecydes of Athens, who himself drew on older, Archaic-Period sources. Mount Haemus was associated with blood, contest, and battles involving the gods in Callimachus, Vergil, Lucan, Pomponius Mela, Statius, Lucian, and Claudian[9]. The appearance of Haemus in the first punishment scene therefore lends an ominous and threatening undertone to the narrative. Mount Haemus is notably mentioned by Pseudo-Apollodorus as one of the sites of the confrontation between Zeus and Typhon[10]. By the time of Ovid, therefore, Haemus was already associated with a contest between an Olympian god and an enemy who was eventually defeated, and was an appropriate character for Minerva to feature on her tapestry. Haemus and Rhodope were closely

[9] See Hijmans 1978, 408-409, with primary references.

[10] Apollod. I 6,3. In this section, Apollodorus also claims that Typhon's blood (αἷμα, -ατος, τό) was splattered onto Mount Haemus during his contest against Zeus, and that this is the origin of the name of the mountain.

associated with Thrace and the Thracians long before and long after Ovid. In his list of noteworthy characters in Thracian culture, Lucian mentions Haemus and Rhodope in the same phrase, as two associated entities, alongside Orpheus and Lycurgus (Luc. *Salt.* 51). The use of the adjective *Threiciam* in initial position, as the very first word of the first punishment scene, signals instantly to the external audience that Minerva is going to be speaking of barbarian lands and characters in her punishment scenes.

From the Archaic Period to the composition of the *Metamorphoses*, Rhodope and Haemus are described only as mountains in the surviving sources. Ovid's account is the earliest surviving attestation of the myth of Rhodope and Haemus as king and queen, and no previous attestation survives of the myth of Rhodope and Haemus as characters rather than solely as mountains. It is uncertain whether the myth of Rhodope and Haemus as human characters is an Ovidian invention or part of a pre-Ovid tradition unattested in the surviving sources. Mountains feature prominently in Greek and Roman mythology, but the distinction between mountains and sentient human characters was always a blurred one. Since mountains were humanised in Greek mythology as in the myth of Cithaeron and Helicon discussed below, the two categories are not mutually exclusive. Due to the fragmentary nature of the surviving evidence, one should leave open the possibility of a lost pre-Ovidian tradition of Mount Haemus and Rhodope as a Thracian king and queen. The myth is also narrated in Pseudo-Plutarch's *On Rivers*, written during the third century CE, and in Lactantius Placidus' *Narrationes Fabularum Ovidianarum*, written during the fourth century CE[11]. These accounts specify that Haemus and Rhodope were brother and sister who fell in love with one another, and whose crime was to name themselves after the famously incestuous divine couple Zeus and Hera. Pseudo-Plutarch's account then relates the following:

> γεννῶνται δ' ἐν αὐτοῖς λίθοι φιλάδελφοι λεγόμενοι, κοραξοὶ τὴν χρόαν, ἀνθρωπόμιμοι, οὗτοι τεθέντες χωρὶς ἀλλήλων καὶ ὀνομασθέντες διαλύονται παραχρῆμα †καὶ ἰδιας† καθῶς ἱστορεῖ Θράσυλλος Μενδήσιος ἐν γ' περὶ Λίθων. μέμνηται δὲ τούτων ἀκριβέστερον <…> ἐν τοῖς Θρακικοῖς.
>
> *And there are stones on these* [*mountains*] *called philadelphoi* (*"sibling-lovers"*), *crow-like in colour, human-shaped, which, if they are placed separately from one another and named, they instantly dissolve themselves, as Thrasyllus of Mendes records in* On Stones. *And he has also made mention of these things more specifically in* On the Thracians.

[11] Ps.-Plut. *Fluv.* 11,3-4; ps.Lact. Plac. *fab. Ov.* VI 1; Serv. auct. *Aen.* I 317; Schol. Ov. *Ib.* 561.

The act of naming instigates metamorphosis both with these stones found on the mountainsides, and in the original punishment of Rhodope and Haemus themselves. The curiously distinctive word choice which describes the stones as being the colour of a crow may recall the bird-transformations of the second and third punishment scenes. This portion of the myth is attributed to two lost works of Thrasyllus of Mendes, who lived during the late first century BCE and the early first century CE, and who was active at the same time as Ovid. It is therefore possible that the content of Pseudo-Plutarch's account was already part of the mythological tradition of Rhodope and Haemus when Ovid composed his first punishment scene. Furthermore, in the early third century CE, Philostratus recorded a tradition in which Haemus was a minor ally of the Trojans during the Trojan War, and was killed in battle by Palamedes[12]. It is unclear how this tradition relates to the broader tradition of Haemus and Rhodope, beyond the shared non-Greek identity of Haemus himself.

The appearance of Haemus in Minerva's first punishment scene is also linked to the two other appearances of Haemus in the *Metamorphoses* through the shared context of hubristic transgressions by mortals against the gods, for which the mortal character in question is then punished. In the earlier story of Phaethon in Book II, Haemus features in a series of Near Eastern, Thracian, and northern Greek mountains which were burned during Phaethon's failed attempt to ride the chariot of Zeus (Ov. *met.* II 219), an example of a mortal's hubristic action against a deity which ended in disaster. Later, at the beginning of the Orpheus Cycle in Book X, Orpheus (a non-Greek lyre-player like Kinyras, who is depicted in the fourth punishment scene) reposes on Mount Rhodope and Mount Haemus after he returns from his journey to the Underworld in search of Eurydice (Ov. *met.* X 77)[13]. Like Rhodope and Haemus themselves, Orpheus was guilty of hubris and transgression against the gods, for which he was punished[14]. These intratextual links are strengthened by the fact that, both in the first punishment scene and in the stories of Phaethon and Orpheus, it is Zeus who punishes the mortal character for his hubristic transgression. This pattern is also strengthened by the later connection of Haemus in Statius' *Thebaid* with this central theme of hubristic transgressions by mortals against the gods which meet with deadly consequences. Juno states that the horses of Oenomaus would have been appropriately stabled at Mount Haemus (I 273), since the figure of Oenomaus is closely associated with

[12] Tzetz. *Antehom.* 273; Philostr. *Her.* 15,16.

[13] See also Pomponius Mela II 17.

[14] For other associations between Haemus and Orpheus, see Hijmans 1978, 410, with primary references.

dolos and hubris in his mythological background, being tricked by the Lydian prince Pelops, and dying in the chariot race against him. This is an example, parallel to that of Arachne, of a Lydian figure outsmarting a more powerful Greek figure. The house of Atreus is, in general, characterised by transgressive struggles for unattainable objects[15].

Haemus was associated with the god Boreas from the Archaic Period onwards, and later appears as the son of Boreas and the princess Orithyia[16]. Although the earliest surviving attestations of the myth of Boreas and Orithyia in the sixth century BCE predate its earliest surviving association with Haemus, it is impossible to ascertain whether this is an accident of preservation. In the myth, Boreas, the god of the north wind who resided in Thrace, abducted the Athenian princess Orithyia from the Ilissos River in Attica, carried her back to Thrace, and raped her, and she resided at Mount Haemus thereafter as a mountain-nymph[17]. Callimachus, whose poems were important intertexts for the two tapestries, also states that Boreas himself resided on Mount Haemus, and was the son of the Strymon River, also located in Thrace (*Hymn* 4, 26-65). Haemus was therefore the product of the rape of an Athenian woman by a foreign god, which took place in a foreign country. Haemus' heritage thus prefigures the central thematic concern of Arachne's tapestry (the rape of women by Greek gods), but inverts the order, since Haemus was conceived through the rape of a Greek woman by a non-Greek god. Haemus's fate, of course, also prefigures the fate of Arachne herself, in being transformed as a punishment for hubris by a Graeco-Roman deity. The first punishment scene thus engages in a dialogue with Arachne's tapestry on multiple levels of allusion, and it links forward to Ovid's narration of Boreas' abduction of Orithyia from Erechtheus at the end of Book VI (*met.* VI 675-721). Moreover, Haemus was also associated with Bacchus by Valerius Flaccus, Statius, and Lucian[18]. If this association existed prior to Ovid as seems probable, then we may posit that, through these mythological allusions, Minerva is making reference to the Bacchic mode in which her antagonist is weaving her own tapestry, warning that punishment and metamorphosis await.

Mount Rhodope was mentioned twice each by Herodotus and Thucydides[19].

---

[15] See Dodson-Robinson 2019, 16-17.

[16] Serv. *Aen.* I 321; Steph. Byz. A 131, p. 97, 1-3 Billerbeck.

[17] Ap.Rh. I 212, II 23; Apollod. III 15,2, 3,196, 3,199; Simon. fr. 534 Campbell from Scholiast on A.R. I 211-215c; Pind. *Pith.* 4,8; Aesch. Fr. 23; Q.S. I 166; Hdt. VII 189; Plat. *Phdr*. 229b-d; Strab. VII 3,1; Paus. I 19,5, I 38,2, III 15,1-4, V 19,1; Diod. Sic. IV 43,3; Hyg. *fab.* 14, 19, 157; Ov. *fast.* V 203; *epist.* 16,345, 18,37; Prop. I 20, II 26, III 6; Stat. *Theb.* XII 630; Nonn. *Dion.* I 134, II 686, XXXVII 155, XLVII 302; Suda Γ 46 Γαμβρὸς Ἐρεχθῆος;

[18] Val. Fl. I 726; Stat. *Theb*. IV 652; Lucian. *Salt*. 51. See Hijmans 1978, 409-410.

[19] Hdt. IV 49, VIII 116; Thuc. II 96, II 98.

Within the *Metamorphoses*, Rhodope appears alongside Haemus in the two contexts mentioned above, and also in the myth of Tereus and Procne later in Book VI, as the setting for a Thracian festival to Bacchus[20]. Rhodope is also mentioned twice in Vergil's *Georgics*, as a general indicator of Thrace[21]. There are at least two other characters in Greek literature also named Rhodope and spelled identically; the most notable one was one of the Oceanids and a playmate of Persephone before her abduction by Hades[22]. It is notable that the near-homophonous Rhodopis (the courtesan who went to Egypt during the 26th Dynasty and whose story was related by Herodotus, Strabo, and Aelian) was also Thracian in the Herodotean account (Hdt. II 134,1-3). The two occurrences of Rhodope in Hyginus' *Fabulae* parallel the fate of Arachne in the weaving contest. Mount Rhodope features as the setting for the victory of a Greek deity over a Thracian mortal; Lycurgus, the king of Edonis in southern Thrace, was thrown to the panthers on Mount Rhodope after denying the divinity of Dionysus (Hyg. *fab.* 132). In another version of this myth which Hyginus also records, Lycurgus commits suicide after blaspheming Dionysus; suicide was similarly attempted by Arachne after uttering words to which a Graeco-Roman deity took offence (Hyg. *fab.* 242). Therefore, Mount Rhodope was the setting in which a Thracian king who denied the divine power of the Greek god Dionysus was killed. Minerva is doubly threatening Arachne here; not only is the story of Rhodope and Haemus a cautionary tale in itself, but Rhodope also has a backstory as the setting in which non-Greek mortals who denied the divine power of Greek deities were killed. Moreover, in another tradition, Rhodope was the mother of the giant Athos by Poseidon; Athos challenged Poseidon, and Poseidon threw a rock at him, burying him and creating Mount Athos[23]. So, apart from Haemus, Rhodope was also associated with another mythical figure who challenged a god and was metamorphosed into a mountain.

Thrace is therefore significant as the setting for the first punishment scene in terms of the themes of artistic prowess and divine punishment. Strabo, writing contemporaneously with Ovid, emphasised the longstanding association between Thracian mythological characters, musical prowess, and the lyre, and he also stated that Thracian music was of Near Eastern origin (Strab. X 3,17). A long-lasting Greek and Roman tradition portrayed Orpheus as a Thracian lyre-player of unparalleled talent[24]. A thematic parallel to the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest is

---

[20] Ov. *met.* II 219, VI 589: *nox conscia sacris, nocte sonat Rhodope tinnitibus aeris acuti*. Also Ov. *met.* X 77.

[21] Verg. *Georg.* III 462, IV 461.

[22] Hom. *Hymn Dem.* 423; Hyg. *fab.* 142.

[23] Scholia on Theocritus, *Idyll.* 7,76.

[24] Ibyc. fr. 306 Campbell; Pind. *Pith.* 4,315; Aesch. *Ag.* 1612; Ar. *Ran.* 1032; Eur. *Hipp.*

the story of Thamyris, a Thracian singer who, after boasting that his musical ability surpassed that of the Muses, was blinded and rendered unable to play the lyre as punishment[25]. Moreover, from the Archaic Period onwards, both Thrace and Thamyris were associated with the kithara, a variety of lyre[26]. The Thracian setting of the first punishment scene thus prefigures the lyre-playing Cypriot king Kinyras in the final punishment scene, and Ovid's description of the punishment scenes begins and ends with allusions to non-Greek lyre-playing characters in an ABBA chiastic structure. Since Thrace was associated with artistic skill and mythical artistic contests, but here functions as the setting of Greek subjugation of foreign characters, the first punishment scene metapoetically reflects the weaving contest in which the scene itself features. This victory of the Olympian gods in a foreign land associated with artistic contests prefigures the coming victory of Minerva over the Lydian Arachne, and also links forward to the two final myths of Book VI: the myth of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela, and the myth of Erechtheus, Boreas, and Orithyia.

The myth of Rhodope and Haemus shares extensive parallels with Corinna's description of a singing contest between the two Boeotian mountains of Cithaeron and Helicon (Fr. 654.i.12-34). Both myths belonged to the same Graeco-Roman mythological tradition of personifying mountains. In Corinna fragment 654 and in earlier and later occurrences, Cithaeron and Helicon feature both as mountains and as humans, and the two were paired from the Archaic Period onwards[27]. The surviving fragment of Corinna's poem begins with the end of the second of the two songs, which relates the myth of Rhea concealing her youngest son Zeus from Cronus in a cave on Mount Ida; this is based on the Hesiodic version of the myth, and the mountain-themed song metapoetically mirrors the contest between mountains in which it features. It is uncertain whether the second song was sung by Cithaeron or Helicon[28]. The gods then vote democratically on the winner of the contest, who is proclaimed to be Cithaeron. After his defeat, Helicon rips out a part of himself in the form of a rock, and throws it down the mountainside, where it shatters into innumerable pieces. The song in Corinna's poem shares with the myth of Rhodope and Haemus the theme of a transgres-

---

953; *Bacch.* 561; *Med.* 543; *Rhes.* 944, 946; Plat. *Apol.* 41a; *Ion* 533c; *Leg.* 677d; *Prt.* 315a, 316d; *Symp.* 179d; Diod. Sic. IV 25.

[25] Hom. *Il.* II 581, 2.594-600; Eur. *Rhes.* 915; Apollod. I 3,3; Strab. VII 35; Diod. Sic. III 67; Plin. *nat.* VII 207.

[26] See further Tsiafakis 2000, 379.

[27] Hom. *Epigr.* 6; Stat. *Theb.* IX 446; Paus. IX 1,1, IX 3,1; Philostr. *Imag.* I 14; Ant. Lib. *Met.* 9,1. See Larmour 2005, 26-31; Larmour 2008, 54-55.

[28] See further Larmour 2005, 28-29.

sion against Zeus involving a mountain. The angry and violent end to the contest uses the imagery of the physicality of the mountains themselves, as does Ovid in the first punishment scene. Corinna blurs the distinction between the geographical and human qualities of Helicon as Ovid does for Haemus. The contest also results in the metamorphosis of the defeated party, since Helicon inflicts a physical change upon himself as a mountain (654.i.33-34). Ovid's equivocal portrayal of Minerva may also be prefigured in Corinna's characterisation of Rhea and Hermes and Corinna's implied reference to Metis, which hints that Cithaeron might have won the contest unjustly, and thus that the actions of the gods are morally ambiguous, and that the reader ought to sympathise with the defeated character[29]. In Hesiod's *Theogony*, an important source text for Corinna Fragment 654, both the Muses and Athena are the daughters of Zeus, and the Muses' role in Corinna's poem emphasises their incontestable divine power, similarly to Ovid's depiction of Minerva's final and unchallengeable victory over Arachne[30]. Moreover, the tradition in which Cithaeron helps to reconcile Hera and Zeus echoes the situation in the first punishment scene in which these two deities, who usually had a volatile relationship, were working together and acting in concert to punish Rhodope and Haemus[31]. Ovid also engaged intertextually with Corinna's poetry elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*[32].

Corinna Fragment 654 also has important resonances in the contest of the Pierides and the Muses (V 295-678), in which the Muses recount to Minerva a story in which the nine daughters of Pierus had challenged them to a singing contest, believing themselves to be of superior ability. Pierus was linguistically and mythologically associated with a mountain of the same name, like Haemus, Rhodope, Cithaeron, and Helicon. After the judgment of the nymphs of Helicon declared the Pierides to be the losers, they were turned into birds as punishment, a fate which was to occur in the second and third punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry (V 662-678). The myth of Minerva and Arachne then begins immediately after this episode. The Muses and Athena/Minerva were both closely associated with artistry, poetry, and weaving. They preside respectively over the contest in the myth of the Pierides which is recounted to Minerva, over the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest, and over the contest between Cithaeron and Helicon. The first punishment scene and these other contests to which Ovid alludes share a central thematic concern with the fickle and unreliable nature of the gods who oversee the

[29] See Larmour 2005, 30.
[30] Hes. *Theog.* 1-13. See Larmour 2005, 29.
[31] Paus. IX 3,1.
[32] See Ziogas 2013, 7.

contests, and who bear associations with artistry and weaving. Ovid also associates Minerva and the Muses directly with each other at the very beginning of Book VI when Minerva expresses agreement with the Muses' song. Minerva approves of their actions in the preceding myth, and expresses her desire to receive praise in turn. These extensive overlaps between the two episodes make for a smooth and natural transition to the weaving contest with Arachne.

2. *Scene Two: Myth of Juno and Gerana* (*VI 90-92*).

> altera Pygmaeae fatum miserabile matris
> pars habet: hanc Iuno victam certamine iussit
> esse gruem populisque suis indicere bellum.
>
> *Another part has the wretched fate of the Pygmaean mother:*
> *Juno ordered her, who had been defeated in a contest,*
> *to be a crane and to declare war on her own people.*

The second punishment scene on Minerva's tapestry concerns Gerana (*Pygmeae mater*), a queen of the Pygmy people of central Africa, whom Antoninus Liberalis named "Oenoe". Gerana (Γεράνα, meaning "crane woman") was the wife of the Pygmy king Nicodamas, and the mother of Mopsus. After being defeated by Juno in a beauty contest, Gerana was transformed into a crane (*grus*) as punishment for her arrogance. The Pygmies were an exotic ethnic group of dwarves who were located by Greek and Roman authors in various lands at the fringes of the known world: sub-Saharan Africa, India, Scythia, and Thrace[33]. They are likely based on the central African pygmies, who were imported by Egyptian elites and traders throughout the Dynastic Period, and who were famously described by Herodotus[34]. Until the 20th century CE, these peoples, who are now restricted to the Congo Basin, lived as far north as what is now the White Nile and Khartoum states of Sudan[35]. They are most commonly associated with the ethnographical and mythological tradition of the geranomachy, in which the Pygmies engaged in a continuous war with the cranes. The cranes migrated south every year and attacked the Pygmies' fields, causing death and destruction, and the Pygmies in turn attacked the cranes' nests and young. The geranomachy is described as an ethnographic reality throughout Greek and Roman literature from the eighth century

[33] See Arafat 2020.
[34] See Scobie 1975, 123.
[35] See Dasen 1993, 27.

BCE onwards, and in Greek art from the sixth century BCE onwards, although possible Late Mycenaean forerunners have been identified[36]. The poet of the *Iliad* mentions the geranomachy in a manner which assumes the external audience's prior familiarity with the story. It therefore dates at least to the Early Iron Age, and may have emerged through Mycenaean Greek reception of Egyptian culture in the Palatial Bronze Age. Egypt is the only other Eastern Mediterranean culture in which dwarves and pygmies feature repeatedly in cultural representations over the long term. The Greek geranomachy was shaped partly by direct knowledge of central African pygmies, and it may have originally emerged from Egyptian and Nubian oral traditions of pygmy peoples who lived around the White Nile[37].

Cranes functioned as a symbol of transition and movement between lands, cultures, and seasons throughout Greek and Roman literature[38]. In Hesiod's *Works and Days*, the time of ploughing and of the winter rains are heralded by the call of the crane migrating from one land to another, and, in Aristophanes' *Birds*, when the Chorus lists various birds whose behaviour marks the turning of seasons, they describe the crane migrating to Libya[39]. Moreover, Plato uses the crane in a generalising example of the human action of self-definition through isolating an Other (Plat. *Plt.* 263d). Occurrences in Cicero, Martial, Celsus, and Lucretius likewise emphasize the repeated act of crossing between lands and peoples[40]. The crane therefore indicates foreignness, distant lands, and cross-cultural transition, as well as the idea of repetitive and cyclical behaviour.

The myth of Gerana posits an alternative, mythical reason for the ethnographic geranomachy. Although the geranomachy itself dates at least to the Early Iron Age, the story of the metamorphosis of Gerana has no surviving attestation prior to the late Classical Period. It is attested in more detail in three post-Ovidian accounts: in Antoninus Liberalis' *Metamorphoses* (16) from the second century CE, in which the Pygmy queen is named Oenoe, and in Claudius Aelianus' *De Natura Animalium* (XV 29) and Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (IX 393e-f) from the early third century CE, in which the Pygmy queen is named Gerana. Antoninus Liberalis and Athenaeus attribute the story to the Greek author Boio's *Ornithogonia*,

---

[36] See Dasen 1993, 183, with references. Hom. *Il.* III 3-6; Hes. *Cat.* fr. 98,9, 98,18, 99, 101 Most; Ael. *NA* XV 29; Ath. IX 393e-f, Arist. *Hist. an.* VIII 12, Strab. I 42, XVII 821; Plin. *nat.* IV 44, V 109, VI 70, VI 187, VII 26; Philostr. *VA* III 45-47, VI 1, VI 23-25; Ctesias *Ind.* (III C, 688 Jacoby) F45, 21-24 *apud* Phot. *Bibl.* 72, 21-50a and F45fα *apud* Excerpt. Const. *De nat. an.* II 67 (see Nichols 2008, 112, 118); Ant. Lib. *Met.* 16.

[37] See Dasen 1993, 177-178; Ovadiah - Mucznik 2017, 153, with references.

[38] See Dan 2014, 45.

[39] Hes. *Op.* 448-450; Ar. *Av.* 709-710.

[40] Cic. *nat. deor.* II 49,125; Mart. XIII 75; Cels. II 18; Lucr. IV 181; Plin. *nat.* X 30-31.

a lost poem from the late Classical or early Hellenistic Period which describes the metamorphoses of various mythical figures into birds, and which was directly used by Ovid elsewhere in his composition of the *Metamorphoses*[41]. Since Boio was mentioned by the Atthidographer Philochorus (c. 340-261BCE), the *Ornithogonia* must have been written during the late Classical Period or the first decades of the Hellenistic Period[42]. The myth of Hera and Gerana therefore dates to the early Hellenistic Period at the latest.

These accounts specify that Gerana was marvellously beautiful, that she proclaimed herself more beautiful than the Greek goddesses, and that she refused to worship Hera. Her beauty induced the Pygmies to worship her as a goddess, and they brought her gifts to celebrate the birth of her child. Athenaeus relates that Gerana had a daughter, Chelone, who was later transformed into a tortoise. Antoninus Liberalis mentions not a daughter but a son, Mopsus. Ovid adds the detail, not made explicit in the other accounts, that she challenged Hera to a beauty contest. Claudius Aelianus' statement that Gerana declared herself more beautiful than the goddesses Hera, Athena, Artemis, and Aphrodite (XV 29) prefigures the fourth punishment scene, in which Aphrodite also features as the offended deity. Hera turned Gerana into a crane, and, when the transformed Gerana tried to return to her people and to her child Mopsus, the Pygmies violently repelled her, leading to the war between the Pygmies and the cranes; Hera therefore made her an enemy of her own people. In view of this background, and since Ovid left Gerana unnamed so that he could make an intratextual allusion to the myth of Pygmalion in Book X as discussed further below, we may conclude that Ovid was drawing on a pre-existing tradition of the metamorphosis of Gerana which has since been lost. Gerana is the most geographically distant of all the punished characters on Minerva's tapestry, and this is mirrored in Ovid's ekphrasis by his use of the imprecise phrase *altera… pars* to introduce Gerana's position on the tapestry, instead of the more specific noun *angulus*, which refers directly to a specific corner of the tapestry[43].

The second punishment scene connects back to the first scene, and it also connects forward to the fourth scene, which itself mirrors the myth of Pygmalion in Book X. A parallel literary tradition located the Pygmies in Thrace from the fourth century BCE onwards, and, throughout Greek history, the itinerant cranes were conceived as Thracian birds, since Thrace was their point of departure for their annual migratory journey south to Africa where the Pygmies, Libyans, and

[41] Boio *ap*. Ant. Lib. *Met*. 16 *et ap*. Ath. IX 393e-f.

[42] Ath. IX 393e-f.

[43] Ov. *met.* VI 87, 90-91.

Ethiopians lived[44]. The myth of Juno and Gerana therefore alludes heavily to the Thracian setting of the first punishment scene, from which the audience's attention migrates, as if with the flight of the cranes, to the African setting of the second punishment scene. Allusions to Libya also occur in the extensive parallels between the myths of the Pygmy Gerana and the Libyan Lamia, in the widespread image of the crane flying south over Libya in the autumn, and in the mythological background of Gerana's son, Mopsus[45]. There are at least four separate figures in Greek mythology named "Mopsus". Since Mopsus is the son of Gerana and is part of the myth described in the second punishment scene, the identities and mythological backgrounds of homonymous characters are naturally drawn into the web of meaning created in this scene. Crucially, the stories and connotations of those characters intersect meaningfully with the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest as a whole. After being exiled from Thrace by Lycurgus, the Thracian commander Mopsus fought a successful battle alongside the Scythian commander Sipylus against the Amazons, and they then pursued the surviving Amazons to Libya. In the context of the numerous other Thracian and Libyan allusions in the myth of Gerana, it is remarkable that this rather more prominent character in Greek mythology who shares the name "Mopsus" also has Thracian and Libyan associations. Moreover, the Argonaut Mopsus, another separate character, was the son of the seer Ampyx, who was the father of the seer Idmon, who shares the same name as the father of Arachne, Idmon[46]. Through this range of allusions, the myth of Juno and Gerana combines and represents a broad range of associations relating to central Africa, Libya, and Thrace.

Ovid also draws a phonetic allusion between the *Pygmeae mater* (Gerana) and Pygmalion, which serves to connect the first, second, and fourth punishment scenes and the myth of Pygmalion in Book X. More specifically, the second punishment scene acts as a bridge connecting the first scene with the fourth scene and the Pygmalion episode. The name "Pygmalion" (Πυγμαλίων) is shared by two pre-Homeric Eastern Mediterranean kings, one historical and the other fictional[47]. The historical Pygmalion was a Phoenician king who ruled Tyre during the late ninth and early eighth centuries BCE. In the second punishment scene, however, Ovid prefigures the myth which he will later narrate in Book X about the mythical Cypriot king Pygmalion. In a tradition whose earliest surviving attestation dates to the third century BCE, Pygmalion fetishised an ivory cult-statue of Aphrodite,

[44] See Dan 2014, 41.

[45] See Fontenrose 1990, 100-101.

[46] Ap.Rh. I 65-68, I 1502-1536; Ov. *met.* IV 618- 621, VIII 316; Hyg. *fab*. 14,2, 128, 172; Tzetzes *Ad Lyc*. 980.

[47] See Cross 1972, 13-19; Dasen 2013, 84-85.

taking it to bed, and acting as if it were alive[48]. However, Ovid himself narrates the slightly different myth of how Pygmalion was repulsed by the shamelessness of the Propoetides on Cyprus, and resolved to remain single and unmarried. Pygmalion then made an ivory sculpture of a woman of ideal beauty, and fell in love with his own sculpture, treating it as if it were a living person. After praying to Aphrodite for a wife like the ivory statue but stopping short of saying explicitly that the statue itself was what he desired, Aphrodite animated the statue, and Pygmalion then married the woman, later fathering a daughter, Paphos, the future mother of Kinyras (10.243-297)[49]. Pygmalion's grandson by this statue was therefore the character who features in the fourth punishment scene: Kinyras. As is discussed later in this article, there is extensive parallelism and mirroring between the fourth punishment scene and the myth of Pygmalion in Book X, and the phonetic allusion between Gerana and Pygmalion anticipates those later parallels. The second punishment scene thus "sets up" the close parallelism between the fourth punishment scene and the Pygmalion episode which is to follow.

The *Pygmeae mater* and the alluded Pygmalion both refer back to Thrace. The artist Minerva weaves the story of the *Pygmeae mater* which contains Thracian allusions; this story links forward to the myth of Pygmalion told by the Thracian artist Orpheus, who is also alluded to in the first punishment scene. Ovid therefore connects back to the Thracian setting of the first punishment scene twice over: in the mythological background of the geranomachy, and in his phonetic allusion to his later story of Pygmalion which was sung by a Thracian artist. The second punishment scene therefore carries the key figure of the Thracian artist forward from the first punishment scene into its prefiguration of the Pygmalion episode. In the context of the visually based analysis suggested by the medium of the tapestry itself, it is appropriate that Ovid should have Minerva allude to Pygmalion in her tapestry, since Minerva's weaving and Pygmalion's sculpture are paradigmatic examples in the *Metamorphoses* of the relationship between verbal and visual artistry. Both Gerana and Pygmalion have strong narcissistic tendencies, and both their stories are defined by an attempt to claim something unobtainable: greater beauty than that of Hera, and an idealised woman and life-partner of one's own creation. Pygmalion, of course, also strongly foreshadows Arachne herself, as they are both prominent examples in the *Metamorphoses* of non-Greek artists who are robbed of their abilities to signify and to produce their art, and who are destroyed. Ovid's prefiguration of Pygmalion perhaps explains why he chose to refer to Gerana as *Pygmeae mater* rather than by her name. The second punishment scene is notably

[48] Clem. Alex. *Protr*. 4,57,3. See Hard 2020, 570.
[49] See Hard 2020, 570.

the only one out of the four punishment scenes in which the protagonist of the scene is not mentioned by name; she is referred to more vaguely by the phrase *Pygmeae mater*, which captures the phonetic allusion with Pygmalion.

3. *Scene Three: Myth of Juno and Antigone of Troy* (*VI 93-97*)

pinxit et Antigonen ausam contendere quondam
cum magni consorte Iovis, quam regia Iuno
in volucrem vertit, nec profuit Ilion illi
Laomedonve pater, sumptis quin candida pennis
ipsa sibi plaudat crepitante ciconia rostro.

She also embroidered Antigone who had once dared to compete
with the great consort of Jupiter, whom regal Juno
turned into a bird, and neither Troy nor her father Laomedon
could help her, but that she took on white feathers and applauded
herself with a clattering beak as a stork.

The third punishment scene describes Juno's transformation of the Trojan princess Antigone into a stork after Antigone had boasted that she was more beautiful than Juno. This punishment scene is the only surviving attestation of this version of the myth. In another version of this story, which is attested from the fourth century CE onwards but which draws on earlier traditions, Juno turns Antigone's hair into snakes to punish her for her boast, but the gods took pity on her, and transformed her into a stork, a bird which eats snakes[50]. Antigone's metamorphosed form in this alternative tradition most notably resembles the snake-haired head of Medusa, which had the power to lithify those who made eye-contact with her. This prefigures the lithification which is to befall Kinyras' daughters in the next punishment scene, and it also reflects the fact that Minerva herself has the power to lithify her enemies, since Perseus gave her Medusa's head to use on her shield. This reminds us that, when we go on to read the fourth punishment scene, Minerva herself possesses the power of lithification which she depicts Aphrodite using in that scene. Thus, Minerva, the weaver of the tapestry, has the power to metamorphose transgressive mortals into both inorganic objects (first and fourth scenes) and animals (Arachne, and therefore the second and third scenes). Minerva is more than an artist in this weaving contest; she herself possesses the metamorphic powers exercised by Hera/Juno and Aphrodite/Venus on her tapestry.

[50] Serv. *Georg*. II 520; Serv. *Aen*. I 27, ps.Lact. *fab. Ov.* VI 1; Vat. Myth. I 79, II 69.

Ovid emphasises metamorphic continuity by using *plaudat* to convey that Antigone continues boasting even as a stork (VI 97). Prefiguring Arachne, Antigone of Troy continues to perform the action which led to her metamorphosis in the first place. The verb *profuit* implies a gnomic statement about the powerlessness of barbarians against the divine power of Graeco-Roman deities (VI 95). The adjective *candidus*, with which Ovid describes the colour of the stork into which Antigone is transformed, was widely used to describe both the Roman gods and the toga, an important symbol of Roman citizenship. An Anatolian character is therefore depicted as being brought under Roman control in both the act and the outcome of her metamorphosis. Antigone's punishment links back to the bird-metamorphosis of the preceding punishment scene, since Gerana and Antigone of Troy are both transformed into birds which look almost identical to one another (VI 92, VI 97). The noun *ciconia* also carried the double meaning of a derisory hand gesture, signifying the defiance of Antigone, like that of Arachne, in her hubristic challenge against the goddess[51]. Since both cranes and storks were eaten as prized delicacies in Augustan Rome, the disturbing possibility of being eaten post-metamorphosis might also be regarded as an implicit part of their punishment[52]. The stork was a foreign bird from the Roman viewpoint, but was also associated with *pietas* and *concordia*, and Antigone's origin in the ancestral homeland of the Roman people accounts for her embodiment of both Roman and barbarian associations in her post-metamorphic state[53]. The stork's association with the internal quality of *pietas* also mirrors the external concept of *victoria*, which crowns the central scene of the tapestry in the form of the goddess Victoria, who was heavily promoted by Augustus (VI 82)[54]. The choice of a stork therefore highlights the continuity between Antigone's pre-metamorphic and post-metamorphic states.

The third punishment scene links forward to the story of Laomedon and the foundation of Troy at the beginning of the Trojan Cycle in Book XI. The bird-metamorphosis of Antigone of Troy is in keeping with the fates of her relatives, since all of Laomedon's other children meet miserable or violent deaths. Antigone's hubristic crime is appropriate in the context of the broader Trojan problem of hubristic and unrealistic judgments which contradict reality. Laomedon angered Apollo and Poseidon for failing to pay them for their help in building Troy, and

[51] For previous occurrences of the noun *ciconia*, see Plaut. *Truc.* 691; Hor. *sat.* II 2,49; Pers. 1,58.

[52] Hor. *sat.* II 8,87; Plin. *nat.* X 30-31. On the fashion for eating storks in Rome particularly during the late first century BCE and early first century CE, see Connors 1998, 58-60.

[53] Petron. 55,6. See Plaza 2006, 122-123; Courtney 2013, 89.

[54] Contra Dufallo 2013, 166, who claims that Ovid does not refer to Augustan symbols or iconography in his ekphrases of the tapestries.

they punished him by flooding the fields around the city, and by chaining his daughter Hesione to a rock to be killed by a sea-monster. In this respect, Antigone is, as her name suggests, 'in place of her parents' in sharing a similar fate for a hubristic transgression. Ovid's formulation that Troy and Laomedon could not 'help' Antigone may allude to the fact that her sister Hesione was in fact helped. Heracles made a deal with their father Laomedon that he would save Hesione if Laomedon would give him the magical horses granted to him by Zeus as compensation for Zeus' kidnapping of Ganymede; Laomedon agreed, Heracles saved Hesione from the monster, but Laomedon reneged on the agreement, and was later killed by Heracles. Antigone's fate therefore parallels that of her sister Hesione, who is also punished by the gods. In the cases of Antigone of Troy and Arachne, the eventual problem is present already in their father; Laomedon was hubristic and so was Antigone, and Idmon was a weaver and taught Arachne how to weave, which was what eventually got Arachne into trouble. Ovid's deployment of Antigone of Troy in the third punishment scene alludes thematically to the homonymous Antigone of Thebes in two meaningful ways. Like Arachne, Antigone of Thebes was punished for going against the wishes of a higher authority (Creon), and she subsequently hung herself. Antigone also shares with Niobe an Anatolian royal heritage, prefiguring the next episode in Book VI. In view of the importance of Troy in the foundation myth of Rome, the myth of Antigone of Troy may reflect on contemporaneous debates in Augustan Rome about the Roman relationship to Greece and the dangers of hubris and overreaching ambition[55].

4. *Scene Four: Myth of the Daughters of Kinyras* (*VI 98-100*)

> qui superest solus Cinyran habet angulus orbum,
> isque gradus templi, natarum membra suarum,
> amplectens saxoque iacens lacrimare videtur.
>
> *The sole corner which remains has bereft Kinyras,*
> *and, embracing the steps of the temple, the limbs of his own daughters,*
> *and lying on the stone, he seems to cry.*

In the otherwise unattested myth depicted in the fourth punishment scene, the Cypriot priest-king Kinyras grieves for his daughters, who have been metamorphosed into the steps of a temple by Aphrodite for an unspecified crime. Kinyras was worshipped on Cyprus as a foundational cultural figure from Late Bronze

---

[55] See Dufallo 2013, 168.

Age onwards, and was the focus of his own mythopoetic cycle[56]. He is heavily linked in all subsequent Greek traditions with Late Bronze Age Cyprus. The fourth punishment scene is based on cult-narratives and traditions concerning Kinyras and his family which emerged in the context of Cypriot sanctuaries of Aphrodite. As Franklin has demonstrated, the fourth punishment scene should be situated within a range of stories relating to Kinyras' children from the broader Kinyras poetic tradition, in which his children are invariably associated with 'angered or grieving gods, and metamorphoses into objects or processes of cult'[57]. The image of Kinyras clasping the temple steps and weeping stems originally from Babylonian cult practice, in which architectural elements of temples were mythologised and personified as family members of the deity in question, and in which temple singers engaged in ritual lamentation, ceremonially weeping and beseeching to avert divine anger during the construction or repair of part of the temple[58]. This originally Babylonian image was preserved, along with many other aspects of the cult of the lyre-playing king, in its transfer from Babylonian to Ugaritic, Canaanite, Cypriot, and Greek culture in the mid- and late second millennium BCE. It was reinterpreted and recontextualised in Ovid's punishment scene, in which the daughters are implied to have been metamorphosed on account of a hubristic transgression. Anderson reasonably proposes that the daughters of Kinyras were punished for having boasted that they were more beautiful than a goddess[59]. The setting of the punishment scene in the context of Cyprus and the Kinyras poetic tradition means that Aphrodite is almost certainly the offended goddess. The closest parallel in Greek and Roman literature to this punishment scene is the lithification of the Propoetides in Book X of the *Metamorphoses*. The Propoetides of Amathus, a Cypriot city associated with Kinyras, denied the divinity of Aphrodite, and were made to prostitute themselves until they were transformed into stone through lack of shame. Their blushes (X 241) recall that of Arachne prior to the weaving contest. We may assume, therefore, that Kinyras' daughters offended Aphrodite, possibly through claims of superior beauty, and were then forced to prostitute themselves until they became the steps of her temple in Paphos.

Kinyras was the focus of an extensive and manifold mythological tradition across multiple Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures, originating in Mesopotamian lyre-cultures and deification of musical instruments in the third millennium BCE. From the Archaic Period onwards, Kinyras became a principal symbol for inter-

[56] See Franklin 2015.

[57] Franklin 2015, 280.

[58] See Franklin 2015, 281.

[59] See Anderson 1972, 164.

flow between Greek and non-Greek cultures. Kinyras was the mythical founder of the temple of Aphrodite at Paphos, which is probably the very temple described in the fourth punishment scene. Elsewhere in the Kinyras tradition, Kinyras himself is punished by the gods for an act of hubristic transgression, like his daughters in this punishment scene, and indeed like Arachne. In Lucian's *True Histories* from the mid-second century CE, Kinyras features as a handsome boy who, after falling in love with Helen, attempts to carry her off to the Cheese Island outside the Land of the Dead, but is apprehended by a company of heroes sent by Rhadamanthus, and is bound by the genitals and suspended above a fire as punishment (II 25-26, II 31)[60]. Kinyras is therefore punished by Greek gods and heroes for a transgression involving Helen, one of the most important symbols of cross-cultural interaction between East and West in Greek and Roman literature. Kinyras experiences metamorphic continuity in the sexual connotations of his punishment, which link his fate in Lucian's parody to the punishments of Helen and of Myrrha in other traditions. Moreover, the Greek figures of Rhadamanthus and Menelaus resonantly succeed in inflicting punishment upon a non-Greek character[61]. Therefore, although his daughters are represented in their post-metamorphic state, Kinyras himself is also an appropriate figure for Minerva to feature on her tapestry. Ovid and Lucian both drew on an older tradition in which the character of Kinyras was linked to the idea of punitive metamorphoses with sexual connotations.

Kinyras provides the additional dimension of a character who is himself artistically productive, whereas the previous three characters in the tapestry are not. In his ekphrasis, Ovid describes the artist Minerva depicting another artist who is punished for hubris in other mythological traditions. Eustathius states that Kinyras reneged on a promise to Agamemnon to supply ships to assist him, instead sending artistic representations of ships which were sculpted from earth; as punishment, Kinyras was then defeated in a musical contest against Apollo, and subsequently killed[62]. His daughters, like Arachne, then attempted to commit suicide, and were transformed into animals by a goddess; they threw themselves into the sea in their grief at Kinyras' death, and were transformed into halcyons. Kinyras thus participated indirectly in the Trojan War, but on the opposite side from Laomedon and Antigone of Troy, linking back to the third punishment scene. Ovid's inclusion of Kinyras encapsulates the larger contest between the Graeco-Roman and barbarian worlds, and prefigures the defeat and transformation of Arachne in artistic terms. As Antigone of Troy in the third scene prefigures Arachne's geographical and cul-

[60] See Franklin 2015.

[61] See further Georgiadou and Larmour 1998, 209-215.

[62] Hyg. *fab*. 242, Plin. *nat.* VII 49, Eust. *Il.* XI 20-23, p. 139, 7-16 Van der Valk.

tural background, Kinyras in the fourth scene prefigures Arachne's status as an artist. Kinyras is unique on Minerva's tapestry in not being metamorphosed in the scene itself; his punishment is not transformation but bereavement, foreshadowing the presumable grief of Idmon after the metamorphosis of Arachne. In more precise terms, Kinyras foreshadows Niobe as a lone parent grieving and 'seeming to weep' (VI 100) for his children[63]. In these multiple respects, Kinyras is an appropriate figure to bring the ekphrasis of Minerva's tapestry to a close.

The fourth punishment scene connects forward to the centrepiece of the Orpheus Cycle in Book X, in its prefiguration of the paired myths of Pygmalion and myth of Kinyras and Myrrha. Kinyras and Pygmalion are the two most notable Cypriot figures in Greek mythology, and their mythologies are closely intertwined. They are both Cypriot artists who are devoted to Aphrodite, the goddess who inflicts the metamorphosis upon women as a punishment in both cases. Kinyras' daughters and the Propoetides are both victims of lithification, and are both groups of young Cypriot women who are unnamed and defined as the daughters of a named male character[64]. In the fourth punishment scene, Aphrodite turns a group of women into stone, but later does the opposite, granting Pygmalion's wish by turning his statue into a woman. The punishing lithification of the Propoetides, who drove Pygmalion away from women, comes full circle in the reverse lithification of Pygmalion's statue, which brings Pygmalion back to women. With the exception of the Athenian princess Aglaurus, all the female victims of lithification in the *Metamorphoses* are non-Greek: the Phrygian Niobe, the Phoenician companions of Ino, and the Cypriot Propoetides and daughters of Kinyras[65]. Amidst these strong parallels, the Phoenician companions of Ino are distinguished by their double metamorphosis involving bird-transformation and lithification[66]. This serves to highlight even further the strong mirroring between the daughters of Kinyras and the Propoetides, both of whom undergo only lithification.

Kinyras' inconsolable grief in the fourth punishment scene links forward to the myth of Myrrha and Kinyras, which immediately follows the myth of Pygmalion. It links specifically to the statement of the Thracian artist Orpheus within that myth that it would have been better for Kinyras if he had never had any children, made in reference to Myrrha's incestuous relationship with her father, Kinyras (X 298-9). The theme of incest in the myth of Myrrha and Kinyras is also present in the word choice of *amplectens* in relation to Kinyras' daughters. Both myths are

[63] See Feldherr 2010, 303.
[64] See Sharrock 2020, 9.
[65] See Sharrock 2020, 9.
[66] See Sharrock 2020, 9.

centrally concerned with the daughters of Kinyras behaving improperly in a way which results in their metamorphosis. Strikingly, both myths end with the motif of tears which are prompted by the metamorphic change: Kinyras weeps for his transformed daughters, and sap oozes from the myrrh tree into which Myrrha has been transformed. It is also notable that both the very brief fourth punishment scene and the much lengthier story of Myrrha and Kinyras in Book X withhold from describing the crime itself; the prostitution of Kinyras daughters' and Myrrha's incestuous love are not explicitly described, and the external audience is left to imagine it.

5. *Narrative structure, chiasmus, and parallelism in the four punishment scenes*

The Arachne-Minerva weaving contest and Minerva's punishment scenes have a vast interpretive potential and a plurality of meaning. The issues present within this episode, and within Minerva's tapestry in particular, can be addressed through a range of thematic lenses and literary-theoretical approaches, including those of gender studies, politics and power relations, postcolonialism, new historicism, and biographical criticism. In the most important recent study, Yoong carried out a detailed and perceptive close reading of the myth of the contest between Minerva and Neptune, which features in the central scene of Minerva's tapestry, and which precedes the ekphrasis of the quartet of punishment scenes. Yoong analysed the reasons for Ovid's selection of words and images, the metapoetic discourse in Ovid's description of Minerva as poet-weaver, and the reception of the scene by internal and external audiences[67]. Yoong argues that Ovid's thematisation of Minerva's tapestry as a *vetus argumentum* (VI 69) determined the presentation and composition of the tapestry, and that Ovid's ekphrasis reflects the divine powers of Minerva herself. Yoong's approach demonstrates how Ovid spatially divides up the narrative of his ekphrasis in order to mirror the well-ordered and structured tapestry of Minerva described in that ekphrasis. However, the intricate structural complexity of the punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry has not been fully described in previous scholarship. The following section will therefore provide some additional observations in light of the close reading of the punishment scenes above. It discusses how the quartet of punishment scenes fits into the broader episode, and explores the internal chiastic and conceptual structures by which the four punishment scenes are organised and integrated with one another.

There is a parallelism of metamorphoses happening on multiple levels within the narrative: Minerva to other characters elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses*, Min-

[67] See Yoong 2015, 22-28.

erva to Arachne in this particular episode, and Juno/Aphrodite to the characters in the punishment scenes. The four punishment scenes are therefore integrated into the broader weaving contest in a multi-layered structure which operates on three levels:

1. At the broadest, overarching level, Minerva's divine power remains dominant from the beginning to the end of the episode;
2. Within the narrative of this episode, Minerva weaves the punishment scenes, and later imposes metamorphosis on Arachne;
3. In the sub-narratives of Minerva's punishment scenes, Minerva weaves images of other characters who had comparable metamorphoses for comparable crimes imposed on them.

This structure is underpinned on each level by the importance of metamorphic continuity, which is central to Ovid's characterisation of Minerva, Arachne, and the characters which feature in the punishment scenes. Metamorphic continuity entails a strong perceptual and thematic connection between crime, metamorphosis, and outcome. Simultaneously, as Sharrock has observed, there is a striking disjuncture between the conceptual continuity of the metamorphosis from the external audience's viewpoint and the jarring and disruptive experience of the metamorphosis for the character in question. The punished character continues acting out their crime in the animal or object which they become after the metamorphosis, ensuring fit of metamorphic outcome, as follows:

1. Rhodope and Haemus unduly aggrandised themselves in terms of status and importance by comparing themselves to Jupiter and Juno, and they were accordingly transformed into large prominent features in the landscape (mountains). Rhodope and Haemus compared themselves to two deities who reside at the top of mountains, and they themselves were transformed into mountains.
2. The African queen Gerana offends a foreign goddess (Juno), and that goddess robs Gerana of her cultural identity (a Pygmy) and makes Gerana herself a foreign character (a crane). Gerana transgresses against the principal goddess of a foreign people (the Greeks), and that goddess causes Gerana to fight against her own people; Juno repays the assault on her own culture with an assault on Gerana's culture. Gerana's cross-cultural offence is punished with another cross-cultural offence visited on her own people in perpetuity. Gerana thought too highly of herself, and therefore she would fly high as a crane.

3. Antigone of Troy loudly boasted that she was more beautiful than Juno, and she was transformed into a bird described by Ovid in terms of its beak and its plumage.
4. The daughters of Kinyras prostituted themselves, displayed their beautiful legs, and became metaphorically "hard" through lack of shame, and they were transformed into temple steps which were physically hard, beautiful, and visible at all times. Just as legs are the lower parts of the human body, steps are the lower parts of temples.

In each of the tales of metamorphosis in the punishment scenes, the punishment reflects the nature and theme of the crime, and the metamorphosis is decided on the basis of the character's hubristic action. The character therefore becomes a metamorphosed version of their own transgression. There is also thematic parallelism between different narrative levels within the episode. The fate of the characters in the four punishment scenes foreshadows the fate of Arachne, for whom Ovid uses the same technique of metamorphic continuity through crime, metamorphosis, and outcome. The mortal woman Arachne's hubristic crime centres on the act of weaving, and she is transformed into an animal principally known for its activity of weaving webs. Arachne continues weaving as a spider, and she also continues hanging (her method of attempted suicide) as a spider. Moreover, as Yoong has demonstrated, Minerva uses the same or similar language as is used by Arachne in her initial statement prior to the weaving contest. In language as well as content, Minerva is responding directly to Arachne's hubris. Arachne's metamorphosis transforms her into a spider, a creature strikingly less elevated than the mountains, crane, stork, and temple steps which feature in the four punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry. In comparison to the punishments inflicted by Juno, Jupiter, and Venus, Minerva takes things a step further with Arachne. This all leads me to agree with those previous studies which have argued that Arachne's metamorphosis should be viewed as a punishment akin to those in the four punishment scenes, rather than as an act of pity[68]. Minerva herself embodies the broadest, overarching, and undisturbed continuity as the supremely powerful character in the narrative. Although Minerva loses the weaving contest and is characterised equivocally in her irate reaction to Arachne's tapestry, Minerva begins and ends the episode with her divine power – the object of Arachne's transgression – dominant and victorious. Graeco-Roman and Augustan primacy then maintains its thread of continuity into the following myth of Latona and Niobe.

[68] See Ziogas 2013, 103.

6. *Structural relationships within the quartet of punishment scenes*

When the relationships between the four punishment scenes are viewed from a variety of different conceptual and thematic angles, Ovid's ekphrasis displays an identifiable principle and pattern of arrangement in all cases. A close analysis reveals a dense mosaic of overlapping chiastic structures in the architecture of the four punishment scenes, a mosaic which has never been elucidated in previous scholarship. Minerva's representation of 'aesthetic balance' in her tapestry is much more complex and intricate than has previously been acknowledged[69]. Firstly, the punished characters are described in descending order of status: a Thracian king and queen, an African queen, a Trojan princess and sister of Priam, and a group of Cypriot princesses. They are all royal figures, in keeping with Minerva's epic mode, whereas Arachne is non-royal. An ABBA structure is used in relation to the number of characters punished in each scene: more than one (scene 1), one (scene 2), one (scene 3), and more than one (scene 4). The shared metamorphosis of Rhodope and Haemus is a rare instance of the normally antagonistic Jupiter and Juno acting in concert in punishing those who dared to arrogate their names, emphasising the unity of the gods against transgressing mortals. The fact that Arachne's mother is dead by the time of the weaving contest (VI 10) is mirrored in the lack of mention of the mothers of the metamorphosed characters in the four punishment scenes. The stories of the metamorphosed female characters include mention of their husbands (Haemus) and fathers (Laomedon, Kinyras), but not their mothers. In an AABB structure, Rhodope's husband is named but her father is not mentioned by name; Gerana's husband is named in the pre-existing tradition but her father is not mentioned by name; Antigone's father is mentioned by name, and the father of the Cypriot princesses is mentioned by name.

The ekphrasis of Minerva's tapestry is divided into several sections which spatially reflect how the tapestry would physically have appeared, and form is thus made to reflect content[70]. Yoong has shown how Ovid replicates the spatial and conceptual organisation of Minerva's tapestry in his ekphrasis of it, but Yoong's analysis can be taken further[71]. Athens, the site of the Athena-Neptune contest, is in the geographical centre of these five locations, mirroring its central position on Minerva's tapestry. The twelve Olympians, seated in the centre of Minerva's tapestry, are the internal audience of the punishment scenes. The non-Greek geographical locations and the obscure nature of each of the myths in the punishment

[69] Oliensis 2004, 287.

[70] See Yoong 2015, 22-23.

[71] See Yoong 2015, 33.

scenes are metapoetically mirrored by their location on the margins of Minerva's tapestry (VI 85). The sequence of the punishment scenes is structured and narrated centripetally in geographical terms. Ovid's ekphrasis narrates, respectively, the northernmost Thrace, the southernmost central Africa, the second-northernmost Troy, and the second-southernmost Cyprus. After the two tapestries have been described, Ovid takes us back to the geographical centre for the metamorphosis of Arachne in her native Lydia, which, like Athens, has Thrace and Troy to its north, and Africa and Cyprus to its south. This centripetal focus mirrors ekphrastically the Graeco-Roman political focus of Minerva's tapestry. This ABAB structure is also used in how Ovid names the punished characters: the northern Rhodope and Haemus are named, the southern Gerana is not named, the northern Antigone of Troy is named, and the southern daughters of Kinyras are not named.

In his creation of a tapestry which succinctly represented and encapsulated almost the entire non-Greek world in only fourteen lines of densely allusive poetry, Ovid used an ABAB pattern in order to interconnect and integrate the cross-cultural allusions which are present in each of the punishment scenes. The range of cross-cultural allusions in the four scenes is structured as follows: specific and obscure (scene 1), broader and more widely attested (scene 2), specific and obscure (scene 3), and broader and more widely attested (scene 4). Scenes 1 and 3 are relatively self-contained, they do not allude to other non-Greek lands and peoples, and they have no surviving attestations prior to the *Metamorphoses* (and are possibly Ovidian creations). Scenes 2 and 4 allude back to the non-Greek cultural and geographical settings of scenes 1 and 3 respectively, they allude outwards to a range of other non-Greek lands and cultures besides, and Ovid modelled them heavily on pre-existing traditions which have survived to us.

1. The myth of Rhodope and Haemus is situated in Thrace. It has relatively few cross-cultural allusions to lands and cultures beyond Thrace and Greece. It is seemingly obscure, with no surviving attestations prior to Ovid.
2. The myth of Juno and Gerana (and the geranomachy more broadly) links back to the Thracian setting of the first scene. It has a wide range of other cross-cultural allusions to central Africa, Libya, India, and Scythia. It is certainly not original to Ovid, dating back at least to the early Hellenistic Period.

Ovid repeats the same pattern for the third and fourth punishment scenes. The verb *pinxit*, with Minerva as implied subject, in initial position at the beginning of the third scene suggests a break with what has gone before, since there is no verb in initial position in any of the other three punishment scenes (VI 93).

3. The myth of Juno and Antigone of Troy is situated in Troy. It has few cross-cultural allusions beyond its Trojan setting. It is seemingly obscure, with no surviving attestations prior to Ovid.
4. The figure of Kinyras links back to the Homeric and Trojan setting of the third scene. Kinyras has a wealth of other cross-cultural allusions to Cyprus, Mesopotamia, the Levant, Mycenaean Greece, and southern Anatolia. Although the myth of the daughters of Kinyras itself has no surviving attestations prior to Ovid, it draws on Cypriot and Near Eastern images and traditions which were transmitted from the Middle and Late Bronze Age. Moreover, the Kinyras scene links back to the theme of the father-daughter relationship which was introduced by Antigone and Laomedon in the preceding punishment scene.

Ovid-as-narrator characterises both tapestries as displaying a *vetus argumentum* (VI 69), 'an ancient matter/subject/theme'. Therefore, in Ovid's ekphrasis, the central scene and the four punishment scenes are defined in terms of their antiquity. Since only two of the four myths draw on a demonstrably longstanding tradition as discussed above, we may surmise that it is the general subject matter of the punishment scenes which Ovid describes as *vetus*, and not the four myths themselves. Similarly, as Yoong has shown, Ovid signals in his ekphrasis that Minerva's tapestry signifies the narrative style of Greek and Roman epic poetry[72]. However, although Ovid associates the divine powers of Minerva with Greek and Roman heroic epic, the content of the punishment scenes is not particularly epic-oriented, being addressed to the Hellenistic and Callimachean Arachne, and focussing on non-Greek women and on the punitive actions of goddesses. Therefore, Ovid's ekphrasis and the contents of the four punishment scenes themselves are not in perfect concordance with one another.

The second and third punishment scenes share a number of additional parallels which they do not share with the first and fourth scenes. The idea of competition is explicitly mentioned only in the second and third punishment scenes. Gerana had been 'defeated in a contest' (*victam certamine*; VI 91), the same noun which is earlier used to describe the contest between Minerva and Arachne, and Antigone of Troy similarly had 'dared to compete' (*ausam contendere*; VI 93) with Juno. The second and third punishment scenes are the only ones which feature a single female figure who is punished, like Arachne, as opposed to a male and a female figure together (myth of Rhodope and Haemus) and a group of female figures (myth of the daughters of Kinyras). The second and third punishment scenes

[72] See Yoong 2015, 35.

are also the only ones in which the transgressor is transformed into an animal as is Arachne, and not into an inanimate object. Since the second and third scenes feature in the centre of Ovid's ekphrasis of the quartet, and are flanked by the first and fourth scenes, the presence of these parallels creates yet another chiastic structure (ABBA) in the quartet of punishment scenes.

Ovid uses an AABA structure in the number of lines accorded to the ekphrasis of each individual punishment scene. The myth of Antigone of Troy is given pride of place among the punishment scenes in appearing in third place out of four, and in being given five lines, whereas each of the other three myths are described with three lines. The first reason for this is that, out of all the characters on Minerva's tapestry, Antigone of Troy is the one who most closely parallels Arachne. They share animal-metamorphosis and west Anatolian cultural origins, they are both identified and situated in the mythological world in terms of their fathers, and they both feature as single characters in the narrative, rather than as a pair or group of metamorphosed characters as in the first and fourth punishment scenes. The additional two lines about the transformed Antigone of Troy behaving like a stork, flapping her wings and squawking, thematically foreshadow the later lines describing the transformed Arachne behaving like a spider; the particularly close parallel between Antigone and Arachne is therefore doubly emphasised. The second reason is that, out of the four punishment scenes, the myth of Juno and Antigone of Troy most closely reflects the generic concerns of Minerva's tapestry as a whole. As Yoong has demonstrated, Minerva's tapestry is characterised principally by its embodiment of the epic mode, as opposed to the Hellenistic, Callimachean mode of Arachne's tapestry. The myth of Antigone of Troy is the most "epic" of the four punishment scenes in terms of its content and characters, its Trojan setting, its mention of Laomedon, and Antigone's status as the sister of Priam. These two factors explain why Ovid provides a longer ekphrasis of the third punishment scene than he does of the other three punishment scenes. The fourth punishment scene then focusses principally on Kinyras himself, rather than on his daughters, who are the metamorphosed characters. We must remember, however, that Kinyras himself is also being punished, if not metamorphosed. Fittingly for the close of the quartet, the final sentence of the ekphrasis of the fourth punishment scene focusses on those who are left behind after the metamorphosis, with its description of Kinyras grieving for his transformed daughters, conveying a sense of finality and a predestined outcome as the remainder of the episode is then narrated to the external audience. This also foreshadows the presumable grief of Idmon for his metamorphosed daughter, and the fear and discord in Lydia caused by Arachne's metamorphosis.

There is an ABBA chiastic structure across the four punishment scenes in the

category of metamorphic destination, in the post-metamorphic fate of the punished character, and in the removal of agency from the punished character. Minerva represents all the characters in the punishment scenes post-metamorphosis. The metamorphic destinations are, respectively, inorganic (scene 1), animal (scene 2), animal (scene 3), and inorganic (scene 4). Arachne's tapestry ripostes to this theme in reverse, depicting the gods taking both animal and inorganic forms in order to seduce and rape women of lower status[73]. Metaphorically, the metamorphic destinations are high (scene 1), low (scene 2), low (scene 3), and high (scene 4). Mountains are high and impressive, storks are a low form of life, cranes are also a low form of life, and temples are beautiful and impressive. Moreover, mountains are walked on (scene 1), cranes are eaten (scene 2), storks are eaten (scene 3), and temple steps are walked on (scene 4). This is degrading and threatening to Arachne in general terms, but we may also notice that spiders are often walked on by humans, and eaten by larger animals. Arachne's punishment is therefore anticipated by the two categories of metamorphic outcome which feature in Minerva's punishment scenes.

The same structure applies to the removal of agency from the punished characters. As Sharrock has demonstrated, throughout the *Metamorphoses*, 'solid inorganic substances constitute a metamorphic destination which… generally freezes the victim and removes his/her agency'[74]. Accordingly, in the first and fourth scenes, agency is removed completely from the transformed Rhodope, Haemus, and daughters of Kinyras. In the second and third scenes, what agency is left is a self-destructive one; Gerana brings on her own destruction as a crane, and Antigone of Troy applauds herself as a stork in a darkly humorous image. There is an important disjuncture between the Arachne-Minerva disagreement and the contents of the punishment scenes, however. Although their disagreement arises over Arachne's productive abilities and her refusal to acknowledge the divine powers of Minerva in relation to weaving, the women in Minerva's punishment scenes are not themselves artistically productive. Minerva's tapestry focusses on their hubris, and not on the idea of poetic/needlework production. This apparent disjuncture nonetheless serves a narrative purpose, because, with Arachne's metamorphosis, Minerva brings Arachne down to the level of the punished women on her tapestry by confiscating her capacity for artistic production. Spiders, of course, weave webs. However, unlike the two tapestries, which contain webs of mythological meaning and signification, spiders weave webs devoid of meaning, and comprised merely of individual lines of silk. Minerva therefore depicts non-artistic women in her punishment scenes to prefigure her coming confiscation of Arachne's ability to produce art.

[73] See Sharrock 2020, 14.

[74] Sharrock 2020, 8.

Finally, Ovid uses an AABB structure in his description of the physical actions of the punished characters post-metamorphosis: no action is described with Rhodope and Haemus as mountains, no action is described with Gerana as a crane, action is supplied with Antigone of Troy who flaps her wings and squawks, and action is also supplied with Kinyras who weeps and clasps the temple steps. The action supplied in the last two punishment scenes continues with Arachne herself, who spins as a spider. Ovid also portrays the theme of grieving for the metamorphosed character with the same AABB structural principle. No grieving is described in the first two punishment scenes, it is implied that Laomedon grieves for Antigone since he cannot 'help' her, and Kinyras grieves for his daughters[75].

7. *Gender dynamics in the four punishment scenes*

The issue of gender is vital to the weaving contest as a whole. Although it has been explored mostly in relation to Arachne's tapestry, it is also fundamental to Minerva's punishment scenes and to the dialogue between the two tapestries themselves. Indeed, the text actively invites the reader to read the two tapestries alongside and against one another. Unlike the preceding contest between the Pierides and the Muses, the weaving contest is narrated not by Minerva but by Ovid himself, creating a sense of distance and of greater reliability, as well as a sense that the two tapestries – described by the poet one after the other – are comparable to one another[76]. Ovid also denotes both Minerva's and Arachne's tapestry as an *opus*, drawing an equivalence between the two works (VI 130). Arachne's tapestry does not introduce the important issue of gender into the weaving contest as many previous studies have argued, since gender dynamics are already an important element of Minerva's tapestry. Ovid's misogynistic portrayals of women have long been recognised in scholarship, and the close reading of the punishment scenes above sheds further light on how Ovid used misogyny as a governing principle for the dynamic between Minerva and Arachne. This dynamic itself has sexual undertones, with Minerva being likened to a rapist in a number of ways during the weaving contest and later in Book VI[77]. Minerva is portrayed as a witch in her unOlympian use of magic juice in the metamorphosis of Arachne, which closely resembles Ovid's coming portrayal of the witch Medea at the beginning of

[75] See Harries 1990, 73.

[76] On this sense of an unfiltered report by the primary narrator, see Johnson 2008, 76.

[77] See Oliensis 2004, 289-290.

Book VII[78]. Ovid has Arachne call Minerva weak-minded, old, and worn out (VI 37-38). Arachne herself is angry, and ignores the advice of an old woman who is attempting to impart wisdom, another gender-based trope[79]. In the apparent obscurity of the myths on Minerva's tapestry and in the Callimachean mass of stories on Arachne's tapestry which are reeled off in quick succession one after the other, Ovid may have been hinting at the idea of gossip between women. The activity of needlework was strongly connected to women and femininity, and we may interpret the tapestries themselves as an alternative means of signifying womanness within a patriarchal discourse which was male-controlled. Ovid portrays the interaction between Minerva and Arachne through the themes of needlework, hysteria, gossip, anger, witchery, feminine co-misery, and the classic Daedalic scenario of a powerful, older, and slighted prima donna bullying and victimising a more talented but less powerful younger woman of foreign origin. These are misogynistic signifiers of femininity, and sexist caricatures of discourse between women. Ovid portrays both Minerva and Arachne misogynistically, despite their differences in status and cultural origin. The misogynistic element is also present within Minerva's punishment scenes. In three out of the four scenes, the female victim of metamorphosis is described alongside her husband or father: the Thracian king Haemus, the Trojan king Laomedon, and the Cypriot king Kinyras. In the fourth scene, the transformed female characters (unnamed) are even subordinated to their non-metamorphosed father (named) in terms of their prominence in Ovid's ekphrasis of the scene.

Surprisingly little attention has been given to the obscurity of the myths which Ovid chose for Minerva's punishment scenes, beyond simply pointing out that they are obscure. Obscurity is a contingent concept in view of the fragmentary nature of the surviving literary corpus, and we must allow for the possibility that these myths may have featured in the vast body of Archaic Greek epic and lyric poetry which has not survived. It is impossible to be certain whether the myths on Minerva's tapestry were obscure in the first century CE, or whether they merely seem little-attested to us now because of the fragmentary nature of the surviving evidence and accidents of preservation. The common and valid interpretation – that of a Graeco-Roman deity punishing a series of non-Graeco-Roman characters for their hubris and transgression, with its obvious political resonance in the Augustan context – is not fully adequate as an explanation for Ovid's choices of scene, as there are many better-attested examples of this narrative pattern from Greek and Roman mythology. If these myths were in fact obscure at Ovid's time,

[78] See Oliensis 2004, 289.
[79] See Oliensis 2004, 288.

then is Minerva trying to show Arachne how clever she is, demonstrating her divine power and knowledge, with Ovid showing his external audience how erudite he himself is in the process? Minerva – along with her Greek counterpart, Athena – is, after all, the goddess who governs poetry and weaving, and her divine powers of weaving and cunning intelligence (μῆτις) are closely interconnected in her characterisation from the early Archaic Period onwards[80]. The weaving contest arose over the matter of 'acknowledgement of, and respect for, Minerva's divine power', and Minerva's tapestry should therefore be regarded as a demonstration of Minerva's divine power[81]. It follows that the divine attributes of Minerva (feminine, epic, metamorphic, violent) were themselves a factor in the selection of the four punishment scenes. Moreover, as Yoong has argued, it is Ovid himself who is the winner of the weaving contest in a larger sense, since the nominal winner, Arachne, is changed into a spider, and Ovid emerges having demonstrated his mastery of these two poetic forms[82]. It is therefore appropriate to seek an Ovid-centric explanation for the apparent obscurity of the myths on Minerva's tapestry.

Another factor which explains why the myths in Minerva's punishment scenes are so obscure is the generic dimension of Minerva's tapestry, which was designed to embody the Homeric and Vergilian epic mode. Although metamorphosis is an important feature of Greek mythology, it was not a traditional subject of epic poetry prior to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Like death in Classical Greek tragedy, it happened "offstage". What metamorphoses do occur in Greek epic are mostly centred around Athena/Minerva, making her an appropriate selector of other feminine, epic-related metamorphoses within Ovid's weaving contest. It is overwhelmingly male rather than female deities who exercise agency in epic poetry with the notable exceptions of Athena/Minerva herself and Hera/Juno, who are, accordingly, the goddesses present in the punishment scenes. Since Ovid was trying to find examples of feminine metamorphoses which would be appropriate for the epic mode, this greatly restricted the range of choices available to him in his creation of Minerva's tapestry, as there was not a great deal to choose from. Ovid was aiming to unite three different criteria simultaneously, in trying to find pre-existing epic examples of female metamorphoses in which a goddess punishes a woman for hubris. The obscurity of the examples (two of which may even be Ovidian inventions) may result from the three narrow criteria (metamorphosis, epic, and hubristic women) which Ovid was aiming to satisfy.

Although Minerva's punishment scenes depict hubristic transgressions compa-

[80] Ov. *fast.* III 833. See Yoong 2015, 4-5.

[81] Yoong 2015, 7.

[82] See Yoong 2015, 11-12.

rable to Arachne's own transgression, there are distinct sexual undertones to each of the female characters who are punished in those scenes, anticipating the sexual violations which are key to Arachne's tapestry. Gender, sexuality, and power are inextricably bound together not only in Arachne's tapestry as has been extensively studied, but also in the punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry. Rhodope had an incestuous relationship with her brother Haemus, like Jupiter and Juno. Gerana's hubris centres around her physical beauty. The body of the pygmy was sexualised in Greek and Roman art from the Classical Period onwards, and Pygmies are often depicted in Greek art with an exaggeratedly large phallus[83]. Moreover, the brains of cranes (into which Gerana was transformed) were considered an aphrodisiac in Roman culture, highlighting the metamorphic continuity of the sexual element of Gerana's transgression through to her post-metamorphic state[84]. Antigone of Troy similarly boasted that she was more physically beautiful than Hera. The probable crime of Kinyras' daughters is explicitly sexual. The fourth punishment scene specifically places emphasis on their limbs, and the broader tradition of Kinyras and his daughters in Ovidian poetry and elsewhere has strong sexual elements. Furthermore, Minerva emphasises feminine rather than masculine divine power. In three out of the four scenes, Minerva depicts Juno – a female deity – punishing women; Juno is a higher authority than Minerva, and is also a goddess of the epic mode in which Minerva is weaving. Juno's three acts of punishment are framed at either end of the ekphrasis of the punishment scenes by two notoriously unfaithful deities also punishing hubristic mortals: Jupiter and Aphrodite. By choosing to include these two deities in her punishment scenes, Minerva prefigures Arachne's later point about unjust deities violating mortals. Jupiter and Aphrodite themselves are not punished for their sexual transgressions, but they exact punishment on mortals who do the same thing. They exemplify the *caelestia crimina* which Arachne targets in her own tapestry (VI 131), and so Minerva somewhat undermines her own argument here. As both tapestries are being woven simultaneously in the weaving contest, the virgin Minerva is arguing that mortal women commit sexual transgressions, as well as male gods. Minerva sets up the sexual theme in advance, and then Arachne ripostes to it by pointing out that, whereas mortal women are punished for their sexually charged acts of hubris, male gods are not.

Minerva's tapestry depicts Greek gods and goddesses metamorphosing and punishing both male and female but exclusively non-Greek mortals. Arachne's tapestry, by contrast, depicts Greek gods metamorphosing themselves in order to violate female but variously Greek and non-Greek mortals. As has been observed

[83] See Clarke 2017.

[84] Ael. *NA* I 44.

in previous scholarship, this is ambiguous because the punishments which Arachne depicts could equally have been viewed by audiences as praiseworthy exemplars of Graeco-Roman power, virility, and supremacy. In either case, Minerva's non-Greek focus is present also in Arachne's tapestry. Elite women functioned as important conduits of cross-cultural interaction in the ancient Mediterranean world, and many of the myths on Arachne's tapestry depict elite women being transported across cultural and geographical boundaries. On both tapestries, all characters are punished exclusively by Graeco-Roman deities; the unifying factor of both tapestries is divine power. Arachne weaves a tapestry which ironically agrees with Minerva's initial warning about the impossibility of resisting divine power. Metamorphosis *is* punishment in Minerva's punishment scenes, but self-metamorphosis is the *means* of punishing others in Arachne's scenes[85]. Minerva unites both uses of metamorphosis in her actions towards Arachne. Minerva's self-metamorphosis as an old woman is the literary technique by which the contest gets underway, and she later metamorphoses Arachne as punishment. Both uses of metamorphosis by Minerva bracket the weaving contest itself, and imply that Minerva's divine power encompasses the contents of both tapestries.

8. *Political and cross-cultural dynamics in the four punishment scenes*

Minerva's four punishment scenes are integrated with Arachne's tapestry and the remainder of the weaving contest in a dialogue which presents a variety of interpretive possibilities from gender, political, and cross-cultural perspectives. This dialogue illuminates Ovid's views on the relationship between artistry and power, the control of narratives, and the use of brute force to quell dissent. The spatiality and internal architecture of Minerva's tapestry mirrors its own discourse on the relationship between the Graeco-Roman and barbarian worlds, and has extensive Augustan resonances. The tapestry is structured in terms of a centre with four corners, functioning as a microcosm of the Augustan *imperium*, and blending cross-cultural and political concerns. One of the foundational events of the Greek world is described first, and is woven in the centre of the tapestry. It is given by far the largest number of lines in Ovid's overall ekphrasis of Minerva's tapestry, and is physically much larger than the four other scenes depicting the defeat and transformation of non-Greek characters by Greek deities. The quartet of punishment scenes which relate to the barbarian world, by contrast, are much smaller (*brevibus distincta sigillis*) than the Athenian centrepiece, and are located mar-

[85] See Feldherr 2006, 175.

ginally around the central image (VI 86). Ovid ends his ekphrasis of the tapestry's central scene with the sentence '*operis Victoria finis*', hinting that the result of the coming contest is a foregone conclusion, and that a Graeco-Roman triumph is inevitable (VI 82). The cult of the goddess Victoria became particularly prominent during the Julio-Claudian Dynasty, and was associated with Augustus' conquest of Egypt[86]. Augustus had erected an altar to Victoria in the Senate House in 29BCE[87]. Victoria was popular in the Roman army, and one of her principal roles was to determine who would be successful in a contest or battle. She therefore acts as an explicitly Augustan introduction to the punishment scenes which are described next. All four of the punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry depict a Graeco-Roman triumph over a selection of non-Graeco-Roman characters. The four scenes and their constituent characters were deliberately chosen to provide as diverse an array of geographical and cultural allusions as possible. The non-Greek characters in the four punishment scenes convey the idea that Minerva's power transcends cultural boundaries, and especially the geographical boundaries of the Mediterranean Sea. The origin of Gerana and Kinyras in distant lands across the sea links back to Minerva's victory over the god of the sea, Neptune, depicted in the central scene of her tapestry. Gerana's metamorphosis results in her warring against her own people, and this foreshadows the only mentioned consequence of Arachne's metamorphosis, which is disturbance and fear throughout her homeland of Lydia[88].

Minerva herself encapsulates Rome and its Greek heritage in strikingly broad terms. She combines and embodies Roman, Etruscan, and Greek cultural and mythological attributes, since she links Roman and Greek divinities very closely in her association with Athena and with power over Athens. In addition, Minerva was originally an Etruscan deity, and symbolised Rome's Etruscan heritage. The myth of Athena and Arachne was politically convenient for Ovid's purposes because it included both a thoroughly Roman, Etruscan, and Greek deity and an explicitly Near Eastern character. The presence of Minerva in the contest aggrandises the difference between the Graeco-Roman and non-Graeco-Roman worlds, integrating Roman, Etruscan, and Greek elements from the outset, prior to the victory of this hybrid character over a weaker, hubristic Near Eastern character[89]. Politically, the triumph of a Roman goddess over Thracian, Cypriot, Near Eastern, and African characters favourably reflects Augustan ideology, and anticipates the more explicit

[86] See Hellerman 2005, 67-68.

[87] See Jones 2007, 155.

[88] See Ov. *met.* VI 91-92, VI 146-148.

[89] This myth of Arachne's metamorphosis into a spider unknown in any previous sources, except for a brief allusion in Verg. *Georg.* IV 246-247. See further Anderson 1972, 151-152.

praise of Augustus which features towards the end of the *Metamorphoses*. Minerva weaves punishment scenes which feature Jupiter and Juno as the triumphant deities who impose punishment. This evocation of the Capitoline Triad in the punishment scenes further heightens the Augustan overtones of the tapestry.

This contest has overwhelmingly been analysed as part of an Augustan-era Roman poem, in a post-Hellenistic literary context, and in terms of the interplay between the Greek Athena and the Roman Minerva. While this is certainly a valid approach to the myth as it features in the *Metamorphoses*, it does obscure the fact that this weaving contest was originally part of the Greek myth of Athena and Arachne, which is attested on a Corinthian vase from the late Archaic Period[90]. The myth of Athena/Minerva and Arachne therefore dates to the Early Iron Age or early Archaic Period, when the bulk of the known corpus of Greek mythology was in formation. Yoong demonstrates that Ovid's composition of the two tapestries was influenced by the pre-existing mythological tradition of the divine conflict between Minerva and Arachne. However, the implications of this Archaic-Period context for our understanding of the weaving contest have not been adequately explored in previous scholarship, although a full discussion is beyond the scope of this article. Since Ovid provides the only surviving literary representation of the Arachne-Athena/Minerva weaving contest, it is impossible to know how much of Ovid's account was part of the pre-existing Greek tradition, and how much of it was an Ovidian invention. The political and cross-cultural dimensions of the original Archaic Greek myth would have been considerably different. If we assume that the original dynamic was between a Greek goddess and a Lydian woman, then we may conclude that this dynamic was preserved but radically reinterpreted by Ovid in his Augustan context. Although the myth of Minerva and Arachne dates to the Archaic Period and far predates the first century CE, the matter of Arachne's non-Greek, Lydian origin took on a new meaning and signification in the Augustan context, in which Anatolia was a colonised region within the Roman Empire.

Minerva frames the punishment scenes with an olive-wreath pattern. This conjures an image of Minerva as winner of the Olympic Games, in which the olive wreath was awarded as a symbol of victory, and it also has Augustan resonances. The olive wreath symbolised victory and peace during the Julio-Claudian Dynasty, and its inclusion in the tapestry highlights these themes in Minerva's triumph over a barbarian figure, echoing Augustus' recent victory over Egypt and the *Pax Romana*. Minerva's victory over both Graeco-Roman (Neptune) and barbarian (Arachne) characters echoes Augustus' own era-defining victories in the Final War of the Roman Republic, over both Roman (Marcus Antonius) and barbarian (Cleopatra VII) figures. The context in which the weaving contest arose was one

[90] See Johnson 2008, 79.

in which Minerva and her adversary knew of each other already, and in which the barbarian character did not like the Greek goddess (VI 20-25), reflecting the tense political situation between Egypt and Rome during the reign of Cleopatra VII. Minerva's appearance also provokes immediate submission and supplication among Arachne's Anatolian compatriots (VI 44-45), reflecting the contemporaneous political realities of Roman imperial domination over Arachne's Lydian homeland and over Thrace, Troy, and Cyprus from the punishment scenes. Minerva only once speaks in dialogue prior to Ovid's ekphrasis of her tapestry, and she does so to offer terms of surrender to a barbarian figure, terms which are promptly rejected (VI 32-33). The resulting contest ends with the defeat of the barbarian figure. This model – of offering terms of surrender before a ruthless military conquest – reflects Roman victories over the Greek city-states, Anatolia, and Ptolemaic Egypt over the preceding two centuries, linking back to Rome's Republican past which was a critical concern of Augustan ideology, and echoing Augustan power in the present. Minerva's political and cultural supremacy continues in the following contest of Latona and Niobe, another Anatolian character. Moreover, it is Ovid who narrates the weaving contest; the Graeco-Roman and Augustan figure of Minerva does not narrate the contents of her own tapestry. This emphasises the objectivity with which the inevitable Graeco-Roman triumph occurs, since the goddess herself does not play a role in narrating the manner of her own victory.

In her rage, Minerva hits Arachne on the head with an Anatolian tool of weaving – a *Cytoriaco radium de monte* (VI 132). Mount Cytorus, located in Paphlagonia, was a principal source of boxwood for the wider Mediterranean region, and Minerva therefore uses a Near Eastern weapon to defeat a Near Eastern enemy, emphasising the totality of Roman power over barbarians. The epithet *Idmonius* refers to Arachne's father Idmon, whose Lydian origin was stated earlier in the episode, suggesting that the most important aspect of Arachne's identity at the moment of her punishment is her Near Eastern cultural origin (VI 133). Minerva hits Arachne on the head four times (VI 133), numerically mirroring the number of punishment scenes on Minerva's tapestry, and she hits Arachne with the same instrument which she had used to weave those punishment scenes. Minerva uses the *radius* to actualise the message of those punishment scenes: that hubristic mortals will be punished.

Minerva's tapestry spatially and structurally reflects a Graeco-Roman-centric worldview, whereas the Lydian Arachne structures her tapestry very differently, in a less rigid and less structured manner, with twenty-one separate scenes listed one after another[91]. Yoong convincingly argues that the metadiscursive contest of weaving and poetics between Minerva and Arachne is shaped by a dichotomy

[91] Ov. *met*. VI 103-128. See Anderson 1972, 164-165.

between Minerva's 'structured order' (embodied in the epic mode) and Arachne's 'uncontrolled liberation' (embodied in the Bacchic mode)[92]. Ovid used epic styles and techniques from Homeric and Vergilian poetry in his construction of Minerva's tapestry, whereas he composed Arachne's tapestry with Hellenistic and Neoteric poetic techniques, using the Arachne-Minerva episode as an opportunity to experiment with these contrasting styles. Yoong shows in his analysis that Arachne's tapestry displays extensive intertextuality with Callimachean poetry in particular[93]. The Lydian and non-elite Arachne focalises from a different culture and social background than Minerva, and uses the Hellenistic and Callimachean mode which developed principally in Ptolemaic Egypt. From the perspective of Ovid and Minerva, Arachne's Lydian and barbarian identity is linked to her weaving of a Hellenistic, Callimachean tapestry. Minerva embodies the epic mode, whereas Arachne embodies the Alexandrian, Callimachean mode associated with Egypt, which had been under Graeco-Roman rule for centuries by Ovid's time. This generic division explains the conspicuous absence of Egypt from Minerva's punishment scenes. The mythical figures selected by Ovid for the four punishment scenes represent Minervan and Augustan dominion over the whole of the known world as representable within the confines of the canon of Greek mythology, in which Punic North Africa and Brittania, for example, obviously did not feature. If (as is undoubtedly true) Minerva's tapestry was meant to represent the entire known world beyond Greece, it is strange that Egypt is the only major Eastern Mediterranean culture which is not featured or alluded to in Minerva's tapestry, especially given the importance of Egypt in the Roman Empire at the time of Ovid. The four punishment scenes were carefully selected so that Ovid/Minerva could allude to the entire barbarian world except Egypt, leaving the Egyptian association to Arachne's Alexandrian tapestry.

In broader terms, the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest is highly problematic in that it comes across to the reader as a statement of the entire civilisation being in crisis. Minerva is the very goddess who stands for the principles of civilisation, law, and social order, but, in her own behaviour in this episode, she behaves like a maniac, being portrayed with the sexist and stereotypical image of the hysterical woman, and lashing out at Arachne in a fit of irrational rage, whereas supposedly she stands for the values of order, planning, and calculation. This irascible Minerva contrasts with the primary traits of Athena, who embodies reason, rationality, cunning, and intelligence. This contrast between Minerva and Athena surfaces particularly strongly in their attitudes towards contest. Minerva's abrupt

[92] Yoong 2015, 2.

[93] See Yoong 2015, 85.

and violent response to Arachne's victory has often been viewed as the most problematic aspect of the weaving contest, and how we choose to interpret Minerva's anger has important implications for how we understand the episode as a whole. Minerva's anger and jealousy, although easily explicable in misogynistic gender terms, are much more problematic in political terms. Ovid was being intentionally subversive in having the Graeco-Roman Minerva, weaver of an epic and Augustan tapestry, make instant recourse to violence to achieve her victory. Nonetheless, Minerva's use of violence could also be seen as an admirable gesture of Roman strength over a barbarian enemy.

The Augustan attitude to Egypt provides an explanatory model through which the anger of Minerva can be understood. The irascible Roman Minerva of Ovid's weaving contest contrasts with the wise and rational Greek Athena, as the far more militaristic culture of late Republican Rome had contrasted with Hellenistic Greek culture in contemporaneous Roman attitudes to Greece. The defining political and military achievement which heralded the Augustan age was the Roman conquest of Egypt, an event which loomed large in the culture and literature of early Imperial Rome. Minerva, in her double-edged and equivocal attitude to Arachne, resembles Augustus, who borrowed extensively from the older and artistically rich culture of Egypt, while having conquered and annexed it. In this Augustan political context, Arachne's embodiment of the Alexandrian and Callimachean mode – a poetic style which was developed in Hellenistic Egypt – is not accidental. Ovid's ascription of the Alexandrian mode to a barbarian, non-Greek character makes the political point – especially applicable to Augustus – that one's acknowledgement of an extraordinary artistic talent and one's ruthless subjugation of the same person or culture need not sit awkwardly with one another. This explains the otherwise bizarre idea of Alexandrian/Callimachean as Other. Regardless of the aesthetic superiority of Arachne's tapestry and the subversive possibility that Arachne's artistic prowess may outshine that of Minerva, Minerva's divine power over Arachne is dominant from the beginning to the end of the episode. Similarly, throughout the period of Roman expansion in the Mediterranean from the third century BCE onwards, the Romans engaged in cross-cultural exchange and reception with other societies which had a much older artistic and cultural heritage than their own, but the looming, ubiquitous presence of Roman military domination nonetheless underpinned Roman hegemony over the entire region.

This article has shown that the quartet of punishment scenes functions as a metaphorical linchpin for the Arachne-Minerva episode as a whole. The punishment scenes unite the central scene of Minerva's tapestry (the inevitability of Graeco-Roman victory) with the themes of Arachne's tapestry (the oppressive and unaccountable power of the gods). Minerva's punishment scenes comment meta-

poetically on the political and literary-cultural context of the *Metamorphoses* in general, complementing Yoong's argument that the Arachne-Minerva weaving contest encapsulates the themes of the whole poem. Through Arachne's victory and Minerva's destruction of her tapestry and assault and transformation of Arachne herself, Ovid argues that the only way of winning against divine power is through art itself, and this is where Arachne fundamentally differs, even if only for a moment, from the women in Minerva's punishment scenes. This metapoetically comments on the transitoriness of both art and life, with Arachne's art and humanness both being destroyed by Minerva. This also clearly foreshadows the closing lines of the *Metamorphoses*, in which Ovid claims that he will live for as long as his poetry continues to be read. After his close reading of Arachne's tapestry, Yoong made the point that Ovid challenges the reader's intertextual and intratextual knowledge through his web of mythological allusions and references within Arachne's tapestry, since the poet refers meaningfully to other mythical episodes within the *Metamorphoses*, and to other Greek and Roman myths more broadly[94]. This point can also be extended to Minerva's tapestry, and for the same reason. This close reading has revealed that Minerva's tapestry is considerably more complex than has previously been acknowledged. Although Minerva's tapestry has long been associated with uniformity, hierarchy, and linearity, in contrast to Arachne's non-linear interweaving of knots and webs, this analysis demonstrates that Minerva weaves a complex array of overlapping knots and webs in her tapestry as well[95]. The myths and figures in Minerva's punishment scenes were carefully selected to embody an extraordinarily intricate web of interconnected allusions, cross-cultural references, and genealogical connections. In view of this, older descriptions of Minerva's work as artistically inferior or lacking in subtlety are no longer valid[96]. Oliensis' argument that Minerva's tapestry downplays the medium in favour of the content likewise seems difficult to maintain[97]. In broader terms, this discussion opens up new interpretive possibilities for how we understand the dynamic between Minerva and Arachne from gender, political, and postcolonial perspectives.

[94] See Yoong 2015, 57.
[95] See Vincent 1994, 361.
[96] See Harries 1990, 75.
[97] See Oliensis 2004, 293.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ahl 1985
F.Ahl, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets*, Ithaca 2020.
Anderson 1972
W.S.Anderson (ed.), *Ovid's Metamorphoses Books 6-10*, Norman 1972.
Arafat 2020
K.Arafat, *Pygmies*, in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 2020.
Bömer 1969
F.Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso Metamorphosen: Kommentar*, Heidelberg 1969.
Clarke 2017
J.R.Clarke, *sexual representation, visual*, in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 2017.
Connors 1998
C.M.Connors, *Petronius the Poet: Verse and Literary Tradition in the Satyricon*, Cambridge 1998.
Courtney 2013
E.Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal*, London 2013.
Cross 1972
F.M.Cross, *An Interpretation of the Nora Stone*, «Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research» CCVIII (1972), 13-19.
Dan 2014
A.Dan, *Mythic Geography, Barbarian Identities: The Pygmies in Thrace*, «Ancient Civilizations from Scythia to Siberia» XX (2014), 39-66.
Dasen 2013
V.Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece*, Oxford 2013.
Dodson-Robinson 2019
E.Dodson-Robinson, *Revenge, Agency, and Identity from European Drama to Asian Film: Agents of Vengeance*, Leiden 2019.
Dufallo 2013
B.Dufallo, *The Captor's Image: Greek Culture in Roman Ekphrasis*, Oxford 2013.
Fantham 2004
E.Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Oxford 2004.
Feldherr 2006
A.Feldherr, *Metamorphosis in the* Metamorphoses, in P.Hardie (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, Cambridge 2006, 163-179.
Feldherr 2010
A.Feldherr, *Playing Gods: Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Politics of Fiction*, Princeton 2010.

Fontenrose 1959
J.Fontenrose, *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and Its Origins*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1959.
Forbes Irving 1990
P.M.C.Forbes Irving, *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths*, Oxford 1990.
Franklin 2015
J.C.Franklin, *Kinyras: The Divine Lyre*, Washington, D.C. 2015.
Galinsky 1996
K.Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction*, Princeton 1996.
Galinsky 2005
K.Galinsky (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Cambridge 2005.
Georgiadou – Larmour 1998
A.Georgiadou – D.H.J.Larmour, *Lucian's Science Fiction Novel True Histories: Interpretation et Commentary*, Leiden 1998.
Hard 2020
R.Hard, *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology*, Eighth Edition, London-New York 2020.
Harries 1990
B.Harries, *The Spinner and the Poet: Arachne in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, «Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society» XXXVI (1990), 64-82.
Heath 2011
J.Heath, *Women's Work: Female Transmission of Mythical Narrative*, «Transactions of the American Philological Association» CXLI (2011), 69-104.
Hellerman 2005
J.H.Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi: Carmen Christi as Cursus Pudorum*, Cambridge 2005.
Hijmans, Jr. 1978
B.L.Hijmans, Jr., *Apuleiana Groningana V: Haemus, the Bloody Brigand* (*Or: What's in an Alias?*), «Mnemosyne» 31:4 (1978), 407-414.
Janan 1994
M.Janan, *'There beneath the Roman Ruin Where the Purple Flowers Grow': Ovid's Minyeides and the Feminine Imagination*, «American Journal of Philology» CXV (1994), 427-448.
Janan 2009
M.Janan, *Reflections in a Serpent's Eye: Thebes in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Oxford 2009.
Johnson 2008
P.J.Johnson, *Ovid before Exile: Art and Punishment in the Metamorphoses*, Madison 2008.

Jones 2007
P.Jones, *Reading Ovid: Stories from the Metamorphoses*, Cambridge 2007.
Joplin 1991
P.K.Joplin, *The Voice of the Shuttle is Ours*, in L.A.Higgins – B.R.Silver (eds.), *Rape and Representation*, New York 1991, 35-66.
Kruger 2001
K.S.Kruger, *Weaving the Word: The Metaphorics of Weaving and Female Textual Production*, Selinsgrove 2001.
Larmour 2005
D.H.J.Larmour, *Corinna's Poetic Metis and the Epinikian Tradition*, in E.Greene (ed.), *Women Poets in Ancient Greece and Rome*, Norman 2005, 25-58.
Larmour 2008
D.H.J.Larmour, *An Agon on the Slopes of Helicon: Corinna's Dialogues with Pindar and Hesiod*, in J.Blevins (ed.), *Dialogism and Lyric Self-Fashioning: Bakhtin and the Voices of a Genre*, Selinsgrove 2008, 46-65.
Lateiner 1984
D.Lateiner, *Mythic and Non-mythic Artists in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, «Ramus» XIII (1984), 1-30.
Leach 1974
E.W.Leach, *Ekphrasis and the Theme of Artistic Failure in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, «Ramus» III (1974), 102-142.
McAuley 2012
M.McAuley, *Matermorphoses: Motherhood and the Ovidian Epic Subject*, «European Network on Gender Studies in Antiquity» II (2012), 123-168.
Miller 2009
J.F.Miller, *Apollo, Augustus and the Poets*, Cambridge 2009.
Newby 2016
Z.Newby, *Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture: Imagery, Values and Identity in Italy, 50BC – AD250*, Cambridge 2016.
Nichols 2008
A.Nichols, *The Complete Fragments of Ctesias of Cnidus: Translation and Commentary with an Introduction*, Gainesville 2008.
O'Bryhim 2014
S.O'Bryhim, *Arachne's Victory:* (*Ovid, Met. 6, 70–102*), «New England Classical Journal» XXXXI (2014), 288-302.
Oliensis 2004
E.Oliensis, *The Power of Image-Makers: Representation and Revenge in Ovid's Metamorphoses 6 and Tristia 4*, «Classical Antiquity» XXIII (2004), 285-321.
Ovadiah – Mucznik 2017
A.Ovadiah – S.Mucznik, *Myth and Reality in the Battle between the Pygmies*

and the Cranes in the Greek and Roman Worlds, «Gerión» XXXV/1 (2017), 151-166.

Plaza 2006

M.Plaza, *The Function of Humour in Roman Verse Satire: Laughing and Lying*, Oxford 2006.

Powell 1992

A.Powell (ed.), *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus*, London 1992.

Rosati 2009

G.Rosati, *Ovidio: Metamorfosi. Volume iii, libri v-vi* (*traduzione di Gioachino Chiarini*). *Scrittori greci e latini*, Roma-Milano 2009.

Scheid – Svenbro 1996

J.Scheid – J.Svenbro, *The Craft of Zeus: Myths of Weaving and Fabric*, Cambridge 1996.

Scobie 1975

A.Scobie, *The Battle of the Pygmies and the Cranes in Chinese, Arab, and North American Indian Sources*, «Folklore» LXXXVI/2 (1975), 122-132.

Segal 1971

C.Segal, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: Greek Myth in Augustan Rome*, «Studies in Philology» LXVIII (1971), 371-94.

Segal 1998

C.Segal, *Ovid's Metamorphic Bodies: Art, Gender, and Violence in the Metamorphoses*, «Arion» V (1998), 9-41.

Sharrock 2020

A.Sharrock, *Noua… corpora: New Bodies and Gendered Patterns in the Metamorphoses*, «Dictynna» XVII (2020), 1-26.

Solodow 2014

J.B.Solodow, *The World of Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Chapel Hill-London 2014.

Tsiafakis 2000

D.Tsiafakis, *The Allure and Repulsion of Thracians in the Art of Classical Athens*, in B.Cohen (ed.), *Not the Classical Ideal: Athens and the Construction of the Other in Greek Art*, Leiden 2000, 364-389.

Vincent 1994

M.Vincent, *Between Ovid and Barthes: Ekphrasis, Orality, Textuality in Ovid's Arachne*, «Arethusa» 27:3 (1994), 361-386.

Vostral 1995

M.J.Vostral, *Women and Weaving in Classical Greece: Ancient and Modern Perceptions of Women's Work*, Tallahassee 1995.

Yoong 2015

H.Yoong, *Divine Poetics: Representation of Genre in Ovid's* Metamorphoses *6.70-128*, https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/fll_etds/37.

Zanker 1988

P.Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Ann Arbor 1988.

Ziogas 2013

I.Ziogas, *Ovid and Hesiod: The Metamorphosis of the Catalogue of Women*, Cambridge 2013.