Block

4

HORACE AND OVID

EXPERT COMMITTEE

Prof. Neera Singh, Director
School of Humanities
IGNOU, New Delhi

Prof. Balaji Ranganathan
Gujarat Central University
Gandhinagar, Gujarat

Dr. Anand Prakash (Retd)
Formerly at Hansraj College
University of Delhi, Delhi

Dr. Rajnish Kumar Mishra
Special Centre for Sanskrit Studies
JNU, New Delhi

Dr. Payal Nagpal
Janki Devi College
University of Delhi

Prof. Romika Batra
Indira Gandhi University
Meerpur, Rewari

Dr. Hema Raghavan (Retd)
Formerly at Gargi College
University of Delhi

Dr. Richa Bajaj
Hindu College
University of Delhi

IGNOU FACULTY
Prof. Neera singh
Prof. Malati Mathur
Prof. Nandini Sahu
Prof. Pramod Kumar
Dr. Pema Eden Samdup
Ms. Mridula Rashmi Kindo
Dr. Malathy A

COURSE PREPARATION

Dr. Pema Eden Samdup:
IGNOU, New Delhi

Ms Anuradha Sroha: Unit 1
Bharti College, University of Delhi

Dr Madhu Grover:
Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi   Unit 2

Ms Anuradha Sroha: Unit 3
Bharti College, University of Delhi

Dr Savita Pathak: Unit 4
Aurobindo College, University of Delhi

CONTENT & LANGUAGE EDITING

Dr Pema Eden Samdup
IGNOU, New Delhi

COURSE COORDINATION

Dr Pema Eden Samdup
IGNOU

PRINT PRODUCTION

Mr. Tilak Raj
Asst. Registrar (Pub.)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Mr. Babu Lal
Section Officer (Publication)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

This block will, as the title suggests introduce us to two of the greatest Roman poets – **Horace** and **Ovid**. It will briefly introduce each poet, their life and works and examine selections of their creative works. In **Horace**'s case we will look at his *Satires* while with **Ovid** we will be examining excerpts from his *Metamorphoses*.

While the first two blocks dealt with the Greek civilisation, the latter two blocks look at the Roman contribution to Literature. In Block 1 we learnt about **Homer**, the great Epic writer and discussed his *Iliad* at length. In Block 2, we studied Greek tragedy and examined **Sophocles**' *Oedipus Rex*. In Block 3 we turned towards the Romans and studied **Plautus**' *The Pot of Gold* and now in Block 4, we look at **Horace** and **Ovid**. You are expected to read **Ovid**'s Selections from *Metamorphoses 'Bacchu', (Book III), 'Pyramus and Thisbe' (Book IV), 'Philomela' (Book VI), tr. Mary M Innes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975) and Horace Satires: 1:4, in Horace: Satires and Epistles and Persius: Satires, tr. Niall Rudd (Hardmonsworth: Penguin, 2005).*

This block contains five units in all.

Unit 1:   Roman Literature: An Introduction
Unit 2:   Introduction to Horace, Life and Works
Unit 3:   Textual Analysis of Satire 1:4
Unit 4:   Introduction to **Ovid**, Life, Literature, Works – *Bacchus* (Book III)
Unit 5:   Textual Analysis of *Pyramus and Thisbe* (Book IV) and *Philomela* (Book VI)

UNIT 1 ROMAN LITERATURE: AN INTRODUCTION

Structure

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This Unit will introduce us to Roman History, Literature and Culture to begin with and will then deal with the great Latin poets. We will start by looking at Ancient Roman History in brief as it will provide the background on Roman society which will be useful in our understanding of **Horace**. From then on, move to a brief introduction to the Latin writers before **Horace**, try and place **Horace**, then do a brief study of the writers after **Horace**, place **Ovid** in the literary history of Rome and sum up with the writers after **Ovid**, so that when we start discussing **Horace** and his *Satires* or when we start **Ovid** and the *Metamorphosis*, we will actually know where **Horace** and **Ovid** came from, who they were, and what their contribution to Classical Literature is.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

If we have not understood Classical Literature by now, then, as we go through this unit, we will touch upon what is classical literature very briefly as well. Hence, in this unit we will try and encapsulate the following points:

- Classical Literature: A Brief
- Life and Times in Ancient Rome
- Writers before Horace
- Horace
- Writers after Horace
- Ovid
- Writers after Ovid

The next section, we shall look briefly at what Classical Literature means.

1.2 EUROPEAN CLASSICAL LITERATURE

When we talk of Classical Literature it could mean only one thing: the Literature of Ancient Greece and Rome predominantly and other older civilisations as well,

for instance, if we say, Classical Indian Literature, we would be talking about Indian texts of ancient times. As we would know by now, the works of **Homer**, **Aeschylus**, **Sophocles**, **Horace**, **Ovid**, would all comprise Classical European Literature or what is more commonly known to us students of English Literature, as, Classical Literature. The term also includes poets, dramatists, and not just novels or any one genre of Literature. In days of old if one were to study Classical Literature, certain assumptions would be in place:

a)   that one is well versed in Greek and Latin (as in the language, culture, tradition)

b)   that one was extremely well placed and could afford to study such an elite course.

Having said that, it is important we understand that Classical Literature usually refers to the Literature of ancient Greece and Rome and that it includes several genres such as the epic, the lyric, the tragedy, the comedy, the satire and the pastoral.

Let us look briefly at the life and times of Ancient Rome as it is a period I am sure, very few of us would know about.

1.3   ANCIENT ROME: HISTORY, SOCIETY & POLITICS

In this section, I think it would be interesting to look at Ancient Rome. Was ancient Rome the same Rome as it is today? Was the city the same? Was the geographical location of Rome the same as it is now? Many questions come to mind when we try and visualise Rome now and Rome then.

Map of Ancient Rome round about the time of Horace, wikipedia.com

Map of the city of Rome today, wikipedia.com

Map of Modern day Italy, wikipedia.com

Map of Europe with Italy, wikipedia.com

Ancient Rome was a very interesting place as we shall see in the sections that follow.

1.3.1 One Origin Myth of Rome

One myth tells us to believe that Rome was founded by two brothers – Romulus and Remus who are believed to be the twin sons of Mars, who some of you may know is popular as the Roman God of War. A king from a nearby kingdom is said to have left the twins in a basket on the river Tiber basically to meet their death by drowning, but a she wolf finds them first and rescues them. As is the case with such myths, the twin boys are raised by the she wolf and they kill the King once they grow up and later found their own kingdom/city on the banks of the same city where they were abandoned. Romulus eventually kills his twin brother Remus and becomes the Emperor of Rome. Needless to say Rome is named after Romulus. Rome was not built in a day is a very famous adage, basically implying that for Rome to become what she did, took time and perseverance. Ancient Rome went through different stages/ phases of political evolution to become what it did during the time of **Horace** and **Ovid**.

1.3.2 Four Major Phases of Ancient Roman History

Roman history is generally split into four ages/ phases – "*the regal phase*", or the time when Rome was ruled by Kings, followed by a phase known as the "*republican period*", during which Rome was governed by elected bodies of officials. The "*republican phase*" was followed by the "*principate phase*", or the age of the emperors, with features of its earlier republican system (whereby the officials were elected), and the "*dominate phase*", which, as the name suggests was the phase when Rome was ruled by extremely powerful and almost dictatorial emperors. The *regal phase* is believed to have begun around 753 BCE. To give us a brief timeline of Rome's history let's say that between the very beginning of Rome/ the Roman way of life and 509 BCE, Rome was ruled by Kings. The second phase/ the *republican phase* began between 509 and 27 BCE. The *republican phase* came to an end with the seizure of power by Rome's first emperor after many years of civil wars and strife. Needless to say this paved the way for the third phase/ *principate* phase began and Rome came to be ruled by many emperors such as the famous **Augustus** and the equally infamous **Caligula**, from **Nero** who is said to have continued to play the fiddle while Rome burned, to Emperor **Hadrian**, from **Marcus Aurelius** to **Commodus**. Around 200 CE, the Roman Empire was on the verge of collapsing, from thereon, Ancient Roman history entered its fourth phase the *dominate phase* when Emperor **Diocletian** took over in 284. Thereafter, ancient Rome became an empire more or less. Let's look at the socio- cultural history of ancient Rome next.

1.3.3 Socio – Cultural History of Ancient Rome

Ancient Rome had a very interesting socio- cultural history and an even more intriguing social composition that would shock quite a few of us today. Life in ancient Rome, as we know of it through historical books, data, classical literary texts, sociological, anthropological and political sources, revolved and evolved around the city of Rome and it's seven famed hills - Aventine Hill ; Caelian Hill; Capitoline Hill ; Esquiline Hill; Palatine Hill; Quirinal Hill; and the Viminal Hill. Rome was rich in theatres, gymnasiums, taverns, baths (the famous Roman baths) and even brothels. Roman architecture gave rise to a wide array of designs ranging from country houses, to villas to palace like palatial mansions and most importantly, the majority of the Roman populace lived in the city. Most of the

towns and cities had temples, and well planned out water supply system that brought water to the urban centres. People were relatively well off and wine and oil were some of the imports to Rome. The landed gentry lived in the city where all matters of importance, luxury transpired, leaving the running and care of their huge farms to farm managers and slaves. Yes, ancient Rome had slaves.

Since the Greek civilisation was the older of the two, a lot of Greek/ Hellenistic influence may be seen in ancient Rome. During the reign of the first Emperor of Rome, Emperor **Augustus** (63 BC – 14 AD), who had Imperial Rome under his command from 27 BC until his death in AD 14; cultured Greek slaves, particularly, the household slaves, would act as tutors to the young Roman men and sometimes even the girls. In fact, the influence of the Hellenistic world was such that Roman writers preferred the stylised Greek writing to the stilted and stiff Latin writing style. Hellenistic influence did not extend just to architecture and writing alone, it extended to the cooking style and much of Roman cuisine was in fact, Greek cuisine. As far as ancient Roman society was concerned, they were rather tolerant of different cultures and religious groups and the worship of various deities was acceptable, the only condition was that other cultures, traditions and religious beliefs and groups should not create trouble for the Romans, which was a fair enough condition. However, there were periodic episodes of attacks against the Christians in particular but as noted by the historian **Edward Gibbons** (1737-94), who wrote *The Rise and fall of the Roman Empire* (published in 6 volumes between 1766 – 88), most of the sources of Christian persecution were from the Christian Church itself. This is interesting as it lets us know two important things: a) Rome was not Christian and b) sometimes it makes sense for us to think about the source of a story be it in a newspaper article or a lesson in history. It is very important that we question sources. Non- Christian sources too talked about persecution but mostly in a general sort of passing way.

Sometimes deceased Emperors were also revered as demigods, as the deceased Emperor's successor would honour the former in an attempt to enhance his own prestige. It was only in the first century AD that Christianity began to spread to the Roman Empire, and by 380 AD, the Empire's official religion was Christianity. The Romans were also highly influenced by the Greeks both in architecture (the arch and the dome of Roman architecture is largely inherited from the Greeks), and sculpture. But Rome also influenced in turn the rest of the western world. For instance, **Virgil** and **Ovid**'s works are still studied, as is the use of Latin in Religion, Science, and Law. The family was the centre of the Roman social structure and comprised of the immediate family, blood relations, the *patria potestas*/ the power that the male head of the family exercised over his children and his more remote descendants in the male line, whatever their age, as well as over those brought into the family by adoption. The male head of the family was literally the Master of the Household, wife, children, the wives of the sons and the nephews, the slaves and the freedmen. He could dispose of them as and how he wished, even putting them to death. Needless to say, slavery and slaves were an accepted part of the social order and the slave market and trade was extremely active. Slaves could be freed by their masters for services rendered/ they could buy their freedom. Some sources say that nearly 25 % of the Roman population comprised slaves.

1.3.4 Socio-Literary History of Ancient Rome

The home was the learning centre and children were taught Roman law, customs, and the boys were trained physically to prepare them to be good citizens or

for recruitment to the army, the girls were taught sewing, weaving and spinning by their mothers. Formal schooling had been in existence since around 200 BC, and children began school around the age of 6 years. By the time they were 12 or 13, they would be expected to learn Latin, Greek, Grammar and Oratory. The native language of the Romans was Latin and high Literature was mostly in Classical Latin, but a highly stylised Latin did exist from around the First Century BC. But the actual spoken Latin was Vulgar Latin meaning the common spoken Latin, which differed from Classical/ Literary Latin. Latin spread throughout Europe and later evolved into the Romance languages such as French, Spanish, Romanian, Italian and Portuguese. English as you may know has its origins in the Germanic tradition but English borrows heavily from Latin and Latin derived words. As mentioned earlier on, Roman Literature particularly in the beginning was highly influenced by Greek Literature and some of the earliest Literature is in the historical epic form.

1.4   LITERARY TRADITION OF ANCIENT ROME

Just as we divided the History of ancient Rome into four phases similarly if we look at largely two hundred of the most literarily productive years of Roman Literature we will get a sense and an understanding of the two centuries and the kinds of works that were produced. The time frame that is of immediate concern to our understanding is between 100 BCE and 100 CE – a span of two centuries. These two hundred years comprised the literary productivity of authors such as **Cicero, Lucretius, Horace, Catullus, Propertius, Virgil, Livy, Ovid, Petronius, Statius,** and **Seneca the Younger, Juvenal, Apuleius** and **Marcus Aurelius**. In section 1.3.2 we talked about the four phases of ancient Roman history, these two centuries saw the ending of the late "*Republican phase*" and the onset of the early "*Principate phase*", and as all good writers of any age are and should be, were in some manner or the other engaged with the goings on of the age they lived and wrote in. But long before **Cicero** blossomed on the Roman literary scene, Rome was already caught up in a swirl of literary activity with writers from places as far off as the periphery of the Italian peninsula, and even Greece. Plays in Latin such as comic, tragic, historical, and epical, as well as burlesques and mimes were being staged during festivals in Rome about a century and a half before **Cicero** became a well-known name. Though most of the early Latin Literature of before 100 BCE except for some plays by **Plautus** and **Terence** was not preserved, we have come to know about them through fragments of Manuscripts saved and decoded by historians. If you recall we studied **Plautus**'s *The Pot of Gold* in Block 3 and we have also traced a bit of Roman Literary history of the comedy there.

Most of what comprises Latin Literature was written during the middle "*Republican phase*" between 240 and 140 BCE. While political Rome was engaged in various continental wars such as the *First Punic War* of 240 BCE, literary Rome saw the fruition of different literary genres, and ideologies that were a reflection of the political splendor of Rome on her expansion mission. The year 240 BCE was also important as it was the year when a Greek play translated into Latin was staged in Rome. The play was translated by a **Livius Andronicus**, who incidentally was a slave. He was a contemporary of **Apollonius** of Rhodes and largely remembered for his translation of **Homer**'s *Odyssey* into Latin of which only about forty lines are said to have survived. Oh his plays which again seem to indicate a Greek ancestry *Achilles, Aegisthus, Andromeda, Danae, The Trojan Horse*, to name but a few, only the titles

appear to have survived. It may be speculated that his translation of the *Odyssey* was a way to help teach the Romans about Greece, the culture and the language. If you recall we talked about how the slaves who were educated were the ones who taught the children of the Roman gentry at home in the initial years. His translation which mind you, was done in the middle of the 2nd Century is something of an achievement.

Livius Andronicus' literary career was followed by that of **Naevius** who too wrote adaptations of Greek comedies or what was discussed in Block 3 - *fabulae palliatae*. By this time however, the Romans were staging shows, in Latin. **Naevius'** most important work was the epic *Bellum Punicum*, which as most early Latin writings is, almost all but lost. It is said to be based on the First Punic War. **Quintus Ennius** is the third early writer of importance who again like his predecessors is not a native born Roman. **Ennius** is believed to have worked with several different genres, he translated Greek plays, wrote a mythical history of Rome called the *Annales*. After **Ennius** (between 200 – 100 BCE) we have the two great playwrights/ dramatists **Plautus** and **Terence**. We have talked about **Plautus** at length in Block 3 so we'll now look at **Terence** who lived between 184 – 159 BCE. Like **Plautus**, **Terence** too adapted the *New Comedy* of Greece to the Roman stage. **Terence** died young, in his twenties and his literary output was just six plays which thankfully have survived. **Terence's** most famous play is *The Situation of The Brothers*, which was staged in 160 BCE, and is a play dealing with the question of how children should be raised or if we may put it in modern parlance, it's a play about effective parenting! After **Terence**, the next set of Latin/ Roman writers that we should know about are: **Lucretius, Cicero, Catullus, Propertius, Horace, Virgil**, and **Ovid**.

The next great writer is **Lucretius**, who is said to have lived between 94-53 BCE. **Lucretius** is remembered for his work *On the Nature of Things*, a poem that showcases his (**Lucretius'**) point of view and chiefly related to his sense of theology, science, and ethics and which is an exposition of the Epicurean philosophy of life. **Lucretius** is followed by **Marcus Tullius Cicero**, the Roman orator and statesman born in 106 BCE, and murdered in 43 BCE. Oh his works only six books on rhetoric and eight books on philosophy have managed to survive the ravages of time, while about fifty odd speeches are extant. His most notable works in Oration were - *In Verrem, In Catilinam I–IV, Philippicae,* and the important works in Philosophy were - *De Oratore, De Re Publica, De Legibus, De Finibus, De Natura Deorum, De Officiis,* to name but a few.

Catullus lived between 84-54 BCE and was a poet essentially. It needs to be mentioned that his writings have a very wide range from sweet love lyrics, to serious poems celebrating marriage, to violently threatening poems, some talk of legendary heroes of a long time ago, others about human experiences. A total of 117 poems of **Catullus** survive today. Again, he wrote both two line *epigrams*, as well as mini – epics, and used a variety of metres. Interestingly **Catullus's** works are numbered such as *Catullus 15, Catullus 51*. The next major writer after **Catullus** is **Propertius** who is believed to have lived between 50 BCE and 1 BCE. **Propertius'** has four books of poems, and the poems in these four books established his reputation as an elegist. **Propertius** is followed by **Horace** whom we shall deal with next.

1.5   HORACE: LIFE AND TIMES

Quintus Horatius Flaccus (8 December 65- 27 November 8 BCE) lived amidst dense political and military events in Rome; from the extreme violence of the civil wars which overthrew the old republic to the new era of peace and order under **Augustus**. Not wanting to enrol his son **Horace**, in a local school of Flavius which had sons of centurions as students, **Horace's** father brought him to Rome. Despite having a strict master for Greek and Latin studies, **Horace** took keen interest in reading the Greek masterpieces. As a child **Horace** could speak the language, having lived with Greeks in Venosa. The Greek poets were also the inspiration and model for his *Odes*. Having completed his studies in Rome, **Horace** followed the examples of young Romans and travelled to Athens, Greece at the age of twenty to broaden his perspectives on the studies of rhetoric and philosophy. There under **Orbilius** of **Beneventum** and other teachers he studied **Livius Andronicus** and **Homer**. His travels were however, disturbed by the political events taking place in Rome after the assassination of **Julius Caesar**, which ended with **Horace**'s involvement in the battlefield. **Brutus**, **Caesar**'s assassin had come to Athens where he was received with sympathy. **Horace** was impressed by **Brutus** arguments for liberty and decided to join the army against the '*triumvirate*'. He also proved himself a man of exceptional qualities and was assigned the grade of '*tribunus militum*', a position reserved for men of higher social class.

In October 42 BCE, **Brutus**' army was defeated at Philippi. **Horace** also sought safety and fled the battleground to save his life. In 4 BCE, **Octavian** extended amnesty to the army and **Horace** was able to return home. The social conditions at home had changed; his father had died, and his farm was confiscated. To earn a living, **Horace** began working as a '*scriba quaestorius*', a technical administrative function within the '*aerarium*', the Ministry of the Treasury. During this time, **Horace** returned to writing poetry in Greek and Latin. In his early writings **Horace** gave vent to his ill-humour, dissatisfaction, bitterness and discomfort at the sad events and tumultuous times of his life.

His friends **Virgil** and **Varius** introduced **Horace** to **Maecenas**, the powerful lord of royal Etruscan descent, which gave birth to a close friendship between the two. **Horace** was accepted into his circle of close friends and developed a deep friendship that lasted for thirty years and ended only with **Horace**'s death. As **Horace** gained popularity he became acquainted with **Emperor Augustus** and **Maecenas** gave him a small estate in the Sabine Hills, twenty-five miles from Rome, on the shore of river Licenza on the flanks of Mount Lucretilis to compensate for his father's confiscated farm. In 26-25 BCE, **Horace** showed remarkable courage when he courteously but firmly refused **Augustus**' offer to become his private Secretary. **Augustus** was not offended as a result of this and remained friendly with **Horace** calling the poet "*a most witty little man*". **Augustus** also reproved the poet for not having mentioned the Emperor at all in his *Satires*.

Augustinian Rome in which **Horace** spent his life, presented all the characteristics of grandiosity and luxury: magnificent theatres and baths, basilicas, temples, forums, gardens, and porticoes of splendid design. Rome was *'caput mundi'* or capital of the world, a city so varied, huge, and so corrupt where flowed all the riches and fashions lf conquered people, all the arts of Greece, Asia, and Africa. In appearance, **Horace** was described as a short stout man, neatly groomed, brown complexioned, balding, with poor eyes, not very robust and

of delicate health. As a young man he was reserved and shy about reciting his verses in public. In his youth he had been a lively storyteller and laughed freely, in old age he suffered from the nerves, was irritable, easily angered, blunt but witty.

Horace's poems have a strong autobiographical focus; however, the speaker is a *personae* or a literary mask who speaks in the first person. He can be identified with the historical author but is nevertheless a fictional character constructed through allusive, generic, rhetorical, and other literary means. The *Satires* and *Epistles* were written during the course of some of the largest political changes which Rome ever underwent. *Epistles 1* was published in 20 BCE, when **Augustus** had '*restored the res publica*' and firmly established his dominance over Roman politics. Even when writing an epistle to **Augustus** himself, **Horace**'s focus is on literary rather than political matters. The surviving works of **Horace** include two books of *Satires*, a book of *Epodes*, four books of *Odes*, three books of *Letters* or *Epistles*, and a *Hymn*. Like most Latin poets, his works make use of Greek metres, especially the *hexameter* and *alcaic*, and *sapphic* stanzas. His **Ars Poetica** ("The Art of Poetry"), is usually referred to as a separate work, and outlines a theory of poetry. The *"Carmen Saeculare"* ("Song of the Ages") is a hymn commissioned by the Emperor **Augustus** for the Secular Games of 17 BCE, proposing the restoration of the traditions of the glorification of the gods *Jupiter*, *Diana*, and *Venus*. We shall not go into too many details on **Horace** here as Units 2, & 3 will deal with **Horace** in detail. In the next section, we shall examine the other literary giants after **Horace**.

1.6 LITERARY GIANTS AFTER HORACE

Virgil is the next great author that needs to be introduced at this point. Virgil was born **Publius Vergilius Maro** in 70 BCE. **Virgil** references his homeland frequently in his writings, and while these references are printed in to be found in his poetry, they can still probably tell us something about his upbringing there. There is not much known about **Virgil**'s personal life except what has been gleaned from references he made in his works. **Virgil** wrote most of the *Aeneid* once **Octavian** became Emperor **Augustus**, and the poem talks about his reign. The *Eclogues* on the other hand, a collection of ten poems in which herdsmen tell stories to one another as they tend to their flocks; and *Georgics* which is a set of four poems on agriculture, were composed much earlier. **Virgil** was greatly admired by the Romans as they considered him to be their national poet and also because they believed that he had managed to perfect his art in language, metre, style, and structure. Let's talk about **Ovid** next.

1.7 OVID: LIFE AND TIMES

Ovid or **Publius Ovidius Naso** is the next writer/ poet in this block and we will spend a little time on him here within the larger framework of Latin writers and then deal with him at length in the next few units. **Ovid** was born in 43 BCE, and died in 17 CE. He is well known for his *Ars Amatoria* which deals with poems that talk about the different stages of a love affair and *Metamorphoses* which is the text under study in units 4 & 5. The *Remedia Amoris*, is a *burlesque* and is said to be a response to the *Ars Amatoria*. In the *Heroides* (Heroines) **Ovid** uses the letter writing mode. His *Fasti* records the religious festivals of the Roman calendar. His most famous work the *Metamorphoses* is written in 15 books and consists of about 12,000 lines. In it are myths and

legends in which transformation plays a part. It is a fascinating work of Literature but we shall be talking about it later so suffice it to say that the *Metamorphose* was, a great way to bring in Greek myths into the Roman world.

1.8   LET US SUM UP

In this background unit on Roman/ Latin Literature we have been introduced to ancient Roman history, politics, social composition and norms, and the beginnings of Roman Literature. We have dealt with the important writers who helped create Roman Literature and dealt with **Horace** and **Ovid** in a little more detail. The next four units are structured thus: Unit 2 will deal with Horace, his life, times, influences on his work, and Unit 3 will examine his *Satire 1:4*. Unit 4 will take up for study **Ovid** and Unit 5 will deal with excerpts from the *Metamorphosis*.

1.9   QUESTIONS

1.   Trace the development of Roman/ Latin Literature from its beginnings to the time of Ovid.
2.   Do you see any traces of cultural influence from another country on the Literature of Rome?
3.   Who were some of the great Roman writers and what did they write about?
4.   Do you think Horace and Ovid are more interesting writers or Virgil and Catullus?

1.10   SUGGESTED READINGS & REFERENCES

1.   Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Bion of Borysthenes." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 20 July 1998, www.britannica.com/biography/Bion-of-Borysthenes.
2.   Davis, Gregson. *A Companion to Horace*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
3.   Flaccus, Q. Horatius, et al. *The Complete Odes and Satires of Horace*. Princeton University Press, 1999.
4.   Flaccus, Quintus Horatius, et al. *A Commentary on Horace: Odes, Book III*. Oxford University Press, 2004.
5.   Freudenburg, Kirk. *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
6.   Harrison, Stephen J. *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*. Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008.
7.   Highet, Gilbert. *Anatomy of Satire*. Princeton University Pres, 2016.
8.   Hooley, Daniel M. *Roman Satire*. Blackwell, 2007.
9.   Horace, and Davie, John. *Satires and Epistles*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
10.   Preston, C. E., and C. E. Preston. *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. Penguin, 1999.
11.   Quintero, Ruben. *A Companion to Satire*. Blackwell Pub., 2007.
12.   Wasson, Donald L. "The Murder of Julius Caesar." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, Ancient History Encyclopedia, 21 Jan. 2019, www.ancient.eu/ article/803/the-murder-of-julius-caesar/

UNIT 2   HORACE: LIFE AND WORKS

Structure

2.0   OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we will be discussing the following:

● The background to **Horace**'s poetry;

● The range of his writings;

● *Satire* as a genre

● Socio-political background of *Augustan Rome*; and

● **Horace**'s choices for writing (*sermo*) formal verse satires.

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In this Unit, we introduce you to the life of **Horace** and familiarise you with the range of his poetic career. We also wish to extend your understanding of the social patterns of *Augustan Rome* so that we can link the satirical poetry of **Horace** with its historical context. Further, this unit will provide information on the genre of the *Satire*: its classical Greek origins, the different kinds of satires in use in ancient Rome, and the complex reasons behind **Horace**'s own choice of writing *sermo* or formal verse satires, which is the form of *Satire 1.4* to be studied in the next unit. We will discuss **Horace**'s important contribution to Latin poetry and to the genre of satire. Let us begin by looking at **Horace**'s life and times.

This unit is a study guide to **Horace**'s satirical poem *Satire I: 4* that we read in translation, since the original was written in Latin. We will begin with an introduction to **Horace** the man and the growth of his literary career. We will discuss this Roman poet's works and the political background of ancient Rome that led to the writing of his satires. We will also get familiar with the genre of satire and explore the growth of this classical form of writing, more particularly since in *Satire I: 4* **Horace** seems interested in creating a special place for himself in the tradition of the *Greaco-Roman* satirists. It is important to note the personal and historical reasons that made it necessary for him to create a new voice for himself in a changed political climate.

Through a brief exploration of different forms of satire like the *lampoon*, the *invective*, the *diatribe*, and the *sermo* (formal verse satire), we might arrive at a better understanding of **Horace**'s sophisticated redefinition of satire. **Horace**

tried to separate himself from the harsher styles of literary satire, and these authoritative choices influenced many later writers with the refinement and perfection of this classical satirist.

The next unit will provide a textual analysis of *Satire I: 4*. We, must remember that more than one close reading of the poem is needed to fully link the ideas that **Horace** introduces as part of a rambling conversation. Attention needs to be paid to the many allusions to other writers in the course of this verse satire, some of the names are fictional and others that cannot be identified since the originals are lost to time. Although the speech forms used in the poem seem simple, we need to understand the underlying complexities of **Horace**'s personal and literary reasons for writing this satire. We would need therefore to be alert to the hidden nuances of the changing tones of the Horatian voice. Let us begin by looking at **Horace**'s life and times next.

2.2   HORACE: LIFE AND TIMES

Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65 BCE-8 BCE), known in the English-speaking world as **Horace**, was born in Venusia of southern Italy, a border region that perhaps enabled the young **Horace** to come across and appreciate a range of Italic dialects. **Horace**'s birthplace was a Roman colony. In one of the frequent wars against the Romans around 91-88 BCE, many *Samnites* (as **Horace** calls his countrymen) were enslaved. **Horace**'s father too had been a slave for part of his life, but later had managed to gain his freedom and improve his social status.

'Freedmen,' or former slaves who had been released from slavery, called *libertini*, could be found in every economic class in ancient Rome, and **Horace**'s father is known to have become prosperous as a kind of broker and goods collector at auctions. Remember we talked a bit about this in Unit 1. He had bought an estate and spent considerably on his son's education, accompanying him to Rome, and later sending him to Greece for his further development. Under Roman law, as a freedman, **Horace**'s father however rich he was could not have held any important official positions, as did for example the senators or the *equites* (knights).

In a rather rigidly maintained hierarchical class system in ancient Rome, the status of freeborn Romans was established by ancestry, making them by birth, *patrician* (the highest born) or *plebeian* (the average workers). Further, based on wealth and political privilege, free Romans could rise to the two higher ranks - the *senatorial*, and become senators, or *equestrian*, and become *equites* (or knights). **Horace**'s father was therefore naturally ambitious for his son to acquire all the means available to rise to the upper social ranks.

Horace's poetry gives us some insights into these class disparities, as also shows us his own complex self-positioning efforts to keep up a public face of superiority. **Horace** says more about himself than any other ancient poet does, and so our main source for his life must be his own poems. In *Satires 1:6*, published at the age of 30, he claims for instance that he could be a senator if he liked, if it was not too much of a trouble with too few gains. In the same satire, lines 65-92, he also pays a gracious tribute to his father's character, giving him

the credit for his own moral uprightness so that he need not be ashamed of being a freedman's son.

His father sent him to Athens, at great expense, to be educated with senators' and knights' sons at the Academy originally set up by **Plato**, where philosophy was studied as an important part of an aristocratic education. When he was 22, not long after the assassination of **Julius Caesar**, **Brutus** and **Cassius**, the Liberators recruited **Horace** along with other young aristocrats from Athens to join their army against **Octavian** (who later became the emperor **Augustus Caesar**). As an officer, **Horace** received the honour of the equestrian gold ring (making him one of the *equites*) personally conferred upon him by **Brutus**, although the Republican army was finally defeated at the Battle of Philippi in 42 BCE.

In the new regime, **Octavian** (later **Augustus**) offered pardon to his opponents, which **Horace** accepted. Working in a minor easy-going civil service position, the budding poet found ample leisure to write his poetry. Through the intervention of his friend the poet **Virgil** (70-19 BCE), and the tragic poet **Varius** (74-14 BCE), **Horace** was extended the friendship and generous patronage of **Octavian**'s right-hand man in civil affairs, **Maecenas** (68-8 BCE). Entering the literary circle of this diplomat, poet and counsellor and forming elite social connections raised the young poet's prosperity still higher. **Maecenas**' name in Italian has given rise to the word for patronage: '*mecenatismo*'. He was a wealthy man of equestrian status and the most intimate friend of **Octavian** from the early days. He was entrusted with important political missions and responsibilities and he was also clearly crucial to the flourishing of poetry around the time that **Octavian** came to power. As his patron, between 35 and 30 BCE, **Maecenas** gave **Horace** a farm with several tenant farmers in the Sabine hills to the north-east of Rome.

The Sabine farm gave **Horace** a kind of semi-retirement from active official life. This separation from the imperial court permitted him to write with a certain degree of independence, which **Horace** acknowledges in his *Odes* in touching upon the importance of a private, apolitical life. Thus, even in his routine celebration of the Empire, **Horace** sought to maintain a position of moderation and equilibrium, qualities that might contribute to much-needed peace of mind within a competitive Roman culture.

Horace's works carry images of the tensions and concerns of contemporary politics, as he confronts his various audiences, some of them actively hostile to him. More than any other writer of his age, **Horace** shows in his poetry the impact of political pressures on his personal world, and in dealing with them, uses conscious techniques of self-presentation as well as self-preservation throughout his works. For some commentators, **Horace**'s association with the regime of **Augustus** was a matter of achieving a delicate balance to maintain his independence, although the 17th century English poet and satirist, **John Dryden** was to label him "*a well-mannered court slave*".

Against such a condemnation we might note that late in life, **Horace** is said to have been offered by **Augustus** and declined, a fairly high equestrian court office as secretary of the imperial private correspondence. **Horace** died at the age of 56, not long after his patron **Maecenas**, near whose tomb he was laid

to rest. Both men bequeathed their property to **Augustus**, an honour that the emperor expected of his friends. In the next section we shall look at what a satire is given that, **Horace** is largely known for his *Satires*.

2.3 THE GENRE OF SATIRE

Latin literature began in imitation of ancient Greek literary forms, from the epic stories of Greek heroes and tragedy to the short poems known as *epigrams*. Attacking the foolish, an important element of satire, is found in Athenian Old Comedy whose sole extant representative is the 5th century BCE Greek playwright, **Aristophanes**. According to **Horace**, the Romans borrowed from him and from **Cynic** and **Sceptic** preachers, whose extemporaneous sermons, called **diatribes**, carried anecdotes, character sketches, fables, obscene jokes, parodies of serious poetry, and other elements also found in Roman satire.

One of Rome's most important rhetoricians, **Quintillian** (35-100 BCE), however, claims the genre to be "*totally ours*", connecting its origins to the early Roman practitioners of the genre, **Ennius** (**Quintus Ennius**, 239-169 BCE) and **Lucilius** (**Gaius Lucilius**, 180-103 BCE). Satire, as invented by the Romans, had a tendency from the beginning towards social criticism—some of it in the form of sharp attack in personal *lampoons* — which we still associate with satire. But the defining characteristic of Roman satire was that it was a mix or a medley.

The Romans produced two types of satires, the *Menippean Satire* and the *Formal Verse Satire*.

2.3.1 *The Menippen Satire*

The *Menippean Satire* was frequently a parody, blending prose and verse, also usually using a fictional third-person narrative. The first use of this form was by the **Cynic** parodist, **Menippus** (300-260 BCE). His works, now lost, influenced **Varro** (116-27 BCE), who brought it into Latin; followed by **Seneca** (4 BCE-65CE), the Stoic philosopher and satirist, who wrote *Apocolocyntosis*, a political parody of the deification of Emperor **Claudius**, which is the only surviving clear example of the *Menippean Satire*. We also have large segments of *Menippean Satire* in *Satyricon*, by **Petronius** (27-66 CE).

2.3.2 *The Formal Verse Satire*

Although earlier Latin writers were instrumental in developing the genre of satire, the official founder of this Roman genre is **Lucilius**, of whom we have only fragments from his voluminous output of 30 books of satire. **Horace**, **Persius** (34-62 CE), and **Juvenal** (c 60-c 130 CE) followed, leaving us many complete satires about life, vice, and moral decay they saw around them in their respective times. Verse satire was written in dactylic hexameter, like epics. Its stately meter partly accounts for its relatively high place in the hierarchy of poetry.

Formal verse satire consists of an outer structure in which the satirist interacts with an *adversarius* (interlocutor) on a point of debate, within a lightly-sketched setting. The inner core of the form, which is the satire itself, largely consists of two divisions: thesis and antithesis, presenting negative elements decrying and ridiculing current vices and follies, followed by positive elements in the satirist's

recommendations of the antithetical virtues to be embraced in order to achieve moral reform of society.

Another important pattern in formal verse satire is the *apologia pro satura sua,* the satirist's apology or defense of his satire. Miniature dramatic and allusive elements may also be used by the satirist to drive his point home by adding short sermons, lively anecdotes, and character sketches or "portraits" that bring alive the follies in action.

The satirical poet **Lucilius** being a senator's son could attack his patrician peers without fear, and his blunt but patriotic voice rails in angry invectives at the forces of modernisation ("*Hellenization*" or being heavily influenced by the alien Greek culture). Thus, **Lucilius** pokes fun at the likes of *Hellenizers* like **Ennius**. His purely Roman rage is cast on contemporary silliness and snobbery which makes Romans run to buy up all kinds of gorgeous, Greek luxuries, even to enthusiastically wearing underwear from Lydia.

The Horatian satire and sense of self on the other hand follows a different pattern of gentler and softer, more cautious ridicule of the absurdities and follies of human beings in general. It directs wit, exaggeration, and self-deprecating humour toward what it identifies as folly, rather than evil. In speaking self-referentially of the satire as a genre in *Satires: 1.4*, **Horace** tells us that it is a touchy business and difficult to get just right. Satires may be amusing, like party goers, but could get out of line and loose-mouthed, thereby embarrassing the company and sometimes making them cringe in fear, expecting the satirist to descend to personal attack even of his friends. In the next section we shall explore some of **Horace**'s works.

2.4   HORACE: LITERARY WORKS

Horace is a centrally important author in Latin literature. His work is composed of a wide range of genres, from *iambus* to *satire*, and *odes* to *literary epistles*. The themes and issues touched upon in his writing may cover light-hearted matters related to love and wine, but it is as likely to carry serious discussions on philosophy and literary criticism. As a literary craftsman, before all else, **Horace**'s chief interest was the improvement and reform of Latin poetry. He also became a key literary figure in the regime of the Emperor **Augustus**, and his career coincided with Rome's political change from Republic to Empire, again something we've discussed in Unit 1.

Although after having fought on the losing side against **Augustus**, **Horace** obtained pardon from the victors, yet in the confiscations that followed, he lost his family house and country estate at Venusia. Later (in *Epistles 2.2*, 51–2) he says of this loss jokingly that he turned to writing verse because of poverty. **Horace**'s first book of *Satires*, probably his first published work (the 1st book of 10 satires around 35 BCE and the 2nd book of 8 satires in 30 BCE) marked his arrival in Roman society and Latin poetry. His *Satires* are addressed mainly to his patron **Maecenas**, within the poetic coterie of the circle of friends who also become jealous eavesdroppers of these companionable discussions.

The Roman literary scene is importantly linked to the organisation of Roman society on the basis of *amicitia* (loosely translated as 'friendship'). The

circulation of poetry and literary prose generally took place through recitations organised by the elite and by having copies made privately. A poet was like a 'client' of his patron, subject to similar duties (attendance at official and social events) and the recipient of similar rewards. He was also special as he had the power to celebrate his patron's achievements and even to confer immortality upon him. For the Romans *amicitia* signified the entire network of social relations between superiors and inferiors, between 'patrons' and their 'clients'. Literary patronage was just one way in which a great man could show himself a friend and in return he expected to be glorified by the poets among his friends, thereby making these into transactions within a gift economy with benefits accruing to both sides. **Horace** celebrated his relationship with **Maecenas** by dedicating to him most of his poetic output.

The *Epodes* (17 in number) also belong to his early period, in which he experimented with a new form of writing *iambi* (singular *iambus)* in Latin in the manner of the Ancient Greek poet **Archilochus** (680-645 BCE). They take their title from the fact that all of them use a poetic metre in which a longer line is followed by a shorter one, called an 'after-song'. These poems are in the nature of 'blame poetry', including *lampoons* used for private revenge, and invectives for a more general denunciation of social offenders. **Horace** proudly claimed to introduce into Latin the iambic poetry of **Archilochus** but (unlike the ancient poet he imitated) without persecuting anyone in particular. The comic mockery of the *Epodes* is fierce, although **Horace** directs the ridicule not at individuals, but rather at social abuses. His low social origins as a freed man's son required caution in the business of writing satires and kept him from attacking important individuals in either genre.

The *Epistles* (published in two books, in 20 BCE and 14 BCE, respectively) have been seen as a continuation of his satires in the form of epistles or verse-letters. The satiric and epistolary forms are well suited to the seeming revelation of homely or confessional detail, and as a result, personal revelations form the basis of much of **Horace**'s discussion there. For this reason, he elects in *Epistles* to characterise the craft of poetry as the practical mechanism of personal survival and social self-enhancement. In *Epistles* 1.20, he compares his book to a prostitute, eager to put itself up for sale to one reader after another in the booksellers' district. The crucial point being made here is that of **Horace**'s successful social advancement as a totally self-made man, who raised himself from poverty and obscurity to occupy a lofty and honoured place in Roman society. The message one gets from *Epistles* 1.20 and 2.2 is that books of poetry are sometimes written in order to earn a living or to enhance the social reputation of their authors, and not so much for their own or for art's sake. Thus, poetry here remains an important aspect of **Horace**'s self-image as it has been the instrument of his worldly success. Poetry is presented as being largely practical in its purpose and application, a somewhat worldly perspective adopted by the poet.

The *Odes* (Latin: *Carmina*) written in the lyric mode in conscious imitation of the Greek originals, **Pindar**, **Sappho** and **Alcaeus**, cover a wide variety of topics, from an eulogy in praise of **Augustus** to general themes like love, friendship, wine, patriotism, the virtues of contentment, and the observation of balance of mind, or the "golden mean". Books 1 to 3 of the *Odes* were published

in 23 BCE, while a fourth book, consisting of 15 poems, was published in 13 BCE.

The period from 20-13 BCE when he published Book 4 of the *Odes* and the first book of *Epistles*, was also a time of the declining importance of **Maecenas** at the imperial court. **Horace** was offered and accepted the position of laureate to **Augustus** and his family. The *Carmen Saeculare* sung to *Apollo and Diana* by a chorus of patrician boys and girls at **Horace**'s own direction before the emperor and all Rome in 15 BCE was the climax of **Horace**'s poetic career.

The last of his epistles, *Epistula ad Pisones*, (*Letter to the Pisos, a father and two sons*), later titled *Ars Poetica*, or '*The Art of Poetry*' is a verse epistle offering advice on writing successful poetry, keeping in mind the qualities of good 'decorum,' particularly in the context of an audience of the ruling elite of Rome. Let us look at **Horace**'s *Satires* next.

2.5 HORACE'S *SATIRES*

Horace alternates between calling his satires *Satirae* and *Sermones*, or "*Conversations*". His awareness of the changed political climate within the new regime makes him particularly careful of his tone and hence this writing takes its interest from what it does not say. **Horace**'s satire at this point had also to deal with the "*Lucilius question*", that is, the expectation of his audience that he would write in the aggressive manner of the master, the genre's inventor. However, the sharpness and uncompromised free speech of **Lucilius**, a senator's son writing invectives in Republican Rome could not be the satirical manner of his low-born successor, **Horace**, a freedman's son.

The inevitable shift of satire, from "open" to "understated", led to a new re-definition of the self-image and the literary stylistics of the poet writing at **Augustus**'s court. Making a virtue out of political necessity, **Horace**'s satire creates both literary and personal images of a new Roman civility. He represents the limits of his satire as aesthetic choices, and as aspects of civic refinement. He adopts a soft-toned and reticent expression, self-effacing yet well able to employ an oblique witty style, full of irony and innuendo.

The first three satires of Book 1 are part of a related group and follow the style of the Greek *diatribe* or philosophical street-sermon in the *Cynic* tradition, attempting to delicately criticise the faults of friends. The overall message and assumption here is that everyone has faults, some of which might be even attractive ones. The balanced and moderate tone of such a satire seems to suggest that one should be sparing of one's criticism of one's friends, and thus points toward the norm of a cultivated and urbane culture.

In 1.5 he describes a journey to Brundisium with **Maecenas**, who was on his way to negotiate the *Treaty of Tarentum* with **Antony** (in 37 BCE). In putting an emphasis on warm friendships and trivial mishaps while describing this trip, **Horace** artfully conceals any political involvement or views of his own. In 1.9 he tells of how a social climber and sycophant, who is also represented as a windbag, too free with his speech tries to exploit his new friendship with **Maecenas** (43–60). The negative images of such social "others" are significantly useful in staging the antithesis of the satirist's self-performance as moderate,

cautious and controlled. In 1.6, his most autobiographical poem, he gives an attractive and no doubt exaggerated picture of his simple life (104–31) as he potters around the market and asks the price of vegetables; he thus tries to avert the malice that attends his new success by emphasising his own austere country life. The thrust of the *Sermones* is ethical, and in the opening address to **Maecenas** (1.1) the theme of 'contentment with one's lot' is not just an expression of gratitude but a denial of larger ambitions.

The Horatian satire has been appropriately termed "a restless genre" since in writing about himself he provides us with a composite picture made up of many comic types; adopts varied tones and faces, many of them masks. Fitting the modesty that the new regime might require of him as a minor civil servant he offers the pose of one deferential to authority, a parasite sometimes, at other times a recluse withdrawn from the world meditating on his own shortcomings, conspicuously on the margins of the aggressively ambitious city crowds. Though greatly admiring the older satirist's sharp wit, **Horace** carried on the *Lucilian* tradition of satire not just by ridiculing vice and folly but by writing in an amusing and self-reflexive way about his own natural failings. The clearest image other than his own of a morally upright example set out against contemporary follies is that of his own father, a representative figure of the fine old-fashioned Roman virtues. In 1.4 and 1.6 **Horace** pays a tribute to his father for being his teacher in practical morality.

Although **Horace** is supposedly addressing himself to his patron, **Maecenas**, there is also by implication a conversation with poets contemporary (**Virgil**, **Varius**, and others of the court circle) and poets past, undertaken in constant inter-textual dialogue that attempts to sort genres, styles, and questions of literary aesthetics. Satire 1.4 and 1.10 both, include defenses of the Horatian satire. The genial, rambling and open-ended conversations held with a shadowy companion-figure disavows the satirical impulse, and also literary outspokenness, apart from any desire to gain literary fame or political status. There is however, a clear attempt to redefine the rules for satire so as to present an ethical, self-fashioned man refraining from personal abuse, since brought up by his father to improve himself against the negative examples of others.

Concerning the standards of the new kind of satire from a stylistic point of view, **Horace** places himself squarely against the slip-shod spontaneity of a **Lucilius** whose "muddy river" had undergone no revisions or erasures. The Horatian literary principles offered to replace older standards are brevity, variety, amenability and refinement. The links between poetry and poet are constantly made in Satire 1.4 to suggest that in both, self-fashioning and the fashioning of a new stylistics of poetry there are ethical questions involved. The new satire, like the new civility is to be diplomatic, accommodating, and inoffensive.

2.6   LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have built an understanding of **Horace**'s life and the circumstances related to his life, and his writings. We have understood what a satire is as a *genre* and also looked at the two types of Satires. We know which satirical form **Horace** used and have been introduced to the poet's works of art.

2.7   QUESTIONS

1.   Discuss the social origins of Horace at the time of his birth and early childhood.
2.   Describe the nature of the class hierarchies in ancient Rome.
3.   What efforts did Horace's father make to improve the social position of his son?
4.   Discuss how Horace balanced his social position at Augustus' court.
5.   What were the origins of Latin satire?
6.   Who were the early practitioners of Latin satire?
7.   What were the two forms of satire practiced by the Romans?
8.   Describe the differences between Lucilius and Horace as satirists.
9.   What were the early experiences of Horace as a writer?
10. Discuss the system of literary patronage at the Roman court.
11. Trace the course of Horace's literary career after he gained success.
12. What were the factors that directed Horace's choice of tone in his satires?
13. What are some of the kinds of positive values that Horace represents in his *Sermones*?
14. Discuss the style of Horatian satire.

2.8   SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

1.   *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*, ed., Stephen Harrison
2.   *Horace: Image, Identity, and Audience*, Randall L. B. McNeill
3.   *Readings in Classical Literature*, ed., Harriet Raghunathan
4.   *The Satires of Horace*, Niall Rudd

UNIT 3   HORACE: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF *SATIRE 1: 4*

Structure

3.0   OBJECTIVES

In this Unit we introduce you to the following:

- the text and the analysis of *Satire 1:4;*
- the Horatian Satire;
- the influences of Epicurean Philosophy and Ethics; and
- the relationship between Horace and his Father.

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Of the two books of *Satires*, the first was completed in 35 BCE, the second towards 30 BCE. **Horace** calls these compositions '*Sermones*'. They were written at first for his circle of friends and derived from conversations and gatherings in which he participated, where he heard jokes, smart remarks, fable-telling, sharp exchanges of wit, and other interesting tales. **Horace** calls his satirical muse '*pedestris*' — a muse who goes afoot. The verse is hexameter, free, more natural than the heroic hexameter of **Virgil** and the *Augustinian* classics. The Italians have several good words for the title **Horace** gave these compositions; they might call these works '*chiacchiera*' (chatter, small talk) or '*ghiribizzi*' (bizarre chitchat, capriccios). According to **Sidney Alexander**, the *Satires* are realistic short stories, moral tales, and anecdotes with a preachy point. Let us look at **Horace** the satirist next.

3.2   HORACE THE SATIRIST

Some of the most important changes in the civil liberties in Rome took place while **Horace** wrote the first two books on satire. By positioning himself as a satirist and the successor of **Lucilius**, **Horace** draws attention to the changed political climate of Rome and the difficulties of writing satire. He also demonstrates how even the most casual and messy of genres could aspire to new standards of composition by promoting technical improvements such as restraint, flexibility, and offensiveness.

23

The satires are addressed primarily to his patron **Maecenas**, which turns everyone else into eavesdroppers. However, **Horace** is also conversing with a small poetic coterie, including **Virgil** and **Varius**, and these two great poets are a part of the coterie to which he belongs. It must be noted that **Horace** is also constantly in touch through inter textual dialogue with the wider community of poets. *Satire 1.4* is a defense of the Horatian satire. As a persona behind his "*conversations*," **Horace** presents himself as well intentioned and self-improving.

As the first of the so-called "*programmatic*" satires, one prominent element of *Satire1:4* is autobiography. However, that is not to say that we should take **Horace**'s account of his humble origins and reluctant emergence completely literally. This is a personality attuned to the character of the genre – low key, quotidian, and, on the surface at least, deferential to authority. An unthreatening pose is not simply a literary device, however, but part of **Horace**'s calculated public 'face', designed to exemplify the modest front of the new regime. His seemingly casual revelations in the manner of **Lucilius** are in fact the controlled self-presentation of a self-made man. Let us look at the text of *Satire 1:4* next. This text is taken from the Gutenberg project.

http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5419/pg5419.html

3.3 *SATIRE 1:4*: TEXT

EUPOLIS ATQUE CRATINUS.

Cratinus, Aristophanes, and all
The elder comic poets, great and small,
If e'er a worthy in those ancient times
Deserved peculiar notice for his crimes,
Adulterer, cut-throat, ne'er-do-well, or thief,
Portrayed him without fear in strong relief.

From these, as lineal heir, Lucilius springs,
The same in all points save the tune he sings,
A shrewd keen satirist, yet somewhat hard
And rugged, if you view him as a bard.

For this was his mistake: he liked to stand,
One leg before him, leaning on one hand,
Pour forth two hundred verses in an hour,
And think such readiness a proof of power.

When like a torrent he bore down, you'd find
He left a load of refuse still behind:
Fluent, yet indolent, he would rebel
Against the toil of writing, writing well,
Not writing much; for that I grant you.

See,
Here comes Crispinus, wants to bet with me,
And offers odds: "A meeting, if you please:
Take we our tablets each, you those, I these:
Name place, and time, and umpires: let us try
Who can compose the faster, you or I."

Thank Heaven, that formed me of unfertile mind,
My speech not copious, and my thoughts confined!
But you, be like the bellows, if you choose,
Still puffing, puffing, till the metal fuse,
And vent your windy nothings with a sound
That makes the depth they come from seem profound.

Happy is Fannius, with immortals classed,
His bust and bookcase canonized at last,
While, as for me, none reads the things I write.

Loath as I am in public to recite,
Knowing that satire finds small favour, since
Most men want whipping, and who want it, wince.

Choose from the crowd a casual wight, 'tis seen
He's place-hunter or miser, vain or mean:
One raves of others' wives: one stands agaze
At silver dishes: bronze is Albius' craze:
Another barters goods the whole world o'er,
From distant east to furthest western shore,
Driving along like dust-cloud through the air
To increase his capital or not impair:
These, one and all, the clink of metre fly,
And look on poets with a dragon's eye.

"Beware! he's vicious: so he gains his end,
A selfish laugh, he will not spare a friend:
Whate'er he scrawls, the mean malignant rogue
Is all alive to get it into vogue:
Give him a handle, and your tale is known
To every giggling boy and maundering crone."

A weighty accusation! now, permit
Some few brief words, and I will answer it:
First, be it understood, I make no claim
To rank with those who bear a poet's name:
'Tis not enough to turn out lines complete,
Each with its proper quantum of five feet;
Colloquial verse a man may write like me,
But (trust an author) 'tis not poetry.

No; keep that name for genius, for a soul
Of Heaven's own fire, for words that grandly roll.
Hence some have questioned if the Muse we call
The Comic Muse be really one at all:
Her subject ne'er aspires, her style ne'er glows,
And, save that she talks metre, she talks prose.
"Aye, but the angry father shakes the stage,
When on his graceless son he pours his rage,
Who, smitten with the mistress of the hour,
Rejects a well-born wife with ample dower,
Gets drunk, and (worst of all) in public sight
Keels with a blazing flambeau while 'tis light."

Well, could Pomponius' sire to life return,

Think you he'd rate his son in tones less stern?
So then 'tis not sufficient to combine
Well-chosen words in a well-ordered line,
When, take away the rhythm, the self-same words
Would suit an angry father off the boards.

Strip what I write, or what Lucilius wrote,
Of cadence and succession, time and note,
Reverse the order, put those words behind
That went before, no poetry you'll find:
But break up this, "When Battle's brazen door
Blood-boltered Discord from its fastenings tore,"
'Tis Orpheus mangled by the Maenads: still
The bard remains, unlimb him as you will.

Enough of this: some other time we'll see
If Satire is or is not poetry:
Today I take the question, if 'tis just
That men like you should view it with distrust.

Sulcius and Caprius promenade in force,
Each with his papers, virulently hoarse,
Bugbears to robbers both: but he that's true
And decent-living may defy the two.

Say, you're first cousin to that goodly pair
Caelius and Birrius, and their foibles share:
No Sulcius nor yet Caprius here you see
In your unworthy servant: why fear me?
No books of mine on stall or counter stand,
To tempt Tigellius' or some clammier hand,
Nor read I save to friends, and that when pressed,
Not to chance auditor or casual guest.

Others are less fastidious: some will air
Their last production in the public square:
Some choose the bathroom, for the walls all round
Make the voice sweeter and improve the sound:
Weak brains, to whom the question ne'er occurred
If what they do be vain, ill-timed, absurd.

"But you give pain: your habit is to bite,"
Rejoins the foe, "of sot deliberate spite."
Who broached that slander? of the men I know,
With whom I live, have any told you so?
He who maligns an absent friend's fair fame,
Who says no word for him when others blame,
Who courts a reckless laugh by random hits,
Just for the sake of ranking among wits,
Who feigns what he ne'er saw, a secret blabs,
Beware him, Roman! that man steals or stabs!
Oft you may see three couches, four on each,
Where all are wincing under one man's speech,

All, save the host: his turn too comes at last,
When wine lets loose the humour shame held fast:
And you, who hate malignity, can see
Nought here but pleasant talk, well-bred and free.

I, if I chance in laughing vein to note
Rufillus' civet and Gargonius' goat,
Must I be toad or scorpion? Look at home:
Suppose Petillius' theft, the talk of Rome,
Named in your presence, mark how yon defend
In your accustomed strain your absent friend:

"Petillius? yes, I know him well: in truth
We have been friends, companions, e'en from youth:
A thousand times he's served me, and I joy
That he can walk the streets without annoy:
Yet 'tis a puzzle, I confess, to me
How from that same affair he got off free."

Here is the poison-bag of malice, here
The gall of fell detraction, pure and sheer:
And these, I'swear, if man such pledge may give,
My pen and heart shall keep from, while I live.
But if I still seem personal and bold,
Perhaps you'll pardon, when my story's told.

When my good father taught me to be good,
Scarecrows he took of living flesh and blood.
Thus, if he warned me not to spend but spare
The moderate means I owe to his wise care,
'Twas, "See the life that son of Albius leads!
Observe that Barrus, vilest of ill weeds!
Plain beacons these for heedless youth, whose taste
Might lead them else a fair estate to waste:"

If lawless love were what he bade me shun,
"Avoid Scetanius' slough," his words would run:
"Wise men," he'd add, "the reasons will explain
Why you should follow this, from that refrain:
For me, if I can train you in the ways
Trod by the worthy folks of earlier days,
And, while you need direction, keep your name
And life unspotted, I've attained my aim:
When riper years have seasoned brain and limb,
You'll drop your corks, and like a Triton swim."

'Twas thus he formed my boyhood: if he sought
To make me do some action that I ought,
"You see your warrant there," he'd say, and clench
His word with some grave member of the bench:
So too with things forbidden: "can you doubt
The deed's a deed an honest man should scout,
When, just for this same matter, these and those,
Like open drains, are stinking 'neath your nose?"

27

Sick gluttons of a next-door funeral hear,
And learn self-mastery in the school of fear:
And so a neighbour's scandal many a time
Has kept young minds from running into crime.

Thus I grew up, unstained by serious ill,
Though venial faults, I grant you, haunt me still:
Yet items I could name retrenched e'en there
By time, plain speaking, individual care;
For, when I chance to stroll or lounge alone,
I'm not without a Mentor of my own:
"This course were better: that might help to mend
My daily life, improve me as a friend:
There some one showed ill-breeding: can I say
I might not fall into the like one day?"

So with closed lips I ruminate, and then
In leisure moments play with ink and pen:
For that's an instance, I must needs avow,
Of those small faults I hinted at just now:
Grant it your prompt indulgence, or a throng
Of poets shall come up, some hundred strong,
And by mere numbers, in your own despite,
Force you, like Jews, to be our proselyte.

Notes:

Gaius Lucilius, was the founder of the Roman satire, and born in Campania, in 180 BCE; he wrote thirty books of satire, of which remain to us only fragments of about thirteen hundred lines. **Horace** seems to exaggerate his debt to Old Comedy.

Colloquial verse a man may write like me,

But (trust an author)'tis not poetry: **Horace** honestly judges his *Satires* to be closer to prose than to poetry.

Sulcius and **Caprius**, were professional informers, hoarse from shouting too much in court.

Hermogenes Tigellius is a literary critic.

3.4 *SATIRE 1:4*: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Horace, the persona, begins by praising the poets and dramatists of Greek and Latin literature; and their contribution to the Roman satire especially from **Aristophanes**' plays. Although the speaker admires his predecessor **Lucilius** for developing the Roman satire he also highlights his literary flaws. **Lucilius** was talented but clumsy and wrote hastily. He made errors that he wanted to revise later but he was also too verbose and lazy to write carefully and thoughtfully.

To focus on himself as a satirist and as a person of strong moral character, the speaker differentiates himself from **Lucilius**. Whenever he is called for irrational challenges by inferior poets like the fictional **Crispinus**, he turns them

down. Unlike **Lucilius**, he does not believe in writing innumerable verses for the sake of winning competitions.

The speaker claims his moral superiority as a satirist and as a person; accordingly, the two qualities are interdependent. He believes his personality is that of a modest and timid man who does not exhibit his writings and talent and that is his greatest virtue. He also claims his writings are not meant for the common masses. He prefers to be selective in his audience or listeners since he is uncomfortable exposing himself to general critics. Perhaps the speaker considers his writings are too honest to be read and circulated among the public; he is aware that he could be too critical of other's follies and vices.

Looking around the Roman population, the speaker sees people who are victims of wrong habits and choices, namely, avarice, adultery, homosexuality and the greed for riches. Excessive greed is blinding and creates anxiety. Here we can see the influences of Epicurean philosophy on the speaker which recognises fear and desires as enemy of peace of mind.

In an imaginary attack, the speaker compares poets to dangerous animals who are a threat to others:

> — *Beware! he's vicious: so he gains his end,*
> *A selfish laugh, he will not spare a friend:*
> *Whate'er he scrawls, the mean malignant rogue*
> *Is all alive to get it into vogue:*
> *Give him a handle, and your tale is known*
> *To every giggling boy and maundering crone.*

Satirical poets were accused of destroying the reputation of people and sometimes even close friends. In his defense to the accusations against him, the speaker argues that his poetry is more like prose:

> *First, be it understood, I make no claim*
> *To rank with those who bear a poet's name:*
> *'Tis not enough to turn out lines complete,*
> *Each with its proper quantum of five feet;*
> *Colloquial verse a man may write like me,*
> *But (trust an author) 'tis not poetry.*

Poetry according to him is much more than putting words to

> *So then 'tis not sufficient to combine*
> *Well-chosen words in a well-ordered line,*
> *When, take away the rhythm, the self-same words*
> *Would suit an angry father off the boards.*

Poetry differs from ordinary speech and poets are geniuses who have heaven's fire for a soul out of which grand words flow continuously.

> *No; keep that name for genius, for a soul*
> *Of Heaven's own fire, for words that grandly roll.*

Here the speaker also mentions the role of the father in the upbringing of a son, a theme he elaborates later in the poem.

> *Aye, but the angry father shakes the stage,*
> *When on his graceless son he pours his rage,*

> *Who, smitten with the mistress of the hour,*
> *Rejects a well-born wife with ample dower,*
> *Gets drunk, and (worst of all) in public sight*
> *Keels with a blazing flambeau while 'tis light.*

The speaker does not wish to further argue on the conflict between prose and poetry since this is not the central theme of the poem:

> *Enough of this: some other time we'll see*
> *If Satire is or is not poetry:*
> *Today I take the question, if 'tis just*
> *That men like you should view it with distrust.*

The speaker argues that there is a difference between satirical poets and professional court informers like "*Caprius and Sulcius*" who also expose criminals and the corrupt in public. The speaker remains a committed satirical poet who rejects popularity:

> *No books of mine on stall or counter stand,*
> *To tempt Tigellius' or some clammier hand,*

The above lines may also show the speaker's snobbery and insecurity at being published and read by the common people of Rome. He shares his writings only with friends –

> *Nor read I save to friends, and that when pressed,*
> *Not to chance auditor or casual guest.*

The speaker also points out the common accusations laid against the satirists in Roman society:

> *Who broached that slander? of the men I know,*
> *With whom I live, have any told you so?*
>
> *He who maligns an absent friend's fair fame,*
> *Who says no word for him when others blame,*
> *Who courts a reckless laugh by random hits,*
> *Just for the sake of ranking among wits,*
> *Who feigns what he ne'er saw, a secret blabs,*
> *Beware him, Roman! that man steals or stabs!*

The reputation of satirists is someone who exposes the follies of everyone, including their close friends:

> *Oft you may see three couches, four on each,*
> *Where all are wincing under one man's speech,*
> *All, save the host: his turn too comes at last,*
> *When wine lets loose the humour shame held fast:*
> *And you, who hate malignity, can see*
> *Nought here but pleasant talk, well-bred and free.*   (Satire 1:4)

His reputation as a good satirist is closely tied to his good upbringing by his father. The speaker credits his father for setting a good example of living with.

> *Thus, if he warned me not to spend but spare*
> *The moderate means I owe to his wise care,*

Here, the speaker's father's teachings are similar to philosophical teachings of Epicurean philosophy. His father would teach the young poet by example of others who lived with bad reputation. The father also stressed the importance of good education:

> *Why you should follow this, from that refrain:*
> *For me, if I can train you in the ways*
> *Trod by the worthy folks of earlier days,*
> *And, while you need direction, keep your name*
> *And life unspotted, I've attained my aim:*

In highlighting the role of his biological father, the speaker distances himself from his literary father **Lucilius** whose satirical style he finds difficult to follow. Thus, warning by citing examples of others is the best method of teaching his father adopted:

> *Thus I grew up, unstained by serious ill,*
> *Though venial faults, I grant you, haunt me still:*

However, the speaker knows he is not free from all vices that could plague human nature; he maintains that he is open to correction unlike most people who do not wish to improve their behaviour. The most important quality the speaker possesses is his self-awareness or self-reflection:

> *This course were better: that might help to mend*
> *My daily life, improve me as a friend: ...*

The poem concludes with the speaker's affirmation of his superior moral position. Moreover, whenever he criticises he does "*jokingly*".

> *Of those small faults I hinted at just now:*
> *Grant it your prompt indulgence, or a throng*
> *Of poets shall come up, some hundred strong,*
> *And by mere numbers, in your own despite ...*

The speaker's criticism of others is often an afterthought not the focus; the focus is primarily self-improvement. Let's look at the themes in **Horace**'s *Satire 1:4* in the next section.

3.5 THEMES

The themes **Horace** deals with in his *Satires* and in particular *Satire 1:4* are several, three of which are crucial to our study.

3.5.1 The Horatian Satire

According to **Frances Muecke**, in *Satire 1: 4*, **Horace** establishes himself as a satirist. The poem takes the form of an argument in reply to an imaginary hostile criticism. We do not know for sure if the speaker has been criticised or not. What matters is that **Horace** has adopted this strategy to explore certain issues that arise from the fact that he is now a writer of satire. For **Horace**, issues like the character of the satirist, the form and method of satire, both as writing and as social criticism and, the relationship of satire to life are all interdependent.

According to **Horace**, there is something special about social criticism; when he says that he is putting satire on a sound ethical footing. **Horace** praises

the virtues of **Lucilius** before criticising his flaws. He claims that his practices as a writer are an intrinsic part of his own character and ethical commitment. His snobbery and fear at being exposed to the uneducated masses is a **Callimachean** attitude. Thus, **Horace** reinvents the political identity of satire arguing for ethics of moderation and poetry of polish and restraint.

Horace routinely criticises those who talk or write too much. This is expressed as an aesthetic flaw of **Lucilius** who composed two hundred lines in an hour standing on one leg. **Horace** seems to be anxious about the effects of too much free speech and loose talk, and his emphasis on the need for discretion, especially in dealing with the great and the powerful. Instead of **Lucilian**'s frank and venomous speech, **Horace** stresses silence. When he does talk, it is about the everyday trivialities of friends and acquaintances preferring silence over political issues. In the next section we shall look at the Epicurean influence on **Horace.**

3.5.2 The Influences of Epicurean Philosophy and Ethics

The *Satires* and *Epistles 1* are mainly preoccupied with ethics. Whether **Horace**'s emphasis on moral issues are a part of a political message or a way of political engagement, it is undeniable that the issue of how to live well, and how far various philosophical schools can help or hinder that, is at the heart of **Horace**'s poetry. **Horace** was influenced by many schools of philosophy - the main influences being *Stoicism* and *Epicureanism*.

Horace himself may have been connected with a group of *Epicureans* based by the Bay of Naples which was centred on **Philodemus** and included **Virgil, Varius Rufus**, and **Plotius Tucca**, **Horace**'s friends. There is certainly an *Epicurean* tone to his emphasis on moderation and his rejection of extreme *Stoic* doctrines like restraint of emotion, endurance, and public service, and its belief in a providential divine order.

Unlike *Stoicism*, *Epicureanism* was closely associated with a particular literary text and this influenced **Horace**'s engagement both with that text and with the philosophy it espoused. In the 50s BCE **Lucretius** wrote one of the greatest and most challenging poems in Latin, *On the Nature of the Universe (De rerum natura)*, setting out an explanation of *Epicurean* physics with a view to curing men's wonder at and fear of death, the gods, and natural phenomena, so that they could achieve the *Epicurean* ideal of 'ataraxia' ('freedom from anxiety'). The poem was immensely influential, and poets of the next and subsequent generations endlessly engaged with it in support or opposition.

One issue, which connects ethics with poetry, is the way in which **Horace** does not merely argue that reading the didactic content of poetry can help in the quest to live well but uses poetics and aesthetics as symbols and metaphors for the right way to live. The **Callimachean** aesthetic ideals of finely wrought, small-scale poetry, in antithesis to the bloated messiness of the **Lucilian** satire, can be read as a Horatian insistence on moderation and the avoidance of extremes and excess.

The *Epicurean* Philosophy adds depth to the poet's presentation and analysis of the many foibles of contemporary Roman society. It was **Epicurus** who maintained that all sense impressions are true and therefore foundational for the

formation of knowledge and ethical decisions. According to **Diogenes**' account of *Epicurean* epistemology, 'sensation' (*aisthçseis*) was one of the three 'interpretive tools' (*kritçria*) for engaging with and reacting to the visible world, along with 'anticipations' (*prolçpseis*) and 'affections' (*pathç*).

Epicurus also rejected the alleged uselessness of theoretical speculation and instead laid particular stress on the importance of efficacy regarding his own philosophical teachings. In addition to this, he especially appreciated the pedagogical role and his willingness to provide followers with useful summaries of his doctrines. While both the *Cynics* and the *Epicureans* employed concise maxims for pedagogical purposes, it was the latter that placed more emphasis on the importance of brevity for the sake of memorisation and usefulness. Aside from being practical, the *Epicurean* doctrine is especially accessible because it transfers the source of knowledge from theoretical speculation to the familiar sense perceptions of everyday life.

3.5.3   Horace and His Father

Horace's father's role is important in the poem; following **Lucilius** is a matter of the choice of genre but following his father's instruction was a matter of character formation. **Horace**'s description of his upbringing in *Satire 1.4* is one of the most significant scenes particularly because it serves to establish the poet's ethical credentials and justify his role as professional critic. It also constructs the ethical persona of **Horace** by synthesising the various literary and philosophical influences in a parodic manner. Scholars have repeatedly shown the significant role of Roman comedy, especially **Terence's** *Adelphoe*, in **Horace**'s serio-comic portrayal of his father's training.

Horace pays tribute to his father by identifying him as the source of his moral purity. In referring to his father **Horace** distinguishes himself from **Lucilius**, his literary predecessor, who is clumsy and verbose and also manages to define the principles of the Horatian satire. However, **Horace** cannot completely overlook the satirical style of **Lucilius** when he frequently criticises individuals by calling out their names. Nevertheless, the major differences between **Horace** and **Lucilius**, especially about their distinct approaches to style and ethics, are widely recognised. These differences are communicated by the poet's shift from public criticism to more private concerns and stock characters reminiscent of New Comedy, which suggests that the Horatian satire would engage with moral deficiency in a light-hearted manner but at a more sophisticated and personal level.

Horace's father's concern for practicality is emphasised by his empirical method and reliance on sense perception, which involves exposure to the everyday details of life on the streets of Rome. As a young man, **Horace**'s empirical training would have provided him with an acute cognitive awareness of the vices, challenges, and temptations associated with living in contemporary Rome like political corruption, sexual promiscuity, and insatiable greed in addition to the economic and sexual vices mentioned in *Satire 1.4*. According to **Horace**'s description, however, it was his father's verbal cues that allowed him to identify and ultimately communicate these realities. His father, therefore, is the origin not only of his moral integrity, but also of the moral vocabulary he employs in his satiric portraits.

3.6   LET US SUM UP

- We analysed the main arguments and discussions of *Satire 1:4.*
- We discussed the concept of the Horatian *satire* and the **Lucilius** *satire*.
- We studied the influence of *Epicurean* Philosophy on **Horace**'s *Satire 1:4.*
- We examined the role of the father in the moral upbringing of his son, **Horace**.

3.7   QUESTIONS

1) Discuss the important themes in the poem?
2) Why is it important for Horace to differentiate his Satires from the satires of Lucilius?
3) In what ways Horace's father contributed to his role as a satirist?

3.8   GLOSSARY

Callimachus- (born c. 305 BCE, Cyrene, North Africa, died c. 240 BCE) He was a Greek poet and scholar, the most representative poet of the erudite and sophisticated Alexandrian school. Callimachus migrated to Alexandria, where King Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt gave him employment in the Library of Alexandria, the most important such institution in the Hellenistic world.

Of Callimachus's voluminous writings, only 6 hymns, about 60 epigrams, and fragments survive, many of them discovered in the 20th century. His most famous poetic work, illustrative of his antiquarian interests, was the *Aitia* (Causes), probably produced between 270 and 245 BCE. The structure of the poem, with its short episodes loosely connected by a common theme, became the model for the *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses* of the Roman poet **Ovid**. Of his elegies for special occasions, the best known is the Lock of Berenice a polished piece of court poetry.

Callimachus raised the hexameter to new heights of order and euphony, and his poetry may well be considered the peak of refinement of Greek verse of the period. Of his prolific prose works, the most famous was the *Pinakes ("Tables of Those Who Have Distinguished Themselves in Every Form of Culture and of What They Wrote")* in 120 books. This work consisted of an elaborate critical and biographical catalogue of the authors of the works held in the Library of Alexandria.

No other Greek poet except Homer is so often quoted by the grammarians of late antiquity. He was taken as a model by many Roman poets, notably Catullus and Propertius, and by the most sophisticated Greek poets, from Euphorion, Nicander, and Parthenius to Nonnus and his followers in the 5th century BCE.

Cratinus- A highly successful writer of Attic Old Comedy. Most of his works only survive in fragments unlike Aristophanes.

Cynics- The first Cynics, beginning most clearly with Diogenes of Sinope, embraced their title: they barked at those who displeased them, spurned Athenian etiquette, and lived from nature. In other words, what may have originated as a disparaging label became the designation of a philosophical vocation. Cynicism

denotes a way of living, it is inaccurate to equate Cynicism with the other schools of its day. The Cynics had no set space where they met and discoursed, such as the Garden, the Lyceum, or the Academy; the streets of Athens provide the setting for both their teaching and their training. The Cynics neglected, and very often ridiculed, speculative philosophy. They were especially harsh critics of dogmatic thought, theories they consider useless, and metaphysical essences.

Foremost for understanding the Cynic conception of ethics is that virtue is a life lived in accord with nature. Nature offers the clearest indication of how to live the good life, which is characterized by reason, self-sufficiency, and freedom. Social conventions can hinder the good life by compromising freedom and setting up a code of conduct that is opposed to nature and reason. Conventions are not inherently bad; however, for the Cynic, conventions are often absurd and worthy of ridicule.

When one has freed oneself from the strictures that impede an ethical life it is true freedom. As such, the Cynics advocate 'askçsis', or practice, over theory as the means to free oneself from convention, promote self-sufficiency, and live in accord with nature. Such askçsis led the Cynic to live in poverty, embrace hardship and toil, and permits the Cynic to speak freely about the silly, and often vicious, way life is lived by his or her contemporaries.

Epicureanism- The philosophy by Epicurus (341–270 B.C.E.) believed in radical materialism and rejected the Platonic Ideas or Forms. He disapproved the possibility of the soul's survival after death. He regarded the fear of punishment and death as the primary cause of anxiety among the human beings which is the source of extreme and irrational desires. The elimination of the fears and corresponding desires would leave people free to pursue the pleasures, both physical and mental, to enjoy the peace of mind and achieve satisfaction. The major source for Epicurean doctrine is Diogenes Laertius' third-century C.E. *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, a compilation of information on the lives and doctrines of the philosophers of classical Greece.

Epicurus understood the task of philosophy first and foremost as a form of therapy for life, since philosophy that does not heal the soul is no better than medicine that cannot cure the body. A life free of mental anxiety and open to the enjoyment of other pleasures was deemed equal to that of the gods.

Eupolis- One of the leading Athenian poets of the Old Comedy and a rival of Aristophanes. Eupolis grew up during the Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, and his first play was produced in 429 BCE.

Lucretius- 99— 55 B.C.E. (Titus Lucretius Carus) was a Roman poet and the author of the philosophical epic De Rerum Natura (On the Nature of the Universe), a comprehensive exposition of the Epicurean world-view. Very little is known of the poet's life, though a sense of his character and personality emerges vividly from his poem. The stress and tumult of his times stands in the background of his work and partly explains his personal attraction and commitment to Epicureanism, with its emphasis on intellectual pleasure and tranquillity of mind and its dim view of the world of social strife and political violence.

Stoicism- Stoicism was one of the new philosophical movements of the Hellenistic period. The name derives from the porch (stoa poikilê) in the Agora

at Athens decorated with mural paintings, where the members of the school congregated, and their lectures were held.

The Stoics held that emotions like fear or envy or impassioned sexual attachments, or passionate love of anything either were, or arose from, false judgements and that the sage – a person who had attained moral and intellectual perfection – would not undergo them. The later Stoics of Roman Imperial times, Seneca and Epictetus, emphasised the doctrines that the sage is utterly immune to misfortune and that virtue is enough for happiness.

No complete works of the first three heads of the Stoic school survive: the 'founder,' Zeno of Citium in Cyprus (344–262 BCE), Cleanthes (d. 232 BCE) or Chrysippus (d. ca. 206 BCE). The only complete works by Stoic philosophers are those by writers of Imperial times, Seneca (4 BCE–65 CE), Epictetus (c. 55–135) and the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180) and these works are principally focused on ethics.

Terence- Terence (195-159 B.C.E), or Publius Terentius Afer, was a Roman comic playwright. As a translator and adapter of the Greek New Comedy, produced about 336-250 B.C., he gave near-perfect form and expression in Latin to the comedy of manners.

3.9   SUGGESTED READINGS & REFERENCES

1.   Baltzly, Dirk. "Stoicism." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, 10 Apr. 2018, plato.stanford.edu/entries/stoicism/.
2.   Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Callimachus." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 8 Feb. 2018, www.britannica.com/biography/Callimachus-Greek-poet-and-scholar.
3.   Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Eupolis." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 20 July 1998, www.britannica.com/biography/Eupolis.
4.   Flaccus, Q. Horatius, et al. *The Complete Odes and Satires of Horace.* Princeton University Press, 1999.
5.   Freudenburg, Kirk. *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
6.   Horace, and Davie, John. *Satires and Epistles*. Oxford University Press, 2011.
7.   *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, www.iep.utm.edu/cynics/.
8.   *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, www.iep.utm.edu/lucretiu/.
9.   Konstan, David. "Epicurus." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, 16 Apr. 2018, plato.stanford.edu/entries/epicurus/#EpicLife.
10.   Lloyd, James. "The Plays of Cratinus." *Ancient History Encyclopedia,* Ancient History Encyclopedia, 21 Jan. 2019, www.ancient.eu/article/794/the-plays-of-cratinus/.
11.   Muecke, Frances. *"Horace the Satirist: Form and Method in Satires 1:4."* Critical Quarterly, 1977.
12.   "Terence." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th Ed, Encyclopedia.com, 2019, www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/classical-literature-biographies/terence.

UNIT 4 OVID: LIFE, LITERATURE, WORKS, AND *BACCHHUS BOOK III*

Structure

4.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we will get glimpse into the world of Roman poetry especially the famous poetry of **Ovid**. If you recall the introductory unit in this Block, you will realise that the reign of Emperor **Augustus** saw the full maturity of Roman poetry. It was a great period for poetic splendor. **Virgil**, **Horace** and **Ovid** are the prime example of the greatness of this period. **Ovid**'s text under consideration in this and the next unit is the *Metamorphoses*, a text that has graphic material on transformation, mutation and mind you without imposing any morality on the listeners or readers both of those times and now. Here we will focus on first of all the life and works of **Ovid**, while the latter part of the Unit will provide a brief on the central theme of Book III / *Bacchus*. Finally, we will be in a position to evaluate our understanding of the live and times of **Ovid** with the help of questions based on this Unit.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Ovid, is one of Rome's greatest poets, and he actually predicted that his fame would live on forever. He wrote this about himself -

> *... nec tame nut testes mos est audire poetas*
> (… nor is the custom to listen to poets as if they were court room witnesses)   *(Am.3.12.19)*

And, so far, his predictions have proven correct as we see how even today we as students of the English Honours class are studying **Ovid**. In the next section, we will study **Ovid**'s life and works in a bit more detailed manner.

4.2 OVID: LIFE AND WORKS

Ovid was born **Publius Ovidius Naso** on March 20, 43 BCE, a year after

the death of the famous Emperor **Julius Caesar**, on whom **Shakespeare** based his historical play *Julius Caesar*. He was born in Sulmo, in a wealthy family. Sulmo is now called Sulmona and is situated in Abruzzi, Central Italy. When **Ovid** was twelve years old, the battle of **Actium** put an end to a Civil War that had been raging between **Anthony** and **Octavian**. **Octavian**, the victor, became the emperor of Rome. (He was later known as **Augustus**.) Because he lived in a time of relative calm and prosperity, and because of his family's wealth, **Ovid** was able to write poetry in peace. **Ovid**'s work draws on the great literary traditions of Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman cultures. His writings are indebted to the works of **Homer, Hesiod, Euripides, Theocritus, Callimachus, Virgil, Tibullus, Horace,** and **Propertius**. Some scholars believe that **Ovid**'s work is largely borrowed from ancient poetry.

After **Ovid**'s early education in Sulmo, his father sent him to Rome to study rhetoric in preparation for a life in politics. However, **Ovid** claimed that whenever he tried to write prose, only poetry came out. His family was not keen on his engaging with poetry. After a short stint in the government, he decided to pursue the writing of poetry. His father discouraged his career choice and persistently reminded him of the fate of the Greek poet **Homer**, who died a poor man. He has remarked that his father had opposed his engagement with poetry for a lucrative livelihood -

> *Saepe pater dixt 'studium auid inutile temptas?*
> *Maeonides nullas ipse relinquit opes.'*

Often my father said, "*Why do you attempt a useless pursuit? Homer himself left no wealth*.

Ovid's father was wrong to worry, about **Ovid**'s future however. **Ovid** found immediate success. His career in a sense can be linked to the trajectory of Rome on its path to becoming an Empire. Politically, Rome was stable under Emperor **Augustus** and on the domestic front, it was a time of peace, and this is reflected in the themes that **Ovid** chose to write about. His works discuss the affairs of the heart of the characters that people his writings instead of talking about war, battle and battlefields.

It is not easy to give an exact date on his works but it could be said that his first literary performances probably took place after the fall of Alexandria. The date is just an approximation. **Ovid** himself (tr. 4.10.57. - 8) writes –

> *... carmina cum primum populo iuuenalia legi,*
> *Barba resecta mihi bisue semelue fuit.*

> *Translation: When I first read my youthful songs to the public, my beard had been cut but once or twice.*

Around 20 BCE he published the *Amores,* or *Loves,* which consisted of three books on the theme of love. **Ovid**'s next work, the *Heroides,* or *Heroines,* took him into uncharted territory. In this novel work, comprising fourteen letters written by legendary women to their husbands or lovers, **Ovid** puts the narrative in the hands of historically voiceless, mistreated, or overlooked women. Around this time, **Ovid** also wrote a tragedy about *Medea*, a popular figure of power, magic, and revenge. This work has not survived, but there is evidence that **Ovid**'s contemporaries judged it a success. **Quintilian**, a Roman critic of literature, and **Tacitus**, a Roman historian, have commented very favorably on the *Medea*.

During the first twenty five years of his career **Ovid** wrote elegies exclusively, such as, *Amores*, *Heroides*, *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*. **Ovid** continued to experiment with his writings and in the next stage of his career, he moved into the realm of didactic ("how to") poetry. Rather than explore traditional didactic topics such as farming (as **Virgil** does in *Georgics*) or science (as **Lucretius** does in *On the Nature of Things*), **Ovid** wrote on the art of seduction and the art of falling out of love. Around 1 BCE or 2 AD, he wrote the *Ars Amatoria* (*Art of Love*), *Medicamina Faciei Femineae* (*Makeup for a Women's Face*), and the *Remedia Amoris* (*Remedies of Love*). In these works, **Ovid** deliberately plays off other, familiar didactic works, particularly **Virgil**'s *Georgics*. He challenges what has been an essentially serious genre and has said ridiculous, comic things about love. With a straight face, he posits that young men and women should spend time learning how to commit adultery and to seduce each other. While working on the *Metamorphoses,* **Ovid** was also writing another piece, the *Fasti,* a poem describing the Roman religious calendar. It seems he never finished this work, although it is valuable for the many fascinating antiquarian details it contains.

Ovid is most known for the *Metamorphoses,* a single poem of fifteen books, which was probably completed around 8 AD. By writing the *Metamorphoses* in the dactylic hexameter, the meter of the epic, **Ovid** intentionally invited comparisons with the greatest Roman poet of his age, **Virgil**, who had written the epic the *Aeneid*. In form, rhythm, and size, the *Metamorphoses* fits squarely in the category of the epic. In content, however, the *Metamorphoses* has little in common with epics such as the *Aeneid,* which are characterised by a single story line and one main protagonist. In fact, **Ovid** explicitly pokes fun at the epic genre. The *Metamorphoses* does not contain a single story, instead it has numerous little stories in it but all the stories have something or the other to do with transformation/metamorphosis. It has a sense of modernity. The *Metamorphoses* more closely resembles the work of **Hesiod** and the **Alexandrian** poets, who favored a collection of independent stories connected by a theme. The *Metamorphoses*' contains roughly 250 stories in 12, 000 lines and 15 Books linked together only by their common theme of metamorphosis or transformation. Let us take a quick look at **Ovid**'s *Metamorphoses* and see how it adheres to or differs from the traditional epic in the next section.

4.3 THE *METAMORPHOSES* AND OTHER TRADITIONAL EPICS

The traditional epic is usually unified by a single hero, whose fortune is the central theme of the epic. The hero is usually a grand leader/ a great king who does larger than life good deeds and who usually sets off on a journey. Has an extremely high position in society and when he falls he tends to fall hard. **Virgil** had given Roman poets a new example for the formal narrative. His 15 books of the *Metamorphoses* were not unified by a single hero who has cross reference and climactic closure. **Ovid** has stated publicly new critical standards by which a poem should be judged, and the standards being that poems should be highly refined, evoking more than it said, and he rejected the long narrative form as being tedious. **Callimachus** has expressly praised the fine-spun verse and denounced the continuous unbroken poem. Here was **Ovid** declaring that he would write a long and totally comprehensive poem that was also fine-spun and refined. And the title implied that the poem would be a composite of many transformation tales.

Shortly after the publication of the *Ars Amatoria* and the *Remedia Amoris*, **Ovid** found himself in great peril. In 8 AD, **Augustus** exiled **Ovid** and banned his books from the libraries of Rome. The reason for **Ovid**'s exile is not entirely clear, but one can surmise that **Augustus** took offense to **Ovid**'s licentious poetry. Poems on the art of seduction would have hardly pleased **Augustus**, who sought to institute moral reform. Moreover, **Augustus** must have been especially incensed when he had to exile his own daughter, Julia, for adultery. Emperor **Augustus** wanted Rome to return to her earlier age of "religious dedication and morality" as described by the online authors of notable biographies. But the exact cause of **Ovid**'s exile is still unclear. The rest of his writings are a kind of lament for the Roman frontier. All **Ovid** writes concerning his exile is that a "*poem and a mistake*" caused his downfall. In exile, **Ovid** penned his last works at Tomis, a colony by the Black Sea. His final three works are the *Tristia, or Sadness, Ibis,* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto,* or *Letters from Pontus*. These works largely concern the hardships he faces in a foreign land and his desire to dwell in Rome again. However, despite all his pleas to **Augustus** and later to **Tiberius**, he would never see Rome again. **Ovid** began writing just a few years after **Octavia** assumed the title by which he is best known to history – **Augustus,** and he died only a few years after the Emperor. **Ovid** perhaps the most **Augustan** poet and certainly the last, died at Tomi sometime during the winter of 17 - 18 CE.

Ovid is at once a major **Augustan** poet and the first in the line of post **Augustan**, early imperial, writers. Master of the art of deceptive transitions, he would no doubt have enjoyed the embarrassment of literary historians who tried to pin him down within a neat scheme of periods. He might also have derived an ironic satisfaction from the thought that his own downfall would be taken as the epoch of an age of literary decline. Yet it is hard to believe that he would have agreed that writers like **Seneca**, **Lucan, Statius**, and **Martial** were the products of a decadent age, rather than rivals of his own poetic intelligence. We shall examine *The Metamorphoses* in the next section.

4.4   THE STRUCTURE OF THE *METAMORPHOSES*

No single character dominates the *Metamorphoses* which is a collection of 250 stories from Greek and Roman mythology, legend, and history. Only the narrator, a version of **Ovid**, unites and controls the narrative. He makes his presence known with attention – gathering literary techniques. Often, there is no logical or structural reason why one story precedes or follows another. We may say that it is primitive mythology but in another sense the stories are very extraordinary. It does not establish any straight moral line. The unobvious, often surprising structure draws attention to itself, and to its author. We are never allowed to forget that a literary mind has constructed the poem. The narrator also draws the focus on himself by breaking into the narrative and, in the first person, offering his perspective and insights.

The tradition of using the metamorphosis theme to emphasise the poem's essential lack of seriousness begins with **Ovid** himself, who in a later work tells us that his tales of transformation were "*not to be believed*" (Trist. 2.64), a claim that highlights the first assumption a contemporary reader might bring to any such story.

In the works of **Ovid**'s immediate epic predecessor **Virgil**, the phenomenon of metamorphosis assumes a more prominent but deeply ambiguous role, one

that in many respects looks ahead to its complex function in *The Metamorphoses*. On the one hand, **Virgil** seems to give an ideological dimension to **Homer**'s reticence about transformation stories. Beyond raising questions about the plausibility of the narrative, *The Metamorphosis* suggests a world of unstable ephemerality that can only be at odds with the poem's motion toward the foundation of Rome as the center of a stable cosmos and indeed comes to be associated with the de-humanising violence and immorality of Rome's civil wars. The next section will deal with the various books in *The Metamorphoses*.

4.5 BOOKS IN *METAMORPHOSES*

- *Book I* – *The Creation, The Four Ages, The Giants, Lycaön, The Flood, Deucalion and Pyrrha, Python, Daphne, Interlude: Pan and Syrinx, Phaëton.*

- *Book II* – *Phaëton (cont.), Callisto, The Raven and The Crow, Ocyrho¸, Battus, Aglauros, Europa.*

- *Book III* – *Cadmus, Actaeon, Sémele, Teiresias, Narcissus and Echo, Pentheus and Bacchus, Acoetes and the Lydian Sailors, Pentheus amd Bacchus.*

- *Book IV* – *The Daughters of Minyas, Pyramus and Thisbe, Mars and Venus, Leucotho¸ and Clyt¸, Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, The Daughters of Minyas (2), Athamas and Ino, Cadmus and Andromeda, Perseus.*

- *Book V* – *Minerva and the Muses, Callilope's Song: The Rape of Proserpina, Arethusa, Triptolemus and Lyncus, The Daughters of Pierus.*

- *Book VI* – *Arachne; Niobe; The Lycian Peasants; Marsyas; Pelops; Tereus, Procne and Philomela; Boreas and Orithyia.*

- *Book VII* – *Medea and Jason, The rejuvenation of Aeson, The Punishment of Pelias, Medea;s Flight, Theseus and Aegues, Minos and Aeacus, The Plague at Aegina, The Birth of the Myrmidons, Cephalus and Procris.*

- *Book VIII* – *Scylla and Minos, The Minotaur and Ariadne, Daedalus and Icarus, Dedalus and Perdix, Meleager and the Calydonian Boar, Acheloûs, The Naiads and Perimele, Philemon and Baucis, Erysichthon.*

- *Book IX* – *Acheloûs and Hercules; Hercules and Nessus,The Death of Hercules, Alcmena and Galanthis, Dryope; Iolaûs and Callirho¸'s sons; Miletus, Byblis, Iphis.*

- *Book X* – *Orpheus and Eurydice, Cyparissus, Orpheus's Song: Introduction, Ganymede, Hyacinthus, Pygmalion, Myrrha, Venus and Adonis, Venus's Story: Atlanta and Hippomenes, Orpheus's Song: Venus and Adonis.*

- *Book XI* – *The Death of Orpheus, The punishment of the Maenads, Midas, Laçmedon;s Treachery – Peleus and Thetis, Peleus at the Court of Ceñx (1), Ceñx's Story: Dedalion, Peleus At The Court of Ceñx, (2), Ceñx and Alcyone, Aesacus.*

- *Book XII* – *The Greeks at Aulis, Rumour, Cycnus, Achilles' Victory, Celebrations, Caenis, The Battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs, Periclymenus, The Death of Achilles.*

- *Book XIII* – *The Judgement of Arms, Ajax's Suicide, The Fall of Troy, The Sufferings of Hecuba, Memnon, The Wanderings of Aeneas (1), The Daughters of Anius, The Daughters of Orion, Ulysses, The Wanderings of Aeneas (2), Acis, Galatea and Polyphemus, Scylla and Glaucus.*

- **Book XIV** – *Scylla and Glaucus (2), The Wanderings of Aeneas (3), The Sibyl of Cumae, Achaemenidus' Story: Ulysses' Men in Polyphhemus' Cave, Macareus' Story: Ulysses and Circe, Picus, Canens and Circe, The Wanderings of Aeneas (4), The Mutinous Companions of Diomedes, The Apulian Shepherd, The Ships of Aeneas, Ardea, The Apotheosis of Aeneas, Aeneas' Descendants, Pomona and Vertumnus, Iphis and Anaxarete, Romulus, The Apothesis of Romolus*.

- **Book XV** – *Myscelus, Pythagoras, Egeria and Hippolytus, Tages, Romulus' Spear, Cipus, Aesculapius, The Apotheosis of Julius Caesar, Epilogue.*

As mentioned in the background unit, **Ovid** influenced not only his direct predecessors but also many writers to come centuries after him. Some of these dates are necessarily approximate or speculative. The dates and names given below, give us an idea about the spread of his influence through the ages.

1185: **Andreas Capellanus**, *De Amore*
1230: **Guillaume de Lorris**, *Roman de la Rose*
1280: **Jean de Meun**'s continuation of *Roman de la Rose*
1310: **Ovid**e *Moralis´ e*
1321: **Dante**, *Divina Commedia*
1340 **Bersuire**, *Ovidius Moralizatus*
1380 **Chaucer**, *House of Fame*
1390 **Gower**, *Confessio Amantis*
1532 **Ariosto**, *Orlando Furioso*
1567 **Golding** translation of *The Metamorphoses*
1590 **Spenser**, *The Faerie Queene, Books 1–6*
1593 **Shakespeare**, *Venus and Adonis; Hero and Leander, Tempest,*
1601 **Ben Jonson**, *Poetaster*
1632 **Sandy** translation of *The Metamorphoses*
1674 **Milton**, *Paradise Lost*
1717 **Garth's** collaborative translation of *The Metamorphoses*
1945 **Hermann Fränkel**, *Ovid: A Poet between Two Worlds*

In the next section we shall look at *Bacchus*/Book III, which is a book prescribed for closer analysis in our course.

4.6 SELECTIONS FROM *THE METAMORPHOSES BOOK III /BACCHUS*

This book contains six stories mainly - *Cadmus, Actaeon, Sémele, Teiresias, Narcissus and Echo, Pentheus and Bacchus* (1), *Acoetes and the Lydian Sailors* and *Pentheus and Bacchus* (2). We will be focusing on the story of *Pentheus and Bacchus* (1) and *Pentheus and Bacchus* (2).

4.6.1 *Book III/Bacchus:* A Summary

Europa Agenor's daughter has been kidnapped/ abducted by the *God Jupiter*. Her father *Agenor* sends her brother *Cadmus* off to find her threatening him that should he fail to bring *Europa* back, he would be exiled. *Cadmus* tries desperately to find *Europa* but fails. Given that he will be exiled if he does not bring *Europa* home, he cannot go home, so he prays to the God *Apollo* asking advice on where he should go and where he should live. *Apollo* feels sorry for *Cadmus* and tells him that he should seek a pristine heifer, one that has never been used to plough and that is where *Cadmus* should settle down and establish a city. Needless to say, *Apollo*'s prophecy comes to pass and *Cadmus* finds the heifer however, his men encounter an enormous serpent, which kills them and *Cadmus* needs to slay the serpent, he does so and, at *Minerva*'s request, buries the teeth of the giant serpent in the ground. Thereafter, a group of hostile men spring forth from the land and begin fighting amongst themselves, eventually they end up killing each other until only five men are left. These five men agree to live in peace with one another and the city of *Thebes* is established. *Cadmus* is well known in ancient myths, legends and Literature for having established the city of *Thebes*. Now if you recall Block 2, our hero *Oedipus Rex* is the King of *Thebes*. Note how myths and legends are interconnected in **Ovid**'s *The Metamorphoses*.

Meanwhile *Jupiter* the God has had yet another sexual dalliance and has impregnated *Sémele* who is *Cadmus*'s daughter. Do you see how *Agenor's* family seems to be facing a lot of troubles? His daughter *Europa* has been kidnapped by *Zeus*, so he sends his son *Cadmus* to look for *Europa*. He threatens *Cadmus* with exile if he cannot find and bring his sister home, so *Cadmus* decides to settle elsewhere when he realsies that he may not find her, and hence, does not return home. And the sexually promiscuous God *Jupiter* has now gone and impregnated *Cadmus*' daughter *Sémele,* after having abducted her aunt *Europa. Juno*, the consort of *Jupiter* is extremely infuriated at *Jupiter* and desires revenge and punishment for *Jupiter* and *Sémele*.

> *Suddenly,*
> *further cause for resentment: Sémele, Cadmus' daughter,*
> *was pregnant by mighty Jove! Queen Juno's tongue was already*
> *sharpened, when 'What has my scolding ever achieved?'*
> *she thought.*
> *'I must target the woman herself and destroy her, if I am to merit*
> *the title of mighty Juno; if I may properly wield*
> *my jeweled scepter as Queen of the Gods; if I am Jupiter's*
> *sister and consort -*   *(Sémele, Book III, p. 105, lines 260-65)*

She disguises herself as an old woman and goes to meet *Sémele*. She manages to convince the unsuspecting *Sémele* to ask *Jupiter* to make love to her like he does with *Juno*. Remember both *Juno* and *Jupiter* are gods and *Sémele* is human. It is but obvious that she will not be able to sustain *Jupiter*'s divine strength and will die.

> *... after assuming the form of a crone with whitened temples,*
> *Wrinkles lining her skin, bent back and tottering legs.*
> *Adopting an old cracked voice, she quickly appeared in the spitting*
> *Image of Bero¸, Sémele's old Epidaúrian nurse.*
>   *(Sémele, Book III, p. 106, lines 275-78)*

*…'If his godhead is genuine, make him give you a pledge of his love.
Ask him to take you in all the majestic splendour he shows
when he comes to the arms of Juno, dressed in his full regalia!'
Sémele's unsuspecting mind was already persuaded by Juno's suggestion.
(Book III, p. 106, lines 283 -86)*

Jupiter makes a promise to *Sémele* that he will honour whatever her heart desires. Little does *Jupiter* know what *Sémele* has been convinced to ask of him and that she has no idea of what she has asked for. *Sémele* cannot withstand the force of *Jupiter*'s divine strength and she dies. However, since she is pregnant, *Jupiter* manages to transfer their unborn son to his own thigh and to carry the baby to full term. The baby born to *Jupiter* and the mortal *Sémele* is *Bacchus*.

*… but Sémele's mortal frame was unable to take the celestial onslaught.
His bridal gift was to set her ablaze. The baby*, still
in the foetal stage, was ripped from her womb, and, strange as it seems,
survived to complete his mother's term stitched up in his father's thigh.
At first the child was secretly reared by Sémele's
sister Ino. She handed him to the nymphs of Nysa,
who hid him away in their private cave and fed him on milk*
(Sémele, Book III, p. 107, lines 308-15)

Going back to *Cadmus*' household we find that it is a deeply troubled household. His young grandson *Actaeon*, spies *Diana* when he is hunting and she is bathing in her sacred grove. *Diana* is so upset that she transforms *Actaeon* into a deer and his own hunting dogs kill *Actaeon* as *Actaeon* has been transformed into a stag and to the hunting dogs the stag is the prey. Just keep taking note of the troubles that seem to occur with members of *Agenor* and *Cadmus*' household/ descendants.

Meanwhile *Jupiter* and *Juno* have made up now that *Sémele* is dead and out of the picture and are bantering about sexual gratification and which gender enjoys sex more. *Jupiter* believes that women enjoy sex more while *Juno* thinks it's the men who enjoy sex more. Since they can't come to a consensus they decide to ask *Teiresias*, who according to myth has led his life as both a male and a female. *Teiresias* having experienced life both a man and as a woman says that it is women who enjoy sex more. *Juno* is so sure that *Teiresias* will agree with her that she feels betrayed and is so angry with *Teiresias*' response in support of *Jupiter*'s claim that she strikes *Teiresias* blind. *Jupiter* feels sorry for *Teiresias* and compensates for his consorts harshness in striking *Teiresias* blind by giving the latter the power of foresight. **Ovid** records *Teiresias*' first prediction: that *Narcissus* will live a long life as long as he does not know himself. These cryptic words are born out soon, when *Narcissus* rejects all suitors and falls in love with his reflection in the stream. There is this continuous back and forth movement as **Ovid** moves from one story line to the other. He then turns back to the story of *Cadmus* and his household.

Pentheus who is *Cadmus*' grandson, is probably the only one who does not worship or even recognise *Bacchus* as a God. He tries to persuade his family and others not to worship *Bacchus*. Meanwhile *Bacchus* is a full grown God having survived *Juno*'s attack on his birth mother *Sémele*. And he has a huge base of devout followers:

Bacchus arrived and the country side rang with ecstatic cries. The crowds poured in; there were mothers and wives with their sons and husbands, nobles and ordinary folk, swept up in the strange new rituals.

(Sémele, Book III, p. 117-18, lines 528-30)

Pentheus is also a skeptic who doubts *Teiresias'* prophetic skills, and when the blind *Teiresias* prophecises that *Pentheus* will at some point in the future disrespect *Bacchus* as a god and that he will be ripped apart by his own kin – his mother, and maternal aunts to be specific *Pentheus* chooses not to believe his predictions. Moreover, he is upset about the frenzy that *Bacchus* and his followers have caused in *Thebes*. He tries hard to capture *Bacchus* whom he believes to be an imposter. The men he sends after *Bacchus* return transformed into *Bacchus'* followers. This infuriates him all the more. *Acoetes*, a devout follower of *Bacchus*, tries to change *Pentheus*'s mind about *Bacchus* but to no avail. *Pentheus* threatens to make an example of *Acoetes* by killing him. When *Pentheus* tries to have *Acoetes* killed, he (the latter) is saved by *Bacchus*. No one is willing to listen to *Pentheus* but *Pentheus* is firm in his belief and resolve in not worshipping *Bacchus* as a God. *Pentheus* is so upset because of his inability to put an end to the cult of *Bacchus* that he sets out for Mount *Cithaeron* where the sacred rites of *Bacchus* are conducted, to try and track and capture *Bacchus* whom he considers a false God.

But on the hill we know what happens and how, *Pentheus* meets his end as his own aunts and mother mistake him for a big wild boar and they hunt him down and rip him apart.

> *Here, as Pentheus profanely spied on the sacred rituals,*
> *Who saw him first? Who rushed on him first in maniacal frenzy?*
> *And who first launched her thyrsus to savage her own dear son?*
> *His mother Agáve. 'watch me, sisters,' she shouted, 'both of you!*
> *Look at that huge wild boar there wandering over our meadow.*
> *That boar must be mine to spear!"*
> *(Sémele, Book III, p. 126 -27, lines 710-14)*

His aunt, *Autonoe*, rips off his arms, and his mother tears off his head and lets out a shout of victory.

... as he yelled out, 'Look at me, mother!' |Agave stared at him, uttered
A wild shriek, violently shaking her neck and tossing her hair,
Then twisted his head right off. Displaying it high* in her blood – drenched
Fingers, she shouted, 'Joy, my companions! Victory is ours!'
(Sémele, Book III, p. 127, lines 724-27)

4.6.2 *Book III/ Bacchus*: An Analysis

Book III/ Bacchus shows the struggle for power between the Gods and the ordinary people/ between the divine and the human, the immortal and the mortal. Apart from a historical/ mythological setting when **Ovid** brings in the establishment of the city of *Thebes* and the myths connected to it, what we find in *Book III* is largely the tales of how there is always a power struggle between the Gods and the humans and how that leads to other tragic endings.

This book begins auspiciously, with the founding of *Thebes*. However, divine revenge soon takes center stage. The gods punish nearly every major character for a crime, regardless of whether the crime was committed wittingly or

45

unwittingly. *Diana* punishes *Actaeon* for accidentally stumbling upon her when she is naked. *Juno* punishes *Sémele* for her love affair with *Jupiter*. She also punishes *Teiresias* with blindness for agreeing with *Jupiter*. And *Bacchus* punishes *Pentheus* for failing to worship him. By focusing on the theme of revenge, **Ovid** invites comparisons with **Virgil**'s *Aeneid*, which portrays *Aeneas*' quest to establish a city, and *Juno*'s resulting wrath. **Ovid** outdoes **Virgil**, whose sole villain was *Juno*. In **Ovid**'s account, three divine figures damn the household of *Cadmus* and the founding of *Thebes*: *Diana, Juno*, and *Bacchus*. We realise that the Gods and Goddesses are portrayed with more human and baser emotions and feelings of anger, jealousy and arrogance than with Godly sentiments. They are full of passion and their over passion leads them to change into something quite human and no longer divine. Every excess has some repercussion.

On the one hand we have *Cadmus* who has been cast in the mold of the conventional epic hero – he is a great man, he's had a series of extraordinary adventures, he has achieved great feats and has now founded a city; while on the other we have his descendants / family members engaged in a tussle for power with the gods. So in a way, **Ovid** seems to be making us as readers question the epic convention where on the one hand is the classical hero who has achieved it all and on the other is his family who seem to be constantly engaged in a struggle with the gods and these narratives seem to lend themselves very well to other tales with tragic endings.

Book III's metamorphosis indicates some of the reasons why the Gods would seek to punish humans and to be engaged in the maintenance of the struggle for power. For instance, *Sémele* (*Cadmus*' daughter) whose crime is being in love with *Jupiter* and being pregnant with his son; *Actaeon* (*Cadmus*' grandson) who is out hunting when he accidently stumbles across *Diana* bathing with her nymphs. Now this is a forbidden act and even though it was accidental, *Diana* perceives it as *Actaeon*'s transgression and hence she feels the need to punish him. She does this by turning *Actaeon* into a stag that is then killed by his own hunting dogs. Then there is *Pentheus* (*Cadmus*' grandson, son of his daughter *Agave*) who disrespects *Bacchus* and wants to prove him to be a false God it ultimately leads to *Pentheus*' death at the hands of his own kin. It appears that sometimes the humans are punished for simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time – a case in point being *Actaoen*'s punishment by *Diana*. Then there are the other little inter-related tales of the power struggle between mortals and the Gods. Take for instance, the stories of *Teiresias*, *Juno* and *Jupiter*, and *Teiresias* and *Pentheus*. *Teiresias* upsets *Juno* by supporting *Jupiter* and she is so infuriated with him that, she strikes him blind.

Narcissus in the narrative *Narcissus and Acho,* is an interesting case of an extremely handsome young man loved by both men and women but he is so arrogant and full of himself that he is selfish, unkind and mean and thinks that none of his suitors are worthy of him so, he ends up rejecting all of them, till he is punished by the Gods when he falls in love with his own reflection, and of course, his reflection does not love him back or respond to him, hence, he pines away and dies. In his case, the mortals appear to deserve the punishment for their nastiness/ unkindness; for their genuinely bad behavior. Even *Pentheus* fits into that category where he is intent on proving *Bacchus* to be a false god and disrespects him. The other important reason why the Gods would be compelled to punish humans would be if the act of *hubris* and the disrespect

of the gods are committed as these two acts would blur the lines between the mortal world and the world of the immortals. What we also notice is that each act of revenge that occurs in *Book III* is associated with an ironic twist at the expense of the victim. *Actaeon*, a hunter, becomes the hunted. The reversal is completed when *Actaeon*'s own dogs tear him apart. *Sémele* is killed by the act of sex, the very act that drew her and *Jupiter* together. She is slain by her lover's overwhelming prowess, and ironically enough she requests her own manner of death by way of the promise she extracts from *Jupiter*. *Teiresias'* extensive knowledge causes his blindness. *Narcissus*, who has rejected all suitors, is rejected by *himself*. He becomes both the object and the subject of spurned love. *Pentheus*'s death is ironic for three reasons. First, his threat to kill *Acoetes* is turned against him when he himself is killed for impiety. Second, *Bacchus*' worshipers mistake *Pentheus* for an animal—ironic, considering that *Pentheus* is not an animal or even a transformed animal, as are many of the characters in the poem are. Finally, despite his refusal to worship *Bacchus*, *Pentheus* becomes a central figure in a worship rite, as he is sacrificed at the hands of his mother and aunt. And following his death, *Thebes* becomes central to the worship of *Bacchus*.

In the stories in *Book III*, the gods seem to have all the power while the mortals are totally at their mercy. Although this power structure is supposed to help human fallible behavior, the gods it appears are hardly role models. In fact what comes across is almost like the French reign of terror where the Gods are in power only because they are feared and not because the people love them or respect them. The Gods seem to be able to control human beings through threats /acts of intimidation, or by exploiting their explosive and volatile tempers. The other aspect that stands out is the way/ manner in which the Gods too seem to feel "something", for instance *Diana* feels violated that *Actaeon* accidently saw her bathing with her nymphs, *Juno* is torn apart by jealousy at *Jupiter*'s transgression with *Sémele* and takes it out on her by killing her at the hands of *Jupiter* himself. So the Gods do seem to experience emotions such as anger, (*Juno* getting mad at *Teiresias*); jealousy (*Juno* wanting to deceive *Sémele* into getting herself killed so as to regain *Jupiter*'s attention and her rightful place as his consort), love, and grief; they do not appear to be able to fully comprehend the sufferings, and fear of mortals — as they are Gods/ the supreme ones who do not have to face the consequences of their actions.

The coming of *Bacchus* is the high point of **Ovid**'s narrative, strongly influenced by **Euripides**' *Bacchae*. In Rome itself the senate had seen the cult of *Bacchus* as so uncontrollable and dangerous to communal order that they had banned its public observation two hundred years before **Ovid**'s death. **Ovid**'s highly wrought narrative begins with an impassioned speech by *Pentheus* scorning the cult as effeminate while urging his dragon-born warriors to defend *Thebes* against this degenerate invasion and arrest its leader.

4.7 LET US SUM UP

Ovid was the most imitated and influential classical author in the Renaissance. This is not surprising, since many of the central preoccupations of his work seem almost to have been calculated to appeal to imitators. **Ovid** provided his Renaissance imitators with a rich stock of metaphors that they could use to describe their own activity and could also revive the past. Renaissance poets who wished to lay claim to the authority of Classical Literature could claim

to re-embody *The Metamorphoses*. In this unit we have examined the life and works of **Ovid** and summarised and analysed *Book III/ Bacchus* of *The Metamorphose*. Book IV reflects on the main *Theban* narrative. And we shall take up for analysis *Books IV/ Pyramus and Thisbe*, and *Book VI/ Philomela*.

4.8 QUESTIONS

1. What has happened to Europa?
2. Which god is Cadmus attempting to honor when he sends his men into the forest?
3. Which god does he unintentionally offend?
4. What is Cadmus' ultimate weapon against the serpent?
5. What prophecy does Cadmus hear after killing the serpent?
6. What was the name of the city founded by Cadmus?
7. Attempt a characterization of Jove's behavior toward Sémele before and after her destruction.
8. What is the meaning of Teiresias' answer regarding Narcissus' future?
9. Narcissus gave his name not only to a flower but to a psychological problem as well. What does it mean when a person is characterised as "narcissistic?"
10. What was the result of Pentheus' death in the City of Thebes?
11. What is the literary value of The Metamorphoses and how has it influenced writers of later ages?
12. Comment on the social norms of the Roman Age with examples from The Metamorphoses.
13. Write a note on the myth of Bacchus and why do you think that there was a clash in worshipping him?
14. Is Actaeon's punishment fair?
15. What happens to Sémele? Who is her child?
16. What is the jesting controversy between Jupiter and Juno about lovemaking and why do they ask Teiresias to decide?
17. What is the purpose of the story of Narcissus?
18. Cadmus' grandson Pentheus scorns the seer Teiresias and he also scorns the god Bacchus. What does Pentheus fear?

4.9 GLOSSARY

Hexametre	:	Hexameter is a metrical line of verses consisting of six feet. It was the standard epic metre in classical Greek and Latin literature, such as in the Iliad, Odyssey and Aeneid.
Ovidian Epic Style	:	Ovid chose to write The Metamorphoses as a poem that meets the criteria for an epic; it is sufficiently long nearly 12000 lines, it has nearly 250 narratives joined together in fifteen books; it is composed in the dactylic hexameter, the meter of both the ancient Iliad and the Odyssey, and the more contemporary Latin epic Aeneid; and it treats the high literary subject of myth. But at the same time, he employs themes and tones of various genres that extend from the grand epic to the elegy, the tragedy and the pastoral.

Metamorphosis	**:**	Metamorphosis is a biological process by which an animal physically develops after birth or hatching, involving a conspicuous and relatively abrupt change in the animal's body structure through cell growth and differentiation.

4.10 SUGGESTED READINGS & REFERENCES

1. Backwell Introductions to the Classical World, Kathrina Volk
2. **Ovid** *https://the-eye.eu/public/Books/Poetry/***Ovid**.*pdf* · PDF file
3. The Cambridge Companion to **Ovid**, Cambridge University Press,2006
4. *Hornblower, Simon; Antony Spawforth (1996). Oxford Classical Dictionary. Oxford University Press. p. 1085.*
5. Mark P O Morford, Robert J Lenardon, (1999), *Classical Mythology* (Oxford University Press US, p. 25)
6. The Play of Fictions, A M Keith, The University of Michigan Press, 1992
7. (https://www.notablebiographies.com/An-Ba/Augustus.html)

UNIT 5 *PYRAMUS AND THISBE/ BOOK IV* AND *PHILOMELA/ BOOK VI*

Structure

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit we will look at *Book IV/ Pyramus and Thisbe*; and *Book VI/ Philomela* of **Ovid**'s *Metamorphoses*. We will summarise the two books with their many stories and analyse the two books as part of our study material. Kindly note you are expected to read the texts in translation. If you read the entire *Metamorphoses* there is nothing like it but if not, please read *Books III, IV & VI*. Needless to say not reading the text will hamper your understanding of the epic and you will not be able to comprehend the many little tales that are contained in each book.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Metamorphoses, if you really look at closely is about 250 stories held together loosely narrated sometimes by one voice – the fictionalised **Ovid** and sometimes by other narrators. As we go through the fifteen books of the epic we realise that the stories are usually about transformations/ metamorphosis. In some cases the transformation is very apparent and easy for us to see, in other cases the transformations may not be literal but are more oblique and subtle hence, we stress the need for actually reading the texts. In *Book III /Bacchus* that we studied in the previous Unit, we are told of *Diana* and her nymphs bathing and how *Actaeon* stumbles onto them and is punished by *Diana* who turns him into a stag. *Actaeon* is really turned into a stag that his own hunting dogs hunt and kill. Here the transformation is literal. Sometimes the transformation/ metamorphosis is used to highlight some unique quality about the person who is being transformed. Sometimes the transformation/ the suggestion of the transformation is such that it is very subtle. Can you guess which transformation would be a subtle one? Well, look at the transformation of *Pentheus*, it is not

that he is actually changed into a boar like *Acateon* was changed into a stag. *Pentheus* is hunted down and literally torn to shreds by his mother and his aunts not because he has been changed into a boar but because they perceive him as one. It seems as if the frenzy with which they were worshipping *Bacchus* has transformed their minds and their sight more than it has transformed *Pentheus* physically. There is almost a suggestion that transformations of the mind and mindsets are much more dangerous than physical changes. Even though *Pentheus* does not change physically he is perceived as a big, wild boar and torn to shreds literally. Remember that quote:

> *Here, as Pentheus profanely spied on the sacred rituals,*
> *Who saw him first? Who rushed on him first in maniacal frenzy?*
> *And who first launched her thyrsus to savage her own dear son?*
> *His mother Agave. 'watch me, sisters,' she shouted, 'both of you!*
> *Look at this huge wild boar there wandering over our meadow.*
> (Book III/ Bacchus, p. 126-7, lines 710 -14)

We shall begin the next section by placing *Book IV* in the larger scheme of things and then we shall summarise it and analyse *Book IV* before we move on to *Book VI*.

5.2 *PYRAMUS AND THISBE/ BOOK IV*

In *Bacchus/ Book III,* once *Pentheus* dies, *Thebes* becomes the stronghold of the followers of *Bacchus*. The only ones not worshippers of *Bacchus* are the daughters of *Minyas* who stick to the traditional practices associated with the worship of the Goddess *Minerva*. They are engaged in spinning and weaving and in order to entertain themselves as they go about their chores they tell each other tales of love but always involving some kind of transformation. So essentially *Book IV* and in particular the story of *Pyramus and Thisbe* is a love story that entails a transformation.

> *One of the daughters, while deftly spinning, advanced a suggestion:*
> *'While others are idle and fondly observing their so-called festival,*
> *we are detained by Minerva, who better deserves our attention.*
> *But why don't we also relieve the toil of our hands by telling*
> *stories of different kinds and take it in turns to speak,*
> *while the rest of us quietly listen? The time will go by more quickly.'*
> (Book IV/ The Daughters of Minyas, pp. 132-33, lines 36-41)

5.2.1 *Pyramus and Thisbe*

It is then that *Arsippe,* one of the daughters of *Minyas* decides on narrating the story of *Pyramus and Thisbe* as she feels that this story is relatively unheard of. *Pyramus and Thisbe* are neighbors in Babylon, *Pyramus* is described as "… *a youth of exceptional beauty*", and "… *Thisbe, by far the loveliest maiden in all the East*". Their homes are separated by a large, brick wall. Their physical proximity to each other and the fact that they are childhood friends makes them familiar with each other and they are soon in love with each other. Like any young couple in love, they make promises to each other to spend their life together. They want to marry each other but their parents are against it. They are young and passionate and smitten with each other but because

51

their fathers do not agree they cannot meet or marry each other. So they suppress their feelings and emotions and the only place that they interact in whatever limited capacity is through the chink in the wall.

> *Neighbourhood made for acquaintance and planted the seeds of friendship which time matured into love. They'd have been united in marriage, had not their father's opposed it. But feelings may not be forbidden; their hearts belonged to each other and burned with an equal passion.*
> *(Book IV/ Pyramus and Thisbe, p. 134, lines 58-62)*

The two young lovers long to be together, long to be able to hold hands or even steal gentle kisses, but the wall in the middle forbids that. *Thisbe* is on one side of the wall and *Pyramus* on the other, and they can only catch the sound of each other's breath, they say, "… *You spiteful wall! They would cry. "Why stand in the way of poor lovers? … If you would only allow us to lie in each other's arms! If that is too much, could you open your cranny enough for a kiss?"* So they talked, hopelessly, sitting on opposite sides of the wall, saying, as night fell, "*Farewell*", each touching the wall with kisses that could not reach the other side. Sometimes they would get upset with the wall, like the wall is a live thing in between them, at other times they are grateful the wall has a chink through which they can talk to each other at least. Finally deciding that these furtive messages that they manage to exchange through the wall is not enough and that they need to be together, they decide to meet one night at *Ninus*' tomb in the woods outside Babylon.

One morning when *Aurora* has quenched the fires of night, and the sun's rays has thawed the frosty grass, they come to their usual place near the chink in the wall. Then they decide, first with a little murmur of their great sorrows, to try, in the silence of night, to deceive the guards, and disappear outside. Once out of the house they would leave the city as well, and they agree, in case they go astray crossing the open country, to meet by the grave of *Ninus*, and hide in the shelter of a tree. There is a tall mulberry tree there, dense with white berries, bordering a cool fountain. They are satisfied with their plan, and ready to carry it out the next night.

> *… when all was quiet*
> *that night, they would try to elude their guards and steal out of doors;*
> *then once they'd escaped from their homes, they'd abandon the city*
> *as well.*
> *In case they got lost on their journey out in the open country,*
> *their rendezvous would be Ninus' tomb, where they'd hide in the shade*
> *in of a certain tree – a tree which was tall and heavily laden*
> *with snow- white berries, a mulberry – close to a cooling fountain.*
> *(Book IV/ Pyramus and Thisbe, p. 135, lines 83-90)*

Eventually the lovers manage to evade their family members and guards and leave their homes. While *Thisbe* waits for her lover, a lioness comes to the nearby stream, and it frightens *Thisbe* away. When she flees, she drops her shawl and the lioness rips it with her bloody jaws and then leaves the shawl near the stream. *Pyramus* comes to *Ninus'* tomb and finds his love's ripped, bloody shawl and assumes that she's been killed by a lion. He kills himself with his sword to be with his love. *Thisbe* soon returns and finds *Pyramus* slain there, and so she kills herself as well. Their blood changes the colour of the mulberry tree under which they lie. The berries change from white to

burgundy from the lovers' blood. Doesn't this narrative remind you of a much later play by **Shakespeare** *Romeo and Juliet*? Or even the late 1990s Bollywood movie *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak*. Let's talk about *Leucotheo and Clytie* next.

5.2.2 Leucotheo and Clytie

Leuconoe, the second daughter of *Minyas*, narrates another unfulfilled love story. *Vulcan* finds out that his wife *Venus* is having an affair with *Mars* and he learns about this from the *Sun*. Though she is at fault, *Venus* is furious at the *Sun* for snitching to *Vulcan*, and so she compels the *Sun* to fall in love with *Leucothoe*. The *Sun* being in love with *Leucothoe* because of *Venus'* compulsion has a torrid affair with her. But the *Sun* is also a married God. When his wife *Clytie*, finds out about *Leucotheo* and the *Sun*'s affair, she goes and informs *Leucothoe*'s father about the affair. *Leucothoe*'s father is very angry with his daughter and buries her alive. Eventually she dies. The *Sun* is still in love with her and mourns her loss and transforms her into a frankincense plant. The narrative of *Salamacis and Hermaphrodites* is next.

5.2.3 Salamacis and Hermaphroditus

Alcithoé, the third daughter, narrates the final love story. The sexually adventurous and promiscuous *Salmacis* desires *Hermaphroditus* with all her heart, but *Hermaphroditus* has no feelings for her and spurns her. She is bold enough to actually grab him when he jumps into her pool. In today's day and age, the action of *Salmacis* would be termed harassment; and she prays to the gods to let them unite and become one. The gods answer her prayers and they make *Hermaphroditus* soft, gentle and feminine. *Salmacis*'s own feminine nature becomes a part of him.

When the three sisters have each had a turn in narrating the love stories, the devotees of *Bacchus* come close and eventually *Bacchus* turns them into bats for their impiety and for not worshipping him so a transformation takes place here.

The narrative then continues with the story of the House of *Cadmus*. *Juno* hates *Cadmus*' daughter, *Ino*, as *Ino* is devoted to *Bacchus*. *Ino* is the second daughter of *Cadmus*, younger than *Sémele*, whom *Juno* tricks into getting killed by her lover and *Juno*'s husband *Jupiter*. Remember *Bacchus* is *Ino*'s nephew and she had actually hid him in her cave and fed him milk once his own mother was killed by *Juno*'s trickery. *Juno* seeks the help of the *Furies*, who drive *Ino*'s husband *Athamas*, insane. Since the *Furies* have meddled with his mind, he imagines his wife to be a lioness and his children to be the cubs of the lioness. The deranged *Athamas* kills one of his children by bashing his head against a rock. *Ino* realising that her husband will kill her other child as well, jumps off a cliff with the other child. However, *Venus* intervenes and requests *Neptune* the God of the Sea, to save *Ino* and her remaining child. *Neptune* then transforms *Ino* and her child into deities of the Sea. When *Cadmus* learns of this new tragedy, he leaves *Thebes* and prays to the gods to transform him into a serpent. He is transformed into a serpent and his wife is transformed as well and together they slither away from *Thebes*. If you recall *Book III* begins with *Cadmus* killing a giant serpent and establishing the city of Thebes and by the end of *Book IV*, *Cadmus* himself is transformed into a serpent as is his wife.

The next character we encounter is *Perseus*. *Perseus* is tired and rather than fly through the night, he decides to rest in the kingdom of *Atlas*. Perseus is in for a surprise as *Atlas* reacts very badly and with great hostility. Now, *Atlas* has a reason for behaving in this harsh manner. He has been told that *Persus* will rob him of his riches and hence, he does not want that situation to occur. *Perseus* tries to tackle *Atlas* but the latter is very strong, eventually *Perseus* turns *Atlas* to stone with the aid of *Medusa*'s head with the writhing snakes and frightening eyes that can turn anyone who looks upon her into stone. Now, there are many Greek myths being utilised here. *Perseus* flies off again and sees *Andromeda* chained to a rock as an offering to a sea monster. *Perseus* does not want *Andromeda* to be sacrificed as he wants her for himself. He descends from the skies, talks to *Andromeda*'s parents for her hand and then using *Medusa*'s head again he freezes the sea monster. *Perseus* then marries *Andromeda*.

5.3 *PYRAMUS AND THISBE/ BOOK IV:* AN ANALYSIS

The three daughters of *Minyas* are depicted as literally weaving, and as they weave and spin yarn they are also figuratively weave stories of unfulfilled love/ spinning tales of unfulfilled love. The love stories they narrate have different characters in them but the recurrent theme is that of a sense of frustrated longing. The two young lovers, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, are separated in their mortal life because of their warring parents. They are able to be united only in death. The *Sun*, loves *Leucothoe*, but can do nothing to save her from being buried alive. The only thing he can do is to turn her into a plant, giving her a sort of rebirth, but that does not really matter as she is already dead and gone. *Salmacis*' love for *Hermamaphroditus* is unrequited. Even when she manages to get him where she wants him and asks for divine intervention, the gods fulfill her request in a very strange manner and in a sense actually prohibits the kind of love she desires from him. Through *Book IV/ Pyramus and Thisbe*, **Ovid** seems to be emphasising how disastrous love and romance can be. Even *Venus* the goddess of love, is powerless and cannot find lasting happiness as we saw from her short lived affair with *Mars*. We shall look at *Book VI/ Philomela* next.

5.4 *PHILOMELA/ BOOK VI*

Book VI begins with acute rivalry between *Arachne* and *Minerva*. *Minerva* as we know is the Goddess associated with beautiful weaving and her position is being threatened by a human called *Arachne* who is arrogant and insolent and does not respect the Goddess and thinks herself to be a better weaver than *Minerva*.

Minerva tries to warn *Arachne* not to disrespect the Gods but *Arachne* in her arrogance does not pay heed. So *Minerva* goes to meet *Arachne*, disguised as an old woman, and advises *Arachne* to seek *Minerva*'s forgiveness for her impunity. But *Arachne* being proud of her workmanship does not pay heed to the old woman's sound advice and *Minerva* is forced to reveal herself to the latter. But *Arachne* will not bow down and finally it amounts to a weaving competition between the two of them – the Goddess of Weaving *Minerva* and

the mortal *Arachne*. *Minerva* weaves a beautiful picture glorifying the Gods and herself. The description of *Minerva*'s weaving is beautifully depicted by **Ovid**. The workmanship is of course brilliant and her tapestry shows the *Olympian Gods*, and her victory over *Neptune*,

> *Neptune, the god of the ocean, was shown on his feet and striking*
> *The rugged crag with his great long trident, while sea-water gushed forth*
> *Out of the cleft in the rock, to establish his claim to the city.*
> *(Book VI/ Arachne, p. 213, lines 74-76)*

- and four other scenes of wherein the Gods are shown victorious over humans who have been then turned into animals as punishment. *Arachne* on the other hand weaves a picture of the gods 'raping and deceiving humans'. Since both of them are very skilled and talented it's a close competition and *Minerva* upset by *Arachne*'s skills that seem to match her own, starts beating her. *Arachne* is obviously upset and unable to take the beating longer, she hangs herself. *Minerva* ultimately feels bad for her and transforms her into a spider and thus is born the first spider, the expert weaver, into the world. So what we have here is also the creation of the myth of how spiders came to be just as in *Book IV/ Pyramus and Thisbe* we get the mythological idea of how mulberries acquired the colour they are today.

When the public come to know of *Arachne*'s tragic fate, they are frightened and know that they should not disrespect the Gods for fear of retribution. This was something we discussed earlier when we said that the Gods seem to have ruled through threats, fear and intimidation. But then there will be no stories if everyone complies and no one stands out. The next narrative that we deal with is *Niobe*. *Niobe* is a woman who does not feel that she is inferior to the gods. Her husband *Amphion*, belongs to a distinguished lineage, and has a huge kingdom, and they are blessed with many children. We need to remember that structurally there are 250 stories in *The Metamorphoses* and each book deals with at least four individual stories. So the next story after that of *Minerva* and *Arachne* is that of *Niobe*. We already know that *Niobe* does not think that she is inferior to the Gods and being aware of her attitude and thought process, *Manto* (*Teiresias*' daughter) tells *Niobe* that she ought to worship *Latona* the goddess along with her two children, *Apollo and Diana*. *Niobe* being of a different frame of mind ignores *Manto*'s good counsel and makes fun of the people who listen to *Manto*. She is so dangerously arrogant at this point that she wonders why people do not worship her. Obviously this will enrage the Gods and needless to say *Latona* is upset. With the help of her children, she causes several consecutive disasters to strike *Niobe*'s family. Her large family of 14 children - 7 boys and 7 girls are all killed. *Niobe* is now deathly afraid of *Latona* having lost all 14 children and the myth and fear of the Goddess spreads.

5.4.1 *Philomela/* Book VI (Lines 412 – 485)

The third narrative is of *Tereus*, the tyrant from *Thrace*. He is a brave warrior who manages to liberate Athens from the control of the barbarians and in exchange marries *Procne*, the daughter of the king *Pandion* of Athens. *Tereus* of *Thrace* is victorious only because *Procne* helps him. *Procne*' help to *Tereus* in defeating the barbarians, turns into a marriage proposal which is of course doomed from the start as we are told that *Juno, Hymenaeus*, and the *Graces* do not attend the wedding.

After being married and away from home for five years, *Procne* wishes to see her sister *Philomela* and so she asks *Tereus* for permission to visit her. *Titan* the God of the Sun, has guided the turning years through five autumns when *Procne* coaxes her husband,

> *If you love me at all,*
> *please send me to visit my sister, or ask her to visit us here.*
> *you can promise my father it won't be long before she returns.*
>   *(Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 231, lines 440- 42)*

She reminds him that he was victorious only because of her help, so she requests him to either send her to see her sister, or let her sister come to see her here. She tells her that he can promise her father that *Philomela* will return after a brief stay.

Tereus agrees to her request and sets off for Athens to fetch *Philomela*, and lands on the shores of Piaeus. As soon as he gains access to his father-in-law, he joins his right hand to his father–in-law's right hand, and they began by wishing each other favourable omens. *Tereus* starts telling him of his visit - his wife's request, and promises a speedy return if she *Philomela* his sister-in-law were sent back with him, when, he sees *Philomela* enter, dressed in rich robes, and richer beauty.

Tereus is a man in lust and used to the pleasures of the flesh. He is deeply tempted by the young and beautiful girl. *Tereus* is fired up by his desire for her, just as if someone has touched a flame to the corn stubble, or burned the leaves, or hay stored in a loft. Her beauty is worthy of it, but he is driven by his natural passion, and the inclination of the people of his region towards lust: he burns passion. His impulse is to cajole and bribe her attendants and her nurse's loyalty, to try and seduce the young girl with extravagant gifts, or worst comes to worst, to rape her and defend the rape in a savage war.

> *... when fair Philomela arrived on the scene, very richly attired,*
> *but even richer in beauty, just like the naiads and dryads*
> *we hear of pacing the forest glades in the robes and jewels of a princess.*
> *The sight of this pure young woman made Tereus hot with desire,*
> *like fire which a farmer sets to the yellow – white corn in a field*
> *or the pile of leaves and the hay that are stored in a barn for the winter.*
>   *(Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 232, lines 451- 57)*

Having seen *Philomela*m, *Tereus* is in lust and is impatient to take *Philomela* with him and be gone from *Piaeus*. *Philomela* agrees to go with *Tereus* to visit her sister, and resting her forearms on her father's shoulders, she coaxes him to let her go to visit her sister. *Tereus* gazes at her, imagining her as already his, watches her kiss her father's cheeks and her arms encircle her father's neck. All her innocent actions of endearment towards her father incite his passion and spur him on to a wild frenzy that can only be quenched by her. Whenever she embraces her father, he wishes he were the father, though of course his intentions would be wicked. The father is won over by the twin entreaties. *Philomela* is overjoyed, and thanks her father, and is happy to be visiting her sister and imagines that it will bring great joy to both of them. Little does she realise that both the sisters will be wretched after her travels to Thrace.

5.4.2 *Philomela/***Book VI (Lines 486-570)**

Here we see *Tereus* getting ready to leave for *Thrace* with *Philomela* in tow, *Pandion* his father – in –law speaks to him

> *... Pandion grasped his son-in-law's*
> *hand and committed his precious charge with tears in his eyes:*
> *'I entrust Philomela to you, dear son. Her sisterly kindness*
> *has won me over. The two of them wanted it so did you.*
> *Tereus, I trust you, you're one of the family. Please, in*
> *the name*
> *of the gods I implore you, watch over my child with a father's love,*
> *and return her soon – she's the comfort and balm of my anxious*
> *old age -*
>   *(Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 234, lines 494-500)*

And so he bades his daughter goodbye and kisses her, soft tears are mingled with his farewells and commands to *Tereues*. As soon as *Philomela* is on board the brightly painted ship, and the sea is churned by the oars, and the land left behind them, the barbarian king cries

> *... 'I have won! My prayers are answered, she's sailing*
> *beside me!' triumphant, the vile barbarian scarcely could wait*
> *for his moment of bliss, and his greedy eyes never swerved from his*
> *prey...*
>   *(Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 235, lines 513- 15)*

Now that they have completed their journey, and disembarked from the wave-worn ship, on the shores of his country, *Tereus'* takes her to a high-walled building, hidden in an ancient forest, and there he locks her away, she, pale and trembling, fearing everything, in tears now, begging to know where her sister is. Then, confessing his evil intent, he overcomes her by force, she a virgin and alone, as she calls out, again and again, in vain, to her father, her sister, and most of all to the great gods. She quivers like a frightened lamb, that fails to realise that it is free, wounded and discarded by a grey wolf, or like a dove trembling, its feathers stained with its blood, still fearing the rapacious claws that had gripped it. After a brief while, when she comes to her senses, she pulls her disheveled hair, and like a mourner, claws at her arms, beating them against her breasts. Hands outstretched, she shouts.

> *... you cruel barbarian! How could you*
> *do such a dreadful deed? Were you wholly unmoved by my father's*
> *entreaties and tears of devotion, my sister's longing to see me,*
> *respect for my maiden virtue and what you owed to your wife?*
> *(Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 236, lines 533- 36)*

Immediately on landing in *Thrace*, *Tereus* takes her, not home, but to a cave where he repeatedly rapes her and when she starts shouting at him in anger for betraying her trust, her parents' trust and raping her, and threatening to tell all who will listen, he cannot tolerate this reaction. He is filled with fear as well and forced by both these thoughts, he frees his sword from the sheath by his side, and seizing her hair gathers it together, to use as a tie, to tether her arms behind her back. *Philomela* sees the sword, and hopes only for death and so offers up her throat. But *Tereus* cuts her tongue and throws it away and doesn't stop here. He mutilates her wounded body, repeatedly, in his lust.

> *Her tongue was still voicing her sense of outrage and crying her father's*
> *name, still struggling to speak, when Tereus gripped it in pincers*
> *and hacked it out with his sword. As its roots in the throat gave a flicker,*
> *the rest of it muttered and twitched where it dropped on the blood- black earth;*
> (Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 237, lines 555-58)

When he returns home to his wife she asks about her sister. He, with false mourning, tells of a fictitious funeral, and cries to give his false story credence. *Procne's* eyes glisten with tears and she laments the fate of her young sister.

5.4.3 *Philomela/*Book VI (Lines 571-619)

The sun-god has circled the twelve signs, and a year is past. *Philomela* is alive but in captivity and left with no option. A guard prevents her escape; the thick walls of the building are made of solid stone; her mute mouth can yield no token of the horrifying facts that have left her thus helpless. Interestingly she passes her time by doing thread work and weaving. She weaves the story of her rape and the cutting off of her tongue. As she cannot speak, she requests the servants to give her tapestry to their mistress. The maid servant takes it to *Procne*, without knowing or realising what the tapestry contains inside. The wife of the savage king unrolls the cloth, and reads her sister's terrible fate, and by a miracle keeps silent. *Procne's* mind is filled with thoughts of vengeance. *Procne* now knows that her sister has been ravaged and is being held in captivity by her husband. Under the pretext of celebrating a festival she manages to meet her sister and on seeing her sister's pathetic condition, *Procne* burns with rage and cannot control her anger. She reproaches her sister for weeping, saying

> *… This isn't the moment*
> *for tears! It's a sword that we need or a still more powerful weapon,*
> *if one is available.*
> (Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 240, lines 611- 13)

Procne swears to avenge her younger sister.

5.4.4 *Philomela/*Book VI (Lines 620-674)

While *Procne* is mulling over these incidents *Itys* the son of *Procne* and *Tereus* comes to his mother. Seeing him she starts forming a plan in her mind. She is ready to sacrifice all her motherly instincts to punish her husband. She chops her son and cooks him and then invites *Tereus* to eat. The wife invites the unsuspecting *Tereus* to the feast. *Tereus* eats by himself, seated in his tall ancestral chair, and fills his belly with his own child.

> *So Tereus sat on the throne of his fathers high on a dais*
> *and started to gorge himself on a dish of the fruit of his own loins.*
> (Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 242, lines 650 - 52)

The smartness and wickedness of *Tereus* is frightening, a) that he should lust after his younger sister-in-law; b) that he should rape her repeatedly and brutally; c) that he should cut off her tongue so that she may never speak of the travesty that was done unto her. But *Philomela* too is not to be outdone, she still manages to weave a tapestry of *Tereus*' heinous crime and she sends it to *Procne*. *Procne* understands immediately what has happened with her sister and in order to

avenge her honour, *Procne* comes up with an equally horrendous plan. She kills her only child *Itys*, cooks the flesh of the child and serves it to *Tereus* the father as a meal. It is only after he has finished his meal that *Procne* reveals to *Tereus* that he has eaten his own son, and *Tereus* goes mad as he comprehends his actions and that of his wife *Procne*.

When her husband asks for his son she cries, "*Itys is with you already – inside.*" He looks around and questions where the boy is. And then while he is calling out and seeking him, *Philomela* comes out with the head of the child.

Then he weeps, and calls himself the sepulcher of his unhappy son, and now pursues, with naked sword, the daughters of *Pandion*. And we see him running after the two sisters but then these two women turn into birds. One of them turns into a nightingale/*Philomel*a and makes for the woods. The other, a swallow/*Procne*, flies to the eaves of the palace. You may know that even today the swallow's throat has not lost the stain of that murder, and the soft down bears witness to the blood. *Tereus* swift in his grief and desire for revenge, changes into a bird himself, with a feathered crest on his head. An immoderate, elongated, beak juts out, like a long spear. The name of the bird is the hoopoe, and it looks as though it is armed.

> *... at the next he was chasing Pandion's daughters around with his naked sword. You could picture the fugitives' bodies suspended on wings. and they were suspended on wings. The one, transformed to a nightingale, made for the forest, the other flew up to the roof as a swallow; but badges of murder remained on their breasts in the blood – tinged plumage.* **(**Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 243, lines 666-70)

> *Tereus, swiftly impelled by his grief and thirsting for vengeance, also changed into a bird, with an upright crest for a headpiece and beak jutting out to a monstrous length in the place of his long spear, looking as if he were armed for battle. We call him the hoopoe.*
> **(**Book VI/ Tereus, Procne and Philomela, p. 243, lines 670- 74)

With this the narrative of *Philomela* ends, her honour is restored through the villainous act of the slaying of her nephew and of cannibalism and both the sisters are transformed into birds… one a nightingale and the other a swallow. And *Tereus* the perpetrator is transformed into a whoopee/ the wood pecker, once again the origin myths of three different birds.

5.5   *PHILOMELA*/ BOOK VI: AN ANALYSIS

Let us begin by analysing each of the narratives in *Book VI*. What may be seen as a mere battle of pride between *Minerva* and *Arachne* is not just a battle of skills but rather a more subtle battle of perspectives as we see from the themes of their tapestries. *Minerva* being a goddess has a different perspective all together and she glorifies the Olympian Gods' and chooses to include the punishment they dole out to disobedient mortals in her weave. *Arachne*, the human, creates a different tapestry consisting entirely of images of deception and rape. Just goes on to show how the two women one goddess, one human perceive the cosmos. *Arachne*'s weave which is flawless depicts the universe as a place of violence and horror. *Minerva* beats *Arachne* so hard that the latter commits suicide and neither woman is judged the best weaver so cannot claim victory.

Niobe's tale deals with the theme of divine vengeance. *Niobe*'s narrative follows *Arachne*'s tale, and by placing these two stories one after the other, **Ovid** is in a sense asking us as readers to compare the two women. On the one hand, *Arachne* is a woman of humble origins but an extremely talented weaver. *Niobe* is a high ranking woman whose reputation is built on her wealth, and family lineage. While *Arachne* is a skilled weaver and an artisan; *Niobe* is a high born woman with little or no such skills. *Arachne* provokes the goddess *Minerva* and is challenged by the latter to a weaving contest; while *Niobe* challenges and provokes the goddess *Latona*. In a sense by juxtaposing these two women, **Ovid** is trying to suggest the innocence of *Arachne* and thereby the unjustness of the fate that she is handed out.

The tapestry that tells the story of *Tereus*' raping and imprisonment of his younger sister-in-law *Philomela* in a way seems to suggest that art/ skill has the power to help people transcend above their misery and plight. Had *Philomela* not woven the tapestry and sent it to her sister, *Procne* would never have come to know about her rape and subsequent imprisonment. The narrative of *Tereus*, *Procne*, and *Philomela* is a very gory one maybe even one of the most grotesque of stories in the entire *Metamorphoses*. Along with lust, betrayal, forced abduction, rape, mutilation, imprisonment is added infanticide and cannibalism taking place within the same family amongst familiar and known and related people. The most intimate familial bonds— that of a husband and a wife, a father-in-law and a son-in-law, two sisters, the husband and his younger sister-in-law, mother and son, and father and son—are all broken. These bonds are one of love and trust and all we find is betrayal in most of the relationships/ bonds. *Philomela* loses the ability to speak, but she somehow manages to tell her side of the story through her weaving/ art. Her artistic creation – the tapestry literally helps her sister know about her being alive, being imprisoned and leads to her escape. Looking at it from our point of view, we could say that art serves the purpose we think it should serve. It helps people alleviate people's suffering metaphorically / maybe we could say cathartically as the Greeks would suggest. *Procne* faces the familiar tragic dilemma of deciding who she is, and which role she needs to fulfill - mother or sister. The conflict between the roles she needs to play and the emotions they bring about, anger/love, and the question of which role will she finally adopt is critical. *Procne*'s role as the mother of *Itys* is the only one that distinguishes her from *Philomela*, and in rejecting her child as the "other" she takes another step toward becoming her sister, looking as she would look and speaking as she would speak. This climactic moment, therefore, juxtaposes the two opposed ways of viewing we have been tracing throughout the poem, an objectification that decouples appearance from identity versus a powerful identification with a seen presence that unites spectator and spectacle and allows her to take on the voice of the silent Image.

5.6   LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have looked at *Books IV & VI*. We have summarised and analysed a number of stories in each book and provided detailed study of the prominent texts such as *Pyramus and Thisbe* and *Philomela*. These units have given us a better understanding of Latin poetry and **Ovid**'s skill as a great poet. He somehow manages to link 250 narratives together and keep our interest sustained. The tales are mostly of transformations/ metamorphosis. **Ovid**'s manner of portraying the narrative focuses on moments, like the brief speech

with which we began the chapter, those moments, in other words, where the social dangers posed by actors become most intense. Please read *The Metamorphoses*, it is a wonderful book with a whole bunch of stories.

5.7 QUESTIONS

1. Ovid's poem depicts the thoughts and actions of a wide range of female characters. Some of these characters are essentially victims, while others are more like what we would today consider "strong women." Do you think Ovid's view of women is positive, negative, or somewhere in between?
2. Why do you think Ovid's Metamorphoses has had such a powerful impact on subsequent literature and art?
3. In what manner is Ovid's Metamorphoses an epic and how is it different from the conventional epic. Elaborate?
4. Itys is the son of Procne and Tereus. Itys is killed, cooked and fed to his father Tereus by his mother Procne, in revenge for Tereus' raping of her younger sister Philomela. How convinced are you with this revenge?
5. Write short notes on the following myths:
   a. The cult of Bacchus
   b. The First Swallow and the First Nightingale
   c. How the mulberry fruit acquired its colour
   d. How the whoopee came into being

5.8 GLOSSARY

Bacchus : God of wine, both its intoxicating effects as well as its social and beneficent influences. Son of Jupiter and *Sémele*. He is viewed as the promoter of peace, a lawgiver, and a lover of peace. Roman equivalent of the Greek Dionysus.

Minerva : Virgin goddess of war, art, wisdom, and science, daughter of Jupiter, and protector of Athens. Roman equivalent of the Greek Athena.

Narcissus : Son of Liriope. He fell in love with his own reflection and wasted away until death. When he died he was metamorphosed into the plant of the same name.

Philomela : Daughter of *Pandion* and sister of *Procne*. She was raped by her brother-in-law, *Tereus*. To make sure she did not tell *Procne* he muted her by cutting out her tongue and imprisoned her in a forest. A year later she was rescued by her sister and in revenge the sisters fed *Tereus* his and *Procne*'s son, Itys. *Philomela* was metamorphosed into a bird along with her sister and brother-in-law.

Procne : Daughter of *Pandion*, wife of *Tereus*, sister of *Philomela*, and mother of Itys. She feeds Itys to *Tereus* after he has raped *Philomela* and cut out her tongue. She was metamorphosed into a bird along with her sister and husband.

Pyramus : Young man from Babylon who is the boyfriend of Thisbe whom he is not allowed to marry.

Teiresias : Blind prophet of Thebes, famous for clairvoyance.

5.9 SUGGESTED READINGS & REFERENCES

1.   Melville, A. D. (tr.) (1986), Ovid: Metamorphoses (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics). With Introduction and Notes by E. J. Kenney.

2.   ¯ (tr.) (1995), Ovid: Sorrows of an Exile (Oxford: Oxford University Press). With Introduction and Notes by E. J. Kenney.

3.   Ando, C. (2007), 'Exporting Roman Religion'. In A Companion to Roman Religion, edited by J. Rüpke (Malden, MA; Oxford; and Carlton: Blackwell Publishing), pp. 429–45.http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9780470690970.ch29

4.   Barkan, L. (1986), The Gods Made Flesh: Metamorphosis and the Pursuit of Paganism (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press).

5.   Currie, H. M. (1981), 'Ovid and the Roman Stage'. Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt II. 31.4: 2701–42.

6.   Fantham, E. (2004), Ovid's Metamorphoses (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

7.   Farrell, J. (1992), 'Dialogue of Genres in Ovid's Lovesong of Polyphemus (Metamorphoses 13.719–897)'. American Journal of Philology 113.2: 235–68,http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/295559

8.   Feeney, D. C. (1991), The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press).

9.   Feldherr, A. (1997), 'Metamorphosis and Sacrifice in Ovid's Theban Narrative'. Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici 38.1: 25–55.

10.   ¯ (2010), Playing Gods. Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Politics of Fiction (Princeton: Princeton University Press),http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9781400836543