INTRODUCTION: TRANSVERSIONS OF 'IPHIS AND IANTHE'

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It's an old story. A father issues a decree: because of his family's poverty and the burdens that girls bring, if his wife gives birth to a girl, the infant must be killed. His distraught wife sees, as if in a dream, the goddess Isis, who tells her to disobey her husband; if the child is female, Isis will protect her. The female infant is given the non-gendered name Iphis and is raised by her mother and nurse as a boy. At the age of thirteen, Iphis is betrothed by her unsuspecting father to the maiden Ianthe. Both girls, who are depicted as alike in all ways but their gender, are deeply in love. While Ianthe eagerly longs for the wedding, Iphis despairs, giving voice to a long lament about her 'strange' and 'prodigious' predicament, contrasting her fate to that of cows, sheep, deer and birds, whose females never seek to mate with other females. On the day before the wedding, her mother fervently prays to Isis and, as mother and daughter walk from the temple, Iphis's body is transformed: her hair shortens, her complexion darkens, her limbs gain strength, her stride lengthens. Venus, Juno and Hymen join to bless the marriage, made possible by an apparent change of sex. That, in brief synopsis, is Publius Ovidius Naso's story of 'Iphis and Ianthe' from Book 9 of his Latin *Metamorphoses* (666–797).[1]

If this story doesn't sound familiar, that is not surprising. The tale of 'Iphis and Ianthe' is one that few people today know. Compared to the stories of Venus and Adonis, Narcissus and Echo, Philomela, Pygmalion, Orpheus and Ganymede, the plight of Iphis and Ianthe has not attracted the broad critical interest of scholars seeking to understand Ovid's influence on literary history – particularly in the

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medieval and early modern periods when that influence was at its height. This is true, despite the considerable interest in the tale shown by medieval and early modern translators, commentators and adapters. *Ovidian Transversions:'Iphis and Ianthe', 1300–1650* aims to redress that critical neglect by exploring a range of issues to which this tale was made to speak in pre-modern France and England.

No full manuscripts of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* survive from antiquity and the earliest manuscript fragments date from the ninth century.[2] The earliest extant witnesses to the complete poem date from the eleventh century.[3] Between then and the fourteenth century, the *Metamorphoses* circulated in concert with Latin commentaries that provided several approaches to the text. Commentators glossed words and meanings, explicating the literal sense of the poem and providing a framework that would be exploited by subsequent authors intent on appropriating the poem for Christian allegory. Around 1170, Arnulf of Orléans provided an *accessus* (introduction), philological and grammatical glosses, a list of transformations included in each book and allegorical interpretations for each 'fable'.[4] Building on Arnulf's allegories, John of Garland composed a verse moralisation, the *Integumenta Ovidii*, around 1234, claiming 'to untie knotty secrets, to open closed matters, to clarify cloudy matters and to proclaim hidden things'.[5] Prose paraphrases, introductions and interlinear and marginal glosses multiplied over time as commentaries sought to impart philological, grammatical, historical, mythological, geographical, ethical and/or literary instruction.[6] As early as the late eleventh century, the presence of an 'Ovidian subculture' in monastic and cathedral schools encouraged ways of reading and imitating Ovid that exceeded his use for instruction; the members of this subculture 'responded playfully and immediately to his literary techniques and to his amatory teasings'.[7]

By the thirteenth century, the *Metamorphoses* was a centrepiece of the school curriculum,[8] and Ovid was being approached simultaneously as a moralist, natural theologian and scientist, as well as a versatile poet showcasing a variety of literary techniques. These variable approaches mean that the *Metamorphoses* was 'marked by inherent instability of meaning' and 'was interpreted and augmented by medieval scholars and writers in ways which often accentuated that instability'.[9] In the fourteenth century, the capacious medieval commentary tradition was itself metamorphosed quite dramatically into the *Ovide moralisé*, a poem of 72,000 lines of octosyllabic verse translations, accompanied by euhemerist (historical) interpretations and Christian moralisations.[10] Composed by an anonymous Franciscan between 1316 and 1328, the *Ovide moralisé* translated all the stories into French, supplementing the narrative with earlier mythographical texts and commentaries, adding interpretations identifying natural phenomena and historical events as the

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sources of the stories, and recasting lustful gods, tyrannical fathers and suffering maidens as allegories of Christian truth.[11]

Versions of the *Ovide moralisé* circulated as well in two fifteenth-century vernacular prose abridgements, a prose version published by Collard Mansion and an independent Latin prose text by Benedictine Pierre Bersuire, the *Ovidius moralizatus*.[12] In both the *Ovide moralisé* and the *Ovidius moralizatus* the aim of revealing universal truths led to surprisingly flexible modes of allegoresis.[13] In fact, Bersuire's text, which was ultimately banned by the Catholic church in 1559, offered multiple and often self-contradictory interpretations, imparting what has been called an 'unpoliceable self-generating polysemousness'.[14] It may be in this invitation to habits of thought – rather than in their invitation to embrace divine revelation – that medieval moralised Ovids registered their greatest cultural impact:

> To regard a classical fable as veiled truth, necessarily open to interpretation on different levels, and to keep simultaneously in one's head several equally valid but self-contradictory 'meanings' for a single text and make the equations between them, is an attitude of mind which remained with sixteenth-century writers and with their public long after the moralized Ovids themselves were forgotten.[15]

Latin editions with and without commentary continued to be published throughout the sixteenth century, often as grammar school textbooks, and the allegorical mode of interpretation remained relevant well into the seventeenth century.[16] The *Metamorphoses* was also translated, largely without religious commentary, into other vernacular languages relatively early. A full Italian translation appeared in the first half of the fourteenth century, with an allegorical reworking appearing around 1375 and many subsequent translations.[17] By 1600 there were two German, one Dutch, and five English editions. Appearing in England were William Caxton's complete prose translation of 1480, and several verse translations, the most influential being that of Arthur Golding (composed of fourteeners) of 1567 and George Sandys (of couplets and commentary) in 1632. Despite the Latin text's popularity as a grammar school resource, during the Elizabethan era many more editions appeared in English than in Latin.[18] Equally popular in France, at least four French translations of the *Metamorphoses* appeared between 1539 and 1617.[19] Translations, commentaries and adaptations provided humanists, students and authors with a capacious template that could accommodate a variety of purposes: instilling lessons in Latin grammar, argument and rhetoric; teaching mythology, mythography and morals; providing models of vernacular oratory, emotional affect and cross-gender voicing;[20] and inviting a variety of responses to the literary and erotic pleasures of this heterogeneous text.[21]

'Iphis and Ianthe' was included in all of these Latin and vernacular texts but its cultural uptake was not limited to them. Traces or analogues of the story are found as well in a variety of medieval texts: the anonymous thirteenth-century *Chanson d'Yde et Olive* and its later adaptations in French and English;[22] John Gower's Middle English *Confessio Amantis* (1390); the fourteenth-century *Cantari della Reina d'Oriente* by Antonio Pucci and *Bella Camilla* by Piero da Siena; and Christine de Pizan's allegorical *Le livre de la mutacion de Fortune* (1403). Beginning with the influential canto 25 of Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1516), the Renaissance witnessed an escalation of references, anecdotes and citations: for instance, in Austin Saker's *Narbonus: The Laberynth of Libertie* (1580) and the 'Of Phylotus and Emelia' episode of Barnabe Riche's *His Farewell to Militarie Profession* (written in the 1570s, published in 1581), which itself became the source for the anonymous Scottish play, *Philotus* (1603). Charles Estienne also included an entry on Iphis in his *Dictionarium historicum, geographicum, poeticum* (1595).

More extended treatments, including wholesale adaptations, were developed in John Lyly's stageplay *Galatea* (1584); Sir Philip Sidney's prose epic the *New Arcadia* (1590); a neo-Latin play of 1,152 lines, *Iphis*, by the Oxford undergraduate Henry Bellamy (*c.*1622–5);[23] and Issac de Benserade's stage play, *Iphis et Iante* (1637). In addition, Alfred Harbage's authoritative *Annals of English Drama* records a lost play of uncertain origin, written between 1591 and 1615, entitled *Iphis and Iantha; or A Marriage Without a Man*.[24] Across the period, visual images illustrating the tale appear as well: in the *Ovide moralisé*,[25] in the illustration of Book 9 of George Sandys' 1632 translation and in other manuscripts and printed texts (see Appendix F). Furthermore, a number of medical writers, including the influential medical compiler Jacques Ferrand, included references to the tale as they struggled to comprehend ambiguous signs of gender and hermaphroditism alongside legal charges of gender 'fraud'.[26]

Opportunistic engagements with the story typically focus on Iphis as an emblematic referent of virtue (or vice), or they draw on isolated aspects of her narrative (her lament, her moment of transformation, the results of her change of sex) to support a specific argument. Iphis's lament as she prays to Isis became a particularly popular literary topos. A few treatments highlight the two lovers' predicament (which is, incidentally, the only form of exposition that enables the portrayal of Ianthe's situation). Whatever the focus, the intended uses for which 'Iphis and Ianthe' has been employed are surprisingly diverse. The tale has been harnessed to affirm the special interest that God takes in his creatures, the veracity (and doubtfulness) of miracles, the creative power of the imagination, the historical truth (or falsehood) of transformations in sex and the possibility of surmounting obstacles to love, including that between men and women, imposed by family and convention.

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The tale regularly appears in lists and examples of miracles, both to affirm and discount their possibility. The first dedication in Saker's *Narbonus*, for instance, mentions Iphis in a list of approved metamorphoses,[27] while her story attests to 'thinges woonderfull and straunge unto nature' in *The Pilgrimage of princes, penned out of Sundry Greeke and Latine aucthours*, by Lodovvicke Loid (1573).[28] In contrast, in the middle of a double cross-dressing plot, Riche's *His Farewell to Militarie Profession* puts Iphis's story in the mouth of Philerno, as he, disguised as his look-alike sister, Emelia, attempts to convince the unwitting Brisilla of the possibility of changing his sex to stave off the women's intended marriages to two old men. In reply to Brisilla's opinion that 'suche wishes are but waste, and unpossible it is, that any suche thing should happen', he asserts that 'there is nothing impossible'; after listing the transformations of Pygmalion, Acteon, Narcissus and Arachne, he offers a robust narration of Iphis's story as 'moste meete and fitting to our purpose', concluding that a similar miracle could be granted them by 'the Goddesse' if approached with sufficient 'zeale and faith'.[29]

Riche's allusion to Iphis not only furthers the twists and turns of a hetero-erotic plot but also plays on the gullibility of Brisilla who, upon experiencing Philerno's intimate embrace (and presumably erect penis), thinks that '*Emelia* was perfectly metamorphosed'. In making Brisilla a dupe, this episode has something in common with those medical texts and treatises of natural philosophy that increasingly posed the observations of 'science' against the wish-fulfilments of 'fable', and that interpreted transformations such as that undergone by Iphis as instances, not of the power of God, desire or the imagination, but of deception and credulity. By the early seventeenth century, the idea of spontaneous sex change had been put under considerable pressure by anatomical investigations, which countered stories of women's transformation into men (both past and present) with arguments regarding the presence of an enlarged clitoris, a small penis or genuine hermaphroditism.[30]

We sometimes can glimpse contradictory intentions within a single author as he struggles to reconcile the meanings of the tale with his beliefs. Note, for instance, the complexity of the commentary that accompanies Sandys' English translation. On the one hand, Sandys proposes the tale's allegory as the transformation of the soul, reiterating a consistent theme of earlier moralised Ovids: 'By this the Ancient declared, that men should despaire of nothing; since althings were in the power of the Gods to give; and give they would what was justly implored.' But like those medieval predecessors who offered euhemerist interpretations, Sandys also drew on secular writing, both ancient and modern, to assert that women had, in fact, been changed into men. Contrasting female sex transformation to the lack of similar stories about men being transformed into women, he drew this moral from authorities both ancient and modern, 'that as it is preposterous in Nature, which ever aimes at perfection, when men

degenerate into effeminacy; so contarily commendable, when women aspire to manly wisdom and fortitude.'[31] Bringing together religion and science, the transformation of the soul and the medicalisation of sex – and routing all of this through early modern gender asymmetries – Sandys's treatment suggests the flexibility and utility that many writers and readers found in this story of miraculous change.

Even very brief cultural references to 'Iphis' indicate a broad range of interpretative engagements. For instance, entries on 'Iphis' occur in four early modern English lexicons between 1584 and 1676, three of which emphasise that her sex change comes about not to enable heterosexual marriage but, in the words of Edward Phillips, 'least Lygdus [Iphis's father] finding himself deceived should be incensed'.[32] Whereas concerns with fraud had long been present in medical commentaries that invoke the tale in discussions of sex change, here the concern about the patriarch's response to such deception begins to suggest the extent to which Iphis's story admitted interpretative leeway. Nonetheless, this leeway would slowly ebb away: in 1778, the short-hand diary entry by Hester Thrale Piozzi that 'Ovid's Iphis & Ianthe no longer seems out of Possibility' attests to the primary erotic currency that the tale possessed by the late eighteenth century.[33]

By far the most extended, publicly available and popular versions of the story during this period are those provided by two early modern stageplays, one published in England, and one in France: Lyly's *Galatea* and Benserade's *Iphis et Iante*. Lyly was perhaps the most famous Elizabethan writer of his time. Since the nineteenth century, he has more often been celebrated (or derided) for the stylistic innovations of his prose fiction *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* than the eight plays he wrote for the boy players of St Paul's Cathedral.[34] Yet his plays not only dominated the repertoire of the boys' companies, but were 'the most famous theatrical events of the 1580s', helping to stoke popular appetite for commercial drama performed in permanent playhouses and helping, as well, to inaugurate a market for printed plays.[35] Just as Golding infused the *Metamorphoses* with English referents, Lyly transposed Ovid's love plot and the antics of the gods to the early modern marshes of Lincolnshire.[36] First performed at Queen Elizabeth's court in 1588 and published in 1592, the play begins with an attempt to deceive Neptune, who has demanded a sacrifice of the area's most beautiful virgin every five years to keep the land from being flooded by the Humber river. Two fathers independently disguise their adolescent daughters, Galatea and Phillida, as boys to prevent their being chosen as the sacrificial victim.[37] The two cross-dressed girls fall in love, leading to mutual delight as well as confusion and consternation. Their predicament is dramatically resolved only when Venus asserts her authority against Neptune and promises to change the sex of one of the girls.[38]

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Benserade's comedy, *Iphis et Iante*, first performed at the Hôtel de Bourgogne in Paris in 1634 and published in 1637, is focused more squarely on Ovid's plot than is *Galatea*, of which the 'Iphis and Ianthe' story comprises just one subplot among three. Benserade increases Iphis's age to twenty, presents her as longing for her marriage rather than fearing it (much to her mother's dismay) and delays her metamorphosis until after the wedding night.[39] Iphis's eagerness and the delay of the marriage allow Benserade to portray her erotic desire in vividly physical terms. In each of these plays, the plight of Iphis and her beloved, as well as the meanings of the sexed body, are connected to foundational social relations: divine and patriarchal authority, the status of women and girls, the question of erotic knowledge and the relationship of erotic desire to the social polity.

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A steady stream of publishing since the 1970s about Ovid's influence on medieval and early modern literature has offered a range of analyses on the consequences of metamorphic figures, tropes and themes. Ovid's impact on the literary production of Francesco Petrarch, Geoffrey Chaucer, Louise Labé, Pierre de Ronsard, Ludovico Ariosto, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, John Lyly, William Shakespeare, John Donne and John Milton – across the genres of epic verse, lyric, erotic epyllia and drama – has been comprehensively surveyed, along with analyses of translations and adaptations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. We thus now enjoy detailed analyses of Ovidian-inspired treatments of humanism, identity, nationhood, patronage, pastoral, sexual violence, trauma, poetic voice, rhetoric, irony, authorship, *galanterie*, modernity and artistic creation and imitation in medieval and early modern literature.[40] Within studies of sexuality, Ovidianism as a source for representing male homoerotic desire has been particularly well explored.[41] With a few, mostly brief, exceptions, however, the tale of 'Iphis and Ianthe' goes absolutely unremarked in this extensive body of work.[42] Moreover, despite the existence of a number of visual illustrations (see Appendix F), no entry on Iphis appears in *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts*.[43]

Although the reasons for this indifference are no doubt complex, they most likely include the following:

- *The unwieldy, episodic and segmented form of the* Metamorphoses. Exigencies of form appear to have influenced both medieval and early modern engagements with Ovid's epic, as well as the parameters of scholarship concerned with it. With over 250 loosely linked narratives marked by conflicting narrative tones and inconsistent narrative personae, Ovid's poem is often read as an unrelated set of extracts rather than a continuous narrative. The dissociation of one strand of

plot from another was embraced by medieval commentators supplying *tituli* directing readers to specific tales,[44] by allegorists who parsed each fable's personae into Christian personifications and by humanists who used specific tales to enumerate exempla and *sententiae*.[45] When medieval and early modern writers take up Ovid, they appear to mimic his strategy of segmentation, leading to a selective focus on certain stories to the exclusion of others.[46] Scholars likewise tend to focus on individual stories, often separating, for instance, Echo from Narcissus, or the rape of Calisto from the larger story of Diana and her nymphs.

- *Scholarly expectations regarding Ovid's influence on particular literary genres, themes and concepts of poetic authority.* When not focused on amorous love or the basic tenor of metamorphosis, scholarship on Ovidian reception has concentrated particularly on literary form, especially Renaissance *elecutio* and *imitatio* (of poetic tropes, allusions, dramatic characters and plots). Poetic origins and authorial self-fashioning, sometimes modelled on Ovid's own career, have also been an influential focus. So too have the epic themes of heroism, nationhood, republicanism, empire and exile, as well as the phenomenon of 'galant' literary culture.[47] 'Iphis and Ianthe', it has been assumed, contributes nothing to this intertextual, citational matrix. Moreover, the dramatic monologue at the core of the tale does not seem to have inspired any verse epyllia, which was a major mode of English Ovidianism during its heyday in the 1580s and 1590s.[48] That 'Iphis and Ianthe' seems to have directly inspired the plots of at least four dramas, however, leads one to wonder how Iphis's complaint may have existed 'behind the scenes' of dramatic monologues voiced by other literary figures.

- *The story's lack of etiological consequence.* Many treatments of medieval and Renaissance Ovidianism begin with the assumption that the *Metamorphoses* is, above all, a series of origin stories: the rape of Calisto explains the origin of the constellation Ursa Major, the union of Salmacis with Hermaphroditus is the cause of a fountain's effeminising waters, and so on. Such etiologies often segue into tales of distinctively human consequence: the tale of Hermaphroditus explains the existence of intersex individuals (with the fusion of boy with nymph answering the proleptic riddle of his name: child of Hermes and Aphrodite). Narcissus, meanwhile, is regularly believed to explain the existence of 'passive' male homosexuality. More generally, metamorphosis is assumed to be the *cause* of novel effects. The transformation of Iphis, in contrast, offers no broader etiological explanation, no remarkable consequence, other than the effects it has on the story's unhappy protagonists.

- *The separation of sex transformation from other scholarly concerns.* One might be inclined to think that the topic of sex transformation was off-putting to Ovid's imitators, as well as to contemporary scholars. It is not, however, as though the topic of sex change is itself taboo: there are a number of medieval narratives about miraculous sex changes, and Ovid's narrative of Tiresias's temporary sex change (*Met.* 3: 316–38) was as popular in the early modern period as it is today. At the same time, very few readers are familiar with Mestra, daughter of Erysichthon – who implores Neptune to save her from slavery by changing her shape and is given the power to shift gender and species at will (*Met.* 8: 847–74) – or with Caenis, daughter of Elatus, who, raped by Neptune, asks in recompense to 'cease to be a woman' so that she need not suffer penetration again and pursues life thereafter as a man, Caeneus, invulnerable to weapons (*Met.* 12: 168–209). The abbreviated reference to Sithon in *Met.* 4: 274 – 'Nor shall I say how by a strange quirk of nature, Sithon's sex once became uncertain, and he was now a man and then a woman' – remains mysterious.[49] Why, we might ask, are these tales not better known?[50]
- *Scholarly expectations regarding Ovidian eroticism.* While 'alternate desires' are increasingly recognised as a vital aspect of Ovid's corpus, many scholars would agree with Cora Fox that 'Renaissance English Ovidianism is . . . generally characterized by the narrative of desire based on the subject-object binary model of the hunt, [and] its repetitions of the rape/abduction narrative.'[51] 'Iphis and Ianthe' fulfils neither of these expectations. Indeed, when readers come to Ovidian-inspired texts, we often think we know what we are going to encounter: male desire of whatever sort (hetero, homo, cross-species) and vulnerable female victims. As Heather James puts it: 'Ovid's repertoire of precepts, plots, and visual scenarios tends, after all, to frame women as pictures for a male viewer's delectation and, too often, as objects of his violence.'[52] 'Iphis and Ianthe' doesn't fit this scenario. Contrariwise, critics who uphold the dubious view that 'faithful mutual love is the highest value of the *Metamorphoses*' have yet to cite the devotion of Iphis or Ianthe as an obvious example.[53]

Whatever the reasons for the neglect of 'Iphis and Ianthe' in treatments of the *Metamorphoses*, it was not until literary critics began to offer lesbian and queer interpretations of 'Iphis and Ianthe' – as well as of its translations, analogues and adaptations written between the thirteenth and the seventeenth centuries – that this tale entered a wider scholarly conversation.[54] And it did so as a story of cross-dressing and lesbianism.[55] Often exploring the differences between Ovid's tale and the treatment of his translators or adaptors, a growing

number of scholars have analysed whether gender and sexuality in these texts are tied to biological sex (and thus are essentialised or are presented as socially constructed or performative), whether patriarchal institutions such as marriage and paternal authority are affirmed or challenged and whether lesbian desire (and sometimes lesbian identity) is accepted, tolerated, celebrated or condemned.[56]

In an attempt to shift the terms of debate from a subversion/containment framework of endorsement or indictment of female-female desire, I proposed in 2002 that 'Iphis and Ianthe' was not only the *locus classicus* of 'lesbian' desire in the early modern period, but that its rhetorical strategies could clue us into the early modern terms of intelligibility for such desire, as well as to an unacknowledged literary tradition of female homoerotic lament – its terms explicitly rearticulated, for instance, by Fiordispina in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* as she mourns the impossibility of her passion for Bradamante,[57] as well as by Philoclea as she describes the torment of her love for Zelmane in Sidney's *New Arcadia*.[58] Erotic desire in the absence of gender difference is rendered legible in Ovid and many of its intertexts, but often only as *amor impossibilis*. As the tale was reworked in Lyly's *Galatea*, I argued, this tension between possibility and impossibility simultaneously upholds the unnaturalness of female-female sex acts while articulating the terms of potential satisfaction in the masculinised body. Erotic desire, in this cultural logic, is not the problem; the problem is the body, its perceived incapacities, and its social function as a marker of gender within a patriarchal system.

The topos of (im)possibility present in 'Iphis and Ianthe' set the terms for subsequent literary negotiations of the viability of female erotic bonds.[59] By the eighteenth century, the story of Iphis and Ianthe referenced explicit sexual meanings that could not be safely projected onto the distant classical past; rather, it evoked the increasingly public nature of sapphism. In her own development and nuancing of this argument, Susan Lanser maintains that 'Iphis and Ianthe', *Galatea* and *Iphis et Ianthe* all represent the 'metamorphic' scenario that dominates sapphic discourse in Western Europe around 1600. Metamorphic plots attempt to 'resolve homoerotic relations through a logic of substitution' by erasing 'the "same" in same-sex relations' – a strategy, she argues, that comes under epistemological stress by the time of Benserade's play, where 'the problem is not homoeroticism as such but its public accommodation'.[60] The effect of Benserade's changes to Ovid's plot is a shift in 'the discursive emphasis from the private preservation of a secret to the public resolution of an impasse'.[61] As Lanser's broader analysis reveals, the impasses produced by such metamorphic plots eventually give rise to a 'sapphic episteme' in which 'the *logic* of woman + woman' is increasingly made socially available, in both its celebratory and phobic formulations.[62]

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Even as scholars have analysed the tale's impact on concepts of lesbianism in increasingly complex ways, others have begun to employ transgender theory to approach its depiction of sex change. Focused on 'Iphis and Ianthe' in the moralised Ovids of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Robert Mills mobilises transgender 'as a prism for understanding medieval encounters with sex change and other modes of gender variance, as well as interrogating the category's associations (or not) with homoerotic behavior'.[63] Simone Chess reads *Galatea*'s double MTFTM (male to female to male) cross-dressing in terms of the gender labour involved in trans* relationships, including the erotic partner's 'labor of forgetting' and 'labor of alliance' by which gender for both partners is co-created as relational rather than the property of an individual.[64] We might note that the play's conclusion, which defers the change of sex, correlates with more recent calls for a less teleological understanding of trans* which suspends the sequential logic that underpins the concepts of MTF and FTM. Additional archival and interpretative work on apprentice boy actors has implicitly strengthened recognition of *Galatea*'s erotics – an eroticism complexly layered and circulated through the multiply cross-dressed, youthful male body – while reminding us that plays written for child companies can lose some of their queerness when these roles are played by adult actors.[65]

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Ovidian Transversions: 'Iphis and Ianthe', 1300–1650 builds on this prior body of scholarship with essays that advance our understanding of these texts' investments in the body, intersexuality, gender, transgender, youth and homoeroticism. In the aggregate, the essays published here make clear that the tale should be considered a key text for feminist criticism, queer studies and the history of sexuality – as central as are the stories of Arachne, Philomela, Narcissus and Ganymede.[66] What would early modern literary histories of sexuality look like, we might ask, if, rather than viewing the amorous, homoerotic Neptune of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* as the privileged, 'quintessentially' Ovidian figure of the 1590s in England,[67] readers were also directed to the beautiful, sapphic and potentially transgender Galatea and Phyllida?

In light of the uptake of Ovid's tale for later representations of female homoeroticism and transgender, it is worth reconsidering the specific terms of Iphis's lament, which has long been read, by classicists, medievalists and early modernists, as a wholesale condemnation of the unnaturalness of her love.[68] In *Queer Philologies*, Jeffrey Masten argues that 'even as scholarship in the history of sexuality has begun to make its way into the introductory materials in editions [of literary texts], editors must work harder to think about the broader ramifications of research into the history of sexuality for editing the text "itself".'[69] In particular, Masten calls for renewed, sex-sensitive attention to the textual gloss – which, in this instance, I propose to treat as a corollary

to textual translation. '"[Q]uis me manet exitus", inquit, / "cognita quam nulli, quam prodigiosa novaeque / cura tenet Veneris?"' The authoritative Loeb edition by Frank Justus Miller translates these lines as '"Oh, what will be the end of me", she said, / "whom a love possess that no one ever heard of, a strange and monstrous love?"' This concluding phrase, which has understandably informed many English readings of Iphis's self-description of her love as 'strange and monstrous', is derived from parsing the capacious term 'prodigiosus', which the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* defines as 'monstrous' and 'unnatural' – but also as 'marvelous'.[70] Ovid appears to have been the first Latin author to use 'prodigiosa', which he employs twice in the *Metamorphoses*: here in Iphis's lament and in reference to what the Loeb edition translates as the 'wondrous court' of Circe (*Met.* 13: 968). What is it, the queer philologist might ask, that renders Iphis's plight monstrous and strange, whereas the residence of Circe, where men are involuntarily turned into animals, is considered merely wondrous? This question only becomes more pressing when we recall that the final sentence of Byblis's story of incestuous love for her brother that precedes and provides a segue to the story of Iphis refers to both monstrosity and miraculous things. In the translation provided by Diane Pintabone: 'Fame of this new *monstrosity* (*monstri*) would perhaps have filled the hundred Cretan cities, / if Crete had not recently borne its own *miraculous things* (*miracula*), / with Iphis having been changed' (*Met.* 9: 666–8, emphases mine). Implicit in Ovid's juxtaposition of these stories is the idea that Iphis's transformation is not monstrous (*monstri*), but miraculous (*miracula*). Economically synthesising both approaches, Arthur Golding's sixteenth-century translation condenses *monstri* and *miracula* into the category of wonder, using it to implicitly describe both phenomena: 'The fame of this same *wondrous thing* perhaps had fillèd all / The hundred towns of Candy, had a greater not befall / More nearer home by Iphis's means, transformèd late before' (emphasis mine).[71]

Given this choice, the fact that Golding translates Iphis's lament as 'How strange a love, how uncouth, how prodigious reigns in me!'[72] – reiterating the sense of 'strange' but foregoing 'monstrous' – seems all the more provocative. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, from the late fifteenth century the meanings of 'prodigious' included '1) Of the nature of an omen; portentous; 2) That causes wonder or amazement; marvellous, astonishing. Also in an unfavourable sense: appalling'. It appears that only after the publication of Golding's edition, however, did 'prodigious' take on the meaning of 'unnatural, abnormal; freakish'. Also instructive is that 'prodigious' is as often paired with 'wonderful' and 'miraculous' as it is with 'monstrous' in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English lexicons. John Florio's *Worlde of Words* (1598) defines 'prodigioso' as 'prodigious, monstrous, unnaturall, woondrous, that giveth a strange signe or token, woonderfull, contrarie to the common course of nature'. Robert Cawdry's *A Table Alphabetical* (1604) defines 'prodigious'

as 'wonderfull, giving an ill signe'. Randle Cotgrave's *A Dictionary of the French and English Tongues* (1611) defines 'prodigiuex/euse' as 'prodigious; wonderous, monstrous, most unnaturall or out of course'. John Bullokar's *An English Expositor* (1616) and Henry Cockeram's *English Dictionary* (1623) define 'prodigious' as 'strange, wonderfull to see'. That prodigious is just as easily collocated with wondrous and wonderful as monstrous and unnatural leads me to ask (taking my cue not only from Masten but also from Karma Lochrie's essay in this volume): could the meaning of 'prodigiosa' in this tale function, perhaps, not only as a textual crux, but as a riddle? At the very least, the multiple meanings of 'prodigiosa' might encourage scholars to resist imputing wholesale negativity to Iphis in the midst of her own self-doubt – in other words, to resist following Iphis's anxious anticipation of impending shame as the only possible story. To pick up on the terms of Laurel Billings's essay included here, we might find in Iphis's articulation of her 'prodigiosa' love not only the fear of social death, but also the possibility of queer survival.

In addition to challenging the critical consensus about dominant modes of Ovidian eroticism, the terms of Iphis's complaint should give us cause to rethink a host of other issues. We might ask, for instance, whether medieval and early modern representations of nature, in which Ovid and other metamorphic texts played an influential role,[73] might productively be approached in terms of her lament, which decries the prohibitions of nature by articulating a bestiary of sex. How might Iphis's human exceptionalism in regards to sex and gender – an exceptionalism bewailed rather than exalted – enable scholars to think anew about the relations between queerness and the natural world? If nature enforces gender difference as a precondition for desire's fulfilment, how queer is it? And does nature get the last word? Second, if, as Lynn Enterline has persuasively argued, grammar school boys cut their emotional teeth on imitating, in writing and speech, Ovid's heroines, and if the tales of two of the most commonly offered of those models – Niobe and Hecuba – end, like Iphis's, in metamorphosis, might it be that such practices of *ethopoeia* (character making) utilised Iphis's complaint as well?[74]

More startling, perhaps, is the extent to which common wisdom regarding the role of Ovid in literary history, and in particular the history of English Renaissance drama, is challenged by 'Iphis and Ianthe'. Maggie Kilgour voices a settled tradition of criticism when she writes that 'While Shakespeare is familiar with the range of Ovid's work, he seems most drawn to the *Metamorphoses*, and in particular *Metamorphoses* 2–4 (Phaeton, Acteon, Narcissus, Hermaphroditus, Pyramus and Thisbe), *Metamorphoses* 10 (the stories told by Orpheus, most notably those of Pygmalion, and Venus and Adonis), and *Metamorphoses* 15 (Pythagoras' vision of external flux as well as the poet's final claim of immortality in art)'.[75] What is it that authorises recognition of Pyramus and Thisbe or Pygmalion – who appear as intertexts,

albeit crucial ones, only in single plays – and the elision of Iphis and Ianthe, who arguably influenced an entire subgenre of romantic comedy, of which Shakespeare is a supreme, but not the only, progenitor?

In 1987 Phyllis Rackin proposed that 'Lyly, writing in the 1580s for Queen Elizabeth's court, was the most influential comic playwright of his age . . . and of all his plays, *Gallathea* seems to have exerted the greatest influence on Shakespeare.'[76] Since then it has been widely recognised that *Galatea* inaugurated the vogue for cross-dressing plays on the English stage. The full contours and import of this Ovidian genealogy, however, are only beginning to be credited. Heather James has recently shown that Ovid's influence on Shakespeare established Juliet as his 'first major heroine in any genre' by linking her to four other transgressive Ovidian girls in the *Metamorphoses* Books 7 to 10 who reflect 'on the unstable nature of passion, the arbitrary force of custom and law, and the tyranny of the name of the father'.[77] In pursuit of this argument, James provides a fresh reading of Iphis's dramatic monologue (which, she argues, 'issues a powerful series of negative examples from nature that ironically make the case for the opposing truth'), posits a possible means for managing the girls' sexual satisfaction (given what Daedalus does for Pasiphaë, James remarks, he 'could invent the world's best dildo') and offers a perceptive observation about Iphis's metamorphosis: 'The scene of metamorphosis is more impressive for what it ignores (the penis) than for what it describes (secondary sex characteristics): if Iphis undergoes a genital change, it is apparently not worth mentioning.'[78] Insofar as Iphis may be passing as male as much as experiencing a change of genital sex, she can be seen as 'the original of Shakespeare's boy heroines'.[79] To put this even more strongly: knowing, as we do, that 'Ovid was Shakespeare's favorite poet',[80] it is to 'Iphis and Ianthe' that we should give thanks for the creation of Rosalind/Ganymede, Viola/Cesario and even, perhaps, the gender-bending fantasies of Cleopatra.[81] Moreover, while we cannot know for certain the authorship of *Iphis and Iantha, or A Marriage without a Man*, given what we know of the homoerotics of Shakespearean comedy, it's worth reconsidering Alfred Harbage's attribution of this lost play to Shakespeare.

While discussions of gender, sexuality and the body thus loom large in this volume – and our contributors would agree that such concerns are closely linked to the issues they consider – the import of 'Iphis and Ianthe' is not limited to these matters.[82] Our contributors' investigation of the array of topics engaged by this tale extends the analytic purview to discourses of religious conversion, climate change, humanist pedagogy, apprenticeship, scientific and medical treatises, alchemical texts, geography, lexicography and practices of reading – and thus to such fields as the history of religion, environmental criticism, the history of education, the history of science, the history of material texts and the history of language. By demonstrating the uptake of 'Iphis

and Ianthe' for this extended set of considerations, our contributors reveal the extent to which medieval and early modern writers found in Ovid's story a productive space within which to dwell, a theme to riff upon, a suggestion of an idea that teases them to do something more (or different) with it. Like the 'artificial' member that appears in several of the essays that follow, 'Iphis and Ianthe' is itself a *supplement* that enables new and untoward combinations of ideas, concepts and concerns to arise. Given the multiplicity of treatments, it becomes clear that there is not one medieval or early modern 'Iphis and Ianthe' but many.

This capacity for invention is of a piece with the hermeneutic uncertainty and epistemological opacity analysed by many of our contributors, particularly in regard to the presumed intelligibility of Iphis's body. As their essays attest, this tale raises important questions not only of subjectivity, desire and embodiment, but also of temporality (the status of past, present and future), ontology (the origins of gendered being and erotic desire) and epistemology (how embodied, desiring subjects know and are known). Questions of scepticism and doubt occur repeatedly across these pages. In the aggregate, the essays in this volume suggest the importance of questioning the 'before and after' syntax of metamorphosis routinely adopted by its readers and critics: What *exactly* has been transformed? On what grounds do we *know* that a transformation has occurred? What is the basis of our certainty? Is her transformation an externalisation of essential, internal character? Is this metamorphosis an example of change-within-continuity or continuity-within-change? Is Iphis always, already, *really* a man – and what would it mean to assert that she is or isn't? What is at stake – hermeneutically, ethically, politically – in our answers to these questions?

* * *

Such questions motivate our offering of the term 'transversion' as an overarching rubric for the translations, commentaries, appropriations, analogues, intertexts and afterlives inspired by this tale, as well as an analytic for rethinking the concept of transformation itself. As a Latin prefix, 'trans' means 'across, through, over, to or on the other side of, beyond, outside of, from one place, person, thing or state to another' (*OED*, 1). The multivalent signification of 'trans' informs this collection in several important ways. The very idea of 'trans' is implicit in the poetics and rhetoric of metamorphosis and thus is central to any Ovidian project. We thus highlight, as a first principle, the meaning of transformation itself, and the questions, such as those above, that it carries in its wake – about which more will be said at the end of this introduction.

Second is the act of translation, the manner in which 'Iphis and Ianthe' circulates by way of 'carrying over' from one language to another. Focused on the medieval and early modern versions of Ovid's tale in Latin, French

and English, issues of translation crop up throughout this volume. Informed by theories in which, in the words of Miranda Griffin, translation poses an 'impossible relationship between language and truth',[83] raising questions of fidelity and transparency that can never fully be resolved, the essays included here approach translation as a transformation, accomplished not only through the (never unproblematic) transit from one language to another, but by incorporating and addressing the social concerns of different times and places. If, as Karen Newman and Jane Tylus maintain, there would have been no Renaissance without translation, this volume affirms the value, as their collection does, of the 'borrowings' and 'generative misprisions' involved in acts of cultural and literary mediation.[84]

If translation is itself metamorphosis, a change into a new form, then there is no reason to analytically separate the *Ovide moralisé* from non-moralising translations, or any of these works from later literary adaptations. Such generic levelling of text, translation and intertext has paid off in the work of Raphael Lyne, who reads the translations of Arthur Golding and George Sandys alongside the poetry of Edmund Spenser and Samuel Drayton, of Liz Oakley-Brown, who examines the cultural and sexual politics of Ovidian translation from '*translatio* to *allusio*', as well as of Susan Wiseman, who reads metamorphosis across different kinds of writing in order to historicise and challenge disciplinary divides.[85] We promote this levelling strategy here as one way to more fully recover and appreciate the literary and social import of 'Iphis and Ianthe'. Further, in order to make some of the versions produced in England and France more readily available, we have included in the book's appendices modern English translations of 'Iphis and Ianthe' from the *Ovide moralisé*, John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* and Christine de Pizan's *Le livre de la mutacion de Fortune*, along with excerpts from Arthur Golding's and George Sandys's early modern English translations of the *Metamorphoses*.

The concept of 'trans' also informs our approach in terms of the temporal and spatial registers across which this volume traverses. Exploring texts produced over three centuries in France and England, this volume seeks not to collapse time into an undifferentiated transhistoricity but to demonstrate both change and continuity in approaches to Ovid's tale. The various and sometimes quite extraordinary alterations to the text between 1300 and 1650 are analysed by several contributors. In geography as well as time, this volume transits 'across, through, over, to or on the other side of' the Channel – La Manche that separates France from England.[86] The inclusion of essays on the French moralised Ovids as well as on Christine de Pizan's 'autobiography' next to an essay on Gower's English poem and John Florio's bilingual dictionary offers an implicit dialogue among several traditions, as do the cluster of essays on Lyly's and Benserade's plays. Across differences of time and place, what

is remarkable in the texts analysed here is the nature of what is preserved: namely, the fact of cross-dressing, the erotic nature of the girls' desire and the transformation of the material body to enable a socially acceptable resolution. No author, whatever his or her intentions in adopting or alluding to Ovid, elides the couple's passion: their desire may be roundly condemned, but it is not hidden from history or forced into a closet.

In light of this commitment to candid portrayals of desire (however roundly it is sometimes condemned), it is notable that early modern dictionaries include a surprising number of terms referring to the kind of transformation at issue in this tale. Sir Thomas Blount in his *Glossographia* (1656) and Elisha Coles in *An English Dictionary* (1676) include the words *transection* ('a turning or passing from one sex to another'), *transfeminate* ('to turn from woman to man, or from one sex to another') as well as *transpeciate* ('to change kind or form').[87] It is thus with awareness of both alterity and resemblance across time that we affirm, as theoretical and thematic motivations, the resonance to our project of the contemporary terms *trans* (a stand-alone category referring to a spectrum of non-normative genders, the disarticulation of sexed bodies from gender as well as gender transition), *trans-* (the hyphen signifying a prefix connecting trans to a specific set of referents) as well as *trans** (the asterisk referring to as-yet-unknown sex and gender possibilities).[88] Several of the essays included here are motivated by the concepts of 'trans' and 'trans-', as they shift the focus from Iphis's and Ianthe's homoerotic desires to the tale's emphasis on gendered embodiment.[89] The concept of trans*, in contrast, 'foregrounds and intensifies the prehensile, prefixial nature of *trans-* and implies a suffixial space of attachment'[90] rather than a category, object or specific location. Trans* thus attempts to bring into being 'binary-resistant ontologies that exist within and beyond our grasp',[91] and its political and conceptual work is therefore always potentially unfinished. Two of the essays here deliberately mobilise 'trans*' to explore the prepositional quality, the instability and open-endedness, of sexed and gendered modes of identification.[92] The broader theoretical questions and investments activated by each of these different concepts – anatomised especially in Rubright's essay – inform the volume as a whole. Rather than promote any particular version of trans, trans- or trans*,[93] this volume perceives the issue at stake – *as they work as analytic concepts* – as the way they signify a conceptually productive tension between identity and non-identity, positionality and prepositionality.[94]

Important as well is that these terms are not mutually exclusive. Both 'the prefix dash and the asterisk', according to A. Finn Enke, 'force us to know *trans* as modification and motion across time and space'.[95] This sense of temporal and spatial change and movement reverberates all the more when placed in close proximity to the noun 'version'. The textual twists and turns that are implied by the word 'version' mirror the complexity of bodily processes

indexed by trans/trans-/trans*; whether as a manifestation of embodied experience or as an interpretative mode, *transversion* signals a forward-and-backward movement across space and/or time. Thus, while the plots and themes of different versions of the story are themselves of considerable interest to us, our curiosity extends to the question of what makes a version, historically and theoretically, a version. Sometimes, as in the case of *Yde et Olive*, the relationship to the reputed Ovidian source has been contested or minimised.[96] This approach, bound as it is by concerns of originality, authenticity, fidelity and direct transmission, is to our mind less productive than thinking in terms of intertexts and a broadly construed adaptational field. Adaptation of early modern authors is increasingly being theorised as a rhizomatic network of relays, citations and transmediations;[97] as is true for this body of work, our aim is to explore which questions and concerns the act of constellating related texts and terms – however they may be related – can bring to the fore. Doing so does not wholly dispense with the concept of fidelity (to an author or a text) but, rather than construe value in terms of degrees of fidelity, we are more interested in tracking the intensities and types of resemblance and difference among texts.[98]

Our use of transversion is historically as well as theoretically motivated. The *OED*'s first definition for the noun 'version', which first appears in 1582, doubles down on the word's relevance for our project by emphasising its relationship to translation. 'Version' is 'a rendering of some text or work, or of a single word, passage, etc., from one language into another; a translation; also (rarely), the action or process of translating' (*OED*, 1.a). (This meaning is preserved in the French pedagogical practice of *thème et version*.) In addition to this sense of translation, the *OED*'s third definition of 'version', first recorded in Sir Francis Bacon's use in 1625, is also salient: 'a turning about; a change of direction'. Version, in other words, involves a translation, a turning, a reorientation both linguistic and directional.[99] But the conceptual connections do not stop there. The first *OED* definition of the noun 'transversion' (*transversio*), appearing in Blount's *Glossographia*, is 'a turning away or crosse, a traversing, or going athwart', to which the *OED* adds: 'the action of turning across or athwart; intersection, a turning into something else, conversion, perversion, transformation, transposition'.[100] (No less interesting, it turns out, are some modern derivations: in molecular biology, for instance, a genetic transversion is a *sport of nature* – a phrase that might well have been applied to Iphis in the medieval and early modern eras.) Without venturing further down the rabbit hole of early modern etymology, we can see that 'trans', 'version', 'transversion', 'translation', 'conversion' and 'perversion' are all linked conceptually by the seventeenth century in a chain of association that most likely pre-dates the recorded etymology and usefully extends into our critical practices. Comprising a constellation of interdependent terms,

their analytic purchase for 'Iphis and Ianthe', we hope, will spark a diverse range of future investigations.

* * *

The creation of this volume has been, from the start, a collaborative process – a fact we emphasise because we advocate it as an important future direction for modes of literary critical work.[101] Indeed, we see a collaborative ethos as itself a transformation of business as usual in the humanities. Our collaboration arose out of a symposium at the University of Michigan in 2016,[102] which was in turn inspired by two events: a graduate course that I co-taught with Peggy McCracken several years prior entitled 'Woman, Animal, Human', and my, Peggy's and Patsy Badir's involvement in the Early Modern Conversions project housed at McGill University. Insofar as Peggy's and my course compared medieval and early modern French and English materials in light of poststructuralist and posthumanist theories of embodiment, the syllabus included several medieval and early modern translations of 'Iphis and Ianthe' and *Galatea* alongside renditions of 'Narcissus and Echo'. The approaches that Peggy and I took to these materials quickly evolved into a mode of hermeneutic counterpoint. Inspired by Deleuze, Peggy tended to focus, both historically and theoretically, on the fundamental instability of concepts, categories and practices, while I, attempting to channel Foucault, tended to stress the historical and theoretical consequences of the culture's emergent attraction to fixity, classification and regulation. To draw the contrast more specifically: a deconstructive approach to medieval renderings of 'Narcissus and Echo', in Peggy's view, demonstrates how language and desire can exceed the organisation and moralisations of myth, while propelling analysis towards Deleuzian lines of flight. Narcissus and Echo are not just figures of instability and excess but of becoming: becoming voice, becoming shadow, becoming reflection, becoming lover.[103] Beyond the dictates of gendered bodies and sex, new and untoward assemblages of self-other arise through specific becomings manifest in relation to certain objects – for instance a fountain or pool.[104] When the class discussion turned to 'Iphis and Ianthe', I emphasised that for all the manifest attractions of becoming and assemblage, the performance of gender in both Ovid's tale and its medieval and early modern transversions is insistently tethered to material embodiment. Both 'Iphis and Ianthe' and *Galatea* return lines of flight to the workings of power, manifested in the (nascently biopolitical) drive to order, stabilise and classify. Erotic desire and the body are not just subject to flux and transformation but are delimited by social desire and its material manifestations in the form of patriarchal authority and sacrificial femicide.[105]

The point, of course, is that both critical emphases are productive – and potentially dialogic. For the irresolvable stand-off between the intellectual traditions represented here by Foucault and Deleuze seems to broadly

characterise the tension between fixity and becoming, classification and trans-formation, that in both historical and conceptual terms provides a crucial organising logic of medieval and early modern cultures. Not incidentally, this is also an organising logic present in the history of sexuality – for instance, in the tension between minoritising and universalising approaches toward 'modern' homosexuality.[106] This tension also might be said to describe a faultline within contemporary trans/trans-/trans* discourses which can, on the one hand, insist that trans marks a transition from one clear state to another and, on the other, deliberately refuse such clarity on behalf of the genderqueer. This volume dem-onstrates that such faultlines have a centuries-long genealogy. It therefore is of considerable interest that early modernists have approached similar tensions in light of Ovidian metamorphosis. As Leonard Barkan notes: 'For all its empha-sis upon the blurring of clear categories, metamorphosis is as much concerned with reduction and fixity as with variability or complexity.'[107] Alternatively, in her analysis of the sapphic discourse she terms 'metamorphic', Susan Lanser notes that while 'the appeal of sex-change resolutions lies in the attempt to stabilize flux and restore fixity ... these metamorphic scenarios leave con-siderable residue.' By residue (what she elsewhere calls 'sapphic remainder') Lanser gestures toward what the plot cannot logically solve by means of its resolution – which is why, in the main, metamorphic stories resort to a 'literal or discursive deus ex machina'.[108] Likewise, in an essay on Ovid's influence on Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, Lori Humphrey Newcomb identifies a tension between 'monumentalizing' and 'spectacularizing' impulses,[109] index-ing them to gender in ways that prove salient to 'Iphis and Ianthe' and its trans-versions. Monumentalising is a materialising mode whose tendency is 'to shape and fix texts, to demand singular control of the art object, to memorialize the body in an exact duplicate, to contain women in immobility'. Spectacularising, in contrast, is a performative mode that 'leave[s] texts behind ... embrace[s] collaboration and proliferation ... [and] celebrate[s] the changefulness of the human body, even the female body'.[110] Emphasising that these two impulses cannot be reconciled, Newcomb traces their complex interplay within both Shakespeare's play and the dialectic between page and stage.[111]

The tensions between monumentalising and spectacularising, fixity and flux, biopolitics and becoming, that Peggy and I engaged pedagogically were given a new set of terms, coordinates and interlocutors by way of the Early Modern Conversions project. The noun 'conversion' means 'turning in posi-tion, direction, destination' (*OED*, 1), as well as 'change in character, nature, form, or function' – both of which have obvious affinities with the constella-tion of terms related to 'trans' noted above. We thus hope that new questions and approaches will arise when conversion is approached through 'Iphis and Ianthe' and its transversions, and transversion is approached by means of the intellectual repertoire involved in rethinking conversion. In particular, we hope

to bring more exactitude to our understanding of the historical and theoretical implications of certain concepts that have organised the study of medieval and early modern religion, politics, social hierarchy, race, gender and sexuality. Based on our evolving appreciation of transversion as an analytic, we propose that this concept offers a resource for moving beyond tried and true categories of experience and identity that have governed analysis of both conversion and metamorphosis. This is in no small part because at the heart of these concepts reside two basic ontological and epistemological questions: What *is* metamorphosis, conversion or transformation? And how do we know when it has occurred? Is the change an expression of the radical replacement of one thing by another or the unfolding or development of an essence that endures?[112] These were certainly questions that medievals and early moderns worried about in regard to the professions of Christian faith by Jews and Muslims who claimed to have converted, as well as in regard to the confessional differences tearing Christianity apart.[113] Furthermore, differences of opinion about how to address these questions have created impasses within the Early Modern Conversions project itself. Whether participants were analysing autobiographical narratives of the voluntary, aspirational conversion of one's own faith (modelled on Augustine's *Confessions*) or the coerced, mass conversions of religious and ethnic others (whose touchstones are the Spanish Inquisition and conversion in the New World), whether we were trying to define the global politics of conversion or its subjective phenomenology, we often seemed to be at conceptual loggerheads, forced to choose between knowledge and uncertainty, fixity and flux, classification and change, being and becoming.

Rather than gloss over these tensions, we ask: How might the analytic of transversion address this impasse? Much criticism of metamorphosis, for instance, upholds the 'clarification' of an essential identity as its central, governing function.[114] Our contributors suggest, instead, that the bodies depicted in 'Iphis and Ianthe' and its transversions might best be considered as the manifestation of a *process* of embodiment, rather than a readily legible and already achieved representation of bodies. If one thinks of embodiment as a process, the transit from one ontological state to another is not necessarily arrested by reaching what, at any discrete moment in time, seems a terminal point, nor is it necessarily unidirectional. But neither, we would insist, is this process as open-ended as the overused trope of 'fluidity' – often used to describe changes in gender, subjectivity or desire – might suggest.[115] Further, any movement entailed by embodiment-as-process involves not only a spatial reorientation but temporal duration as well. Several essays dwell on the temporality of transition, showing it to be less a moment than a process, eventuating less in a terminal result than in a movement *in between* that undermines the neat sequence of past to present to future. If we deliberately and patiently track each moment of change *across*, then new understandings of what is at stake emerge.

The moment that Iphis walks from the temple, starting off female and ending (maybe) as a (kind of) male; the lack of mention of a penis in the tale's scene of metamorphosis;[116] the arbitrary nature of whose sex will be transformed, Galatea's or Phyllida's, and the deferral of this change beyond the frame of Lyly's play; the fact that Benserade's drama starts near the end of the story, slows down the plot and emphasises resistance to marriage and postponement of the transformation and the truth[117] – each of these matters command our attention for its dilation and deferral of the meaning of metamorphosis, as well as of the transformation implied by the all-too-simple, shorthand concept of 'sex change'. Indeed, they offer a mandate for considering transversion, meta-morphosis and conversion *in slow motion*, insisting that we ask: Is the change of sex a trans*fixion*? Or does it always leave some *version* of something (else, other, prior) behind?[118]

Beyond suggesting the interpretative payoff of slowing down our analyses to account for minute processes of change – as well as the sometimes recalci-trant resistance to it – a number of ontological and epistemological challenges ensue from the methodological application of transversion. First, in terms of ontology: it is often said that metamorphic dynamics entail a psychologically enabling loss of the self – and this insight has become a staple of criticism of Ovidian-influenced comedies such as *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Twelfth Night*. Others, conversely, have argued that Ovid's fleeing nymphs, in particular, are 'saved' by a metamorphosis that paradoxi-cally allows them to retain their essential identity – albeit in altered form.[119] Each of these positions, while theoretically attractive, encounters a problem of ethical discernment: who is losing one's self, who can experience that loss as enabling, and whose self is saved? We suggest that rethinking metamorphoses in terms of transversion enables interpretative acts that do not hinge on abso-lute or universalised conceptions of loss or gain, which themselves tend toward ethical positions that fail to account for social hierarchy and privilege.

Second, in terms of epistemology: the fact that knowledge is withheld from many of the actors in these texts (the father as well as the beloved); the fact that Galatea and Phyllida literally do not know what to make of one another's bodies and even after they go off into the forest to 'make much of one another' still do not seem to know;[120] the fact that scholars routinely profess opinions of whose sex will be changed in Lyly's play based on presumptive knowledge of a character's 'essential' masculinity[121] – each of these issues translates an ontological question into an epistemological one, that is, a problem of knowl-edge. Such a shift also underlies medieval euhemerist and Christian interpreta-tions of the *Metamorphoses* as the revelation of divine truths. Because one of the central anxieties about religious conversion was the inability to *know* if someone's conversion was authentic, attention to the problems that conversion presents to knowledge relations has ramifications for those whose interests lie

primarily in the history and politics of religion as well as those interested in the history and politics of embodiment.

Indeed, transversion might provide further analytic purchase in terms of the effort to balance awareness of the historical specificity of conversion as a phenomenon indicatively formed in the realm of religion with awareness of the concept's capacious salience for a variety of transformations. Within the Early Modern Conversions project, the challenge has been to accomplish this balancing act without evacuating conversion's historical and conceptual specificity or rendering conversion simply a synonym for all change. This volume thus offers transversion as a potential lever to press conversion and metamorphosis against one another. For instance, it has become a cliché in scholarship on Ovid that his *Metamorphoses* is itself always undergoing metamorphosis.[122] It has yet to be fully appreciated, however, that conversion is also always a converting – not a settled state but an ongoing process. Conversely, the tethering of conversion to the high-stakes realm of religion may tend to elicit more scholarly exactitude than the generally fuzzier (and often purely phenomenological) concept of metamorphosis. For instance, scholars of conversion necessarily wonder whether it is a turning away or a turning toward – or both. Conversion may follow (or impart) a different structural logic than metamorphosis, insisting on specific material entailments of temporal moment and geography, training the eye on *when* and *where* change happens. The virtue of transversion is that it asks us to scrutinise such dynamics of location and temporality, to watch movements as they transit forward and back, and to attend to the play of difference as well as similarity.

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The transversions that motivate this collection are visually represented in the bronze statue sculpted by Auguste Rodin for his *Gates of Hell* that adorns this book's cover. Part of the amortisement of the right-hand pilaster of the *Gates*, these entwined lovers are known in that context, as well as in stand-alone versions, as *Ovid's Metamorphoses*. Because the sculpture is placed vertically in the *Gates*, the figure lying on her back is almost completely hidden by the body of her partner. (This hidden figure appears in several of Rodin's compositions, including 'Young Girl with a Serpent'.) The pair have enjoyed a number of names over the course of Rodin's career. They were described as 'Castor and Pollux', even as Rodin affirmed to Carl Jacobsen on 18 October 1907 that the pair depicts 'the episode where the nymph Salmacis falls in love with a hermaphrodite'.[123] The statue was also known as 'Les Amies' (the friends) and, with reference to Baudelaire, as 'Voluptuousness (Les Fleurs du Mal)'. A photograph annotated in Rodin's hand names it 'Desire'. Currently, it is advertised as 'Iphis and Ianthe' by the on-line image service Artnet. How it received this attribution, we do not know. We do know that the models were two dancers

from the Opéra, known as 'priestesses of the isle of Lesbos' recommended by Degas to Rodin.[124]

Such conundrums of attribution need not trouble us. The flexibility of names for this loving pair, not to mention their feminised if ambiguous embodiment, are altogether fitting emblems of transversion, suggesting just how transferable its conceptual logic may be as we seek to understand the variability and complexity of bodies coming together – as female, as male and as uncircumscribed by gender – over the centuries.

Notes

1. See the Loeb translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by Frank Justus Miller. Although there is some debate, the apparent source for the story of 'Iphis and Ianthe' is that of Leucippus in Book 2 of Nicander's lost *Heteroeumena*, the probable prose summary of which is preserved in the transformation tales compiled by Antonius Liberalis; see Wheeler, 'Changing Names'.
2. These manuscript copies of the Latin *Metamorphoses* include subtitles (*tituli*) to help readers orient themselves in the text and prose paraphrases (*argumenta*) to help readers understand it. See Hexter, 'Medieval Articulations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*'.
3. Tarrant, 'The *Narrationes* of "Lactantius" and the Transmission of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*'.
4. Gillespie, 'From the Twelfth Century to *c.*1450'. See also the introduction in Gura, *A Critical Edition and Study of Arnulf of Orléans' Philological Commentary to Ovid's 'Metamorphoses'*.
5. Gillespie, 'From the Twelfth Century to *c.*1450', p. 194. See also the introduction in Born, *The Integumenta on the Metamorphoses of Ovid by John of Garland*. *Integumentum* refers to the veiling of a hidden truth.
6. Coulson, 'Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the School Tradition of France', and 'Ovid's Transformations in Medieval France'.
7. Gillespie, 'From the Twelfth Century to *c.*1450', p. 189.
8. Hexter, 'Medieval Articulations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', p. 76. Gillespie argues, however, that 'none of the surviving school collections of *accessus* from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries treats the *Metamorphoses*', suggesting that many pedagogues 'felt strongly that this was not a suitable work to put into the hands or minds of impressionable students', p. 193.
9. Minnis, *Magister amoris*, p. 12.
10. Gillespie, 'From the Twelfth Century to *c.*1450'.
11. The author of this text 'assumes variously', in the words of Copeland, 'the posture of moral expositor, biblical exegete, allegorist, and translator', roles that also extend to the compilation and incorporation of 'existing vernacular versions of some Ovidian material'; *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics and Translation in the Middle*

Ages, p. 117. Copeland further argues that its 'vernacular system of exegesis replaces its Latin precedent; and in a radical move of appropriation, a vernacular translation substitutes itself for the Latin original as the object of exegetical interest', p. 114.

12. In addition to Coulson, 'Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the School Tradition of France', and Gillespie, 'From the Twelfth Century to c.1450', for the complicated history of these interrelated works, see Dimmick, 'Ovid in the Middle Ages', and Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages*, p. 100.

13. According to Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France*, in the medieval moralised Ovids, 'Poetic language is essentially figurative language, and poetic fable is the pleasant telling of truth disguised, an extended metaphor or allegory, to be read rather as riddle than as narrative', p. 24.

14. Gillespie, 'From the Twelfth Century to *c*.1450', p. 206.

15. Moss, 'Ovid in Renaissance France', p. 26.

16. In addition to Moss, 'Ovid in Renaissance France', see Blair, 'Ovidius Methodizatus', and Green, *Humanism and Protestantism in Early Modern English Education*, pp. 222–3, who notes that a new edition of the *Metamorphoses* was published in England 'every three or four years from the 1580s to the 1740s', p. 223.

17. Cornish, *Vernacular Translation in Dante's Italy*.

18. Green, *Humanism and Protestantism*, p. 318.

19. These include *Les XV livres de la Metamorphose D'ovide* (1539); *Olympe, ou Metamorphose d'Ovide* (1597); *Les métamorphoses d'Ovide traduites en prose françoise*, trans. Nicolas Renouard (Paris: M. Guillemot, 1606); and *Les métamorphoses d'Ovide* (1617). Over the next few decades, Renouard's translation was reprinted over twenty times; see Taylor, *The Lives of Ovid*, p. 50. In addition, two parodic 'burlesque' versions of the *Metamorphoses* were published in France in 1650; see Taylor, *The Lives of Ovid*, pp. 55–69.

20. The *Metamorphoses* was widely disseminated through humanist pedagogy, alongside the *Ars Amatoria* and *Heroides*, for lessons in prosopopoeia (imitation) and ethopoeia (character-making); see James, 'Shakespeare, the Classics, and the Forms of Authorship'; Enterline, *Shakespeare's Schoolroom* and 'Rhetoric and Gender in Early Modern British Literature'.

21. For gendered readings of some of the commentaries and translations, see McKinley, *Reading the Ovidian Heroine*.

22. These include a late fourteenth-century drama, *Miracle de la fille d'un roy*, a fifteenth-century French prose epic adaptation in *Les processes et faicts du trespreux noble et vaillant Huon de Bordeaux, pair de France et Duc de Guyenne*, and an English prose epic from the 1530s.

23. Freyman et al., *Iphis*. For a hypertext, Latin–English version, with critical notes correlating lines from Bellamy's *Iphis* to the *Metamorphoses* and discussion of how Bellamy amplifies the lesbian plot, see Sutton, www.philological.bham. ac.uk/iphis/.

24. Harbage, *Annals of English Drama*, pp. 106–7.

25. These images, and the movements between text and image, have been surprisingly under-read. For pertinent analysis of some of them, see Mills, *Seeing Sodomy in the Middle Ages*, pp. 116–21.

26. See Ferrand, *De la maladie d'amour ou mélancholie érotique* (1610). In tracing the history of some of these citations, Beecher, 'Concerning Sex Changes', p. 997, notes that Pliny the Elder's source for his 'case study' of the change from male to female of Lucius Cossitius in his *Natural History* 'is so close to [the] Ovidian tale that we may wonder whether it is not displaced from an underlying mythological tradition.' Whereas Beecher finds it 'strange to think that by a process of citation,

even the myths of the ancients became the substance of scientific analysis', it is the intent of our volume to suggest the extent of this form of intertextuality.

27. Saker matter of factly states '& that young *Iphis* retayning till her mariage day the shape of a Maide, though attyred in the habite of a man, was then made a husband, for which he long wished, and enioyed the company of his beloued wife', n.p.

28. Loid, *The Pilgrimage of princes*, p. 107.

29. Riche, *His Farewell to Militarie Profession*, n.p. For a modern translation, see Beecher, *Barnabe Riche*, pp. 303–4. In the anonymous Scots play *Philotus* (1603) which closely follows Riche's plot, this exchange is much reduced, with the reference to Iphis accorded only four short lines (stanza 107).

30. Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*; Beecher, 'Concerning Sex Changes'; Long, in this volume.

31. Sandys, *Ovid's Metamorphosis Englished*, p. 450.

32. Phillips, *The New World of English Words*, accessed on-line through *Lexicons of Early Modern English*. According to *LEME*, the two other lexicons that emphasise paternal displeasure are Thomas Cooper, *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae* (1584) – 'Then Telethusa perceituing the matter coulde no longer be hid, and fearing hir husbandes displeasure, called to the Gods for helpe' – and Elisha Coles, *An English Dictionary* (1676) – 'Iphis, a Cretan Virgin turn'd into a man on her wedding day (at the prayers of her Mother) to avoid the anger of her husband Lygdus.' Henry Cockeram's *English Dictionary* (1623) notes only that 'her Mother seeing the matter could be no longer hid, praied to the gods'. Interestingly, Phillips' lexicon, the only of the four to include an entry for Ianthe, mistakenly describes her as 'a certain Virgin, the daughter of Telessa, who the first day of her marriage was transformed into a man'.

33. Piozzi, *Thraliana*, Vol 1, p. 356.

34. For more scholarship on *Galatea*, see Lunney, 'Recent Studies in John Lyly'.

35. Kesson, *John Lyly*, p. 4. 'Lyly was the first Elizabethan to see a series of his plays go into print, and the first writer to see his plays reprinted', p. 4. 'Having opened up a new market for single-story fiction books in the late 1570s, Lyly's authorship then helped to open up the market for play books in the 1580s and early 1590s', Kesson, p. 167.

36. Golding's translation refers to such English phenomena as fruits and flowers; see Badir in this volume.

37. Interestingly, in the probable source for Ovid's tale, Nicander's *Heteroeumena*, the name of the Iphis figure's mother is Galataea; see Raval, 'Cross-Dressing and "Gender Trouble" in the Ovidian Corpus', and Wheeler, 'Changing Names'.

38. Critical fashion has long viewed Lyly's plays as stilted and, in essence, non-theatrical, a view that recent university productions and theatre-based staged readings have refuted. That this criticism has gone hand in hand with allegations of his stylistic 'effeminacy' and aesthetic 'impotence' is broached by Kesson but worth additional analysis.

39. There is no translation of this play into English.

40. See Lanham, *The Motives of Eloquence*; Fyler, *Chaucer and Ovid*; Pearcy, *The Mediated Muse*; Loewenstein, *Responsive Readings*; Rubin, *Ovid's 'Metamorphosis English'*; Harvey, *Ventriloquized Voices*; Taylor (ed.), *Shakespeare's Ovid*; Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare*; Lyne, *Ovid's Changing Worlds*; James, 'Ovid in English Renaissance Literature'; Pugh, *Spenser and Ovid*; Kilgour, *Milton and the Metamorphosis of Ovid*; Taylor, *The Lives of Ovid*; Wiseman, *Writing Metamorphosis in the English Renaissance*; and Casali, 'Ovidian Intertextuality in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*'.

41. Barkan, *Transuming Passion*; Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England*; DiGangi, 'The Homoerotics of Marriage in Ovidian Comedy'; Stanivukovic, *Ovid and the Renaissance Body*; Ferguson, *Queer (Re)Readings in the French Renaissance*; Carter, *Ovidian Myth and Sexual Deviance*; and Nardizzi et al. (eds), *Queer Renaissance Historiography*.

42. The exceptions include Chess, 'Queer Gender Informants in Ovid and Shakespeare'; Scragg, *The Metamorphosis of Gallathea*; Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh*; Perry, *Another Reality*; Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid*; Braden, 'Ovid and Shakespeare'; Keith and Rupp (eds), *Metamorphosis: The Changing Face of Ovid*; Oakley-Brown, *Ovid and the Cultural Politics of Translation*; Ferguson, *Queer (Re) Readings in the French Renaissance*; Carter, *Ovidian Myth and Sexual Deviance*; Starks-Estes, *Violence, Trauma, and* Virtus *in Shakespeare's Roman Plays and Poems*; and James, 'Shakespeare's Learned Heroines in Ovid's Schoolroom' and 'The Ovidian Girlhood of Shakespeare's Boy Actors'. Earlier work on this tale is testament to a change in scholarly understandings of gender and sexuality. Fairly typical of the earlier brief mention is the casual treatment of Burrow, 'Original Fictions: Metamorphoses in *The Faerie Queen*': 'Is the world populated by people produced from the rapes of the gods? From Iphis-like lesbianism? From Pygmalian [*sic*] union with stones? The poem is an extraordinarily tense mixture of the generative and the perverse. And Ovid is not interested in reconciling them', p. 100.

43. Reid, *The Oxford Guide to Classical Mythology in the Arts*.

44. This method was also evident in the popular twelfth-century phenomenon of creating *florilegia*, or selected extracts, of the *Metamorphoses*. See Gura, *A Critical Edition and Study of Arnulf of Orléans' Philological Commentary*.

45. Hexter, 'Medieval Articulations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', notes that for medieval interpreters of the poem, 'segmentation is a precondition for interpretation', p. 63. Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*, however, distinguishes between the *Ovide moralisé*, which 'overcoded the text with an officially sanctioned (Christian) narrative', whereas later humanist pedagogues privileged 'copia' which 'decoded the [Ovidian] text into rhetorical and discursive components. The older method subsumed dangerous contents within a larger ideological unity; the newer method decomposed this same material into harmless, inert atoms', p. 47. Crane, *Framing Authority: Sayings, Self, and Society*, argues that humanists and their students treated Latin texts such as Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as 'containers of extractable fragments of wisdom and eloquence', p. 87.

46. Even translators of the full work seem to have been challenged in this regard; according to Oakley-Brown, even as 'they aspire to the unity they thought they saw in Ovid's text', they 'were unavoidably trapped by the fragmentation which was at the heart of Ovid's narrative method', *Ovid and the Cultural Politics of Translation*, p. 192.

47. See, in addition to work cited in note 40, Greene, *Light in Troy*; James, *Shakespeare's Troy*; and Cheney, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession*. See also Dupas in this volume.

48. Hulse, *Metamorphic Verse*; Keach, *Elizabethan Erotic Narratives*; Ellis, *Sexuality and Citizenship*.

49. Compare Groves' more trans-positive translation: 'Nor do I tell the story of how once Sithon lived as both sexes, now man, now woman, through an innovation of natural law', in 'From Statue to Story', p. 322.

50. There are two ways of thinking of 'Iphis and Ianthe' in relationship to intertextuality: as related to themes, texts, and intellectual projects *beyond* Ovid's original Latin poem, and as internally, laterally, connected to other stories within

the Ovidian corpus. Whereas our volume explores the former, readers may well be interested in the latter. An earlier tradition of scholarship tended to associate Iphis with the stories of 'unnatural love' in Book 9, including the incest tales of Byblis and Myrrha, and/or the male homoerotic tales of Orpheus, Ganymede and Hyacinthus. Surprisingly few scholars read 'Iphis and Ianthe' in terms of other Ovidian tales of sex change (e.g. Tiresias, Caenis/Caeneus, Mestra, Sithon, and Salmacis and Hermaphroditus).

For a sense of classicists' readings of the tale, see Hallett, 'Female Homoeroticism and the Denial of Roman Reality in Latin Literature'; Pintabone, 'Ovid's Iphis and Ianthe: When Girls Won't be Girls'; Raval, 'Cross-Dressing and "Gender Trouble" in the Ovidian Corpus'; Kamen, 'Naturalized Desires and the Metamorphosis of Iphis'; Ormand, 'Impossible Lesbians in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*'; and Walker, 'Before the Name'. Sharrock's overview, 'Gender and Sexuality', leads with the story of Iphis. See also Alison (trans.), *Change Me: Stories of Sexual Transformation from Ovid*.

A few scholars who have analysed 'Iphis and Ianthe' briefly consider other Ovidian tales of cross-dressing, androgyny and sex change: see, for instance, Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh*, who discusses Tiresias and 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus'. Mestra and Sithon have received little comment. Regarding Tiresias, see Carp, '"Venus Utraque"'; Liveley, 'Tiresias/Teresa'; and Brisson and Lloyd, *Sexual Ambivalence*. For 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus', see Nugent, '"This Sex Which Is Not One"'; Robinson, 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus'; Nagle, '"Amor, Ira," and Sexual Identity in Ovid's "Metamorphosis"'; Zajko, '"Listening With" Ovid'; Groves, 'From Statue to Story'; Keith, 'Versions of Epic Masculinity in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*' and, briefly, 'Gender and Sexuality'. In 'Versions of Epic Masculinity' Keith also briefly addresses Caenis/Caenus, as does Brisson; see also Papaioannou, *Redesigning Achilles*.

51. Fox, 'Sexuality and Desire', p. 162; 'alternate desires' is her phrase, p. 167. See also Curran, 'Rape and Rape Victims in the "Metamorphoses"'.

52. James, 'Shakespeare's Learned Heroines in Ovid's Schoolroom', p. 68.

53. Pugh, *Spenser and Ovid*, p. 57.

54. My impression is that classicists' revisionary work on this story (see note 50) has also largely been initiated by feminist scholars, and that their trajectories of interpretation have, with due deference to historical and linguistic differences, paralleled that of medieval and early modern scholarship. In this regard, the lack of mention of 'Iphis and Ianthe' in Rimmel's *Ovid's Lovers* is especially a lost opportunity, as she positions her book as an intervention in the binary rubric whereby literary critics analyse '*either* female *or* male figures, *either* constructions of femininity or masculinity', proposing instead to explore 'relationality', particularly 'the desiring subject in Ovidian poetry as a being-in-relation', pp. 3–4.

55. See also Smith's novel, *Girl Meets Boy*, which turns its titular phrase on its head with its multiple challenges to gender binaries in the matter of love and sex; and Charles Martin's poem, 'Iphis and Ianthe'.

56. Most of the medieval and Renaissance scholarship on 'Iphis and Ianthe' offers a reading of Ovid's tale in relation to one of its transversions. Among these, 'Yde et Olive', *Galatea* and *Iphis et Iante* have been most frequently analysed. On 'Yde et Olive', see Watt, 'Behaving Like a Man? Incest, Lesbian Desire, and Gender Play'; Kłosowska, *Queer Love in the Middle Ages*, pp. 81–7; Weisl, 'How to Be a Man, Though Female'; and Robins, 'Three Tales of Female Same-Sex Marriage'. Amer, *Crossing Borders*, pp. 50–87, traces the genealogy of this tale to the Arabic 'The Story of Qamar al-Zaman and the Princess Boudour', from *Alf layla wa layla* (*One Thousand and One Nights*). Using trans and disability theory, Chess,

'Queer Gender Informants in Ovid and Shakespeare', reads Iphis in terms of Shakespeare's (non-faithful) adaptation of her into Viola/Cesario: both are non-binary gender informants who instigate a 'queer gain' in the form of 'utopian possibility' for themselves and other characters.

On *Galatea*, scholarship has focused largely on cross-dressing, chastity, lesbianism, the Elizabethan court and the (erotic) role of the boy player. Rackin's essay on the androgyny of Lyly's boy heroine was an important precursor for early modern scholarship; see 'Androgyny, Mimesis, and the Marriage of the Boy Heroine on the English Renaissance Stage'. See also Bruster, 'Female-Female Eroticism and the Early Modern Stage'; Jankowski, '"Where there can be no cause of affection": Redefining Virgins, Their Desires, and Their Pleasures', and *Pure Resistance: Queer Virginity*; Pincombe, *The Plays of John Lyly: Eros and Eliza*; Franceschina, *Homosexualities in the English Theater*; Shannon, 'Nature's Bias: Renaissance Homonormativity and Elizabethan Comic Likeness'; Dooley, 'Inversion, Metamorphosis and Sexual Difference'; Wixson, 'Cross-Dressing and John Lyly's *Gallathea*'; Robinson, 'The Metamorphosis of Sex(uality)' and *Closeted Writing and Lesbian and Gay Literature*; Walen, *Constructions of Female Homoeroticism*; Drouin, 'Diana's Band: Safe Spaces, Publics, and Early Modern Lesbianism'; Carter, *Ovidian Myth and Sexual Deviance*; and Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*. In *Masculinity, Corporality and the English Stage*, Billing proffers a male homoerotic reading based on the 'stable' phenomenology of the boy actor's erotic body, and in *Male to Female Crossdressing in Early Modern English Literature*, Chess reads *Galatea* through a trans* analytic.

On *Iphis et Ianthe*, in addition to Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*, and Robinson, *Closeted Writing and Lesbian and Gay Literature*, see Leibacher-Ouvrard, 'Speculum de l'Autre Femme'; Legault, 'De-Sexing the Lesbian'; and Row, 'Queer Time on the Early Modern Stage: France and the Drama of Biopower'.

57. On Fiordispina and Bradamante, see DeCoste, *Hopeless Love*; and Casali, 'Ovidian Intertextuality in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*'. *Orlando Furioso* was translated into English by Sir John Harington in 1591, and the story of Fiordispina was mined for the episode of Britomart and Malecasta in Sir Edmund Spenser's *The Fairie Queene*.
58. Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*.
59. Another Ovidian tale, that of Jupiter's rape of Calisto while in the guise of Diana, is another crucial model for female-female homoeroticism; see Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*.
60. Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*, pp. 25 and 57.
61. Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*, p. 80.
62. Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*, p. 29, emphasis in original.
63. Mills, *Seeing Sodomy*, p. 132. His focus on 'things' intersects with the concerns of Lochrie and McCracken in this volume.
64. Chess, *Male to Female Crossdressing*, p. 141. Gower's version also has been read through a trans perspective focused on gender dysphoria by Bychowski, 'Unconfessing Transgender'.
65. See Bryan, *In the Company of Boys*, and Munro, 'Queering Gender, Age, and Status in Early Modern Children's Drama'.
66. On Arachne, see Miller, 'Arachnologies: The Woman, the Text, and the Critic'. On Philomela, see Enterline, *The Rhetoric of the Body*; Carter, *Ovidian Myth and Sexual Deviance*; Lamb, 'Singing with the (Tongue) of the Nightingale'; Newman, '"And Let Mild Women to Him Lose Their Mildness": Philomela, Female Violence, and Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece*'; and Starks-Estes, *Violence, Trauma, and* Virtus *in Shakespeare's Roman Poems and Plays*. On Narcissus, see

DiGangi, 'Male Deformities'. On Ganymede, see Barkan, *Transuming Passion*, and Saslow, *Ganymede in the Renaissance*. A similar case might be made for the story of Calisto, most often viewed as simply Diana's nymph, but who engaged in a dalliance with Jove while he impersonated Diana; see Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism*.

67. This is the assessment of Burrow, 'Re-Embodying Ovid', p. 305.
68. We might take Makowski's 1996 summary for the consensus that has reigned until recently:

> The centerpiece of the Iphis story is the monologue on the pathology of homoerotic love ... a speech remarkable both for its rhetorical display and for its insistence on the unnaturalness of homosexual passion ... The word *prodigiosa* is significant as it connotes a type of love not wondrous but rather monstrous in the same sense that freaks of nature are monstrous. ('Bisexual Orpheus', p. 31)

69. Masten, *Queer Philologies*, p. 214.
70. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*. In 'Impossible Lesbians in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*', Ormand translates 'prodigiosa novaeque cura Veneris' as 'a monstrous heartache of novel love', p. 98.
71. The fungibility of terms can be seen in comparing Miller's Loeb translation, 'The story of this *unnatural passion* would, perhaps, have been the talk of Crete's hundred towns, if Crete had not lately had a *wonder* of its own in the changed form of Iphis', to that of Melville, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*: 'The tale of this *strange miracle* might well / have been the talk of all the hundred towns / Of Crete, had not that island lately known / In Iphis's change a *marvel* nearer home' (emphases mine).
72. See Forey, *Ovid's Metamorphoses, Translated by Arthur Golding*.
73. See Wiseman, *Writing Metamorphosis in the English Renaissance*; Salisbury, *The Beast Within*; Crane, *Animal Encounters*; Shannon, *The Accommodated Animal*; and Nardizzi and Feerick, *The Indistinct Human in Renaissance Literature*.
74. With thanks to Lynn Enterline.
75. Kilgour, 'Virgil and Ovid', p. 528.
76. Rackin, 'Androgyny, Mimesis, and the Marriage of the Boy Heroine', p. 29.
77. James, 'The Ovidian Girlhood of Shakespeare's Boy Actors', p. 111, p. 112. See also Lanser in this volume.
78. James, 'The Ovidian Girlhood of Shakespeare's Boy Actors', pp. 116 and 117.
79. James, 'The Ovidian Girlhood of Shakespeare's Boy Actors', p. 117.
80. James, 'The Ovidian Girlhood of Shakespeare's Boy Actors', p. 106.
81. In 'Ovid and Shakespeare', Braden notes in an offhand remark that the cross-dressing comedies do 'in play what Ovid's Iphis does for real', p. 449. In 'Shakespeare's Learned Heroines in Ovid's Schoolroom', James distinguishes between the Ovidian genealogy of Rosalind, whose linguistic prowess derives from the *Ars Amatoria* and *Amores*, and that of Viola, whose plight 'recalls Ovid's story of Iphis', who 'views herself as a 'monster' (*Met.* 9.736) and her love as a hopeless and strange prodigy' (*Met.* 9.727–8), p. 75. See also Chess, 'Queer Gender Informants', on the relationship between Cesario and the eunuch Mardian, who has an impact on Cleopatra's erotic imaginings.
82. In this, they follow in the footsteps of queer studies scholars who have expanded the purview, both historical and theoretical, of sexuality in culture, most prominently Bray, *The Friend*, which established that male homoerotic bonds were embedded in a nexus of social relations – not only the patriarchal household but education, patronage and service.

83. Griffin, 'Translation and Transformation in the *Ovide moralisé*', p. 42. Griffin argues that the 'practice of reading into an original an eternal truth which was not originally written into it has the effect of unsettling the role and identity of exactly what is "original" in this transaction of translation and transformation: any hierarchy of pre-existing text and its translation is troubled', p. 47.

84. Newman and Tylus, *Early Modern Cultures of Translation*, pp. 1–2.

85. Lyne, *Ovid's Changing Worlds*; Oakley-Brown, *Ovid and the Cultural Politics of Translation*; Wiseman, *Writing Metamorphosis in the English Renaissance*.

86. We are aware of the importance of the Ovidian tradition elsewhere, particularly in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, and look forward to others' engagement with this literary history.

87. With thanks to Joseph Gamble, who alerted to me to material from the online *Lexicons of Early Modern English* as part of his work on early modern lexical connections among trans- and con-version.

88. For a range of articulations of transgender and a survey of the field, see Stryker and Aizura (eds), *The Transgender Studies Reader 2*. Enke, 'Introduction: Transfeminist Perspectives', notes that 'the asterisk in *trans** functions as a truncation symbol the way that putting an asterisk after a word or fragment works in many library search systems', p. 7.

89. See Lochrie, Griffin and Long in this volume.

90. Hayward and Weinstein, 'Tranimalities in the Age of Trans* Life', p. 196.

91. Enke, 'Introduction', p. 7.

92. See Billings and Rubright in this volume.

93. Although they place different emphases on the import of identity, none of our contributors countenance a use of 'trans' that fails to do justice to the lived experience of individuals or to their right to self-identify in whatever way makes most sense for them.

94. Such issues have come to the fore in online debates about the term trans*, which has proven over time to be controversial, particularly in activist circles, and has sometimes been seen as a sign of invalidation rather than inclusivity. At stake in the use of language and typography are such issues as reproducing or disrupting binarisms, allegations of transmisogyny, attachments or disattachments to identity, and the value and function of historical memory. Our aim is not to resolve such issues, but to acknowledge the tensions they enact.

95. Enke, 'Introduction', pp. 7–8.

96. See, for instance, Durling, 'Rewriting Gender', as well as Amer, *Crossing Borders*.

97. See Douglas Lanier, 'Shakespearean Rhizomatics', and 'Shakespeare / Not Shakespeare: Afterword', and Lisa Starks-Estes, *Ovid and Adaptation in Early Modern English Theater*. Like Lanier, Bryan Reynolds (and his several co-writers) employs Deleuzean concepts to explore how Shakespeare's texts, particularly when adapted or remediated, create modes of becoming rather than static identities. Reynolds dubs this quality 'transversalism'; see *Performing Transversally*.

98. The circularity of influence between the Latin original, its translation and its intertexts is especially clear in the Italian tradition: upon the sixteenth-century publication of two major translations of the *Metamorphoses* – the *Transformationi* of Ludovico Dolce (1553) and the *Metamorfosi* of Giovanni dell'Anguillara (1561) – 'The *Metamorphoses* became an Ariostesque poem', insofar as the translator followed 'Ariosto's imitation rather than the Latin original'; see Casali, 'Ovidian Intertextuality in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*', p. 307.

99. In 'Version, Con-, Per-, and In- (Thoughts on Djuna Barnes's Novel, *Nightwood*)', Burke briefly considers how conversion, perversion, inversion and aversion all share the root 'vert', meaning 'to turn'.

100. For analysis of the early modern meanings of 'perversion', see Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*.
101. The Early Modern Conversions project, which collected an international team of scholars to study conversion as a social, political, religious and aesthetic phenomenon, has provided crucial support for the kinds of creative collaboration that are, in their own way, transforming work in the academy. A University of Michigan symposium brought together nine of the volume's contributors, and the editors were enabled to twice work face to face with the help of Conversions funding, provided by SSHRC. I, in particular, benefited from the opportunity to discuss conceptual frameworks for this introduction. In addition, all of the contributors participated in a workshop underwritten by the Early Modern Conversions project as well as the generosity of Cornell University. This volume would not have developed without the support of the University of Michigan, Cornell, SSHRC and Paul Yachnin, director of the Early Modern Conversions Project. See the Early Modern Conversions project: http://earlymodernconversions.com/.
102. The symposium took place at the University of Michigan in January 2016 under the auspices of the Institute for the Humanities and the Institute for Research on Women and Gender. Hearty thanks to Paul Yachnin, Steven Mullaney, Stephen Wittek, Sidonie Smith, Patrick Tonks, Doretha Coval, Stephanie Harrell, Nina Barraco, Doug Trevor and George Hoffmann for their help.
103. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.
104. For McCracken's analysis of becoming-animal, becoming-human and becoming-sovereign in medieval French literature, see *In the Skin of a Beast*.
105. Recognition of this might challenge the truism within criticism of the *Metamorphoses* that, as Charles Segal, 'Ovid's Metamorphic Bodies', puts it, 'it is not the body that leads the narrator to the story, but the story that is forced to end in something that happens to the body', p. 14. The threat of infanticide begins with the fact of Iphis's female body, which in turn leads to her story.
106. See Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*.
107. Barkan, *The Gods Made Flesh*, p. 66. Barkan reads the tale in terms of 'a manifest destiny of masculinity within Iphis', indicated by the child's androgynous name and her 'quite masculine love for Ianthe', p. 71.
108. Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*, pp. 58, 79, 57.
109. Newcomb, '"If that which is lost be not found"', pp. 239–59.
110. Newcomb, '"If that which is lost be not found"', p. 240.
111. See also Feldherr's contention in 'Metamorphosis in the *Metamorphoses*' regarding Ovid's portrayal 'of participation in the creation of the structured world we know' and his 'exposure of the flux, change, and victimization that underlines it' that 'an interpretation that privileges one tendency at the expense of the other remains fundamentally incomplete', p. 177.
112. See Bynam's discussion of two medieval models of change, 'replacement-change' and 'evolution-change', in *Metamorphosis and Identity*, pp. 20–5.
113. See Kruger, 'Conversion and Medieval Sexual, Religious, and Racial Categories'; Britton, *Becoming Christian*; and Shoulson, *Fictions of Conversion*.
114. See Feldherr, 'Metamorphosis in the *Metamorphoses*', p. 170.
115. For the concept of embodiment-as-process from another associate of the EMC project, see Spiess, 'Puzzling Embodiment'.
116. James, 'The Ovidian Girlhood of Shakespeare's Boy Actors', notes that 'in Ovid's Latin, there is no need to choose between masculine and feminine pronouns. Iphis may be a boy or she may pass for a boy, and in either case Iphis may still enjoy the love of 'sua . . . Ianthe'. The feminine possessive adjective, *sua*, attaches

to the direct object (Ianthe) regardless of the gender of the subject (Iphis) of the sentence', p. 117. In contrast, in Golding's translation, Iphis 'Did take Iänthe to his wife, and so her love enjoy'.

117. See Row, 'Queer Time on the Early Modern Stage', who reads the play in terms of *retardement* or delay. See also Billings in this volume.

118. Lanser, *The Sexuality of History*, observes that: 'In an epoch [the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries] preoccupied with alteration, appearance, and movement, it seems to be necessary not simply to demand a change from same-sex to cross-sex affiliation but to show change as it is happening, even if – or because – that process is often covering a sleight-of-hand', p. 56.

119. See, for instance, Britton, *Becoming Christian*, pp. 76–7.

120. *Galatea*, ed. Scragg (III, ii, 65). See Mathie in this volume. Kesson, '"It is a pity you are not a woman"', alludes to a Globe Theatre staged reading in which 'the girls' surprise at discovering one another's real identities at the end' of the play is staged as 'a performance for the benefit of those around them', 43.

121. See Cartwright's thoughtful discussion of the play's deferral of such knowledge in *Theatre and Humanism*, pp. 182–4. See also Eggert, Rubright, Long, Lochrie and McCracken in this volume.

122. See Lyne, *Ovid's Changing Worlds*, and Feldherr, 'Metamorphosis in the *Metamorphoses*'.

123. Le Normand-Romain, *Rodin*, p. 74. There are overlaps between the story of 'Iphis and Ianthe' and that of 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus', including the extent to which the force of a frustrated female desire instigates the process of transformation.

124. Le Normand-Romain, *Rodin*, p. 74.

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