

## ANCIENT LITERATURE AND METAMORPHOSES

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## ANNOTATSIYA:

**MAQOLA TARIXI:***Received: 09.10.2025**Revised: 10.10.2025**Accepted: 11.10.2025***KALIT SO'ZLAR:***myth, mythology,  
metamorphosis  
(transformation,  
transformation), Homer,  
Aesiod, Aeschylus,  
Aristophanes, Ovid, etc.*

*In this article, we will talk about the metamorphoses that have come down to us as part of the works of the ancient literature representatives of Homer, Hesiod, Ovid and others, and the specific signs of this phenomenon, the reasons for its formation. It is also thought that types, which are the product of primitive thinking, developed rapidly in antiquity and turned into a literary tool, serving the socio-aesthetic goals of the creator.*

Fiction, reflecting all the phenomena of existence, does not bypass the laws of nature, including the process of metamorphosis. The role of the mythology of the ancient world (ancient times) in transmitting the initial manifestations of metamorphoses to the next generation is incomparable.

In this regard, it is enough to recall the epics of Homer "Iliad" and "Odyssey", the works of Hesiod "Works and Days" and "Theogeny". In Greek and Roman literature, especially in the poetry of the Hellenistic period, we do not meet a poet who, like Ovid, organically connected metamorphoses with each other and turned them into a single work, such as "Metamorphoses", which includes 250 variations. The first Latin novel written on

the motif of transformation that has come down to us in its entirety is the work of Apuleius, the last representative of Roman literature, “Metamorphoses” (or “The Golden Ass”).

For example, in the chapter of the Illiad entitled “The Greeks Farewell to the Greeks”, a giant appeared from under one of the altars in the port of Alvida The story is about a red snake devouring eight sycamores and a bird on the top of a plane tree in an instant and then turning into stone. This motif of transformation in the epic is interpreted as a harbinger of the gods predicting the future.

Several metamorphoses can also be seen in Homer’s “Odyssey”. So, during his ten-year adventure, Odysseus, who accidentally lands on the shore of the island of Circe, is treated to wine by the sorceress Paris. His companions who drink the wine turn into pigs one by one, but do not lose their minds. In this episode, too, metamorphosis is carried out not by humans or by chance, but by the sorceress Paris through trickery.

Metamorphoses also play an important role in Hesiod's “Works and Days” and “Theogeny”. The metamorphoses in the shell of Hesiod’s myths are characterized by a generality that is completely different from each other. The Metamorphoses, written approximately in the years 1-8 AD, are the pinnacle of Ovid’s work, and at the same time, one of the great monuments of Roman literature. The epic contains about 250 such narratives. One of the oldest myths in the epic, belonging to the type of metamorphoses, is about Phaethon, the son of the sun god, and his sisters.

According to legend, when young Phaethon goes to his palace to find out if he is really the son of Helios, his father wants to prove the truth of his words by granting his son whatever he wants. To demonstrate this truth to others, Phaethon persuades his father to ride the sun chariot around the sky. But, unable to control the horses, he let go of the reins, and a terrible fire broke out where the solar chariot approached the earth. Jupiter, wanting to save the earth from the fire, killed him with a thunderbolt. His lifeless body fell into the river Eris. The sisters wept incessantly over the destruction of Phaeton, so the gods turned them into poplars and their tears into amber. Since then, the poplars have been bending over the banks of the Eris River and shedding tears, their tears turning into amber and dripping into the river.

Ovid’s Metamorphoses also contain variations on various themes, in particular, the motif of being a victim of tragic love plays a key role. The gods are interpreted as the main cause of the terrible tragedies in love. Their love for the daughters of ordinary people ultimately leads to the most sad visions. For example, when Jupiter’s love affairs with Io

began to become boring, he handed her over to his wife, the Sun, so that he would not have any trouble. And she turned her into a cow. Jupiter was also the reason why the beautiful Callisto fell into the wrath of her and was turned into a bear.

With the passage of time, we can see that metamorphoses have lost their initial importance and function, the scope of the theme and influence has expanded, it has evolved from a divine phenomenon to a literary phenomenon, and it has taken the form of a traditional motif. Metamorphoses went through the path of rapid development already in antiquity and managed to form as a literary phenomenon.

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