Metamorphoses

Etiology = ‘discourse about causes’

Greek *aitio* = ‘cause, origin’           plural: *aitia* = causes, origins

Hellenism: Hellenistic Age traditionally begins with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE

Literary precedents: Callimachus’ *Aitia* (poem on origins) – Alexandrian poetry
*The Vanished Library* (L. Canfora)

Roman literature as a strand of Hellenistic literature
Roman literature is ‘born’ in 240 BCE: *Odyssey* in Latin

Myth of foundation – casting Rome in cosmological discourse
(Elaine Fantham, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses* (Oxford, 2004))

Metamorphosis of a genre: from epic to modern fiction

- Fabulous, cf. Latin *fabula*
- Miraculous, cf. Latin *miraculum*
- Monstrous, cf. Latin *monster*

Tale of Wanders:
- Cf. *Odysseus’* uses of enchantment (Nugent outline 13.1a)

How absurd is Ovid’s lecture on the Metamorphoses of Nature and the Creation of Rome?

Rome begins at Troy – or does it?

Casting Roman grandeur in Greek myth and lore

Circling back to the beginning