

**Abstract:** This article analyses three female figures in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Echo, Salmacis, and Philomela. We know that Ovid studied in the rhetorical schools for a long time and utilized rhetorical devices extensively in his poetry. This article aims not only to prove that these three figures are described using figures of speech, but that the figures' essences themselves are shaped by these devices and are reflections of three particular rhetorical devices relating to subtraction and negation. Echo evokes *ellipsis*, Salmacis *litotes*, and Philomela *aposiopesis*. While this is not to suggest that Ovid explicitly created these figures to function as perfect allegories of these three figures of speech, it does illustrate how Ovid endeavored to broaden the dictates of the narrative fiction genre by 'contaminating' it with stylistic aspects. He does this by attributing to the three female figures in question the effects in the economy of the narrated myth analogous to those that produce the aforementioned procedures in the text in which they are inserted.

**Keywords:** Ovid, Ellipsis, Litotes, Aposiopesis, Latin literature.