SOME PROPERTIAN IMITATIONS IN OVID'S *AMORES*

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IT IS generally acknowledged that ancient authors felt at liberty to imitate lines or even passages from the works of their predecessors, but it is often difficult to explain exactly why a poet included a particular imitation from a particular predecessor at a given point in his work. This paper is an attempt to present some answers to the question: why does one artist deliberately choose to imitate another? In attacking the problem, we shall confine our discussion to Ovid's early elegiac work, the *Amores*, and concentrate on some of the many imitations of Propertius to be found in it.[1] These imitations seem to fall into two main groups.

I

One of the most striking features of Ovid's love elegy is its predominantly light and playful tone. Although there are fleeting moments of the light and jocular to be found in Tibullan and Propertian elegy, both of the earlier elegists tend to take love and the love affair in a basically serious way. Ovid's lightness of tone must be considered one of his major contributions to the genre, even if one places upon it the blame for the ultimate disappearance of love elegy.[2] Ovid gives love elegy a "new" look, in that he is able to view love and himself as a lover with a certain detachment. In many of his elegies, love is seen with a new perspective. It is no longer a life-and-death matter, but a pleasant and intriguing game. Ovid still follows his elegiac predecessors in his use of traditional themes and ideas, but often he chooses to handle such traditional material in new and strikingly different ways.

Ovid evidently finds imitation useful for emphasizing the newness of this more detached treatment of some of the traditional material and attitudes pertaining to love. He does not, of course, depend entirely on imitation to carry the message of his less intense, lighter elegy. A reader who does not recognize a single imitation in the *Amores* will still come away from the work with an impression of its playful tone, for Ovid expresses himself in general terms as well as through imitation. Imitation, however, provides the opportunity for Ovid to compare his views on love and the lover specifically with those expressed by his predecessors. Since imitation leads the reader to make a mental comparison of the lines before him and the lines being imitated, Ovid, by setting his new ideas and attitudes beside the "old-fashioned" ones of Propertius, can provide a concrete impression of some of the innovations he brings to the elegiac genre.[3]

1. Various scholars have contributed to the recognition of Propertian imitations in the *Amores*, although most have done no more than note them. The one attempt at analysis is that of R. Neumann, *Qua ratione Ovidius in Amoribus scribendis Properti elegiis usus sit* (Göttingen, 1919). His conclusions, however, contain many errors because of his belief that any similarity of subject matter between Propertius and the *Amores* indicates imitation on Ovid's part. Editions which note (but do not necessarily explain) imitations of Propertius in the *Amores* include: M. Rothstein, *Die Elegien des Sextus Propertius* (Berlin, 1898); P. Brandt, *P. Ovidi Nasonis Amorum libri tres* (Leipzig, 1911); H. E. Butler and E. A. Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius* (Oxford, 1933). All of the above will hereafter be cited by the name of the author or editor only.

2. See B. Otis, "Ovid and the Augustans," *TAPA*, LXIX (1938), 188–229. For a discussion of this tone, see E. Reitzenstein, "Das neue Kunstwollen in den *Amores* Ovids," *RhM*, LXXXIV (1935), 62–88; L. R. Wilkinson, "Greek Influence on the Poetry of Ovid," *Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique*, Fondation Hardt, II (Vandoevres-Genève, 1953), 223–43.

3. Ovid often states his preference for modern fashions of behavior (particularly in regard to love) instead of the "good old ways." For example, he says at *Ars* 3. 121–22, 127–28: "prisca iuvent alios, ego me nunc denique natum / gratulor: haec aetas moribus apta meis ... sed quia cultus adest nec nostros mansit in annos / rusticitas priscis illa superstes avis."

Let us now examine some imitations which create this type of contrast. Prop. 2. 4 begins: "Multa prius dominae delicta queraris oportet, / saepe roges aliquid, saepe repulsus eas, / et saepe immeritos corrumpas dentibus unguis, / et crepitum dubio suscitet ira pede" (1–4). Through the use of the verb *oportet*, Propertius has constructed a passage of complaint about some of the little trials of love. The tone is hardly one of joyous enthusiasm. Yet Ovid at *Am.* 2. 9*b*. 43–46 does, in fact, introduce a joyous and hopeful tone into a passage which includes an obvious Propertian imitation:[4] "me modo decipiant voces fallacis amicae / (sperando certe gaudia magna feram), / et modo blanditias dicat, modo iurgia nectat; / saepe fruar domina, saepe repulsus eam." Ovid has turned the passage into a series of wishes. By actually requesting what the older elegist finds so unpleasant and restrictive, he is insinuating that Propertius' complaints are ill-founded. The little trials of love should not be taken so seriously. This attitude is consistent with Ovid's lighter, more detached outlook on love. Much of the joy of love for the "modern" Ovidian lover lies in the chase, with easy access rendering the conquest dull and unexciting.[5] Since this is an important part of the pleasure of love for Ovid, it is not surprising to find this short but pointed contradiction of Propertius here where Ovid is listing the things he would miss if love were denied him.

A second, similar example can be seen at *Am.* 3. 4. 31–32, which contains a direct quotation from Propertius.[6] Prop. 2. 23. 19–20: "nec dicet, 'Timeo, propera iam surgere, quaeso! / infelix, hodie vir mihi rure venit.'" *Am.* 3. 4. 31–32: "indignere licet, iuvat inconcessa voluptas: / sola placet, 'timeo' dicere si qua potest." Here again Ovid is contradicting Propertius' conventional attitude. The older elegist wants to be allowed to carry out his tryst in peace, unhindered by guards, husbands, *et al.* This is one reason why in 2. 23 he claims to prefer prostitutes to freeborn Roman women. Ovid, however, disagrees. Again, he feels that the excitement of the chase is extremely important and that fear, like occasional denial, is another way to add to it.

Imitations which reflect Ovid's lighter tone are not confined to short contradictions of Propertian attitudes about the conduct of love affairs. They can be found also in Ovid's treatment of some of the conventions of love elegy which are taken very seriously by the earlier Latin elegists. Lovers commonly swear by their eyes, as in Propertius 1. 15. 33–38:[7]

> tam tibi ne viles isti videantur ocelli,
> per quos saepe mihi credita perfidia est!
> hos tu iurabas, si quid mentita fuisses,
> ut tibi suppositis exciderent manibus:
> et contra magnum potes hos attollere Solem,
> nec tremis admissae conscia nequitiae?

These lines are introduced into a typically serious context. Cynthia has sworn falsely many times, and Propertius wonders that she does not tremble in fear at her own perjury. The tone of Propertius' elegy is one of despair over Cynthia's lack of faith. Despair eventually gives way to bitterness as Propertius cautions (1. 15. 41–42): "quis ego nunc pereo, similis moniturus amantis / 'O nullis tutum credere blanditiis!'"

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4. This imitation has been previously noted by Rothstein, *ad loc.*; Butler and Barber, *ad loc.*; Brandt, *ad loc.*

5. The same point which Ovid makes in this imitation is expressed in more general terms in *Am.* 2. 19, where Ovid asks the husband of his mistress to make the chase more exciting by putting obstacles in his path.

6. Others who have cited this imitation include Neumann, p. 22; Rothstein, *ad loc.*; Brandt, *ad loc.*

7. For other examples, see Rothstein, *ad loc.*

Ovid has imitated the first two lines of this Propertian passage in *Am.* 3. 3:[8]

argutos habuit: radiant ut sidus ocelli,
   per quos mentita est perfida saepe mihi.
scilicet aeterni falsum iurare puellis
   di quoque concedunt, formaque numen habet.
perque suos illam nuper iurasse recordor
   perque meos oculos: et doluere mei   [9–14].

He is also complaining about his girl's lack of faith and her false swearing, but the tone of this elegy is completely different from that of Propertius 1. 15. Ovid has removed his accusations from the realm of the serious and bitter by a simple, humorous stroke. She has done the false swearing, but his eyes are the ones that hurt. This ludicrous situation brings about an ending to the poem which is far from bitter. Ovid is begging the girl to spare his eyes: "tu tamen illorum moderatius utere dono, / aut oculis certe parce, puella, meis" (3. 3. 47–48). It is clear here, once again, that Ovid has imitated Propertius in order to contrast the "old" and "new" outlooks on love. The tone of earnest and even bitter denunciation which comprises the bulk of Prop. 1. 15 is completely absent from *Am.* 3. 3. Ovid, with his greater detachment, accepts his girl's perjury as part of the game, and thus his elegy's tone can be lighter and interlaced with humor.

Ovid's desire to emphasize the light and often humorous tone of the *Amores* also results in the frequent use of imitation for parody. In every case of imitation of this sort, Ovid takes a verse or distich which Propertius uses in a serious context and uses it himself in an elegy which is pre-

dominantly playful in tone. Although when using parody Ovid does not restrict the subject matter of his imitations to love, the contrast created by parody effects a reaction in the reader similar to the ones previously discussed. Ovid imitates something which is serious and intense in Propertius' work. The reader who associates Ovid's line with the Propertian original is once again impressed by the prevalence of humor and the lightness of tone in the *Amores*.

Two examples should suffice to demonstrate this type of imitation. Prop. 2. 16. 41–42: "Caesaris haec virtus et gloria Caesaris haec est: / illa, qua vicit, condidit arma manu." *Am.* 1. 2. 51–52: "aspice cognati felicia Caesaris arma: / qua vicit, victos protegit ille manu." The Propertian distich is very solemn. The question of a possible transposition of these lines to a more suitable context has no bearing on the fact that they do constitute a sincere and serious compliment to Augustus.[9] Ovid's imitation is much less serious.[10] He is describing his participation in Amor's triumph and is using Caesar as an example for his captor— Amor, like Caesar, should spare his conquered victims further suffering. The playful tone here is immediately obvious, particularly in the fact that Caesar is not even treated in his own right but is mentioned as a relative of Cupid.

Ovid imitates with similar results at *Am.* 2. 6. 21–22. Prop. 3. 3. 31–32: "et Veneris dominae volucres, mea turba, columbae / tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu." *Am.* 2. 6. 21–22: "tu poteras fragiles pinnis

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8. The evidence for imitation here lies in the similarity between Prop. 1. 15. 34 and *Am.* 3. 3. 10. In addition, Ovid's use of *ocelli* at the end of line 9 may reflect Propertian influence. Propertius in his first book always chooses *ocellus* over *oculus*. In the third book of the *Amores*, however, Ovid shows no such decided preference, and, in fact, *oculi* is used more frequently (eleven times, to seven for *ocelli*).

9. Many editors have suggested transposing this distich to a more suitable context. A. E. Housman, for example, would

place it following 3. 11. 38 (see his "Emendationes Propertianae," *JP*, XVI [1888], 10). Butler, on the other hand, favors a position following 3. 22. 22 (see Barber, *Sexti Properti carmina*[2] [Oxford, 1960], p. 54). For my own position on the question, see "A Note on Propertius 2. 16. 41–42," *CP*, LXVI (1971), 110–12.

10. This imitation has been previously cited by Neumann, p. 13; Rothstein, *ad loc.*; Butler and Barber, *ad loc.*

hebetare zmaragdos / tincta gerens rubro punica rostra croco." The birds Propertius is describing here are the doves of Venus. Prop. 3. 3 is an extremely serious pro-grammatic poem, in which Propertius meets Apollo and the Muses and is directed to continue writing elegy. The doves are part of the physical setting of the Cave of the Muses and can be viewed as an important symbol of Propertian elegy.[11] What a difference, then, when Ovid imitates Propertius' pentameter line in order to describe Corinna's dead parrot!

II

In the *Amores* one can find many other examples of Propertian imitations which create contrast or parody. Ovid, however, does not imitate only for the purpose of displaying the lightness and humor of his elegy. That this is one of his important goals should be clear from the preceding examples, but he also recognizes that the Propertian corpus is a potential resource which can be tapped to enhance more serious meanings and innuendoes of his own elegy. For, even though Ovid's light touch has been emphasized so far in this paper, he is at all times an artist, and, as such, he is often striving in his elegies for important effects which go far beyond his lightness of tone. In creating these effects Ovid sometimes chooses to work with Propertius. He imitates so that the reader will recall a specific Propertian elegy and then uses the association thus obtained to strengthen the feeling or heighten the effect he is trying to create in

his own poem. A younger artist is imitat-ing an older one, not out of lack of originality, but because the imitation in some way helps to fulfill his own artistic aims for a particular elegy.[12]

When Ovid uses imitation for this pur-pose, the imitation generally has important implications for the elegy as a whole. This would seem to be the case, for example, at *Am*. 1. 12. 25–26: "inter ephemeridas melius tabulasque iacerent, / in quibus absumptas fleret avarus opes." This dis-tich is generally agreed to be based on Prop. 3. 23. 19–20:[13] "me miserum, his aliquis rationem scribit avarus / et ponit duras inter ephemeridas!" We have here once again a contrast—Ovid wishes his tablets may suffer the very fate which Propertius fears may have befallen his— but it is not a contrast between Ovid's light, playful view of love and Propertius' serious one. Ovid is just as passionate and serious as his predecessor, if not more so. In fact, this very passion provides the reason for Ovid's imitation at this point in his elegy. *Am*. 1. 12 is a tirade directed against the tablets for failing in their mission to persuade Corinna to agree to a tryst. From the very first line of the elegy, "flete meos casus: tristes rediere tabellae," Ovid is concerned with em-phasizing the evil and malicious nature of his tablets. Slanderous references to their ancestry and dire wishes for their future abound. Then, at line 25, the vision of Propertius' tablets breaks in upon the reader. Propertius' tablets were evidently dearly beloved by the poet because of their

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11. W. Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom*, Hermes Einzelschr. XVI (1960), 242, says: "Die Vögel sind das neue Symbolele-ment des kleinen elegischen Dichtens."

12. Similar use of Catullan imitation was briefly noted by J. Ferguson, "Catullus and Ovid," *AJP*, LXXXI (1960), 337–57, in his comparison of Cat. 62. 42–44 with *Met*. 3. 353–55. Also, L. C. Curran, "Ovid *Amores* 1. 10," *Phoenix*, XVIII (1964), 314–18, clearly demonstrates how Ovid has used the beginning of Prop. 1. 3 to contribute substantially to the effect of *Am*. 1. 10.

13. Those who have previously noted this imitation include Rothstein, *ad loc.*; Brandt, *ad loc.*; H. Tränkle, *Die Sprach-kunst des Properz und die Tradition der lateinischen Dich-tersprache*, Hermes Einzelschr. XV (1960), 118. Tränkle, I believe, clinches the argument for imitation by pointing out that a form of *ephemeris* is found only in these two places in all of Latin poetry.

customary success in their missions of persuasion. The contrast is swift and artful. These associations underline even more strongly the "treachery" of Ovid's tablets and his own sad, desolate plight due to their failure.

A similar but slightly more complex example can be found in *Am.* 1. 8, at the beginning of the *lena*'s speech. The very first words which Ovid puts into the mouth of the old woman are meant to recall a particular Propertian line.[14]

Prop. 2. 22*a*. 1: "Scis here mi multas pariter placuisse puellas." *Am.* 1. 8. 23: "scis here te, mea lux, iuveni placuisse beato?" Ovid spends the first twenty-two lines of his poem building up an evil picture of his *lena*. She is a drunkard, a witch, and worst of all, "haec sibi proposuit thalamos temerare pudicos" (19). The *lena* then speaks for herself and stands condemned by eighty-six lines of advice in which she is shown to be ruled, insofar as love is concerned, by greed and the principles of expediency. It seems unlikely, though, in view of the associations carried by the imitation cited above, that Ovid means for the *lena* to be viewed by the reader as completely repulsive.

By beginning the *lena*'s speech with this Propertian imitation, Ovid creates a certain background against which the rest of her speech can be read. Propertius in 2. 22*a* explains in some detail how it is impossible for him to make do with one woman since every sort of woman attracts him and his sexual powers are exceptional. For him the principles of expediency also reign supreme, as we see, for example, at

lines 39–40: "aut si forte irata meo sit facta ministro, / ut sciat esse aliam, quae velit esse mea!" The imitation, then, is meant to establish a feeling of cynicism in regard to masculine conduct in love. The effect can only be the mitigation of some of the reader's indignation as the old woman offers her cynical views of the proper feminine conduct in the game of love. Ovid has artfully inserted a new element into the traditional *lena* poem by reminding the reader of the existence of the double standard. Men may look out for themselves first and thus deal cynically with women (as Prop. 2. 22*a* demonstrates), but they become angry when women treat them in the same way. Once this discrepancy is recognized, it is difficult to condemn the old woman utterly.[15] Ovid makes it clear that neither party is blameless. If a man is by nature fickle, then a woman must be permitted to get what she can out of each potentially short-lived love affair.

Am. 2. 13 contains yet another imitation of this sort. In this poem, Ovid prays for Corinna's life, which is endangered owing to a self-inflicted abortion. After stating the situation (1–6) and calling on certain Egyptian deities (7–14), he attempts to strengthen his case by linking his own life with that of his mistress (15–18):[16]

huc adhibe vultus et in una parce duobus:
    nam vitam dominae tu dabis, illa mihi.
saepe tibi sedit certis operata diebus,
    qua tingit laurus Gallica turma tuas.

These lines contain some very clear references to Prop. 2. 28*b*. 41–46:[17]

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14. This imitation has been cited by Butler and Barber, *ad loc.*; Brandt, *ad loc.*; Rothstein, *ad loc.*

15. This may provide an explanation for the relatively weak ending of Ovid's poem. His imprecations against the *lena* do not carry much conviction when compared to those of Propertius at the end of 4. 8. But if Ovid is actually showing some compassion for the female who is so often mistreated by the male in the game of love, then we should hardly expect a bitter display of hatred against the *lena*.

16. The idea of saving the lives of two people by sparing one is fairly common in ancient literature. For detail, see E. Bréguet, "*In una parce duobus*: Thème et Clichés," *Hommages à L. Herrmann, Collection Latomus*, XLIV (1960), 205–14.

17. My claim of imitation here is based not on the similar theme but on the use and position of specific words in Ovid's poem, namely *duobus, illa*, and *operata sedit*. Others who have previously cited this imitation include Rothstein, *ad loc.*; Butler and Barber, *ad loc.*; Neumann, p. 56.

si non unius, quaeso, miserere duorum!
  vivam, si vivet; si cadet illa, cadam.
pro quibus optatis sacro me carmine damno:
  scribam ego 'Per magnum est salva puella
    Iovem';
ante tuosque pedes illa ipsa operata sedebit,
  narrabitque sedens longa pericla sua.

Anyone familiar with Propertius' elegy realizes that Propertius, too, is pleading for the life of a sick mistress and that Cynthia did indeed recover. In fact, in the lines immediately following this passage, Propertius offers thanks to Persephone for sparing his mistress. This is the key to Ovid's imitation here. He expects the reader to make this association—Cynthia recovered partly, it must be supposed, on the strength of Propertius' promise of line 45 above. Cynthia, when she is well, will perform sacrifices to the gods. Corinna, on the other hand, has already performed religious duties, and so, we should expect, is more worthy of divine aid than Cynthia. Ovid brings about this entire chain of associations by a simple change in Propertius' wording. *Operata sedebit* becomes *sedit . . . operata*, the future act becomes something already accomplished, and Corinna's piety is established.

There is, however, tremendous irony here. Ovid very carefully builds up this picture of Corinna's piety, but juxtaposed to it is the whole reason for Corinna's illness, her abortion. Ovid emphasizes the abortion both at the beginning of the elegy, where he baldly states, "Dum labefactat onus gravidi temeraria ventris, / in dubio vitae lassa Corinna iacet," and again near the end, where he calls on Ilithyia for aid (18–28). The emphasis becomes all the more apparent when one realizes that Ovid is offering the credit for saving Corinna to

Ilithyia, the helper of women in childbirth, while Propertius in 2. 28*b* offers the credit for Cynthia's salvation to the neutral figure of Jove.[18] All of this is leading up to *Am.* 2. 14, where Ovid himself castigates Corinna, her health now improved, for her improvident act. He is displeased with her in 2. 13 also, but as he himself puts it, "ira digna mea, sed cadit ira metu" (4). We thus have a curious mixture of tones in *Am.* 2. 13. First, there is the quiet background tone of Ovid's displeasure over the abortion, the tone which will predominate in 2. 14. Superimposed on this is desperation, Ovid's frantic prayers and hopes for his mistress' recovery. The subtle comparison with Cynthia in Prop. 2. 28*b* contributes much to this tone. Ovid is willing to clutch at any straw, even Corinna's former piety, now so obviously overshadowed by her sin of abortion, if only the gods will spare the girl. The use of this Propertian imitation is a master stroke because it so effectively heightens the feeling of desperation which Ovid is trying to communicate to the reader.

A final example to be considered is the imitation we find in Ovid's propempticon, *Am.* 2. 11. A little more than halfway through the poem, Ovid has included the following: "at si vana ferunt volucres mea dicta procellae, / aequa tamen puppi sit Galatea tuae" (2. 11. 33–34). This should immediately bring to mind a similar distich from Propertius' propempticon: "sed quocumque modo de me, periura, mereris, / sit Galatea tuae non aliena viae" (1. 8. 17–18). The figure of Galatea has provided Ovid with a way of linking his elegy to the earlier propempticon of

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18. *Am.* 2. 13. 21–26:
  lenis ades precibusque meis fave, Ilithyia:
    digna est quam iubeas muneris esse tui.
  ipse ego tura dabo fumosis candidus aris,
    ipse feram ante tuos munera vota pedes;

adiciam titulum 'Servata Naso Corinna':
  tu modo fac titulo muneribusque locum.
Prop. 2. 28*b*. 43–44:
  pro quibus optatis sacro me carmine damno:
    scribam ego 'Per magnum est salva puella Iovem.'

Propertius.[19] In fact, up to the point where the appeal to Galatea is made, both propemptica are developed along remarkably similar lines. Each poet begins by trying to dissuade his girl from embarking on the perilous ocean voyage, but eventually abandons this attempt and offers best wishes for the journey if the girl will indeed persevere. For each poet, the Galatea distich marks this change in feeling.

Ovid has developed this structural similarity for a purpose. He is leading his audience to view his entire propempticon in the light of Prop. 1. 8 in order that he may gain a more effective ending for his elegy. Propertius follows his wishes for Cynthia's safe journey with six lines (21–26) in which he predicts what will happen after she sails—he will always remain true to her. Then, suddenly, whether in the same poem or in a separate but related one, Propertius breaks into a passage of unrestrained joy because Cynthia has decided to remain at home after all.[20] This tone is echoed in *Am.* 2. 11. Ovid, too, begins almost immediately after the Galatea verse with a passage of joy (43–52). There is, however, one ironic feature. Propertius' joy is real, but Ovid's is all imaginary. Corinna, unlike Cynthia, has not agreed to stay. Ovid is simply imagining what might happen between them when she finally does return from her voyage. Because of the parallel structures of the elegies up to this point, the reader has been anticipating similarly happy endings. This makes the ironic "happi-

ness" that Ovid does describe all the more poignant.

Ovid has created irony here by emphasizing the imaginary, just as in the last example he emphasized Corinna's abortion. There the emphasis was made clear by frank statements and the appeal to Ilithyia. Here Ovid works not only through the structural parallel in which the Galatea distich figures so prominently, but also through another important imitation. The last lines of Ovid's propempticon are: "haec mihi quam primum caelo nitidissimus alto / Lucifer admisso tempora portet equo" (2. 11. 55–56). This is an obvious imitation of Tibullus 1. 3. 93–94:[21] "hoc precor, hunc illum nobis Aurora nitentem / Luciferum roseis candida portet equis." Clearly Ovid has chosen to end *Am.* 2. 11 on this note because Tibullus' distich also marks the end of a flight of fancy. Tibullus is imagining himself returning home and Delia coming forth to meet him, while in reality he is deathly ill in Phaeacia. The associations which the reader picks up from the Tibullan imitation make doubly clear the importance of the imaginary for Ovid's poem. Ovid has used two separate imitations to be sure that the irony of the unfulfilled wish and purely imaginary happiness is not overlooked.

These are only some of the many imitations of Propertius to be found in the *Amores*. But even from these few examples one can begin to see the two different types of association which Ovid expects the reader to make. One type is based on imitation of words and offers very little

19. Such an appeal to Galatea for a good voyage is to be found in no other extant Latin propempticon. It is possible that she figures in a lost propempticon, but even so, the wording *sit Galatea tuae* which Ovid borrows directly from Propertius would still force the reader to associate *Am.* 2. 11 with Prop. 1. 8. *Am.* 2. 11. 33–34 has been noted as an imitation by other scholars, including Rothstein, *ad loc.*; Butler and Barber, *ad loc.*; Neumann, p. 95; W. Görler, "Ovids Propemptikon (*Amores* 2. 11)," *Hermes*, XCIII (1965), 338–47.

20. For arguments and bibliography on whether Prop. 1. 8 should be one poem or two, see K. Jäger, *Zweigliedrige Gedichte und Gedichtpaare bei Properz und in Ovids "Amores"* (Tübingen, 1967), pp. 47–55.

21. This imitation has been noted by Brandt, *ad loc.*; Neumann, p. 99; Görler, pp. 345–46 (see n. 19); F. Jacoby, "Zur Entstehung der römischen Elegie," *RhM*, LX (1905), 78.

contextual or structural similarity to aid the reader's memory. Such imitations are interesting in themselves but cannot be considered extremely important for understanding the particular elegy in which they are used, since they can be easily overlooked by a reader whose knowledge of Propertius is less than perfect. Other imitations, however, are recognizable not only from the similarity of the words but also from the similar subject matter and sometimes even from the structure of the two poems in question. These imitations are obviously much more important in Ovid's plan for a particular poem, since they so often influence the reader's feelings about the entire elegy. Ovid expects the reader to recognize these imitations. If they are missed, some of the humor or irony or tenderness of the elegy is also missed.

It is extremely unlikely that Ovid limited his imitating to Propertius or even to Propertius and Tibullus. What he could do with Propertian imitations in the *Amores* he could presumably do with Vergilian and Horatian and Catullan imitations in any one of his many works. Although the scope of this paper was necessarily restricted, it does show, I believe, that anyone who would read Ovid with true understanding must have a thorough knowledge of Ovid's literary predecessors. This much is clear: Ovid did not imitate without a reason. Imitation in his hands was an artistic tool. We must be ready not only to recognize imitations but also to look for their implications.

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