OVID'S *AMORES:* A POLITICAL READING

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IT IS ONLY IN RECENT YEARS THAT Ovid's *Amores* has come to be viewed as a political work.[1] One reason for this change in critical perspective is the fact that what counts as "political" has changed.[2] We no longer consider poetry political only when it deals directly with matters of state.[3] Moreover, as readers of Augustan literature, we can acknowledge that through his legislation and through his promotion of certain ideologies, the emperor had politicized matters that had once been personal. It is because of its treatment of issues central to Augustan ideology that Ovid's *Amores* is a political work.

In the 1990s the nature of the debate concerning Ovid and Augustan politics has changed, largely because of the work of D. F. Kennedy. In an important paper Kennedy has argued, firstly, that "the degree to which a voice is heard as conflicting or supportive is a function of the audience's—or critic's—ideology, a function, therefore of *reception*" (his emphasis);[4] secondly, that "the clear-cut distinction between 'Augustan' and 'anti-Augustan' breaks down" because "it overlooks the fact that, whatever the author's intention or however great his desire, *no* [his emphasis] statement (not even made by Augustus himself) can be categorically 'Augustan' or 'anti-Augustan';

1. In the mid-twentieth century it was possible for Ovidian scholars like L. P. Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled* (Cambridge, 1955), H. Fraenkel, *Ovid: A Poet between Two Worlds* (Berkeley, 1956), and G. Lee "*Tenerorum Lusor Amorum*" in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature: Elegy and Lyric,* ed. J. P. Sullivan (London, 1962), 149–79 to discuss Ovid's earliest poems without any reference to politics. It was in the 1970s and 1980s that critics became sensitive to political elements. Thus J. Barsby, *Ovid* (Oxford, 1978), 11 reveals awareness of tensions between official morality and the Ovidian stance, even though he characterizes the collection as "apolitical." G. Williams, *Change and Decline: Roman Literature in the Early Empire* (Berkeley, 1978), 63 is also aware of difficulties, but asserts firmly that "there is no calculated attack on Augustus." Cf. I. M. Le M. Du Quesnay, "The *Amores*," in *Ovid,* ed. J. W. Binns (London, 1973), 41, who comments that "the *Amores* are not a bitter attack on the Augustan régime nor a lament for the lost republic"; D. Little, "Politics in Augustan Poetry," *ANRW* 2.30.1 (1982): 245–370, esp. 322, who sees the work not as "political," but as having "political implications"; and the comment of A. W. J. Holleman, "Ovid and Politics," *Historia* 20 (1971): 458–66: "Ovid's anti-Augustanism, to be sure, may not be called 'explicitly political,'—it was political all the same" (466). By contrast, S. Mack, *Ovid* (New Haven, 1988), 64 remarks that "Ovid makes us question the foundations of Augustan propaganda," while M.-K. Gamel, "*Non sine caede:* Abortion Politics and Poetics in Ovid's *Amores*," *Helios* 16 (1989): 183–206, esp. 196 claims that the work constitutes "a disturbing portrait of fundamental Roman ideas, not just about eros, but about social relations, politics, and literature, and their interrelationships."

2. For an excellent discussion of the issues involved in the concept "political" see D. F. Kennedy, *The Arts of Love: Five Studies in the Discourse of Roman Love Elegy* (Cambridge, 1993), 34–38.

3. This is Kennedy's definition (*The Arts of Love* [note 2 above], 35).

4. D. F. Kennedy, "'Augustan' and 'Anti-Augustan': Reflections on Terms of Reference," in *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus,* ed. A. Powell (Bristol, 1992), 41.

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the traces of its constituent discourses were—and still are—open to appropriation in the opposite interest."[5]

Is it legitimate to claim that how a voice is heard is solely a matter of the reader's ideology? Certainly that is what Kennedy seems to be claiming here. And that is how he has been received.[6] But despite this, when discussing Ovid's *Ars Amatoria,* Kennedy is willing to speak of "an Ovidian discourse which determines its reception as ironic, and even 'anti-Augustan.'"[7] If through its constituent properties a discourse can actually determine its own reception, then how the voice is heard must depend at least in part on the text's inherent properties. That is to say, how a text is received is not determined solely by the reader's ideology. How can a reception-theorist admit that a text can determine its own reception? How a voice is heard is dependent upon both the sound and the listener, the text and reader.

Kennedy's second point seems logically dependent upon the first. It is, I presume, because the reader's understanding of the text is dependent upon his/her ideology that a text is "open to appropriation in the opposite interest." But this can produce absurd results. Firstly, if we adopt Kennedy's "dynamic, dialogical framework," can we not argue that since Kennedy is engaged in a particular discourse, that of literary theory, his text is "open to appropriation in the opposite interest"? Can we not argue that no statement (not even made by Kennedy himself) can be categorically pro- or anti-theory? But to claim that Kennedy is anti-theory is to reveal misunderstanding of his work. Secondly, it follows that if an ancient author attempts to write in a pro- or anti-Augustan fashion, he necessarily fails. He inevitably produces a work that can reasonably be read in either way. Would anyone take an anti-Augustan reading of the *Res Gestae* seriously?

But perhaps I have misunderstood the claim. Kennedy's position is restated in greater detail in his discussion of the *Ars Amatoria:*

> Even those like Ovid, who might arguably have wished to distance themselves from the actions of Augustus, are nonetheless unable to escape from the discourse, and could be seen as contributing to its consequences. *Expedit esse deos et, ut expedit, esse putemus* (*Ars* 1.637) mirrors Livy's "sophisticated" attitude, but it is ironic, and even "anti-Augustan." However, Ovid's statement, although rhetorically resisting its own implication in this logic of explanation, cannot be exempted from its own effects, for Ovid's ironic and flippant appropriation is part of what gives this logic its social meaning and force, and so helps to render legitimate the moral and religious programme of Augustus.[8]

That last sentence is a fairly opaque piece of prose. Kennedy here seems to accept that Ovid's treatment of the Augustan religious program is flippant and ironic, even anti-Augustan. He also rightly observes that line 1.637 de-

5. Ibid., 40–41.

6. See, for example, the superb article of A. Sharrock, "Ovid and the Politics of Reading," *MD* 33 (1995): 97–122. Sharrock accepts that "a text of itself cannot be either 'pro-' or 'anti-' 'Augustan', only readings can be." She then goes on to offer an anti-Augustan reading: "I am offering you here a commitedly anti-Augustan reading of the *Ars Amatoria*" (122).

7. Kennedy, "Reflections" (note 4 above), 45.

8. Ibid., 45. See also E. O'Gorman, "Love and the Family: Augustus and Ovidian Elegy," *Arethusa* 30 (1997): 104–5, who accepts Kennedy's position.

rives its social meaning and force from its appropriation of the Augustan program. And that is the twentieth-century reader's primary concern: the line's social meaning and force. But how does Ovid's appropriation contribute to rendering the Augustan program legitimate? True, the line draws attention to the program, but it plainly does so in such a way as to subvert it. In my view, it is not yet time to abandon the antithesis between "pro-" and "anti-Augustan" and that opposition is fundamental to this paper.

But there is one more matter that requires clarification. When we talk about Ovid's poetry in relation to politics, what are we actually concerned with? Are we discussing the poem's reception in antiquity? Or how the text seems to work? Kennedy is willing to acknowledge that a text like the *Ars Amatoria* shows signs of anti-Augustanism. These signs, however, he construes as being in effect supportive of the emperor's position:

> Both the immediate reception and the history of that reception are caught up in a contemporary logic of explanation of power in which "oppositional" and "subversive" may have had the unforeseen consequence for those involved of consolidating the position of "Augustus."[9]

Thus even if we concede that certain texts are subversive or oppositional, their effect is, nevertheless, to support the regime. There are several possible responses to this claim. Firstly, a question. What evidence is there to support it? Kennedy cites none and is careful to qualify his assertion by not using the indicative mood. Secondly, while certain forms of oppositional speech may actually support the regime in a contemporary democracy, that is scarcely likely to be true in less free societies. Thirdly, there is no way of knowing about these "unforeseen consequences." What kind of evidence could tell us whether or not texts like those of Ovid actually had the effect of consolidating the regime?

Our aim then is to examine the way in which the text seems to work. It is here that the notion of intention is useful. Intention is always a difficult concept and in some quarters it has been banished from literary study altogether.[10] Nevertheless, we have to acknowledge that writers do actually have intentions and that as readers, one of the things we do is attempt to reconstruct them. Hinds rightly attacks the complete exclusion of the author's intention as "intertextualist fundamentalism." He argues as follows:

> The axiom that meaning is constructed at the point of reception becomes a better tool for dealing with the kinds of case which interest students of philological allusion if it embraces the fact (i.e. rather than occluding it) that one of the most persistent ways in which both Roman and modern readers construct the meaning of a poetic text is by attempting to construct from (and for) it an intention-bearing authorial voice, a construction which they generally hope or believe (in a belief which must always be partly misguided) to be a reconstruction; and the author thus (re)constructed is one who writes towards an implied reader who will attempt such a (re)construction.[11]

9. Kennedy, "Reflections," 46.

10. The most important papers on this issue are those of M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" and R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author." Both are reprinted in *Modern Criticism and Theory*, ed. D. Lodge (Harlow, England and New York, 1988).

11. S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry* (Cambridge, 1998), 49.

Our aim then is to construct or reconstruct an "intention-bearing authorial voice" for these poems.

In what follows I shall examine the *Amores* in relation to what is commonly known as "Augustan ideology." "Ideology" is a term that can be used in a variety of ways. Thus T. Eagleton lists sixteen different definitions in his book on the subject, but the one that comes closest to what I have in mind is "ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power."[12] There can be no doubt that Augustan ideology was sufficiently fluid, sufficiently flexible to meet changing needs during the four decades of the emperor's rule.[13] However, there are several constant elements that are particularly pertinent when considering the *Amores,* in particular the emphasis on military success, the exploitation of the Julian myth and the attempt to restore what was conceived of as traditional morality, especially sexual morality.

Although peace may have been presented as the central Augustan achievement, as the emperor claimed (*RG* 13) and as the complex of Solarium Augusti and Ara Pacis Augustae in the Campus Martius reminds us,[14] that peace was founded on success in war. So Mars had his temple in an equally important set of monuments, the Forum Augustum. For the first time this god had a temple within the *pomerium.* It was in his temple that the standards lost at Carrhae were kept (*RG* 29). It was here that the Senate considered wars and triumphs. It was from here that Roman generals departed for foreign wars and to here that they returned with triumphal tokens (Suet. *Aug.* 29.2). As C. Newlands points out, the temple of Mars Ultor "enshrined in the heart of Rome the notion of just war as the legitimate basis of the state's imperial dominion and identity."[15] In the *Res Gestae* the emperor recorded his two ovations, three curule triumphs, and twenty-one salutations as *imperator* (*RG* 4) ahead of the Ara Pacis (*RG* 12.2) and the threefold closing of Janus' temple (*RG* 13). Moreover, the inscription devotes more space to military expansion than it does to peace. And we should not forget that the Prima Porta statue represents Augustus as a soldier. War was fundamental to Augustan ideology.

So too was the myth of Trojan origins. In this story resided an important source of legitimacy, for it accounted not only for Rome's origin but also for that of the Julian family. As Zanker puts it, "the myth of the Julian family . . . became the centerpiece of the new national myth."[16] Once again the temple of Mars Ultor is central, a temple built at the emperor's expense and on his own land (*RG* 21.1). Here that myth is embodied in stone. Within the temple stood Venus, mother of Aeneas, and Mars, father of Romulus. Occu-

12. T. Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London and New York, 1991), 1–2, quoting from 1.

13. On the development of Augustan ideology, P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor, 1988) is crucial. See also D. C. Feeney, "*Si licet et fas est:* Ovid's *Fasti* and the Problem of Free Speech under the Principate," in *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus,* ed. A. Powell (Bristol, 1992), 1–4.

14. For this complex and its significance see Zanker, *Power of Images* (note 13 above), 143–44. In particular Zanker points out that "it was so contrived that on Augustus's birthday the *gnomon* pointed to the nearby Ara Pacis Augustae, recalling that at his birthday the constellations of the stars had already determined his reign of peace: *natus ad pacem.*"

15. C. Newlands, *Playing with Time: Ovid and the Fasti* (Ithaca, 1995), 87.

16. Zanker, *Power of Images,* 195.

pying a central position among the *summi uiri,* and facing each other in the exedrae of the forum, were Aeneas and Romulus. In the center was placed a triumphal quadriga together with an inscription honoring the emperor himself with the supreme title, *pater patriae*. The message could hardly be plainer or more official: Rome's history is Julian history and it culminates in Augustus.

Equally official was the attempt to reform Roman private morality.[17] Augustus may have rejected the office of "supervisor of laws and morals" (*RG* 6.1), but he nevertheless attempted to revive ancient morality by legislation (*RG* 8.5). It was in the year 18 B.C.E., or thereabouts, that adultery became illegal in Rome, for it was then that the *lex Iulia de adulteriis* was enacted.[18] From our perspective, two of the law's provisions are particularly pertinent. First of all, the law defined the crime "as deliberate adultery with a married woman or a virgin, widow, or divorced woman of respectable station, or a male."[19] Secondly the law introduced a charge of *lenocinium* under which "a husband who caught his wife in adultery and kept her as his wife, letting the man go, was liable for pandering."[20] But the suppression of adultery was not the emperor's only marital objective, for in the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* he apparently sought to promote marriage and childbearing by forbidding members of the senatorial order and their descendants to marry partners of unsuitable status and by conferring legal and economic privileges upon married couples and parents.[21] To reinforce the message, Horace's *Carmen Saeculare,* sung by boys and girls at a sacrifice conducted by Augustus and Agrippa to Apollo and Diana on June 3, 17 B.C.E., that is, on the fourth day of the Saecular Games,[22] deals with marriage legislation (Hor. *Carm. Saec.* 17–20):

> diva, producas subolem patrumque
> prosperes decreta super iugandis
> feminis prolisque novae feraci
> lege marita. . . .
>
> Goddess, rear our youth and prosper the Senators' decrees on the nuptials of women and the marriage law fruitful with new offspring. . . .[23]

And these same concerns are reflected on the Ara Pacis where, as Zanker points out,[24] the few children of the imperial house were prominently positioned.

17. As K. Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton, 1996), 128 observes: "While the concept of an 'Augustan program' has often been overstated, it fully applies to the legislation on morals and marriage: Augustus was the prime mover behind this unmistakable legislative program." For the ideological significance of the law see the important discussion of C. Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge, 1993), chap. 1. She rightly emphasizes "the symbolic charge of the Augustan moral legislation, which played a central role in establishing the credentials of his autocratic regime" (36).

18. For the date see S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford, 1991), 520. The *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* is securely dated to 18 B.C.E. The *lex Iulia de adulteriis* is logically linked with it.

19. Ibid., 278.

20. Ibid., 288.

21. Ibid., 60–80 for details.

22. The details of the ceremony come from *CIL* 6.32323. See *Religions of Rome,* ed. M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, vol. 2, *A Sourcebook* (Cambridge, 1998), 140–44, esp. 143 for a translation.

23. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own.

24. Zanker, *Power of Images,* 158–59.

Why did Ovid choose to write erotic verse? For poets in Augustan Rome the selection of a genre in which to write was not merely an aesthetic decision. To write love elegy was, first of all, to follow in the footsteps of Cornelius Gallus, a poet whose fame Ovid is happy to proclaim (*Am.* 15.29–30):

Gallus et Hesperiis et Gallus notus Eois,
et sua cum Gallo nota Lycoris erit.

Gallus will be famous in the east, Gallus in the west
and with Gallus his Lycoris will be famous.

It was of course precisely because of his eastern fame that Gallus, elegist and soldier, incurred imperial displeasure and committed suicide in 26 B.C.E.[25]

Moreover, to write elegy was to reject the most prestigious of all literary genres, epic poetry. For the neoteric poets of the late Republic, to write personal verse was to abandon ways of writing they considered outmoded and archaic, but for Augustan poets, to renounce epic was also to renounce Augustan themes.[26] Propertius puts it like this (Prop. 2.1.17–26):

quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,
ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus,
non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo
impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter,
nec veteres Thebas, nec Pergama nomen Homeri,
Xerxis et imperio bina coisse vada,
regnave prima Remi aut animos Carthaginis altae,
Cimbrorumque minas et benefacta Mari:
bellaque resque tui memorarem Caesaris, et tu
Caesare sub magno cura secunda fores.

But if fate had only given me this, Maecenas,
that I should lead heroic bands to war,
I would not sing of Titans, not of Ossa on Olympus
piled, so that Pelion might be a path to heaven,
nor of ancient Thebes, of Pergama, Homer's glory,
and of two shoals coming together at Xerxes' command,
or Remus' first kingdom or the pride of lofty Carthage,
the threats of the Cimbri and Marius' good deeds:
I would record the wars and achievements of your Caesar, and you
would be my second concern next to great Caesar.

In Propertius 2.1 the poet explains why it is that he continues to write love elegy. He does not feel obliged to explain why he does not write tragic or lyric or didactic or pastoral verse. For Propertius, choosing to write elegy means one thing: not writing epic. An epic could, of course, be composed on many subjects: on Greek myth, the tales of Thebes and Troy for example; on Greek history, the war against Xerxes; on Roman history (whether recent

25. As J. C. McKeown, *Ovid: "Amores": Text, Prolegomena, and Commentary*, vol. 2, *A Commentary on Book One* (Leeds, 1989), 412 points out: "*Gallus notus Eois* can hardly fail to remind us of the primary cause of Gallus' downfall, his self-advertisement in Egypt."

26. On the "oppositional" nature of elegy, see Kennedy, "Reflections," 47.

or remote), Romulus and Remus, the Punic wars, or Marius' battles against the Cimbri. But the most pressing subject for an Augustan epicist is Caesar's wars and achievements. That is the subject that Propertius avoids.

Ovid faced the same choice. He expresses it more succinctly than Propertius in *Amores* 3.12.15–16:

> cum Thebae, cum Troia foret, cum Caesaris acta,
> ingenium movit sola Corinna meum.
>
> Though there was Thebes, though Troy, though Caesar's deeds,
> only Corinna stirred my talent.

Just in case we should be tempted to take this statement autobiographically, the poem itself asserts that it should not be read as literal truth: *nec tamen ut testes mos est audire poetas* ("it is not usual to listen to poets as witnesses," 19). Moreover, in 3.12 the poet is explicitly concerned to emphasize the fictional nature of poetry in general (19–40), and of Ovidian elegy in particular (*Am.* 3.12.41–44):

> exit in inmensum fecunda licentia vatum,
> obligat historica nec sua verba fide:
> et mea debuerat falso laudata videri
> femina; credulitas nunc mihi vestra nocet.
>
> Unbounded is the poets' fertile freedom,
> it does not restrict its words with history's accuracy:
> and the praises of my mistress you should have seen
> as fiction; now your gullibility does me harm.

When Ovid claims that Corinna "stirred his talent" he is not asserting that he wrote elegy because he loved a woman, but that he wrote elegy because he chose to do so. Corinna equals elegy. Note too the crucial difference between Ovid's poem and that of Propertius. The Propertian poem is addressed to Maecenas and the tone is apologetic: "I'm not up to writing epic." By contrast, Ovid's has no stated addressee and gives no genuine reason. Its tone is flippant, not repentant: "If only I'd written epic, then no rival would have known about my mistress."

The very first poem of the collection juxtaposes elegy and epic in a similar way. In 1.1 the poet begins by telling us that he had actually begun composing a poem telling of "wars in a serious meter" (*arma gravi numero*), but that Cupid intervened and compelled him to write elegy. The choice is effectively presented as arbitrary: the poet is capable of writing epic, but he won't. In 2.1 we find a similar story. Once again the poet is busy writing his epic, this time on the battle between gods and giants, when who should close the door but his girlfriend. After that he could not continue with epic. But this time a reason is given for preferring elegy to epic: praising a girlfriend means a better sex life (2.1.33–34). In 2.18 also it is a girl who prevents epic composition. Attempting to abandon both elegy and his girlfriend, the poet finds her kissing and embracing him. In those circumstances he can forsake neither elegy nor girlfriend. Epic will have to be dumped.

In these programmatic poems (1.1, 2.1, 2.18, and 3.12) the poet is primarily concerned to establish his independence. Without reason, without apology, without humility, he declares that he will not take up the composition of epic poetry. In 3.1 aesthetic choice takes on a distinctly political coloring.[27] This time, however, the contest is between elegy and tragedy. The poet happens to be strolling near a cave within a sacred wood, wondering what to write next when two women appear, Elegy and Tragedy. Each of course is described in terms appropriate to the genre she represents. Thus in Elegy's case one foot is longer than the other (8, 12), while Tragedy wears the garb characteristic of tragic actors, the mantle (*palla*),[28] sceptre, and buskins (12–14).[29] This much detail is sufficient to associate the women with their respective genres. But Ovid goes further than that, for Elegy is described in terms that suggest the elegiac mistress. Her hair is perfumed (7), her clothes are extremely sheer (*tenuissima*),[30] she has a lover's face and an elegant form. As Wyke points out,[31] her appearance is strikingly reminiscent of Cynthia's first physical appearance in Propertius. She is also described in terms suggestive of Corinna's initial entry into Ovid's text.[32] By contrast, Tragedy is described in terms that suggest that she is a respectable Roman matron, for her robe hangs full-length to the ground (12), while her gestures are suitably serious (31–32). Tragedy disapproves of dissipation (17–18), of the lover's notoriety (19–20) and offers the attractions of Roman glory (29). Thus the poet faces a choice, not merely between genres but between the embodiments of different values, between a mistress and a matron, between wanton idleness and social responsibility. How does the poet choose? He opts for mistress and wanton idleness.

We see the same rejection of the claims of official Augustan values in Ovid's treatment of the military. In Rome the army was, of course, centrally important. It was the means whereby the empire had been acquired and maintained; it was the instrument whereby Octavian had triumphed in civil war and won through to autocratic power.

In the *Monobiblos* the Propertian lover had explicitly rejected the life of military service in favor of erotic struggle (Prop. 1.6.29–30):

non ego sum laudi, non natus idoneus armis:
hanc me militiam fata subire volunt.

I was not born suitable for glory, not for warfare:
the fates want me to endure this campaigning.

Moreover, in the collection's final poem (1.22) the poet had rejected Roman militarism and identified himself not with Latium and Rome, but with Umbria and Perusia, a region and a city devastated by Caesarian forces in the most recent of civil wars. In *Amores* 3.15, the last poem of his collection,

27. Cf. M. Wyke, "Reading Female Flesh: *Amores* 3.1," in *History as Text: The Writing of Ancient History*, ed. A. Cameron (London, 1989), 113–43, esp. 117.

28. For the tragic associations of the *palla* see *OLD, s.v.* "palla," §1c.

29. Cf. 2.18.15–16, where the poet talks of his own attempt at writing tragedy.

30. *Tenuis* is also, of course, a word with important generic associations.

31. Wyke, "Reading Female Flesh" (note 27 above), 119. Prop. 1.2.1–8.

32. Wyke, "Reading Female Flesh," 123 compares 3.1.51: *tunica velata soluta* used of Corinna with 1.5.9: *Corinna venit tunica velata recincta.*

Ovid makes a similar gesture, by identifying himself with Sulmo and the territory of the Paeligni, and by reminding us that his native land had fought against the Romans in the Social War (3.15.8–10).[33]

In both Propertius and Ovid, love is presented as a mode of warfare, for being in thrall to a mistress entails subjugation by Cupid. The Propertian lover confesses as much in his opening lines, for when Cynthia takes him captive, Love compels him to cast down his eyes of steadfast arrogance (1.1.1–4). The Ovidian lover is more extravagant. Even before he knows the identity of his beloved, he finds himself in Cupid's triumphal procession (1.2). Cupid's triumph is pictured in terms that recall precisely the details of actual Roman triumphs. As the victorious general wears the laurel wreath, so Cupid wears the myrtle. As horses draw a general's chariot, so doves haul Cupid's. Both drive their chariots amid applauding crowds and lead a procession of captured enemies. In Cupid's case the prisoners are young men and women, allegorical figures like Good Sense and Modesty, and the poet himself. The god is greeted with the traditional cry *io triumphe* and, like the war god,[34] is accompanied by appropriate personifications, in this case Flattery, Error, and Madness. Such detailed parody might be merely amusing, but at the poem's end we are reminded of Cupid's relationship to the emperor (51): *aspice cognati felicia Caesaris arma* ("look upon the successful wars of your relative Caesar"). We are reminded that the emperor is not Venus' only descendant active in Rome. Even more significantly, we are reminded that Cupid's triumph is actually legitimate, meeting as it does the emperor's rule that triumphs could be celebrated only by members of his own family.[35] To treat the triumph in this flippant yet pointed way is to mock and trivialize a major cultural institution.[36]

For the most part Ovid treats the military as contemptible and their achievements as negligible. In 1.13 the soldier's preparations for warfare are listed among the unfortunate effects of the sunrise, along with children having to go to school, unwary litigants heading off to court, and housewives starting work. And what does victory over the Sugambri mean for the Ovidian lover? It means that his girlfriend will be able to buy a nice new German wig to cover her baldness (1.14.45–46).[37] Or consider the lover's response to the fact that his girlfriend has taken a wealthy soldier as her new lover (*Am.* 3.8.11–20):

> Ecce, recens dives parto per vulnera censu
> praefertur nobis sanguine pastus eques!
> hunc potes amplecti formosis, vita, lacertis?
> huius in amplexu, vita, iacere potes?

33. As Wyke, "Reading Female Flesh," 127 points out. For the opposition between lover and soldier see also Tib. 1.1.53–54, 1.10, 2.6.1–18.

34. Cf. Hom. *Il.* 15.119 of Ares accompanied by Deimos and Phobos.

35. As F. D. Harvey, "*Cognati Caesaris:* Ovid *Amores* 1,2, 51/52." *WS* 17 (1983): 89–90 points out.

36. See M. Buchan, "Ovidius Imperamator: Beginnings and Endings of Love Poems and Empire in the *Amores*," *Arethusa* 28 (1995): 53–85, who points out that this blurring of boundaries between Cupid and Caesar at the end of *Amores* 1.2 should force us to re-evaluate the roles of both Cupid and Caesar in 1.1 and 1.2, for each refuses to remain within prescribed limits.

37. McKeown, "*Amores*" (note 25 above), 2:382, comments: "Ovid trivialises Augustan military achievements."

si nescis, caput hoc galeam portare solebat,
ense latus cinctum, quod tibi servit, erat;
laeva manus, cui nunc serum male convenit aurum,
scuta tulit; dextram tange, cruenta fuit.
qua periit aliquis, potes hanc contingere dextram?
heu, ubi mollities pectoris illa tui?
cerne cicatrices, veteris vestigia pugnae:
quaesitum est illi corpore, quidquid habet.

Look, a wealthy upstart, who won his wealth through wounds,
a knight fed on blood, is preferred to me.
Can you embrace, my life, this man with your fair arms?
Can you lie, my life, in his embrace?
If you are unaware, this head used to wear a helmet;
those loins which serve you once bore a sword;
his left hand, which a new gold ring suits so badly,
held a shield; touch his right hand, it was bloody.
Can you touch this right hand? It killed someone.
Ah, where is your heart's delicacy?
Look at his scars, traces of a previous fight:
All his wealth was won with his body.

The lover is of course trying to argue a case here. He wishes to persuade his mistress to stop seeing an ex-soldier by creating revulsion at both his trade and the newness of his money. We might view this approach as purely ad hoc. However, in the collection's final poem, the poet defines himself as the antithesis of this soldier (*Am.* 3.15.5–6):

siquid id est, usque a proavis vetus ordinis heres,
non modo militiae turbine factus eques.

I am a long-standing heir of rank, if that is anything, from remote ancestors,
I am no knight recently created in war's turmoil.

In 3.8 the poet mocks the soldier's knightly pretensions: the gold ring does not suit him. He sneers at the physical aspects of a soldier's life, the equipment, the wounds, the scars. Line 20 even suggests that the soldier is a kind of prostitute: *quaesitum est illi corpore, quidquid habet* ("all his wealth was won with his body"). The poet despises the nouveau riche. By contrast, in the collection's signature poem, in the poem where the poet's persona comes closest to identification with the historical Ovid,[38] he declares that, for what it's worth, his wealth is old, he is not some jumped-up parvenu. But even more importantly, his wealth and status have no connection with warfare.

This stance seems contradicted elsewhere by Ovid's presentation of the erotic game as a kind of warfare in which the lover plays the soldier. Thus in 2.9 the lover characterizes himself as a soldier in Cupid's army who wishes to retire, while in 3.7 his penis is now longing to campaign (*militiam,* 68). But the most important poem of this kind is 1.9, for there Ovid argues at length that the lover is a kind of soldier: *militat omnis amans*. This

38. It was Publius Ovidius Naso who was *Paeligni ruris alumnus* (3.15.3), not the Ovidian lover.

proposition he purports to prove by a series of ingenious parallels: both lovers and soldiers need youth and courage, endure hardships, perform daring exploits, and suffer the vicissitudes of fortune. Indeed, famous soldiers have been noted lovers: Achilles, Hector, Agamemnon, Mars.

But the central point the lover wishes to establish is that lovers are not idle. Thus at 31–32 we are told: *ergo desidiam quicumque vocabat amorem, / desinat* ("therefore, whoever calls love idleness should stop"), and the poem concludes with a piece of advice: *qui nolet fieri desidiosus, amet* ("if you do not wish to be idle, try love"). This is extraordinary because in Roman poetry idleness is one of the lover's essential properties. Thus Catullus links *otium* (leisure) with both love and poetic composition,[39] while Propertius is aware of accusations of idleness made against him.[40] Tibullus too, having refused to campaign with Messalla, declares (Tib. 1.1.57–58):

Non ego laudari curo, mea Delia; tecum
dum modo sim, quaeso segnis inersque vocer.

I do not care for glory, my Delia: as long as I am
with you, I seek to be called sluggish and inactive.

And Horace also links love with inactivity (Hor. *Carm.* 1.8.1–7):

Lydia, dic, per omnis
te deos oro, Sybarin cur properes amando
perdere, cur apricum
oderit campum patiens pulveris atque solis,
cur neque militaris
inter aequalis equitet, Gallica nec lupatis
temperet ora frenis?

Lydia, tell me, by all the gods I beg you, why you hasten to ruin Sybaris with love, why, though once patient of dust and sun, he loathes the sunny Campus, and does not ride amid soldiers of his own age, and does not restrain his Gallic steed with jagged bit?

Horace links love not only with leisure but with avoidance of civic responsibilities, in particular, with failure to engage in military service.[41] Elsewhere in the *Amores* Ovid makes this same connection (*Am.* 1.15.1–4):

Quid mihi Livor edax, ignavos obicis annos,
ingeniique vocas carmen inertis opus;
non me more patrum, dum strenua sustinet aetas,
praemia militiae pulverulenta sequi . . . ?

Why, biting Envy, do you charge me with indolent years,
and call my poetry the work of an idle talent,
alleging that I do not, in the ancestral way, while vigorous youth sustains me,
pursue campaigning's dusty rewards . . . ?

39. Catull. 50, 51.
40. Prop. 1.12.
41. For the incompatibility of love and athletic (including military) pursuits see R. G. M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: "Odes Book 1"* (Oxford, 1970), 108–9. They cite Plaut. *Bacch.* 428–34, *Mostell.* 149–56; Sall. *Cat.* 7.4; Prop. 2.16.33–34.

It is clear then that in the context of Rome's civic and literary culture to assert the equivalence in worth of the lover and the soldier, as our poet does, is to maintain a paradox. By doing so with such skill and wit and at such length, the poet in fact convinces us of the opposite position: the lives of lover and soldier are actually incompatible.[42]

Why then does the poet treat love as a form of military campaign? Wyke points out that "in a society . . . in which citizenship carried the obligation of military service" this metaphor defines "the elegiac male as socially irresponsible . . . As a soldier of love he is not available to fight military campaigns."[43] To treat love as a kind of warfare, to regard the lover as the moral and social equivalent of the soldier, is to reject Rome's dominant ideology.[44]

In his treatment of the Julian myth we see Ovid repudiating a specifically Augustan element in that ideology. Though older than the Principate, this myth had been given its classic definition in Virgil's *Aeneid*. Early in Book 1, Virgil establishes the connection between remote past and Augustan present, between Trojan Aeneas and the Julian family. Venus refers to her motherhood of Aeneas (he is *meus Aeneas* at 1.231), while Jupiter establishes the progression from Ilium to Ilus to Iulus[45] and Iulius.[46] It also happens that a princess of the Trojan royal house, Ilia, will, through the agency of Mars, become mother of Romulus and Remus.[47] Jupiter stresses the family's Trojan origins: he speaks of "Trojan Caesar" (1.286). In Book 6 these associations are strengthened by Anchises' juxtaposition of the city's original founder, Romulus, with its new founder, Augustus (6. 777–805).

How does Ovid treat this myth? For obvious reasons, Virgil had not highlighted the story's erotic potential. Ovid does. After all, the two gods most prominent in the Julian story, Venus and Mars, were also notorious adulterers. We are reminded of this at a number of points in the *Amores*. Thus in 1.8 we are reminded of Mars being caught in Vulcan's net,[48] in 2.5 of the passionate "kisses Venus brought to her dear Mars,"[49] in 2.9b of the relationship between Mars and Cupid.[50] The story has other ramifications. If Aeneas is Venus' son, then Cupid is his half-brother. Thus in 3.9 we are told that

42. As M. Wilson, "Wasted Words: Rhetoric and Paradox in Ovid's *Amores*," *Classicum* 13 (1987): 5–13, esp. 10 observes: "[I]t is precisely the multiplicity of parallels to assert a palpably tenuous resemblance between the two occupations that makes the poem amusing." By contrast, P. Murgatroyd, "*Militia amoris* and the Roman Elegists," *Latomus* 34 (1975): 59–79 seems to take the comparison at face value: "it seems probable that the inspiration for *militia amoris* lay simply in the similarity between amatory and military situations, but it is not until *Amores* 1.9 that the comparison is worked out at length" (74–75). For the opposition between love and war cf. Tib. 1.1.75–76: *hic ego dux milesque bonus. vos, signa tubaeque, / ite procul.*

43. M. Wyke, "Mistress and Metaphor in Augustan Elegy," *Helios* 16 (1989): 25–47, esp. 42.

44. Thus, for the reasons outlined above, I do not accept the argument of L. Cahoon, "The Bed as Battlefield: Erotic Conquest and Military Metaphor in Ovid's *Amores*," *TAPhA* 118 (1988): 293–307 that "love in the *Amores* is inherently violent and linked to the Roman *libido dominandi*" (294). The equation between the lives of the lover and the soldier is ironic.

45. Verg. *Aen.* 1. 267–68.

46. Verg. *Aen.* 1. 288.

47. Verg. *Aen.* 1. 288, 6. 777–78.

48. *Am.* 1.8.41–42; see also 1.9.29–30. McKeown, "*Amores*," 2:270 points out the sexual connotations of *victi, resurgunt,* and *cadunt*. He comments: "This obscenity is the more outrageous because *victi . . . resurgunt* also hints at contemporary political propaganda that Rome under the guidance of the Julian dynasty is a new Troy rising to greatness from the defeat of the old."

49. *Am.* 2.5.28.

50. *Am.* 2.9b. 47–48.

Cupid mourned at Tibullus' funeral as much as he did at that of his brother, Aeneas.[51] It also follows that the emperor himself is related to the god of love, and so in 1.2, as we have seen, Cupid is urged to look to the successful arms of his relative Caesar.[52] In 2.14 the lover presents the story even more outrageously. Concerned that Corinna has attempted to procure an abortion, the lover asks what would have happened if others had done so (*Am.* 2.14.17–18):

si Venus Aenean gravida temerasset in alvo,
Caesaribus tellus orba futura fuit.

If Venus had violated Aeneas in her pregnant belly
the future world would have been bereft of Caesars.

Suetonius tells us that Augustus "took offence at being made the subject of any composition except in serious earnest."[53] How would he have reacted to a reference of this kind?

Ovid's treatment of the Romulus and Remus legend is similarly disrespectful. Where Virgil chooses his language carefully and speaks of Ilia as merely "pregnant by Mars" (*Marte gravis, Aen.* 1.274), Ovid points to Romulus and Remus as the product of adultery. While urging that a husband should grant his wife appropriate license, the lover points out that Rome is the city (*Am.* 3.4.39–40):

in qua Martigenae non sunt sine crimine nati
Romulus Iliades Iliadesque Remus.

In which the Mars-descended were born not without crime
Ilia's son Romulus and Remus son of Ilia.

Even more telling, in my view, is a poem in which Romulus and Remus are not actually named. *Amores* 3.6 starts out as one of those poems in which the lover attempts to persuade the unpersuadable, for the poem is addressed to a river in flood.[54] The lover threatens to publish the river's name and bring it into disrepute (19–22), a threat he fails to carry out. Next he argues that rivers should help lovers since they too have experienced love and, to prove the point, he gives us a catalogue of randy rivers (23–44). But by far the longest section of the poem (38 lines out of 106) is taken up with the "marriage" of the river Anio to Ilia (45–82). Ilia, wandering about the Tiburtine countryside, comes upon the river Anio. Anio offers himself as lover and is initially rejected (69–70). Eventually, however, Ilia desperately hurls herself into the river, and is molested and married by the lustful river (79–82). And so Ilia is raped a second time. "Rape" seems the appropriate word, since Ilia is unwilling, but the narrator speaks (ironically perhaps) of "marriage" (*socii iura . . . tori,* 82).

51. *Am.* 3.9.13–14.
52. *Am.* 1.2.51.
53. Suet. *Aug.* 89.3.3, trans. C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA, 1913).
54. For a discussion of other such poems see Wilson, "Wasted Words" (note 42 above). Wilson discusses 1.13, 1.8, 1.9, 3.11b, and 2.11.

More important, however, is the fact that the poem presents the aftermath of Ilia's rape by Mars, the event that produced Romulus and Remus. Ilia wanders alone around the countryside, distraught and disheveled (*Am.* 3.6.47–50):

Ilia cui placuit, quamvis erat horrida cultu
ungue notata comas, ungue notata genas.
illa gemens patruique nefas delictaque Martis
errabat nudo per loca sola pede.

Ilia pleased him, although she was in appearance unkempt
her hair nail-torn, her cheeks nail-torn.
She, groaning over her uncle's crime and the offence of Mars,
was roaming barefoot in the wilderness.

Note too the emphasis on Ilia's Trojan origins. Even the choice of the Virgilian "Ilia" for the name of Romulus' mother rather than Livy's "Silvia"[55] points to Troy. Note too that Anio addresses her as "descendant of Idaean Laomedon" (*ab Idaeo Laomedonte genus,* 54) and "Trojan offspring" (*Troiana propago,* 65) and that her task at Rome is to tend to the "Trojan fire" (*Iliacis . . . focis,* 76). Ovid clearly takes pains in this section to stress Ilia's connections with the Julian version of Rome's foundation.

But Ilia's role in that myth is primarily that of rape victim. Note how the narrator emphasizes not only her physical appearance but also the rape's devastating psychological effects. Ilia is distressed (*anxia,* 53), weeping (57), frenziedly beating her breasts (58), and fearful (*metus,* 61, 62). She rejects Anio's advances out of modesty (67) and tries to escape but fails again through fear (*metu,* 70). Her only wish is to have died before the loss of her virginity. She is overwhelmed by guilt at the violation of her Vestal's vows. The narrator's picture of Ilia is clearly intended to highlight the pain that she endures as a result of Mars' criminal action and to arouse sympathy for a woman caught up in history's processes. For the most part, Ovid treats the Julian version of Rome's origins as a source of humor or as an object of mockery, but in *Amores* 3.6 the poet exposes what the Augustan version of the myth omits, the individual injustice and suffering entailed by Rome's foundation.

To highlight the fact that both adultery and rape were implicit in the tale of Rome's foundation was particularly telling in the context of a regime that, as we have seen, was bent on improving private morals. For elegiac poets such an official stance might well pose problems, since Roman love poetry was traditionally concerned with the kind of sexual relationship censured by traditional moralists and Augustan legislation. Catullus had characterized his relationship with Lesbia as a "stolen love" (*furtivos . . . amores,* 7.8) and had urged her to reject the mutterings of strict old men (*severiorum,* 5.2). Although marriage between lover and mistress is presented as a theoretical possibility,[56] marriage to Lesbia remains an unattain-

55. Livy 1.3.10.
56. Poem 70 implies a situation in which the lover has asked his beloved to marry him.

able goal. We find a similar situation with Propertius and Tibullus. The elegiac mistress is, as Veyne says, "someone irregular, a woman one did not marry."[57] The Augustan legislation, however, was not problematical for Tibullus, since he died around the same time as its enactment. As for Propertius, his poetry had become steadily less concentrated on his relationship with Cynthia to the point that Book 4, the only Propertian book published after the marital legislation, contains just two poems dealing with Cynthia (poems 7 and 8) and actually celebrates married love (poems 3 and 11).

For Ovid, however, the situation was more difficult. Unfortunately for us, the chronology of the publication of Ovid's works is not clear. Although some of the *Amores* were certainly written before the enactment of the Augustan marriage legislation,[58] the reduction of the collection from five books to three and the publication of a second edition clearly took place after, for the earliest possible date for poem 1.14 is 16 B.C.E. But if, as Syme argues we should, we see in the lover's advice that his girlfriend obtain a German wig to replace her own lost hair (45–50)[59] an allusion to the victory of Tiberius over the Sugambri and his subsequent triumph, then a date of 8 B.C.E. for that poem becomes the earliest possible.[60] For us it is important to note, firstly, that Ovid was in a position to edit his collection of *Amores* and that he did so, and, secondly, that the second edition was published later than the emperor's marriage legislation.

How then does Ovid present adultery in *Amores?* Is Corinna supposed to be married? The number of poems in which she is actually named is surprisingly small, twelve in all.[61] And in only one poem, 2.12, does the issue of her marital status arise. The poem begins with a cry of victory (*Am.* 2.12.1–4):

Ite triumphales circum mea tempora laurus:
vicimus; in nostro est ecce Corinna sinu,
quam vir, quam custos, quam ianua firma (tot hostes!)
servabant, ne qua posset ab arte capi.

Triumphal laurels, go around my temples:
we have won; look, Corinna is in my embrace,
she whom her man, her guard, a strong door (so many enemies!)
protected, lest she be captured by some craft.

The Ovidian lover here proclaims his triumph over Corinna's *vir.* But who or what is this *vir?* In the translations of Booth,[62] Green,[63] Lee[64] and

57. P. Veyne, *Roman Erotic Elegy: Love Poetry and the West,* trans. D. Pellauer (Chicago, 1988), 2.

58. *Tr.* 4.10.57–60 suggests that Ovid was seventeen or eighteen (26 or 25 B.C.E.) when he began writing *Amores* poems.

59. Note especially 1.14.46: *tuta* ***triumphatae*** *munere gentis eris.* Tiberius' German triumph was held in January, 7 B.C.E.

60. R. Syme, *History in Ovid* (Oxford, 1978), 5.

61. Corinna is named fourteen times in three books (1.5.9, 1.11.5, 2.6.48, 2.8.6, 2.11.8, 2.12.2, 2.13.2, 2.13.25, 2.17.7, 2.17.29, 2.19.9, 3.1.49, 3.7.25, 3.12.16.) By contrast, Cynthia is named sixty-two times in the four books of Propertius.

62. J. Booth, ed., *Ovid: The Second Book of "Amores"* (Warminster, England, 1991), 62. Booth is of course aware of the ambiguity (6).

63. P. Green, trans., *Ovid: The Erotic Poems* (Harmondsworth, England, 1982), 126.

64. G. Lee, trans., *Ovid's "Amores"* (London, 1968), 93.

Showerman[65] the lover has outwitted her husband. The poem undoubtedly works better for English-speaking readers if translated in this way, but the fact remains that *vir* is ambiguous between "husband" and "lover."[66] The Ovidian lover may have outwitted her husband or her regular sexual partner. We cannot tell.

But Ovid is not always so evasive. Consider, for example, 2.19 and 3.4. Despite their positions in the collection, these are virtually paired poems for in 2.19 the lover urges a woman's husband to guard her more closely, while in 3.4 he advises a husband to give his wife more license. Let us consider 2.19. The lover begins by urging a man to watch a girl more carefully. Such an injunction might well be appropriate on the lips of a concerned moralist, but on this occasion the sentiment is uttered because the lover finds the lack of challenge boring: anyone can love what he's allowed to love. The same advice must be given to the girl as well: she must refuse the lover often, make him lie outside in the cold. But who are these people? So far the man has been addressed simply as "you" and "fool" (*tibi . . . stulte,* 1). The woman is a "girl" (*puella,* 1) and "you, the one who has just recently ravished my eyes" (*tu quoque, quae nostros rapuisti nuper ocellos,* 19). It is not until line 46 that the suggestion is made that they might be husband and wife (*Am.* 2.19.45–46):

ille potest vacuo furari litore harenas,
  uxorem stulti si quis amare potest.

Capable of stealing sand from an empty beach,
  is anyone capable of loving a fool's wife.

The maxim is offered as a generalization: having sex with an idiot's wife is like stealing candy from a baby. Despite the repetition of *stultus,* it is only implied, but not actually asserted, that this man and woman are married. It is not until line 50 that it is implied that the man is a husband: "you are unfeeling and endure things a husband (*marito*) should not endure."[67] But the lover goes further: if the husband continues his tolerance, the lover will give up "permitted love" (*concessi . . . amoris,* 52). This love is *concessus* because the husband allows it. But, if we recall the legal overtones of *concessus* (lawful), to call adultery *concessus amor* is both shocking and paradoxical. He goes on to wonder whether he must spend every night without a *vindex,* a claimant. Again the language is legal,[68] for a husband has a duty

65. G. Showerman, trans., *Ovid: "Heroides" and "Amores"*[2] (London, 1977).

66. See *OLD,* s.v. "vir," 2.

67. I find Booth's comment puzzling: "There is just enough ambiguity in the terms *maritus* and *uxor,* used of the man and the girl, to cover Ovid, should he so wish, against the charge of posing as an adulterer" (*Second Book of "Amores"* [note 62 above]). The same point is made in greater detail by W. Stroh, "Ovids Liebeskunst und die Ehegesetze des Augustus," *Gymnasium* 86 (1970): 323–52. Stroh argues that the terms *uxor, maritus,* and *coniunx* are ambiguous because they are sometimes used of nonmarried people (333–34). This does not render the terms ambiguous at all. Consider the words "husband" and "wife" in English. They may sometimes be used as courtesy titles of unmarried people, but there is no doubting that "husband" means "married male" and that "wife" means "married female". Even if there were any ambiguity about Ovid's terms, their juxtaposition in this context would remove it. Moreover, if *coniunx, uxor,* and *maritus* were ambiguous, what terms could Ovid use if he wished to speak unambiguously?

68. For the legal connotations of *vindex* see *OLD,* s.v. "vindex," 1.

to claim his rights and demand vengeance. But this lover becomes even more outrageous (57): *quid mihi cum facili, quid cum lenone marito?* ("What business have I with an indulgent, with a pimping husband?"). Here the lover specifically recalls the charge of pandering, *lenocinium,* which could be brought under the *lex Iulia de adulteriis* against a husband who failed to divorce an adulterous wife. But why does the lover disapprove of such behavior? Not because he disapproves of pimping, but because the husband's vice ruins the lover's fun (58): *corrumpit vitio gaudia nostra suo.* Mockery of the Julian law on adultery could hardly be more explicit.

Poem 3.4 is clearly a companion piece to 2.19,[69] but this time the lover is arguing the opposite case. As before he begins with ambiguous terms, with *vir* and *puella* (1). Very soon, however, it becomes clear that adultery is at issue, for the lover begins to employ the terms *adulter* and *adultera.* Even though you guard the girl's body, her mind will be *adultera* (5); even if you lock up the house there will be an *adulter* within (8); and a woman guarded by her husband becomes a "worthwhile adulteress" (*adultera cara,* 29). Moreover, the man is no longer just a *vir,* he is now a *maritus* (27) and the woman is not merely a *puella,* she is an *uxor,* a wife (45). The lover even goes so far as to stress the woman's legal status (33): "it is not right to protect a free-born girl (*ingenuam*)." There is no doubting that adultery is at issue here.

What then is the lover's attitude to adultery? For him the husband who frets over his wife's infidelities is rustic (*Am.* 3.4.37–38):

> rusticus est nimium, quem laedit adultera coniunx,
> et notos mores non satis Vrbis habet.
>
> He is too rustic, whom an adulterous wife offends,
> and does not know well enough the City's morals.

What is it to be rustic? "Rustic" is the term you apply to the river that blocks the path to your girlfriend.[70] Rusticity is a quality that attractive girls and great poetry most definitely lack.[71] Rusticity denies sophistication. Rusticity denies love. But, as the case of Ceres proves, rusticity is primarily a question of attitude and values, not mere location (*Am.* 3.10.17–18):

> nec tamen est, quamvis agros amet illa feraces,
> rustica nec viduum pectus amoris habet.
>
> However, she is not, even though she loves fertile fields,
> rustic, nor does she have a heart bereft of love.

"Rustic" is the ultimate insult in the lover's lexicon. And for a man to be offended by his wife's adulteries is to be boorish, uncouth, rustic. So much for the *lex Iulia de adulteriis.*[72]

69. Note that, for example, both poems use the examples of Danae (2.19.27–28; 3.4.21–22) and Io (2.19.29–30; 3.4.19–20).

70. *Am.* 3.6.88.

71. Girls: 2.4.13, 2.8.3; poetry: 2.4.19.

72. As E. Fantham, *Roman Literary Culture: From Cicero to Apuleius* (Baltimore, 1996), 113 remarks, "Surely these poems would have offended the emperor in his role as moral leader." See also Edwards, *Politics of Immorality* (note 17 above), 56.

What then of the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*? This law was more concerned with promoting what we currently call "family values" among the aristocracy than with defining a class of actions as criminal. According to Treggiari,[73] the law aimed "to encourage marriage and reproduction." Only in 3.13, a poem in which he plays the devoted husband who piously accompanies his wife to a festival of Juno at Falerii, can the poet be said to match Augustan ideals. In this poem alone does Ovid abandon the persona of the playful and unprincipled lover.[74] For the most part, the lover truly is, despite his protestations in 1.3, "love's circus rider" (*desultor amoris,* 15). He is the kind of lover who boasts of his sexual prowess, of having sex with Corinna nine times in a single night (3.7.26), who joyfully deceives his mistress by sleeping with her maid (2.7 and 2.8) and delights in subverting conventional moral discourse. Consider lines 1–4 of *Amores* 2.17:

Si quis erit, qui turpe putet servire puellae,
  illo convincar iudice turpis ego.
sim licet infamis, dum me moderatius urat
  quae Paphon et fluctu pulsa Cythera tenet.

If there will be anyone who thinks it disgraceful to be slave to a girl
  in his judgement I shall be proved disgraceful.
Let me be infamous, as long as she burns me more moderately,
  the ruler of Paphos and wave-pounded Cythera.

The concept of love's slavery is of course characteristic of Propertian elegy.[75] But whereas the Propertian lover shows himself aware of the humiliation that involvement in such a relationship entails, the Ovidian lover seems to revel in it. He will happily be called "disgraceful." He will even accept being labeled *infamis* if Corinna will be more cooperative. The term is a legal one denoting such people as prostitutes, procurers, adulterers, actors, and other characters of low repute. They were people, in short, whom Roman citizens were forbidden to marry. For one who claims to have inherited the rank of knighthood[76] to choose *infamia* constitutes a rejection of fundamental Roman values. By contrast, the Propertian lover at least fears *infamia* (2.24a.7–10), likening his *infamis amor* to that of Antony (2.16.39).[77]

Indeed the Ovidian lover seems to have much in common with the most prominent *infamis* in the collection, Dipsas, the procuress of 1.8. Just as Dipsas associates old-fashioned chastity as practiced by the Sabines with their squalor (1.8.39), so the lover claims that chastity and beauty are incompatible (2.2.14). Like the lover, Dipsas despises rusticity (1.8.44). As Dipsas advises the girl that lovers should be rejected often (*saepe nega noctes,* 1.8.73), so the lover advises his new girlfriend to reject him often

73. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage* (note 18 above), 60.

74. Cf. L. Cahoon, "Juno's Chaste Festival and Ovid's Wanton Loves: *Amores* 3.13," *ClAnt* 2 (1983): 1–8: "By contrast, 3.13 stands out as the only poem in the *Amores* in which the speaker cannot conceivably be the witty and shameless lover."

75. See esp. 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 1.12. For discussion see R. Lyne, "*Servitium Amoris*," *CQ* 29 (1979): 117–30.

76. *Am.* 1.3.8, 3.15.6.

77. As Booth, *Second Book of "Amores,"* 179 points out.

(*saepe rogata nega,* 2.19.20).[78] If Dipsas recommends deception and perjury (1.8.71–74, 83–86.), the lover is equally indifferent to the claims of truth.[79] Thus he follows up his protestation of innocence to Corinna in 2.7 that he did not sleep with Cypassis with a letter to Cypassis asking how Corinna found out about their sexual activities (2.8). Perhaps then it is not surprising that if Dipsas is a procurer, so is Elegy herself (*lena,* 3.1.44), so too is the Ovidian lover (*me lenone,* 3.12.11).[80]

At the beginning of this paper I claimed that the *Amores* is a political work. I have argued that choosing to write love elegy was itself a political act, for the stance of the elegist is intrinsically subversive. We see the effects of this in the poet's negative treatment of military institutions and in his handling of the Julian myth. The importance of neither should be underestimated. After all, the emperor was essentially an autocrat dependent upon the army for his power and upon such fictions as the tale of Trojan origins for his legitimacy. But it is in his treatment of adultery that Ovid is most flagrantly anti-Augustan. Whereas in the *Ars Amatoria* the poet at least gestures towards defending himself against the charge of promoting adultery,[81] in the *Amores* he openly presents himself as an adulterer. Augustus exiled Ovid to Tomis because of the *Ars Amatoria.* He might equally have banished him for writing the *Amores.*

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78. As N. P. Gross, "Ovid *Amores* 1.8: Whose Amatory Rhetoric?" *CW* 89 (1996): 205 points out.

79. See 2.8.19, 3.3.36.

80. Thus I agree with the conclusion of K. S. Myers, "The Poet and the Procuress: the *Lena* in Latin Love Elegy," *JRS* 86 (1996): 1–21 that "the *lena* shares more with the poet than she is contrasted with him: her *carmina* echo his *carmina,* her *artes* mirror those of the elegiac poet-lover" (20). See also M. L. Stapleton, *Harmful Eloquence: Ovid's "Amores" from Antiquity to Shakespeare* (Ann Arbor, 1996), 20: "Dipsas' advice really is his 'shadow,' in that it doubles his own counsel, and it 'exposes' him for what he is."

81. For these gestures see P. J. Davis, "*Praeceptor amoris:* Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* and the Augustan Idea of Rome," *Ramus* 24 (1995): 181–95, esp. 182–84.