

PLAYING WITH MARBLE: THE MONUMENTS OF THE CAESARS IN OVID'S *FASTI*¹

A bimillennium has failed to dampen the fascination surrounding the volatile relationship between Augustus, Rome's first Emperor, and Ovid, the most prominent poet to live through his entire rule. This volatility is no more apparent than in Ovid's *Fasti*, in which the poet makes specific promises to engage seriously with Augustan Rome. The opening section of the poem invites us to look forward to a didactic treatment of the festivals of the Latin year as they are organized in Augustus' time (1.1),² the reasons behind these festivals (1.1), and the imperial family's crucial place within these institutions (1.9–14). The choice of the calendar as the governing structure for the poem is itself a form of flattery to Augustus, who had recently completed reformation of the calendar so that it became, for the first time, a reliable means of measuring time. In effect, Ovid follows closely on from Verrius Flaccus, who produced the magnificent inscription of the calendar at Praeneste soon after A.D. 6.³ The poem, it would seem, has a clear purpose that gets to the heart of imperial achievement. But modern scholars have rightly drawn attention to the ways in which the *Fasti* consistently undermines itself and resists being pinned down on anything. A few examples will suffice here: Ovid's grand claims for the thematic outlook of the *Fasti* are met with regular references to the instability of the metre and genre to sustain the subject-matter;⁴ his purported didactic persona is undermined by his regular uncertainty and increasing reliance on (dubious) informants;⁵ his juxtaposing of very different types of episode potentially invites subversive readings of Augustan ideology.⁶

The instability of the *Fasti* can be further demonstrated if we consider the way in which the poem handles the physicality of the city of Rome, through the evocation of monuments associated with the imperial family.⁷ Ovid makes the physicality of Rome an essential part of his agenda for the poem: he makes specific claims to honouring the imperial family by celebrating the *arae Caesaris* (1.13), by which we should understand all types of 'sacred area' set up or revitalized by the Julian family.⁸ This intention on Ovid's part should come as no surprise. In their reformation of the

¹ Earlier versions of this paper were given at the Classical Association 2001 and research seminars at the Universities of St Andrews and Manchester. I would like to offer particular thanks to Tim Cornell, Alison Sharrock, Roy Gibson, and John Briscoe for their helpful comments and suggestions.

² References to Ovid's *Fasti* are from E. Alton, D. Wormell, and E. Courtney, *Ovidius Fasti* (Stuttgart, 1988) and are referred to by book and line number only. Other works are referred to in full.

³ See e.g. A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Time for Augustus: Ovid, Augustus and the *Fasti*', in *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble* (Bristol, 1987), 227.

⁴ See especially S. Hinds, 'Arma in the *Fasti*', *Arethusa* 25 (1992), 81–153.

⁵ See especially C. Newlands, *Playing with Time: Ovid and the Fasti* (New York, 1995), 51–86.

⁶ Newlands (n. 5) and A. Barchiesi, *The Poet and the Prince* (Berkeley, 1997) have been particularly influential in this regard.

⁷ A. J. Boyle's recently published monograph, *Ovid and the Monuments: A Poet's Rome* (Aureal, 2003), is a welcome addition to this area of Ovidian scholarship. I have not been able to consult this work for the present paper.

⁸ For the popular etymology, cf. Varro, *Ling.* 5.38 *loca pura arae; a quo potest etiam ara deum*; Isid. 15.13.6; R. Maltby, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), 45.

Roman calendar, Caesar and then Augustus had instituted a large number of new festal days which highlighted their own achievements and services to Rome.⁹ These days would often commemorate the construction of a certain religious building, which in turn commemorated the imperial deed which led to the construction (for example, Altar of Augustan Peace), or else they would commemorate the reconstruction of an existing but decaying religious building (for example, Temple of Castor and Pollux). Ironically therefore, though the original calendar had been reformed because it was inaccurate (that is, not synchronized with the solar year) and susceptible to political corruption,¹⁰ the process of reformation afforded the imperial family another medium through which to promote its interests. As Edwards succinctly puts it in analysing Ovid's position, 'it was not possible . . . to consider the organisation of Roman time without engaging also with the spatial context through which Roman time was articulated'.¹¹

From Ovid's pledge to handle the *arae Caesaris*, and the generally nationalistic and aetiological pose adopted in the preface, the reader is encouraged to expect detailed analyses of imperial monuments and, as such, a clear picture of the physicality of Rome: the magnificent appearance of these monuments, their location, date of dedication/construction and the reasons behind these dedications/constructions.

However, like other expectations raised in the preface, the *Fasti* as a whole is quite different. There is, in fact, only one monument in the *Fasti* whose appearance is actually described, as well as the reasons behind its foundation, namely the Temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augustum (5.545–98). The passage provides our fullest literary evidence on the temple. However, even here, we should be wary of taking the physical description at face value. It has been suggestively argued that the description of the temple betrays the viewpoint of its primary spectator, the god Mars: the systematic viewing of the temple and the distinct avoidance of the aesthetic seems to befit such a military deity. Furthermore, the stories surrounding this section of the poem offer different perspectives of the key concepts enshrined in the temple.¹²

Concentration on the physicality of imperial monuments, therefore, and a discussion of the important issues pertaining to them, is the exception in the *Fasti* rather than the rule. The reader is thus forced to ask different questions of Ovid: how does he handle imperial monuments in the poem? Why does he handle them thus and is he consistent in his approach? These are the issues I wish to explore in the present paper. In particular, I will construct two important though competing categories. First, I shall deal with monuments that appear to be evoked primarily (and, in some cases, solely) to praise the imperial family ('Monumental flattery'). Secondly, I shall examine those monuments whose evocation involves a certain amount of play between imperial message and reality ('Monumental manipulation'). The two categories I propose are for simplicity of reference only; they are by no means objective and depend to a large extent on the individual reader. Nevertheless, the paper thus structured should demonstrate the poet's mastery over his material, his apparent willingness to approach imperial monuments in varying complex ways, and the potential instability

⁹ See Wallace-Hadrill (n. 3), 223–7; G. Herbert-Brown, *Ovid and the Fasti: An Historical Study* (Oxford, 1994), 15–26.

¹⁰ Herbert-Brown (n. 9), 15–16, 19.

¹¹ C. Edwards, *Writing Rome: Textual Approaches to the City* (Cambridge, 1996), 57.

¹² See Newlands (n. 5), 87–123. For other important studies of this section of the poem, see Herbert-Brown (n. 9), 95–108; J. Scheid, 'Myth, cult and reality in Ovid's *Fasti*', *PCPhS* 38 (1992), 124–9; R. Riedl, *Mars Ultor in Ovids Fasten*, *Heuremata* Band 10 (Amsterdam, 1989).

of the Rome that he constructs through the poem. In effect, Ovid plays around with the marble structures of Rome.

I. MONUMENTAL FLATTERY

It is quite apparent that, when a member of the imperial household took it upon himself to construct or renovate a religious building, there was much more to it than a simple expression of piety towards the gods.¹³ In particular, it could be an effective means of self-aggrandizement. It is notable that the original commemoration dates for several monuments were changed when they were renovated; the purpose of this was often to afford more exposure to the imperial family (usually the dedicator) than the dedicatee.¹⁴ A good example of this is the Temple of Concordia dedicated by Tiberius in A.D. 10. The celebration date for previous temples of Concordia was at some point in late July, where it was in close proximity to other abstract political concepts, Honos (19 July), Spes (1 August), and Salus (5 August).¹⁵ However, for Tiberius' temple, the dedication date was changed to 16 January.¹⁶ The new date was well chosen, as this was the day on which Octavian had received the title of Augustus from the senate in 27 B.C.¹⁷ The effect was powerful: from A.D. 10 onwards, 16 January became a multi-layered celebration of dynastic achievement. Ovid is aware of the self-promotional aspect of building/rebuilding temples, and he obliges to some extent in his poem.

Temple of Castor and Pollux (1.705–8)

When Ovid reaches 27 January, he duly mentions the dedication of a temple to Castor and Pollux, the divine sons of Leda (1.705–8):

at quae venturas praecedit sexta Kalendas,
hac sunt Ledaeis templa dicata deis:
fratribus illa deis fratres de gente deorum
circa Iuturnae composuere lacus.

The original temple was vowed in either 499 or 496 B.C. but dedicated in 484 B.C. as a mark of gratitude to the two brothers for offering assistance as fighting horsemen at the battle of Lake Regillus.¹⁸ Ovid refers here to the rebuilding of that temple,

¹³ See especially D. Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge, 1996), 107: 'Individual donors received praise for their piety; the general populace received attractive environments for worship; the government received tangible manifestations of the renewed Republic; the city received a white mantle of marble shrines.'

¹⁴ Edwards (n. 11), 57.

¹⁵ See e.g. E. Curti, 'From Concordia to the Quirinal: notes on religion and politics in mid-republican/hellenistic Rome', in E. Bispham and C. Smith (edd.), *Religion in Archaic and Republican Rome and Italy* (Edinburgh, 2000), 80ff.

¹⁶ Cf. *Fasti Praenestini* (Degrassi 115), Cass. Dio 56.25.1, Suet. *Tib.* 20 (though the year is erroneously recorded as A.D. 12). For analysis of monuments whose dedication dates were altered under the Julian family, see especially P. Gros, *Aurea Templata: recherches sur l'architecture religieuse de Rome à l'époque d'Auguste* (Rome, 1976), 32ff.

¹⁷ Cf. *Fasti Praenestini* (Degrassi 115), *Feriale Cumanum* (Degrassi 279), Censorinus, *D.N.* 21.8. Interestingly, Ovid in the *Fasti* asserts that Octavian took the title on the Ides (13) of January (1.587–90). However, Ovid has not missed an opportunity to praise the emperor: by juxtaposing honour given to Jupiter (1.587–8) with honour given to Octavian (1.589–90), a flattering link is forged between divine and earthly rulers.

¹⁸ For the story, cf. Dion. Hal. 6.13, Plut. *Cor.* 3.4.

undertaken in the name of Tiberius and his brother and funded from the spoils of a successful campaign in Germany, which was finally dedicated on 27 January A.D. 6.¹⁹ However, Ovid does not offer the reader much information. Apart from an indication of its location (*circa Iuturnae . . . lacus*), we are told nothing about the appearance or function of the temple, nor the reason behind the building of the original temple or its reconstruction. Even the dedicatees and dedicators of the temple are given to us in the allusive forms, ‘the sons of Leda’ and ‘brothers from the race of gods’, respectively. This section, in effect, only works as a cryptic reminder to an event already well known to the reader. But Ovid has a different agenda here. He takes advantage of the occasion to forge a neat (though contrived) complimentary link between dedicatees (divine brothers Castor and Pollux) and dedicators (Tiberius and Drusus, divine by adoption into the Julian family). The whole event is thus seen as a harmonious mark of respect from one divine pairing to another. The polyptoton in 707, with *fratribus . . . deis* in the first half of the line balanced by *fratres deorum* in the second, is an effective expression of the harmony between both parties. Although the day demands that Castor and Pollux be honoured, Ovid’s phraseology has the effect of casting more praise on the mortal dedicators. In short, Ovid has made only fleeting allusion to the physicality of the temple for the sake of the flattery he can offer the imperial dedicators. This is the simplest example of an approach to monuments that is adopted elsewhere by the poet, as the next two discussions will demonstrate.

Livia’s shrine (6.637–48)

te quoque magnifica, Concordia, dedicat aede	
Livia, quam caro praestitit ipsa viro.	
disce tamen, veniens aetas: ubi Livia nunc est	
porticus, immensae tecta fuere domus;	640
urbis opus domus una fuit spatiumque tenebat	
quo brevius muris oppida multa tenent.	
haec aequata solo est, nullo sub crimine regni,	
sed quia luxuria visa nocere sua.	
sustinuit tantas operum subvertere moles	645
totque suas heres perdere Caesar opes:	
sic agitur censura et sic exempla parantur,	
cum vindex, alios quod monet, ipse facit.	

Ovid has several ingenious ways of making his transition from monument to imperial flattery. Here, Ovid mentions the shrine that Livia dedicated to her husband Augustus on 11 June 7 B.C. The shrine was, in all likelihood, designed to promote the image of a strong conjugal relationship between the Emperor and his wife: Livia dedicates a shrine to her husband at the colonnade known as the Porticus Liviae (which was itself dedicated to her by her husband several years before).²⁰ This is certainly how Ovid understands it: his reference to Augustus as *caro . . . viro* (6.638) suggests deep affection on Livia’s part. But Ovid does not intend to dwell on this shrine—*disce*

¹⁹ Cf. *Fasti Praenestini* (Degrassi 117) *Aedi(s Castoris et Pollucis) dedicat(a est)*, Suet. *Tib. 20* *dedicavit . . . item Pollucis et Castoris suo fratrisque nomine de manubiis*, Cass. Dio 55.27.4. The date of dedication for the original temple is reputed to have been 15 June; cf. Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.5.13, Livy 2.42.5.

²⁰ For the various arguments for the shrine as a display of imperial family solidarity, see M. Flory, ‘*Sic exempla parantur*: Livia’s shrine to Concordia at the Porticus Liviae’, *Historia* 33 (1984), 310ff.

tamen (6.639) quickly marks a new direction. He casts our minds back to the previous building on the site, which was the palace of Vedius Pollio. Ovid alludes to the fact that Vedius had bequeathed his palace to Augustus on the understanding that a public work be erected on the site to commemorate him. However, the Emperor decided to raze it to the ground and build the Porticus Liviae on its site. Ovid attributes Augustus' decision to demolish the palace to a distaste at the luxury it represented: attention is drawn to the obscene size of this one individual's dwelling (6.641–2) which leads up to Augustus' condemnation of the palace as representing harmful luxury (6.644).

However, there were more obvious reasons why Augustus might not wish to be seen associating himself with Vedius Pollio and enshrining his name in a public work. First, Pollio was a notoriously cruel individual. He owned a shoal of lampreys, and is reputed to have gained particular pleasure from seeing men torn to pieces instantly by his fish (Plin. *HN* 9.77). This practice outraged the Emperor himself, if the bizarre story recorded in Cassius Dio 54.23 is to be believed: at a dinner-party hosted for Augustus, Pollio condemns one of his slaves to such a death for breaking a goblet; Augustus saves the suppliant slave by ordering all the goblets to be broken, so that the slave can no longer be singled out for blame. Secondly, there is good reason to suggest that Pollio, an unsavoury but wealthy individual, was a key figure in Octavian's rise to power, perhaps even acting as his political counsellor at one time.²¹ Following Octavian's assumption of power, Pollio must have been an embarrassment to an Emperor who liked to see himself as merciful, and he would surely have been keen to distance himself from such a lavish gift from the man.²² Thirdly, on a more general level, Augustus had long been transforming the landscape of Rome and codifying its monuments so that they might exclusively promote the interests of the Julian family;²³ a shrine to his wife, therefore, fitted the design much better than a new structure to the dubious Vedius Pollio.

Ovid's concentration on Pollio's luxury is, therefore, a deliberate choice. The reason for this lies in his desire to finish with a neat complimentary statement to Augustus (6.647–8): by refusing to embrace luxury, the Emperor is a ruler who has practised what he preached in his sumptuary legislation. This sentiment would have been well received by the Emperor, who had been keen to promote himself as a censor of private architectural extravagance.²⁴ On a more general level, Augustus prided himself on 'leading by example'.²⁵ From a contemporary shrine dedicated on 11 June, Ovid has used the recent history of the space to create a multi-layered piece of praise to Augustus: he is acknowledged not only as the ideal husband by his wife's dedication of the shrine, but also as the sincere upholder of financial morality. Augustus is thus

²¹ See R. Syme, 'Who was Vedius Pollio?', *JRS* 51 (1961), 23–30, esp. 28ff.

²² See Flory (n. 20), 325. Flory adds (326) that such a large estate would have been a prime breeding-ground for conspiracies and plots of revolution, adding a further incentive to Augustus to raze it to the ground.

²³ See especially Favro (n. 13), 143ff., 217ff.

²⁴ He is likewise reputed to have demolished the lavish dwellings of his granddaughter Julia (Suet. *Aug.* 72.2) and Scaurus, converting some of the columns to public use in the theatre dedicated to Marcellus (Asc. *Scaur.* 45); in keeping with this, Augustus' own residence on the Palatine was relatively modest architecturally (Suet. *Aug.* 72.1); see further P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor, 1988), 135ff.

²⁵ Cf. *Aug. Anc.* 8: *legibus novis latis conplura exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro usu revocavi et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi*; Suet. *Aug.* 89.2.

neatly praised in two of the most important areas of personal morality for which he introduced legislation.²⁶

Temples of Aesculapius and Jupiter (1.289–94)

A more subtle manipulation of Roman monuments can be found early in Book 1. After a long and involved conversation with the god Janus, Ovid, suddenly reverting to the role of earnest researcher, reveals that he has learnt something else about 1 January from the calendars (1.289–94):

quod tamen ex ipsis licuit mihi discere fastis,
sacravere patres hac duo templa die.
accepit Phoebos nymphaque Coronide natum
insula, dividua quam premit amnis aqua.
Iuppiter in parte est: cepit locus unus utrumque
iunctaque sunt magno templa nepotis avo.

Ovid informs us, in typically allusive fashion, that two temples were dedicated on this day on the Island of the Tiber (*insula . . . aqua*, 1.292). The first was dedicated to the healing god Aesculapius, the ‘son born to Phoebus and the nymph Coronis’ (1.291), as a mark of gratitude for the help he gave the Romans during a time of dire pestilence.²⁷ The temple is believed to have been dedicated a few years after the pestilence in 293 B.C.²⁸ The second monument—alluded to only by *Iuppiter in parte est* (1.293)—was a temple dedicated to Ve(d)iouis on 1 January 194 B.C. by C. Servilius (originally vowed by L. Furius Purpurio six years earlier).²⁹ The two temples, therefore, were dedicated to different gods at different points in history and for different reasons. Nevertheless, by making use of the traditional mythological lineage—Jupiter as grandfather of Aesculapius—Ovid is able to link the two temples harmoniously in his last two lines by means of a contrived general statement (1.293–4): not only do the temples share common ground, but their shared location is described in terms of a divine family reunion (mirrored in the text by the juxtaposition of *nepotis avo*). This is obviously an instance of poetic creativity and not a sentiment Ovid would have found in the calendars. On one level, Ovid shows both his ability and his desire to present his material in a neat, artistic manner.

But, as with the previous examples, there may be a political dimension to all this, if

²⁶ It could perhaps be argued that Ovid’s choice to employ Pollio as a means of constructing flattery is not without its problems. It is interesting that Ovid spends more time on the evil building destroyed than the harmonious structure that replaced it. For those that know Pollio’s involvement in the career of Octavian, does this section not act as a subtle reminder of the contradictions in Augustus himself, the conqueror of his one time political aide? For a different (problematic) reading of this section in its context, see C. Newlands, ‘Connecting the disconnected: reading Ovid’s *Fasti*’, in A. Sharrock and H. Morales (edd.), *Intratextualities: Greek and Roman Textual Relations* (Oxford, 2000), 188–201.

²⁷ For the miraculous story, cf. e.g. Ov. *Met.* 15.622–743; Livy 10.47.7, *Per.* 11; Plut. *Mor.* 286d–e.

²⁸ See Degrassi ap. M. Steinby, *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (Rome, 1993–2000), I.21–2.

²⁹ It is widely believed that the temple was officially dedicated to Ve(d)iouis, as suggested by *Fasti Praenestini* (Degrassi 111) and *Fasti Antiates Miores* (Degrassi 2). However, the temple is elsewhere associated with Jupiter (Livy 34.53.7, *Vitr.* 3.2.3), reflecting a popular connection between the two deities; cf. e.g. Ovid (*Fast.* 3.437) who understands Veiovis as the ‘young Jupiter’ (*Iuppiter iuvenis*). For the traditional problems surrounding the identification of the temple, see Briscoe on Livy 31.21.12, Degrassi ap. Steinby (n. 28), V.101.

we take into consideration the immediate addressee of these words, Germanicus.³⁰ Ovid sets up a progression of thought in Book 1. Having greeted Germanicus as the (new) patron of the poem, Ovid tells the young prince that he can look forward to reading about many of his family's achievements, in particular those of his *pater* Tiberius and *avus* Augustus, and that he too will share in these honours (1.9–12):

invenies illic et festa domestica vobis;
 saepe tibi pater est, saepe legendus avus,
 quaeque ferunt illi, pictos signantia fastos,
 tu quoque cum Druso praemia fratre feres.

But Ovid is keen to show that not only does Germanicus share the honour of others, he quickly earns it for himself. A prophecy of a lucky year for Germanicus (1.63–4) is duly followed by the recording or prophesying of a major triumph for Germanicus over the Germans, only a few lines before our passage in question (1.285–6). With this fresh in mind, the generalized statement in 1.293–4 is surely open to wider interpretation by the addressee: might Germanicus not be invited to view the statement as equally applicable to *himself* and think that he, like Aesculapius, might one day share the same place and honour as his own *magnus avus* Augustus? The phraseology of 1.294 encourages this interpretation. The tenses of the line suggest that the temple of the grandson *was joined* (*iunctaque sunt*) to an (existing) temple of the grandfather. This fits the chronology of the proposed allusion (Germanicus joining the honours of Augustus) rather better than it does the chronology of the actual temples, where clearly it is the grandson's honour (temple of Aesculapius) which pre-dates that of the grandfather (temple of Jupiter). These temples belong, of course, to an age long before the imperial period. But, if my interpretation is correct, Ovid has 'imperialized' them in his poem, manipulating them so that they acquire fresh imperial significance.

To summarize, Ovid's treatment of the religious buildings in the poem might seem disappointing when one takes into account the initial pledge. Far from detailed descriptions, his references to the monuments are allusive and vague; they would only serve as reminders of events that were already well known to his readers. But Ovid's intention in these examples has been to praise the imperial family for their building work and, where possible, to forge a sense of harmony between the gods and the imperial family. In using imperial monuments as a means of constructing panegyric—a sound tactic given Augustus' own pride in this area³¹—Ovid shows more variety and creativity than any other author.³² From the treatment of these monuments, we might gain a wider interpretation of Ovid's *arae Caesaris* (1.13): the *arae Caesaris* consist of not only those sacred areas that were built/rebuilt by the Caesars, but also those areas, unconnected to the imperial family, that can be shaped to offer flattery to the Caesars in this poem.

³⁰ Ovid originally dedicated the *Fasti* to Augustus (*Ov. Tr.* 2.547–52), but rededicated it to Germanicus, after the death of Augustus in A.D. 14, in an apparent attempt to curry favour with the powerful young prince for his return to Rome from exile; see especially E. Fantham, 'Ovid, Germanicus and the composition of the *Fasti*', *PLLS* 5 (1985), 243–82. Germanicus is certainly the consistent addressee of Book 1.

³¹ Cf. *Aug. Mon. Anc.* 19–21.

³² Propertius uses the Temple of Palatine Apollo as a way of flattering Augustus (2.31.1–16 [magnificent appearance], 4.6 [aetiology]), but he does not extend this to other monuments. Others limit themselves to offering very general praise of Augustus' building work; cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.714–16, Hor. *Carm.* 3.6.1–6, Vell. Pat. 2.130.

II. MONUMENTAL MANIPULATION

So far, we have looked at examples in which Ovid has used monuments as a suitable vehicle for praising the imperial family. The two examples that I will consider shortly, the Temple of Juno Sospita and the Ara Pacis, might also be placed in the same category: as we shall see, they are both outwardly positive towards the imperial family. But then again, as Stephen Hinds rightly reminds us,³³ ‘every passage ever written by Ovid about Augustus admits of a non-subversive reading: but that is not in itself a refutation of Ovidian subversion’.

In the following examples, Ovid does, I feel, create sufficient ambiguity to invite more cynical readings, at least from some in his audience.

Temple of Juno Sospita (2.55–66)

principio mensis Phrygiae contermina Matri Sospita delubris dicitur aucta novis.	55
nunc ubi sunt, illis quae sunt sacrata Kalendis templa deae? longa procubuere die. cetera ne simili caderent labefacta ruina	
cavit sacrati provida cura ducis, sub quo delubris sentitur nulla senectus; nec satis est homines, obligat ille deos.	60
templorum positor, templorum sancte repostor, sit superis opto mutua cura tui.	
dent tibi caelestes, quos tu caelestibus, annos, proque tua maneant in statione domo.	65

Ovid records that Juno Sospita was honoured with a new shrine/temple (or shrines/temples) on 1 February, but that it had fallen down by his own day. It was apparently placed next to the shrine of the Phrygian Mother Goddess (Magna Mater), which identifies the location as the Palatine. A problem faces us immediately: there are recognized cults and temples to Juno Sospita in the Forum Holitorium and at Lanuvium, but this is the only ancient source that talks of a Palatine cult.³⁴ Many scholars are inclined to dismiss this as Ovidian error or confusion.³⁵ The more charitable commentators accept that there may well have been a cult on the Palatine and that any supporting evidence is now lost to us.³⁶ The elusiveness of the text does not help us in our enquiry. Verses 57–8 do not make it clear what remains of this supposed shrine of Juno Sospita—has it completely disappeared? Or are there still ruins or something more substantial visible?

These difficulties aside, there is no question that Ovid’s sentiments here have a particularly ominous ring to them. This would not be the first time that the goddess had suffered such impiety at Rome. It was recorded by Cornelius Sisenna (ap. Cic. *Div.* 1.99 [fr. 5 Peter]) that, during the Marsian war (91–89 B.C.), the daughter of Quintus Caecilius Metellus, Caecilia, received a dream which encouraged her to restore the

³³ S. Hinds, ‘Generalising about Ovid’, *The Imperial Muse: Ramus Essays on Roman Literature of the Empire* (Berwick, 1988), 25.

³⁴ See Coarelli ap. Steinby (n. 28), III.129–30.

³⁵ See e.g. G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer* (Munich, 1912), 188, n. 9; F. Bömer ad loc.

³⁶ For a detailed assessment of the problem, leading to a suggestion that a temple existed on the Palatine before being relocated, see Herbert-Brown (n. 9), 34ff.

Temple of Juno Sospita to its former state.³⁷ The nature of this dream is recounted by Julius Obsequens (55): Juno was seen fleeing her temple because it was being used as a lavatory by married women and because a dog had made its lair right under the very image of the goddess. Caecilia restored the temple to its former glory, but this did not prevent a series of prodigies and disasters befalling Rome—rivers running with blood, gods dripping with sweat, and the death of entire Roman armies. Although it is not stated specifically, there is a strong case for interpreting the prodigies as punishment from Juno for the neglect of her temple.³⁸ Ovid's claim, therefore, of a second instance of neglect for Juno Sospita would cause a certain amount of unease. At the very least, given the aftermath of the previous neglected temple, Ovid's section here bodes ill for the future.

The ominous nature of this neglect does not stop there. In the first book of the *Fasti*, Janus is keen to stress that beginnings are crucial for the well-being of the longer period (1.177–82). In particular, he suggests that the gods' temples are open on first days and are accessible to human prayers (1.181–2). In the light of Juno's temple, Janus' candid statements now have worrying consequences: how will this month progress, given that it has started so badly? As a final point, there is etymological irony here too: it is Juno in her role as 'Saviour' (*Sospita*) who has, paradoxically, not been saved on the Palatine.

The start of this section is, then, a cause of concern for the reader. But perhaps the situation is ameliorated by what follows. We soon find that the lost shrine of Juno Sospita is only mentioned as an introduction to Ovid's main theme. Ovid continues by pouring praise on Augustus, in his role as *positor* and *repositor templorum* (2.63), for making sure that the majority of temples have not suffered the same fate as the lost temple; he prays that the gods may look after the Emperor as he has looked after them (2.63–4). Ovid has abruptly shifted from mentioning a specific honour paid to a deity on this date to general praise of Augustus for his work as builder and restorer of temples: he has, in effect, used a 'non-monument' as a springboard for imperial flattery. Nor would this flattery have been ill received by the emperor: the building and restoration of temples was an achievement for which he was famous and of which he himself was most proud.³⁹

We have to assess, however, whether Ovid's choice to celebrate Augustus' record on temple restoration on the anniversary of a defunct temple creates too much irony to take the encomium at face value.⁴⁰ If Ovid had wished to praise Augustus unequiv-

³⁷ It is now generally agreed that temple in question was the one at Rome, in the Forum Holitorium; see F. Coarelli ap. Steinby (n. 28), III.128–9.

³⁸ In Obsequens 55, the same section deals with the story of the dream of the befouled Juno and the subsequent catastrophes: it seems natural to connect the two. In Sisenna (ap. Cic. *Div.* 1.99 [fr. 5 Peter]), the most terrifying omen reported is that of the shields of Lanuvium being gnawed by mice. Given the recognized cult of Juno Sospita at Lanuvium, it seems natural to take this as a specific punishment from Juno herself (does not the fact that the soothsayers regard it as the most serious prodigy suggest that they too see it as the work of Juno?).

³⁹ Cf. Livy 4.20.7 *Caesarem Augustum, templorum omnium conditorem ac restitutorem*, Dio Cass. 56.40 (Tiberius reminiscing), Suet. *Aug.* 30.2; Augustus' own pride in this area is apparent throughout the *Res Gestae*, but cf. in particular *Mon. Anc.* 4.1–8 (list of temples he has built), 4.17–18 (number of temples he has restored).

⁴⁰ A. Boyle, 'Postscripts from the edge: exilic *Fasti* and imperialised Rome', *Ramus* 26 (1997), 9 notes the irony in passing. On the other hand, Herbert-Brown (n. 2), 42–3 suggests that the encomium here is sincere, and that Ovid introduces Juno Sospita to exploit the potential for assonance between *Sospita* (2.56) and *positor* (1.63). Although the observation about assonance is

ocally for his building work, why mention a temple that he could easily have omitted (it appears in none of the Julian calendars)?

The elusiveness of the time reference here (2.58 *longa . . . die*) allows for different readings. One can take the Temple of Juno Sospita as emblematic of the religious neglect believed to have taken place during the turbulent years of the Republic; Ovid therefore emphatically celebrates the renewed religious interest that Augustus has demonstrated in his building work. As such, this section can be read as a fulfilment of the wish/prophecy to Augustus uttered by Horace in *Carm.* 3.6 (1–4):

delicta maiorum immeritus lues,
Romane, donec templa refeceris
aedisque labentis deorum et
foeda nigro simulacra fumo.

However, if it is felt that Augustus *could* have restored the temple—especially if some remnants of it existed in Ovid’s day—then Ovid’s sentiments might be read as subtle criticism of an Emperor who has overlooked a temple close to his own residence on the Palatine. It might call into question the conceit, entertained by Augustus himself, that *every* religious building in need of repair was restored.⁴¹ In effect, Ovid might be reminding his audience of the truth surrounding the imperial programme of restoration: it was the religious monuments which offered the best symbolic links to Rome’s past and the best opportunity for inclusion of the imperial family that were restored first, while many others were left to decay.⁴² The potential antagonism between imperial conceit and reality is playfully conveyed in the text by the close proximity of the contradictory statements *longa procubere die* (2.58) and *sub quo delubris sentitur nulla senectus* (2.61).

In short, this section presents an encomium to Augustus which is unproblematic at face value. However, I feel that Ovid offers us scope for a very different and more playful interpretation of this section which centres around religious neglect and calls into question Augustus’ dubious role as *positor/ repostor templorum*.

Ara Pacis Augustae (1.709–22)

In a poem addressed to Augustus from exile, Ovid defends himself against the charge of having incited *matronae* to sexual promiscuity in his *Ars Amatoria*. One of his key arguments is that a poet cannot be held responsible for the variety of interpretations which different readers might form during the act of reading. He continues by suggesting that monuments too do not always convey only the messages that the architect intended; the architect has no control over this (*Tr.* 2.287–302). He ends with the general truth (301–2): *omnia perversas possunt corrumpere mentes; / stant tamen ipsa suis omnia tuta locis*. Ovid’s own awareness of the central role of audience reception in the viewing of iconography/reading of texts is important to an

interesting, I feel that it glosses over too many ambiguities in this section. The very phraseology of 2.57–8 is striking. Formulae such as *nunc ubi* are common in Augustan literature to emphasize just how great Rome has grown from humble beginnings; cf. e.g. 1.243: *hic, ubi nunc Roma est, incaedua silva virebat*, 6.401; *Ars* 3.113ff., Verg. *Aen.* 8.98–100, 347–8; Prop. 4.1.1ff., 4.4.9ff. The reversed use of the formula here, to denote *deterioration* over time, provides additional shock value.

⁴¹ Cf. Aug. *Mon. Anc.* 4.17–18 *duo et octoginta templa deum in urbe consul sextum* [28 B.C.] . . . *refeci, nullo praetermisso quod eo tempore refici debebat*, also Livy 4.20.7 (quoted in n. 39).

⁴² See especially Favro (n. 13), 105–10.

understanding of the *Fasti*. I have mentioned above the potentially playful readings generated by Ovid's handling of the Temple of Mars Ultor. This example of play is not isolated. The case I wish to study is Ovid's handling of the *Ara Pacis* (1.709–22). The added benefit of such analysis is that the monument itself survives for us to view; this allows us greater scope for comparison between the static monument and the interpretations Ovid's treatment generates.⁴³

First, we should establish the basic facts. It was when Augustus had returned from Spain and Gaul in 13 B.C. that the senate decreed that an altar be set up to Augustan Peace, now known as the *Ara Pacis Augustae*. The structure itself consisted of an altar surrounded by a wall, and this was enclosed within larger precinct walls. On the inner precinct walls were sculpted sacrificial symbols in the form of garlanded bucrania. The outer precinct walls were adorned with a variety of different images: processions of senators and the imperial family; Julian ancestors in the form of Aeneas and Romulus and Remus; most famously perhaps, the 'Italia' relief, showing a woman with babes amidst a Golden-Age-styled scene of peace and fertility; images of vines on the lower half of the outer walls sustain this sense of abundance and fertility. Given that there is a variety of levels on which any art can be interpreted, the desired message of the *Ara Pacis*, taking into account the variety of its imagery, might well have been that a Golden Age of peace and prosperity had returned to Rome, and would remain provided that the imperial household were kept safe and that proper respect and sacrifice were offered to the gods.⁴⁴

Dealing with this important monument on its day of dedication, 30 January, Ovid makes no mention of the monument's powerful visual appeal, the occasion of the dedication—a senatorial dedication no less (*Aug. Anc.* 12)—or the reasons behind it. Instead, his entry takes the form of a eulogy: having requested the presence of Augustan Peace herself, wreathed in Actian laurel (1.711–12), the poet offers praise of present peace as well as a realistic picture of how it is maintained (1.713–18):

dum desint hostes, desit quoque causa triumphi:
tu ducibus bello gloria maior eris.
sola gerat miles, quibus arma coerceat, arma,
canteturque fera nil nisi pompa tuba.
horreat Aeneadas et primus et ultimus orbis:
siqua parum Romam terra timebat, amet.

The praise here is outwardly wholehearted: as Germanicus is the primary addressee of Book 1, this section constitutes a celebration of peace under the Julian household, and forms a fitting climax to the focus on peace in the first book.⁴⁵ However, a different impression might be gained if we take into account the literary framework for this section. Eulogies to peace are common in ancient literature and are particularly

⁴³ Differences between the *Ara Pacis* and Ovid's handling of the monument in the *Fasti* have been noted previously: that, unlike the ornamentation of the altar, Ovid's treatment deals with the subjects of Rome and creates an idea of peace achieved through conquest over land and sea; see A. Momigliano, 'The peace of the *Ara Pacis*', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), 228–31. Although Momigliano's observations are valuable, I feel that there are other differences to be noted and that Ovid may have a specific intention here (see below).

⁴⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the altar's ornamentation and Augustan message, see Favro (n. 13), 262–8; J. Elsner, 'Cult and sculpture: sacrifice in the *Ara Pacis Augustae*', *JRS* 81 (1991), 50–61; Zanker (n. 24), *passim*, but esp. 120–3, 158–60, 172, 175–6, 179–83.

⁴⁵ For the emphasis on peace in Book 1, see Fantham (n. 30), 266ff.

favoured among the Greek poets.⁴⁶ However, all of them praise *idealized* peace and develop the theme by employing a series of motifs. What is particularly noticeable with Ovid's eulogy to Pax Augusta is the way in which it *reverses* these motifs.

There is, at first, no sense of tension between Augustan peace and the idealized peace of Ovid's predecessors: Ovid's call for man to cease his warring mentality and seek glory in the promotion of peace (713–14) is consistent with previous eulogies of peace. However, the next sentiment concerning the need for maintenance of arms (715) is alarming: the accusative *arma* is suitably delayed for shock effect. It represents a striking departure from previous eulogies of peace, which consistently take delight in the notion that peace renders all arms useless, causing them to rust away.⁴⁷ The following line (716) reveals another worrying accompaniment to Augustan peace, the trumpet. Although its usage is confined here to festive processions, Ovid is nevertheless admitting into his praise of peace a traditionally military tool—much hated for its ability to make a loud noise and cause sleepless nights to soldiers—that is often joyously highlighted as being *absent* from times of peace.⁴⁸ Its epithet *fera* only helps to draw attention to its inappropriateness within the context of peace.⁴⁹ Finally, in 717–18, the promotion of love of Rome is conceded only as a last resort if the promotion of fear should fail: the placement of *horreat* at the beginning of the couplet, and *amet* at the end, aptly conveys the priorities of Augustan peace. The promotion of fear over love is, undoubtedly, another uncomfortable sentiment within the context of a praise of peace.

The point I am making is not that there is anything outwardly 'un-Roman' about Ovid's sentiments here. The Romans were, of course, well aware of the fact that real peace meant subjugating potential trouble and engendering a sense of fear among Rome's enemies, and such sentiments form an acceptable part of imperial ideology.⁵⁰ What I am suggesting is that it is the *manner* in which Ovid has chosen to express such sentiments that is both unique and striking. The fact that Ovid has chosen to deal with Augustan peace within a framework usually reserved to explore idealized peace causes uneasiness and creates a persistent jarring effect. To the more astute reader, Ovid's sentiments show all too well the gulf between real peace and the 'peace' proclaimed by Augustus.

How, then, does Ovid's section compare with a visual examination of the altar itself? One might argue that the poet's sentiments clash with the iconography of the

⁴⁶ For eulogies of peace, cf. Bacchyl. fr. 4; Eur. *Bacch.* 413; *Supp.* 481, 453N; Ar. 111K, 402K; Philem. 74K; Tib. 1.10.45ff.

⁴⁷ Cf. e.g. Bacchyl. fr. 4.69ff.; Eur. 453N.; Theoc. 16.96–7; Verg. *G.* 1.493–5; Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.43–4; Tib. 1.10.49–50 *pace bidens vomerque nitent, at tristia duril militis in tenebris occupat arma situs*; Ov. *Fast.* 4.925–30 *utilius gladios et tela nocentia carpes: nil opus est illis, otia mundus agit . . . inquinat arma situs, / conatusque aliquis vagina ducere ferrum / adstrictum longa sentiat esse mora*; Sen. *Thy.* 565–6. There is also a generic point being made here. Ovid's insistence on the presence of *arma* blurs the distinction which he made in the introduction, where he pledged to sing about *Caesaris aras*, not *Caesaris arma* (1.13). This is part of a wider strategy on the part of the poet, who consistently points up the dominance of arms in the establishment of religious buildings which, in turn, creates a tension between the poem's elegiac metre and its weighty, epic subject-matter; see especially Hinds (n. 4).

⁴⁸ Cf. Bacchyl. fr. 4.75; Hor. *Epod.* 2.5; Tib. 1.1.4 with Smith ad loc. 1.10.11–12 *tunc mihi vita foret . . . nec audissem corde micante tubam*; Luc. 4.394–5; Sen. *Thy.* 574; Plut. *Nic.* 9.

⁴⁹ *fera tuba* is a collocation not found elsewhere (*TLL* 6.1.606.20).

⁵⁰ Cf. e.g. Verg. *Aen.* 6.798–800 *huius in adventum ian nunc et Caspia regnal responsis horrent divum et Maeotia tellus, / et septemgemini turbant trepidi ostia Nili*; Hor. *Carm.* 3.3.45ff., *Carm. Saec.* 53–4; Tac. *Hist.* 4.74, *Agr.* 30.4 (bitterly ironic).

monument. Ovid's insistence on the presence of arms, trumpets, and fear takes us far away from the timeless serenity of the *Ara Pacis*, and is incompatible with the iconography's attempt to suggest a return to the Golden Age.

However, the iconography of the monument itself is perhaps not as stable as it first appears. Elsner has suggestively argued⁵¹ that the figure of the cow on the *Ara Pacis* is an iconic contradiction which bears witness to the problems of Augustan ideology: it is seen at one time sitting at leisure on the 'Italia' relief, at another being led to sacrifice in a procession, and at another as a garlanded skull on the inner walls. A certain irony is apparent: in order to secure peace and fertility such that the cow can live at ease, the cow itself must be sacrificed. As Elsner observes,⁵²

The positive implications of the Italia panel cannot be separated from imagery that reeks of killing . . . none of [the images on the Italia relief] can be separated from the death by which this fantasy of perfection is to be bought.

It is not the essential paradox of sacrifice—renewal through death—that would have been problematic here for the Romans.⁵³ What is a problem, however, is the fact that Augustus (not for the first time) attempts to marry, through the iconography of the *Ara Pacis*, two competing systems of thought: sacrifice, with its system of renewal by death, and the Golden Age (Italia relief), in which *no* animal sacrifice takes place because there seems *no* need for renewal.⁵⁴ The resultant iconography produces a paradox of the most blatant kind: the death of the cow ensures the life of the cow.

Augustus had inevitable difficulties in his attempts to appropriate Golden Age ideology, and Ovid has shown himself quick to draw attention to them, most famously in *Ars* 3.113–28, where he plays on the different connotations of an *aurea Roma*.⁵⁵ Turning back to the *Fasti* passage, it is possible that Ovid is again playfully pointing up—this time more allusively and intertextually—the contradiction between Augustan rule and Golden Age that is apparent even in a visual examination of the *Ara Pacis*.

III. CONCLUSION: ROMAN MONUMENTS THROUGH THE EYES OF AN EXILE

We have seen that Ovid's treatment of imperial monuments in the *Fasti* is surprising, particularly when we remember the pledges in the preface. Let us start with possibly the most curious feature of Ovid's treatment. It is remarkable how little attention is given to the *physical appearance* of the imperial monuments: only one monument, the Temple of Mars Ultor, receives any sort of visual survey.

The absence of ephrasis from the visual programme of the Augustan monuments is striking for several reasons. First, as soon as the poem makes clear that the *arae Caesaris* will be a major topic for treatment (1.13), one has every reason to expect that the poet would conjure up their magnificence before our eyes. After all, the size and

⁵¹ Elsner (n. 44), 58ff.

⁵² Elsner (n. 44), 60.

⁵³ See especially L. Morgan, *Patterns of Redemption in Virgil's Georgics* (Cambridge, 1999), 105ff., who argues for a popular (Stoic) belief in the importance of destruction in the process of (re)creation.

⁵⁴ I hold the popular view that animal sacrifice, as well as meat-eating, was absent from the Golden Age; for the problems of this aspect of the Golden Age, see Morgan (n. 53), 108ff. For the spontaneous growth, an apparent lack of death and perfect harmony between man and gods, all of which suggest that sacrifice is redundant in the Golden Age, cf. e.g. Hes. *Op.* 109ff.; Aratus, 105ff.; Ov. *Met.* 1.101ff.

⁵⁵ See especially R. Gibson, *A Commentary on Ovid Ars Amatoria 3* (Cambridge, 2003), ad loc.

visual splendour of the monuments was at least as important to the imperial family as their symbolic messages:⁵⁶ Augustus is reputed to have boasted that he found the city in brick and left it in marble.⁵⁷ If, as suspected, the poem was at least partly designed to curry favour with Augustus from exile, visual urban description is a curious omission.

Secondly, Ovid had only to look to his chief source for the *Fasti* to see how effectively such visual material could be handled. It has been argued, for example, that Callimachus in his *Aetia* included, as a means of flattering Berenice II, a description of a tapestry offered to her in commemoration of her victory.⁵⁸

Thirdly, no convincing generic or metrical argument can be advanced to account for the absence. Although the hexameter is perhaps better suited to extended ecphrasis, successful examples can be found from elegy. Propertius (2.31.1–16) offers a description of the Temple of Palatine Apollo and its adjacent portico which, in its expression of the structure's colour, beauty, intricate detail, and wonder, loses nothing in comparison with the longer ecphrases of epic (for example, Verg. *Aen.* 1.453–93).⁵⁹ Moreover, Ovid himself has visually described Rome (albeit briefly) in one of his earlier elegiac works, *Ars Amatoria* (1.67–88).⁶⁰ Ovid's systematic refusal to engage with the physicality of Rome in the *Fasti* is, therefore, both deliberate and provocative.

On a more general level, the reader gains little sense of the intricate layout and careful planning of Rome and, consequently, little sense of the Augustans' efforts to codify the city so that it promoted concordant messages.⁶¹ Nor can this be accounted for simply by pointing to the calendrical structure of the poem: although the calendar might dictate an episodic structure, Ovid makes little attempt to draw connections, topographical or symbolic, between the monuments he does mention.

Instead, as has been shown, Ovid typically evokes a monument—often allusively—simply as a springboard to his own agenda. But this is no simple agenda. It has been shown that Ovid's dealings with imperial monuments generate a variety of different readings, from essentially eulogistic about the imperial family to suggestively playful with Augustan ideology. If the imperial family believes that it is in control of its monuments, Ovid quickly reminds it that, in *his* poem, it is *he* who controls.

I wish to conclude by suggesting that the reason for Ovid's distinctive handling of imperial monuments in the *Fasti*, particularly the absence of the visual, might lie in his exile. Ovid tells us that his relegation to Tomis in 8 B.C. 'interrupted' his work on the *Fasti* (*Tr.* 2.549–52). In exile, he continued work on the poem and revised certain parts of it, most notably the preface, which was rededicated to Germanicus after Augustus'

⁵⁶ See Favro (n. 13), 105–10. Newlands (n. 5), 98 notes of the Temple of Mars Ultor: 'Imperial majesty and authority were expressed not only in the statuary and inscriptions but in the sheer size and vast proportions of the complex and in the quality and quantity of its materials.' The same can surely be said of the other Augustan monuments visually downplayed in the poem. For example, the *Ara Pacis* is ornate enough and the Porticus Liviae was renowned for its beauty (Plin. *HN* 14.11, Cass. Dio 55.8).

⁵⁷ Cf. Suet. *Aug.* 28.3.

⁵⁸ See R. Thomas, 'Callimachus, the *Victoria Berenices*, and Roman poetry', *CQ* 33 (1983), 105ff.

⁵⁹ We gain a full sense of its foreign luxury (*Poeni . . . columnis*, 3; *Libyci nobile dentis opus*, 12), its dazzle (*claro . . . marmore*, 9), the sense of wonder for the viewer (*vivida signa*, 8) and the precise orientation of statues in the portico and the temple (5–6, 9–16). Compare this with the colourless evocation of the same temple in the *Fasti* (4.951–4).

⁶⁰ Despite the brevity, we nevertheless gain a sense of the fabric and colour of the Portico of Octavia (*externo marmore dives opus*, 70), the Livian colonnade (*priscis . . . tabellis*, 71) and the sculpture of the Temple of Palatine Apollo (73–4).

⁶¹ See n. 23.

death in A.D. 14. The full extent of revision in the text as we possess it will always be a contentious issue. Book 1 shows the most obvious signs of systematic revision, but convincing cases have been put forward for viewing all six books as fully revised.⁶²

If the poem has been systematically revised from exile, Ovid's subordination of the visual aspect of Rome becomes more interesting. In his exilic poetry, Ovid presents a typically complex persona. He frequently purports to have a capacity for 'mental' vision of Rome from Tomis.⁶³ He can envisage himself in attendance at public events in Rome, such as a military triumph (*Tr.* 4.2.57–64) and consular inaugurations (*Pont.* 4.4.27–46, 4.9.37–56). Furthermore, he claims to be able to take a mental stroll around the locations and buildings of Rome, most notably at *Pont.* 1.8.33–8.

However, Ovid is keen to stress the *limitations* of this capacity for mental vision. He complains directly that it is no substitute for real presence in Rome and real sight.⁶⁴ In particular, on the point of going into exile, Ovid admits that the buildings of Rome will soon be lost to his eyes (*Tr.* 1.3.31–4):

'numina vicinis habitantia sedibus,' inquam
 'iamque oculis numquam templa videnda meis,
 dique reliquendi, quos urbs habet alta Quirini,
 este salutati tempus in omne mihi.

The limitations of his mental vision are also indirectly detectable in his exilic poetry. Ovid offers no sustained visual examination of Rome in the poetry he wrote while banished from the city. Instead, his descriptions of the city read more like a string of loosely attached memories on which the exiled poet dwells; it is for this reason that scholars have rightly regarded the depictions of Rome found in Ovid's exilic poetry as 'impressionistic' and 'more emotional than factual'.⁶⁵

If one accepts that the entire poem was revised during Ovid's exile, it is tempting to assess his avoidance of the visual in the *Fasti* as a further manifestation of this complex exilic persona. As the poet cannot gaze upon Rome personally, and experience its visual delights and splendour, it follows that careful visual examination of Roman buildings can form no part of the *Fasti*. Any description can be at best general and impressionistic. Two particular tactics in this approach to the visual appear to link the *Fasti* with the exilic poetry.

First, they both offer descriptions of the consular inaugurations on 1 January (*Fast.* 1.75–88; *Pont.* 4.4.27–46, 4.9.37–56). All three descriptions are similar to each other and general in nature.⁶⁶ As with the recollection of monuments, Ovid in the exile

⁶² The most obvious example of post-exilic revision outside Book 1 is Ovid's sudden emotional outburst at 4.81–4, but for persuasive arguments of thorough revision, see especially Fantham (n. 26) and Newlands (n. 5), 124–45 (Books 1 and 6 deliberately designed to 'frame' the existing work). Furthermore, we should take note of A. Cameron, *Callimachus and his Critics* (Princeton, 1995), 118, who points out that a revised preface to the first book of a work usually indicates complete revision of the text.

⁶³ Ovid may have adopted this from Cicero's exilic persona; cf. *Fam.* 15.16, *Tusc.* 5.114, 115. For general discussions of Ovid's 'mental' vision, see J.-M. Claassen, *Displaced Persons: The Literature of Exile from Cicero to Boethius* (London, 1999), 178–9; B. Nagle, *The Poetics of Exile* (Brussels, 1980), 90–9.

⁶⁴ Cf. e.g. *Tr.* 4.2.65–8, *Pont.* 4.4.43–6 (below).

⁶⁵ See Claassen (n. 63), 178.

⁶⁶ In each case Ovid develops each ceremony generically—with no novel detail to specify the consul in question—and there are noticeable overlaps in general imagery and detail; cf. e.g. the metonym *purpura* (*Fast.* 1.81, *Pont.* 4.4.25, 4.9.26) and *Fast.* 1.84 = *Pont.* 4.4.32.

poetry accounts for the generality by reminding his reader that his 'mental vision' is no substitute for real sight and actual participation at the event (*Pont.* 4.4.43–6):

me miserum, turba quod non ego cernar in illa,
nec poterunt istis lumina nostra frui.
quod licet, absentem, qua possum, mente videbo:
aspiciet vultus consulis illa sui.

Given the similarity of description of the inauguration ceremony in the *Fasti*, it seems fitting to apply the same reasoning: Ovid's distance from Rome prevents him from being any more specific.

Secondly, it is worth considering the most detailed descriptions of monuments in both types of poetry. The only visual examination of a monument in the *Fasti* occurs during the discussion of the Temple of Mars Ultor (5.545–98); the most coherent analysis of the city in the exile poetry is the 'tour of Rome' (*Tr.* 3.1.27ff.). However, in both passages, it is important to recognize that Ovid is *not* the principal viewer: in the *Fasti*, it is Mars who views the temple (5.551ff.); in *Tristia* 3.1, it is Ovid's poetic book, his *alter ego*, that witnesses the splendour of Rome.⁶⁷

In short, I suggest that whatever the enterprise to which Ovid turns his hand in exile, be it *Fasti*, *Tristia*, or *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid would have us believe that his geographical location is inconsistent with proper visual analysis of Rome.

We might take this a stage further. Feeney has suggestively argued⁶⁸ that Ovid's reason for ceasing work on the *Fasti* after Book 6 was to make a 'mute protest' by denying Augustus the chance to read those months that were most dear to him (July and August). It seems equally possible that, along with the more direct appeals for restoration, the absence of the visual in the *Fasti* might form part of this 'mute protest' at being away from Rome, the very source for his poem. Taken in conjunction with his exilic poems, might Ovid not intimate that a return from exile would also herald a return of visual colour to his nationalistic poem?

Whatever the reason or reasons, Ovid's handling of the physicality of Rome is both fascinating and elusive, and only demonstrates further the slippery relationship between the poet and Augustan Rome.

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⁶⁷ Ovid consistently admits that it is only his book which may 'look upon Rome'; cf. e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.57–8, 5.4.1–4. Indeed, it has been argued that the play on *libertas* in this poem emphasizes the greater freedom enjoyed by the poetic book than by the author; see S. Hinds, 'Booking the return trip: Ovid and *Tristia* 1', *PCPhS* 31 (1985), 14.

⁶⁸ D. Feeney, "'Si licet et fas est': Ovid's *Fasti* and the problem of free speech under the principate", in A. Powell (ed.), *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus* (Bristol, 1992), 15ff.