OVID ON READING: READING OVID. RECEPTION IN OVID *TRISTIA* II*

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In this paper I propose to consider Ovid's poem as a document of literary criticism, which offers us a striking treatment of the role of the audience in reception.[1] Ovid's concerns are twofold: on the one hand he is concerned with the ostensible manner in which his own works have been read, but he also discusses a wide range of other texts, and in doing so, offers readings of them, which, I will argue, illustrate the open-ended nature of reception and meaning.

Now, undoubtedly we are sometimes too willing to label works as 'anti-Augustan' or 'Augustan', as if that was all that could be said about them;[2] the glib use of such terms often seems to obscure more complex and more interesting questions (the *Aeneid* and the *Georgics* are familiar examples). But with Ovid, however, such issues are at least raised by the poet himself, since the exile poems do deal with Ovid's attitude to Augustus, and the twin possibilities of writing poetry which can offend the emperor, or which can please him.[3] Now while Ovid's famous explanation of the causes of his exile as 'carmen et error' (*Trist.* 2.207) may perhaps be a smokescreen[4] — Ovid adducing the *Ars Amatoria* as his fault in order not to have to go into the details of what the *error* was that had offended Augustus — *Tristia* 2 must still be considered on its own terms; Ovid writes as if it is possible for Augustus to be offended by his poetry, and therefore the issue is an important one. For example, he seems to offer an 'Augustan' reading of the *Metamorphoses* to Augustus himself at *Tristia* 2.557–62:[5]

> atque utinam reuoces animum paulisper ab ira,
> et uacuo iubeas hinc tibi pauca legi,
> pauca, quibus prima surgens ab origine mundi
> in tua deduxi tempora, Caesar, opus!
> aspicies, quantum dederis mihi pectoris ipse,
> quoque fauore animi teque tuosque canam.

And would that you would recall your mind from its anger for a little while, and, when you are at leisure, order a few lines from here to be read to you, the few lines in which I have led

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[1] For an introduction to the history of reception, see J. P. Tomkins, 'The reader in history: the changing shape of literary response', in J. P. Tomkins (ed.), *Reader-Response Criticism from Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (1980), 201–32. See also the collection of essays edited by U. Eco, *Interpretation and Overinterpretation* (1992).

[2] On the use of these terms in relation to Ovid, see the discussion and bibliographic material of S. G. Nugent, '*Tristia* 2: Ovid and Augustus', in K. A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate* (1990), 239–57, at 241; A. Barchiesi, *Il poeta e il principe. Ovidio e il discorso augusteo* (1994), 34–6; G. D. Williams, *Banished Voices: Readings in Ovid's Exile Poetry* (1994), 154–8; T. Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature* (1998), 3–14. For a theoretical treatment of the issues, see D. F. Kennedy '"Augustan" and "Anti-Augustan": reflections on terms of reference', in A Powell (ed.), *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus* (1992), 26–58, while G. K. Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: an Interpretive Introduction* (1996), 225, 244–6, draws attention to the need to see 'Augustan' as a term with a wider frame of reference than that of agreement (or disagreement) with the views of the *princeps*. Note also the important article of F. Ahl, 'The art of safe criticism in Greece and Rome', *AJPh* 105 (1984), 174–208.

[3] The reciprocal relationship between Augustus' edict of relegation, described as 'tristibus . . . uerbis' (*Trist.* 2.133) and Ovid's exile poetry, *Tristia*, is noted by Habinek, op. cit. (n. 2), 155–6.

[4] For this view see most recently Galinsky, op. cit. (n. 2), 269.

[5] On the issue of 'Augustanism' in the *Metamorphoses*, see e.g. B. Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (1966), 145, 302–5, 329; G. K. Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: an Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (1975), 210–17; P. Hardie, 'Questions of authority: the invention of tradition in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 15', in T. Habinek and A. Schiesaro (eds), *The Roman Cultural Revolution* (1997), 182–98.

> down my work which starts from the first origin of the universe to your times, Caesar. You will see how much heart you yourself have given to me, and with what favour I sing of you and of your family.

In the last two lines Ovid proclaims that he regards his *Metamorphoses* as a work which affirms the Emperor and his family. But perhaps the crucial word in the whole passage is *pauca*, which not only jokingly refers to the whole fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses*,[6] but also evokes a particular passage, the passage where Ovid brings his poem down to the time of Augustus and concludes by describing the metamorphosis of Julius Caesar into a star (*Met.* 15.843–50),[7] before proceeding to an encomium of Augustus, who is said to surpass Julius Caesar (15.850–70); the passage concludes with Ovid's pious wish that the day of Augustus' ascent to heaven be long postponed. It is in the light of *pauca* that we should perhaps consider the last two lines of my quotation from *Tristia* 2. Ovid asks the Emperor to consider how much heart he has given to Ovid (that is, encouragement to composition), and with what favour Ovid is singing of him and his family. Perhaps the answer is not so much as we might think.[8] Ovid asks Augustus to measure his attitude to the Emperor on the basis of *pauca*, which at first sight seems encomiastic: Ovid does not wish to bother Augustus, who is burdened with more weighty cares (this point, recalling Horace's treatment of Augustus in *Epist.* 2.1, is made at *Trist.* 2.213–38). *Pauca* might moreover suggest that only a few lines of the text are needed to prove Ovid's loyal credentials, so full of tributes is it.[9] However, in spite of Ovid's earlier claim that there are many testimonies to his loyalty in the *Metamorphoses* (*Trist.* 2.63–6),[10] there are only a few lines referring to the Emperor, those in Book 15 and the lines in Book 1 (*Met.* 1.204–5) where Ovid compares the gods' reaction to Jove's intended flood to the response of mortals to the attack on Julius Caesar, before adding 'nec tibi grata minus pietas, Auguste, tuorum / quam fuit illa Ioui', 'Nor was the piety of your subjects less pleasing to you, Augustus, than the piety of the gods was to Jove'. When we consider the totality of Ovid's fifteen books of *Metamorphoses*, it seems a little strange that the Emperor is asked to determine Ovid's loyalty and enthusiasm from the handful of lines where Ovid does mention him.[11] The centrality of reception as a concern for Ovid is brought out in Ovid's reference to a passage at the very end of the work. Apart from the brief mention in Book 1, Augustus would have had to have read through all the intervening books before finally reaching the passage which Ovid points to, unless he were to order someone else to read the passage to him; we shall see later that

[6] On 559–60 see D. R. Shackleton Bailey, 'Notes on Ovid's poems from exile', *CQ* 32 (1982), 390–8, at 393, who construes *surgens* as neuter. It is, however, perfectly possible to take *surgens* as masculine, referring to Ovid himself; for the sliding relation between an author and his text, compare the discussion of *Tristia* 2.5 below, at p. 21. On the relation between this passage and the opening of Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1, see A. Barchiesi, 'Voci e istanze narrative nelle Metamorfosi di Ovidio', *MD* 23 (1989), 55–97, at 91, who notes the subtle change from 'ad *mea* perpetuum deducite tempora carmen' (*Met.* 1.4) to 'in *tua* deduxi tempora, Caesar, opus' (*Trist.* 2.560).

[7] On this passage see e.g. Otis, op. cit. (n. 5), 303–4; Galinsky, op. cit. (n. 5), 259.

[8] Contrast however F. G. B. Millar, 'Ovid and the *Domus Augusta*: Rome seen from Tomoi', *JRS* 83 (1993), 1–17, at 8, who regards this passage and the references to the *Metamorphoses* as straightforward panegyric: 'Looking back in *Tristia* II on his poetic achievement before his exile, Ovid, if anything, rather underestimates how profoundly shaped by Augustan loyalism this work had been (555–62).'

[9] cf. *Trist.* 2.61–2 (on the *Ars Amatoria*): 'quid referam libros, illos quoque, crimina nostra, / mille locis plenos nominis esse tui?' and the discussion of Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 22–3; Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 172.

[10] Note especially *Trist.* 2.66: 'inuenies animi pignora multa mei'. Galinsky, op. cit. (n. 5), 219 regards *Trist.* 2.63, 'inspice maius opus', as an echo of Virgil, *Aen.* 7.44: 'maius opus moueo'. This argument is even more convincing if one compares Ovid's use of *maius opus* at *Am.* 3.1.24 to refer to the possiblity of writing tragedy. At *Trist.* 2.63 Ovid is also referring to *Met.* 15.750–1, 'neque enim de Caesaris actis / ullum *maius opus*, quam quod pater exstitit huius', where Julius Caesar's greatest achievement is his (adoptive) paternity of Augustus; on this passage of the *Metamorphoses*, see further S. E. Hinds, 'Generalising about Ovid', in A. J. Boyle (ed.), *Ramus: Critical Studies in Greek and Roman Literature 16. Imperial Roman Literature I* (1988), 4–31, at 24–6. Note also *Fasti* 5.567–8, 'spectat et Augusto praetextum nomine templum, / *et uisum lecto Caesare maius opus*', where Mars is looking at Augustus' temple to Mars Ultor. Other occurrences of *maius opus* in Ovid are *Ars Am.* 3.370, *Rem.* 109, and *Met.* 8.328.

[11] S. J. Heyworth, 'Notes on Ovid's *Tristia*', *PCPhS* 41 (1995), 138–52, at 146 n. 39: '... less than 2 pages reveal the *Metamorphoses* as shaped by Augustan loyalism, without mention of any episode between 1.205 and Aeneas in book 13!'

Ovid was at least willing to countenance the possibility that Augustus might not have had much time for poetry anyway.

Whether or not one accepts the more questioning undercurrents of my analysis of the passage from Ovid's *Tristia*, it is hard to deny that Ovid does open up for us questions of political allegiance, 'anti-' or 'pro-' Augustan.[12] Furthermore, in a typically Ovidian fashion, the political status not only of the *Metamorphoses* but also of Ovid's address to Augustus in *Tristia* 2 is called into question.

In this article I intend to examine Ovid's views on readership and reception in the *Tristia*. As we have seen, the task is a complex one, and I hope that one point which will emerge is the extent of Ovid's own inconsistency. Along the way, I may well both flirt with and cross swords with such alluring monsters as intentionalism and biographical criticism.

Ovid begins his second book of exile poetry by asking himself why he is having anything to do with literature and books, when it is literature which has caused him to endure such suffering. This division between the author and his work need not occasion particular surprise: in the first poem of *Tristia* 1 Ovid sent his book to Rome, lamenting that this was a journey forbidden to him, while in *Tristia* 3.1 the entire poem is a monologue spoken by the book. In *Tristia* 2 this dichotomy, which will be a running theme, is brought to our attention at the poem's outset. Consider the following passage (*Trist.* 2.5–8):[13]

> carmina fecerunt, ut me cognoscere uellet
> omine non fausto femina uirque meo:
> carmina fecerunt, ut me moresque notaret
> iam pridem emissa Caesar ab Arte mea.

> My songs have brought about that men and women should wish to know me, which portended nothing good for me. My songs have brought about that Caesar should censure me and my way of life from the *Ars Amatoria* which had already been published.

Ovid's language could not be more explicit. His *carmina* are the reason for present attitudes to himself. The author is here a passive figure; it is his *carmina* which have independently caused people to wish to know him, and it is his *carmina* which have caused Caesar's response to the *Ars Amatoria*. Elsewhere (*Trist.* 2.207) Ovid ascribes his downfall to 'carmen et error'; here, in anticipation of the later passage, Ovid gives a fuller picture of the relation between author and text. In particular, notice the shifting role of *me* in these four lines. In the first couplet, Ovid speaks of how his songs have made men and women wish to get to know him. The pairing 'femina uirque' suggests that Ovid has his erotic verse in mind, and here *me* seems synonymous both with the poetry, and with Ovid himself.[14] Whereas in the first couplet Ovid remarks that his songs have caused people to know him, or his songs, in the next couplet Ovid speaks specifically of his personal experience of Augustus' reaction. There are thus two types of *I* in this passage; what is most striking is that Ovid does not say 'I have been responsible' (on either interpretation of *I*). Instead he uses the third person; it is his *carmina* which are responsible.

[12] H. B. Evans, *Publica Carmina. Ovid's Books from Exile* (1983), 11: 'Yet the problem of Ovid's attitude to Augustus cannot be ignored in any examination of the exile poetry. As proponents of the non-political Ovid have observed, the poet did not give major emphasis to imperial themes in his earlier works. The Ovidian concordance reveals that by far the largest number of references to Augustus appear in the books for [*sic*] Tomis. This is not surprising when we remember the main themes of the exile poetry, Ovid's defense of his conduct and appeals for imperial mercy.' Contrast however Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 162 (on *Tristia* 2): 'To take sides with the self-caricature of the poet against his caricature of the emperor may be to enter into the spirit of the poem, but it is not criticism.'

[13] On the textual difficulties of this passage, see G. Luck, *P. Ovidius Naso. Tristia Band 1* (1967), 14; Heyworth, op. cit. (n. 11), 139–40.

[14] Compare, for instance, Propertius 1.7.13: 'me legat assidue post haec neglectus amator', where *me* stands for the text of Propertius. Note also Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1.2, 'hoc legat et lecto carmine doctus amet', where *me* is found as a variant for *hoc* in some manuscripts. Regardless of whether *me* or *hoc* is the text Ovid wrote, the variant strikingly illustrates a hesitation as to whether or not to equate a text with the author.

This distinction between poet and poetry anticipates the position adopted by Ovid later in *Tristia* 2.353–6:

> crede mihi, distant mores a carmine nostro —
> uita uerecunda est, Musa iocosa mea —
> magnaque pars mendax operum est et ficta meorum:
> plus sibi permisit compositore suo.

> Believe me, my morals are different from my song — my life is modest, my Muse is playful. The greater part of my works is lying and feigned: it allowed itself more licence than its composer.

Now the whole issue of personae in ancient literature is one which is currently being debated, but, without at this stage entering into the debate, one can at least say that in this passage there is an attempt to draw a distinction between an author and the character of his works. For this type of defence[15] one may compare for instance Catullus' approach to this same distinction between a poet and his works in Catullus 16.5–6: 'nam castum esse decet pium poetam / ipsum, uersiculos nihil necesse est', 'For a pious poet himself should be chaste, but his verses need not be so at all'.[16] Luck in his commentary notes several similar passages elsewhere in Ovid's exile poetry and in other authors.[17]

A line of enquiry which may perhaps be revealing, however, is an examination of the argument which Ovid uses in reaching the position outlined at *Tristia* 2.353–6. Ovid does not simply pass off without argument the assertion that a poet's work has nothing to do with his personal morality.[18] The passage is the culmination of a complex argument, which is concerned as much with the role of an audience in a text's reception as with the designs of the author.

After introducing the twin motifs of *carmen et error*, and declining to speak of the latter (on the grounds that Ovid has no wish to renew Augustus' wounds) at *Tristia* 2.207–10, Ovid then begins the defence of his *carmen*. The argument begins strikingly with a passage pointing out that Augustus has higher concerns to deal with than Ovid's poetry (*Trist.* 2.213–18):[19]

> fas ergo est aliqua caelestia pectora falli?
> et sunt notitia multa minora tua;
> utque deos caelumque simul sublime tuenti
> non uacat exiguis rebus adesse Ioui,
> de te pendentem sic dum circumspicis orbem,
> effugiunt curas inferiora tuas.

> Can it therefore be right that heavenly minds are in some way deceived? Indeed there are many things which are beneath your attention; and just as Jove, when he watches over the gods and lofty heaven at the same time, does not have the leisure to be engaged in trivial matters, in the same way more insignificant matters escape your concern, when you survey the world which depends upon you.

Here (and an ironical reading of this passage is possible), Ovid asserts that it is possible for 'caelestia pectora' to be deceived, or tricked, *falli*,[20] a word which opens up the by no

[15] Nugent, op. cit. (n. 2), 251, speculates that Ovid's claim to personal virtue may glance at Augustus' own immoralities.

[16] On the complexities of Catullus 16 see D. L. Selden, 'Ceveat lector: Catullus and the rhetoric of performance', in R. Hexter and D. L. Selden (eds), *Innovations of Antiquity* (1992), 461–512.

[17] See e.g. *Trist.* 1.9.59–60, 3.2.5–6, *Ex Ponto* 2.7.47–50, 4.8.19–20, Martial 1.4.8, 'lasciua est nobis pagina, uita proba', with Citroni's commentary ad loc. and G. Luck, *P. Ovidius Naso. Tristia Band 2* (1977), 131–2.

[18] See A. Barchiesi, 'Insegnare ad Augusto: Orazio, *Epistole* 2,1 e Ovidio, Tristia II', *MD* 31 (1993), 149–84, at 176–8.

[19] For comparison with the opening of Horace, *Epist.* 2.1, see Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 18), Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 20–1, and Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 180–1. See also P. Cutolo, '*Captatio* ed apologia in *Tristia* II', in I. Gallo and L. Nicastri (eds), *Cultura, poesia, ideologia nell'opera di Ovidio* (1991), 265–86, at 277–8.

[20] John Moles suggests to me the possibility that *falli* may evoke the *Dios Apate* in *Iliad* 14.

means simple possibility of 'misreading'.[21] Ovid continues by reminding the Emperor that he has responsibilities for such provinces as Pannonia and Armenia,[22] before concluding this section as follows (*Trist.* 2.237–40):

> mirer in hoc igitur tantarum pondere rerum
> te numquam nostros euoluisse iocos?
> at si, quod mallem, uacuum tibi forte fuisset,
> nullum legisses crimen in Arte mea.

> Am I therefore to be surprised that under this burden of mighty matters you never unrolled my frivolities? But if you by chance had had the leisure, which I would prefer, you would have read no crime in my *Ars Amatoria*.

In the first place Ovid even suggests that Augustus may never have had time to read the *Ars Amatoria*, since he was so burdened with the cares of Empire.[23] Note the emphasis placed on reception here; it is as if Ovid is ascribing to Augustus the construction of a negative 'reading' of the *Ars Amatoria* without having 'read' the text. Secondly, Ovid argues, if Augustus had had the leisure to read the *Ars Amatoria*, he would not have found any *crimen* in Ovid's *carmen*.[24] Again the burden of interpretation falls on the reader of the poetry; instead of saying, 'I have not written a wicked poem', Ovid invites Augustus to find out for himself its contents and implications.[25]

Ovid continues by conceding that the poems are not worthy to be read by Augustus, but then maintains that the charge of incitement to adultery is invalid (*Trist.* 2.243–6), which then allows him to quote (with slight adaptation[26]) the line from the *Ars Amatoria* (1.31–4) where Ovid had warned married women to keep away from his poetry. Again the issue of reception is raised, and Ovid draws attention to the problematic nature of addressing a particular work to particular readers; it is all very well to restrict a work to those who are not married, but they can still read the poem anyway. This issue is, of course, relevant to *Tristia* 2 itself as well; the work is addressed to Augustus, but what are the likely responses of other readers of the text? This point is made by Ovid himself, perhaps because mere quotation of the lines in the *Ars Amatoria* prescribing the readership of the poem was unlikely to suffice as a defence. Ovid gives the argument which would be likely to be used against him (*Trist.* 2.253–6):

> 'at matrona potest alienis artibus uti,
> quoque trahat, quamuis non doceatur, habet.'
> nil igitur matrona legat, quia carmine ab omni
> ad delinquendum doctior esse potest.

[21] The issue of misreading is discussed by Eco, op. cit. (n. 1), 45–88. Eco argues (52) 'that we can accept a sort of Popperian principle according to which if there are no rules that help to ascertain which interpretations are the "best ones", there is at least a rule for ascertaining which ones are "bad"'. This positivism is challenged by R. Rorty in Eco, op. cit. (n. 1), 89–108.

[22] See Habinek, op. cit. (n. 2), 151–69, who sees Ovid's representation of Tomis and the Roman frontier in the exile poetry as a discourse of colonization.

[23] Nugent, op. cit. (n. 2), 250–1, argues that the issue of whether Augustus read the *Ars Amatoria* is 'a no-win situation proposition for Augustus'.

[24] Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 22–3, argues that 'Il punto è che, se Augusto avesse avuto tempo, avrebbe trovato le parole "*nullum [. . .] crimen*" nell'*Ars*, il *carmen* che per lui è un *crimen: inque meo nullum carmine crimen erit* (1,34 "e nella mia poesia non ci sarà alcun capo d'accusa"). L'argomento è circolare (e serpentino). Questo testo non è incriminabile perché dice a chiare lettere: "Io non sono un testo incriminabile".' See also Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 18), 166–7.

[25] Nugent, op. cit. (n. 2), 251, detects a different emphasis: 'Thus does Ovid prescribe Augustus' reading and, with the extended revisionist reading of earlier texts, foist his own readings upon Augustus. Again Ovid recommends a specific reading of his own works to Augustus: "Just open my books and you'll see what a role you play there, how I really value you".'

[26] Commenting on the alteration of *Ars. Am.* 1.33, 'nos Venerem tutam concessaque furta canemus' to 'nil nisi legitimum concessaque furta canemus' (*Trist.* 2.249), Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 18), 166, remarks that: 'L'interpolazione *nil nisi legitimum* mostra che non si è mai sicuri abbastanza: l'*Ars* si era protetta contro le accuse, ma è stata condonnata.' As Barchiesi notes on the same page, the alteration to the text of the *Ars* reinforces the earlier implication that Augustus was not an attentive reader; one might make the further point that such an alteration itself illustrates the independence of text from author: a text cannot only be misunderstood, but even altered (although, paradoxically, it is here the author, Ovid, who is altering his own text). See also Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 206–9.

> 'But a matron can make use of skills intended for others, and has something from which she can draw conclusions, although she is not being taught to.' Then let matrons read nothing, because any poem can make them more learned in debauchery.

In the second couplet, the kernel of Ovid's position in *Tristia* 2 is revealed. Instead of asserting that the poet's life and his works can be quite different in terms of their moral character, Ovid adopts quite a different position, since he is prepared to challenge that first premise that a poet's work can be morally corrupting. His response is the brilliant assertion that every poem, 'carmine ab omni', can lead to the corruption of a married woman, so that such women are to read nothing at all. Here we see Ovid arguing that it is in fact possible for any such reader to construct her own 'immoral' reading from the text.

The succeeding lines exemplify such readings of poetry, and stress the paramount role of the individual reader (*Trist.* 2.259–64):

> sumpserit Annales — nihil est hirsutius illis —
> facta sit unde parens Ilia, nempe leget.
> sumpserit 'Aeneadum genetrix' ubi prima, requiret,
> Aeneadum genetrix unde sit alma Venus.
> persequar inferius, modo si licet ordine ferri,
> posse nocere animis carminis omne genus.

> She will have picked up the *Annales* — nothing could be more manly than them — and of course she will read how it was that Ilia became a parent. When she has first picked up 'the mother of the Aeneadae', she will ask how bountiful Venus became the mother of the Aeneadae. I will show below, if only one is permitted to relate it in order, that every kind of poem can corrupt the mind.

Even the most austere literature, such as Ennius' *Annales* (also mentioned at *Trist.* 2.423–4), or Lucretius' didactic poem can nevertheless contain elements which could be harmful to the reader. Notice again Ovid's habitual interest in the reception of texts: the reader has physically to pick up the books in question; the reader of Lucretius is imagined as asking how it is that Venus can be called the 'mother of the Aeneadae'.[27] There is a slight but important distinction between the first two couplets. In the first couplet, the reader is envisaged simply as passively reading the tale of Ilia and Mars. In the second, however, reading the text involves not mere acceptance of its contents, but questions raised in response to it; the married woman reads the phrase 'Aeneadum genetrix' and then asks about its implications in a parody of mythological curiosity and learning. It is a pleasing irony that it is didactic poetry, a type of poetry which teaches its readers and is hence in a position of authority, which Ovid imagines as producing this more involved and independent response from the reader; the didactic nature of Lucretius' poem itself evokes a *frisson*, since Ovid's 'harmful' work, the *Ars Amatoria*, is also didactic. Lucretius is moreover a peculiarly appropriate example for burlesque in this fashion, since his poem had included in Book 4 a celebrated passage on the dangers of love (4.1037–1287). Indeed, one might even argue that Ovid is parodying one of his own methods in the *Ars*, the technique whereby possible questions from the audience are anticipated. Compare, for instance, the episode in *Ars Amatoria* 1.375–80 where Ovid responds to an imaginary question on whether it is a good idea to take Ovid's precepts on winning over the mistress' maid so far as actually to sleep with her.

[27] The couplet referring to Lucretius also tellingly illustrates the unstable nature of signs and meaning. 'Aeneadum genetrix' in the first line signifies the works of Lucretius, here represented by the opening words. In the second line, the same pair of words literally refers to the 'mother of the Aeneadae' (itself a paradoxical idea, since Aeneas is her son). The shift in meaning between the first and second lines of the couplet mirrors the fluidity and uncertainty of a text's reception; Ovid imagines a reader rebelling and asking awkward questions right at the inception of the Lucretian text. Cf. Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 22–3, on 'nullum . . . crimen' in *Trist.* 2.240 and 2.247–50. On first words of literary works, see S. J. Heyworth, 'Horace's *Ibis*; on the titles, unity, and contents of the *Epodes*', in F. Cairns (ed.), *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar* 7 (1993), 85–96, at 85–6; P. G. McC. Brown, 'An interpolated line of Terence at Cicero, *De finibus* 2.14', *CQ* 47 (1997), 583–4 with n. 3.

Ovid then restates his case that every type of poem can be harmful (263–4), before making explicit the obvious argument that everything which can be harmful can of course be beneficial as well (*Trist.* 2.265–8):

> non tamen idcirco crimen liber omnis habebit:
> nil prodest, quod non laedere possit idem.
> igne quid utilius? siquis tamen urere tecta
> comparat, audaces instruit igne manus.

> But not for that reason will every book be guilty. Nothing is advantageous, which does not also have the potential to cause harm. What is more useful than fire? Yet if someone is preparing to burn down buildings, he equips his daring hands with fire.

After saying that not every book has *crimen*, Ovid continues by expounding the ambiguous status of various *exempla*. Thus fire is immensely useful, but can be used for the destruction of buildings. Similarly, the medical arts can be both beneficent and malign in their influence, whilst a sword can be put to different uses by travellers and by bandits. The *exempla* illustrate the point that such things as fire possess no intrinsic moral value; such value is assigned to them as a consequence of the use to which they are put; in the same way it is possible for meaning to be determined by a reader. Ovid then returns to his true subject matter, the status of literature (*Trist.* 2.273–6):

> discitur innocuas ut agat facundia causas;
> protegit haec sontes, inmeritosque premit.
> sic igitur carmen, recta si mente legatur,
> constabit nulli posse nocere meum.

> Eloquence is learned so that it may conduct honourable cases; it protects the guilty and overwhelms the innocent. In the same way, therefore, my poem, it will be agreed, can harm nobody, if it is read with the right mind.

Just as eloquence can be put to variously good or bad uses in the law courts, so, Ovid continues, will it be agreed that his poem will not cause any harm, *recta si mente legatur*.[28] Here *recta . . . mente*, which evokes the Stoic phrase ὀρθὸς λόγος, as noted by Luck and Williams, does not, I would argue, refer to the process of finding a right or single interpretation of a text, but to the morality of the reader. Ovid does not say that if a person reads a text *recta . . . mente*, he or she will find the true meaning; instead he argues that such a person will not be corrupted. The issue is one of the *consequences* of, and not the nature of, reading. There is a possible objection, which Ovid meets effectively by asserting that the power of his poetry has been much exaggerated anyway (*Trist.* 2.277–8):

> 'at quasdam uitio.' quicumque hoc concipit, errat,
> et nimium scriptis arrogat ille meis.

> 'But a poem corrupts some women.' Whoever thinks this is wrong, and ascribes too much power to my writings.

From here Ovid points out (*Trist.* 2.279–300) that spectacles and such places as theatres and even temples can nevertheless be places for love;[29] a reader of Ovid's works might recall that Ovid had suggested such places as suitable for finding a girl at *Ars Amatoria* 1.59–100, 3.387–98.[30] Once again, just as he had envisaged a reader asking how it was

[28] The Stoic implications of *recta mens* (recalling ὀρθὸς λόγος) are noted by G. Luck, *P. Ovidius Naso. Tristia Band 2* (1977), 123 and Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 164. For Ovid's argumentation here, compare also the discussion of good and bad speech at Plato, *Phaedrus* 258d, which commences with a recognition that the writing of speeches is not in itself shameful, and Gorgias' defence of rhetoric as a morally neutral skill at Plato, *Gorgias* 456c6–457c3; see further E. R. Dodds' 1959 commentary on the *Gorgias*, and B. Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (1988), 84–120.

[29] On this passage see Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 23–4; Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 165, 201–4.

[30] Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 202.

that Venus came to be called 'Aeneadum genetrix' in Lucretius, so too does Ovid show the same type of interest in *responses* to phenomena: thus standing in the temple of Jove engenders the thought that the god has had many love affairs with mortal women; similarly in the temple of Juno, one can reflect on the many rivals ('paelicibus') who caused the goddess pain (*Trist.* 2.289–92). After other examples of dubious behaviour among the gods, Ovid then reiterates his view that 'omnia peruersas possunt corrumpere mentes: / stant tamen illa suis omnia tuta locis' ('All things can corrupt perverse minds, yet all those things remain safe in their own contexts') in *Tristia* 2.301–2. The first line of this couplet affirms the point that all things can be dangerous, but Ovid then modifies his position, remarking that nothing need be dangerous if it is in its proper place, thus allowing himself to renew his claim in the following couplet that the *Ars Amatoria* in any case included a warning that it was written only for those who were *meretrices*. This claim about place, or context, having a limiting effect on reception is in any case a spurious one; Ovid's discussion of such thoughts springing to mind in *temples* has already shown this. Reception cannot be controlled.

It will already have become clear that the argumentation of *Tristia* 2 is shifting and sometimes elusive. Having returned to his defence that the *Ars Amatoria* in any case included a warning, Ovid now pursues this motif, pointing out that if a woman enters a place from which she has been barred by a *sacerdos*, the responsibility for that act is hers. In itself this argument is without mischief, yet Ovid continues in much more daring vein (*Trist.* 2.307–8):

> nec tamen est facinus uersus euoluere mollis;
> multa licet castae non facienda legant.

> But it is not however a crime to unroll tender verse. Chaste women may read of many things which they may not do.

Here Ovid draws a distinction not between the morals of the *author* and his text, but between the morals of the text and its *reader*. If the reader is a chaste woman, there is no difficulty in her reading a work which deals with behaviour which she is not to imitate (*non facienda*). In the ensuing section Ovid illustrates his point with a series of *exempla* where again the emphasis is on the *response* to particular sights: thus a matron can behold naked women without being corrupted, whilst the Vestals are able to behold *meretrices*. This allows Ovid to continue by arguing (*Trist.* 2.313–14) 'at cur in nostra nimia est lasciuia Musa, / curue meus cuiquam suadet amare liber?' 'But why is there too much licentiousness in my Muse, or why does my book persuade anyone to love?' Here Ovid not only develops his argument that it is impossible to argue that a book is morally bad, but also alludes to the earlier passage (*Trist.* 2.277–8) where Ovid warned against ascribing too much efficacy to his poetry.

The sequel is a frivolous confession of repentance, explained in terms of Ovid's failure to write on various epic subjects (*Trist.* 2.317–36), such as the Trojan war, Thebes, or even the legendary Roman past, or the more recent exploits of Augustus.[31] These examples will be significant later on in the book. Ovid explains, however, that his talent was designed for work on the smaller scale: 'tenuis mihi campus aratur: / illud erat magnae fertilitatis opus', 'I plough a scanty field — that was a task for great fecundity', so that epic projects were beyond him. Unfortunately erotic verse proved to be as congenial to Ovid's *ingenium* as it was conducive to his downfall. In lines 345–52 Ovid imagines Augustus' argument that Ovid has given instruction in nefarious conduct. Ovid's rejoinder, that 'quodque parum nouit, nemo docere potest', 'no one can teach what he knows badly', then leads into an assertion that no husband has had cause to doubt a child's paternity on Ovid's account, which is immediately followed by Ovid's exposition, in 353–6, that his poetry is separate from his morals, a passage to which I

[31] Ovid's *recusatio* of an epic on Augustus is discussed by Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 190–3, who notes the link with *Amores* 2.1 where Ovid renounces epic (and Jove) in favour of love. See also S. Stabryla, 'In defence of the autonomy of the poetic world (some remarks on Ovid's 'Tristia' II)', *Hermes* 122 (1994), 469–78, at 473–4.

have already referred. The language of *Tristia* 2.352 'ut dubius uitio sit pater ille meo', 'so that a father should be uncertain because of my fault', echoes the distinction between Ovid the person and Ovid the poet which occurs at the beginning of *Tristia* 2: *uitio . . . meo* could simultaneously refer to a hypothetical act of adultery committed by Ovid himself or the action of another adulterer; in both cases it is, for the sake of argument, envisaged that the woman has been corrupted by Ovid's poetry.

In 357–8 Ovid continues in enigmatic vein:[32]

> nec liber indicium est animi, sed honesta uoluptas:
> plurima mulcendis auribus apta feres.

> Nor is a book an indication of the mind but an honourable pleasure. You will say many things that are suitable for soothing the ears.

Ovid argues that a *liber* is not itself an *indicium animi*. The fact that the book may confer pleasure is not in itself an indication of the author's intent or character. However, there is an oddity in this position, since the present *liber*, *Tristia* 2, is nothing if not an attempt to demonstrate an *indicium animi*, Ovid's intention not to corrupt his readers. The paradox of Ovid's position here is that, in keeping with the distinction in 353 between *mores* and *carmine nostro*, Ovid argues that one cannot discern the *animus* of an author from his book. However, what Ovid is doing in *Tristia* 2 is precisely to give an *indicium animi*.[33] This draws attention to Ovid's ironic use of a literary mode as a means for communicating what purports to be biographical information about the state of Ovid's mind.[34]

In the section which follows Ovid then discusses and offers readings of a range of poets. As well as constituting part of his defence, I would argue that these readings are also illustrative of Ovid's earlier intimations that it is possible for a text to be read in any way the reader wishes. Ovid begins with some simple references to earlier authors, and interprets their characters and lifestyles from their writings. On the theory that poetry is an index of character, Accius the tragedian would then be *atrox*, Terentius would be a *conuiua*, while the writers of martial epic would be *pugnaces* (*Trist.* 2.359–60). Yet, curiously enough, if this same principle were to be applied, Ovid in *Tristia* 2 would be contrite and desiring to appease Augustus. Ovid's ostensible concern, however, is a

[32] In 357, though other manuscripts read *uoluntas*, two manuscripts (EV) have *uoluptas*, a reading favoured by Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 170 n. 39 and J. Diggle, 'Notes on Ovid's *Tristia*, Books I–II', *CQ* 30 (1980), 401–19, at 417–18. *uoluptas* seems preferable, since it accords well with 'mulcendis auribus' in 358; for the use of such language in contexts describing the pleasure of literature cf. e.g. Apuleius, *Met.* 1.1: 'auresque tuas beniuolas lepido susurro permulceam'. Compare also the textual problems of Lucretius 2.257–8 where successive line endings in the manuscripts OQ are *uoluptas* and *uoluntas*. In *Trist.* 2.357–8 the manuscripts also offer variants for *feres*: *feret*, *ferens*, *refert*, and *fores*. For a full account of variants in this passage see Hall's 1995 Teubner apparatus. Luck's 1967 text is as follows:

> nec liber indicium est animi, sed honesta uoluntas
> plurima mulcendis auribus apta feret.

Hall's own text is more radical, linking the couplet with the succeeding lines on Accius and Terence:

> si liber indicium est animi nec honesta uoluptas,
> plurima mulcendis auribus apta dare,
> Accius esset atrox, conuiua Terentius esset,
> essent pugnaces qui fera bella canunt.

In this text, *si*, *nec*, and *dare* are all Hall's own conjectures.

[33] For the legal flavour of *indicium*, note such idioms as *indicium postulare* (to seek pardon by informing) and *indicium profiteri* and *indicium offerre* (to offer information): see *OLD* s.v. *indicium* 2b.

[34] Nugent, op. cit. (n. 2), 253: 'In the context of Ovid's exilic work, however, the assertion is devastating, for it directly contradicts Ovid's stance throughout the entire corpus of his exilic poetry — namely, that his poetry of exile is a direct reflection of his life in exile. More specifically, the assertion undermines the claim to credibility that this apologia itself might have.' Cf. Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 171: 'But Ovid's defence leaves him with a new problem. He defends the *Ars* by appealing to the benefits of a reading which is alive to the disjunction between poet and poetic persona; but he invites us to believe that in lines 353–8 poet and poetic persona are one. His defence can only stand if it is read without the kind of literary sophistication which that defence calls for to vindicate the *Ars*.' The point is also made by Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 18: 'Un testo così coinvolto nei problemi dell'interpretare e nella ricerca di letture sdoppiate, che forse ci sta invitando a una lettura non univoca di se stesso.'

The problems of interpreting a text whose author is still living are discussed by Eco, op. cit. (n. 1), 72–88. Typical of his approach is the following observation (73): 'At this point the response of the author must not be used in order to validate the interpretations of his text, but to show the discrepancies between the author's intention and the intention of the text.'

defence of his erotic works, and in the next couplet (*Trist.* 2.361–2) he makes the obvious point that he is by no means the first poet to have treated the subject of love. The next four lines (*Trist.* 2.363–6), however, include a deft sleight of hand:

> quid, nisi cum multo Venerem confundere uino,
> praecepit lyrici Teïa Musa senis?
> Lesbia quid docuit Sappho, nisi amare, puellas?
> tuta tamen Sappho, tutus et ille fuit.

> What did the Tean Muse of the old lyric poet teach, except the mingling of Venus with much wine? What did Lesbian Sappho teach girls, except how to love? Sappho, however, was safe, he also was safe.

Here, in a complete reversal of his earlier claim that the poet does not impart moral instruction, Ovid alleges that Anacreon and Sappho both gave instruction in love, and nevertheless came to no harm.[35] The argument is all the more striking because Ovid here imparts a didactic purpose (which he had denied in his own poetry) to the non-didactic love poems of Anacreon and Sappho. The same criticism (or judgement) could of course be applied to Ovid's *Amores*, to say nothing of the *Ars Amatoria*, actually cast as a didactic poem. Once again we may observe the elusiveness of Ovid's argumentation; here he is concerned with the argument that others wrote love poetry and were unaffected by the practice. It is an especially bold stroke to accuse Sappho and Anacreon of the charge which Ovid has been most keen to rebuff in the earlier part of his argument.

Ovid then continues with Callimachus and Menander (*Trist.* 2.367–70):

> nec tibi, Battiade, nocuit, quod saepe legenti
> delicias uersu fassus es ipse tuas.
> fabula iucundi nulla est sine amore Menandri,
> et solet hic pueris uirginibusque legi.

> Nor, Callimachus, did the fact that you yourself often confessed your love affairs in verse to your reader cause you harm. No play of pleasant Menander is without love, and it is the custom for him to be read by boys and girls.

Once again one may observe Ovid playing and varying the stances and arguments which he has adopted previously. In his own case he was anxious to assert that his life was by no means unchaste, despite the contents of his poems (*Trist.* 2.353–6). Here however he wilfully adopts a biographical mode of reception, interpreting Callimachus' poems as confession ('delicias uersu fassus es ipse *tuas*'), a mode of reading which he explicitly rejects for his own poetry. Once again Ovid declines the absolutism of a consistent approach, thus illustrating the open-endedness of reception. The couplet on Menander is also shrewdly cast. All of the comedian's works have an amorous element in them, *et solet hic pueris uirginibusque legi*. Luck in his commentary notes the similarity with the opening stanza of Horace's third book of *Odes*: 'carmina non prius / audita Musarum sacerdos / uirginibus puerisque canto', but declines to make further comment. The echo seems to have two possible effects: on the one hand, Ovid mischievously recalls a solemn passage from Horace and applies it to the comedies of Menander. The second possibility is that Ovid is drawing attention to an actual similarity between Menander and Horace. Although it is not true to say that every poem by Horace contains erotic elements, Ovid's reminiscence is a reminder that the songs addressed by Horace in Book 3 to 'uirginibus puerisque' include not only such weighty works as the six so-called 'Roman odes', but also works on lighter subjects (such as *Odes* 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 3.12, 3.26, 3.28); the shift in tone from *Odes* 3.6 to 3.7 is particularly notable.

In *Tristia* 2.371–80, Ovid again modifies a position he had adopted earlier. Whereas in 2.317–36, Ovid was lamenting his failure to write mythological epic on the grounds

[35] Note that an unpunctuated text of 365 allows equal priority to the alternative meaning: 'What did Lesbian Sappho teach except to love girls?'

that such subjects would have been far safer, here Ovid shows that it is possible to offer radical readings even of works such as the *Iliad*.[36] Again I draw attention to the language of Ovid's evaluation (*Trist.* 2.371–4):[37]

> Ilias ipsa quid est aliud, nisi adultera, de qua
> inter amatorem pugna uirumque fuit?
> quid prius est illi flamma Briseidos, utque
> fecerit iratos rapta puella duces?

> What else is the *Iliad* itself, except an adulteress, about whom there was a fight between her lover and her husband? What does it have before the passion felt for Briseis, and how a stolen girl made the generals angry?

Instead of saying 'What is the *Iliad* but a poem *about* an adulteress?', Ovid implies an even deeper level of moral corruption by saying, 'What is the *Iliad* but an adulteress, about whom there was a fight between her lover and her husband?'; note that *Ilias* can mean 'Trojan woman' as well as 'Iliad', and that in the phrase 'pugna uirumque', which superficially recalls Virgil's 'arma uirumque' from *Aen.* 1.1, 'uirumque' here means husband, not man. This approach gives primacy to the whole Trojan legend, rather than the *Iliad*'s own declared subject, the anger of Achilles, here dealt with in the second couplet. Even the 'anger of Achilles' does not escape alteration. In Homer, we hear first of all of the anger of Achilles, at the beginning of the poem, and then hear of the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, which is then followed by Agamemnon's decision to console himself for the loss of Chryseis by taking Briseis from Achilles. Ovid's reference to the opening of the *Iliad* humorously reverses the sequence of the epic, where we hear of anger as the subject, and then hear of Achilles' *achos* (pain) at the loss of Briseis (*Iliad* 1.188), a pain which is as much connected with the dishonour incurred by Achilles as the loss of Briseis; Ovid however asks 'What comes before the passion felt for Briseis?', as if that passion is the very subject of the epic.

In the four lines on the *Iliad*, Ovid offered a reading where love was the principal theme of the work. Similarly with the *Odyssey* (*Trist.* 2.375–80):

> aut quid Odyssea est nisi femina propter amorem,
> dum uir abest, multis una petita uiris?
> quis nisi Maeonides Venerem Martemque ligatos
> narrat, in obsceno corpora prensa toro?
> unde nisi indicio magni sciremus Homeri
> hospitis igne duas incaluisse deas?

> Or what is the *Odyssey*, except one woman sought on account of love by many men while her husband is away? Who but Homer tells of Venus and Mars bound together, their bodies caught in the shameless bed? How, except for the testimony of great Homer, would we know that two goddesses grew hot with passion for their guest?

Just as the *Iliad* was an adulteress, and not about one, so too is the *Odyssey*, in pointed refutation of its actual title and opening word (Ἄνδρα, *Od.* 1.1), 'a *woman* sought on account of love by many suitors while her husband is away'. Here one is reminded of wives in love poetry who are similarly sought, and have, or have not, given way.[38] Even if one wished to assign primacy to Penelope in the *Odyssey*, a more conventional reading of the epic might have concluded that the poem was 'a woman who *resisted* many suitors,

[36] Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 193, suggests that Ovid portrays Homer's epics 'as if they were Hellenistic love-romances'.

[37] Compare Propertius 2.8.29–36 for a similarly erotic treatment of the *Iliad*; see also Propertius 2.1.49–50; D. T. Benediktson, 'Propertius' elegiacization of Homer', *Maia* 37 (1985), 17–26.

[38] cf. e.g. Propertius 3.12, Horace, *C.* 3.7 and 10, Ovid, *Am.* 3.4.23–4.

while her husband was away'.[39] Ovid does not go so far as to say 'resisted', and the moral status of Penelope is not made explicit. The examples of the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* show how the reception of a text is not in the hands of the author; the type of reading Ovid offers, burlesque though it may be, demonstrates the power of a reader.

In 377–8, Ovid then mentions the tale of Ares and Aphrodite, which appears in *Odyssey* 8.266–366. The couplet is a subtle one. In the first place, there is an immediate rejoinder to Ovid's question, 'Who but Homer narrated the tale?' The answer is that it is not Homer but Demodocus, the blind Phaeacian singer, who gives the story, which is merely reported by Homer; Ovid thus assigns blame to Homer, even though Homer did not present the tale in his own person. Homer's representation of Demodocus' song about Aphrodite and Ares becomes a moral failing, and the same is true for Homer's testimony of the passions of Calypso and Circe for Odysseus (*Trist.* 2.379–80):

> unde nisi indicio magni sciremus Homeri
> hospitis igne duas incaluisse deas?

> How, except through the testimony of great Homer, would we know that two goddesses grew hot with passion for their guest?

There is a pleasing irony in Ovid's language here. *indicio . . . Homeri* of course refers to evidence supplied by Homer, but *indicio* also recalls *Tristia* 2.357, 'nec liber indicium est animi'. Ovid of course rejects the idea that a book's morals are those of its author, but if one does accept the notion, then the amours of Circe and Calypso are related *indicio . . . Homeri*, 'through a revelation of Homer'. In other words, Homer's narratives of Circe and Calypso could, on such a theory of literature and morality, be considered as evidence for his character.[40]

After demonstrating the possibilities for erotic reinterpretation of Homer that are open to a reader,[41] Ovid shifts his attention (381–410) to the genre of tragedy, and points out (382) that it always contains the 'materiam . . . amoris', illustrating his case with such examples as Hippolytus, Canace, Pelops, Medea, Tereus, Thyestes, Scylla, Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, Bellerophon, Hermione, Atalanta, Cassandra, Danae, Andromeda, Semele, Haemon (the beloved of Antigone), Alcmena, Admetus, Theseus, Protesilaus, Iole, Deidameia, Deianeira, Hylas, the *Iliacusque puer* (either Ganymede or Troilus), concluding breathlessly as follows (*Trist.* 2.407–8):[42]

> tempore deficiar, tragicos si persequar ignes,
> uixque meus capiet nomina nuda liber.

> I will run out of time, if I run through the loves of tragedy, and my book will scarcely contain the bare names.

Tragedy is an ingenious genre for Ovid to use. The erotic nature of many of its plots could be denied by nobody. Nevertheless, tragedy points us to what Ovid does in his discussion of epic, the appropriation of high genres into the realms of love poetry.

For the moment, however, Ovid continues with lesser works, such as the Milesian fables of Aristides, Eubius' shadowy work on the methods required for procuring

[39] Note that Agamemnon, at *Odyssey* 24.196–8 predicts that the immortals will ensure *Penelope's* lasting fame in a song. There have been several recent treatments of the *Odyssey* centred on Penelope: see e.g. M. A. Katz, *Penelope's Renown. Meaning and Indeterminacy in the Odyssey* (1991), N. Felson-Rubin, *Regarding Penelope. From Character to Poetics* (1994).

[40] Compare Hermesianax *fr.* 7.27–34 Powell for an erotic interpretation of Homer's biography on the basis of his poems.

[41] Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 193–4, offers a different emphasis, seeing these rereadings of Homer as simply being Ovid's reply to Augustus' reading of Ovid's poetry: 'If Augustus has been critically naive and one-sided in his evaluation of the *Ars Amatoria*, then Ovid can be equally one-sided and simplistic in his assessment of the Homeric poems, as well as of Greek tragedy and the poets he mentions in lines 363–470.'

[42] Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 198, interprets this list as a reminder to Augustus that 'poetry can immortalise persons other than the poet himself'. Ovid's characteristic overstating of his case in *Tristia* 2 with sheer weight of examples is noted by Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 194.

abortion, to say nothing of more explicitly pornographic works such as the *Sybaritica* of Hemitheon of Sybaris (*Trist.* 2.413–18):

> iunxit Aristides Milesia crimina secum,
> pulsus Aristides nec tamen urbe sua est.
> nec qui descripsit corrumpi semina matrum,
> Eubius, inpurae conditor historiae,
> nec qui composuit nuper Sybaritica, fugit,
> nec quae concubitus non tacuere suos.

> Aristides joined together the Milesian crimes, but he was not, however, exiled from his own city. Nor did Eubius, who wrote on abortions, the writer of an impure enquiry, go into exile, nor the author of the recent *Sybaritica*, nor the women who did not keep quiet about their own love-making.

The effect of this rather odd sequence of works listed by Ovid after his discussion of tragedy is a disarming one; it is almost as if Ovid gives the impression of scraping the barrel in a search for works which have love as their subject. Aristides, the author of Milesian fables, who was not exiled, gives an ironic contrast with that other Aristides, Aristides the Just, who was ostracized. Mention of Eubius (which one suspects would not have been especially tactful given Augustus' concern to encourage larger families), and then works which were downright pornographic seems in fact to be a weak argument, since Ovid seems to be comparing himself with works much more dubious even than his own *Ars Amatoria*. But before leaving such Greek authors, it is worth noting Ovid's innocuous transition from them (*Trist.* 2.419–20):

> suntque ea doctorum monumentis mixta uirorum,
> muneribusque ducum publica facta patent.

> And these works are mixed up with the memorials of learned men, and have become publicly available due to the generosity of leading men.

Here Ovid reminds us that such works are readily available in the libraries which have been endowed for the public; the most notable example was of course Augustus' Palatine library. There is an implicit contrast with the treatment which Ovid fears will be meted out to his *Tristia* in *Tristia* 1.1.69–98 where he advises his work not to hope to find a place on the Palatine; the same motif can also be found in *Tristia* 3.1 as well. Moreover *muneribusque ducum* is a pointed reminder that leading men, including Augustus, have themselves been involved in the dissemination of such texts; it is as if the blame does not just lie upon the head of an author. *Publica facta patent* too stresses the role of reception, the need for an audience to exist for such poetry, as well as hinting that there may well be a considerable demand; one recalls that Ovid began *Tristia* 2 by remarking on the manner in which he was known to men and women because of his poetry (5–6).

Now to the Latin authors and Ovid's readings of them. He starts by mentioning Ennius and Lucretius for their martial and cosmological poetry, a seemingly innocuous beginning.[43] However *ut* clauses in lines 423–6 on these authors lead to the *sic* which introduces four lines on Catullus and his poetry (427–30). Again, the detail of the language is important; the *ut* clauses followed by the *sic* clauses are a strikingly simple, yet effective means for Ovid to hint at the parity and equivalence shared by the two forms of poetry. We have already seen how Ovid annexed tragedy to the realm of the erotic; now, by a different tactic, Ovid increases the respectability of amorous writing by suggesting that it is purely a difference of interest and subject matter which distinguishes the work of a Catullus from that of an Ennius or a Lucretius. Moreover, the implied similarity further enforces the points previously made by Ovid both about

[43] The ironic aspects of Ovid's presentation of Ennius and Lucretius are perceptively discussed by Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 15–18.

annalistic epic and Lucretius' poem (259–62), where Ovid drew attention to such erotic elements as Ilia and the opening phrase of Lucretius, 'Aeneadum genetrix'.[44]

In 429–30 Ovid refers to Catullus' love poetry, 'in quibus ipse suum fassus adulterium est', 'in which he confessed his own adultery', *suum* again emphasizing an actual coincidence between the biography of the poet and the contents of his poetry. In the ensuing list of Roman love poets which follows the reflexive adjective is similarly used of Calvus, 'detexit uariis qui sua furta modis' (*Trist.* 2.432), and Varro of Atax (*Trist.* 2.440), 'non potuit Veneris furta tacere suae'. The point is simple: Ovid draws attention to poets whose scandalous lives and loves have informed their own poetry. Ovid, on the other hand, has already established a contrast between his personal morality and the conduct described in his amatory works.[45] One may make the further point that Ovid in his exile poetry goes to great lengths to heighten the sense of his personal morality by writing not about some Corinna or some other mistress, but about his wife, previously not mentioned in his poetry. Her regular appearances in the exile poetry can in part be seen as an attempt by Ovid to demonstrate his own virtues — the poems addressed to Ovid's wife show an exemplary form of married life and fidelity, and though Ovid's wife did not accompany him into exile, a typical *exemplum* of marital steadfastness, on the grounds that she could do more for him by working for his return in Rome, Ovid is nevertheless keen to portray her as the equal of such heroines as Penelope, who had patiently endured their husbands' absences; for this, see e.g. *Trist.* 1.6.19–22, 5.14.35–40, *Ex Ponto* 3.1.105–13. Ovid's mention of Roman love poets who had written about their love affairs stands in pointed contrast to Ovid's presentation of his own private life in the *Tristia*, where he is able to enjoy the reflected glory of his wife's pious devotion.[46]

The remaining poets mentioned in lines 427–46 reinforce Ovid's argument, though one may pick out such details as the implication of personal immorality in such phrases as 'Cinnaque procacior Anser' (*Trist.* 2.435). Note, however, that once again the direction of Ovid's argument has shifted. Whereas he began his account of Greek love poets by pointing out that Anacreon and Sappho came to no harm as a result of their compositions, it becomes apparent in lines 445–6 that Ovid is not interested in a mere enumeration of Latin love poets; the example he chooses, Gallus, is a curious one, since Gallus did incur the displeasure of his imperial master and indeed committed suicide. What does Ovid have to say of him? (*Trist.* 2.445–6):

> non fuit opprobrio celebrasse Lycorida Gallo.
> sed linguam nimio non tenuisse mero.

> Nor was it a disgrace for Gallus to have celebrated Lycoris, although it was a disgrace not to have held his tongue under the influence of excessive wine.

The curiously negative language 'non fuit opprobrio' seems to draw attention to Gallus' punishment; Augustus is reminded of a poet whom he did not punish on poetic grounds.[47] The enigmatic second line of the couplet seems to set even Gallus' offence in a trivial light (compare Ovid's reference to 'temerati crimen amici' at *Am.* 3.9.63), perhaps awkwardly suggesting a parallel for Ovid's *error* of sight, which supposedly was a contributory factor in his fall.

The *frisson* engendered by the mention of Gallus is immediately emphasized in the following lines (*Trist.* 2.447–64) where Ovid moves on from Gallus, a love poet who caused no offence in his non-didactic poetry but was punished on other grounds, to Tibullus, here represented by Ovid as a didactic poet of love, an exaggeration of the pose of *praeceptor amoris* which is found in the elegiac poets. Tibullus stands in contrast

[44] Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 16–17.

[45] Note also Ovid's earlier account of his balanced and moderate lifestyle (*Trist.* 2.89–116), discussed by Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 162–3.

[46] cf. R. G. M. Nisbet, '"Great and Lesser Bear" (Ovid *Tristia* 4.3)', *JRS* 72 (1982), 49–56, at 56: 'Most curiously of all, and surely deliberately, he [Ovid] professes an Augustan ideal of marriage, even if the celestial pattern is marred by the imperfections of earth.'

[47] On Gallus' gossip about Augustus, see Dio Cassius 53.23.5, J.-P. Boucher, *Caius Cornélius Gallus* (1966), 49–54.

to Gallus not just because of his survival, but also because he actually, as Ovid represents him, gives instruction, as opposed to description of love. The poem of Tibullus to which Ovid is alluding is Tibullus 1.6, where the poet suspects that Delia has betrayed him with another. In *Tristia* 2.447–58, Ovid incorporates, in some places with extremely close echoes, motifs from Tibullus 1.6, a poem where Tibullus upbraids a *mari complaisant*. Ovid's presentation of the poem is, however, quite different from Tibullus', which despite its cynical premise, is, if it is didactic, imparting lessons from which the wronged husband may benefit; Tibullus, in a jokingly confessional mood, admits some of the tricks of the trade to the husband. Ovid however uses the poem in quite a different way. Note especially the following couplet (*Trist.* 2.449–50):

> fallere custodes idem docuisse fatetur,
> seque sua miserum nunc ait arte premi.

> The same poet tells of teaching how to deceive guardians, and says that now he is wretchedly overwhelmed by his own skill.

As has been noted by Barchiesi and Williams, this seems a neat rewriting of Tibullus 1.6.9–10:

> ipse miser docui, quo posset ludere pacto
> custodes: heu heu nunc premor arte mea.

> I myself taught how one could beguile guardians: alas, alas, now I am overwhelmed by my own skill.

There is, however, a difference.[48] Tibullus' lesson to Delia is not explicitly said by him to have been couched in a literary form, and may be regarded as part of the fiction of the poem. Ovid, by contrast, himself presented such instruction to his mistress in a literary form (*Am.* 1.4), so that the charge against Tibullus would in any case fall on himself. But there is more. In his treatment of Tibullus, Ovid is applying the same criteria which he rejected in *Tristia* 2.353–6, where he drew a distinction between a poet's moral life and his poetic output. Here, with Tibullus, Ovid brilliantly contrives to have both sides of the argument: Tibullus the poet is found guilty of morally corrupt teaching in his poems, on biographical evidence which is itself gathered from Tibullus' poetry. The evidence that Tibullus assumed a *poetic* didactic role is gleaned by Ovid neither from the poetry of Tibullus or from other evidence pertaining to his life, but Ovid's *docuisse fatetur* implies that Tibullus was all these things anyway. Moreover the passage also has implications with regard to the theme of reception: the anecdote about Tibullus illustrates that poet's failure to control the reception of his own text, and his inability to prevent it being read and used in a way which was not to his own advantage.

Similarly a couplet relating to Propertius (*Trist.* 2.465–6):

> inuenies eadem blandi praecepta Properti:
> destrictus minima nec tamen ille nota est.

> You will find the precepts of beguiling Propertius are the same: but he was not affected with even the smallest mark of censure.

Once again the allegation of *praecepta*, actual teaching and instruction. And indeed, Propertius did express the wish that he would be read by neglected lovers (1.7.13), 'me legat assidue post haec neglectus amator', but he is nevertheless not a teacher of love on quite the same scale as Ovid.[49]

[48] On Ovid's use of Tibullus 1.6 see Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 18), 171–2; Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 195–6. In a curiously biographical moment Williams argues (195) as follows: 'It is not too fanciful to believe that Tibullus' telling complaint *heu heu nunc premor arte mea* (1.6.10) is what first led Ovid to select the poem as eminently suitable for reproduction in *Tristia* 2.'

[49] On the didactic elements in Propertius, see A. L. Wheeler, 'Propertius as praeceptor amoris', *CPh* 5 (1910), 28–40.

Mention of Propertius, and Tibullus before him, allows Ovid to return to his own role as a poet, and to affirm his canonical status within the history of Roman poetry (*Trist.* 2.467–70):

> his ego successi, quoniam praestantia candor
> nomina uiuorum dissimulare iubet.
> non timui, fateor, ne, qua tot iere carinae,
> naufraga seruatis omnibus una foret.

> I followed these poets, since kindness tells me to hide the names of those currently alive. I confess that I did not fear that there would be one shipwreck where so many ships had sailed, where everyone else had been saved.

Ovid's treatment of Tibullus and Propertius has two functions, as now emerges. On the one hand, he associates himself with their love elegies (a type of composition which he himself essayed), and on the other hand, by misrepresenting their compositions as being more didactic than they really are, he is able to argue that such writings did not result in their punishment. More striking is the first couplet of the passage I have just quoted, where Ovid refrains from naming any contemporary poets, ostensibly on the grounds that he needs to hide them (in keeping with his general practice of concealing names in the *Tristia*, if not the *Epistulae ex Ponto*). However, the couplet also serves another purpose; it is a reminder that Ovid is not the only poet of his type — there are, indeed, others of his kind writing in Rome. *Servatis omnibus* in the second couplet makes the same point even more insistently.

And indeed, Ovid continues, just as there have been those who have written of love with impunity, so other dubious activities have received attention: as is well known, the list of *artes* and games begins provocatively with dice (*Trist.* 2.471–92), a pastime dear to Augustus (Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 71).[50]

After observing (*Trist.* 2.495–6) that out of so many poets he is the sole example 'quem sua perderit Musa', 'whom his own Muse destroyed', Ovid continues by arguing that such forms as the mime, which frequently contain adulterous plots, are tolerated, and, with Ovid's typical interest in reception, watched by all classes and ages (*Trist.* 2.501–2):

> nubilis hos uirgo matronaque uirque puerque
> spectat, et ex magna parte senatus adest.

> These mimes are watched by marriageable girls, married women, men and boys, and most of the Senate is there.

After pointing out that a spectacle may be even more corrupting than something which is heard, Ovid suddenly points out Augustus' own role (*Trist.* 2.509–16):

> inspice ludorum sumptus, Auguste, tuorum:
> empta tibi magno talia multa leges.
> haec tu spectasti spectandaque saepe dedisti —
> maiestas adeo comis ubique tua est —
> luminibusque tuis, totus quibus utitur orbis,
> scaenica uidisti lentus adulteria.
> scribere si fas est imitantes turpia mimos,
> materiae minor est debita poena meae.

> Look at the expenditure on your spectacles, Augustus; you'll read that many such things have been bought by you at a high price. You have often looked on these things, and put

[50] On the link between games and poetic *lusus* see Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 204–5, who notes the appearance of gambling in the *Ars Amatoria*. On the whole passage see also J. Gómez Pallarès, 'Sobre Ovidio, *Tristia* II, 471–492', *Latomus* 52 (1993), 372–85, who interprets (380–1) the reference to poems written on 'fucandi cura coloris' (*Trist.* 2.487) as an allusion to Ovid's own *Medicamina faciei feminae*.

them on to be looked at — your gentle majesty is indeed everywhere — and with your eyes, which the whole world uses, you have unconcernedly beheld adulteries on stage. If it is right to compose mimes which imitate shameful conduct, a lesser punishment is needed for my material.

Here Ovid implicitly puts Augustus in the role of both author and audience of his own spectacles in the memorable line 'haec tu spectasti spectandaque saepe dedisti'. Of course, on the superficial level, there is an element of daring in these lines, since Ovid is associating Augustus with adulterous spectacles in the theatres, and there is a tradition of Augustus himself as a notorious adulterer (Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 69). *Lentus* too strikes a chord, suggesting the lingering pleasure of an emperor in such scenes.[51] More significant than all this, however, is the fact that Augustus is open to censure either on the grounds which Ovid represents the Emperor as using against him (putting temptation in the way of others), or in Ovid's terms, because Augustus is a spectator of something which is immoral. This passage is a good example of the complexities in examining Ovid's attitudes to Augustus, even in a poem which is ostensibly an attempt to win over the Emperor's clemency.

As happens in *Tristia* 2, Ovid often recapitulates material; his comments on the effects of looking at visual images in *Tristia* 2.521–8 need not detain us. However, immediately afterwards, Ovid returns to the theme of poetry, repeating in *Tristia* 2.529–32 his own inability to write epic. This, however, is at once followed by the most powerful literary subversion in the whole poem, Ovid's triumphant interpretation of the *Aeneid* in erotic terms (*Trist.* 2.533–6):[52]

et tamen ille tuae felix Aeneidos auctor
contulit in Tyrios arma uirumque toros,
nec legitur pars ulla magis de corpore toto,
quam non legitimo foedere iunctus amor.

And yet that fortunate author of your *Aeneid* brought arms and the man into Tyrian beds, and no part from the whole work is more read than love joined in an illegitimate union.

The pointed possessive *tuae* heightens the sense of an *ad hominem* criticism of Augustus.[53] In the second line, *arma uirumque*, the opening of the *Aeneid*, is humourously juxtaposed with 'in Tyrios . . . toros', referring to Aeneas' dalliance with Dido at Carthage.[54] Even more weighty, however, are the implications of the second couplet, where Ovid, returning to the theme of reception, makes the damning point that *Aeneid* 4 and its narrative of Dido's passion for Aeneas is the most popular part of the *Aeneid*.[55] Once again Ovid draws attention to the independence of the reader and the

[51] For *lentus* in a sexual (but metaphorical) context, cf. Catullus 28.9–10: 'o Memmi, bene me ac diu supinum / tota ista trabe lentus irrumasti'. Cutolo, op. cit. (n. 19), 281–2 with n. 38, sees a link with Virgil's description of Tityrus as 'lentus in umbra' (*Ecl.* 1.4), with the intriguing possibility of a contrast between Augustus, linked to Tityrus, and Ovid, compared implicitly with the exiled Meliboeus.

[52] For Ovid's use of the *Aeneid* in the *Metamorphoses*, see e.g. Galinsky, op. cit. (n. 5), 217–51; J. B. Solodow, *The World of Ovid's Metamorphoses* (1988), 110–56.

[53] cf. Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 18: 'L'*Eneide* prediletta dal principe e appropriata dal discorso augusteo (*tuae*) ha portato fortuna a Virgilio, *felix* perché opposto a Ovidio che scrive *tristia* per colpa dell' *Ars amandi*; eppure anche lì c'è una storia d'amore di un certo tipo. La legge della pertinenza, il *decorum*, è stata violata perché l'epica, fattasi impura, potesse aprirsi a un tema erotico che dona successo e popolarità a Virgilio.' Cutolo, op. cit. (n. 19), 283, sees in this passage of the *Tristia* an allusion to Horace, *Epist.* 2.1.245–7: 'at neque dedecorant tua de se iudicia atque / munera, quae multa dantis cum laude tulerunt, / dilecti tibi Vergilius Variusque poetae'.

[54] For reworkings of *arma uirumque* in Ovid's works, see now Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 5–14, 25–6. Ovid's 'toros' recalls Aeneas speaking his narrative of his wanderings 'toro . . . ab alto' (Virgil, *Aen.* 2.2), and Dido's dying words, spoken 'os impressa toro' (*Aen.* 4.659).

[55] For the popularity of Dido, see Galinsky, op. cit. (n. 5), 248, who also notes that Ovid treats the episode only briefly in the *Metamorphoses*.

possibilities of interpretation which are open to all, his most potent literary example, the *Aeneid*, reminding us that there are many who only read it in portions.[56]

What then are the implications of *Tristia* 2? What insights into the reading of poetry does it offer?

In the first place I would wish to emphasize Ovid's elusiveness, and willingness to deviate from his own lines of argument. As I hope to have shown, *Tristia* 2, though it argues a general defence, cannot be pinned down, since Ovid is constantly changing his own criteria. Thus he gives us in *Tristia* 2.353–6 a typical argument that a poet's morals should not be judged according to those exhibited in his works, yet both in terms of other poets, such as Catullus and Calvus, and in terms of himself, Ovid is inconsistent, since he regards other love poets as putting their own lives into their poetry, while his claim that a book is not an *indicium animi*, is refuted by his own attempts in a literary setting to show an *indicium animi* of his own to Augustus.

A point which does emerge from the text, however, is the liberation of the audience.[57] On the one hand, this is a liberation from the author, and a recognition that an author cannot tell his audience how they are to interpret a text.[58] Thus Ovid is constantly drawing our attention to the process of reception. In the example I have just mentioned, he shows how a selective reading of *Aeneid* 4 is possible, one that indeed is so selective as to ignore the rest of the poem; one may compare the even more selective 'reading' of the *Ars Amatoria* which Ovid ascribes to Augustus, a reading dependent on the Emperor not having read the text and on an enemy of Ovid's giving a misleading account of it to Augustus (*Trist.* 2.237–8, 2.77–8). Similarly, Ovid's account of the process of interpretation of Lucretius' 'Aeneadum genetrix' takes no account of Lucretius' intentions when using the phrase; what matters is that a reader may be moved to speculate on how it was that Venus became the mother of the Aeneadae.

But Ovid does not just imply that the reader is independent of the author.[59] In effect he posits another type of independence as well, independence from external forces such as the Emperor. Instead of offering the defence, or assertion, that Ovid's work would survive anything (cf. the end of the *Metamorphoses* for this, and the extraordinary

[56] Note that Augustus himself is recorded as having heard readings of portions of the *Aeneid* (*Vita Donati* 32); cf. Ovid's own suggestion (*Trist.* 2.557–8, discussed above) that Augustus arrange to have the panegyric passage at the end of the *Metamorphoses* read to him as an excerpt. Note also J. Masters, *Poetry and Civil War in Lucan's Bellum Civile* (1992), 222, on Vacca's account of Lucan's recitation to Nero: 'Lucan may indeed have published or recited three books in advance of the rest, precisely *because* he was conscious of the fact that Virgil had done similarly with the Aeneid.' On Augustus' literary tastes, see Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 89; R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (1939), 460, 484–5; Galinsky, op. cit. (n. 5), 211–12; Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 181.

[57] On the audience of *Tristia* 2 itself, see T. Wiedemann, 'The political background to Ovid's *Tristia* 2', *CQ* 25 (1975), 264–71, at 271, who makes the important point that *Tristia* 2's readership extends beyond the notional addressee of the poem, Augustus, and suggests that the poem 'was not intended for Augustus' eyes at all; it was meant to influence the circle of educated Roman aristocrats to whom Ovid's other poems from Tomoi were addressed, and Ovid hoped that *they* would be the ones who, recognizing the absurdity of Augustus' grounds for exiling Ovid, would do their best to see that he was recalled'.

[58] For discussion of the idea that a text can simultaneously be read in two ways, see Demetrius of Phalerum, *De elocutione* 291, with Ahl, op. cit. (n. 2), 195; Otis, op. cit. (n. 5), 305; Barchiesi, op. cit. (n. 2), 21; Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 157–8; Hinds op. cit. (n. 10), 25: 'If he [Ovid] was subversive in his writing (as I believe he was), how could he possibly proceed but by indirection and nuance? In any but the most powerful or the most reckless of Romans, publicly voiced anti-Augustanism must needs be a rhetoric of ambiguity and innuendo. 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.'

[59] Note that Ovid even countenances the possibility that the *Tristia* themselves may give offence to a reader at *Trist.* 1.1.22 (addressed to his book): 'ne, quae non opus est, forte loquare, caue.' Ovid's despatch of his book to Rome without him in *Trist.* 1.1 can be compared with the discussion in Plato, *Phaedrus* 275d of the defencelessness of the written word. Note also the language of control used by Eco, op. cit. (n. 1), 83, in discussing his failure to prevent interpretations of the title of his novel, *Foucault's Pendulum*, as a reference to Michel Foucault, despite the fact that the pendulum of the title was the work of Léon Foucault: 'But the pendulum invented by Léon was the hero of my story and I could not change the title: thus I hoped that my Model Reader would not try to make a superficial connection with Michel. I was to be disappointed; many smart readers did so. The text is there, and perhaps they are right: maybe I am responsible for a superfical joke; maybe the joke is not that superficial. I do not know. *The whole affair is by now out of my control.*'

assertion in *Tristia* 3.7.47–8 that Augustus has no power over Ovid's *ingenium*[60]), Ovid adopts a different, but equally potent tactic, implying that it is not possible for Augustus to control interpretation.[61] Thus even a temple, perhaps one of the ones restored by the Emperor, can lead a woman to improper thoughts; similarly even Augustus' *Aeneid, tuae . . . Aeneidos*, can be read in a fashion which neglects everything except the tale of Dido and Aeneas in *Aeneid* 4. The possessive adjective *tuae*, suggesting Augustus' control over the *Aeneid*, is introduced at the very moment where the Emperor's failure to control the reception of perhaps the most Augustan text, Virgil's *Aeneid*, is also demonstrated.[62]

Thus *Tristia* 2 is important not only as Ovid's defence of his own poetry. As I hope to have shown there are a number of inconsistencies in his argument, inconsistencies that perhaps represent weakness,[63] but a kind of elusive and paradoxical weakness; Ovid uses the poem to assert his own mastery not just as a poet but also as a reader: hence the brilliant series of 'readings' of various texts which he offers. Undoubtedly there are other confrontational strands in Ovid's argument, such as the cheeky reference to Augustus' role as the giver of corrupting *ludi* and a player of dice, which seem to criticize the Emperor. What I hope to have shown, however, is that that confrontation hinges on Ovid's interest in the reception of texts, and the conferring of power on readers rather than authors.[64] If Ovid is challenging the Emperor in *Tristia* 2, under the guise of attempting to appease his wrath, we would do well to remember that Ovid is conscious of the role of his readers as well.

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[60] *Trist.* 3.7.47–8: 'ingenio tamen ipse meo comitorque fruorque: / Caesar in hoc potuit iuris habere nihil.' Compare Tacitus' comments on the folly of imperial book-burning (*Ag.* 2.1–2, *Ann.* 4.35.5). For censorship during Augustus' reign, see Seneca, *Contr.* 10 pr. 4–5 (on T. Labienus), Dio Cassius 56.27.1 (anonymous pamphlets), Suetonius, *Caligula* 16, Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.72 (Cassius Severus), Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 36 (ending of publication of the *acta senatus*). Though Syme, op. cit. (n. 56), 486–7, refers to 'stern measures of repression against noxious literature' towards the end of Augustus' reign, there is perhaps a danger of overestimating the nature and extent both of such literary and intellectual opposition to Augustus and of the Emperor's responses; see now K. A. Raaflaub and L. J. Samons, II, 'Opposition to Augustus', in K. A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate* (1990), 417–54, at 436–47, who rightly draw attention to the ancient evidence for Augustus' lenience in such matters. As Syme, ibid., notes, the *Ars Amatoria* was not suppressed. See also M. Citroni, *Poesia e lettori in Roma antica* (1995), 440–2, 431–5.

[61] One might, however, contrast the opening poem of the third book of the *Tristia*, where his book describes its failure to gain admission to the temple libraries of Rome (*Trist.* 3.1.59–80). The book, however, ends up in private hands: perhaps a more dangerous form of reception? Cf. F. Kermode, 'Freedom and interpretation', in B. Johnson (ed.), *Freedom and Interpretation: the Oxford Amnesty Lectures 1992* (1993), 46–68, at 46: 'There is obviously a close relation between liberty of interpretation and political liberty in general.'

[62] Ancient rhetorical theory (in Demetrius of Phalerum and in Quintilian) of ambiguity as a mode to be used when addressing tyrants is usefully discussed by Ahl, op. cit. (n. 2), 186–92; Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 159–60. See also M. Dewar, 'Laying it on with a trowel: the proem to Lucan and related texts', *CQ* 44 (1994), 199–211, for a sceptical response to ironic readings of Lucan's opening address to Nero.

[63] See further S. G. Owen, *P. Ovidi Nasonis. Tristium Liber Secundus* (1924), 55; Wiedemann, op. cit. (n. 57), 271; Nugent, op. cit. (n. 2), 243–4. Note however the verdict of R. Syme, *History in Ovid* (1978), 222: '. . . a fine piece of work, lucid, coherent, and forceful, worthy of a great orator or a good historian.' For analysis of the rhetorical structure of the poem see Owen, op. cit., 48–54; G. Focardi, 'Difesa, preghiera, ironia nel II libro dei *Tristia* di Ovidio', *SIFC* 47 (1975), 86–129, at 87–105; Stabryla, op. cit. (n. 31), 471.

[64] Williams, op. cit. (n. 2), 168, sees the shift between author and reader in terms of responsibility, rather than power.