

Martial's Ovid / Ovid's Martial*

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INTRODUCTION: SHORT CUTS

Martial's short, pungent, and carefully-worded epigrams are enjoying a critical renaissance. In reaction to (surprisingly persistent) habits which treat them as transparent windows on to social historical realities beyond them, they are now receiving fresh attention as constructed literary artefacts whose codes of referentiality are as rich and various as anything in Latin poetry. The new Martial turns out to be, among other things, a notably attentive reader of the poems of Ovid, early, middle and late: so that this seems an opportune moment to draw the epigrammatist into another currently vigorous enquiry, the study of first-century C.E. Ovidian receptions.¹ One obvious advantage of reading Martial within an Ovidian frame of reference will be to accelerate the appreciation of Martial's own poetic and poetological self-awareness, especially across generic boundaries. Building in the first instance upon some obvious points of contact, but also later upon some challenges of seeming incommensurability, the present discussion hopes to explore a number of ways in which Ovid can shape a reading of Martial, and also (more unexpectedly) a number of ways in which Martial can shape a reading of Ovid.

'Ovidisches bei Martial', 'Ovid und Martial', 'Martial's debt to Ovid': originality of titlature has not been a high priority in the trickle of articles to address this relationship in recent decades.² Those articles (like this one) probably draw the pose of schematism

*This paper has had a long performance history, in the course of which many details have been sharpened by the responses of generous audiences on both side of the Atlantic. Early portions were presented at a 2002 conference on Ovid in Trinity College Dublin (organized by Damien Nelis), a 2002 conference on the *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* in Manchester (organized by Roy Gibson, Steve Green, and Alison Sharrock), a 2003 conference on Flavian poetry in Groningen (organized by Ruurd Nauta, Harm-Jan van Dam, and Hans Smolenaars), and a 2003 joint meeting in Calgary of the Classical Associations of the Pacific Northwest and Canadian West. During a period of research in 2003–4 made possible by a sabbatical fellowship from the American Philosophical Society and by a Lockwood Professorship of the Humanities at my own institution, fuller versions were tested at Stanford, the University of British Columbia, Princeton, Virginia (The Stocker Lecture), and in the literature seminar of the Faculty of Classics, Cambridge. The last phase in the paper's grand tour came while I was teaching at the UW Rome Center in Spring 2005, thanks to invitations to speak at the Universities of Rome La Sapienza, Rome Tor Vergata, Florence, and Arezzo. I am indebted to Sergio Casali for his generosity in undertaking an Italian translation ('Il Marziale di Ovidio / l'Ovidio di Marziale'), from which the paper emerged improved at many points by his own literary critical acuity. My thanks to Dan McGlathery for suggesting as long ago as 1991 that I try bringing my Ovidian expectations to a reading of Martial; to Luke Roman for communicating to me a sense of the aesthetic range of the *Epigrams*; to Kathy Coleman for her kindness in showing me sections of her edition of and commentary on *Liber Spectaculorum* in advance of publication; and to Catherine Connors, as also to the *JRS* readers, for valuable advice in the final stages of revision.

¹ See P. Hardie, 'Ovid and early imperial literature', in P. Hardie (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid* (2002), 34–45; M. Dewar, 'Ovid in the 1st–5th centuries A.D.', in B. W. Boyd (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Ovid* (2002), 383–407; G. Tissol and S. Wheeler (eds), *The Reception of Ovid in Antiquity, Arethusa* 35 (2002), 341–461 (especially C. Williams, 'Ovid, Martial, and poetic immortality: traces of *Amores* 1.15 in the *Epigrams*', 417–33); cf. S. Hinds, *Allusion and Intertext* (1998), 83–91, 129–44.

² E. Siedschlag, 'Ovidisches bei Martial', *RFIC* 100 (1972), 156–61; H. Szelest, 'Ovid und Martial', in W. Schubert (ed.), *Ovid: Werk und Wirkung* (1999), 861–4; R. A. Pitcher, 'Martial's debt to Ovid', in F. Grewing (ed.), *Toto Notus in Orbe: Perspektiven der Martial-Interpretation* (1998), 59–76. Cf. J. P. Sullivan, *Martial: The Unexpected Classic* (1991), 105–7; G. B. A. Fletcher, 'On Martial', *Latomus* 42 (1983), 404–11, at 404–6. I list here only general surveys which take their bearings from F. Zingerle, *Martial's Ovid-Studien* (1877); other articles (some of them cited later) treat specific cases.

from the work which inaugurates comparative study of Ovid and Martial in the modern period. Anton Zingerle's *Martial's Ovid-Studien* of 1877 is one of those extended and largely undigested catalogues of parallels whose continuing usefulness is tempered by a vague sense of disquiet that such a work should seem to wear so much better than other past discussions with higher pretensions to sophistication. Although I hope to do more critical work here than Zingerle, I retain the approach through high-density passage-comparison.

The recent publication of a Cambridge 'green and yellow' Martial by Lindsay and Patricia Watson provides an occasion to reflect upon the fact that in epigram, more than in any other genre, anthologization itself constitutes the defining act of interpretation³ — a point by no means lost on Martial himself, who more than once affects to turn over to his individual readers the job of editing his books down to an appropriate size.⁴ Although my own anthology trespasses upon readerly patience with its inordinate length, the individual discussions will eschew expansiveness and aim for a brevity of compass appropriate to the epigrammatic *oeuvre* under study. Short cuts, then, not a grand narrative.

What follows is divided into three parts: 'Martial's *Ars Amatoria*', 'Martial's *Tristia*', and 'Martial's *Metamorphoses*'; the third part, for reasons to emerge later, will be further subdivided.

I MARTIAL'S *ARS AMATORIA*: STRIPPING DOWN ELEGY

As his non-euphemistic directness might lead one to expect, Martial's avowed model in the handling of matters sexual is Catullus, not Ovid. Catullus' is the first and most prestigious name offered when Martial presents a list of epigrammatic predecessors, generically defined by their verbal frankness, back in the preface to his first numbered book (I *praef.*):⁵

lascivam verborum veritatem, id est epigrammaton linguam, excusarem, si meum esset exemplum: sic scribit Catullus, sic Marsus, sic Pedo, sic Gaetulicus, sic quicumque perlegitur.

As for the playful frankness of my vocabulary, the language of epigram that is to say, I should make apology if the example were of my setting. But that is how Catullus writes, and Marsus, and Pedo, and Gaetulicus, and whoever else is read all through.

Catullus, on Martial's tendentious emphasis, is a poet who knows how to call a spade a spade. He is also, though Martial does not say so here, a poet no less capable of inclining towards euphemism and coy innuendo — of engaging (as it were) in sparrow-talk. There are times, then, when Catullus needs an intervention from Martial to keep him faithful to his own, Catullan programme of epigrammatic *lascivia*: so, for instance, II.6.14–16, addressed to the *puer* who mixes Martial's wine:

da nunc basia, sed Catulliana:
quae si tot fuerint quot ille dixit,
donabo tibi Passerem Catulli.

Give me kisses, Catullan kisses. If they shall be as many as he said, I will give you Catullus' Sparrow.

³ L. Watson and P. Watson (eds), *Martial: Select Epigrams* (2003) made its welcome appearance while the present project was in mid-course. My emphasis upon anthology takes a further cue from a 2003 (Seattle) paper by William Fitzgerald titled 'What is a book of epigrams (Martial 1)?', prolegomenal to his forthcoming book *Martial: The World of the Epigram*.

⁴ Martial 10.1; cf. 4.82.

⁵ Martial's Latin is quoted from D. R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), *Martial: Epigrams*, Loeb Classical Library (1993), except where specified otherwise; translations of Martial and others are in the main taken or lightly adapted from the Loeb Classical Library.

The terms on which Martial here proposes to raise the stakes on a few thousand Catullan kisses (with 'combinatorial' allusion to Cat. 2–3 and 5–7) are fairly unmistakable;⁶ and, as far as Martial is concerned, those terms are Catullan. In other words, whatever Catullus himself thought he meant by a *passer*, Martial's Catullus knows that a *passer* is never just a *passer*.⁷ (This distinction will be worth bearing in mind in what follows.) Nor is 11.6 the only epigram in which Martial nudges Lesbia's ambiguously chaste pet towards obscenity. A facetiously tasteless piece back in Book 7 drives the point home, and abandons any decorum of innuendo altogether, with almost eighteen inches of explicit (and hyperbolic) sparrow-substitution (7.14; emphases mine):⁸

accidit infandum nostrae scelus, Aule, puellae;
 amisit lusus deliciasque suas:
 non quales teneri ploravit amica Catulli,
 Lesbia, nequitiis passeris orba sui,
 vel Stellae cantata meo quas flevit Ianthis,
 cuius in Elysio nigra columba volat:
 lux mea non capitur nugis nec amoribus istis,
 nec dominae pectus talia damna movent:
 bis senos puerum numerantem perdidit annos,
 mentula cui nondum sesquipedalis erat.

An unspeakable villainy has afflicted my girl, Aulus: she has lost her plaything and pet — not such as tender Catullus' mistress wept for, Lesbia, bereaved of her sparrow's naughty tricks, or such as Ianthis, sung by my Stella, bewailed, whose black dove flies in Elysium. My beloved is not won by trifles or by such loves as those, nor do such losses move my lady's heart. She has lost a boy numbering twice six years, whose cock was not yet eighteen inches long.

Where, then, does an erotically suggestive but non-obscene Augustan elegist like Ovid enter the discussion? Traditionally, as a model for Martial's verse-style rather than for his subject-matter. Martial is the poet not just of hendecasyllabics but also of elegiacs — which makes him not only doubly post-Catullan, but also at once post-Catullan and post-Ovidian. In other words, Martial is the metrical successor of both the Latin poets who make a point of counting their metres in elevens (10.9.1, 3–4):⁹

undenis pedibusque syllabisque . . .
 notus gentibus ille Martialis
 et notus populis . . .

I, Martial, known to the nations, known to the peoples for my verses of eleven feet and eleven syllables . . .

Martial's post-Ovidian stylistic virtuosity has always been recognized; the technical command of the elegiac couplet in his work is at least equal to the master's.¹⁰ To take just one example, note (after Wills) the later poet's resumption, at poem-beginnings, of that

⁶ 'Combinatorial' allusion: P. Hardie, 'Flavian epicists on Virgil's epic technique', *Ramus* 18 (1989), 3–20, at 3–4.

⁷ 'Clearly with an obscene double sense here, but that is M.'s contribution. Catullus meant no such thing, nor is M. likely to have thought he did': so Shackleton Bailey, op. cit. (n. 5) ad loc. on the 'sparrow'; cf. the fuller discussion of N. M. Kay, *Martial Book XI* (1985) ad loc. Martial would doubtless have enjoyed the attempt at damage control.

⁸ Even before the model is named in 7.14.3–4, the opening couplet already speaks the language of Catull. 2.1–2: 'passer, deliciae meae puellae, / quicum ludere . . .'

⁹ Catull. 42.1: 'adeste, hendecasyllabi . . .' ('come, eleven-syllable lines . . .'); cf. Catull. 12.10. For the (distinctively Ovidian) reckoning of an elegiac couplet by elevens, Ov., *Am.* 1.1.30: 'Musa per undenos emodulanda pedes' ('O Muse to be set to rhythm through eleven feet'); cf. *Fast.* 2.567–8.

¹⁰ See, e.g., E. J. Kenney in Boyd, op. cit. (n. 1), 38.

favourite Ovidian trick which recycles the first hemistich of a hexameter at the end of the pentameter (Ov., *Am.* 1.9.1–2; Mart. 8.21.1–2, 12.88):¹¹

militat omnis amans, et habet sua castra Cupido:
Attice, crede mihi, *militat omnis amans.*

Phosphore, redde diem: quid gaudia nostra moraris?
Caesare venturo, *Phosphore, redde diem.*

Tongilianus habet nasum: scio, non nego. sed iam
nil praeter nasum *Tongilianus habet.*

In contrast, Martial's post-Ovidian thematic virtuosity is only just beginning to attract notice. Not that style is in the end separable from theme: as we shall see, matter and manner come together in Martial's tendency to 'cap' the thought in Ovid's elegiac verses as one epigrammatist 'capping' another. In form and in content alike, Martial recognizes — and makes us recognize — Ovid himself as an epigrammatist thinly disguised as a writer of longer poems.

Martial's key intertextual dialogues with the erotic Catullus often feature overt citation of Catullus by name. Not so his dialogues with the erotic Ovid — except in one case (2.41.1–2):

'ride, si sapis, o puella, ride'
Paelignus, puto, dixerat poeta.

'Laugh, if you have any sense, girl, laugh': it was the Paelignian poet, I think, who said this.

No discussion of Martial's use of Ovid can avoid this poem-beginning,¹² recognizable, I think (cf. *puto*, a quintessentially Ovidian parenthesis), as Martial's one overtly advertised verbatim quotation from the *Ars Amatoria*. If Ovid's erotodidactic output had been lost to posterity, we would be indebted to this passage for the knowledge that the *Ars* was written in hendecasyllables. Well, of course it was not; and only a literal-minded reading of Martial would attempt to retrieve the situation by taking 2.41.1 as good evidence for some other, lost Ovidian poem in the required metre.¹³ Rather (with that arch *puto* as a nudge) Martial quotes a line of Ovid as it emerges, imperfectly, from the hendecasyllabic memory of a hendecasyllabic poet. Behind the metrical misprision lies a point, however, in that there *are* epigrams by Martial (elegiac ones, naturally) which begin with verbatim and metrically congruent 'mottoes' from Ovid: in fact, 'Paelignus, puto, dixerat poeta' could be read as a kind of perversely delayed gloss on no fewer than three elegiac epigrams earlier in this second book (2.8, 12, 22) which each begin with a verbatim, but un glossed, Ovidian hemiepes.¹⁴

The hendecasyllabic 2.41 offers no metrical engagement with Ovid; what it offers is substantive thematic engagement. Martial's advice to his female addressee (2.41.1–8)

¹¹ J. Wills, *Repetition in Latin Poetry* (1996), 432–4, citing several more Ovidian and Martialian *incipits* of this kind. In Mart. 12.88 (a single-couplet epigram), the framing pattern is extended by the doubled *nasum*: Wills, in a delicious parenthesis, sniffs out a hint of metacommentary: 'The chiasmic repetition of *nasum* (cf. *Nasonem?*) ...'.

¹² Unavoidability of 2.41: cf. now M. Janka, 'Paelignus, puto, dixerat poeta (Mart. 2.41.2): Martial's intertextual dialogue with Ovid's erotodidactic poems', in R. K. Gibson, S. J. Green, and A. R. Sharrock (eds), *The Art of Love: Bimillennial Essays on Ovid's Ars Amatoria and Remedia Amoris* (2006), 279–97; and C. Williams, 'Identified quotations and literary models: the example of Martial 2.41', in R. R. Nauta, H.-J. van Dam and J. J. L. Smolenaars (eds), *Flavian Poetry*, Mnemosyne Suppl. 207 (2006), 329–48. Ovid is cited by name as an erotic poet also at Martial 5.10.10 and 12.44.6, more fleetingly but still pointedly.

¹³ The phantom fragment enjoyed untroubled citation in successive editions of the Teubner *Fragmenta poetarum Latinorum*, until the intervention of L. Cristante, 'Un verso fantasma di Ovidio (Inc. 6, p. 143 Morel; 145 Buechner)', *Prometheus* 16 (1990), 181–6.

¹⁴ On 2.12 and 22 see below; on 2.8 see Section 11.

'ride, si sapis, o puella, ride'
 Paelignus, puto, dixerat poeta.
 sed non dixerat omnibus puellis.
 verum ut dixerit omnibus puellis,
 non dixit tibi: tu puella non es,
 et tres sunt tibi, Maximina, dentes,
 sed plane piceique buxeique.
 quare si speculo mihique credis ...

'Laugh, if you have any sense, girl, laugh': it was the Paelignian poet, I think, who said this. But he did not say it to all girls. However, supposing he did say it to all girls, he didn't say it to you. You are no girl, and you have but three teeth, Maximina, and they quite the colour of pitch or boxwood. So, if you trust your mirror and me ...

lives up to its second-line billing as a slice of *Ars Amatoria*; specifically (given the gender of the addressee) as a slice of the third book of the *Ars* (3.279–82; cf. 513):

si niger aut ingens aut non erit ordine natus
 dens tibi, ridendo maxima damna feres.
 quis credat? discunt etiam ridere puellae,
 quaeritur aequae illis hac quoque parte decor.

If you have a tooth that is black or too large or growing out of place, laughing will cost you dear. Who would believe it? Women learn even to laugh; here too seemliness is required of them.

Cf. ...

spectantem specta, ridenti mollia ride

Look at one who is looking at you, smile back at a tender smile

No need to linger long on the point, since 2.41 has received more recent attention than any other epigram treated in this article. My emphases above simply highlight the main verbal correspondences as this twenty-three-line piece gets under way; the only detail not remarked by others is Martial's remix of the Ovidian *maxima damna* (AA 3.280) into a name for the orthodontically-challenged girl, *Maximina* (2.41.6). So too the closing reversal in Martial's poem (2.41.22–3)

at tu iudicium secuta nostrum
 plora, si sapis, o puella, plora

No, take my advice and weep, if you have any sense, girl, weep

has already been seen to epigrammatize the juxtaposition, in the *Ars* passage's more extended catalogue of feminine comportment, of advice for laughing and (ten lines later) advice for weeping (AA 3.291–2):

quo non ars penetrat? discunt lacrimare decenter
 quoque volunt plorant tempore quoque modo.

How far does art not go? They learn to wail becomingly, and can weep when and how they choose.

What does merit a moment's emphasis, however, is the larger framing of the Ovidian advice, which may have something to tell us about Martial's priorities as a reader of the *Ars Amatoria*. The Augustan poet's pointers on female laughter are part of a section on making the best of bodily flaws and defects (AA 3.251–8):

non mihi venistis, Semele Ledeve, docendae,
 perque fretum falso, Sidoni, vecta bove
 aut Helene, quam non stulte, Menelae, reposcis,
 tu quoque non stulte, Troice raptor, habes.

*turba docenda venit pulchrae turpesque puellae,
pluraque sunt semper deteriora bonis.
formosae non artis opem praeceptaque quaerunt;
est illis sua dos, forma sine arte potens.*

You have not come to learn from me, Semele and Leda, or you, Sidonian maid, borne on the false bull over the sea; or Helen, whom with good reason, Menelaus, you seek back, and whom with good reason, Trojan abductor, you keep. It is the crowd that come to learn, women both fair and ill-favoured; and ever are the ill-favoured more numerous than the fair. The beautiful care not for precepts and the help of art; their dowry have they, beauty that is powerful without art.

Why has Martial chosen to write an epigram about *this* section of *Ars* 3 in particular? Perhaps because the Ovidian target-passage sounds so like Martial himself in its framing. Ovid introduces this section with a programmatic passage which identifies everyday or even ugly women as his main didactic audience, rather than beauties or mythic heroines. In terms of the conventions of Augustan elegy, this Ovidian delimitation constitutes something of a debasement of the elegiac woman — who should have no physical flaw other than her charmingly asymmetrical feet (cf. *Am.* 3.1.8–10); but it is exactly what one would expect *Martial* to do with the body of the elegiac woman, debasing her for the lower genre of epigram, and programmatically disavowing both beauty and mythic preciousness in favour of the robust imperfections of real life.

Back in 1998, a vignette in my *Allusion and Intertext* treated a later engagement with the *Ars* in which an analogous kind of allusive positioning is discernible, albeit in a more hair-raising context. Here the female recipient of the erotic advice, and the target (this time) of some notable mythological exemplification, is Martial's own (purported) wife (11.104.11–16):

*nec motu dignaris opus nec voce iuvare
nec digitis, tamquam tura merumque pares:
masturbabantur Phrygii post ostia servi,
Hectoreo quotiens sederat uxor equo,
et quamvis Ithaco stertente pudica solebat
illic Penelope semper habere manum.*

You don't deign to help the business along by movement or voice or fingers, as though you were preparing incense and wine. The Phrygian slaves used to masturbate behind the door as often as Hector's wife sat astride her 'horse', and even while Ulysses was snoring, modest Penelope always used to have her hand right there.

The reference to Andromache is unmistakably Ovidian (*AA* 3.777–8):

*parva vehatur equo: quod erat longissima, numquam
Thebais Hectoreo nupta resedit equo.*

A small woman should ride astride: because she was very tall, Hector's bride Andromache never sat astride her 'horse'.

Once we wrest our attention away from the italicized hexameter in Martial's epigram (13), what stands out in the associated pentameter (14) is its arch appropriation of a vignette which belongs right at the limits of Augustan elegy's well-known norms of erotic euphemism.¹⁵ The Ovidian target-passage occurs late in its book of the *Ars*, at the self-problematized point where the instructions to the poem's addressee enter the bedroom on

¹⁵ On Ovid and elegiac euphemism, cf. J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (1982), 224: 'Ovid's *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* are more explicit than other elegy, but both works are lexically inoffensive.' On erotic elegiac decorum in general, see J. Connolly, 'Asymptotes of pleasure: thoughts on the nature of Roman erotic elegy', *Arethusa* 33 (2000), 71–97.

their final approach to the sexual and erotodidactic *telos*. One of my suggestions in 1998 was that Martial's allusive gravitation towards this sexually frank 'end-zone' of the otherwise euphemistic *Ars Amatoria* is deliberate and strategic: the epigrammatist is thus enabled to construct (and to play with) a 'proto-Martialian' Ovid who strays from elegiac (and mythic) coyness and comes close to anticipating Martial's own down-market obscenity.¹⁶

While still keeping the terms of this case-study in mind, let me shift the main focus of the present discussion to intertexts in which the Ovidian target-passages show a more normative elegiac decorum in matters erotic. In what follows, the Martialian allusions to Ovid will register less as moments of collusion than as moments of generic confrontation: the epigrammatist's characteristic move will be to 'stain' the Augustan love-elegiac text (in the term made current for Latin poetry by Amy Richlin)¹⁷ — sometimes through the literal introduction of a phallus where none was apparent before.

A word here about allusive interpretability. An overtly flagged allusion to Ovid in 2.41 is one thing; but the very generosity, even promiscuity, of the lists of *loci similes* collected by Zingerle in the nineteenth century and Siedschlag and others in the twentieth offers a more pervasive challenge, or tease, to the assiduous commentator. When Martial's elegiac couplets speak in the cadences of Ovidian elegy, when or how far are the echoes to be read as thematically grounded, when or how far as utterly indifferent to content or context? And can we always tell? Take two of the verbatim Ovidian *incipit*-tags early in *Epigrams* 2, mentioned above, each further distinguished by having served as an *incipit* for Ovid too (2.12.1 ~ *Am.* 1.2.1; 2.22.1 ~ *Trist.* 2.1) — complete epigrams quoted:

*esse quid hoc dicam, quod olent tua basia murram
quodque tibi est numquam non alienus odor?
hoc mihi suspectum est, quod oles bene, Postume, semper:
Postume, non bene olet qui bene semper olet.
quid mihi vobiscum est, o Phoebe novemque sorores?
ecce nocet vati Musa iocosa suo.
dimidio nobis dare Postumus ante solebat
basia, nunc labro coepit utroque dare.*

What am I to make of it that your kisses smell of myrrh and that you always have an odour from outside yourself? I find it suspicious that you smell good all the time, Postumus. Postumus, a man does not smell good who smells good all the time.

What do I want with you, o Phoebus and Sisters Nine? See, the playful Muse harms her poet. Postumus used to kiss me with half his lips, now he's started doing it with both.

Flagged and 'twinned' by their poem-beginning hemistichs from key early and late Ovidian poems, these two not-widely separated epigrams *could* be read as debasing the entire story of Ovid's erotic elegiac career, from *Amores* to exile, into the mini-narrative of a Martialian encounter with an *os impurum*; or, then again, for a less (or differently) engaged reader, the Ovidianism of these ordinary-looking phrases may come across as fleeting, non-systematic, and (at least in the case of 2.12.1) merely prosodic.¹⁸

¹⁶ Construction of 'proto-Martialian' Ovid: cf. Hinds, op. cit. (n. 1), 129–35. The present brief recapitulation cuts to the chase; my earlier treatment registered the arch element of *oppositio in imitando* in the Martialian move from *numquam* to *quotiens*, and discussed allusive complications in the larger framing of the passages.

¹⁷ A. Richlin, *The Gardens of Priapus* (rev. edn, 1992), 26–30.

¹⁸ *Am.* 1.2.1–2, 5: '*esse quid hoc dicam, quod tam mihi dura videntur / strata, neque in lecto pallia nostra sedent ... / nam, puto, sentirem, si quo temptarer amore*'; *Trist.* 2.1.1–3 (sharing not just the opening hemistich with Mart. 2.22 but also the harmful Muses): '*quid mihi vobiscum est, infelix cura, libelli, / ingenio perii qui miser ipse meo? / cur modo damnatas repeto, mea crimina, Musas?*' For a thematic interpretation of the Ovidian echo in 2.22, cf. N. Holzberg, *Martial und das antike Epigramm* (2002), 98–9. An Ovidian approach might also note that the 'Postumus Cycle' (2.10, 2.12, 2.21–3) ends with a refusal by Martial to reveal the true identity of his 'Postumus' (2.23.1–2: 'non dicam, licet usque me rogetis, / qui sit Postumus in meo libello') — perhaps an echo of Ovid's pose of reticence concerning the identity of his 'Corinna' (AA 3.538: 'et multi, quae sit nostra Corinna, rogant?')

More forcefully grounded in thematic dialogue with Ovid is the italicized hemistich below, which sets up a punchline in the closing line of *Epigram* 11.29:

languida cum vetula tractare virilia dextra
 coepisti, iugulor pollice, Phylli, tuo.
 iam cum me murem, cum me tua lumina dicis,
 horis me refici vix puto posse decem.
 blanditias nescis: 'dabo' dic 'tibi milia centum
 et dabo Setini iugera certa soli;
 accipe vina, domum, pueros, chrysendeta, mensas.'
nil opus est digitis: sic mihi, Phylli, frica.

When you start stroking my slack parts with your ancient hand, I am slaughtered by your thumb, Phyllis; and when you go on to call me 'mouse' or 'light of my eyes', I hardly think I can recover in ten hours. You don't know how to coax. Say 'I'll give you a hundred thousand and I'll give you some reliable acres of Setine soil; take wine, a house, boys, gold-inlaid dishes, tables'. No need is there of fingers: rub me up *this* way, Phyllis.

Once again Martial is giving unsolicited erotic advice to a female addressee. Right from the outset, this epigram is already engaged with the *Ars Amatoria*, and in terms not dissimilar to those proposed just above (later in the same book of epigrams) for 11.104. To read the pillow-talk of Martial's third and fifth lines in conjunction with a couplet near the climax of *Ars* 3 (795-6),¹⁹

nec blandae voces iucundaque murmura cessent
 nec taceant mediis improba verba iocis

Nor let coaxing sounds and pleasant murmurs be idle, nor in the midst of play let naughty words be hushed

and to adduce a related passage near the climax of *Ars* 2 whose busy male left hand parallels (and outperforms) the aged female right hand in the first line of the Martial poem (705-7),

sponte sua sine te celeberrima verba loquentur,
 nec manus in lecto laeva iacebit iners;
 invenient digiti quod agant in partibus illis

Of their own accord, without your aid, they will utter eloquent speech, nor will the left hand lie idle on the bed. Their fingers will find what to do in those parts . . .

is to recognize the unfortunate Phyllis as an unsuccessful student of the sexually frank (i.e. proto-Martialian) 'end-zones' of Ovid's *Ars*, failing alike in the fields of verbal and of digital stimulation. However, the epigram's closest approach to Ovidian amatory language, in its final line, changes the allusive dynamic. Here (again) is Martial (11.29.8):

nil opus est digitis: sic mihi, Phylli, frica.

And here (in two versions) is the Ovidian elegiac template (*AA* 1.137-8, *Am.* 1.11.23):

*nil opus est digitis per quos arcana loquaris,
 nec tibi per nutus accipienda nota est.*

quid digitos opus est graphio lassare tenendo?

No need is there of fingers for secret speech, nor must you receive a signal by means of nods.

What need is there to tire her fingers by holding of the pen?

¹⁹ 11.29.5 *blanditias* ~ *blandae voces*; 11.29.3 *murem* ~ *murmura* (with intertextual paronomasia?).

In the terms sketched above, we move here from generic collusion to generic confrontation. To read literary history from *these* hemistichs is to force even the decorous mainstream of Ovidian courtship into the sexually explicit territory of Martialian erotics: the fingers which *Ovid's* lovers were accustomed to use (or not use) for hand-signals and for handwriting are now to be used (or not used) for ... a hand-job.²⁰

Another snapshot (still from *Epigrams* 11), another moment of scoptic obscenity. The following piece treats the avoidance of sex by a man called Lattara (11.47):

omnia femineis quare dilecta catervis
 balnea devitat Lattara? ne futuat.
 cur nec Pompeia lentus spatiatur in umbra
 nec petit Inachidos limina? ne futuat.
 cur Lacedaemonio luteum ceromate corpus
 perfundit gelida Virgine? ne futuat.
 cum sic feminei generis contagia vitet,
 cur lingit cunnum Lattara? ne futuat.

Why does Lattara avoid all baths patronized by the female cohorts? He doesn't want to fuck. Why doesn't he take a leisurely stroll in Pompey's shade or repair to the threshold of Inachus' daughter? Doesn't want to fuck. Why does he sluice his body, all plastered with Lacedaemonian mud, with cold water from the Virgo? Doesn't want to fuck. Since he is at such pains to avoid the contagion of womankind, why does Lattara lick a cunt? Doesn't want to fuck.

In line 3 Martial is allusively reversing a famous line in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* about cruising the Portico of Pompey in search of female companionship (AA 1.67),²¹

tu modo Pompeia lentus spatiare sub umbra

Only take a leisurely stroll beneath Pompey's shade

with added point because Ovid had already himself reversed AA 1.67 in a couplet of his *Remedia Amoris* (627–8, quoted here alongside an earlier set-up couplet, 613–14, for reasons to emerge in a moment):

si quis amas nec vis, facito contagia vites:
 haec etiam pecori saepe nocere solent ...
nec, quae ferre solet spatiantem porticus illam,
te ferat, officium neve colatur idem.

If you love, and do not wish to, see to it that you avoid contagion: even animals are hurt by this ... And do not frequent the portico that she frequents when strolling, nor cultivate the same society.

In other words, Martial's epigram as a whole becomes an allusive recapitulation of an Ovidian movement from *Ars* to *Remedia* — but all debased and reduced to bodily function by a refrain which (even before the surprise appearance of an *os impurum* in the final couplet) strips down the complexities of Ovidian elegiac courtship and erotodidactic cure to the epigrammatic motions of a simple F-word: 'ne futuat'. And what of that final *os impurum*? Let us take a closer look:

cum sic feminei generis contagia vitet,
 cur lingit cunnum Lattara? ne futuat.

²⁰ A brisk antidote, then, to the 'exaggerated sentimentality' of *Am.* 1.11.23 (Ian Du Quesnay, reported by J. C. McKeown, *Ovid: Amores* (1987–), ad loc.). Cf. *Mart.* 1.92.3 (also obscene): 'non opus est digito'; Siedschlag, op. cit. (n. 2), 158.

²¹ Kay, op. cit. (n. 7), ad loc., sketching also the pre-Ovidian associations of the Portico of Pompey in Latin erotic poetry. Martial's associated pentameter (4) extends the allusion with its specification of another of Ovid's places of amatory assignation, the Temple of Isis/Io (*AA* 1.77–8).

The kiss-off couplet turns out to be no less Ovidian than what has preceded it: Martial co-opts the metaphorical (and essentially chaste) image of *contagia* with which the *Remedia* passage had opened (613: 'siquis amas . . . , facito contagia vites', included in the quotation above), and forces it into a context of literal and genital invective.²²

One cannot read far in Martial's erotic epigrams without noticing his general fixation on the phallus, along with his repeated mobilization of the figure of Priapus to preside over a poetic of penile sexuality and aggression. The usual intertextual move here is to entertain possible relationships between Martial and the Latin *Corpus* of *Priapea*;²³ but for the present Ovidian purpose let us turn to one Priapic epigram in Martial which seems to engage with a key moment in the poetics of Augustan elegy (6.16):

tu qui falce viros terres et pene cinaedos,
iugera sepositi pauca tuere soli.
sic tua non intrent vetuli pomaria fures,
sed puer aut longis pulchra puella comis.

You that terrify men with your sickle and queens with your cock, protect these few acres of secluded soil. So may no elderly thieves enter your orchard, but a boy or a lovely long-tressed girl.

The situation is a standard one for a Priapic poem: the ithyphallic divine statue set to guard the estate threatens intruders with punitive penetration ('terres . . . pene'). What makes things interesting, in the pay-off pentameter, is the description of the intruders envisaged by the poet as especially choice victims for the phallic god: 'sed puer aut longis pulchra puella comis'. The line is virtually verbatim from the opening elegy of Ovid's *Amores* (1.1.17–20):

cum bene surrexit versu nova pagina primo,
attenuat nervos proximus ille meos;
nec mihi materia est numeris levioribus apta,
aut puer aut longas compta puella comas.

When my new page arose well with its first verse, that next verse weakened my vigour; nor do I have matter suited to lighter measures — neither a boy nor a stylish long-tressed girl.

It is the programmatic boys and girls of Augustan elegy who are here set up for penile attack; Martial's Priapus, on this scenario, will literally stick it to the more fastidious genre.²⁴

But the intertextual energy can move in the opposite direction too: Martial's Priapic appropriation of *Amores* 1.1 seems to be strategically positioned so as to elicit a lurking penis within *Amores* 1.1 itself. Look again at the Ovidian couplet which *immediately precedes* Martial's allusive target, ostensibly descriptive of the alternate rising and falling of the elegiac couplet (*Am.* 1.1.17–18):

²² Martial's epigram also contains a trace of the earlier Ovidian sequel to *AA* 1.67 (men seeking women) at *AA* 3.387 (women seeking men): 'at licet et prodest Pompeias ire per umbras.' Here the recommendation of the Portico is set up by a contrasting mention of locations, including the bracing Aqua Virgo, unavailable to women (*AA* 3.385: 'nec vos Campus habet, nec vos gelidissima Virgo') — a juxtaposition which evidently informs Lattara's avoidance strategy at *Mart.* 11.47.5–6 ('gelida Virgine' etc.).

²³ A worthwhile move: see E. O'Connor, 'Martial the moral jester: Priapic motifs and the restoration of order in the Epigrams', in Grewing, op. cit. (n. 2), 187–204, especially 189 (with earlier bibliography).

²⁴ cf. Zingerle, op. cit. (n. 2), 19. Behind the thieving *puer* of *Mart.* 6.16.4 perhaps lurks not only the *puer* of *Am.* 1.1.20 but also the *saeve puer* of *Am.* 1.1.3–5, Cupid, himself a thief and (to press things in another way) himself perhaps suggestive of the unrealized pederastic promise of *Amores* 1.1. (It has been well suggested to me that Martial's erotic *oeuvre* can be read as (in post-Ovidian terms) a redressing of the skewed balance of the *Amores* and *AA* to give emphasis to *pueri* as well as *puellae* as objects of male pursuit.)

cum bene surrexit versu nova pagina primo,
attenuat nervos proximus ille meos.

Against the objections of the ranking modern commentary, many recent readers of Ovid's *Amores* sense a sexual reference in these ostensibly chaste lines: the metaphoric rise and fall are readily mapped on to a different kind of erectile function and dysfunction, programmatically suggestive of the 'soft' masculinity of the elegiac poet-lover.²⁵ 'Such an undertone does not seem appropriate here', says McKeown ad loc., perhaps replicating Augustan elegy's own unease with the language of sexual frankness. But in a sense this is the *point* of Martial's allusion. The epigrammatist's reworking of *Amores* 1.1.19–20 both elicits and stiffens the implied penis in the previous Ovidian couplet: on this appropriative reading, Ovid's uneasy elegiac lover is already an intermittent proto-Priapus, in need only of some stylistic Viagra to enter Martial's own robust *Priapea*.²⁶

Martial complicates his own approach to non-euphemistic sexuality at various points in his *oeuvre*. At the beginnings of his fifth and eighth volumes, he marks book dedications to Domitian by advertising the *suspension* of his usual sexual explicitness;²⁷ and early in Book 11, he celebrates the elevation of a less repressive figure to the principate by advertising an *intensification* of his usual sexual explicitness (11.15.3–10):

hic totus volo rideat libellus,
et sit nequior omnibus libellis,
qui vino madeat nec erubescat
pingui sordidus esse Cosmiano,
ludat cum pueris, amet puellas,
nec per circuitus loquatur illam,
ex qua nascimur, omnium parentem,
quam sanctus Numa *mentulam* vocabat.

I want this entire little book to laugh and be naughtier than all little books. Let it be soaked in wine and not be ashamed to be greasy with rich Cosmian unguent, let it play with the boys, love the girls, and name outright that from which we are born, the universal parent, which holy Numa used to call 'cock'.

Indeed, the eleventh volume's opportunistic linkage of new-found *libertas* and sexual licence (11.2.5–6),

clamant ecce mei 'Io Saturnalia' versus:
et licet et sub te praeside, Nerva, libet

Look, my verses shout 'Hurrah for the Saturnalia!' Under your rule, Nerva, it's allowed, and it's a pleasure

while clearly Saturnalian (cf. 11.6, 11.15.12), may also make it cumulatively tempting to read into the book's dedicatory poetics an implicit etymology of 'Nerva' himself as the Emperor who gives free rein to *nervi*, i.e. to *mentulae* — though of course such an idea never breaks surface.²⁸ Be that as it may, it is hardly by happenstance that *Epigrams* 11 furnishes so many case-studies for this section of my paper.

²⁵ So D. F. Kennedy, *The Arts of Love: Five Studies in the Discourse of Roman Love Elegy* (1993), 59; contrast McKeown, op. cit. (n. 20), ad loc., who finds insufficient contextual motivation for the innuendo.

²⁶ For its general suggestiveness here, cf. Alison Sharrock's essay on the problematic play between weakness and strength in the make-up of the elegiac poet-lover: 'The drooping rose: elegiac failure in *Amores* 3.7', *Ramus* 24 (1995), 152–80.

²⁷ Mart. 5.2; Mart. 8 *praef.* and 1.

²⁸ OLD s.v. *nervus* 1b; Adams, op. cit. (n. 15), 38; Ov., *Am.* 1.1.17–18, quoted above. Suggestive remarks on the theme of the *princeps obscenus* in Book 11: S. Lorenz, *Erotik und Panegyrik: Martials epigrammatische Kaiser* (2002), 219.

More than once Martial lends an intertextual resonance to such hedgings of moral-sexual stance by allusive evocation of Catullus 16 — the *locus classicus* for such hedging even were he a less post-Catullan poet than he is²⁹ — as in the last line of one of the epigrams excerpted above (11.15.13):

mores non habet hic meos libellus

This little book does not have my morals.

However, one key programmatic renegotiation of obscenity invites attention in the context of a specifically Ovidian disclaimer. Two-thirds of the way through his third book, the epigrammatist issues a warning to a generalized Roman matron to stop reading his *libellus*: his Muse, suitable thus far for her attention,³⁰ is about to throw *pudor* aside (3.68.1–6),

huc est usque tibi scriptus, matrona, libellus.
 cui sint scripta rogas interiora? mihi.
 gymnasium, thermae, stadium est hac parte: *recede.*
 exuimur: nudos parce videre viros.
 hinc iam *deposito* post vina rosasque *pudore,*
 quid dicat nescit saucia Terpsichore

Thus far, matron, my little book has been written for you. For whom are the latter parts written, you ask? For me. The gymnasium, the warm baths, the running track are in this portion: retire. We are undressing: forbear to look upon naked males. Henceforth tipsy Terpsichore, laying modesty aside after the wine and roses, knows not what she is saying . . .

and (specifically) is about to name that Thing which no well brought-up woman should be in the business of naming (7–10):³¹

schemate nec dubio, sed aperte nominat illam
 quam recipit sexto mense superba Venus,
 custodem medio statuit quam vilicus horto,
 opposita spectat quam proba virgo manu.

. . . naming openly and with no ambiguous turn of phrase that object which Venus proudly welcomes in the sixth month, which the bailiff sets for guard in the middle of the garden, which a good girl eyes behind her hand.

Martial is thinking, of course, of Latin poetry's most famous advisory note to matrons, at the start of the *Ars Amatoria* (AA 1.31–4):

este procul, vittae tenues, insigne pudoris,
 quaeque tegis medios instita longa pedes:
 nos Venerem tutam concessaque furta canemus
inque meo nullum carmine crimen erit.

Keep far away, you slender hair-bands, emblems of modesty, and the long skirt that hides the feet in its folds. I will sing of safe Venus and permitted stealth, and in my verse there shall be no crime.

²⁹ But it has been rightly noted that such disclaimers by Martial also evoke Ovidian (exile-period) disclaimers modelled on Catullus 16 (*Trist.* 1.9.59–60, 2.353–4 etc.): see Kay, op. cit. (n. 7) on 11.15.13, and M. Citroni, *M. Valerii Martialis Epigrammaton Liber I* (1975) on 1.4.8.

³⁰ A somewhat disingenuous claim; archly so at 3.32 (quoted later, in Section IIIa), an epigram specifically subversive of *matronae* . . . and addressed to a *Matrimia*.

³¹ For the Priapic dimension here, see O'Connor, op. cit. (n. 23), 191–2.

Unlike Ovid, he immediately admits (in the epigram's punchline) that his warning to the modest matron is likely to be directly counterproductive (3.68.11–12):³²

si bene te novi, longum iam lassa libellum
ponebas, totum nunc studiosa leges.

If I know you well, you were already weary of the lengthy volume and putting it aside; but now you will read with interest to the end.

At the start of the following epigram, indeed, so far from repeating Ovid's assurance that there will be 'no *crimen* in my *carmen*' (AA 1.34), Martial substitutes a *mentula* — 'no penis in my poems' — and disavows the slogan by transferring it to a puritanical rival (3.69.1–4):

omnia quod scribis castis epigrammata verbis
inque tuis nulla est mentula carminibus,
admiror, laudo; nihil est te sanctius uno:
at mea luxuria pagina nulla vacat.

You write all your epigrams in chaste language, and in your verses there is no cock. I admire, I commend; you are the purest of the pure. Whereas no page of mine lacks lubricity.

Martial's pattern of allusion in 3.68 and 69 might be taken to imply that Ovid's own claim to warn off *matronae* in the *Ars* was disingenuous; and that impression is strengthened when, after some twenty epigrams of inventive and near-unbroken obscenity, bracketed at both ends by anatomically busy meditations on adultery, he again breaks off to address the respectable female reader (3.86), asking why (despite his warning) she is still reading, and allowing that at this point she might as well continue. 'Can Ovid himself have expected any other outcome for *his* warning?', Martial seems to ask. (Nor is this the only occasion on which the later erotic poet seems to second-guess the judgement shown by his ill-fated predecessor; a little more on this in Section II.)

To draw out the thematic continuity between 3.68–9 and the previously discussed 6.16, it is in both cases an interpolated *mentula* which serves to disrupt the decorum of a key erotic-elegiac source-text; and in both cases (3.68.9–10 here) that *mentula* imports specifically Priapic associations. Both instances involve programmatically marked model-passages: but one need only cite Duncan Kennedy's suggestive essay on 'love's figures and tropes'³³ to understand how a powerful reading like Martial's, fixated on the stiff Priapic member, can expose the coy language of erotic elegy to sexualization at any and every turn.

Martial is no more shy about the female than about the male *pudenda*; and here too, in literary historical terms, an intensification of graphic detail can be read as a 'staining' of elegiac sensibility. Take the coincidence of verbal and metrical phrasing which enables an unexpected comparison between (yet) another epigram in Martial's eleventh book (11.81)

cum sene communem vexat spado Dindymus Aeglen
et iacet in medio sicca puella toro.
viribus hic, operi non est hic utilis annis:
ergo sine effectu prurit utrique labor.
supplex illa rogat pro se miserisque duobus,
hunc iuvenem facias, hunc, Cytherea, virum

³² My early reader Sergio Casali (see acknowledgements) sharpens the intertextual irony here by pointing out that *si bene te novi* is itself a distinctively Ovidian tag (cf. esp. AA 3.51): see now his article 'Il popolo dotto, il popolo corrotto: ricezioni dell' *Ars Amatoria* (Marziale, Giovenale, la seconda Sulpicia)', in L. Landolfi and P. Monella (eds), *Arte perennat amor. Riflessioni sull' intertestualità ovidiana (L' Ars Amatoria)* (2005), 13–55, cited again in Section II.

³³ Kennedy, op. cit. (n. 25), 46–63.

Eunuch Dindymus and an old man harass Aegle in common, and the girl lies dry in the middle of the bed. Lack of strength makes the one, length of years the other useless for the job; so each labours in fruitless desire. She begs in supplication for herself and the two unfortunates, Cytherea, that you make one of them young and the other a man

and the start of an elegy in the third book of Ovid's *Amores* (3.10.1–2):

annua venerunt Cerealis tempora sacri:
secubat in vacuo sola puella toro.

The time for Ceres' annual festival is come: in seclusion the girl lies, alone in the empty bed.

Two vignettes of a girl lying in the middle of a bed, and in the middle of a pentameter (see emphases above): but how do we get from the *sola puella* in the *Amores* to a *sicca puella* in Martial? The *topos* of lying in the middle of the bed is in Ovidian elegy a matter of the *absence* of the lover from the beloved, or vice versa: cf. *Her.* 19.157–8 (Hero to Leander):³⁴

in tua castra redi, socii desertor amoris:
ponuntur medio cur mea membra toro?

Come back to your camp, deserter of love's alliance: why must I lay my limbs in the middle of the bed?

The twist in Martial's epigram is that elegiac absence is restaged as an 'absent presence' of two grotesquely ineffectual lovers, an old man and a eunuch, flanking the girl in mid-bed and poking at her so ineffectually that she might as well be on her own. The change in adjective from *sola* to *sicca* reinforces the contrast by shifting Ovidian euphemism towards Martialian explicitness; as Lucretius (another demystifier of the lover's discourse) would put it, the vocabulary of *amor* is reduced to the vocabulary of *umor*.³⁵

As in *Am.* 1.1.17–20, discussed earlier, the interpretive trajectory here is perhaps reversible: the Martialian provocation may release Augustan elegy's own hidden potential for hard-core sexuality. Consider another occurrence of the 'middle of the bed' *topos* in the *Amores*, in the mid-Book 2 elegy in which Ovid handles the stresses of being in love with a pair of girls at the same time (*Am.* 2.10.15–18):

sed tamen hoc melius, quam si sine amore iacerem:
hostibus eveniat vita severa meis;
hostibus eveniat viduo dormire cubili,
et medio laxè ponere membra toro!

And yet it is better thus than if I were lying loveless: to my enemies fall the austere life! To my enemies fall the lot of sleep with no one alongside, and members set down slackly in the middle of the bed!

Here the *topos* involves someone else (the poet's enemy) lying alone in a bed; and this time there is an accompanying implication (only barely within the bounds of elegiac

³⁴ cf. also *Am.* 1.5.2 'adposui medio membra levanda toro' (poet in mid-bed, *awaiting* girl).

³⁵ To anticipate the move towards argumentative reversal in the next paragraph, the change from the Ovidian *sola* (*Am.* 3.10.2) to the Martialian *sicca* (11.81.2) is also, on closer inspection, another case in which Martial discovers a Martialian norm of sexual frankness lurking in Ovidian elegy itself. The fact is that Ovid actually uses *sicca* in the sexual sense at *AA* 2.686, in one of those self-consciously problematic 'end-zone' passages (targeted by Martial in 11.29 and 104, and also, as we shall see, in 9.67) in which the *Ars Amatoria* approaches sexual climax and (hence) the limits of elegiac decorum. The other precedent cited by commentators for Martial's use of *sicca* is no less interesting: in *Heroides* 15, 'Sappho' (intuitively Ovidian, as ever) at once uses the word and apologizes for its frankness in terms drawn straight from the apology for frankness which heralds the sexual climax of *Ars* 3 (the women's book): *Her.* 15.133–4: 'ulteriora pudet narrare, sed omnia fiunt: / et iuvat et siccae non licet esse mihi'; cf. *AA* 3.769: 'ulteriora pudet docuisse, sed . . .'. My thanks to Alison Sharrock for prompting this second look at *sicca*, in discussion at the Manchester colloquium.

euphemism) that the elegiac lover himself is in a position to welcome not just one partner into his bed but two (*Am.* 2.10.19–24):

at mihi saevus Amor somnos abrumpat inertes
simque mei lecti non ego solus onus;
 me mea disperdat nullo prohibente puella,
 si satis una potest, si minus una, duae.
 sufficiam: graciles, non sunt sine viribus artus;
 pondere, non nervis corpora nostra carent.

But for me — let fierce Love break off my lazy slumbers, and may I not be the only burden of my bed! Let no one stop my girl from working me to ruin — one, if she can do it; if not one, then two. I shall be up to it: my limbs are slender, but not without strength; my body lacks weight, not vigour.

In other words, Ovid's own notable flirtation in *Amores* 2.10 with two-on-one action brings Ovidian elegy a little closer to our sexual freak show in Martial 11.81. And once that association is made, a pervasively Martialian reading of the Ovidian passage becomes almost irresistible — aided and abetted this time by McKeown on 'laxe ponere membra' in line 18 ('a sexual *double entendre* . . . may be strongly suspected'). Here as elsewhere, it really does not take much to nudge the language of erotic elegiac innuendo (cf. also line 24: 'non nervis corpora nostra carent') towards the briskly penile vocabulary of Priapus — or towards the less brisk vocabulary of Priapic failure.

To introduce one last excerpt from 'Martial's *Ars Amatoria*', let us return to the sexually frank 'end-zones' of Ovid's erotodidactic opus, adduced earlier in connection with *Epigrams* 11.29 and 104.³⁶ Counting by thousands is a familiar activity in the language of love poetry; think of all those kisses in Catullus 5. More specifically, the *topos* of the *mille modi* is a favourite of Ovid's: in the context of courtship, as in *AA* 1.755–6 (one thousand ways to win one thousand women's hearts),³⁷

finiturus eram, sed sunt diversa puellis
 pectora; *mille animos excipe mille modis*

I was about to end, but various are the hearts of women; use a thousand means to waylay a thousand hearts

but more especially in the Augustan poet's closest flirtations with sexual explicitness, as his erotic elegiac books approach resolution. So it is at *AA* 3.769–88,

ulteriora pudet docuisse, sed alma Dione
 'praecipue nostrum est, quod pudet,' inquit 'opus.'
 nota sibi sit quaeque; *modos a corpore certos*
sumite: non omnes una figura decet.
 quae facie praesignis erit, resupina iaceto
 [six further *modi* in 774–86 . . .]

mille ioci Veneris; simplex minimique laboris,
 cum iacet in dextrum semisupina latus

What remains I am embarrassed to teach; but kindly Dione says, 'What brings embarrassment is before all else my business.' Let each woman know herself; from your own bodies fix your methods; one fashion does not suit all alike. Let her who is fair of face recline upon her back . . .

Venus has a thousand plays; a simple one, involving no hard work, is when the woman lies upon her right side, half-reclined

³⁶ . . . and more recently (n. 35 above) in connection with 11.81.

³⁷ cf. *Am.* 2.8.1 (*mille modi* of hair-stylings by Cypassis, in a context of flirtatious praise).

at AA 2.679–80 (of older and more experienced women),

utque velis, *Venerem iungunt per mille figuras:*
invenit plures nulla tabella modos

According to your taste, they will join love's embrace in a thousand ways: no picture could devise more modes than they

and also, as it happens, at a correspondingly late juncture in the *Amores* (*Am.* 3.14.17–24):

est qui nequitiam locus exigat: omnibus illum
 deliciis imple, stet procul inde pudor.
 hinc simul exieris, lascivia protinus omnis
 absit, et in lecto crimina pone tuo.
 illic nec tunicam tibi sit posuisse pudori
 nec femori impositum sustinuisse femur;
 illic purpureis condatur lingua labellis,
inque modos Venerem mille figuret amor.

There is a place that calls for naughtiness: fill that with all delights, and let embarrassment be far away. Once you have departed from here, straightaway set all wantonness aside, and leave your misdeeds in the bed. But there be not shy of shedding your clothes and allowing thigh to be pressed to thigh; there let tongue be buried in rosy lips and let love shape itself in a thousand ways.

All three of these passages give a decidedly sexual turn ('one thousand positions') to the *topos* of the *mille modi*. However, even in its most unclothed moments, Augustan elegy has a decorum, and, even here, the restrained physicality of Ovid's *mille modi* stays euphemistically away from (in pornographer's parlance) *all anal and oral action*. And, interestingly, it is precisely thus that Martial seems to editorialize on his predecessor's erotic number-crunching. The following epigram has not (so far as I know) been pressed before as a response to the Ovidian version of *nequitia*,³⁸ but it should be (9.67):

lascivam tota possedi nocte puellam,
 cuius nequitas vincere nemo potest.
fessus mille modis illud puerile poposci:
 ante preces totum primaque verba dedit.
improbius quiddam ridensque rubensque rogavi:
 pollicita est nulla luxuriosa mora.
 sed mihi pura fuit; tibi non erit, Aeschyle, si vis
 accipere hoc munus condicione mala.

All night long I enjoyed a wanton girl, whose naughtinesses no man can exhaust. Wearied of the thousand positions, I asked for the boy routine; before I begged or started to beg, she gave it in full. Laughing and blushing, I asked for something more indecent; the licentious girl promised without hesitation. But so far as I am concerned, she was unsullied; she won't be so far as you are concerned, Aeschylus, if you choose to accept this present on bad terms.

'How do I love thee? Let me count the ways ...' *Do* elegy's *mille modi* offer a strong enough menu for the carnal appetites of the lower-genre epigrammatist? That is how Martial interrogates the *topos* as his poem opens. And his answer? An emphatic and epigrammatically pungent 'No!'. '*fessus mille modis illud puerile poposci*' (9.67.3):³⁹ the request is for position #1001; and it is followed at once by a further request, in the

³⁸ For *nequitia* (cf. Mart. 9.67.2) as a buzz-word of (especially Ovidian) amatory elegiac lifestyle, cf. McKeown, op. cit. (n. 20), on *Am.* 2.1.1–2; also *Am.* 3.14.17, quoted above.

³⁹ i.e. not just 'tired by a thousand positions' (*OLD fessus* 1) but 'tired of the "thousand positions"' (*OLD fessus* 5b).

following couplet, for position #1002. Except that Martial has imparted a nicely paradoxical twist to his debasement of the *topos*, and of the more elevated genre. Both the *culus* and the *os impurum* are now in play: but, unlike elsewhere in Martial, the epigrammatist has described them in a language of euphemism and periphrasis worthy of Augustan elegy itself; he even permits himself a blush (9.67.5).⁴⁰

In the case-studies above, Martial has repeatedly been seen editorializing on the euphemistic language of elegy by 'staining' it, in more and less complicated ways; it can be argued that the intertext between Ovidian and Martialian erotics, as well as differentiating them, tends to give the reader both a more Ovidian Martial and a more Martialian Ovid than before. But in the final analysis, it seems to be the epigrammatist who sets the terms of the conversation. As more obviously in terms of verbal and metrical point, so too in terms of *topos*, theme, and literary self-definition, what dominates throughout is a specifically epigrammatic rhetoric of 'capping' and one-upmanship; even as the conversation reveals its further layers, the well-timed punch-line remains the principal end in view.

II MARTIAL'S *TRISTIA*: REDIRECTING THE BOOK OF EXILE

In medieval and Renaissance Europe, when interest in Ovid's poetry was intimately bound up with interest in Ovid's *vita*, the reception of the *Ars Amatoria*, and more generally of Ovidian amatory elegy, tended to be informed by a strong sense of the poet's exile as the sequel and outcome of his erotic career.⁴¹ Such linkage is already observable here and there in Martial, though not explicitly: in 3.68 and 69, discussed above, we have seen a variation by the epigrammatist upon Ovid's famous *Ars* disclaimer (*AA* 1.31-4) whose concentration upon the controllability of readerly outcomes betrays an evident fixation on the fate of the *Ars* itself.

In general, Ovid's poetry of exile attracts more attention in current work on Martial than does anything from the pre-exile *oeuvre*. That is not in itself surprising: it has long been traditional for any discussion of Ovid in relation to 'Silver-Age' successors to treat as implicitly formative for imperial Roman poetics the rhetorical and panegyric strategies adopted by the disgraced Augustan poet in the chilly climate of the years following 8 C.E. Recent treatments find a Martial interested in Ovid's ways of addressing Augustus and the imperial house, and (more tendentially) a Martial concerned to use the author of the ill-judged *Ars Amatoria* as a foil for his own greater success in writing verse acceptable to the emperor(s) under whom he writes.⁴² For instance, *Tristia* 1.1 emerges as the implicit point of contrast in *Epigram* 5.6 when one of Martial's books, dressed for success in cedar-oil and purple (*vs. Trist.* 1.1.5-10), is entrusted to Domitian's chamberlain Parthenius, a well-connected go-between (*vs. Trist.* 1.1.87-90) who will know the right moment to bring it into the palace and to the emperor's attention (*vs. Trist.* 1.1.93-8); Ovid's unwelcome *Tristia* book, bearing the stigma inherited from its ill-fated erotic predecessors, is still the foil when Martial's epigram ends with a confident prediction that his *libellus* will be exactly what the emperor wants.⁴³

A 2005 paper by Sergio Casali⁴⁴ brings new impetus to the discussion of Martial's exile-haunted receptions of the *Ars Amatoria*. Casali puts into play a post-Ovidian reading of

⁴⁰ For other interpretative issues in this epigram (especially in the final couplet) see Watson and Watson, *op. cit.* (n. 3), *ad loc.* (= *Epigram* 46 in their anthology).

⁴¹ See e.g. R. Lyne, 'Love and exile after Ovid', in Hardie, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 288-300, especially 289; R. Hexter, 'Ovid in the Middle Ages', in Boyd, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 413-42, especially 433.

⁴² See Pitcher, *op. cit.* (n. 2), especially 65-72; and an excellent discussion in Lorenz, *op. cit.* (n. 28), 18-19 with 112-17, pursuing the long-recognized Ovidian resonances of *Mart.* 1.1-3 into 1.4-5.

⁴³ The *Tristia* connection seems not in fact to be picked up in standard treatments of 5.6, a reminder of how Ovid can be overlooked as a thematic model by readers of Martial.

⁴⁴ Casali, *op. cit.* (n. 32).

one particular epigram in Book 11 whose intervention in the questions of poet-emperor relations and of sexual outspokenness is startlingly unique (11.20):

*Caesaris Augusti lascivos, livide, versus
sex lege, qui tristis verba Latina legis:
'Quod futuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi poenam
Fulvia constituit, se quoque uti futuam.
Fulviam ego ut futuam? quid si me Manius oret
pedicem? faciam? non puto, si sapiam.
"aut futue, aut pugnemus" ait. quid, quod mihi vita
carior est ipsa mentula? signa canant!
absolvit lepidos nimirum, Auguste, libellos,
qui scis Romana simplicitate loqui.*

Malignant one, you who read Latin words with a grim face, read six wanton verses of Caesar Augustus:

'Because Antony fucks Glaphyra, Fulvia determined to punish *me* by making me fuck her in turn. I fuck Fulvia? What if Manius begged me to bugger him? Would I do it? I think not, if I were in my right mind. "Either fuck me or let us fight", says she. Ah, but my cock is dearer to me than life itself. Let the trumpets sound!'

Augustus, you surely are the one to find risqué little books blameless, you who know how to speak with Roman straightforwardness.

In a book which (as already seen) celebrates the accession of a more benign emperor (Nerva) by opportunistically linking new-found *libertas* and sexual licence, Martial enrolls Rome's very first emperor, Augustus Caesar, as the prototype imperial reader of 'lascivos ... versus', indeed as the prototype *writer* of such epigrams: a proto-Martial on the Palatine. It is the final couplet (right after the Octavianic epigram-within-the-epigram⁴⁵) which deserves a closer look in the present context. What more forgiving reader of 'lepidos ... libellos' could there be than the imperial author of the six verses just quoted? Indeed; and yet ... The word *nimirum* can be felt to function (like an Ovidian *scilicet*⁴⁶) to open up the assertion in *absolvit* (9) to a double-take; and indeed the hint may already have been dropped in 'qui tristis ... legis' (2): this same Augustus, ostensibly the antidote to grim-faced *tristitia* in the reading of *verba Latina*,⁴⁷ is in fact directly responsible, through his own reading, for turning that earlier age's leading composer of *lascivi versus* — see e.g. AA 2.497 'lascivi ... praeceptor Amoris' — into a poet of (precisely) *Tristia*. The allusive implication reverberates. Martial's literary historical coup in aligning his own wanton verses with a tendentious 'found version' of Augustan classicism is one of the most brilliantly self-confident moments in his *oeuvre*; but the post-Ovidian note, if heard, reminds us that the poet who stakes his career on assumptions about imperial taste is not necessarily on to a sure thing.⁴⁸

To move more fully into the world of 'Martial's *Tristia*', it is symptomatic that both *Epigram* 5.6, cited above, and the Ovidian elegy which underlies it (*Tristia* 1.1) are concerned with the presentation at court of *the book*: it is in their sustained allusion to the circulation of poetry and poetry books, especially as revelatory of anxieties about authorship and status, that the *Tristia* stand among Martial's most significant intertexts. Luke

⁴⁵ On the presumptive context of the epigram by the young Octavian, a piece of civil-war propaganda directed against Antony's wife Fulvia at the time of the siege of Perusia in 41 B.C.E., see Kay, op. cit. (n. 7), ad loc.

⁴⁶ Ovidian *scilicet*: S. Hinds, 'Generalising about Ovid', *Ramus* 16 (1987), 4–31, at 24–6.

⁴⁷ 11.20.2 is in the first instance a resumption of Mart. 1 praef.: 'si quis tamen tam ambitiose tristis est ut apud illum in nulla pagina Latine loqui fas sit ...'.

⁴⁸ I borrow freely at each end of this paragraph from Casali, op. cit. (n. 32), 33–4. Casali adds the provocative suggestion that the 'grim-faced reader' of line 2 may be the mature Augustus himself, forced by Martial's tendentious advocacy of Ovid's *libelli* to confront the discrepancy between his past and present attitude to poetic *lascivia*.

Roman, in his landmark article in *JRS* for 2001, puts it like this:⁴⁹ 'In general, Martial adapts motifs formed in the context of "poetry in exile", and rewrites them in terms of "poetry as usual".' Martial's books are programmatically obsessed, especially in their openings and closings, with the book-poetics of Ovid's exile, and especially with the personifications of the book in the balancing preface-poems of *Tristia* 1 and 3; the fundamentals were long ago established by Mario Citroni.⁵⁰ The conversation here involves sociological as well as poetological self-placement. Martial's allusions to the *Tristia* seem to suggest that the abjection of the exiled poet and the debasement of his art offer an apt model for the abject clientship and determinedly non-sublime art of the epigrammatist — who encounters *his* professed disadvantages without even leaving Rome.

An epigram early in the second book recycles the exiled Ovid's apology (in the *persona* of his book) for garbled Latinity (*Trist.* 3.1.17–18)

siqua videbuntur casu non dicta Latine,
in qua scribebat, barbara terra fuit

If some expressions perchance shall seem not Latin, the land in which he wrote was a barbarian one

— blamed in this new case not on a barbaric environment but on an incompetent copyist (2.8.1–4):⁵¹

siqua videbuntur chartis tibi, lector, in istis
sive obscura nimis *sive Latina parum,*
non meus est error: nocuit librarius illis
dum properat versus annumerare tibi.

If some things in these pages, reader, strike you as too obscure or as doubtful Latin, the error is not mine: the copyist did the damage in his hurry to tell out the number of verses for you.

Martial's phrase 'non meus est error' may even encode a 'footnote' to the *Tristia* allusion: the bad Latin is not the result of any *error* of *mine* . . . in contrast with Ovid's bad Latin, ultimately attributable to that famous (*carmen et*) *error* of his.⁵²

Back in the first book, in an instance of quasi-formular adaptation noted by Citroni,⁵³ the motto *vade salutatum* translates a moment of Ovidian epistolarity — in effect, *Naso Perillae salutem dicit* — (*Trist.* 3.7.1–2)

vade salutatum, subito perarata, Perillam,
littera, sermonis fida ministra mei

Go and present my greetings to Perilla, quickly written letter, and be the trusty servant of my speech

into a moment of typical-looking Martialian clientship (1.70.1–2):

vade salutatum pro me, liber: ire iuberis
ad Proculi nitidos, officiose, lares.

⁴⁹ L. Roman, 'The representation of literary materiality in Martial's *Epigrams*', *JRS* 91 (2001), 113–45, at 124.

⁵⁰ Citroni, *op. cit.* (n. 29) on Mart. 1.3; *idem*, 'Le raccomandazioni del poeta: apostrofe al libro e contatto col destinatario', *Maia* 38 (1986), 111–46, at 136–40. The latter discussion emphasizes how the book-personifications of the *Tristia* work alongside Horace, *Epistles* 1.20 (to which they themselves are of course indebted) as models for Martial's addresses to his book; a useful check-list of recurrent expressions is offered at 138 n. 45.

⁵¹ *cf.* Roman, *op. cit.* (n. 49), 124.

⁵² For Ovid's (obsessively invoked but never specified) *error* see *Trist.* 2.207–8; *cf.* e.g. *Trist.* 1.2.99–100, 4.10.89–90. The 'footnote' would show Martial (characteristically) alert to the potential in Ovid's own poetics for imaginative slippage between the canonical *error* and other kinds of failure (including artistic failure) associated with life in exile.

⁵³ Citroni, *op. cit.* (n. 50), 138 n. 45.

Go and present my greetings, book, in my place: you are bidden to proceed, dutiful creature, to Proculus' handsome house.

Here Martial is alluding, as it happens, to one of Ovid's *least* abject exile poems, an almost upbeat missive to his step-daughter; but the larger revisionary pay-off is that, when one rereads the exile poetry (and especially the *Epistulae ex Ponto*) with a Martialian sensibility, one can find the move to associate the epistle's trademark *salutem* with the client's morning *salutatio* already clearly in place *within* a number of Ovid's own poems.⁵⁴ It should be remarked, by the way, that Martial's allusion to clientship in 1.70 is in fact far from formulaic: the epigram ends by resisting its own discourse of self-abasement, with the point made to the patron that this *liber's* greeting, whatever its merits, at least demands recognition as something of a higher order than a common *salutatio* (1.70.16–18):

si dicet 'Quare non tamen ipse venit?',
sic licet excuset 'Quia qualiacumque leguntur
ista, salutator scribere non potuit.'

If he shall say, 'Why does he not come himself?' you may make this excuse: 'Because, whatever these poems are worth to the reader, a morning caller could not have written them.'

At its close here, the epigram is sounding another post-Ovidian note:⁵⁵ behind 'qualiacumque leguntur / ista' lies not just the famous *qualecumque* of Catullus 1.8–9 (as usually noted) but, more immediately, the post-Catullan apologetics of the first *Tristia*-elegy (1.1.45–6):

haec quoque quod facio, iudex mirabitur aequus,
scriptaque cum venia qualiacumque leget.

Even the making of such verse as this will impress a fair-minded critic, and he will read these writings, whatever they are worth, with indulgence.

If 'Martial's *Tristia*' are concerned to apply the motifs of poetic exile to poetic life at home, the Ovidian intertext should register in another way if Martial ever himself leaves the city of Rome. And just such a departure occurs late in the epigrammatist's career, with its consequences setting the agenda for the preface to Book 12;⁵⁶ modern speculation about Martial's underlying motivations provides one kind of context in which to think about a fresh accession here of allusion to the *Tristia*.⁵⁷ An interesting complication of the post-Ovidian dynamic is that the remote provincial locale to which the poet withdraws in or soon after 98 C.E. (with concomitant fears about the impairment of his poetry's

⁵⁴ See especially *Pont.* 1.7.1–2 and 15–16 (with J. F. Gaertner (ed.), *Ovid, Epistulae ex Ponto, Book 1* (2005), on 1–2) and *Pont.* 2.2.3–4 (with M. Helzle, *Ovids Epistulae ex Ponto Buch I–II* (2003), ad loc.), both addressed to the influential Messalinus (cos. 3 B.C.E.).

⁵⁵ My brief account has left unmentioned another episode of *Tristia*-allusion in the middle of 1.70. The instructions given to the book for making its way across Rome show clear debts to *Tristia* 3.1: Citroni, op. cit. (n. 29), especially on 1.70.3 and 5; P. Howell, *A Commentary on Book One of the Epigrams of Martial* (1980), intro. n. (adducing also *Pont.* 4.5).

⁵⁶ The departure is foreshadowed in the final epigram of Book 10 (104), with marked engagement of *Tristia* 1: cf. H. Fearnley, 'Reading the imperial revolution: Martial, *Epigrams* 10', in A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik (eds), *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text* (2003), 613–35, at 633–4. An earlier, temporary withdrawal from Rome advertised in the opening epigrams of Book 3 generates its own marked intensification of *Tristia* imagery: cf. Citroni, op. cit. (n. 50), 137; Pitcher, op. cit. (n. 2), 59–60.

⁵⁷ P. Howell, 'Martial's return to Spain', in Grewing, op. cit. (n. 2), 173–86, especially 184–5, argues for a politically innocent decision to retire; others (e.g. Shackleton Bailey, op. cit. (n. 5), Vol. I, 4) assume difficulties for Martial, as in some sense a Domitianic 'insider', in the shifting alignments of the imperial court after the assassination of Domitian in 96 C.E. and then the death of Nerva in 98 C.E.; cf. K. M. Coleman, 'Martial Book 8 and the politics of AD 93', *PLLS* 10 (1998), 337–57, at 355.

metropolitan touch) is his own small-town Spanish birthplace — a combination, then, of exile and reverse-emigration.⁵⁸

The major constellation of *Tristia* motifs in Book 12 is in the second epigram, addressed by the poet to the book, which starts and finishes thus (12.2.1–2, 15–18):

ad populos mitti qui nuper *ab Urbe* solebas,
ibis io Romam, nunc peregrine liber,
 ...
 ille dabit populo patribusque equitique legendum,
nec nimium siccis perleget ipse genis.
quid titulum poscis? versus duo tresve legantur,
 clamabunt omnes *te, liber, esse meum.*

Book that used to be sent from the City to the peoples of the world, ho! to Rome you will go, a foreigner now ...

He [i.e. Stella] will give you to the people and Fathers and knights to read, and will peruse you himself with cheeks not altogether dry. Why do you ask for a title? Let two verses or three be read, and all men, book, will exclaim that you are mine.

Compare Ovid's inaugural poem from exile, also addressed to the book, both in its *incipit* and later (*Trist.* 1.1.1–2, 27–8, 61–2):

parve – nec invideo – sine me, *liber, ibis in Urbem*,
ei mihi, quo domino non licet ire tuo!
 ...
 inuenies aliquem, qui me suspiret ademptum,
carmina nec siccis perlegat ista genis,
 ...
ut titulo careas, ipso noscere colore;
 dissimulare velis, *te liquet esse meum.*

Little book, you will go without me to the City (and I grudge it not), whither, alas, your master is not allowed to go! ...

You are to find someone who will sigh over my exile, and will peruse your verses with cheeks that are not dry ...

Though you should lack a title, your very style will bring recognition; though you should wish to hide the fact, it is clear that you are mine.

This engagement with Ovid's exile poetics is sustained in the intervening verses of Martial's epigram too, which project a tour of the *Urbs* for the personified *libellus* on the model of *Tristia* 3.1, but with a markedly more favourable reception anticipated — rather as in *Epigram* 5.6, discussed earlier. R. A. Pitcher details the points of contact.⁵⁹ What merits new emphasis here is the final intertextual punchline, picked out above in my underlined italics. The epigram ends with the assertion that, *even without a title*, any two or three verses of this *liber* will proclaim themselves to be *by Martial* ... except that the words in which the poet makes this assertion turn out to be from two or three verses *by*

⁵⁸ In Book 12, absence from Rome can be presented either as a Juvenalian wish-fulfilment of escape from the madness of the City (cf. 12.18, addressed to Juvenal himself) or as an implicitly Ovidian nightmare of banishment to the back of beyond (cf. 12 *praef. passim*). Martial's professed concerns about impairment of his book's metropolitan touch are linguistic and, as such, clearly post-Ovidian: 12 *praef.*: 'ne Romam ... non Hispaniensem librum mittamus, sed Hispanum' ('... not only from Spain but actually Spanish'); cf. *Trist.* 3.1.17–18, quoted earlier; also *Trist.* 3.14.49–50: 'timeo ne Sintia mixta Latinis / inque meis scriptis Pontica verba legas'.

⁵⁹ Pitcher, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 62–4. Most significantly, Martial's book can expect to be reunited with its 'brother-books' (12.2.5–6) in an imperial temple library (7–8); contrast *Trist.* 3.1.59–74.

Ovid! An act of self-identification masks an act of plagiarism . . . which is really an act of homage to a book with its own distinctive discourse of self-identification.

Martial has long enjoyed a cameo role in histories of the book and of book production.⁶⁰ His epigrams talk about dedication of books, circulation of books, and the trade in books in a more matter-of-fact-seeming way than does most Roman poetry; they contain some of the earliest references anywhere to the codex (notably 1.2.3, quoted below); and Martial is the first Latin poet to make habitual internal reference to his books by book-number. Analysis of this material, especially by Peter White and Ruurd Nauta, has added much to our sense of the day-to-day circumstances in which Martial wrote.⁶¹ But also, as already glimpsed, Martial is a proto-Nabokovian pioneer in *playing with ideas about books and book production* — a matter on which the late Don Fowler published the seminal paper in 1995 — and in this the epigrammatist takes his cues above all from the exile poetics of Ovid.⁶²

So let me end my brief tour of ‘Martial’s *Tristia*’ (and revisit an early Ovidian paper of my own) by looking at Martial’s resumption of one of the inaugural features of Ovidian book-play in exile: puns on the word *liber*:

parve — nec invideo — sine me, *liber*, ibis in Urbem,
ei mihi, quo domino *non licet* ire tuo.

Here in the opening couplet of the *Tristia* (1.1.1–2), the book-slave is free where his master is constrained: the *liber* is the one who is truly *liber*. In the sequel-poem, *Tristia* 3.1, the pun itself finds a sequel (3.1.71–4):

nec me, quae doctis patuerunt prima *libellis*,
atria *Libertas* tangere passa sua est.
in genus auctoris miseri fortuna redundat,
et patimur nati, quam tulit ipse, fugam.

Nor did Liberty allow me to touch her halls, the first that were opened to learned books. The fate of our unfortunate author overflows upon his offspring, and we children suffer the exile which he has borne.

No room for this *liber* in the *atria Libertatis*; no *libertas* for any of Ovid’s *libri*, children (i.e. *liberi*) of a disgraced poetic sire.⁶³

Recent readers have discerned an echo of this pattern of word-play in the second epigram of Martial’s first book, in which the *liber* is tracked through the streets of Rome to the establishment of a book-selling *libertus* named Secundus (1.2):

qui tecum cupis esse meos ubicumque *libellos*
et comites longae quaeris habere viae,
hos eme, quos artat brevibus membrana tabellis:
scrinia da magnis, me manus una capit.
ne tamen ignores ubi sim venalis et erres
urbe vagus tota, me duce certus eris:
libertum docti Lucensis *quaere Secundum*
limina post Pacis Palladiumque forum.

⁶⁰ Discussion and references in Citroni, op. cit. (n. 29) and Howell, op. cit. (n. 55) on Mart. 1.2.

⁶¹ See P. White, ‘The presentation and dedication of the *Silvae* and the *Epigrams*’, *JRS* 64 (1974), 40–61; important agreements and disagreements in R. R. Nauta, *Poetry for Patrons: Literary Communication in the Age of Domitian* (2002), especially 107–41, 367–74.

⁶² D. P. Fowler, ‘Martial and the book’, *Ramus* 24 (1995), 31–58, in many ways the inaugural work of a ‘new Martial’ movement; cf. Roman, op. cit. (n. 49), 113–14 with 124–5; and see now N. Holzberg, ‘Martial, the book, and Ovid’, *Hermathena* 177 and 178 (2004–5), 209–24, arguing that the example of Ovid can elicit elements of playful design not just within Martial’s books but between them.

⁶³ i.e. (on this reading) the explicit pun in *Trist.* 3.1.71–2 unlocks an implicit follow-up in 3.1.73–4, with *nati* standing in for *liberi*. My discussion resumes S. Hinds, ‘Booking the return trip: Ovid and *Tristia* 1’, *PCPS* 31 (1985), 13–32, at 13–14 with n. 2.

You who want my little books to keep you company wherever you may be and desire their companionship on a long journey, buy these ones, that parchment compresses in small leaves. Provide cylinders for the great; one hand can hold *me*. But in case you don't know where I am on sale and stray wandering all over town, you will be sure of your way under my guidance. Look for Secundus, freedman of lettered Lucensis, behind Peace's entrance and Pallas' Forum.

A *libellus/libertus* play is registered (with varying emphases) by Ahl, Grewing, and Roman;⁶⁴ and *liber/liber* punning is implicitly sustained in the following epigram too, in which, amid clear allusion to Horatian as well as to Ovidian book-personification, the 'parve liber' (1.3.2) becomes a slave released by one master, the author, only to fall into the hands of another, 'dominae . . . Romae' (1.3.3).⁶⁵

For connoisseurs of word-play, a modest haul: in these opening epigrams Martial's *liber*-punning seems unemphatic at best, and merely derivative of Ovid's. However, the picture immediately sharpens if we turn our attention from the start of Book 1 to the end of Book 2. The book's antepenultimate and penultimate poems may be considered together, as elegiac and hendecasyllabic approaches to the same theme (2.91, 92):

rerum certa salus, terrarum gloria, Caesar,
 sospite quo magnos credimus esse deos,
si festinatis totiens tibi lecta libellis
detinuere oculos carmina nostra tuos,
 quod fortuna vetet fieri, *permitte videri,*
natorum genitor credar ut esse trium.
 haec, si displicui, fuerint solacia nobis;
 haec fuerint nobis praemia, si placui.

natorum mihi ius trium roganti
Musarum pretium dedit mearum
 solus qui poterat. valebis, uxor.
 non debet domini perire munus.

Caesar, the world's sure salvation, glory of the earth, whose safety is our assurance that the great gods exist, if my poems, so often read by you⁶⁶ in hasty little volumes, have detained your eyes, permit in semblance what fortune forbids in fact, that I may be credited as the father of three children. If I have displeased, let this be my consolation, this my reward if I have pleased.

The Right of Three Children he gave me at my petition who alone had the power, as a reward for my poetry. Good-bye, wife. Our Lord's gift should not be wasted.

Take a closer look at the reward given to Martial for his poetic productivity. Here at the end of his second book Martial seeks and Domitian grants what the sum of these epigrams surely asks us to unpack, in a new variation of the famous and still-operative dispensation instituted under Augustus,⁶⁷ as the *Ius Trium . . . Lib[er]orum*.⁶⁸ This is a covert piece of

⁶⁴ F. Ahl, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets* (1985), 56–7; F. Grewing, 'Etymologie und etymologische Wortspiele in den Epigrammen Martials', in Grewing, op. cit. (n. 2), 315–56, at 325–6; Roman, op. cit. (n. 49), 126–7 and n. 45. Grewing also notes a more pointed *liber/liber* pun at Mart. 1.101.9–10, as elucidated by Fowler, op. cit. (n. 62), 46.

⁶⁵ On *liber/liber* in Mart. 1.3, cf. A. J. Boyle, 'Martialis redivivus: evaluating the unexpected classic', *Ramus* 24 (1995), 82–101, at 95–6, especially for the usefully open-ended questions into which he unpacks the pun: 'The book is a slave who has now gained freedom. But freedom from what, from whom? . . . [etc.]'.

⁶⁶ Reading *tibi lecta* (MSS and most eds) in 2.91.3, not Shackleton Bailey's *collecta*.

⁶⁷ On the legal terms of the privilege, see (with bibliography) Watson and Watson, op. cit. (n. 3), headnote on 2.91 and 92 (= their 9a and 9b), and C. Williams, *Martial Epigrams Book Two* (2004) on 2.91.6; on the actual circumstances of the award to Martial (cf. also 3.95.5–6), Williams on 2.91.5 and 2.92.3.

⁶⁸ i.e. in the *ius trium* here, *natorum* stands for the official *liberorum*, which unlocks *librorum*; a recombination of elements earlier combined in Ov., *Trist.* 3.1.71–4 (quoted above).

addition (two books become three); and it is followed (and reinforced) by an overt piece of subtraction in the next and final epigram, in which two books become one (2.93):⁶⁹

*'primus ubi est' inquis 'cum sit liber iste secundus?'
quid faciam si plus ille pudoris habet?
tu tamen hunc fieri si mavis, Regule, primum,
unum de titulo tollere iota potes.*

'If this is the second book,' you say, 'where is the first?' How can I help it if the other is more bashful? However, if you prefer that this one become the first, Regulus, you can take one iota from the title.

In this closural conceit about book production, the reader who cannot identify or lay his hands on Martial's first book is invited to convert Book 2 *into* Book 1 by the simple expedient of dropping one digit from the inscribed title.⁷⁰ So to this epigram's opening question, 'Where is Martial's *primus liber* to be found?', one answer is '*apud secundum*'. But there is another answer too, because early in Book 1 itself (1.2.7, quoted a little above) Martial had already told his reader exactly where to go in search of that first book: viz. to the shop of a man named . . . *Secundus*. Once again, then, the *primus liber* is to be found . . . *apud Secundum*; *apud libertum Secundum*, in fact. Game, set and match to Martial, master of the metapoetics of book production. The numerological tease may now be handed back to modern students of the actual and vexed publishing history of the *Epigrams*, to make of it what they will.⁷¹

III MARTIAL'S METAMORPHOSES

Another Martial, another Ovid; or perhaps several more Martials and Ovids, since Sections IIIb and IIIc below will further fragment the object of study, abandoning the canonical group of twelve numbered books in pursuit of Ovidianism in the early sets of specialized epigrams (*Liber Spectaculorum*, *Xenia*, *Apophoreta*) — on which some of the most interesting current work on Martial is being done.

(a) Deflating Epic Myth

At first glance, Martial's epigrams would seem to offer singularly unpromising territory for any real intertextuality with Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Martial, after all, goes to considerable lengths to distance his ostensibly down-to-earth verse from the kind of mythological poetry represented by the *Metamorphoses* — most famously in the following two epigrams, which extol the virtues of epigrammatic brevity over epic and tragic inflation, and of everyday life over baroque mythological invention (4.49 and 10.4, ignoring for now my emphases):

⁶⁹ i.e. the covert play with book numerology in 2.91 and 2.92 is in effect 'glossed' by the explicit (and innovative: Williams, op. cit. (n. 67), ad loc.) crunching of book numbers in 2.93.

⁷⁰ See Williams, op. cit. (n. 67), on 2.93.1 for attempts to reconstruct the set-up of the conceit: most attractive is Citroni, op. cit. (n. 29), xiv–xviii (here in Williams' report): 'The first book was "modest" in that it did not call itself LIBER I — a label which implies that more is to follow — but bore a simpler title, such as M. VALERII MARTIALIS EPIGRAMMATON LIBER.'

⁷¹ Note in particular the apparent contradiction between Martial's pattern of closural allusion to an *oeuvre* of two numbered books and the adjacent 2.91.3: 'festinatis *totiens* tibi lecta libellis / . . . carmina nostra'. The latter is usually understood as a reference to the smaller or *ad hoc* bundles of poems, belonging to an earlier stage of promulgation, envisaged by White, op. cit. (n. 61), especially 46; cf. Williams, op. cit. (n. 67), on 2.91.3 for other explanations. The juxtaposition of incompatible book-counts is perhaps not in any case mere carelessness, but (like the other number-games here) part of Martial's exploration of the paradoxes and possibilities of a newly-invented numerical book-poetics.

nescit, crede mihi, quid sint epigrammata, Flacce,
 qui tantum lusus illa iocosque vocat.
 ille magis ludit qui scribit prandia saevi
 Tereos aut cenam, crude Thyesta, tuam,
aut puero liquidas aptantem Daedalon alas,
pascentem Siculas aut Polyphemon ovis.
 a nostris procul est omnis vesica libellis,
 Musa nec insano syrmate nostra tumet.
 'illa tamen laudant omnes, mirantur, adorant.'
 confiteor: laudant illa, sed ista legunt.

Anybody who calls them mere frivolities and jests, Flaccus, doesn't know what epigrams are, believe me. More frivolous is the poet who writes about the meal of savage Tereus or your dinner, dyspeptic Thyestes, or Daedalus fitting his boy with liquid wings, or Polyphemus feeding Sicilian sheep. My booklets avoid all inflatedness, neither is my Muse puffed up with tragedy's mad robe. 'And yet all the world praises such things, and admires and marvels.' I admit it: that is what they praise, but *this* is what they read.

qui legis Oedipoden caligantemque Thyesten,
 Colchidas et Scyllas, quid nisi monstra legis?
 quid tibi raptus Hylas, quid Parthenopaeus et Attis,
 quid tibi dormitor proderit Endymion,
exutusve puer pinnis labentibus, aut qui
odit amatrices Hermaphroditus aquas?
 quid te vana iuvant miserae ludibria chartae?
hoc lege, quod possit dicere vita 'meum est'.
 non hic Centauros, non Gorgonas Harpyiasque
 invenies: hominem pagina nostra sapit.
 sed non vis, Mamurra, tuos cognoscere mores
nec te scire: legas Aetia Callimachi.

You who read of Oedipus and Thyestes plunged in darkness and Colchian dames and Scyllas, of what do you read but monstrosities? What good will ravished Hylas be to you, or Parthenopaeus and Attis, or Endymion the sleeper, or the boy who was stripped of his drooping wings, or Hermaphroditus, who hates the amorous waters? What pleasure do you find in the empty sham of such a wretched sheet? Read *this*, of which life can say, 'it's mine'. You won't find Centaurs here, or Gorgons or Harpies: my page smacks of human beings. But you don't want to recognize your own behaviour, Mamurra, or to know yourself: all right, read the *Aetia* of Callimachus.

The *Metamorphoses* is not mentioned in either of these polemical epigrams. Callimachus' *Aetia* (an extended elegy) is the poem targeted by name, in the final words of 10.4; earlier in the same epigram, commentators have discerned two of Martial's Flavian epic contemporaries lurking between the lines;⁷² and, in the third verse, the question 'quid tibi raptus Hylas?' vaults over Valerius⁷³ to an earlier generation's synecdoche for jaded mythological poetry, the 'cui non dictus Hylas puer?' of Virgil's *Georgics* 3 proem (3.6; cf. 3.4 'omnia iam vulgata'). Implicitly, however, the *Metamorphoses* can be felt to fall firmly within the category of what is rejected here (see now my italics). Among the mythological topics dismissed as idle fantasies in the middle of 10.4 are the fall of Icarus and the aquatic

⁷² Evocation of Statius (especially in the specification of Parthenopaeus) and probably Valerius: Sullivan, op. cit. (n. 2), 73, with Boyle, op. cit. (n. 65), 86; more in Watson and Watson, op. cit. (n. 3), on 10.4 (= their 7).

⁷³ Not that Valerius' epic is itself insensitive to the issue of Hylas' mythological overexposure (quite the reverse): see M. A. Malamud and D. T. McGuire, 'Valerius' *Argonautica*', in A. J. Boyle (ed.), *Roman Epic* (1993), 192–217, especially 212–15 (including discussion of the archly self-reflexive allusion to Virg., *Ecl.* 6.44–5 at Val. Flacc., *Arg.* 3.596–7).

misadventure of Hermaphroditus, both trademark Ovidian themes;⁷⁴ among the topics dismissed in the middle of 4.49 are (again) Daedalus and Icarus, and Polyphemus as Sicilian *pastor*. To stay with 4.49 for a moment, it is not immediately obvious why either Daedalus or the pastoral Polyphemus belongs alongside the monstrous Tereus and Thyestes in this epigram's disparaging catalogue of mythological inflatedness or bombast (7 *procul omnis vesica*; cf. 8 *tumet*), and perhaps the explanation in each case is Ovidian: the flight of Daedalus and Icarus as the site of extravagant mythological digression in the otherwise practical *Ars Amatoria*, and/or as the problematization in *Ars* versus *Metamorphoses* of elegiac versus epic poetics;⁷⁵ Polyphemus not as in the mild grotesquerie of Theocritean bucolic but as in the amplified Ovidian *hyper-pastoral* of *Metamorphoses* 13 — a boastful shepherd feeding an inflated flock of sheep,⁷⁶ perhaps all afflicted with correspondingly distended *vesicae* ('bladders', in the word's literal sense).⁷⁷

But why, in any case, should we expect the author of either of these two epigrams to be interested in a work like the *Metamorphoses*? I have already adumbrated one answer: in 4.49 and 10.4 myth is rejected not by being ignored but by being programmatically disavowed — by no means the same thing. Also, though the possibility seems only recently to have been considered,⁷⁸ the latter epigram may itself be open to a subtextual reading which undercuts its own anti-mythic poetics. In the second half of 10.4 (see now my underlining) Mamurra's misguided espousal of the poetry of mythological fantasy is contrasted with Martial's own epigrammatic investment in life (8 *vita*), the human condition (10 *hominem*), and self-knowledge (12 *te scire*). Yet at the start of the epigram the first item on Mamurra's mythological reading list is *Oedipus*, who engages in the archetypal quest for *self-knowledge*, and is also famous for decoding the Sphinx's famous riddle about *life*, to which the answer is 'a human being': maybe Mamurra's mythology has something to offer to Martial's epigrammatic project after all.

Another, more literal-minded way of tackling 4.49 and 10.4 is to ask whether mythic themes disavowed there, including Ovidian ones, can in fact be found elsewhere in the corpus of Martial's epigrams. And, of course, they can: Hermaphroditus, for instance, has by the tenth book made two appearances in the numbered books: one implicit, in 4.22, where the language is suffused with elements of Ovid's sensuous description of Hermaphroditus, without the myth itself being cited;⁷⁹ and one explicit, in 6.68, where Hermaphroditus is paired with Hylas in an epigram which at once confirms and belies the anti-mythic poetics of 10.4 ('quid tibi raptus Hylas?'), through a fantasy about a swimming accident at Baiae in which the predatory nymphs of myth reject those submerged ephebes in favour of the actual drowned youth mourned — and of course himself mythologized — in this epigram's own verses. Yet another Hermaphroditus awaits us outside the canonical sequence of Martial's books, in the early *Apophoreta* (14.174): he will be treated below.

What Martial really rejects in 4.49 and 10.4 is not mythological poetry *per se*, but rather a package of pretentious attitudes which are felt to go with mythological poetry. In this

⁷⁴ Icarus and Hermaphroditus complete a sequence of fallen and sexually ambiguous ephebes started by Hylas (3–6): i.e. the mid-section of 10.4 offers effete and effeminate youths as a synecdoche for effete mythological poetry (in contrast, perhaps, to the Priapic robustness of Martialian epigram); cf. Watson and Watson, op. cit. (n. 3), ad loc., headnote, for the Hellenistic dimension to this.

⁷⁵ On these aspects of the Daedalus myth in *AA* and *Met.* see A. Sharrock, *Seduction and Repetition in Ovid's Ars Amatoria Book II* (1994), 87–195.

⁷⁶ While Theocritus' Polyphemus has 1,000 sheep (*Id.* 11.34; cf. *Virg., Ecl.* 2.21), the sheep of Ovid's Polyphemus are *beyond* counting: *Met.* 13.823–4: 'nec, si forte roges, possim tibi dicere quot sint; / pauperis est numerare pecus!'

⁷⁷ OLD s.v. *vesica* 1 (cf. 2a *fin.*). Such an implication would yield an alimentary perversion of the adjacent detail in the *Met.* passage, in which Ovid's Polyphemus had boasted of the distention of his animals' *udders* (not their bladders): *Met.* 13.825–6: 'praesens potes ipsa videre / ut vix circumeant distentum cruribus uber.'

⁷⁸ I had written '... seems *not* to have been considered': but with what follows cf. now B. K. Gold, 'Accipe divitias et vatum maximus esto: money, poetry, mendicancy and patronage in Martial', in Boyle and Dominik, op. cit. (n. 56), 591–612, at 594.

⁷⁹ cf. Zingerle, op. cit. (n. 2), 29.

programmatic moment he belongs to the same world as Persius or Juvenal. *Epigram* 3.32 may serve as one hair-raising example (among many) of Martial's routine debasement of myth in an invective-satiric context:

non possum vetulam. quereris, Matrinia? possum
 et vetulam, sed tu mortua, non vetula es.
*possum Hecubam, possum Niobam, Matrinia, sed si
 nondum erit illa canis, nondum erit illa lapis.*

I can't do an old woman. You complain, Matrinia? Well, I *can*, even an old woman. But you are not old, you're dead. I can do Hecuba, I can do Niobe, Matrinia, but only if the one is not yet a bitch, the other not yet a stone.

In the wake of our reading of 'Martial's *Ars Amatoria*', and in light of the epigram's metamorphic conceit, we might read this as a kind of Priapic assault on a specifically Ovidian version of myth.⁸⁰ What Martial does in a case like this is to cut myth down to size; and that offers a kind of transition to a thoroughly neglected set of Ovidian vignettes in the single-couplet epigrams of Martial's so-called fourteenth book, the *Apophoreta*, actually published early in his career, along with the paired Book 13, before the book which Martial himself was to number as his first. It is in this marginal part of Martial's *oeuvre* that we will find, unexpectedly, something like the core of 'Martial's *Metamorphoses*'.

(b) *Material Miniatures*

The epigrams of the *Apophoreta* represent a collection of versified gift tags, ostensibly written to accompany the presents distributed by lottery at Roman Saturnalian banquets. Before the Ovidian connection is addressed, it may be useful to begin with some general observations about this odd collection, a minor triumph of poetic niche-marketing, which is just beginning to attract sustained critical attention.⁸¹

Nothing could be less inflated in scale than the strictly delimited two-line epigrams of the *Apophoreta*, headed by even briefer *lemmata* or *tituli* (14.2):

quo vis cumque loco potes hunc finire libellum:
 versibus explicitum est omne duobus opus.
 lemmata si quaeris cur sint adscripta, docebo:
 ut, si malueris, lemmata sola legas.

You can finish this book at any place you choose. Every performance is completed in two lines. If you ask why headings are added, I'll tell you: so that, if you prefer, you may read the headings only.

Nothing could be more grounded in everyday life than the book's bare inventory of items presented as 'favours' to dinner-party guests, organized (so Martial tells us in the first of two prefatory poems) into an alternation of rich and of poor men's gifts: 14.1.5 'alternas ... sortes'. The kind of Saturnalian gift-giving described here and in the paired Book 13, the *Xenia*, was a matter of familiar cultural practice at Rome: in Martial's own time

⁸⁰ Transformation of Hecuba at *Met.* 13.567–71; of Niobe at *Met.* 6.303–9. The isocolic pentameter (3.32.4) is itself a kind of marker of engagement with Ovid: Siedschlag, *op. cit.* (n. 2), 161.

⁸¹ See T. J. Leary (ed.), *Martial Book XIV: The Apophoreta* (1996). Current discussion of Book 14 alongside Book 13 takes its bearings from M. Citroni, 'Marziale e la letteratura per i Saturnali (poetica dell'intrattenimento e cronologia della pubblicazione dei libri)', *ICS* 14 (1989), 201–26, at 206–12; cf. more recently Fowler, *op. cit.* (n. 62), 54–6; Roman, *op. cit.* (n. 49), 130–6; S. C. Stroup, 'Invaluable collections: the illusion of poetic presence in Martial's *Xenia* and *Apophoreta*', in Nauta *et al.*, *op. cit.* (n. 12), 299–313; and now A. Barchiesi, 'The search for the perfect book: a PS to the new Posidippus', in K. Gutzwiller (ed.), *The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book* (2005), 320–42, at 324–30.

Statius devotes one of the *Silvae* to it (4.9); and Suetonius preserves the information (*Aug.* 75) that the emperor Augustus had embraced the traditional oscillation between valuable and valueless gifts as an opportunity for playing mind-games with his guests. The list of gifts in Martial's *Apophoreta* includes (*inter alia*) writing-tablets, dice, tooth-picks, combs, knives, lamps, balls, fly-swatters, tables, table-ware, cloaks, cushions, pets, lap-dancers, and (as we shall see) mythological paintings, fine-art figurines, and volumes of literature in various genres in both book-roll and codex formats: the vertiginous variety, along with the often problematic alternation between rich gifts and poor, is a cultural materialist's dream come true.

Everyday life; and yet not quite everyday life. Take a closer look at the book's introductory poem (14.1):

synthesibus dum gaudet eques dominusque senator
 dumque decent nostrum pillea sumpta Iovem;
 nec timet aedilem moto spectare fritillo,
 cum videat gelidos tam prope verna lacus:
 divitis alternas et pauperis accipe sortes:
 praemia convivae det sua quisque suo.
 'sunt apinae tricaeque et si quid vilius istis.'
 quis nescit? vel quis tam manifesta negat?
 sed quid agam potius madidis, Saturne, diebus,
 quos tibi pro caelo filius ipse dedit?
vis scribam Thebas Troiamve malasve Mycenae?
 'lude' inquis 'nucibus': perdere nolo nuces.

While the equestrian and lordly senator rejoice in dinner-suits and the wearing of the cap of liberty befits our Jupiter, while the slave as he shakes the dice-box does not fear to look at the aedile, though he sees the cold pools so close: receive the alternated lots of rich and poor men; let each one give his table companion the appropriate prize. 'They are trifles and rubbish and whatever is meaner than that.' Who does not know this? Or who denies anything so obvious? But what better have I to do in the drunken days, Saturn, which your son himself gave you in return for heaven? Do you want me to write of Thebes or Troy or wicked Mycenae? 'Play with nuts', you say. But I don't want to lose my nuts.

First, this kind of gift-giving is associated with the Saturnalia, when by definition the habits and distinctions of everyday life come under some pressure: as Mario Citroni has shown,⁸² the Saturnalia is always for Martial a programmatically charged setting, not just here in the early gift-epigrams but throughout his *oeuvre*. Second, this programmatic preface to the *Apophoreta* takes care to emphasize the ephemerality of its poetic trifles (especially lines 7–8) by explicitly contrasting them in the final hexameter (line 11, emphasized) with the writing of mythological epic or tragedy — something hardly worth doing in a Roman poetic context if this book did not in fact harbour some literary pretensions of its own. Third, the prefatory poem is self-consciously freighted with programmatic form and content puns — starting with the book's *incipit*-word, *synthesibus*, which translates as 'smart-casual leisure suits', but also, etymologically, as 'juxtapositions' or 'matches' (of rich gift and poor,⁸³ of text and object, of title and epigram, of single-

⁸² Citroni, *op. cit.* (n. 81), especially 212–26.

⁸³ Another lurking pun: the designation of the rich gift / poor gift sequence in 14.1.5 as 'alternas ... sortes' probably owes something to the traditional (and specifically Ovidian) designation of the elegiac couplet itself as a pattern of alternation, *alterno versu* (*Trist.* 3.1.11 etc., with S. Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-conscious Muse* (1987), 120 and n. 9); in each case the alternation is between a major and a minor element.

couplet hexameter and single-couplet pentameter, of *Xenia* and *Apophoreta*⁸⁴). An ostensibly random bundle of occasional verselets, then, synthesized both thematically and otherwise, through the book-maker's editorial art, into a notably unrandom collection. No, what we have here is an under-appreciated masterpiece of catalogue-poetry, a Borgesian *tour de force*; and when the gift-lottery moves late in the book from household items to works of art and literature, we should have our antennae up.

It is at this point that the mythological epics programmatically disavowed in the first prologue-poem (14.1.11) find their way back in — Ovid's included — in an extended sequence of gift-volumes of literature, of varying plausible and implausible dimensions (14.183–96). Homer and Virgil, who head up the list, attract two gift-volumes each (14.183–4 and 185–6), one featuring their canonical works and the other featuring their poetic trifles;⁸⁵ Ovid is represented only by the *Metamorphoses*, which as usual fails in this way to meet the taxonomic norms of epic (14.192).

OVIDI METAMORPHOSIS IN MEMBRANIS

haec tibi multiplici quae structa est massa tabella,
carmina Nasonis quinque decemque gerit.

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES IN PARCHMENT

This mass that has been built up for you with manifold leaves contains the fifteen songs of Naso.

The focus in the above distich on the book's physical make-up as a 'mass' generated through a great deal of 'folding' seems to invite construal as some kind of arch form-and-content allusion — whether to the cosmogonic plot of Ovid's epic, its complex narrative patterning, its metamorphic multiplicity, or some combination of these.⁸⁶

But a sequence of even more interest to the Ovidian reader is the one immediately preceding the volumes of literature, in which an intermittently clear line of allusion to the *Metamorphoses* already informs Martial's quasi-ecphrastic encapsulations of mythological statuettes and paintings (14.170–82). By its nature, this section is a focal point for the book: Saturnalian gift-giving in its originary form was defined precisely by the exchange of figurines (*sigilla* or *sigillaria*), originally of clay but later of more precious materials too, sold in a special annual market known as the *Sigillaria* and associated with the *Saturnalia*.⁸⁷

What engages the attention here (with some reinforcement from that near-adjacent gift-presentation of the epic itself) is a notable pattern of aesthetic negotiation with the *Metamorphoses* as a recurrent literary intertext — and, specifically, a very post-Ovidian interest in the matter of ecphrastic movement between art-object and text. The *objet d'art* sequence includes three readily recognizable distillations of the *Metamorphoses*, beginning with 14.173, 'Hyacinthus in tabula pictus'.⁸⁸ And this modulation of the *Apophoreta* into

⁸⁴ In the apparent *incipit*-phrase of the *Xenia*, 13.1.1 'ne toga ... desit' sounds a sartorial note opposable to the *incipit* of the *Apophoreta*, 14.1.1, where the toga is precisely what is missing (in terms of dress-code, the *synthesis* (OLD s.v. b) is an 'un-toga'). In literal terms the parallel is illusory (the toga at 13.1.1 is a metaphorical description of papyrus used first for writing and then for fish-wrapping), but none the less pointed for that, in terms of intertextual conversation between *incipits*. The case for reading 13.1 as an introductory poem is now further advanced by Barchiesi, *op. cit.* (n. 81), 327–8; the bid to exclude 13.1–2 from the book as inorganic (see T. J. Leary (ed.), *Martial Book XIII: The Xenia* (2001), 37) has lost much of its rationale.

⁸⁵ i.e. *Batrachomyomachia* v *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, *Culex* v 'immensum ... Maronem' (with the implied ascription to Homer and to Virgil of those *opera minora*).

⁸⁶ Form and content conceit in 14.192: for the first suggestion cf. *massa* = *pre-cosmic Chaos* at Ov., *Fast.* 1.108 (*Fast.* 1.103–12 plays self- and cross-referentially between *Fast.* and *Met.* versions of cosmogony); for the second see Roman, *op. cit.* (n. 49), 135; for the third cf. Ovid's own metamorphic form-and-content pun (involving the revolutions of a book-roll, not the turning leaves of a codex) at *Trist.* 1.1.117 'mutatae, ter quinque volumina, formae', with Hinds, *op. cit.* (n. 63), 20.

⁸⁷ Leary, *op. cit.* (n. 81), 5–6; cf. A. S. Hollis (ed.), *Ovid Ars Amatoria Book I* (1977), on AA 1.407–8.

⁸⁸ Also one arguable distillation of *Heroides* 19 and 20 in 14.181 'Leandros marmoreus', interesting in itself: Leary, *op. cit.* (n. 81), ad loc.

the stuff of Ovidian myth is already foreshadowed in the sequence just before the *objet d'art* epigrams, in which a group of gifts of miscellaneous sporting and musical equipment includes (*inter alia*) a discus and two *citharae* (14.164–6). The twice-given ‘cithara’ (in the epigrams so titled) channels its inherent metapoetic potential into mythic invocation of Orpheus, in language shaped by more than one of the canonical Orpheus-moments in Augustan poetry (14.165, 166):⁸⁹

CITHARA

reddidit Eurydicen vati: sed perdidit ipse,
dum sibi non credit nec patienter amat.

IDEM

de Pompeiano saepe est eiecta theatro
quae duxit silvas detinuitque feras.

LYRE

It gave Eurydice back to the bard: but he himself lost her, not trusting himself or loving patiently.

SAME

It has often been thrown out of Pompey’s theatre — the instrument that drew forests and held wild beasts.

The preceding ‘discus’ epigram invokes the myth of Apollo and Hyacinthus, for a poet of Martial’s time unequivocally Ovidian (14.164),

DISCUS

splendida cum volitant Spartani pondera disci,
este procul, pueri: sit semel ille nocens

DISCUS

When the shining weight of the Spartan discus is flying, keep your distance, boys. Let it be guilty only once.

and thus directs the main allusive trajectory of all three epigrams towards the Orphic metanarrative of Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10–11 (Orpheus at 10.1ff. and 11.1ff.; Hyacinthus at 10.162–219).

In context, then, when Hyacinthus reappears in Poem 173 as the title of a painted *tabula*,

HYACINTHUS IN TABULA PICTUS

flectit ab invisio morientia lumina disco
Oebalius, Phoebi *culpa dolorque*, puer

HYACINTHUS PAINTED ON A PANEL

He turns dying eyes from the hateful discus, the Oebalian boy, Phoebus’ fault and sorrow that epigram’s internal dialogue between implied painting and descriptive text is compounded by a dialogue between said painting as *objet d'art* and the discus of 164 as *objet trouvé*, cross-referential alike in their reference to Hyacinthus and in their shared post-Ovidian textualization. (This is, remember, Martial’s book of *syntheses*.)

No less interesting (in terms of post-Ovidian thinking about both texts and objects) is the juxtaposition of Poem 173, the painted panel of Hyacinthus, with Poem 174, a marble sculpture of Hermaphroditus:

HERMAPHRODITUS MARMOREUS

masculus intravit fontis: *emersit utrumque*:
pars est una patris, cetera matris habet.

⁸⁹ Leary, *op. cit.* (n. 81), ad locc. finds parallels of theme and phrasing in Virgil (especially *Geo.* 4.486 with 494–5), in Ovid (*Met.* 10.56–7; perhaps add *Met.* 10.25–6 ‘*posse pati volui . . . / vicit amor*’), and in Propertius 3.2.3–4.

HERMAPHRODITUS IN MARBLE

He entered the fountain a male; he came out both-sexed. One part is his father's; the rest he has of his mother.

First, the matter of epigrammatic distillation. In each case, Martial in effect compresses the narrative climax of an episode in Ovid's epic into two words (see emphases above). In the case of Hyacinthus, 'culpa dolorque' (173.2) offers a two-word précis of a conceit which Ovid had unfolded in a string of aphorisms across several verses of the *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 10.196–201, with emphases):⁹⁰

'laberis, Oealide, prima fraudate iuventa'
Phoebus ait 'videoque tuum, mea crimina, vulnus.
tu dolor es facinusque meum; mea dextera leto
inscribenda tuo est; ego sum tibi funeris auctor.
quae mea culpa tamen, nisi si lusisse vocari
culpa potest, nisi culpa potest et amasse vocari?'

'You are fallen, Oebalides, defrauded of your youth's prime,' says Phoebus, 'and in your wound do I see my guilt; you are my sorrow and misdeed; my hand must be written down as the cause of your destruction; I am the author of your death. And yet, what is my fault, unless my having played with you can be called a fault, unless my having loved you can be called a fault? ...'

In the case of Hermaphroditus Martial's two-word phrase 'emersit utrumque' (174.1) evokes a full two lines of theme and variation in the Ovidian model account (*Met.* 4.377–9, with emphases):

sic, ubi complexu coierunt membra tenaci,
nec duo sunt sed forma duplex, nec femina dici
nec puer ut possit, neutrumque et utrumque videntur.

So, when their limbs came together in the clinging embrace, they were no longer two but had a double form, such as could be said to be neither woman nor boy: they seemed to be neither and both.

The obvious way of reading this is offered by Marion Lausberg, on the Hyacinthus distich, who contrasts the epigrammatic brevity of Martial's treatment with the epic amplitude of Ovid's.⁹¹ My own sense is that we should stand this quite reasonable approach on its head. Neither in 173 nor in 174 does Martial in fact offer anything like the kind of epigrammatic wit and point of which he is elsewhere capable. Rather, he uses his brief and relatively unshowy phrases here as allusive cues to elicit moments of *real* epigrammatic virtuosity . . . in his Ovidian model. The *Metamorphoses* invoked by Martial in the Hyacinthus and Hermaphroditus distichs is the *Metamorphoses of an epigrammatist*, a proto-Martialian epic defined by the quasi-elegiac epigrams into which Ovidian hexameter narrative so characteristically spikes.

Martial's choice of Ovid's Hyacinthus as a model for epigram may be strategic in another way too: see now *Met.* 10.214–16, right after the creation of the new flower from the young man's blood:

non satis hoc Phoebus est (is enim fuit auctor honoris);
ipse suos gemitus foliis inscribit et AI AI
flos habet inscriptum funestaque littera ducta est.

⁹⁰ This allusion seems to be a strong indication that Martial's text of the *Met.* did contain 10.200–1, with its striking three-fold repetition of the word *culpa* (pace R. J. Tarrant, *P. Ovidi Nasonis Metamorphoses*, Oxford Classical Texts (2004), whose edition follows Merkel in excising these lines). Phrasing and patterning of 200–1 as characteristically Ovidian: Wills, op. cit. (n. 11), 421.

⁹¹ M. Lausberg, *Das Einzeldistichon* (1982), 204.

Phoebus was not satisfied with this (for he was the author of the honour); he himself inscribed his groans upon the petals, and the flower bore the inscription, AI AI, drawn in letters of mourning.

Martial's 'culpa dolorque' originates in the lament of an Ovidian Apollo whose dedicatory AI AI constitutes a kind of Ur-text of epigrammatic and epitaphic inscription: note that the verb *inscribere* occurs no fewer than three times in the transformation scene (215 and 216 above, with 198–9 'mea dextera leto / inscribenda tuo est' earlier), underscoring its status as an archetypally epigrammatic event within epic — a moment made for Martial, as it were.⁹² Pressing this idea of generic anticipation still further, one might even go so far as to argue that Ovid's Apollo effects a kind of proto-Martalian 'synthesis' *between* a dedicatory text (AI AI) *and* a dedicated gift-object (the commemorative flower). In other words, the more extreme suggestion here would be that in Hyacinthus Martial has selected an Ovidian myth which can be read as *anticipating the generic set-up* of his own book of epigrammatic gift-objects, the *Apophoreta*.

It may strengthen this last line of interpretation (or then again, it may discredit it entirely) if I argue for something similar going on in the adjacent case of Hermaphroditus. Here again is more Ovidian context (*Met.* 4.352–6):

ille cavis velox applauso corpore palmis
desilit in latices alternaque bracchia ducens
in liquidis translucet aquis, *ut eburnea si quis
signa tegat claro vel candida lilia vitro.*
'vicimus et meus est!' exclamat Nais . . .

He, clapping his body with hollow palms, dives swiftly into the waters and, swimming with alternate strokes, gleams in the limpid flow, as if one should enclose ivory figures or white lilies in translucent glass. 'I win and he is mine!' cries the Naiad . . .

Martial's Hermaphroditus is a marble statuette, a high-end gift in the inventory of the Sigillaria. In the *Metamorphoses* Hermaphroditus is, of course, a living character; but at the moment of his immersion in the fountain, a simile focalized by the predatory naiad Salmacis compares him, in a famous moment of aestheticization,⁹³ to a statuette, in this instance of ivory (*Met.* 4.354–5, with emphases above): indeed he is compared to *two* items which would serve as high-end gift-objects, a glass-encased statuette and a glass-encased flower. Even before Martial translates him to the epigrams of the *Apophoreta*, then, Ovid's Hermaphroditus has already been constructed (by Salmacis) as her very own gift-wrapped miniature toy-boy — in other words, as a Martalian party favour.

The third manifestly Ovidian *objet d'art* in this section of the *Apophoreta* is a painted Europa (14.180):

EUROPE PICTA
mutari melius tauro, pater optime divum,
tunc poteras Io cum tibi vacca fuit.

PAINTING OF EUROPA

You could better have been changed to a bull, most excellent Father of the gods, when Io was your cow.

First, we can quickly register the epigram's metamorphic *incipit*: 'mutari melius'. Second, we can observe how the 'synthesis' of text, *titulus* and implied art-object is applied here to a myth which has *always*, in Ovid and in Hellenistic poetry before him, been *about*

⁹² This is to make some background appeal to those Hellenistic habits of metapoetic linkage between literary epigram and its perceived roots in actual epigraphic inscription (both funerary and dedicatory): see M. Fantuzzi and R. Hunter, *Tradition and Innovation in Hellenistic Poetry* (2004), 291–338, with bibliography.

⁹³ See e.g. S. Hinds, 'Landscape with figures: aesthetics of place in the *Metamorphoses* and its tradition', in Hardie, *op. cit.* (n. 1), 122–49, at 137–8.

synaesthesia between ecphrastic text, artistic representation, and (deceptive) reality. Thus Arachne's tapestry at *Met.* 6.103–4, the *locus classicus* of the Europa myth for subsequent Latin tradition:⁹⁴

Maeonis elusam designat imagine tauri
Europen; verum taurum, freta vera putares.

The Maeonian woman depicted Europa deceived by the form of the bull; you would think it was a real bull and real sea.

In effect, Martial 14.180, in concert with the other art-object epigrams above, constructs Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (perhaps for the first time) in what will turn out to be one of its most enduring functions: as 'the painters' bible'.

One further thought about 14.180 brings up something more impalpable, which may return us from aesthetic questions specific to the *Metamorphoses* to the generic issue with which my larger section began, in the initial discussion of 4.49 and 10.4: viz. the epigrammatist's professed unease with epic and quasi-epic pretentiousness. Let me apply some interpretative pressure to the epic (and specifically post-Ennian) formality of Martial's address to Europa's suitor as 'pater optime divum' (14.180.1).⁹⁵ What the epigrammatist has his eye on here, I think, is the more explicit problematization of Jupiter's divine dignity in the first of the two Europa vignettes in the *Metamorphoses*, at the bridge between the second and third books (*Met.* 2.846–50):

*non bene conveniunt nec in una sede morantur
maiestas et amor: sceptri gravitate relicta
ille pater rectorque deum, cui dextra trisulcis
ignibus armata est, qui nutu concutit orbem,
induitur faciem tauri . . .*

Majesty and love do not go well together, nor tarry long in the same dwelling-place. And so he left his solemn sceptre behind, did the Father and ruler of the gods, who wields in his right hand the three-forked lightning, who shakes the world with his nod, and took upon himself the appearance of a bull.

Again, Martial has managed to evoke something Martialian in his epic model — in this case, a moment when epic pretension and pomposity come in for the kind of deflation which at times (as noted in the previous subsection) can seem to be the epigrammatist's programmatic precondition for *any* allusion to the epic genre.

Oblique corroboration of this final point is available in the near-adjacent epigram 178, 'Hercules fictilis' — via a brief digression from Ovidian into Virgilian intertextuality. Here is the epigram, along with Leary's excellent commentary note on 14.178.2:

HERCULES FICTILIS
sum fragilis: *sed tu, moneo, ne sperne sigillum:
non pudet Alciden nomen habere meum.*

⁹⁴ Europa's is the first image (103–7) on Arachne's programmatic tapestry (Ovid, *Met.* 6.103–28), distinctive also in its pick-up of the markedly 'visual' and hardly less self-reflexive description of the heroine at the close of *Met.* 2 (see now A. Barchiesi (ed.), *Ovidio: Metamorfosi Vol. I* (2005), on *Met.* 2.874–5; and cf. *Met.* 3.1 'fallacis imagine tauri'). For the ecphrastic dimension of the Europa tradition see further Stat., *Theb.* 9.332–8, with Dewar (1991), ad loc.; and cf. the canonical Greek treatments in Moschus' *Europa* and, later, in Achilles Tatius 1.1.

⁹⁵ For the locution Leary, op. cit. (n. 81) adduces Enn., *Ann.* 203 Sk. 'divom pater atque hominum rex' and 181 Sk. 'pater optime Olympi'; cf. also Cic., *Nat. Deor.* 2.64, with citation of *Ann.* 592 Sk.; and add the already parodic Lucilius fr. 24-7W: 'ut / nemo sit nostrum quin aut *pater optimus divum*, / aut Neptunus pater, Liber Saturnus pater . . .'

HERCULES IN CLAY

I am fragile: but I warn you, do not scorn the figurine: Alcides is not ashamed to bear my name.

(Leary ad loc.) If the great Hercules is not ashamed to be called *fictilis* ... and to be a cheap *sigillum*, the recipient of such a gift should also be happy. The lofty patronymic heightens the contrast between Hercules' greatness and the humble representation with which he is content.

Regarding Hercules' humility, despite his prowess, cf. Verg. *Aen.* 8.359ff., and 364–5: Aeneas is challenged to emulate him in accepting Evander's simple hospitality.

Here, then, the poor gift of a Hercules in clay (paired in 177 with the rich gift of a Hercules in high-prestige Corinthian bronze) elicits in its moralizing address to the reader a surprise allusion to *another* deflationary moment in epic, Evander's 'te quoque dignum / finge deo' in *Aeneid* 8, famously addressed to Aeneas about that same Hercules (Virg., *Aen.* 8.362–7):

ut ventum ad sedes, 'haec' inquit 'limina victor
Alcides subiit, haec illum regia cepit.
aude, hospes, contemnere opes et te quoque dignum
finge deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis.'
 dixit, et angusti subter fastigia tecti
 ingentem Aenean duxit ...

When they reached his dwelling, Evander said: 'Victorious Alcides stooped to enter this door; this was a palace large enough for him. Have the courage, my guest, to scorn riches; mould yourself, too, to be worthy of deity, and come not disdainful of our poverty.' He spoke, and beneath the roof of his narrow house led mighty Aeneas.

Hercules teaches Martial's epigrammatic reader, by example, how to embrace the humble gift of a clay statuette; Hercules had taught Virgil's epic hero, by example, how to embrace the humble hospitality of a lowly abode. What epigrammatic allusion to an epic moment could be more (un)pretentious? In registering, with Leary, the force of the allusion in 178 to the *Aeneid* 8 vignette, we should also be alert to a double-take on the epigram's titular *fictilis* elicited by Virgil's 'te quoque ... finge', a masterly touch which sharpens the inter-text, heightens the imagery of modelling and self-fashioning, and leaves the import of neither passage unaltered. To read the titular *fictilis* as punningly involved with the epigram's Virgilian allusion might seem far-fetched; but in fact the same pun works with the same Virgilian allusion to make the same point, this time overtly, at the conclusion of one of Seneca's *Epistulae Morales* (31.11):

quid est enim eques Romanus aut libertinus aut servus? nomina ex ambitione aut iniuria nata. subsilire in caelum ex angulo licet. exsurge modo

et te quoque dignum

finge deo.

finges autem non auro vel argento: non potest ex hac materia imago deo exprimi similis; cogita illos, cum propitii essent, *fictiles* fuisse. Vale.

For what is a Roman knight or a freedman or a slave? They are mere names, born of ambition or of injustice. One may leap to heaven from the very slums. Only rise 'and mould yourself, too, to be worthy of deity'

This moulding will not be done in gold or silver; an image that is to be in the likeness of god cannot be fashioned of such materials; remember that the gods, when they were propitious to men, were moulded in clay. Farewell.

The passage in question is likely enough to have been in Martial's literary repertoire, and is certainly now readable, against the tide of time, as a singularly apt commentary, not just on the earlier *Aeneid* 8 vignette, but on the later *Apophoreta* epigram too.

(c) Ovid's Liber Spectaculorum

And now for one last shift, from the early *Apophoreta* to Martial's even earlier *Liber Spectaculorum* (Book of Spectacles), apparently written to mark the dedication of the Flavian amphitheatre (the 'Colosseum') by Titus in 80 C.E. In the face of some elements of stark discontinuity, this final subsection of my article will continue to be interested in Martial's epigrammatic reprocessing of myth, including Ovidian myth, and in post-Ovidian interplay between poetry, representation, reality, and something which asks to be called, in its very singular way, 'art'. Leaving aside the other issues that cause problems in the *Liber Spectaculorum* — title, transmission, separation between epigrams, relation of an incomplete collection to the original poetry book — let us begin by facing the matter which makes the book most obviously problematic for a modern reader: its content.⁹⁶ If these epigrams earn a place on many scholars' short-lists of the most repulsive verse ever written (I know one prominent Latinist in whom they have produced a career-long inability to read the rest of Martial), this is in large part because of the misfit (for us) between the aesthetic polish, and sometimes preciousness, of the epigrams — not unlike that on display in the *Apophoreta* — and the unassimilable horror of the acts that they purport to portray.

The following epigram will raise these issues as starkly as any (*Spect.* 6):⁹⁷

iunctam Pasiphaen Dictaeo credite tauro:
vidimus, accepit fabula prisca fidem.
ne se miretur, Caesar, longaeva Vetustas:
quidquid Fama canit, praestat harena tibi.

You must believe that Pasiphae did couple with the bull of Dicte: we have seen it happen, the age-old myth has been vindicated. Don't let ancient Tradition vaunt herself, Caesar: whatever Fame sings, your arena brings before you.

What Martial is doing here is, in a sense, of a piece with his later approach to mythological aesthetics in 4.49 and 10.4: he is cutting myth down to size, bringing it to the level of everyday experience, and indeed (up to a point) self-consciously debasing it. That is, even if most of Martial's ancient readers feel no need to regard this epigram's casual cruelty as *intrinsically* debased and abominable (a lesson which modern readers may need to learn from Kathleen Coleman's unflinching article in *JRS* for 1990),⁹⁸ they will probably read its representation of a Pasiphae in the arena as more disreputable *in poetic terms* than a Pasiphae represented in an epic ecphrasis (cf. Virg., *Aen.* 6.24ff.), or in a high-Alexandrian fantasy (cf. Virg., *Ecl.* 6.45ff.; Ovid, *AA* 1.289ff.). And the usual Martialian qualification applies in such a case too: as in the ostensibly unprestigious epigrams of the *Apophoreta*, sampled above, the Martial of the *Liber Spectaculorum* knows how to move quietly back up-market through deft touches of high literary preciousness. The fact is that this bull-epigram, no less than the 'Europe picta' of 14.180, can be felt to evoke in its repulsive variant of mythological *mimesis* the metapoetic complex of ideas about reality, art, and deception which dominate the high end of the Cretan bull tradition in literature. In other words, we are closer than we might wish to Ovid, *Met.* 6.103–4:

Maeonis elusam designat imagine tauri
Europen; verum taurum, freta vera putares.

⁹⁶ On the *Spect.* in general, until the introduction to her much-anticipated edition and commentary becomes available, see K. M. Coleman, 'The *liber spectaculorum*: perpetuating the ephemeral', in Grewing, op. cit. (n. 2), 15–36. Against the traditional pre-Domitianic dating, see now T. V. Buttrey in the present volume (pp. 101–12).

⁹⁷ For my main discussions in this section I cite the text from Coleman's forthcoming edition (with the numbering now standard since U. Carratello's 1981 edition); my translations too are taken or lightly adapted from Coleman.

⁹⁸ See K. M. Coleman, 'Fatal charades: Roman executions staged as mythological enactments', *JRS* 80 (1990), 44–73; and 63–4 for the probability that *Spect.* 6 envisages actual violation of a female human victim.

So too, the first couplet of *Spect.* 6 opens itself to an alignment with respectable traditions of poetic *doctrina*: the *topos* of authentication is recognizably the same one favoured in the (pseudo-)pedantic mythography of higher-genre poets, including Ovid.⁹⁹ Nor should we miss in its deployment the playful hint of the Cretan liar motif ('... Dictaeo credite ...'). Abominable stuff, in this context; but, for Martial and for Roman poetry, post-Alexandrian genre-bending business as usual.

Thus far, the parallel with the *Apophoreta* holds. But in qualifying the proposition that the arena epigrams debase myth — 'up to a point', as my parenthesis said — I had more in mind than the touches of recuperative aesthetics just described. Although in artistic terms a representation of the mass entertainment of the amphitheatre can be plotted towards the bottom of any table of genres (more like a rope dancer than like Terence), in another sense the involvement of the emperor raises the stakes considerably — as happens in the second couplet of the present epigram (*Spect.* 6.3–4):

nec se miretur, Caesar, longaeua vetustas:
quidquid Fama canit, praestat harena tibi.

Where it counts, encomiastics trump aesthetics. Arguably, indeed, the dominant conceit in the *Liber Spectaculorum* is of the Flavian amphitheatre as a place where Caesarian spectacle *transcends* and in *that* sense renders expendable the whole world of nature, art, and traditional myth.

Praise of Caesar (on which more shortly) recurs in the first couplet of a no less disturbing, and this time palpably post-Ovidian arena poem, *Spect.* 24, on which I will linger for a while:

quidquid in Orpheo Rhodope spectasse theatro
dicitur, exhibuit, Caesar, harena, tibi.
reperunt scopuli mirandaque silva cucurrit,
quale fuisse nemus creditur Hesperidum.
adfuit immixtum pecori genus omne ferarum
et supra vatem multa pependit avis.
ipse sed ingrato iacuit laceratus ab urso.
haec tantum res est facta παρ' ἱστορίαν.

Whatever Rhodope is said to have watched in Orpheus' theatre, Caesar, the arena has displayed to you. Cliffs crawled and a wood ran forwards, a wonder to behold; the grove of the Hesperides is supposed to have been just like that. Present, mixed with the tame, was every kind of wild beast, and above the bard there balanced many a bird; but he himself fell, torn apart by an unappreciative bear. This was the only thing that happened contrary to the story.

In this epigram the myth of Orpheus' death and dismemberment is literalized (if that is the right word, which it both is and is not) in another of the Flavian arena's 'fatal charades': the amphitheatre becomes a stage-set of trees, rocks, birds and wild animals; and a hapless individual dressed up as the mythic musician faces a very real execution by mauling. Now one of the canonical versions of the death of Orpheus is to be found at the beginning of Book 11 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*; and Martial's epigram quite clearly flags its allusion to that passage through evocation in its opening line of Ovid's own self-consciously metatheatrical conceit of the 'Orphei ... theatri' (*Met.* 11.20–5):¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ cf. e.g. *Met.* 8.721–2 with A. S. Hollis, *Ovid Metamorphoses Book VIII* (1970), ad loc.

¹⁰⁰ The parallel between *Met.* 11.22 and *Spect.* 24.1, adduced ad loc. in Magnus's edition of *Met.*, as also now in Tarrant, op. cit. (n. 90), offers a good indication that Martial read *theatri* in the Ovidian line, not the poorly-attested variant *triumphi* favoured in other recent editions.

ac primum attonitas etiamnum voce canentis
 innumeras volucres anguesque agmenque ferarum
 Maenades *Orphei* titulum rapuere *theatri*;
 inde cruentatis vertuntur in Orphea dextris
 et coeunt ut aves, si quando luce vagantem
 noctis avem cernunt . . .

First away went the multitudinous birds still spellbound by the singer's voice, with the snakes and the train of wild beasts, the glory of Orpheus' theatre, harried by the Maenads; then these turned their bloodied hands against Orpheus and flocked around like birds, when they see the bird of night wandering in the daylight . . .

It is disturbing to find just how readily the grisly business of the arena assimilates itself, in *Spect.* 24, to the elegant language of Ovidian myth-making.¹⁰¹ (We are, and are not, in a different world than in the Orphic *cithara* epigrams of the *Apophoreta* at 14.165 and 166, adduced earlier.) The intertext is even more disturbing when we recall (as Martial surely means us to do) that in the very next lines of Ovid's version the imagery of theatricality had actually slid into amphitheatricality, in one of the most startlingly anachronistic similes in the *Metamorphoses* (11.25–8):¹⁰²

. . . *structoque utrimque theatro*
ceu matutina cervus periturus harena
 praeda canum est, vatemque petunt et fronde virentes
 concidunt thyrsos *non haec in munera* factos.

. . . and as when in the morning sand of the amphitheatre a doomed stag falls prey to hounds. They rushed upon the bard and hurled at him their wands wreathed with green leaves, not made for such use as this.

Will the real arena poet please stand up? Ovid's comparison of the scene of Orpheus' dismemberment to a kill in a Roman amphitheatrical *venatio* crystallizes, in a surprisingly overt way, the *Metamorphoses*' pervasive interest in the metaphors of spectacle, including contemporary Roman spectacle (an aspect of the epic to which critics of our own time are newly alert);¹⁰³ Martial's epigrammatic rewrite draws Ovid farther into the amphitheatre, while thoroughly confounding Ovid's safe distinctions between the fictional and the real. Something similar happens — albeit less obtrusively, and with a different distribution of irony and of metaphor — when a deer in another of Martial's arena epigrams supplicates in a way which combines general anthropomorphism (*Spect.* 33.3–4)

Caesaris ante pedes *supplex similisque roganti*
 constitit, et praedam non tetigere canes

She stopped before Caesar's feet, suppliant and like to one begging, and the hounds did not touch their quarry

with specific allusion to one of the most *implicitly* amphitheatrical death-scenes in the *Metamorphoses*, that of the metamorphosed Actaeon (3.240–1):

et genibus pronis *supplex similisque roganti*
 circumfert tacitos tamquam sua bracchia vultus.

¹⁰¹ The bare list of further vocabulary shared with Ov., *Met.* 11.1ff. (*silva, fera, vates, theatrum* (again), *avis, harena*) is notable: Lorenz, op. cit. (n. 28), 74 n. 94. In context, 'mirandaque silva' can be felt to include an acknowledgement of Ovid's *tour de force* tree-catalogue at *Met.* 10.90–106.

¹⁰² Specifically amphitheatrical language in italics. Cf. Hinds, op. cit. (n. 93), 139–40.

¹⁰³ On spectacle in the *Met.* see A. Feldherr, 'Metamorphosis and sacrifice in Ovid's Theban narrative', *MD* 38 (1997), 25–55, including discussion (42–4) of implicit amphitheatricality in Ovid's account of the death of Actaeon; cf. below. On Ovidian spectacle in the larger context of early imperial literature, see Hardie, op. cit. (n. 1), 38–42.

And now down on his knees, supplicant and like to one begging, he cast his silent face around, as if it were his arms.

A non-Ovidian addendum. It may be of interest that another nexus of verbal parallelism sends the reader of the Orpheus epigram at *Spect.* 24.5–6

adfuit immixtum pecori genus omne ferarum
et supra vatem multa pependit avis

to two paired passages in Calpurnius' *Eclogues* which feature their own genre-disrupting treatment of a Roman arena. In *Eclogue* 2, a hexameter almost identical to the one above¹⁰⁴ describes a species-transcending gathering of animals who watch a song contest in a pastoral *locus amoenus* (Calp. Sic., *Ecl.* 2.10–11):

adfuit omne genus pecudum, genus omne ferarum
et quodcumque vagis altum ferit aera pennis.

Present was every kind of tame animal, every kind of wild beast, and every creature whose roving wing smites the air aloft.

A second Calpurnian passage, in *Eclogue* 7, repeats the line-ending tag (7.57–9, with emphases),

ordine quid referam? vidi *genus omne ferarum*,
hic niveos lepores et non sine cornibus apros,
hic raram silvis etiam, quibus editur, alcen

Why narrate each thing in order? I saw every kind of wild beast, here I saw snow-white hares and horned boars, here a creature rare even in the forests which produce it, the elk but this time the 'genus omne ferarum' (more obviously exotic, and transformed from spectators to spectacle) are encountered not in a pastoral *locus amoenus* but in the manufactured setting of a massive wooden amphitheatre, as seen by the astonished shepherd Corydon on a visit to the Roman metropolis (*Ecl.* 7.23–6):

vidimus in caelum trabibus spectacula textis
surgere, Tarpeium prope despectantia culmen;
emensique gradus et clivos lene iacentes
venimus ad sedes . . .

We saw a theatrical structure that rose skyward on interwoven beams and almost looked down on the summit of the Capitoline. Passing all the way up the steps and slopes of gentle incline, we came to the seats.

Within the larger *topos*-tradition of Orphic and quasi-Orphic performance, this Calpurnian doublet (if the dating holds) is Martial's specific source for the language and phrasing of *Spect.* 24.5. Calpurnius memorializes a famous pre-Flavian amphitheatre given to Rome by Nero by converting pastoral poetry, in his seventh and final *Eclogue*, into arena poetry.¹⁰⁵ Martial (on the tendentious reading which I propose) 'recognizes' this as a proto-Martialian move and associates his epigram with it through a marked verbal echo — just as in his simultaneous allusion to the amphitheatrics of Ovid, *Met.* 11.20ff. In this one epigram's allusive micro-narrative of its tradition, then, the marginal genre of the

¹⁰⁴ i.e. on my reading, the Calpurnian connection compels attention even alongside the other half-dozen Latin poetic instances of the tag 'genus omne ferarum' retrievable via concordance (some not without background relevance to the present nexus), and alongside Ov., *Met.* 11.21.

¹⁰⁵ Nero's wooden amphitheatre (57 C.E.): cf. Suet., *Nero* 12 (describing a programme with resemblances to things described in *Spect.*); Tac., *Ann.* 13.31. I still read Calpurnius Siculus as a Neronian poet; for bibliography on the arguments for a later date, and on the equally vigorous counter-arguments, see Coleman, *op. cit.* (n. 98), 52 n. 69; cf. T. K. Hubbard, *The Pipes of Pan* (1998), 150 n. 15, 176 n. 55.

Liber Spectaculorum has found for itself a distinctive and specifically amphitheatrical strand of literary prehistory, in which issues of staging and spectacle, representation and reality are already very much in play.

The perverse final twist in *Spect.* 24 is the pseudo-learned 'footnote' (restored through brilliant conjecture¹⁰⁶) which closes the epigram (24.7–8):

ipse sed ingrato iacuit laceratus ab urso.
haec tantum res est facta παρ' ἱστορίαν.

This Orpheus is mauled to death not by maenads but by a bear; and the mythological solecism is marked by the pedantic Greek phrase παρ' ἱστορίαν. As the opening couplet's language of mythological authentication yields here to the mock-learned flagging of a mythological (and non-Ovidian) variant, the ancient reader is in a position not very different from that of a reader of Ovidian myth,¹⁰⁷ and the modern reader (as in *Spect.* 6.1–2, discussed earlier) is in a very unpleasant place indeed.

Now, as has long been noted, the black humour in παρ' ἱστορίαν is also readable as an allusion to a specific Greek poem, an epigram by Martial's Neronian predecessor Loukillios or Lucillius (*A.P.* 11.254):

πάντα καθ' ἱστορίην ὀρχούμενος, ἐν τὸ μέγιστον
τῶν ἔργων παριδῶν ἠνίασας μέγਾਲως.
τὴν μὲν γὰρ Νιόβην ὀρχούμενος, ὡς λίθος ἔσσης,
καὶ πάλιν ὦν Καπανεύς, ἐξαπίνης ἔπεσες·
ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῆς Κανάκης ἀφυῶς, ὅτι καὶ ξίφος ἦν σοι
καὶ ζῶν ἐξῆλθες· τοῦτο παρ' ἱστορίην.

Your dancing was faithful to the story all the way, but one big oversight annoyed us greatly. For you danced your Niobe with stony inflexibility, and, again, in the role of Capaneus you unexpectedly fell down; but when it came to Canace you missed the mark. You see, you had a sword . . . and made your exit alive and well. Now *that* was contrary to the story.

In Lucillius the conceit is that, when the third of the three specified myths is danced on stage, the performer (whose ineptness causes him to falter in myth-appropriate ways in the roles of Niobe and Capaneus) fails to oblige the long-suffering audience with a corresponding (and deadly) mishap in the role of Canace, despite the availability of her sword to get the job done:¹⁰⁸ he leaves the stage alive, 'contrary to the legend' (but not contrary to one's expectations of a mimetic performance). The Lucillian παρ' ἱστορίην turns on a mere fantasy of the performer's death; the Martialian παρ' ἱστορίαν, in contrast, weighs two outcomes in *each* of which the performer's death is literal and non-negotiable. Once again, as in the governing conversation between Martial's and Ovid's versions of Orphic performance, the common aesthetic thread is an interest in staging and spectacle, in life and art, and also (repugnantly to us) in the boundary between represented death and real death: nothing here seems discontinuous with Martial's later interests.

As at the end of my subsection on the *Apophoreta*, a brief digression into Martialian engagement with Virgil will help to frame one last Ovidian reading of the *Liber*

¹⁰⁶ Interventions first by Bücheler and then by Housman recognized that the Greek punchline-phrase παρ' ἱστορίαν had been corrupted into *ita pictoria* (vel sim.), through a confusion between majuscule forms of Greek and Latin script: Coleman's forthcoming commentary ad loc. sets out the full story.

¹⁰⁷ Indeed, for the view that the *Met.* 11 model-passage itself functions as the main foil to the closing παρ' ἱστορίαν, see Lorenz, op. cit. (n. 28), 74–5. The pedantry, especially in that it is couched in Greek, might also fairly be described as Callimachean: cf. Martial's later equivocation about mythological poetry at 10.4.12.

¹⁰⁸ Interpretation here as in R. Aubreton, *Anthologie Grecque, Première Partie: Tome X* (= *A.P.* 11), Collection Budé (1972), 161 n. 3; translation of *A.P.* 11.254 lightly adapted from G. Nisbet, *Greek Epigram in the Roman Empire* (2003), 131–2.

Spectaculorum. Current and recent scholarship has laid emphasis upon the self-consciously ideological aspect of the Flavian amphitheatre as a figure for the whole Roman and Caesarian world (a point adumbrated above, for Martial, in connection with *Spect.* 6).¹⁰⁹ As negotiated in *Spect.* 3, this conceit takes a post-Virgilian form:

quae tam seposita est, quae gens tam barbara, Caesar,
 ex qua spectator non sit in urbe tua?
 venit ab Orpheo cultor Rhodopeius Haemo,
 venit et epoto Sarmata pastus equo,
 et qui prima bibit deprensi flumina Nili,
 et quem supremae Tethyos unda ferit.
festinavit Arabs, festinavere Sabaei,
 et Cilices nimbis hic maduere suis.
 crinibus in nodum tortis venere Sugambri,
 atque aliter tortis crinibus Aethiopes.
vox diversa sonat populorum, tum tamen una est,
 cum verus patriae diceris esse pater.

What people is so far removed and so barbarous that there is no spectator from it in your city, Caesar? The farmer of Rhodope has come from Orphic Haemus, the Sarmatian has come, fed on draughts of horses' blood, and he who drinks the headwaters of the Nile, discovered at last, and he whom the wave of furthest Tethys pounds. The Arab has come hurrying, the Sabaeans have come hurrying, and here the Cilicians have been sprayed with their own mist. The Sugambri have come with their hair curled in a knot, and the Ethiopians with their hair curled in another way. The speech of the peoples sounds different and yet, when you are hailed as the true father of the fatherland, they all then speak as one.

The spectators, we learn here (including one in line 3 who hails from 'Orpheo . . . Haemo'), are hardly less exotic than are the spectacles on offer.¹¹⁰ But the matter of intertextual interest (for the present argument) is that the amphitheatre's international and polyglot crowd, as described in this epigram, seems intermittently to evoke an earlier catalogue of global peoples massed to pay tribute to a Caesar — on the shield of Aeneas, Virgil's celebrated set-piece of Roman ecphrasis (*Aen.* 8.705–6 and 720–3, with emphases above and below):

. . . omnis eo terrore Aegyptus et Indi,
omnis Arabs, omnes vertebant terga Sabaei.
 ipse sedens niveo candentis limine Phoebi
dona recognoscit populorum aptatque superbis
 postibus; incedunt victae longo ordine gentes,
quam variae linguis, habitu tam vestis et armis.

In terror at this all Egypt and India, every Arab, all Sabaeans, turned to flee . . . Caesar himself, seated at the marble-white threshold of shining Phoebus, reviews the gifts of the peoples and hangs them on the proud portals; the conquered nations move in long procession, as diverse in costume and armour as they are in language.

The effect of this strand of allusion is perhaps to enhance the imagery of microcosm in *Spect.* 3, to set epigram into dialogue with epic, and to transfer prestige from one poetic and imperial icon to another.

¹⁰⁹ See E. Gunderson, 'The Flavian amphitheatre: all the world as stage', in Boyle and Dominik, op. cit. (n. 56), 637–58; cf. L. Deschamps, 'Il ritratto di Tito nell'opera di Marziale', in *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi Flaviani*, Vol. 1 (1981), 69–84, especially 82 on *Spect.* 3.

¹¹⁰ A point enriched by the close verbal correspondence between *Spect.* 3.3 and *Spect.* 24.1 (quoted earlier): the latter passage's Rhodope is itself both spectator and spectacle.

Back now (one last time) to 'Martial's *Metamorphoses*'. That the amphitheatre-as-cosmos can be a space of Ovidian as well as of Virgilian epic association is revealed by *Spect.* 27:

si quis ades longis serus spectator ab oris,
 cui lux prima sacri muneris ista fuit,
 ne te decipiat ratibus navalis Enyo
 et par unda fretis: *hic modo terra fuit.*
 non credis? specta, dum lassant aequora Martem:
 parva mora est, dices '*hic modo pontus erat.*'

If you have arrived late from distant shores to watch the show, and this was your first day at the sacred spectacle, don't let the naval warfare deceive you with its ships, and the water that is like the sea: here just now there was land. You don't believe it? Watch, while the waters wear Mars out. After a brief delay you will say, 'Here just now there was sea.'

This is one of a number of epigrams in the *Liber Spectaculorum* which feature scenes of marine spectacle, with special emphasis here on the capacity of the Flavian amphitheatre to be alternately flooded for such events and then, just as rapidly, dried out again; the general ambience of paradoxography is characteristic of the set. But in this particular epigram the paradoxography is specifically Ovidian and metamorphic (*Met.* 2.262–3, with *Met.* 1.314–15; see emphases):

et mare contrahitur siccaeque est campus harenae,
 quod modo *pontus erat* ...
 terra ferax, *dum terra fuit*, sed tempore in illo
 pars maris et latus subitarum campus aquarum.

Even the marine waters contract, and there is an expanse of dry sand, where just now there was sea.

A fertile land, while it was land; but at that time it was part of the sea, a broad expanse of sudden waters.

(Is it by chance that the Ovidian phrasing in the final line of Martial's epigram is framed as a direct *quotation* — so that *dices* can 'footnote' the allusion?¹¹¹) The repeated tag, whose association with the *Metamorphoses* is as much a matter of style as of specific evocation — '*modo* ist häufig Terminus der Metamorphose', says Bömer —¹¹² invites us to magnify the hydraulics of the arena into a cosmic matter of Deucalionic and Phaethontic proportions; the flood of Book 1 and the conflagration of Book 2 are both figured in the *Metamorphoses* as grand sequels (and threats) to the epic's initial creation narrative.

In this way, then, the epigram does its small bit to make the Flavian amphitheatre more cosmic. Does it also, for Martial (our tendentious reader of Ovidian myth), serve to make the cosmos of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* more amphitheatrical? On Martial's strong rereading in *Spect.* 27, the *Metamorphoses*' own epic and cosmic field of action is now itself perhaps assimilable to a Martialian 'campus harenae' (*Met.* 2.262; cf. *Met.* 1.315 'campus aquarum'). Although Martial will soon abandon arena epigram and move (albeit still within his chosen genre) in new directions, let us savour a particular glimpse here of youthful ambition. Make no mistake about it: this upstart epigrammatist has the capacity,

¹¹¹ History and normal expectations of direct speech used to close an epigram: see Coleman's forthcoming commentary, headnote on *Spect.* 27.

¹¹² F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso, Metamorphosen* (1969–86), on *Met.* 5.569 (cf. on 2.263 itself); Hinds, *op. cit.* (n. 83), 93–4.

if he is so inclined, to reinscribe the *Metamorphoses* as nothing more (or less) than *quindecim libri spectaculorum*.

ENVOI

My reading (having now found its way to the beginning of Martial's career) remains an open-ended one, eschewing any single overall conclusion.¹¹³ Here are some parting questions. Do Martial's epigrams in the end mobilize different Ovids for different purposes, so that any attempt to find a unified Martial via Ovid, or a unified Ovid via Martial, comes up short? More fundamentally, is it inevitable that an inherently fragmented work like an epigram collection will in turn 'fragment' any literary model, and indeed 'fragment' any reading practice? Or does the present paper's resistance to a strongly unified plot reflect the irreducibility to formula of one talented poet's imaginative engagement with another over the length of a writing career spanning some twenty-five years? If all this sounds like mere avoidance of a big picture, well, so be it: Martial is an epigrammatist, after all, and there are enough small surprises awaiting discovery in the detailed texture of his verse to justify some indulgence of critical miniaturism.

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¹¹³ 'Open-ended', and selective too. My tripartite structure is by no means intended to foreclose the possibility of an approach (say) in terms of 'Martial's *Fasti*' — especially given the orientation of epigram as a genre towards various kinds of occasionality, Martial's particular interest in calendrical marking of the Saturnalia (Section IIIb with Citroni, op. cit. (n. 81)), and the pervasive engagement of his verse with Roman urban space.