QUID MORO EXEMPLIS?: MYTHOLOGICAL *EXEMPLA* IN OVID'S PRE-EXILIC POEMS AND THE ELEGIES FROM EXILE

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OVID'S MYTHOLOGICAL *EXEMPLA* sometimes seem excessively ornamental, or simply excessive, especially in the poems from exile. Nonetheless, we need not conclude that the frequent use of *exempla* throughout his works exemplifies contemporary rhetorical excesses, nor that Ovid's exilic *exempla* in particular prove his own artistic decline.[1] I shall argue below that, in both the pre-exilic poems and the elegies from exile, many of his apparently superfluous or inappropriate examples function to demonstrate the limits of the usefulness of paradigms and the desire to master tradition rather than be mastered by it. Particular attention will be given to *Tr.* 1.5, which illustrates many of the similarities between Ovid's pre-exilic and exilic techniques and anticipates many characteristics of the mythological examples found in subsequent Ovidian poems.

I

A brief consideration of the traditional grounds for questioning an example and of the varying degrees of complexity of examples in selected pre-Ovidian poems may be a useful preliminary.[2] The most obvious basis for refuting an example used as an argument is falsehood.[3] The accuracy of examples might seem more relevant for rhetorical theorists and orators, who

[1]On the use and abuse of *exempla* in Ovid's lifetime, see Sen. *Controv.* 7.2.6–7 and 7.5.12–13. On the large number of *exempla* in Propertius and Ovid, see H. V. Canter, "The Mythological Paradigm in Greek and Latin Poetry," *AJP* 54 (1933) 201–224, at 220; and Hans Renz, *Mythologische Beispiele in Ovids erotischer Elegie* (diss., Würzburg 1935) 42. For criticism of some *exempla* in the *Amores*, see Richard Whitaker, *Myth and Personal Experience in Roman Love-Elegy* (Göttingen 1983) 138–146. On *exempla* as evidence of Ovid's supposed literary deterioration in exile, see L. P. Wilkinson, *Ovid Recalled* (Cambridge 1955) 360; cf. Jean-Marc Frécaut, *L'Esprit et l'humour chez Ovide* (Grenoble 1972) 319.

[2]Modern attempts to classify the functions of examples in classical poetry include Robert Oehler, *Mythologische Exempla in der älteren griechischen Dichtung* (diss., Basel 1925) 40–44, 76–77, 110–111, on the use of examples to support consolations, laments, admonitions, threats, petitions, or wishes, and to provide proofs, points of comparison, parallels, amplification, and clarification; and Michael von Albrecht, "Zur Funktion mythologischer Gleichnisse in augusteischer Dichtung," *Lampas* 17 (1984) 184–193, at 192–193, on the use of examples to link Roman mythology with Greek mythology, epic with elegy, etc.

[3]Arist. *Rh.* 1403a; *Rhet. Her.* 2.46.

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usually preferred historical examples, than for Augustan poets. However, the question of accuracy does arise in Ovid, sometimes explicitly, when a speaker denies the truth of myth, and often implicitly, when an example diverges from the more generally accepted version.[4]

The other grounds for refutation relate to appropriateness.[5] The degree to which a poet's example may be viewed as reprehensible, inappropriate in scale, or simply not sufficiently comparable obviously varies with both the text and the audience. Homeric examples are generally perceived as straightforward rather than inept, humorous, or ironic. Achilles' account of Niobe (*Il.* 24.602–620), which persuades Priam to stop weeping, is a classic consolatory *exemplum* along the lines of οὐ σὺ πρῶτος, a theme which was to appear frequently in tragedy.[6] Yet even Homeric examples can be problematic, as evidenced by the scholarly debate about the relevance of Phoenix's cautionary tale of Meleager (*Il.* 9.529–599), which did not persuade Achilles to relent completely.[7]

The use of mythological *exempla* became considerably more complex by the Hellenistic era; nor was the poets' frequent use of obscure myths or obscure versions the only factor in this complexity. For example, in Callimachus *Hymn* 5, Athena's attempt to comfort the mother of the newly blinded Tiresias by citing Actaeon's fate invites questions for two reasons. First, Actaeon is traditionally less obviously innocent than Tiresias; second, the goddess implies οὐ σὺ ὑστάτη instead of the more usual οὐ σὺ πρώτη. Athena's choice of this "precedent," which not only admits of doubt about its comparability but also does not precede the event in question, suggests little emotional involvement with the nymph whom she supposedly loves and seeks to comfort.[8]

Augustan poets, like the Hellenistic poets whom they often emulated, introduced unexpected or apparently inappropriate examples for a variety of purposes. For instance, in the *Aeneid*, Turnus implies a comparison between Aeneas and Paris (*Aen.* 9.136–139), whereas the plot structure reveals

[4]Mythological examples are rejected in Apsines *Rhet. Gr.* 1.373.23–24 (Spengel). Historical examples are said to be more useful in Arist. *Rh.* 1394a. See further Canter (above, n. 1) 202–204. For a denial of the truth of mythology in Ovid, see *Am.* 3.6.17–18 (cf. *Tr.* 3.8.1–12); for a novel explanation of a myth, see *Rem. am.* 161–162, on Aegisthus' adultery (cf. *Tr.* 1.9.33–34).

[5]μαχετέον ἢ ὅτι τὸ παρὸν οὐχ ὅμοιον ἢ οὐχ ὁμοίως ἢ διαφορὰν γέ τινα ἔχει (Arist. *Rh.* 1403a); *exemplum vitiosum est si ... inprobum, ut non sit imitandum, aut maius aut minus quam res postulat* (*Rhet. Her.* 2.46).

[6]Cf. Soph. *El.* 153; Eur. *Hipp.* 834, *Alc.* 417, 892.

[7]See Judith A. Rosner, "The Speech of Phoenix: *Iliad* 9.434–605," *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 314–327, at 314, 322–327.

[8]On Callim. *Lav. Pall.* 107–118, see further A. W. Bulloch (ed. and comm.), *Callimachus: The Fifth Hymn* (Cambridge 1985) 218–219; cf. Oehler (above, n. 2) 121. For Actaeon's arrogance, see Eur. *Bacchae* 337–340 and Diod. 4.81.4.

more important similarities between Aeneas and Achilles.[9] It is generally accepted that this comparison to Paris is characteristic of Turnus' mistaken beliefs about the outcome of the conflict between himself and Aeneas. No one would contend—as has sometimes been contended of Ovidian *exempla*—that Virgil's use of Paris was superfluous, careless, or lighthearted.

Propertius offers a more likely parallel to Ovid in his use of examples. Like Ovid, he appears to some readers to use examples simply for decoration, and to others to use examples deliberately for humorous or ironic effect.[10] However, readers who compare the two poets typically conclude that Propertius' examples are more functional than Ovid's, whereas many of Ovid's examples are primarily ornamental, entertaining, or intended to draw attention to his technique.[11] A full evaluation of Propertius and his relationship to Ovid is obviously beyond the scope of a discussion focused on relationships between Ovid's pre-exilic and exilic works, but I shall mention several Propertian passages in connection with the Ovidian passages discussed below. In general, Propertius shows many features characteristic of Ovid's use of mythology: the *exemplum e contrario*, the use of less traditional versions, a challenge to the validity of myths, and catalogues of examples which seem sometimes to wander from the original point.[12] I shall

[9]Cf. the comments of Iarbas (*Aen.* 4.215), Juno (7.321), and Amata (7.363–364). The most obvious parallels to Achilles are Aeneas' shield, made by Vulcan, and his passionate desire to avenge Pallas (cf. Patroclus) by killing Turnus (cf. Hector). On the complexities of Aeneas' similarities to Odysseus, Paris, Menelaus, Jason, and Achilles, see Jasper Griffin, *Latin Poets and Roman Life* (Chapel Hill, N.C. 1985) 193–194.

[10]J. P. Sullivan, *Propertius: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge 1976) 133–134, argues that some Propertian examples lack a clear function. Georg Luck, *Hexen und Zauberei in der römischen Dichtung* (Zürich 1962) 38–39, and Julia Haig Gaisser, "Mythological *Exempla* in Propertius 1.2 and 1.15," *AJP* 98 (1977) 381–389, argue that the apparent incongruity of certain Propertian examples is deliberate; this approach is rejected by Theodore D. Papanghelis, *Propertius: A Hellenistic Poet on Love and Death* (Cambridge and New York 1987) 28 ff. D. Thomas Benediktson, *Propertius: Modernist Poet of Antiquity* (Carbondale, Ill. 1989) 34–35, 88–93, emphasizes the structural function of Propertius' *exempla*. See, more generally, Archibald W. Allen, "*Sunt qui Propertium malint*," in J. P. Sullivan (ed.), *Critical Essays on Roman Literature: Elegy and Lyric* (Cambridge, Mass. 1962) 129–141, and Barbara K. Gold, "The Literary Misuse of Mythology: Propertius and Ovid," *Stentor* (publication of the Michigan Classical Conference, Wayne State University) NS 1.3 (April 1983) 1–6.

[11]See, e.g., A. G. Lee, "*Tenerorum lusor amorum*," in J. P. Sullivan (ed.), *Critical Essays on Roman Literature* (above, n. 10) 154–155, contrasting the "decorative" mythology and "wit" of *Am.* 1.10.1–10 with Prop. 1.3.1–10; Whitaker (above, n. 1) 166, on Ovid's "flippant irreverent wit" (in contrast to other Latin elegists); Gordon Williams, *Figures of Thought in Roman Poetry* (New Haven 1980) 62, on "ornamental expansion or illustration" as the "major use of mythic material in the poetry of Ovid"; Gold (above, n. 10) 6; Benediktson (above, n. 10) 88.

[12]*Exemplum e contrario*: see Prop. 1.1.15–18 (Milanion). Unusual use of tradition: see the comments of Joy Kerler King, *Studies in Verbal Repetition in the* Monobiblos

argue below that many comparable passages in Ovid, although longer, more numerous, and more elaborate than their Propertian parallels, are nonetheless functional rather than merely frivolous.

Ovid's use of *exempla* has occasioned at least as much controversy as Propertius'. The entertaining nature of many Ovidian *exempla* may seem to some readers to support the view that Ovid is primarily a story-teller, who should not be intellectualized.[13] However, a number of scholars to be cited below, after examining the *exempla* in the contexts of both the poems themselves and the tradition in which Ovid worked, have identified complex effects in addition to simple entertainment. Certainly Ovid calls attention to his poetic techniques, but the function of his examples as apparently superfluous *ornamenta* need not blind us to their function as *argumenta*—nor to the possibility that apparent flaws in the arguments are themselves functional.[14] While the exaggerations and incongruities of many examples are undeniably amusing, it will be suggested here that some passages imply serious questions about the adequacy of tradition.

The pre-exilic poems, which have attracted more scholarly attention than Ovid's last poems, will be surveyed briefly, with attention to *exempla* which clearly do not support the propositions set forth, the inconsistent use of particular *exempla*, two explicit denials of the validity of mythology, the rejection of *exempla* by their hearers, and the lack of an exemplary hero in the *Metamorphoses*. The elegies from exile will require fuller discussion because of traditional scholarly assumptions about their sincerity.[15] Some of these poems cite relatively straightforward *exempla*. For instance, Elpenor, Icarus, Dolon, and Phaethon are appropriate examples of the dangers of ambition (*Tr.* 3.4.19–30). However, we shall see below that many passages conspicuously—and sometimes so ingeniously as to be incredible—reject apparently appropriate mythological parallels for the poet's sufferings. Many other passages, particularly some involving Augustus, cite examples whose

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of Propertius (diss., Univ. of Colorado 1969) 64–66, on this same passage. Challenge to the validity of myth: see 3.5.23–24 (discussed below). Problematic catalogue: see 2.1.51–54 (discussed below).

[13]See, e.g., Alan H. F. Griffin, "Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *G&R* NS 24 (1977) 57–70, at 68 and Oliver Lyne, "Ways of Resurrecting Ovid," *Times Literary Supplement* (March 7, 1975) 254. I owe the latter reference to Florence Verducci, *Ovid's Toyshop of the Heart:* Epistulae heroidum (Princeton 1985) 290.

[14]In ancient discussions, examples can be either proofs (Arist. *Rh.* 1393a, Cic. *Part. or.* 40) or ornaments (Cic. *Orat.* 138, *De or.* 3.205; *Rhet. Her.* 2.46). See further Bennett Price, *Παράδειγμα and* Exemplum *in Ancient Rhetorical Theory* (diss., Univ. of California, Berkeley 1975) 88.

[15]On Ovid's supposed sincerity in exile, see Hermann Fränkel, *Ovid: A Poet Between Two Worlds* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1956, Sather Classical Lectures 18) 120; and R. J. Dickinson, "The *Tristia*: Poetry in Exile," in J. W. Binns (ed.), *Ovid* (London and Boston 1973) 158.

treatment raises questions about their validity. Thus, in both the pre-exilic poems and the elegies from exile, we can observe from two angles the elusiveness of valid examples. Sometimes we observe a character—the *relegatus* himself in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*—insisting on the differences between himself and some *exemplum*. At other times, context or our own knowledge of tradition invites us to reject an example offered by a speaker, or in the exile corpus by the *relegatus* himself.

II

Ovid's amatory poetry repeatedly portrays an *amator* or *praeceptor amoris* proposing examples which not only amuse us because of their inappropriateness or falsehood, but also are sometimes so incongruous as to invite us to reject the argument of the lover or instructor. For example, Curran notes that in *Am.* 1.3 the claim not to be a *desultor amoris* (15) is undercut by the comparison of the fame to be enjoyed by the still unnamed *puella* to the fame of Io, Leda, and Europa—all loved (or victimized) by Jupiter (21–24), the most famous *desultor* of them all.[16] One might compare the double-edged *exempla* in Prop. 1.15.9–22, which, in Gaisser's interpretation, not only praise women (Calypso, Hypsipyle, Alphesiboea, Evadne) who were more faithful than Cynthia, but also hint that the *amator* may ultimately leave her (as he indeed does in 1.17 and 1.18).[17] However, whereas Propertius 1.15 essentially reinforces exhortation with veiled warnings, Ovid—light-heartedly in *Am.* 1.3 and more seriously in some exilic poems—goes farther by undermining reassurances with veiled warnings.[18]

Some of the *Amores*, by referring to what *might* have happened, in what Davis terms anti-*exempla*, seem to trivialize the very notion of the search for true and appropriate examples. For instance, when the *amator* tore his beloved's hair, she looked as Cassandra would have looked *if* Cassandra's hair had not been bound: *sic, nisi vittatis quod erat, Cassandra, capillis, / procubuit templo, casta Minerva, tuo* (*Am.* 1.7.17–18). Since Cassandra's hair is said elsewhere to be unbound (*Am.* 1.9.38; cf. *Aen.* 2.403–404), the mention of the headband in *Am.* 1.7 is unexpected and thus draws attention to the incongruity of the comparison. Davis, examining a number of the *Amores*, concludes that "when it is convenient for myth to be treated as

[16]Leo C. Curran, "*Desultores Amoris*: Ovid *Amores* 1.3," *CP* 61 (1966) 47–49.

[17]Gaisser (above, n. 10) 388–391.

[18]Propertius, too, is capable of using examples which seem to undermine his point; Gaisser ([above, n. 10] 385) argues that the *exempla* of 1.2, ostensibly a warning against cultivated beauty on the grounds that it is unnecessary for chaste women, actually teach "that natural beauty does not preclude the possibility of many lovers." However, the use of examples which undermine not a warning but an ostensible attempt at reassurance seems more characteristic of Ovid and recurs in the exile poems (see below on *Tr.* 1.9.27–34 and *Pont.* 3.6.19–20).

true, it is; when it is not convenient, it is admitted to be false" (415). Of particular interest is 3.12, in which the *amator* catalogues a number of myths, comments that *exit in immensum fecunda licentia vatum / obligat historica nec sua verba fide* (41–42), and wishes that his praises of his mistress had not been believed.[19] Although Prop. 3.5 indicates that the *amator*, when old and gray (23–24), may conclude that the mythology of the afterlife is *ficta* (45), *Am.* 3.12 goes much farther in its ready acceptance of the falsehood of many myths and its comparison of mythology to the supposedly false accounts of an ostensibly real mistress.

Also important for Davis's conclusion that the use of myth in the *Amores* shows a "gleeful perversion of elegiac convention" is 3.6.13–18: *nunc ego, quas habuit pinnas Danaeius heros, / terribili densum cum tulit angue caput, / nunc opto currum, de quo Cerealia primum / semina venerunt in rude missa solum. / prodigiosa loquor, veterum mendacia vatum: / nec tulit haec umquam nec feret ulla dies* (*Am.* 3.6.13–18).[20] This poem is additionally noteworthy because it presents an addressee rejecting *exempla*, a phenomenon more common in the *Metamorphoses* than in the *Amores*. As we read, we react not simply to the examples themselves in their contexts but also to the addressee's rejection of the speaker's examples. This addressee is an unusual one, a river, who ignores the catalogue of mythological love-stricken rivers cited by a lover seeking to cross over and visit his beloved. The *amator* does not blame this rejection on the falsity of myths, which he acknowledged in lines 17–18, nor does he conclude with a humorous confession of the foolishness of reciting myths to an inanimate object.[21] Ovid passes over these possibilities to achieve an even more humorous effect: the *amator* has failed to persuade the river because he has inappropriately selected noble examples for an ignoble audience (89–104).[22] The *exempla* are acknowledged to be unsuitable, but not for the obvious reasons.

Readers of the *Ars amatoria* frequently cite incongruities in *exempla* as evidence that the poem is largely humorous or ironic. Only eleven lines

[19]J. T. Davis, "*Exempla* and Anti-*exempla* in the *Amores* of Ovid," *Latomus* 39 (1980) 412–417, citing also 3.2.13–18; on 1.7, cf. H. Akbar-Khan, "*Ovidius Furens*: A Reevaluation of *Amores* 1.7," *Latomus* 25 (1966) 880–894, at 884. An anonymous referee has pointed out that the poet compounds the humorous effect of his treatment of mythology by opening his catalogue with a contaminated myth: lines 21–22 combine the stories of Scylla, the betrayer of her father, Nisus (cf. *Met.* 8.17 ff.), and Scylla, the beloved of Glaucus, punished by Circe (cf. *Met.* 14.55 ff.).

[20]Davis (above, n. 19) 417.

[21]It might be argued, on the basis of the river legends themselves, that rivers are here considered animate; yet, given the statement about poets' lies (17–18), the incongruity of such an elaborate speech to such an audience is inescapable.

[22]Whitaker ([above, n. 1] 146) discusses the poem's Hellenistic erudition, but not its humor.

into the poem, the *praeceptor* claims: *Phillyrides puerum cithara perfecit Achillem / atque animos placida contudit arte feros. / qui totiens socios, totiens exterruit hostes, / creditur annosum pertimuisse senem; / quas Hector sensurus erat, poscente magistro, / verberibus iussas praebuit ille manus* (1.11–16). Durling's argument that Achilles is not an ideal *exemplum* of docility has been disputed by Myerowitz, who stresses Achilles' delight in the cithara (*Ars* 1.11) and his meeting with Priam in *Iliad* 24. However, Myerowitz does not account for the incongruity between Achilles' boyhood tameness and his subsequent fierceness in *Ars am.* 1.13 (cf. 2.741–742), nor does she explain satisfactorily what she calls the "comic deflation" of lines 17–18: *Aeacidae Chiron, ego sum praeceptor Amoris; / saevus uterque puer, natus uterque dea.*[23] Watson finds that many (though not all) of the *exempla* in the *Ars* are overtly inappropriate. Of particular relevance for the exile poetry is her observation that the *praeceptor* sometimes rejects *exempla* which probably never occurred to his audience. For instance, his assertion that Andromache and Tecmessa do not justify carelessness in feminine grooming, since the men of their day were equally crude (*Ars* 3.107–112), is humorously unnecessary, as Ovid's contemporaries were unlikely to look to the Trojan War period for fashion hints.[24] The suggestion that the behavior of traditional epic characters may be evaluated by the standards of the conventional elegiac lover is a further source of humor.[25]

It can be argued that many *exempla* in the *Remedia amoris* are incongruous, and that these incongruities do not evince a heedless use of rhetorical ornaments but undercut the thesis that love can be safely categorized and controlled.[26] Because of considerations of space, I shall mention just four

[23]Robert M. Durling, "Ovid as *Praeceptor Amoris*," *CJ* 53 (1958) 157–167, at 159; Molly Myerowitz, *Ovid's Games of Love* (Detroit 1985) 46–47.

[24]Patricia Watson, "Mythological *exempla* in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*," *CP* 78 (1983) 117–126, at 119–123, citing also 1.53–54 and 3.517–524. Cf. below, Section IV, on the rejection of unlikely comparisons in *Pont.* 4.10.21–28. Florence Verducci, "The Contest of Rational Libertinism and Imaginative License in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*," *Pacific Coast Philology* 15.2 (December 1980) 34–38, goes farther than Watson, claiming that every digression in the *Ars* challenges the generalizations of the *praeceptor*. Her short discussion argues convincingly that the tale of Cephalus and Procris (3.685–746) both fails to support the implication that women are most likely to be rash (683–686)—since Cephalus was equally rash—and reveals the danger of treating love as a hunt, a strategy earlier recommended to male readers (1.45–50, etc.). However, Verducci does not analyze every digression in the *Ars*.

[25]This point was suggested to me by an anonymous referee. Andromache reappears in 3.777–778 (along with Atalanta, 775–776), this time as a positive example, in another unlikely context: advice to women on the choice of a flattering sexual position. On equally amusing anachronisms and modernization in some episodes in the *Met.*, see Joseph B. Solodow, *The World of Ovid's* Metamorphoses (Chapel Hill, N.C. 1988) 75–89.

[26]I hope to examine the *Remedia* in a separate essay.

characteristics here, all of which will reappear in the exilic poems. First, a particular example may be cited more than once to support quite different theses. Thus, Tereus first appears in a list of unfortunate lovers (61) but later in a catalogue of examples supposedly encouraging second attachments (459–460).[27] Second, familiar myths are sometimes assigned novel or farfetched interpretations. The flat statement that Aegisthus became an adulterer because he was idle (161–162) omits most of the complex story of the house of Atreus, in which amatory jealousy played an important part.[28] One might compare, for example, Prop. 2.8, where the phrases *abrepta ... coniuge* (29) and *erepto ... amore* (36) explain Achilles' withdrawal in terms more elegiac than Homeric. However, Ovid's use of Aegisthus does not simply illustrate the known tendency of elegiac poetry to assign amatory interpretations to familiar legends: in fact, it does the opposite, by specifying idleness rather than love as the reason for this adultery. Third, the repeated use of contrary-to-fact constructions (*Rem. am.* 55–62, 67–68, 99–100, 573–574, 605–606, 745) underlines the difficulty of finding actual *exempla* to support the claims of the *praeceptor* that he can cure love.[29]

Fourth, mythological and literary examples frequently appear in groups of three or more (55–68, 381–384, 451–486, 735–740, 745–748, 771–784; some of these passages include one detailed *exemplum* along with several shorter ones). The use of catalogues may seem more characteristic of classical poetry in general, or at any rate of Ovid in general, than of the *Remedia* in particular. Certainly Propertius uses catalogues which raise questions, such as the brief list of women who supposedly prepared potions for unsuspecting males (2.1.51–54).[30] The *Ars* contains longer catalogues which include problematic examples. For instance, can Medea credibly illustrate both the unlawful, unbounded lust which characterizes women rather than men (*Ars am.* 1.269–282, 335–336) and the male tendency to victimize relatively innocent women (3.31–34)? Nonetheless, the *Remedia* is noteworthy

[27]Cf. David Mankin, "Paris in Ovid's *Remedia amoris*," unpublished paper presented to the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, April 27, 1984, on the use of Paris as both a negative example (65–66, 573–574) and a positive example (457–458, 711–712).

[28]Similarly, Circe's attempt to detain Ulysses in *Rem. am.* 273–284 has no parallel in Homer (see *Od.* 10.489).

[29]The reader's attention is drawn to the dearth of adequate examples in some of the elegies from exile also, but in a different manner. In the *Remedia*, Ovid has created a *praeceptor* who makes exaggerated claims, which are undercut indirectly by the use of contrary-to-fact constructions in the mythological "proofs." In *Pont.* 1.3 and other poems to be discussed below, the *relegatus* attributes mythological *exempla* to his addressee and directly criticizes the adequacy of these examples for his experience.

[30]See Luck (above, n. 10) 38–39 on Prop. 2.1.51–56. However, lengthy catalogues, sometimes including one particularly detailed example, are more characteristic of Ovid (*Am.* 3.6.25–82, *Ars am.* 1.283–340, *Rem. am.* 453–484, 771–784).

for its use of six catalogues in 814 lines, two of those catalogues containing contrary-to-fact constructions, as noted above, which undermine the credibility of the *praeceptor*. In particular, the catalogue ostensibly encouraging second attachments (451–486) contains two features which should provoke closer scrutiny of all the catalogues in the poem. First, most of the affairs mentioned turned out disastrously, such as Tereus' relationship with Philomela (459–460), mentioned above.[31] Second, directly after this unexpected use of Tereus as a positive example, the *praeceptor* inserts the self-mocking phrase *quid moror exemplis, quorum me turba fatigat?* (461)—and promptly adds another *exemplum*, a lengthy and frivolous account of Chryseis and Briseis (467–486).[32] Despite the obvious differences, the *relegatus* resembles the *praeceptor* of the *Remedia* in that some of the elegies from exile conspicuously manipulate certain examples, others demonstrate the scarcity of truly appropriate examples, and some contain catalogues whose examples or details cannot be accepted at face value.

The *Heroides* allow us both to evaluate the examples cited by individual characters and, in the case of the double epistles, to observe one character rejecting examples cited by another.[33] Although these poems have often been considered more straightforward than the *Amores* and the *Ars*, Verducci has argued that the *Heroides* deliberately show the misapplication of rhetoric, and that the effect of Ovid's parody is "a challenge to the Roman 'classical' heritage, a challenge which does not insult the integrity of the past but which adjusts the fictions of the past to the complicated, urbane, skeptical, yet charitable integrity of a new and different world."[34] Jacobson, whose interpretation of the *Heroides* is more traditional, nevertheless acknowledges "perhaps irony ... wit or parody" in the exempla of *Her.* 4.93–100, since the love affairs of Cephalus, Adonis, and Meleager, cited by Phae-

[31] Procris, returning from Minos to her husband, was accidentally killed by the latter; Phineus was forced by his second wife to blind his sons by his first wife; Alcmaeon's second wife had his sons by his first wife killed; Paris' abduction of Helen led to the Trojan War, which brought suffering on himself as well as others (cf. above, n. 27); Tereus, after raping his wife's sister, was tricked by the two women into eating his own son. See A. A. R. Henderson (ed. and comm.), *P. Ovidi Nasonis* Remedia amoris (Edinburgh 1979) 98–99.

[32] On humor in some Ovidian catalogues, see G. Karl Galinsky, *Ovid's* Metamorphoses: *An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1975) 195. On *Rem. am.* 461 and Ovid's parody of such phrases as *ne multis morer*, see Henderson (above, n. 31) 99.

[33] For a brief discussion with bibliography on the authorship of the double epistles, see Valerie A. Tracy, "The Authenticity of *Heroides* 16–21," *CJ* 66 (1971) 328–330. Although it is assumed here that these poems are Ovidian, my general arguments do not depend on this point; Ovid's interest in examples and their rejection is evident in several passages in the *Met.*, discussed below.

[34] Verducci (above, n. 13) 85.

dra in her attempt to woo Hippolytus, all end in disaster.[35] Examples which are not merely questionable but explicitly questioned appear in *Her.* 16–17. Helen's attempts to reject Paris' precedents for adultery (cf. *Her.* 16.293–294, 327–330) are perhaps weakly argued, as befits her token resistance to his epistolary courtship: '*at peccant aliae, matronaque rara pudica est.*' / *quis prohibet raris nomen inesse meum?* / *nam mea quod visa est tibi mater idonea, cuius* / *exemplo flecti me quoque posse putes,* / *matris in admisso falsa sub imagine lusae* / *error inest; pluma tectus adulter erat* (17.41–46). Nonetheless, the passage is instructive because it offers further evidence of the elusiveness of fully adequate examples. Some objection can usually be found, whether the addressee simply retorts that she will be an exception, as in line 42 above;[36] or the addressee points out a discrepancy, as in 45–46; or the speaker himself acknowledges a discrepancy in his own example, as in the Cassandra *exemplum* (*Am.* 1.7.17–18, discussed above); or the author leaves it to us to discover a flaw, as in the juxtaposition of three inappropriate examples in *Her.* 4.

The *Fasti* and *Metamorphoses*, which contain more direct narration of the interaction of characters than does Ovid's amatory poetry, include numerous instances of the rejection of an *exemplum* by a character. The *Fasti*, by means of a rebuke addressed to an animal, humorously recalls the human tendency to disregard the applicability of the experience of others: *sus dederat poenas: exemplo territus huius* / *palmite debueras abstinuisse, caper* (1.353–354). In the *Metamorphoses*, such passages sometimes provide witty transitions but often also illustrate the ways human beings ignore or misuse the past.[37] A number of characters do not learn from the misfortunes of others, which might have served as deterrents. Thus, the Minyades are not *talibus exemplis monitae* (*Met.* 3.732); undeterred by the fates of Agave and Pentheus, they must experience divine wrath for themselves (4.1 ff.).[38]

[35]Howard Jacobson, *Ovid's* Heroides (Princeton 1974) 153–154.

[36]For another dogmatic assertion that a particular instance is exceptional, see *Ars am.* 1.743–754, in which the *praeceptor* acknowledges the loyalty of legendary friends but insists that such friends cannot be found today.

[37]Discussions of transitions in the *Met.* include Quintilian's criticism (*Inst.* 4.1.77); Frank J. Miller, "Some Features of Ovid's Style: 3. Ovid's Methods of Ordering and Transition in the *Metamorphoses*," *CJ* 16 (1920–21) 464–476; L. P. Wilkinson, "The World of the *Metamorphoses*," in N. I. Herescu (ed.), *Ovidiana: Recherches sur Ovide, publiées à l'occasion du bimillénaire de la naissance du poète* (Paris 1958) 231–244; J.-M. Frécaut, "Les Transitions dans les *Métamorphoses* d'Ovide," *REL* 46 (1968) 247–263; and Robert Coleman, "Structure and Intention in the *Metamorphoses*," *CQ* NS 21 (1971) 461–477. Each of the modern discussions comments in some way on transition by association, but none focuses on the rejected *exemplum* as a means of transition or on the thematic implications of such passages.

[38]The tendency to ignore warning examples first appears in the poem in a more humorous episode: both the narrator and the unmoved hearer are birds (*Met.* 2.597).

At other times, a speaker attempts to draw a connection which is not immediately apparent: there is no obvious reason why Egeria should be consoled by the rather dissimilar sorrows of Hippolytus, which—significantly—are characterized as *exempla* (15.495) by Virbius-Hippolytus himself before he tells his story, but as *aliena* . . . *damna* (15.547–548) by the narrator of the *Metamorphoses* after the conclusion of Hippolytus' tale.[39] The elusiveness of paradigms dominates some general discussions of the *Metamorphoses*. For example, the poem reveals "skepticism about the received ideas about . . . culture . . . and about the possibility of order and lucidity in human existence, which the classical tradition fosters," according to Johnson; it noticeably lacks "a unitary exemplar of human values . . . a single complex hero . . . [a] single myth [which] is able to interpret a significant segment of human existence," according to Segal.[40] Although the rejection of traditional paradigms was to become more prevalent in the elegies from exile (e.g., *Tr.* 1.5), Ovid's interest in the complexities and limitations of myths clearly preceded his banishment.

Besides depicting the explicit rejection of *exempla*, the *Metamorphoses*—like the amatory poems—includes examples which many readers are likely to reject. An obvious instance is Byblis' use of the *exempla deorum* in support of her incestuous desires (9.555). Awareness of the context, including both Byblis' previous admission that the gods have *sua iura* (9.500) and the obvious gap between divine and human prerogatives throughout the *Metamorphoses*, should lead us to question Byblis' example; and her subsequent sufferings prove her error.[41] A more controversial instance is the compari-

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An instance toward the end of the poem almost has a tragic outcome: after Pomona remains unmoved by Vertumnus' tale of Iphis, her suitor is prepared to use force, but instead she is won over by his beauty (14.765–771).

[39]Similarly, Venus' story of the origin of her hatred for lions (10.543–707) seems poorly chosen to keep Adonis away from all large animals. The *ora* . . . *non* . . . *credita* of Pythagoras (15.73–74) may be another instance of *exempla* ignored, although the narrator does not specify that it is the mythological examples which are ignored, and he does use the phrase *instructo pectore* (15.479) of Numa after Pythagoras' long speech. Following Charles Segal, "Myth and Philosophy in the *Metamorphoses*," *AJP* 90 (1969) 257–292, at 283, I cannot take seriously Pythagoras' use of Thyestes (15.462) to discourage meat-eating and thus to protect us from consuming our relatives, since the larger context (the *Metamorphoses* as a whole) includes many instances of people being transformed into plants. For a different interpretation, see D. A. Little, "Non-Parody in *Metamorphoses* 15," *Prudentia* 6 (1974) 17–21.

[40]W. R. Johnson, "The Problem of the Counter-Classical Sensibility and Its Critics," *CSCA* 3 (1970) 123–151, at 147; Charles Segal, "Ovid: Metamorphosis, Hero, Poet," *Helios* NS 12 (1985) 49–64, at 59.

[41]D. C. Feeney, *The Gods in Epic* (Oxford 1991) 195–197, contrasts Byblis (who first acknowledges the uniqueness of divine rights but then cites divine behavior as a precedent) with Iphis (who denies the existence of animal precedents for her desires in *Met.* 9.731–734), Myrrha (who accepts animal precedents in 10.324–331), and the

son of Augustus, Julius Caesar's son by adoption, to Jupiter, another son who surpassed his father (15.857–860). Considerations of space do not permit a review of the debate about this passage here, since the present study emphasizes the elegies from exile. Instead, I shall simply state my agreement with such readers as Fränkel and Moulton, who see "defiance" and "a sour note" in the comparison of Augustus to a god who—according to the poem's conclusion, just a few lines further on—cannot destroy poetry: *iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignes / nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas. / ... siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam* (15.871–872, 879).[42]

III

The poems written after Ovid was relegated by Augustus repeatedly compare the emperor to an angry, powerful Jove. Yet these same poems, in lines which recall the bold conclusion of the *Metamorphoses*, continue to assert the power and invulnerability of poetry: *si quid habent igitur vatum praesagia veri, / protinus ut moriar, non ero, terra, tuus* (*Tr.* 4.10.129–130); *tabida consumit ferrum lapidemque vetustas, / nullaque res maius tempore robur habet. / scripta ferunt annos ....* (*Pont.* 4.8.49–51, written after Augustus' death). Neither the supposed timidity of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* nor other changes supposedly caused by his exile should be exaggerated. In particular, the idea that "legend has lost its meaning" in these poems needs to be qualified by an appreciation of, first, the questions already raised about the meaning of legend in the earlier poems and, second, the new uses to which legend is put in the elegies from exile.[43] As we have just seen, Ovid's pre-exilic poems offer precedents for the rejection of *exempla*, although this procedure becomes more elaborate in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and for the ironic use of *exempla*, although the

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nurse in Euripides' *Hyppolytus* (who cites the gods as precedents for laws). A related phenomenon, although distinct from the human misuse of divine precedent, is the use by one Ovidian deity of another deity's cruelty as a precedent (4.420–431, 6.1–4). We are likely to feel uneasy about such *exempla* because of our sympathy for the victims, not because of some logical flaw or any conviction that the divinity's attempt at vengeance will fail.

[42]Fränkel (above, n. 15) 111; Carroll Moulton, "Ovid As Anti-Augustan: *Met.* 15.843–79," *CW* 67 (1973) 4–7, at 6. Cf. Johnson (above, n. 40) 146. For dissenting views, see D. A. Little, "Ovid's Eulogy of Augustus: *Metamorphoses* 15.851–70," *Prudentia* 8 (1976) 19–35, and Galinsky (above, n. 32) 254–255.

[43]Wilkinson ([above, n. 1] 45–46) states that "trouble forced" Ovid to give up the "pretense" and "*bravura*" which characterized his earlier poetry. Fränkel ([above, n. 15] 123), commenting on *Tr.* 3.8, states that "legend has thus sunk to a minor dignity"; cf. Harry B. Evans, Publica Carmina: *Ovid's Books from Exile* (Lincoln, Nebraska 1983) 63, on the same poem, commenting that "legend has lost its meaning," although with the qualification, "Not all legend, of course."

interpretation of some passages is controversial. I shall examine an early poem, *Tr.* 1.5, at some length before surveying other passages where *exempla* are either rejected or used problematically.

Tr. 1.5 includes many features characteristic of Ovid's use of mythology. First, the poem contains *exempla* which are less encouraging than they are ostensibly intended to be (19–24), which may be compared to Phaedra's examples in *Her.* 4, discussed above, and to Ovid's use of Nisus and Euryalus in *Tr.* 1.9.33–34, discussed below. Second, and most obviously, *Tr.* 1.5 includes an extensive rejection of a possible parallel (57–82); this phenomenon is partially anticipated by characters who refuse to be consoled or warned in the *Fasti* or *Met.* (although their refusals are briefer), and it recurs in *Pont.* 1.4 and 4.10. Third, the poem contains a direct statement of the limitations of mythology (79–80), comparable to *Am.* 3.6.17–18 and *Tr.* 3.8.11–12. Finally, the concluding reference to Jupiter's wrath, which undercuts previous assertions of Augustus' mercy, recalls the end of the *Met.* and anticipates, e.g., *Pont.* 3.6.

Tr. 1.5 initially emphasizes the *honestum*, praising a friend who remained loyal after the *relegatus* was thunder-struck (*attonitum*, 3).[44] This friend is not named but knows who he is and will be remembered by the *relegatus* all his life (7–14). In better weather (*vento amico*, 17), such loyalty might never have been discovered: *Thesea Pirithous non tam sensisset amicum, / si non infernas vivus adisset aquas. / ut foret exemplum veri Phoceus amoris, / fecerunt furiae, tristis Oresta, tuae. / si non Euryalus Rutulos cecidisset in hostes, / Hyrtacidae Nisi gloria nulla foret* (19–24). The knowledge that Theseus and Pylades risked their lives and that Nisus lost his

[44] *Relegatus* here refers to the speaker of any exile poem under discussion, just as *amator* is used in discussions of the *Amores*. The exile poems, although they presumably reflect more biographical experience than do the *Amores*, nonetheless present varying stances. The narrator-*relegatus* may claim in one poem that he is cowed by Augustus or in another that he is confident of imperial mercy, but aspects of the poem may invite us to join the "implied author" in "engaging in ... ironic constructions, repudiating ... the professed values ... of unreliable narrators and ... refusing to become the ... credulous listener," in the terms of Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*[2] (Chicago 1983) 429–430. On factual inconsistencies in the exile poems, see E. Lozovan, "Réalités pontiques et nécessités littéraires chez Ovide," in *Atti del convegno internazionale ovidiano* (Rome 1959) 2.355–370. On manipulation of fact, see B. R. Fredericks [Nagle], "*Tristia* 4.10: Poet's Autobiography and Poetic Autobiography," *TAPA* 106 (1976) 139–154. On the varying roles assumed by the *relegatus*, see Mary H. T. Davisson, "*Magna tibi imposita est nostris persona libellis*: Playwright and Actor in Ovid's *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1," *CJ* 79 (1984) 324–339, at 337–339. For arguments that Ovid has created a "myth of exile," see Edward Kennard Rand, *Ovid and His Influence* (1925; repr. New York 1963) 106–107; Jo-Marie Claassen, "Ovid's Poems from Exile: The Creation of a Myth and the Triumph of Poetry," *AuA* 34 (1988) 158–169, at 167–169; and *eadem*, "Ovid's Poetic Pontus," in F. Cairns (ed.), *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar* 6 (Leeds 1990) 65–94.

might intimidate Ovid's contemporaries rather than encourage them. As the *relegatus* acknowledges, comrades generally flee as soon as thunder has been heard (*intonuit*, 29). He learned this first from earlier examples but then from his own experience: *atque haec, exemplis quondam collecta priorum, / nunc mihi sunt propriis cognita vera malis* (31–32). Were the poem to end here, we might read it as a validation of the lessons of tradition, but the second half will assign greater importance to individual experience.

Shifting from the *honestum* to the *tutum* and from the praise of one friend to the exhortation of *amici ... pauci*, the *relegatus* urges them to rescue him from his shipwreck (33–36). Do not worry about offending a *deus* (38), because Caesar approves of loyalty (39–40); the *ira numinis* may be lessened (44).[45] After this ambiguous encouragement, ending in a reference to divine wrath, the *relegatus* seems less sure that his loyal companions are still listening, and he inserts a conditional clause: *scire meos casus siquis desiderat omnes* (45). Having lamented the infinity of his misfortunes, incredible yet true (47–50), he claims: *si vox infragilis, pectus mihi firmius aere, / pluraque cum linguis pluribus ora forent: / non tamen idcirco complecterer omnia verbis, / materia vires exsuperante meas* (53–56). After this allusion to *Il.* 2.488–490, the *relegatus* does not invoke the Muses (cf. *Il.* 2.484, 491–492), but challenges *docti poetae* to write about him instead of about Ulysses, because the *relegatus* has endured *mala plura* (57–58).

Ovid's use of Ulysses in *Tr.* 1.5 has attracted the attention of many modern *docti*. Rahn has demonstrated that the Ulysses myth is central to Ovid's portrayal of himself in the exile corpus; Drucker has pointed out that *Tr.* 1.5 introduces a variation on the *recusatio* by challenging *other* poets to replace traditional epic topics with the personal sufferings of this poet; Claassen alludes to the poem in her argument that the exile corpus as a whole creates a new "myth of exile" which includes deliberate exaggeration.[46] Also relevant to the alleged superiority of the *relegatus* to Ulysses as a topic is Hinds's observation that the following poem expresses a desire to give Ovid's wife precedence over Penelope in the *Heroides* (see *Tr.* 1.6.22, 33).[47] The present discussion focuses on the manner in which the *relegatus* dismisses the myth of Ulysses. Some of his arguments are

[45]The text of *Tr.* 1.5.44 between *deminui* and *numinis ira potest* is uncertain. In any case, the line clearly refers to the wrath of Augustus.

[46]Ulysses myth: H. Rahn, "Ovids elegische Epistel," *AuA* 7 (1958) 105–120, at 115–118. *Recusatio*: Michael Drucker, *Der verbannte Dichter und der Kaiser-Gott: Studien zu Ovids späten Elegien* (diss., Heidelberg 1977) 95–97; cf. Gerlinde Bretzigheimer, "*Exul ludens*: Zur Rolle von *relegans* und *relegatus* in Ovids *Tristien*," *Gymnasium* 98 (1991) 39–76, at 60. Myth of exile: Claassen,"Ovid's Poems from Exile" (above, n. 44) 165–169.

[47]Stephen Hinds, "Booking the Return Trip: Ovid and *Tristia* 1," *PCPS* NS 31 (1985) 13–31, at 28. Hinds, who focuses on *Tr.* 1.1 and 1.7, does not spell out here

reasonable: the Greek hero did have a shorter voyage and loyal companions, he was a hardy, victorious warrior, and he was aided by a goddess (59–66, 71–76). However, one argument, which is conspicuous because it seems forced, underlines the homesickness of the *relegatus*: Ulysses missed only Dulichium (or Ithaca or Samos), whereas I long for the great city of Rome (67–70).

The apparent climax of this synkrisis recalls previous references to thunder (29) and an angry god (44): *cumque minor Iove sit tumidis qui regnat in undis, / illum Neptuni, me Iovis ira premit* (77–78). In other words, the wrath of Jupiter-Augustus surpasses Neptune's. If we find this measurement of a Homeric god's wrath against the standard of a living ruler's slightly incongruous, the incongruity is acknowledged when the *relegatus* points out the real reason he is suffering more than Ulysses. His own woes are historical: *adde, quod illius pars maxima ficta laborum, / ponitur in nostris fabula nulla malis* (79–80). This reminder both recalls his earlier claim that his woes are incredible yet true (49–50) and—if we apply traditional rhetorical categories—shifts his argument from refutation on the grounds of inappropriateness to refutation on the grounds of falsehood. Such a direct assertion of the falsity of myths is relatively infrequent in elegies which make extensive use of mythology, but it occurred in *Am.* 3.6.17–18 (cf. 3.12.41–42) and is implied in *Tr.* 3.8.11–12.[48] Having established his superiority in suffering on both grounds, the *relegatus* apparently cannot resist citing one more feature of Ulysses' fictional sufferings.[49] The most obvious difference between the two sufferers constitutes a second climax to the synkrisis: Ulysses returned home, and I seem destined to stay here forever (81–83). The persistence of this distinction depends on the distinction

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the connection brought about by the claims in 1.5 and 1.6 that the *relegatus* and his wife should take precedence over Ulysses and Penelope respectively as poetic topics. On Ovid's use of tradition with respect to his wife in a later poem, see Davisson (above, n. 44).

[48]In *Tr.* 3.8, the *relegatus* wishes that he could travel through the air like Triptolemus, Medea, Perseus, or Daedalus (1–6), but then reproaches himself: *stulte, quid haec frustra votis puerilibus optas, / quae non ulla tibi fertque feretque dies?* (11–12). His only hope is to pray to Augustus (13 ff.)—a hope which we now know to have been equally fantastic, although Ovid may not have known this at the time. *Tr.* 4.7.11–18 in a sense dismisses a series of mythological monsters: the *relegatus* would believe that all these creatures exist before he would believe in his addressee's disloyalty (19–20)—but the fact remains that he has had no letters from this addressee. Cf. Mary Thomsen Davisson, "*Omnia naturae praepostera legibus ibunt*: Adunata in Ovid's Exile Poems," *CJ* 76 (1980–81) 124–128, at 126–127.

[49]In *Tr.* 1.2, the *relegatus* similarly attempts to have it both ways in his use of Virgil: Janet P. Bews, "The Metamorphosis of Virgil in the *Tristia* of Ovid," *BICS* 31 (1984) 51–60, at 52, notes that Ovid first "disclaims ... epic associations" by distinguishing his sufferings from those of Aeneas and Ulysses (7–10), but then re-introduces epic associations through his description of the storm (13 ff.).

stated in the first apparent climax of the synkrisis, the harsher wrath of the contemporary sufferer's divine persecutor (77–78), as we learn from the conditional clause which concludes the poem: *ni fuerit laesi mollior ira dei* (84).

Line 84 also links the second half (roughly speaking) of the poem with the first half, which concluded *deminui siqua numinis ira potest* (44). Although the *relegatus* does not directly address his *sodales* at the close, his concluding reference to the need to appease a divinity's anger recalls his earlier exhortations. However, the Nisus example (24), used in the passage which praises loyalty and stresses the *honestum*, raises doubts about the *tutum*; and the synkrisis (57–84) which follows the attempt to prove the *tutum* (37–42) strengthens these doubts, by emphasizing the force and historicity of Augustus' wrath. The *amici* posited by this poem might well be skeptical about the advisability of helping its author. The *docti poetae* exhorted in 57 could be equally skeptical about the claim that the most famous long-suffering traveler can now be dismissed as a topic: the argument that Ithaca is not worth lamenting implies a trivialization of the *Odyssey* which is difficult to take literally. Indeed, Ulysses' love of his homeland will be defended in *Pont.* 1.3.31–36, which rejects many other examples with which Rufinus might try to "heal" the *relegatus* but does not include Ulysses in the list of inadmissible examples. *Tr.* 1.5 portrays a *relegatus* who is isolated—or has isolated himself—both from sources of practical help and from traditional consolation along the lines of οὐ σὺ πρῶτος.

IV

Three other exile poems which systematically reject traditional paradigms of suffering will be discussed briefly, followed by three passages which reject parallels for Augustus and Livia. *Pont.* 1.3 contains the most explicitly stubborn rejection of paradigms. The *relegatus* first thanks Rufinus for attempting to heal his *mens* and, in effect, refutes standard consolatory and exilic *praecepta* (1–60).[50] He then directly challenges his addressee to cite *exempla* of brave sufferers: *i nunc et veterum nobis exempla virorum,/ qui forti casum mente tulere refer* (61–62). The *relegatus* obligingly provides a list of exiles who supposedly suffered less because they were sent to less unpleasant places (63–82). This catalogue, consisting of four historical characters, five mythological characters, and one nation, is noteworthy primarily for its length and effect of completeness.[51] The *relegatus* finds no precedent for his own misery: *persequar ut cunctos, nulli datus omnibus*

[50]See Mary H. T. Davisson, "*Sed sum quam medico notior ipse mihi*: Ovid's Use of Some Conventions in the Exile Epistles," *CA* 2 (1983) 171–182, at 175–178.

[51]Cf. David R. Slavitt in his introduction to his translation of *Ovid's Poetry of Exile* (Baltimore 1990) viii: "In the *Ibis* ... that piling of reference upon learned reference

aevis / tam procul a patria est horridiorve locus (83–84). Whether or not Rufinus agrees, he is soon informed that he lacks one crucial advantage in any attempt he might make to use tradition persuasively: *sed sum quam medico notior ipse mihi* (92). When a sufferer first ostentatiously displays his mastery of consolatory tradition but then emphasizes the superior insight gained from his personal experience, further argument becomes pointless. We are simply left with the decision of the *relegatus*, in this poem at least, to assume the stance of the misunderstood sufferer.

The following poem, addressed to Ovid's wife, includes a lengthy argument that Jason suffered less than the *relegatus* (*Pont.* 1.4.23–46). This *exemplum* is not explicitly attributed to the addressee, but the placement of the first words which identify her (*fidissima coniunx*, 45) at the conclusion of the Jason example seems to warn her against citing it. The synkrisis opens by contrasting Pelias' relatively insignificant power with Augustus' (27–30) and continues with generally unexceptionable arguments: Jason did have a shorter journey and more help (31–40). However, one point of comparison is noteworthy: *illum furtivae iuvere Cupidinis artes; / quas a me vellem non didicisset Amor* (41–42). The literal interpretation, that Jason used the arts of Cupid, who had previously learned them from Ovid, who is now suffering exile as a result, intrudes recent literary history into traditional mythology and is chronologically absurd. This couplet adds wit, but it also underlines the difference between heroes, whose *laus* (24) depends on poets, and a poet, who can manipulate gods as well as heroes within the realm of his poetry. Although the couplet ostensibly expresses regret about the indoctrination of Cupid in the *Ars*, the artificiality of this connection stated between Ovid's condemned *carmen* and Jason draws attention both to the power traditionally claimed by poets and to the boldness of this particular poet. Only then does the *relegatus* mention the most obvious difference between himself and Jason: *ille domum rediit: nos his moriemur in arvis, / persteterit laesi si gravis ira dei* (43–44). Cupid may have been tamed in the *Ars*, but the godlike wrath of the emperor, supposedly provoked by that poem, will be less easily appeased.

A later poem, *Pont.* 4.10, unlike *Tr.* 1.5 and *Pont.* 1.3, mentions neither a possible *nostos* nor the wrath of Augustus (presumably now dead). This second detailed refutation of the Ulysses *exemplum* differs in many respects from the much earlier *Tr.* 1.5, but resembles this poem as well as *Pont.* 1.3 and *Pont.* 1.4 by suggesting—without actually stating—that the addressee might cite an inadequate mythological parallel. Certainly lines 3–4, which juxtapose *confers* with the addressee's name, imply that Albinovanus Pedo might propose an inappropriate parallel from nature: *ecquos*

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becomes, very quickly, funny ... the author in his remote helplessness being at least part of the butt of his joke."

tu silices, ecquod, carissime, ferrum / duritiae confers, Albinovane, meae? Forms of *conferre* are similarly used twice in the refutation of the obvious parallel from mythology: *exemplum est animi nimium patientis Ulixes, / ... nec tu contuleris urbem Laestrygonos umquam / gentibus, obliqua quas obit Hister aqua. / ... nec potes infestis conferre Charybdin Achaeis ...* (9, 21–22, 27).[52] Whereas the synkrisis of *Tr.* 1.5 emphasized generalities (Ulysses' shorter journey, companions, return home, and hardier nature) the synkrisis in *Pont.* 4.10 includes six proper names from Homer and a variety of other details which create an impression of erudition at first but seem arbitrary on closer examination. Calypso's love, Aeolus' gift, and the Sirens' song (13–17) may have been pleasanter than anything Ovid experienced, although Ulysses longed to leave Calypso, lost the bag of winds, and had to be restrained by force from succumbing to the Sirens' enticements (*Od.* 1.13, 10.46–49, 12.192–196). However, it is unlikely that an addressee as learned as Pedo would consider citing the advantages of lotus (18–20), since Ulysses resisted that temptation (*Od.* 9.91–102). Nor is it obvious why Pedo, should he turn to the harsher trials of Ulysses, would single out Scylla and Charybdis for specific comparison with the Heniochian ships and the Achaei (25–28). This unconventional interpretation of the *Odyssey*, like the passage which announces certain assumptions about Pedo's poem in progress on Theseus (71–82, discussed below), draws attention to the poet's privilege of wittily reinterpreting and re-creating myths according to the needs of a particular poem.[53]

The practice of dismissing possible parallels for one's own situation appears in *Her.* 17 and several times in the *Metamorphoses*, but is more prominent in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Partially comparable passages in Propertius show how much further the exiled Ovid carries this practice. Prop. 1.1 argues that Milanion enjoyed a happier outcome than the poet (15–18), but does not trivialize the hero's sufferings.[54] In Prop. 3.12, the catalogue of Ulysses' trials (25–36) leads to the conclusion that the addressee's beloved will outdo Penelope in fidelity (37–38), not that the addressee (nor, of course, the poet) will surpass Ulysses himself in endurance. By contrast, the length of the Ovidian synkrises and catalogue just examined, the direct challenges in *Tr.* 1.5 and *Pont.* 1.3, and the arbitrariness of some details of *Pont.* 4.10 all convey an impression of a *relegatus* determined to demonstrate both his unsurpassed mastery of mythological tradi-

[52]We need not assume that *contuleris* (21) is a generalizing subjunctive, since *potes ... conferre* (27) is indicative, and these two uses of *confero* echo the challenge *ecquid ... confers*, immediately followed by the name of the addressee, in lines 3–4.

[53]See further Mary H. T. Davisson, "*Duritia* and Creativity in Exile: *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10," *CA* 1 (1982) 28–42.

[54]See further Gold (above, n. 10) 4, following King (above, n. 12) 64–73.

tion and his unsurpassed suffering. We need not conclude that self-isolation from tradition was a biographical fact of Ovid's life, especially since the *relegatus* sometimes seems to protest too much, but we need to appreciate the importance of this stance in the exile corpus.

The *relegatus* seems to protest too much also in three passages from the *Epistulae ex Ponto* which reject possible parallels to Augustus and Livia. Two instances are discreetly brief but noteworthy for their lack of positive *exempla*. First, *Pont.* 1.2 encourages Fabius Maximus to appeal to a *princeps* who is not Theromedon, Atreus, or Diomedes (119–120). Augustus is praised earlier in the poem for his *clementia* (59), but he is not said to equal or to surpass any particular examples of mercy. Second, *Pont.* 2.2 contrasts Polyphemus and Antiphates with the *placidus* emperor (113–115) but again offers no positive examples. Moreover, fear is frequently expressed in the larger context: e.g., *sic tamen haec tempta, si non nocitura putabis. / ignosces. timeo naufragus omne fretum* (125–126).[55] Despite the praise of Augustus' moderation (115–118), an earlier passage contrasting the error of the *relegatus* with the wickedness of mythological rebels (9–14) allows us to wonder whether his *vitium* was sufficient to justify the defeat of Augustus' *clementia* and the strength of his *ira* (119–120).[56] A longer instance appears in *Pont.* 3.1, an exhortation to Ovid's wife to plead with Livia. After acknowledging the addressee's fear, the *relegatus* lists seven frightening mythological females whom the empress does not resemble: *quid trepidas et adire times? non inpia Procne / filiave Aeetae voce movenda tua est, / nec nurus Aegypti, nec saeva Agamemnonis uxor, / Scyllaque, quae Siculas inguine terret aquas, / Telegonive parens vertendis nata figuris, / nexaque nodosas angue Medusa comas* (119–124). This catalogue, in conjunction with certain passages suggesting that Livia is not always receptive, is unlikely to reassure.[57]

We need not read the entire exile corpus as anti-Augustan polemic. As Evans reminds us, "Ovid's treatment of imperial themes ... is not constant."[58] However, in addition to allowing for variations over time,

[55]The examples of mercy given in lines 25–26 appear to refer to Messalinus (see 23–24), not Augustus, and are followed by expressions of fear (29–32, etc.).

[56]On the *ira* of Caesar in the exile corpus, see further Ronald Syme, *History in Ovid* (Oxford 1978) 223–224.

[57]The interpretations of *Pont.* 1.2, 2.2, and 3.1 offered by Ursula Bernhardt, *Die Funktion der Kataloge in Ovids Exilpoesie* (Hildesheim and New York 1986) 113–120, 358–359 are similar to mine. On 3.1, see further Davisson (above, n. 44) 331–333, commenting that fortune favors Livia in lines 125–126 but is the enemy of the *relegatus* in 152.

[58]Evans (above, n. 43) 13, 16, *et passim*; he interprets the treatment of Augustus' wrath in *Tr.* 1 as an instance of "standard panegyric" (p. 14), but acknowledges that part of *Tr.* 2 mocks the emperor's apparent attitude to the *Ars* (p. 16); he generally finds

we need to consider the variety in Ovid's audience: for example, certain nuances might strike *docti poetae* more readily than an emperor who—in *Tr.* 2.219–240, if not in reality—had little time for close reading.[59] The rest of us may profitably remain receptive to such nuances.

V

In any case, it is easy to identify which examples the *relegatus* dismisses, even if these refutations do not have the same effect on every reader. It is more difficult to determine which exilic examples Ovid's readers themselves can most usefully question. Almost all readers of the *Metamorphoses* will recognize that Byblis is a confused woman in love, a character distinct from both the narrator and the author, and will reject her attempt to cite the *exempla deorum* (9.555). By contrast, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* were written in the first person by a man who, in the opinion of some readers, was usually too discouraged to write poetry which was witty, ironic, or anything other than "sincere."[60] In what follows, I shall argue that many examples cited by the *relegatus* have much in common with those in Ovid's earlier poems. After mentioning two generally accepted instances of absurd *exempla*, I shall point out that even some pleas for sympathy or help are double-edged, and that some of the examples cited are open to question. Finally, I shall consider both the *exempla* cited and the *exempla* rejected in a particularly complex poem, *Pont.* 3.6, which purports to allay a friend's fear of Augustus.

Many readers of *Tr.* 2 acknowledge at least a degree of humor in Ovid's ostensible defense of a poem which was ostensibly one cause of his exile.[61] The exaggerations and absurdities in this defense, including the catalogues of *exempla*, imply that the *relegatus* is not taking the charges against the *Ars amatoria* very seriously. For instance, in the catalogue of gods said to be interesting chiefly for their sex lives, the notion that one's principal thought in Juno's temple will be her jealousy of her amatory rivals (291–292) is questionable (although conceivably true for admirers of the *Metamorphoses*!). The catalogue of other supposedly amatory works is also obviously exaggerated: our idea of the *Iliad* would certainly be incomplete if

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that the later poems from exile are more "compliant" than the earlier ones (pp. 26–30). For a different view of a later poem, see below on *Pont.* 3.6.

[59] On an Ovidian tale clearly destined to affect different audiences differently, see David Konstan, "The Death of Argus, or What Stories Do: Audience Response in Ancient Fiction and Theory," *Helios* 18 (1991) 15–30, at 22, 26.

[60] Fränkel ([above, n. 15] 120) states that "the emotional history of Ovid in exile makes a good and true, if sad, story." Dickinson ([above, n. 15] 187) states that Ovid "no longer displayed the wit of earlier days (for obvious reasons)."

[61] E.g., Evans (above, n. 43) 16.

our only evidence were *Ilias ipsa quid est aliud, nisi adultera, de qua / inter amatorem pugna virumque fuit?* (371–372).

Exaggeration is evident not only in Ovid's poetic self-defense but also in some *exempla* supposedly intended to seek sympathy. Such passages, like those which sweepingly dismiss mythological parallels, invite us both to smile and to question the pose of the inconsolable sufferer.[62] For instance, when Ovid defends his supposedly inferior exile poetry on the grounds that he needs to express his feelings, he notes that the victims in the bronze bull, Priam, and Niobe were permitted to weep by Phalaris, Achilles, and Diana and Apollo (*Tr.* 5.1.49–58). As Frécaut notes, Phalaris presumably enjoyed his victims' tears and was not motivated by sympathy to permit these lamentations.[63] Moreover, the juxtaposition of Priam and Niobe reminds us that in the *Iliad* Achilles eventually exhorted Priam to stop weeping and cited Niobe as a model (24.549–613).[64] Furthermore, both the merits of Ovid's exile poetry and the conventional nature of poetic apologies invite us to protest that his poems are, at the very least, aesthetically superior to the groans of a torture victim. Hence we may question the appropriateness of the Phalaris example and the accuracy of the Achilles example. Priam and Niobe are used very differently in elsewhere in the same book. *Tr.* 5.12 criticizes a correspondent who has urged the *relegatus* not (as in 5.1.35) to stop writing, but to amuse himself by continuing to compose poetry: *exigis ut Priamus natorum funere plaudat, / et Niobe festos ducat ut orba choros* (7–8). Finding pleasure from writing in exile, although potentially difficult, is scarcely as improbable as rejoicing after a multiple bereavement. Both the exaggeration in *Tr.* 5.12 and the contrast to *Tr.* 5.1 invite a skeptical response.

A different sort of skepticism may be evoked by some passages urging the addressee to remain loyal. We have already examined passages which, while ostensibly rejecting gruesome examples in connection with Augustus and Livia, acknowledge that loyalty to the *relegatus* can be frightening. Some passages which explicitly urge loyalty acknowledge danger implicitly

[62]Lozovan (above, n. 44) catalogues inconsistencies and exaggerations in the complaints of the exile corpus; for example, the poems are inconsistent as to whether Ovid is completely isolated from other speakers of Latin (p. 365, citing *Tr.* 3.3.1–2, 5.7.53–54, and *Pont.* 4.14.41). Cf. Claassen, "Ovid's Poetic Pontus" (above, n. 44) *passim* and Slavitt (above, n. 51) viii.

[63]Frécaut (above, n. 1) 318. Note that Phalaris is rejected as a parallel for Augustus in *Pont.* 3.6.42 on the grounds that the emperor is more merciful.

[64]In *Met.* 6.310–12, the stone into which Niobe is transformed weeps, but in *Tr.* 5.1 the use of Priam encourages us to recall Homer's version. See Bernhardt (above, n. 57) 198–199, 202–203, following Georg Luck (ed. and comm.), *P. Ovidius Naso:* Tristia 2 (Heidelberg 1977) 282. Interestingly, in *Pont.* 1.2.29–30 Niobe is envied not for her tears but for her insensibility. Like Tereus in the *Rem. am.*, Niobe in the exile corpus is used to support a variety of arguments.

by citing (as opposed to rejecting) examples. For instance, praising the loyalty of Cotta Maximus in *Pont.* 2.3, the *relegatus* compares his own state to death (44) and underlines this comparison by citing the risks which Achilles, Theseus, and Pylades took for their legendary friends (41–46; cf. 3.2.27–34). Rather than attempt to argue that Cotta's loyalty involves less risk, the *relegatus* indicates that his addressee is contending with an angry *Fortuna . . . bene pugnans . . . hostis* (51–53). Nowhere does the poem claim that the addressee is being asked to do something less dangerous than the exemplary heroes cited.

Of particular interest are two passages where the *relegatus* cites examples to support explicit claims that loyalty is not excessively dangerous. *Tr.* 1.9 argues that Augustus is not angered by loyalty shown to his enemies: *de comite Argolici postquam cognovit Orestae / narratur Pyladen ipse probasse Thoas. / quae fuit Actoridae cum magno semper Achille, / laudari solita est Hectoris ore fides. / quod pius ad Manes Theseus comes iret amico, / Tartareum dicunt indoluisse deum. / Euryali Nisique fide tibi, Turne, relata / credibile est lacrimis inmaduisse genas* (27–34). Here are the positive *exempla* missing from *Pont.* 1.2, 2.2, and 3.1. However, tradition offers no confirmation of these claims.[65] The passage simply takes two elements found just four poems before, three famous pairs of friends (*Tr.* 1.5.19–24) and Augustus' alleged admiration for loyalty among enemies (37–40) and links them unconvincingly. Indeed, the tentative phrase *credibile est* in *Tr.* 1.9.34 invites us to question at least the Nisus example on the grounds of accuracy, and therefore to question Augustus' tolerance.

A more complex instance occurs in an interesting later poem which has already been mentioned, *Pont.* 4.10. Here, the *relegatus* urges Pedo, who is writing a poem about Theseus, to imitate his subject. Forms of the word *fides* appear three times (74, 78, 82) in nine lines. The *relegatus* distinguishes between Theseus' tasks and Pedo's, but fails to mention the ultimate risk Theseus took for Pirithous: *inque fide Theseus quilibet esse potest. / non tibi sunt hostes ferro clavaque domandi, / per quos vix ulli pervius Isthmos erat: / sed praestandus amor, res non operosa volenti. / quis labor puram non temerasse fidem?* (78–82). However, the poem is more specific about how Pedo need *not* imitate Theseus than about what he must do. If we assume that the *fides* cited here is Theseus' loyalty to Pirithous, as is spelled out in other poems which mention Theseus, we may doubt that such loyalty is *nobis imitabile* (77) and easy (81) since it ultimately took him not to Corinth (cf. 80) but to Hades.[66] If, on the other hand, the terms *fides*, *amor*, and *temerasse* remind us of the perfidious lover of Catullus

[65] See Bernhardt (above, n. 57) 138–139, following Luck (above, n. 64) 76–77.

[66] *Tr.* 1.5.19–20, *Tr.* 1.9.31, *Pont.* 2.3.43–44 (which equates exile in Tomis with death), and *Pont.* 2.6.26 all specify Theseus' loyalty to Pirithous, and all but the last indicate the dangers Theseus faces. *Pont.* 3.2.33 implies Theseus' loyalty by juxtaposing him

64.132 and *Ars am.* 1.536, we cannot find Theseus' behavior exemplary. Thus, Theseus' *fides* was too formidable for ordinary mortals in one episode and non-existent in the other. Although the obvious interpretation is that this reference to Theseus, like the others in the exile corpus, encourages the sort of loyal friendship shown to Pirithous in Hades, the diction of this particular passage and its silence on Hades may remind us of Ariadne. Despite the certainty expressed by the *relegatus* about Pedo's interpretation of a tradition and about the applicability of this tradition to Pedo's life, the existence of a truly encouraging *exemplum* is not established here.[67]

VI

Finally, *Pont.* 3.6 cites several *exempla* and rejects others in order to encourage the anonymous addressee not to fear that the disclosure of his name would provoke Augustus' wrath. Benedum argues that the poem is ironic and critical of Augustus' wrath; Evans contends that the praise of Augustan *clementia* is genuine, since Ovid would not have named the other addressees of the *Epistulae ex Ponto* if Augustus were as formidable as Benedum claims.[68] In my view, whether or not Ovid's historical audience included any friends who still feared to be named, both the references to fear and the apparent reassurances in *Pont.* 3.6 are often expressed in terms which recall the complaints voiced elsewhere in the corpus. In particular, the use of *exempla* supports the view that the emperor who relegated Ovid remains an alarming figure.

After reproaching the addressee for fearing to be named (1–6), the *relegatus* cites himself as an example of imperial mercy, for the benefit of an addressee who may not have observed this quality: *quanta sit in media clementia Caesaris ira, / si nescis, ex me certior esse potes* (7–8). *Clementia*, by its position in the line, is surrounded—and perhaps overwhelmed—by *in media ... ira*. Moreover, as Benedum notes, earlier passages in the corpus make it difficult to accept the notion that the punishment imposed represents mercy and that the *relegatus* himself would not claim to deserve less (9–10).[69] Thus, more than one answer is possible to the indirect question *quanta sit clementia*.

Nonetheless, Augustus does not forbid either correspondence or consolation (11–14), claims the *relegatus*, and one should not fear the *Augustos ... deos* (16) excessively, because: *fulminis adflatos interdum vivere telis /*

with Orestes' companion in a letter to a loyal friend. The exception, *Tr.* 2.403, appears in a list of mythological characters, all of whom have evidently experienced amatory tragedies.

[67] See further Davisson (above, n. 53) 39–41.

[68] Jost Benedum, *Studien zur Dichtkunst des späten Ovid* (diss., Giessen 1967) 121–124; Evans (above, n. 43) 183, n. 33.

[69] Benedum (above, n. 68) 75, citing, e.g., *Tr.* 4.8.49–50.

vidimus et refici, non prohibente Iove. / nec, quia Neptunus navem lacerarat Ulixis, / Leucothea nanti ferre negavit opem (17–20). The excessively timid addressee posited by this poem is likely both to notice that *interdum* qualifies the Jupiter example and to remember that Neptune, although he tolerated Leucothea's assistance to Ulysses, was less kindly disposed to Ulysses' hosts, the Phaeacians (*Od.* 13.125–169). Perhaps anticipating objections, the *relegatus* draws a distinction: Augustus is more moderate than other gods, whereas Jupiter and Neptune often punish people unfairly (23–30). Again, readers of the entire corpus, if they remember that Augustus was regularly likened to Jupiter and that the wrath of Jupiter-Augustus is worse than Neptune's, may be skeptical of the notion that Augustus is distinct from and fairer than both gods.[70] To this revised view of Jupiter and Neptune, the *relegatus* adds a third example: *cum pereant acie fortissima quaeque, vel ipso / iudice dilectus Martis iniquus erit. / at si forte velis in nos inquirere, nemo est / qui se, quod patitur, conmeruisse neget* (31–34). Once more, the wording deserves scrutiny: we are told not simply that Mars is unjust, but that he acknowledges his injustice; and we are then informed not that the condemned (assuming that this is the sense of *nos*) consider their punishment appropriate, but that they do not actually deny this. Anyone in Ovid's position was unlikely to deny Augustus' justice openly but would no doubt welcome an imperial acknowledgment of injustice.

The final distinction between Augustus and the Olympian gods acknowledges the desire of the *relegatus* for a reprieve: *adde quod extinctos vel aqua vel Marte vel igni / nulla potest iterum restituisse dies. / restituit multos aut poenae parte levavit / Caesar: et in multis me, precor, esse velit* (35–38). Those killed by drowning, lightning, and war are at least no longer in suspense about their fate; the *relegatus* and his addressee obviously experience less certainty. Recognizing that the addressee may still fear the *princeps* (39–40), the *relegatus* rejects Busiris and Phalaris as parallels (41–42; cf. 1.2.119–120 and 2.2.113–115) and rebukes his addressee for fearing *saeva ... in placidis saxa ... aquis* (44)—despite the previous acknowledgment of Neptune's caprice (29–30; cf. *Aen.* 5.848–849). The *relegatus* insists that his own fear is a thing of the past (45–50) but finally suggests that the addressee love him *latenter*, "in hiding" (60). If the addressee posited by this elegy were to express his hidden love by an attentive reading of both this poem and the rest of the corpus, he would, first, discover significant evidence for the fear inspired by Augustus, evidence which itself lies partly hidden in the gaps between the denial of this fear and the *exempla*; and,

[70] Augustus is identified with or compared to an angry Jupiter in, e.g, *Tr.* 1.1.81–82, 1.4.26, 3.11.62, 4.8.45–52, and *Pont.* 1.7.49–50. His wrath is worse than Neptune's in *Tr.* 1.5.77–78. and 3.11.62.

second, he would recognize the paradoxical boldness demonstrated by the willingness to hint at such a fear. Obviously modern readers, unlike the implied addressee of *Pont.* 3.6, can acknowledge openly these aspects of the elegies from exile.

It has been argued above that, although Ovid does not abandon mythology in exile, his poems offer significant indications that mythology provides neither perfect parallels for his unique sufferings and endurance, nor adequate proofs of imperial *clementia*. Needless to say, Ovid could not have anticipated these particular incongruities before he was relegated. Nonetheless, much of the humor and the interest of the pre-exilic corpus derives from the rejection of *exempla*, whether by Ovid's characters or by his readers. Our experience with the amatory works, the *Fasti*, and the *Metamorphoses* can teach us both to recognize Ovid's exploration of the limitations of tradition and to appreciate the new complexities, the humor, and the daring of the elegies from exile.[71]

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