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Author(s): Revilo P. Oliver
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XVI.—The First Edition of the *Amores*

REVILO P. OLIVER

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

The general belief that the present text of the *Amores* was composed by Ovid in his early twenties is not only unfounded, but is impugned by evidences of extensive revisions in subject and style which may have been made as late as 2 A.D., after Ovid had reached middle age. All conclusions drawn from the *Amores* regarding Ovid's early style or youthful character are therefore uncertain.

The amatory elegies in the famous collection entitled *Amores* are now almost universally assumed to have been the work of Ovid's youth, and it is generally believed that most, if not all, of them were composed when the poet was between twenty and twenty-five years of age. Naturally, therefore, all those who have had occasion to discuss the character or the literary development of Ovid have used the *Amores* as evidence from which to draw conclusions concerning his precocious sophistication, his insincerity or fickleness at the age when he should have felt most deeply, and his reliance on literary sources of inspiration.[1] It is not my purpose here to discuss the

[1] Since a full bibliography of Ovidian studies will be found in the standard manuals, to which should be added the new work by N. I. Herescu, *Bibliographie de la littérature latine* (Paris, 1943), I have not attempted to present an exhaustive documentation in the following pages. Works which I have occasion to cite more than once are listed here, so that the abbreviation *op. cit.* will invariably be a reference to this note.

EDITIONS

P. Ovidii Nasonis *Amores*, edidit, adnotationibus instruxit Geyza Némethy (Budapestini, 1907).

Ovide, *Les Amours*, texte établi par Henri Bornecque (Paris, 1930).

CRITICAL STUDIES

J. W. Duff, *A Literary History of Rome* (London, 1910).

P. Fargues, "Ovide, l'homme et le poète: II," *RCC* 40 (1938–39) 137–151.

H. Fränkel, *Ovid, a Poet Between Two Worlds*, Sather Lectures XVIII (Berkeley, 1945).

C. Lamarre, *Histoire de la littérature latine au temps d'Auguste*, 3 (Paris, 1906).

B. Lavagnini, "La cronologia degli *Amores*," *Ath* 9 (1921) 94–101.

E. Martini, *Einleitung zu Ovid*, Schriften der Philosophischen Fakultät der Deutschen Universität in Prag XII (Brünn, 1933).

B. Otis, "Ovid and the Augustans," *TAPhA* 69 (1938) 188–229.

F. Plessis, *La poésie latine* (Paris, 1909).

M. Pohlenz, *De Ovidi carminibus amatoriis* (Gottingae, 1913).

E. K. Rand, "The Chronology of Ovid's Early Works," *AJPh* 28 (1907) 287–296.

O. Ribbeck, *Geschichte der römischen Dichtung*[2] (Stuttgart, 1900).

W. Y. Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age* (Oxford, 1892).

A. L. Wheeler, "Topics from the Life of Ovid," *AJPh* 46 (1925) 1–28.

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character of Ovid, but rather to question the validity of the assumption on which all such judgments and deductions are based.

I

It is well known that the extant text of the *Amores* is a second edition,[2] for a prefatory epigram informs us that the three books of the present collection replace an earlier edition in five books. The date of the first edition seems to be reasonably well established within fairly definite limits, although there is some difference in scholarly opinion on the exact years to which should be assigned the two *termini*, the publication of the first book and the final publication of the complete collection in five books. The first of these dates rests on two statements made by Ovid in the autobiographical elegy in the *Tristia*:[3] that he began to read his poetry in public when his youthful beard had been trimmed but once or twice,[4] and that his songs in praise of Corinna won him early celebrity. Since it seems fairly safe to infer that the verses which he first read were songs to Corinna,[5] and since it is highly probable that these songs were the first of the *Amores*,[6] it follows that Ovid began the composition of his amatory elegies about 25 B.C., when he was eighteen, and published some of them soon thereafter. The date at which the collection in five books was completed is less certain. The widely accepted opinion[7] that the date of completion was about 15

[2] The argument of M. Piéri, *Quaestiones ad P. Ovidi Nasonis Epistulas heroidum pertinentes* (Massiliae, 1895) 7 ff., that there was no published first edition is so manifestly contradicted by the text of the epigram that it has won no approbation; cf. Arthur Palmer, *Heroides* (Oxford, 1898) ix; Bornecque, *op. cit.* v f.

[3] 5.10.57–60.

[4] A. L. Wheeler, *op. cit.* 12–16, has shown that the phrase *barba resecta* must refer to the trimming of the beard, and that the date must, therefore, be about 25 B.C., when Ovid was eighteen. The persistence of the older interpretation in some accounts, as in Fargues, *op. cit.* 139 ("C'était entre 22 et 25 ans que les jeunes gens, à cette époque, *barbam deponebant* . . ."), is probably to be attributed to ignorance of Wheeler's article. Schanz-Hosius (210) accept Wheeler's interpretation, but apparently assume that a man would not have a beard worth trimming (*scheren*) before he was twenty.

[5] Although Bornecque, *op. cit.* v, concurs in the belief that the *Amores* were begun in 25 B.C., he asserts, *ibid.* and in his edition of the *Héroïdes* (Paris, 1928) vii, that the *iuvenalia carmina* which Ovid first recited and published must have been some of the *Heroides*. He presents no arguments in support of his statement.

[6] As M. Pohlenz, *op. cit.* 3, cautiously observes: Corinnam a se iam tum [*sc.* iuvenalibus annis] cantatam esse Ovidius ipse testatur; num tamen ullum ex primis illis carminibus in editionem Amorum receperit nescimus. But the proviso is merely a formal reminder that we are here dealing with what is only very probable, not absolutely certain.

[7] Adopted, e.g., by Martini, *op. cit.* 27, Bornecque, *op. cit.* v, Fränkel, *op. cit.* 194.

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B.C. is based on the fact that one elegy in the present collection[8] contains an allusion to the defeat of the Sugambri in 16 B.C., and on the tacit or explicit supposition that the present text contains nothing that did not appear in the first edition.[9] It is, of course, a little astonishing that Ovid should have spent ten years in composing five books of elegies, and if, with Pohlenz and Rand,[10] we believe that the elegy which alludes to the Sugambri did not appear in the first edition, the date may be pushed back to 19 or 18 B.C. An even earlier date can be obtained by arguing that the epicedion on Tibullus was not a part of the first edition.[11]

The date of the second edition is less easily determined. It must obviously be later than 16 B.C. — but how much later? On the highly tenuous grounds that one elegy seems to have been written before the death of Horace in 8 B.C. and before the death of Propertius, who may be assumed to have died not long after 15 B.C., Pohlenz[12] suggests as a *terminus ante quem* the date 10 B.C., which, obviously, would better serve as a *terminus a quo*, since the poem might well have been written some time before the second edition was issued.[13] The belief, once universally held, that the second edition must have appeared before the *Ars amatoria* (2 B.C.) was based upon the vulgate text of that work in which one line read: deve tribus libris titulus quos signat Amorum. However, since the important word, *tribus*, does not occur in the best manuscript and the inferior manuscripts do not agree at this point, recent editors

[8] 1.14.45.

[9] Without this supposition, the *communis opinio*, if not actually inconsistent, requires some detailed explanation and defense. For example, Martini, *op. cit.* 27, holds that the first edition was published after 16 B.C., but also maintains that Elegies 2.18 and 3.15 appeared for the first time in the second edition. If these, why not also 1.14 — or at least some lines in that poem? At least some discussion would seem called for, but we are confronted by an attitude of mind which takes it for granted that any additions to or changes in the text of the first edition must be exceptional. Thus Clovis Lamarre, *op. cit.* 67, 80, is certain that 3.15 must have been in the first edition, although he quite plausibly argues that one poem, 2.8, was added in the second edition.

[10] Pohlenz, *op. cit.* 9. Rand, *op. cit.* 291: "We can hardly suppose that Ovid spent *more* than eight years on his earliest work."

[11] Cf. Wheeler, *op. cit.* 17.

[12] *Op. cit.* 7–9.

[13] It is true that Bornecque, *op. cit.* vi, adapting the argument of Th. Birt, *PhW* 33 (1913) 1226, infers from the word *quoque* in the first line of Book Two that the first book of the second edition must have been issued separately; but this inference, aside from the difficulty of reconciling it with the epigram, which clearly supposes the simultaneous publication of the three books, is not consistent with his assumption that virtually everything in the second edition was reproduced without change from the first edition, the various books of which were issued separately.

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have either admitted a crux or proposed emendations, such as *decerpens*, which leave the passage useless for our purpose. One emendation, indeed, by reading *vel de quinque libris*, would, if accepted, make the second edition necessarily later than the last book of the *Ars amatoria*, but it seems to have won little approbation.[14] Recent scholars, therefore, have generally refused to draw conclusions from the uncertain text,[15] and have tended to favor a date considerably later than 2 B.C. After a careful study of the chronology of Ovid's erotic works, Edgar Martini suggests 2 A.D. as the probable date of the second edition, since it was "nach der Ars veranstaltet, wie der Hinweis auf dieselbe in der für die 2. Ausgabe gedichteten Elegie II 18 beweist. . . . In dem gleichfalls für die 2. Ausgabe geschriebenen Epilog (III 15) verabschiedet sich der Dichter von der erotischen Elegie und kündet größere Unternehmungen an (worunter die Fasti und Metamorphoses, nicht etwa Tragödien, zu verstehen sind.)"[16] Unfortunately none of the three indications adduced in evidence is irrefragable. The words *artes teneri profitemur Amoris* do indeed strongly suggest an allusion to the *Ars amatoria*, but they are susceptible of another interpretation;[17] the valediction to the *mater Amorum* can scarcely be construed as a pledge thenceforth to abstain from verse on amatory

[14] Bruno Lavagnini's argument in support of his emendation of the line in question (3.343) is weakened by its own inconsistency. After asserting that the *tribus* of the inferior manuscripts *must* be a scribal emendation, and presenting (*op. cit.* 100) his own emendation, *vel de quinque*, he goes on seriously to suggest that Ovid, in a hypothetical revision of the *Ars amatoria* which affected only this one line, changed *vel de quinque* to *de ternisve* — a far less natural construction than the vulgate reading!

[15] E. K. Rand, *op. cit.* 293, argues that *tribus* is "not a later emendation, but a genuine tradition from the archetype." The reading certainly is not to be rejected merely because *R* is corrupt at this point, for it is to be hoped that monobibliolatry is now becoming old-fashioned, but the fact that some of the inferior manuscripts have *de veterum*, while those which have *tribus* vacillate between *de*, *deve*, and *deque*, suggests that they represent no certain tradition. It is quite possible that despite the pessimistic observations of Concetto Marchesi in his edition of the *Artis amatoriae libri* in the Corpus Paravianum (Augustae Taurinorum [1918?]) vii–ix, a thorough collation of the late manuscripts might elucidate, or even solve, the textual problem; see B. L. Ullman, "The Present Status of Latin Text Criticism," *CW* 4 (1910) 25.

[16] *Op. cit.* 27; cf. 10.

[17] Cf. Friedrich Lenz' "Bericht," *JAW* 264 (1939) 49: "Daß aus am. II 18, 19 ein Hinweis auf die Ars herausgelesen werden *muß*, kann ich nicht zugeben." In the *Amores* Ovid frequently thinks of love as an *ars* (e.g. 2.12.4: nequa posset arte capi) and many passages, whatever the date at which they were written, are really *praecepta amoris*. Cf. Pohlenz, *op. cit.* 10: Vt enim apud Ciceronem (Tusc. II, 12) philosophi nominantur '*artem vitae professi*,' sic 'artes Amoris professus' unusquisque dici potest qui Amori servit et carmina amatoria pangit.

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subjects;[18] and the *area maior* towards which the poet turns cannot be identified with certainty.[19] The net effect, however, is to suggest a late date as certainly possible and even, in the absence of other evidence, probable.[20] In any case, there is good authority for a belief that twenty-seven or more years *may* have intervened between the composition of the earliest *Amores* and the publication of the second edition, and that this edition may have been prepared by a man of forty-five looking with a critical eye at the effusions of his eighteenth year.

The process by which Ovid reduced the first edition of the *Amores* to the shorter second edition is almost universally assumed to have been largely, if not exclusively, a process of deletion, i.e. the elimination of juvenile compositions equal in length to two books. This inference is drawn from the prefatory epigram:

> Qui modo Nasonis fueramus quinque libelli,
> tres sumus: hoc illi praetulit auctor opus;
> ut iam nulla tibi nos sit legisse voluptas,
> at levior demptis poena duobus erit.

Now this epigram really tells us nothing, for while it is true that the first and last lines distinctly suggest that the revision consisted merely in the excision of some poems, it could be argued that the contrast between *hoc opus* and *illi operi* almost equates the second

[18] Thus Martini, *loc. cit.*, thinks that the double epistles of the *Heroides* were written after the publication of the second edition of the *Amores*.

[19] Lavagnini's argument, *op. cit.* 95, that the final epistle must refer to the *Metamorphoses* since an earlier elegy, 2.18, implies that the *Medea* had been completed is worthless because (a) the words *tragoedia nostra crevit* need not mean that the tragedy had been *completed* before Ovid's attention was, as he explains, distracted from it, and (b) the poems in the second edition are not arranged chronologically, e.g. the epicedion on Tibullus, which, it is generally held, shows such depth of feeling that it must have been written soon after his death (19 B.C.), is Elegy 3.9, while the allusion to the defeat of the Sugambri in 16 B.C. occurs in the *first* book (1.14). But on the other hand, even if the mention of Dionysus in the concluding lines of the final elegy necessarily implies that Ovid intended to turn toward tragedy as a subject, no safe deduction can be drawn therefrom, since the date of the *Medea* is even more uncertain and the subject of further debate.

[20] Brooks Otis has promised, *op. cit.* 201, but has not yet published, a defense of his chronological arrangement of Ovid's works. Not only does he, like Martini, F. Jacoby (*RhM* 60 [1905] 71), and others, place the second edition of the *Amores* after the *Remedia amoris*, but he makes it literally the last of Ovid's amatory works by placing it after even the double epistles of the *Heroides*. This might give a date as late as 6 or 7 A.D. Professor Otis has generously offered to place his full argument on the chronological question at my disposal, but I have preferred not to anticipate publication of his study.

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edition to a *novum opus* having little in common with the superseded collection. Nor does the epigram tell us why Ovid 'preferred' the new edition.[21] We must, therefore, in the absence of any indication of another motive for revision, accept the common and natural explanation that the basis of Ovid's preference was aesthetic and literary, and that he had removed from the collection work which fell below the standards of excellence established by his more mature taste. In the *Tristia* he himself assures us, no doubt with justifiable pride in his powers of self-criticism, that he rigorously eliminated and gave to the *emendaturis ignibus* work which he considered imperfect.[22] That this was all that he did — that after expunging a large number of poems, he reproduced the rest without significant change in the second edition of the *Amores*, is an ubiquitous and thus far unchallenged assumption. There is, as we have noted above, some difference of opinion as to whether Ovid added a few new elegies in the second edition. The point of view of scholars who believe that he did, is fairly stated by E. K. Rand: "The revision consisted in the addition of certain subsequent pieces, and the exclusion of two-fifths of the original poems."[23] The opposite point of view is that adopted by Hermann Fränkel: "The possibilities [of changes other than excision] . . . are remote, because the preface does not give the impression that Ovid had added new elegies or tampered with the old ones."[24] Both schools agree, then, that "most of the *Amores* seems to have been written while he [Ovid] was in his twenties."[25]

[21] It is true that two distinguished critics, Ribbeck and Martini, with a solemnity which argues a prolonged sojourn in Trophonian caves of scholarship, assure us that in the third line of the epigram Ovid warns his readers that they will find the new edition dull; they conclude therefore that he suppressed his most sprightly verses. Ribbeck, *op. cit.* 239: "In der zweiten . . . Ausgabe ist eine Anzahl der verfänglichsten Gedichte ausgemerzt." Martini, *op. cit.* 14: "O. hat also bei der Neuausgabe . . . eine Anzahl der laszivsten und pikantesten Stücke gestrichen." Procul este severi!

[22] *Tristia* 4.10.61 f. Note that these lines immediately follow mention of the *Amores*. There was, of course, no way in which an author could suppress work already published. The best that he could do was try to supplant it.

[23] *Op. cit.* 291. Of the two scholars who most freely admit additional elegies, Pohlenz, *op. cit.*, specifies 1.2, 3, 14, 15 and 2.18 as complete poems added in the second edition, but makes no suggestion of possible changes in earlier poems, while Friedrich Lenz, "Ceresfest, eine Studie zu Amores III, 14," *SIFC* N.S. 10 (1932) 299–313, finds that the narrative technique shown in 3.6, 10, and 13 implies a later date, but by contrasting them with the more juvenile, and hence presumably unrevised, amatory elegies, assumes that Ovid did not recast completed work.

[24] *Op. cit.* 194.

[25] *Ibid.* 11.

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This assumption is, it seems to me, impugnable on a priori grounds, since it presupposes a kind of revision for which there is no parallel in the literary history of the world. When poets produce work which is, by any standard of literary criticism, of uneven merit, they do not, except in very short lyrics, produce some poems that are perfect and others that are hopeless. If the compositions are of any length, all of them will probably be mixtures of strong passages with passages of inferior merit. Whatever the nature of the defects, whether the primary excess or deficiency be one of temperament or of expression, they are so much a part of the author in a given phase of his career that he cannot long escape their influence, and his vice, whether, for example, it be a penchant for precious metaphors or an hypertrophic sentimentality, will overtake him before he has completed two dozen lines. The most famous examples of literary revision are, of course, long narratives in prose or verse: Manzoni's *Gli sposi promessi* and *I promessi sposi* are two quite different books; the versions of Flaubert's *La tentation de Saint Antoine* are contrasts in both style and feeling; Tasso's *Gerusalemme conquistata* is scarcely recognizable as the work of the author of the *Gerusalemme liberata;* and it is a critical commonplace that Byron's *Don Juan* is really *Childe Harold* rewritten at an age when

> Imagination droops her pinion,
> And the sad truth that hovers o'er my desk
> Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

Although few lyric poets have in the course of their careers so little changed their basic conceptions of technique as Edgar Allan Poe, it is well known that he rewrote at least once almost every poem that appeared in his earliest published collection.[26] It is needless to multiply examples. I know of no instance in which a poet revised an early collection of verses by merely omitting a large part of them. It therefore seems to me highly improbable — almost incredible — that if, in the years that intervened between the first and the second editions of the *Amores*, Ovid's taste had so changed that he completely suppressed at least two-fifths of his earlier work, he did not find himself compelled by the same considerations to rewrite a very large part of what was left. At the very least, we are warranted in attempting to test this hypothesis by internal evidence.

[26] Poe's revisions may most conveniently be studied in the critical edition of his *Works* by James A. Harrison (New York, 1902).

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II

Since it appears that stylistic tests are not sufficiently delicate to serve our purpose,[27] the most promising approach to our problem is an examination of the content of the extant collection, making use of the one independent and trustworthy datum which we now possess concerning the content of the first edition of the *Amores*, Ovid's statement in his autobiographical elegy:

> moverat ingenium totam cantata per urbem
> nomine non vero dicta Corinna mihi.[28]

If we are justified in inferring from Ovid's words that at least the earlier books of the first edition of the *Amores*[29] dealt primarily, if

[27] Such stylistic tests as I have tried to devise gave negative results if applied objectively, and if applied subjectively (i.e. to a previously assumed division between "early" and "late" lines), could be used to prove anything. Far more elaborate stylistic tests have been used by Robert S. Radford, "The Juvenile Works of Ovid and the Spondaic Period of His Metrical Art," *TAPhA* 51 (1920) 146–171. His statistical analysis of vocabulary and metrics leads to the conclusion (*ibid.* 151) that "nearly one-fourth of the poems in our present *Amores* have been retained from the first edition with little change. . . . The remaining three-fourths . . . consists of poems which have either been fully revised or newly written." The cogency of his results, which to a considerable extent support the argument which I present in this paper, is greatly diminished by the fact that the same tests identify, *inter alia*, the *Priapea*, the *Culex*, the *Lydia*, and the poems of Sulpicia as the work of Ovid! For restatements of the statistical method, see R. S. Radford, "The Culex and Ovid," *Ph* 86 (1930) 68–117; R. F. Thomason, *The Priapea and Ovid* (Nashville, Tennessee, 1931). Cf. R. B. Steele, *A Review of "The Priapea and Ovid"* [Nashville? 1931?].

[28] *Tristia* 4.10.59 f. *Corinna* is a proper name, not a common noun, although it seems to be interpreted as the latter by F. A. Wright, *Three Roman Poets* (New York, 1938) 181: "Corinna is a hybrid [!] form from the Greek *Korê*, which means both 'girl' and 'doll.' Ovid, like Damon Runyon, uses it as a generic word for the female sex." This statement is probably an elaboration of Crusius's dogmatic remark in his article "Elegie," *RE* 5.2301: "Im Mittelpunkt . . . steht ein Weib mit griechischen *nom de guerre, Corinna*, 'das Mädchen' (zu κόρη, mit der Dichterin hat sie nichts zu tun)." Even if Ovid had not earlier heard of the (also hybrid?) Boeotian poetess, he must have read Propertius 2.3.21, and, given the Lesbia of Catullus, his use of the name Corinna could not have failed to suggest an allusion to the poetess. So far as I can see, the strange etymology cited above serves only to mitigate, *si quid sentiunt Manes*, the chagrin of the anonymous Mediaeval author of Vat. Lat. 1479, who explained Corinna as *quasi cor-urens*.

[29] We are, of course, here dealing only with a strong probability; cf. note 6 above. — The alternative hypothesis, that Ovid early published a collection of poems to Corinna entirely distinct from the first edition of the *Amores*, cannot be entirely ruled out of consideration. So far as I know, however, there is no evidence which indicates that the songs to Corinna were not the early *Amores*, and, for the sake of economy in discussion, I have in the following pages disregarded an hypothesis which, if accepted, would automatically cancel all evidence for an early date for the first edition of the *Amores*, and would thus enforce, rather than invalidate, my conclusions.

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not exclusively, with a feminine protagonist called Corinna, we may legitimately inquire whether the present collection possesses the characteristics which we may reasonably expect to find in a condensation of such a first edition.

Despite all the critical studies of recent years, we still find scholars who maintain that the present collection exhibits a quite satisfactory unity of theme. The most recent editor of the *Amores*, Henri Bornecque, assures us that "l'ouvrage présente une réelle unité." And this unity is not merely one of general subject and tone, but also a unity of what we may call plot: "à propos d'une femme appelée Corinne, Ovide nous présente l'histoire d'une liaison avec tous ses incidents, depuis ses premiers symptômes, jusqu'à la rupture définitive, en passant par toutes les phases de l'amour."[30] Even W. Y. Sellar, who is a little more sceptical, speaks of the *Amores* as "Ovid's poetry in which he traces the progress of an ordinary intrigue."[31] And Clovis Lamarre, the author of the most detailed analysis of these elegies, while dubious about the later books, recognizes a narrative unity: "il n'y a guère d'interruption dans tout le drame du premier livre."[32] It therefore behooves us to consider this interpretation briefly.

The present collection opens, appropriately enough, with two poems in which the author explains his decision to write amatory verse, and avows that he has been smitten by the missiles of Cupid. In the third poem, he quite plausibly proceeds to hope that the unnamed object of his affections will reciprocate his passion or, at least, yield to it, and he promises her the immortality of poetry: per totum pariter cantabimur orbem. He further assures her of his uncorrupted heart and that he will be devoted to her exclusively: non sum desultor amoris. So far, so good. But the fourth poem is addressed to a married woman[33] who not only has obviously been Ovid's mistress for some time, but who is not by any means his first mistress; and in place of the *nuda simplicitas* and *purpureus pudor* professed by Ovid in the preceding elegy, we find the wide experience of a veteran intriguer who freely, if not proudly, informs his present *belle amie* that he is no novice: feci multa proterve. And as though

[30] *Op. cit.* vi–vii.

[31] *Op. cit.* 327; cf. Fargues, *op. cit.* 145: "Ovide a imaginé l'histoire d'une liaison, avec de nombreux incidents."

[32] *Op. cit.* 57.

[33] For convenience I use the term "married" to indicate a relationship whose precise legal status is not defined in the text; note, however, *iure* in line 64.

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it were not enough to describe to her his experiences with a former *domina*, he includes an episode which must be intentional burlesque, for I doubt whether it could be accepted as a serious narrative even on the supposition that Ovid's great genius as a poet was surpassed by phenomenal accomplishments as an acrobat.[34] The fifth elegy does little to reassure our nascent scepticism. It is, to be sure, a charming and almost idyllic description of a visit to Ovid's home by a lady who is named Corinna, and, although it is not explicitly so stated, the implication is that this is not the first time that Corinna has granted her favors to the poet. But it not only seems highly improbable that she can be the lady of the preceding poem; if we are here dealing with a narrative, how can we explain the fact that the elegy which celebrates the poet's first conquest of Corinna is the twelfth elegy of Book II, and that five elegies after this amatory victory we find him beseeching a coyly reluctant and presumably chaste Corinna to yield to his proffered affection? This is a strange kind of progress in a liaison! Returning to Book I, we find that the sixth elegy is a paraclausithyron, an elaboration of a conventional amatory theme which can scarcely be interpreted literally, and that the seventh describes a quarrel with an unnamed lady. In the eighth, we find Dipsas, the *lena*, seeking to corrupt the virtue of a relatively innocent young woman who is apparently Ovid's recognized mistress, since the scene must be either his house or hers and his presence excites no astonishment. This girl obviously cannot be the married woman of the fourth elegy, who needs no admonition not to be faithful to one man, nor can she, who possesses no servants, be the Corinna of the eleventh elegy of the same book, who maintains an elaborate establishment and with whom an intrigue must be conducted with discretion. Even if we assume that we have thus far encountered no more than three mistresses of Ovid,

[34] Although lines 47–50 seem not to have troubled any editor or commentator, except M. J. Mangeart, who, in his note *ad loc.* in the second volume of the edition of Ovid in Panckoucke's Bibliothèque (Paris, 1836), defends an interpretation which is plausible in the context but does violence to the Latin, it seems to me that we are here dealing with a patent absurdity. We need not, I think, in this connection lament the loss of the works of Elephantis, or wonder whether the compositions of Forberg and Pierrugues are an adequate substitute. Ovid says that he fears that an infidelity of the kind of which he has been guilty could take place at the obviously respectable banquet which he is to attend — could take place *without attracting notice* and, under certain conditions, without being obvious to an *attentive* observer. This, I submit, is a preposterous fear of a physical impossibility; the passage is therefore ludicrous, and contains the kind of comic exaggeration that is a stock source of humour in farces.

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we must, if we suppose anything of a narrative order, supply a fourth when we reach the second elegy of Book II, where the poet seeks a means of approaching a closely guarded woman whom he saw for the first time on the preceding day; and this is by no means the last addition to the list that we should have to make if we continued our cursory review of the *Amores*. For subsequent amatory versatility, however, we are somewhat prepared by the fourth elegy of Book II, which might serve as a preface to the catalogue of women exhibited by Don Juan's valet in Mozart's opera and by Don Juan himself in Mérimée's story. But returning again to Book I, we may notice that the various incidents therein recounted have no apparent connection with each other — no consequences. Even taken by itself, the first book cannot be part of the "histoire d'une liaison." We should, at least, have to emend the expression to read "trois liaisons," and even then it would be doubtful whether the word *histoire* could be properly applied to a series of unrelated incidents. I frankly see no way of avoiding agreement with the majority of modern scholars, who deny that the *Amores* contain a continuous narrative — indeed, I think we may safely go further than many of them, for when the collection is described by Martini as "eine bunte Menge von Bildern aus dem Liebesleben, die, durch die zentrale Figur der Corinna zusammengehalten,"[35] or by Terzaghi as "una vera e propria casistica, in cui è incasellato tutto quanto può avere relazione con avventure amorose, . . . una storia fisiologica dell'amore [con] . . . il centro in una donna,"[36] we can take exception only to the assumption that the work has a single central figure. "There is no consistent story in the *Amores*. . . . They are the author's studies in varying moods of love"[37] — and more than that, there is no consistent heroine.[38] With at least three *dominae*

[35] *Op. cit.* 11 f.

[36] Nicola Terzaghi, *Storia della letteratura latina* (Torino, 1935) 1.440.

[37] J. Wight Duff, *op. cit.* 588.

[38] Hermann Fränkel, *op. cit.* 26, denies in effect that there are consistent heroines in the Latin elegy: "There is little continuity in . . . Roman erotic poetry, and scholars who have tried to piece together the history of one individual affair have lost their labor. . . . Each elegy is to be seen in its own light." Cf. *ibid.* 11: "The Roman writer['s] . . . ambition was to ignore the accidental limitations of his own personal adventure. He was trying to picture, not one person's emotions, but any true lover's love." Whether or not the scholars who have attempted "to piece together the history" of Delia, Cynthia, and Nemesis have toiled infructuously, the very fact that they were able to make the effort argues a high degree of consistency in the materials which they used. In the elegies devoted to these ladies, both they and the poets who celebrated them appear as distinct personalities distinguished by so many idiosyncrasies of

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in the first book, and more to come in later books, we must conclude that our text of the *Amores* exhibits unity neither of narrative nor of protagonist, and its real unity lies in the deliberately contrived variety of, and contrast between, the successive amatory episodes, i.e. the *variatio* which Wilhelm Port has identified as the principle governing the arrangement of the elegies.[39]

Once we have renounced the assumption of chronological or narrative sequence in our edition of the *Amores*, it becomes far more difficult to pronounce on the possible number of protagonists. This may explain what would otherwise be astonishing: the fact that despite the proliferation of Ovidian studies in recent years, we have no published analysis of the *Amores* according to the feminine figures who appear in them.[40] If we admit that the events described in a given elegy may have taken place several years after the events of the following elegy and several years before the episode narrated in the preceding elegy, identifications become extremely difficult. Our principal clue in this erotic labyrinth is the name of Corinna, which enables us to identify her positively as the heroine of twelve elegies which deal with a total of eight amatory episodes,[41] and to be equally certain that she is not the heroine of either of two other elegies.[42] We have, in addition, one incidental but important allusion to her by name,[43] and perhaps some grounds for conjecturing that she is the woman addressed in the third poem of the first book.[44] It is a significant commentary on the present text that so much becomes vague and doubtful when we no longer have the name of Corinna to guide us. The unnamed lady who is specifically contrasted with Corinna in 2.19 does not seem to be the same as the unnamed heroine of 3.7, who is contrasted not only with Corinna

temperament that the writers were singularly inept, if they were striving to ignore personal limitations. What we know of the heroines may not be historically correct, but it is not internally inconsistent.

[39] "Die Anordnung in Gedichtbüchern augusteischer Zeit," *Ph* 81 (1925) 451 ff.

[40] Miss Ruth Stafford, in a dissertation written at the University of Illinois which she hopes to publish in the near future, has classified the elegies according to the probability that the central figure may be Corinna, whom she finds to be a psychologically consistent figure.

[41] There are three diptychs and one non-amatory poem (on the death of the parrot) in the twelve elegies, which are 1.5, 1.11 & 12, 2.6, 2.7 & 8, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13 & 14, 2.17, 3.12.

[42] 2.19 and 3.7.

[43] 3.1.49 sqq.

[44] 1.3.25 (per totum pariter cantabimur orbem) may be echoed in *Tristia* 4.10.59 f.: totam cantata per urbem . . . Corinna — but I should hesitate to press the point.

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but with three other mistresses whose names occur only in this elegy. The closely watched girl of 2.2 cannot be the easily accessible lady of 3.2, since in both cases Ovid is making his first advances to the woman, but it would be difficult to decide whether the woman of 3.2 is or is not the woman of 3.7, whom we mentioned above. Plessis estimates[45] that the *dramatis personae* of our extant collection include a half-dozen *dominae* in addition to Corinna — a round figure which we may well accept, since greater precision, even if attainable, is unnecessary for our present purposes. Although it is quite possible that Corinna may be the heroine of elegies in which she is not named or otherwise designated, the extreme difficulty of identifying these elegies with any certainty may be illustrated by the fact that in either accepting or rejecting Lenz's thesis that the indiscreet woman of 3.14 is Ovid's first wife, we must appeal entirely to subjective considerations.[46] In the present discussion, therefore, we shall follow the procedure of Némethy[47] and Ribbeck,[48] and attribute to Corinna only those episodes in which she appears by name.

We must at this point consider a question which we can no longer postpone: the reality, or historicity, of Corinna. The overwhelming weight of scholarly opinion at the present time denies that she ever existed, and dismisses her as a figment of Ovid's imagination. With the exception of Clovis Lamarre[49] and Léon Herrmann,[50] no authority now maintains without qualification that Corinna was a real woman. Plessis is content with the more cautious statement that "il n'y a pas de raison suffisante de nier l'existence de Corinne."[51] To this list we should, perhaps, add by inference the name of Vin-

[45] *Op. cit.* 436.

[46] F. Lenz, "Ein Selbstbekenntnis Ovids?" *SIFC* N.S. 12 (1935) 233–4.

[47] *Op. cit.* 96.

[48] *Op. cit.* 229–232.

[49] *Op. cit.* 54–57.

[50] "La faute secrète d'Ovide," *RBPh* 17 (1938) 695–725. Herrmann's attempt to identify Corinna as the divorced wife of P. Lentulus Spinther is open to multiple objections ranging from abuse of evidence to implausibility of conclusion, and is, in my opinion, an unfortunate and unnecessary excursus which sadly detracts from the closely reasoned argument which is the main subject of his article. Herrmann's theory has at least the merit of accounting for *all* of Ovid's veiled allusions to the cause of his exile and of also explaining the otherwise mysterious disappearance of the last six books of the *Fasti*.

[51] *Op. cit.* 440. Cf. Ph. Martinon, *Les Amours d'Ovide* (Paris, 1897) vii–ix; A. Cartault, *La poésie latine* (Paris, 1922) 115: "La Corinne primitive a existé, mais elle a été noyée dans la multitude des Corinnes simultanées ou postérieures."

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cenzo Ussani, who does not seem entirely convinced that Corinna was not, after all, Augustus's daughter, the elder Julia.[52]

The opposite point of view is represented by so formidable an array of authority that we have only an *embarras de richesse* in choosing typical views. Although the disbelief in the reality of Corinna seems to have had its origin in the revelation of Ovid's very extensive literary indebtedness to his precursors in the amatory lyric, which was first fully illustrated by Zingerle in 1869,[53] modern scholars tend to base their conclusions primarily on data elicited from the *Amores* themselves, and hold that (1) the Ovidian poems reveal such lack of passion and sincerity that they cannot be drawn from actual experiences, and that (2) the character of Corinna is so indistinctly or inconsistently drawn that it is impossible to believe that she is an individual. The following quotations fairly represent the conclusions of the great majority of modern critics:

> Corinna war überhaupt keine Sterbliche von Fleisch und Blut, wie Lesbia oder Delia oder Cynthia, sondern ein Phantasiegebilde, auf das der Dichter nach diesem und jenem Modell Allgemeines und Conventionelles vereinigt hat. . . . In keinem dieser Corinnalieder[54] erklingt ein echter Hertzenston: sie sind mit Geschick und Anmut, aber nach der Schablone gemacht und schmecken nach der Schule. Mustert man den übrigen Vorrat der Liebeselegien, welche mit jenen unter dem Titel *Amores* vereinigt sind, so hat man den Eindruck einer nahezu vollständigen Sammlung erotischer Gemeinplätze, einer Encyclopädie oder Palästra des Amor, an welcher künstlerisches Studium, Witz und Phantasie mehr Anteil haben als das Gemüt.[55]

> Cette belle Corinne n'a pas existé. Elle n'est, semble-t-il, qu'une synthèse, qu'un portrait composite. . . . Notons, en effet, que la physi-

[52] *Storia della letteratura latina nelle età republicana e augustea* (Milano, 1929) 381. I confidently expect to see the cycle of scholarly conjecture about the cause of Ovid's exile soon completed by a return to the old doctrine that Julia was Ovid's mistress. Proof: Ovid informs us that his mistress dyed her hair not wisely but too well (1.14); on the word of Macrobius (2.5.7) we may believe that the elder Julia had occasion to do likewise; Ovid would naturally have made no allusion to so betraying a detail in his first edition, but in a second edition, published long after Julia went into exile, he may have sought to hint the identity of his illustrious paramour. Augustus got the point in 8 A.D. Ovid's involuntary ocular crime, therefore, consisted in seeing, not Livia nude, but Julia bald.

[53] Anton Zingerle, *Ovidius und sein Verhältniss zu den Vorgängern und Gleichzeitigen römischen Dichtern* (Innsbruck, 1869–71).

[54] Ribbeck uses this term to distinguish the twelve elegies listed in note 41 above from the rest of the *Amores*. His conclusions are carefully and cautiously based on these elegies only. Other critics, unfortunately, do not always emulate his precision in defining the basis of criticism.

[55] Ribbeck, *op. cit.* 229, 232.

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onomie, que la condition même de cette amoureuse sont dessinées d'une façon extrêmement vague.[56]

A much more probable solution . . . is that Corinna was no person in particular, but only a name about which Ovid grouped many experiences and memories and something of a continuous story. As she appears in the poems, she is little more than a *κωφὸν πρόσωπον*, with no individuality of temper or circumstances, nor are her personal traits and accomplishments distinct like those of Cynthia.[57]

Little penetration is needed to divine that Corinna is an epitome of many women. She is now married, now single; now adorable, now shameless.[58]

A careful reading of these most charming and daintily phrased trifles will lead any unprejudiced person to the conclusion that Ovid never had a serious affair with any woman in his life and Corinna was a lay-figure on whom to hang all that his taste, . . . his ingenuity, . . . and his excellent knowledge of Greek literature . . . could suggest. . . . Everything which Propertius passionately felt, Ovid feigns most prettily.[59]

Korinna [war] die Geliebte Ovids oder vielmehr der Schemen, den er an Stelle einer wirklichen Geliebten in seinen Amores unterschiebt. . . . Die Versuch, aus Ovids Angaben etwas über sein wirkliches Liebesverhältnis (oder die Verhältnisse) zu ermitteln, sind von wissenschaftlichen Standpunkte aus lächerlich.[60]

Since it can scarcely be supposed that Ovid lacked ability to write convincingly, this criticism of the *Amores* naturally suggested that the evidences of insincerity and irreality are, at least in part, the products of a conscious technique, designed, perhaps, to give to Ovid's work a certain originality by producing a sharp contrast to earlier love-poetry.[61] But Ovid must have sought more than

[56] Fargues, *op. cit.* 143.

[57] Sellar, *op. cit.* 327.

[58] Duff, *op. cit.* 588.

[59] H. J. Rose, *Handbook of Latin Literature* (New York [1937?]) 327.

[60] W. Kroll, *RE* 11.1397, *s.v.* "Korinna, 2."

[61] Martini, *op. cit.* 11: "Hatte Properz seinen Situationsmalereien und Stimmungsbildern durch planvolle Verflechtung der Gegenwart mit der mythischen Vorzeit eine romantische Färbung gegeben, Tibull seine Darstellung auf einen ländlich-idyllischen Hintergrund projiziert, so war Ovid bestrebt, das Liebesleben durchaus realistisch zu schildern. . . . Hatte Properz seinen Gedichten die ganze Glut seines leidenschaftlichen Temperaments eingehaucht, Tibull seine Lieder auf einen weichen, sentimentalen Ton gestimmt, so schrieb Ovid seine Kanzonetten ohne jede innere Ergriffenheit." Ovid's "Grundauffassung der Erotik als Gegenstand der Liebeselegie" is discussed in considerable detail by Erich Reitzenstein, "Das neue Kunstwollen in den Amores Ovids," *RhM* N.S. 84 (1935) 62–88.

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mere novelty. Thus E. K. Rand finds a delicate play of humor in the entire collection: "His purpose is not to unbosom what Schanz (§294) so sorely misses in the Amores — 'des Herzens auf- und abwogende Stimmungen'; it is to observe the lover and all his ways in life and in the elegy with the subconscious purpose of making his sentimentality ridiculous."[62] And Rand paints a charming picture of the youthful Ovid's secret amusement when his contemporaries were deceived by his lightsome fancy.[63] But Rand's description of Ovid's purpose as "subconscious" does not entirely accord with Ovid's use of literary elements which he must consciously have borrowed from earlier elegists. Neumann's careful study of Ovid's indebtedness to Propertius not only shows that Ovid cannot reasonably be accused of plagiarism, but that his originality frequently takes the form of irony or mockery in his adaptation of a borrowed *motif:* Saepe Ovidius rem, quam Propertius serio atque intento studio profert, iocose tractat, ut est animo ad iocandum prompto; vel, ut aliis verbis utar, Ovidius argumenta, quae Propertius aliquo casu vitae commotus tractavit, in facetias vertit.[64] Two American scholars have recently carried this critical tendency to what must be its ultimate extension. Miss Haight attributes to Ovid as a primary purpose an intent to make the serious amatory elegists ridiculous.[65] Brooks Otis concludes that "Ovid's amatory elegy . . . is in essence a *reductio ad absurdum* of the genre as exhibited by Gallus, Tibullus and Propertius."[66] Both Corinna and her lover are merely mummers in motley enacting a thinly disguised burlesque, and Ovid is serious only when he preaches a gospel of corruption through such figures as Dipsas, the *lena*, who is his *porte-parole.*[67]

The marked divergency of these critical interpretations in other matters merely emphasizes their agreement on the question with which we are here concerned, the implausibility of Ovid's portraiture of Corinna. We must, I think, grant that it is highly improbable that *all* of the scholars who have, in one way or another, identified

[62] *Op. cit.* 294 f.

[63] *Ovid and His Influence* (Boston, 1925) 12, 17.

[64] Rudolph Neumann, *Qua ratione Ovidius in Amoribus scribendis Properti elegiis usus sit* (Gottingae, 1919) 124.

[65] E. H. Haight, *Romance in the Latin Elegiac Poets* (New York, 1932) 150 ff. Cf. the notice of this book by D. W. Lucas, *CR* 47 (1933) 243: "The improbable view that Ovid *Amores* II, 6 is a 'travesty' of Catullus III, should not be stated as if it were an accepted truth, and there is still less justification for the statement 'he (Ovid) imitated other poets with such merry satire that Rome laughed with him.' "

[66] *Op. cit.* 197.

[67] *Ibid.* 203: "Ovid, in fact, is the *lena* and the dramatic device is only a tr

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Corinna as a *Phantasiegebilde* have based their opinions entirely on data manufactured by their own imaginations and subsequently read into the *Amores*.[68]

Since we have concurred with the preponderant scholarly opinion that the Corinna of our text of the *Amores* is a *κωφὸν πρόσωπον*, we should likewise concur in the conclusions drawn from this observation and deny that the lady ever existed in the flesh, were it not for the fact that these conclusions are open to two objections which seem to me insurmountable.

First, if Corinna was merely an incoherent fantasy, Ovid could scarcely have continued to the end of his life to affirm her reality. Writing in exile at the age of fifty-three, when he could have had no conceivable motive for perpetuating a juvenile mystification, and when, indeed, he had everything to gain from admitting an imposture and thus adding some needed support to his dubious claim to a *vita verecunda*, he explicitly states that he was inspired by a woman who was pseudonymously known as Corinna.[69] If we doubt

[68] Further evidence for the irreality of the Corinna of our text will be presented below, pp. 212 f.

[69] The lines are quoted above, p. 198; for the phraseology, cf. *Tristia* 2.427: sic sua lascivo cantata est saepe Catullo femina, cui falsum Lesbia nomen erat. It is true that S. G. Owen in his special edition, *Tristium liber secundus* (Oxford, 1924) 191 ff., thinks that Ovid avows the irreality of Corinna in the passage in which he tells Augustus that after his *Gigantomachia* was a failure, he (as Owen himself translates) "turned back to frivolous work, the poetry of youth," and stirred his spirit with "pretended passion." I transcribe the lines (2.339–346), omitting only a couplet of parenthetical lamentation:

> Ad leve rursus opus, iuvenalia carmina, veni,
> et falso movi pectus amore meum.
> Non equidem vellem: sed me mea fata trahebant,
> inque meas poenas ingeniosus eram. . . .
> Haec tibi me invisum lascivia fecit, ob Artes
> quîs ratus es vetitos sollicitare toros.

Note that Ovid does *not* say: rursus veni ad iuvenalia carmina *in quibus* falso amore pectus meum *moveram*. The words *movi* and *rursus veni* are strictly parallel and synchronous; granting that *iuvenalia carmina* are more than a synonym for *leve opus* and are, as Owen contends, the *Amores*, Ovid does not say anything about the source of *their* inspiration. If he says that he returned to the *Amores* and employed a *falsus amor*, he must refer to (a) *new compositions* added to the juvenile collection, (b) a *revision* of earlier compositions, or (c) new compositions on the same general theme of love, i.e. the *Ars amatoria*. Which of these interpretations is adopted is immaterial to our argument, but the third is by far the most plausible since the subject of this elegy is not the literary biography of Ovid, but an apology for one specific composition, the *Ars amatoria*, whose subject is, indeed, the art of seduction *falso amore*, and which must be the book which the poet has in mind when in the next line he exclaims *non equidem vellem*, "Would that I had not done so!" In no case can he be presumed to be describing his youthful elegies.

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the veracity of this statement, we must also doubt Ovid's veracity when, a few lines later, he tells us that he was thrice married, and we must, in effect, discard all details of his biography that are based on the autobiographical elegy. In fact, if that elegy is an attempt to deceive posterity, we could even question the identity of Ovid and so enliven classical scholarship with an analogue to the Shakespearean controversy. If, on the other hand, we believe Ovid, we must explain why the sincere inspiration provided by a real woman *quae moverat ingenium* left so few traces of sincerity or even reality in verses written by one of the world's greatest masters of the poetic art.

Second, Ovid's contemporaries, far from recognizing in Corinna a Protean fiction or a ludicrous caricature, not only believed in her reality but endeavored to ascertain her identity. Ovid could scarcely otherwise have dared to write in the *Ars amatoria:*

> Nos [*sc.* poëtae] facimus placitae late praeconia formae:
> nomen habet Nemesis, Cynthia nomen habet,
> Vesper et Eoae novere Lycorida terrae,
> et multi, quae sit nostra Corinna, rogant.[70]

The secret was evidently well kept,[71] but no one doubted that there was a secret. Martial's well-known quip on the obscurity of great poets during their lifetimes, contains the couplet:

> rara coronato plausere theatra Menandro;
> norat Nasonem sola Corinna suum.[72]

The joke would have been utterly pointless if it were not a parodic inversion of an established tradition that Corinna was a real woman whose identity was known only to the discreet poet who had been her lover.

Now this fact, it seems to me, can be reconciled with modern criticism of the *Amores* by only two hypotheses. Either (1) Ovid's contemporaries were all so stupid that, despite their thorough knowl-

[70] 3.535 ff.

[71] The contrary implication in *Amores* 3.12.7–10 is not in point. We are not defending the historicity of poems in the present edition, but even if the statement in these lines is to be taken literally, the conditions can be met by the supposition that the liaison was known to a few confidants. As every one knows, contrary to the teaching of proverb, many intrigues of which the public never hears are often known to an astonishingly large number of people. A kind of negative evidence may be found in the fact that Apuleius, who was evidently well informed concerning the *vies amoureuses* of the elegiac poets (*Apologia* 10.3), makes no mention of Corinna.

[72] 5.10.10 f.

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edge of Roman manners and social customs, many aspects of which are obscure to us, and despite their intimate acquaintance with the characteristics of persons concerned in current scandal and gossip, of which we know virtually nothing, and despite their familiarity with the whole corpus of elegiac poetry, much of which is now lost, they failed to recognize the many signs of artificiality, insincerity, and satire which "any unprejudiced person" should perceive, and they possessed not even the "little penetration" needed to know that Corinna is "an epitome of many women"; or (2) their belief in her existence was based on texts which we do not have, i.e. a first edition of the *Amores* which differed greatly from the edition that has come down to us.

The choice between these alternatives should not be difficult, nor is the choice which seems obvious to me entirely devoid of the support of eminent authority. Although an *obiter dictum* in an excursory footnote is, so far as I know, the only comment of Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff on the problem we have discussed, his opinion may be inferred from the words which I have italicized in his remark that in our text of the *Amores*, "Gestrichen ist, *was einmal dagewesen sein muß*, die Einführung Corinnas, die *jetzt* ein ganz blutloses Geschöpf ist mit einem leeren und doch anspruchsvollen Namen."[73]

III

A major difference between the first and second editions of the *Amores*, such as we have predicated, could conceivably have been produced by the deletion of a considerable number of complete poems, and thus does not necessarily indicate revision of such earlier poems as were retained in the later edition.[74] It therefore remains to be determined whether the metamorphosis of the erotic narrative was the result of (a) mere omission of many, or even most, of the poems which presented Corinna in terms sufficiently sincere and realistic to make her seem the analogue of Cynthia and Delia, or (b) omissions plus changes in the remaining poems so extensive that it is impossible to say what portions, if any, were reproduced without change from the first edition. In other words, can the *Corinnalieder*

[73] *Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos*, 1 (Berlin, 1924) 239.

[74] Plessis, *op. cit.* 437, censures Ovid for injudicious deletions: "Dans la première édition, les Corinniennes étaient groupées et formaient les trois premiers livres. . . . Ovide n'en dut rien retrancher."

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of the present collection have formed part of a reasonably intelligible and plausible sequence?

We may first attempt to arrange in chronological order, so far as possible, the eleven[75] elegies which deal with eight episodes of which Corinna is indubitably the heroine, and the three other elegies which contain references to her. Although the relative place of some poems cannot be determined exactly, a fair approximation is the following order.

(1) 2.17. This must be the first poem in the sequence, since the poet's plea to Corinna to accept his proffered affection, and the promise, Non tibi crimen *ero* . . . non *erit* nobis hic infitiandus amor, clearly imply that, strictly speaking, the liaison has not yet begun. (Let us note in passing that line 29 implies the previous publication of at least one book in praise of Corinna, and that the elegy ends with the promise, absurd in the present context, that she alone will be celebrated in the *Amores*.)

(2) 2.12. This must be placed next in sequence, since it celebrates the first occasion on which Corinna gave herself to the poet.

(3) 1.5. The idyllic description of Corinna's visit to Ovid's home almost certainly belongs here, since the last line implies that her visits have not thus far been frequent.

(4) 1.11 and 1.12. This diptych is later than the preceding elegy since numerous visits by Corinna to Ovid's home are said (1.11.5) to have taken place. Corinna's *coiffeuse* is named Nape.

(5) 2.13 and 2.14. The exact place in the sequence is uncertain. Corinna has become pregnant and ascribes her pregnancy to Ovid.

(6) 2.11. The propemptic song to Corinna embarking on an unexplained voyage by sea may be placed here, since the feeling displayed, if genuine, belongs to an early phase of the liaison in which passion has not become satiety.

(7) 2.7 and 2.8. A much later stage seems implied by this diptych in which Ovid and Corinna's *coiffeuse*, here called Cypassis, deceive the now jealous and suspicious mistress.

(8) 3.12. The final rupture is apparently imminent, since the poet not only denounces Corinna's infidelities but somewhat ungallantly suggests that only the glamor lent her by his verse has enabled her so to prostitute herself. (This and the preceding epi-

[75] I exclude 2.6 as useless for our purposes, since it tells us no more than that somebody gave Corinna a parrot.

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sode suggest, if there is any sincerity in them, a desire for a kind of revenge on a mistress already lost or discarded.)

(9) 2.19.9–18. The allusion to Corinna implies that the liaison has been terminated for some time.

(10) 3.7.23–26. The liaison with Corinna has long been terminated, and since the mistress first named, Chlide, was a recent (*nuper*) connection, there is a slight implication that the series of mistresses is Corinna, Libas, Pitho, Chlide, and finally the frustrated but nameless heroine of this elegy.

(11) 3.1. This cannot be dated by the reference to Corinna in lines 49 ff., but the concluding statement that Ovid is about to abandon amatory elegy suggests that this poem should be placed last in the sequence.

It is at once apparent that the elegies which we have thus arranged in chronological order are seemingly placed at random in the extant edition of the *Amores*, and that the order in which they occur in this edition cannot possibly be even the vestige of a narrative sequence. Although we have no positive evidence, it is probable that in the first edition Ovid arranged the poems to Corinna in the roughly chronological narrative sequence used by Tibullus, Propertius, and Lygdamus,[76] whom he studied so closely. This is the normal order in which a series of amatory poems dedicated to one woman would naturally be arranged. If the logically developed introduction to the amatory theme in the first three elegies of the present collection, or either of the promises of poetic and amatory fidelity made in seemingly introductory poems (1.3.15–20 and 2.17.33 f.), formed part of the original edition, that edition must have at least approximated a narrative arrangement. And if we suppose that one or more books of elegies to Corinna were published before the liaison was terminated, it is difficult to see what other arrangement could have been employed. In any case we are justified in concluding that if the elegies whose chronological order we

[76] The elegies to Delia, Marathus, Nemesis, Cynthia, and Neaera all seem to follow generally (i.e. allowing for an introductory poem, as Tibullus 1.1, and for reminiscence, as Propertius 4.8) in a sequence which traces the development of the liaison. It is indeed unfortunate that we know nothing of the arrangement of the work which may have been most similar to Ovid's first edition, and which, in any case, would provide a more trustworthy analogy than the comparatively short sequences in the Corpus Tibullianum; the statement of Servius, *ad Ecl.* 10.1: Gallus . . . poëta eximius . . . amorum suorum de Cytheride scripsit libros quattuor, is our only information. Was the collection similar to that of Propertius, or was it even more exclusively amatory in theme? Was the title *Amores?*

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have outlined above were in the first edition arranged in any logical pattern, Ovid in the second edition must have deliberately rearranged them in such a way as completely to destroy their sequence and connection. This, of course, would imply a total change in the purpose and tone of the collection — even, perhaps, an intentional obliteration of Corinna as an individual.

If, now, we scrutinize the *Corinnalieder* in search of those hints regarding Corinna's social and civil status which would most diligently have been sought by the curious among Ovid's contemporaries, we find not only a vagueness which might well be the result of discretion, but definite contradictions.[77]

Was she married? The poem which we have placed first chronologically implies that she was an independent woman, since there is an express statement that love between her and the poet need not be concealed. The poem which immediately follows in the chronological sequence explicitly declares that Corinna was guarded by a *vir*, who must have been her husband or the equivalent. Yet if there had been a *vir*, we should expect some further mention of him — indeed, a reference would have been unavoidable in the elegy (2.19) in which Ovid retrospectively enumerates, for the edification of a married woman whose husband is too complaisant or confident, the various obstacles which Corinna coquettishly devised to make herself difficult of access and thus maintain his interest. The need to devise obstacles, however, cannot easily be reconciled with the statement in 3.1 that the lady was subject to such close surveillance by a *custos* that it was necessary for her to steal from her bed at night and walk with bare feet to a rendezvous with her lover. In 2.7 and 3.12 she is represented as the mistress of a household and free to receive visits from Ovid or, presumably, any other man. The final paradox, however, awaits us in the propemptic elegy (2.11), in which the phrase *socios Penates* can only mean that Corinna had lived in Ovid's home as a resident mistress.[78]

As we have seen, good external evidence warrants the belief that the identity of Corinna was successfully concealed. This agrees with the precautions observed in 1.11 and 1.12, but is contradicted not only by the joint residence assumed by 2.11, but also by the

[77] Cf. note 38 above. Comparable inconsistencies are not, so far as I can see, to be found in the earlier elegists.

[78] Cf. Némethy's comment *ad loc.*: SOCIOSQUE PENATES, communem domum; poëta Corinnam secum habitasse fingit. I can see no other interpretation.

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implication of 2.7.5 f. that Ovid and Corinna appear in public together,[79] and by the affirmation in 3.12.7: nostris innotuit illa libellis. This phrase may be mere hyperbole, but it should be noted that the elegy in which it occurs more or less directly contradicts five other elegies, including the two with which we have just said that it agrees in one detail. For elegy 3.12, which apparently marks the last stage of the liaison, states that Ovid had thitherto had no rival for Corinna's affections (line 5), thus excluding the *vir* of 2.12; it implies (line 6) that he does not have the means of supervision which would presumably be at his disposal if, as in 2.11, she lived in his house; it assumes (line 10) that she never had the advantages which enabled her to be *immitis* in 2.17; and it asserts (line 16) that he has kept at least the promise of poetic fidelity made at the end of 2.17, thus excluding the entire episode described in 2.7 and 2.8.

A fairly extensive list of minor inconsistencies could be compiled, but need not be set forth here. The contradictions we have noted are surely so obvious that Roman readers could not have failed to notice them; and I think we should be credulous indeed to impute to those readers a credulity so great that it could not be shaken by the obvious. The Corinna described in the elegies we have examined is too Protean to be one mortal woman. It is probable, therefore, that the references to her status which give this impression did not *all* appear in the first edition. If, however, we grant that some of these *Corinnalieder* are either poems which appeared for the first time in the second edition or poems from the first edition so extensively revised that the original conception of Corinna as a heroine was distorted or defaced, it becomes impossible to determine with any certainty what elegies, if any, have not been subjected to revision, since, so far as I can see, the only appeal left to us is to subjective judgments, which are always in danger of being influenced by preconceived notions of what Ovid should have felt, done, and said. I confess that it seems likely to me that the *vir* of 2.12 is the product of a late addition or rewriting, since, in the one poem in

[79] The preceding distich provides a curious question which our insufficient knowledge of the application of the Lex Iulia de theatris makes it impossible to answer. When Ovid looks back at the *summa theatri* and thus arouses feminine jealousy, where is Corinna? If she is in the women's section of the theatre in a position from which she can see Ovid, would not his natural excuse be that he was looking for, or at, her? It would almost seem that she was seated beside him. She must, of course, be near him to intercept the glance mentioned in the next couplet, but this incident need not take place in the theatre.

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which he appears, he serves to augment the number of obstacles expugned by the poet, and thus emphasizes the proposition *militat omnis amans*, which seems to be the main point of the poem; but this estimate is based partly on my feeling that the poem contains too much ingenious paradox and too little Corinna to have been acceptable as an expression of sincere emotion — and I see no way of proving this proposition. Again, 3.12 is, as we have noted, in conflict with external evidence, but I personally should hesitate to assume that it is, therefore, a late addition, for the very lines in question (7–10, 43–44) are, perhaps, as humiliating as any lines ever addressed to a woman, and I should prefer to believe that their rather subtle bitterness was excogitated under the stimulus of some genuine feeling. But this again is not evidence.

It will be sufficient, I think, to have shown that there is a considerable probability that Ovid in his second edition of the *Amores* deliberately destroyed by excision and rearrangement a sequence of amatory elegies that formed a plausible literary portrait, and by revision of some or all of the remaining poems carelessly or intentionally defaced what was left of the portrait. His purpose — if we may infer that from his attainment — was to produce a *palaestra amoris*, a collection of erotic exempla so arranged as to form a series of neat antitheses, connected by constant variety, and consistent only in their adroit blending of urbane irony with fugitive suggestions of deeper passion. Whatever may have been lost to posterity because the earlier and more conventional collection was thus supplanted, Ovid exhibited in his second edition the originality in which he seems always to have taken conscious pride: ignotum hoc aliis ille novavit opus.[80]

[80] *Ars amatoria* 3.346. That a first edition of the *Amores* radically different from the second should have left no trace of its contents, need excite no astonishment in an age which possesses only two lines of the *Medea* and no ancient biography of Ovid. Quotations from the extant *Amores* are found in the *graffiti*; there may also be some equally brief quotations from the first edition, but I know not how we should recognize them. One curious detail of uncertain implication may be noted. Apollinaris Sidonius, in one of the letters which remind us that literary interests could still excite ardour in the dusk of classical civilization, remarks (2.10.6) that feminine society need be no deterrent to poetic composition: si . . . contubernio feminarum poëticum ingenium . . . quereris obtundi, reminiscere, quod saepe versum Corinna cum suo Nasone complevit. Now it is true that Sidonius proceeds to give a kind of catalogue of ladies who inspired or encouraged poets, but it may be significant that Corinna came first to his mind, although there is nothing in the extant text of Ovid's works which would account for this precedence. It is also true that Sidonius retails elsewhere the story that Corinna was a *Caesarea puella* — a story probably invented in his own day

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If we grant that our hypothesis is probable — or even that it is not improbable — then, unless we find some way to identify verses that *must* have appeared in the first edition, no inferences concerning either the style or the character of Ovid in his youth can safely be drawn from the *Amores*. At best, we must use in this connection the phrase which, unhappily, it is necessary to use so frequently in classical studies: *non liquet*.

(cf. G. Przychocki, "De Ovidii 'Caesarea puella,' " *WS* 36 [1914] 340–42) — but the two details need not have come from the same source. If Sidonius means that Corinna completed verses, I should be inclined to suppose that he may have had, directly or indirectly, knowledge of some elegy in which Ovid either explained his choice of a poetess's name for his mistress (the *Einführung* suggested by Wilamowitz; cf. note 73 above) or presented an amatory dialogue, such as might have been suggested by Horace (*Carm.* 3.9); but I am not persuaded that he need mean more than that Corinna's relations with Ovid provided material for poetic composition.

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