less transformed by their successors if these are actually operating as models of reading.

The survey given in this chapter of Ovid's models may—in spite of the fact that material for almost a whole library has been pressed together in a few pages with no pretensions whatsoever of completeness—justify some preliminary conclusions. If it can be assumed that the readers of Ovid had the same qualitative literary background as he had himself—and that assumption should have a fair chance of being valid as the *Metamorphoses* actually did find favour with the readers—then the nature of their appreciation of the poem must have followed the lines indicated in the present chapter. Quantitatively the literary background has no doubt varied very much, from almost complete knowledge of Greek and Latin literature to almost nothing—if, that is, persons who know the *Aeneid* can be said to have read almost nothing. But fundamentally readers with such quantitatively different qualifications would discover the same interrelation between the *Metamorphoses* and its models—or, in the case of those who knew Vergil only, its model. However, the interplay between model and performance is only one among the factors determining the experience of reading the *Metamorphoses*. The poem requires a certain minimum of familiarity with the Greco-Roman mythology, but it is probably not too unsafe to believe that in Ovid's time even the less educated Romans had a knowledge of mythology which can be compared to the knowledge everybody had of the Bible and Holy Legends some generations ago [158]. Even if one of these rather unqualified readers should have read the *Metamorphoses* as his first book at all, he would probably have found it entertaining, as young undergraduates do nowadays, simply because Ovid is a good narrator; but the literary refinements and the subtle virtuosity of varying the models would have been wasted upon him, in much the same way as the irony in Hans Andersen's fairy-tales is wasted on children—a fact which does not imply that their experience is in itself less valuable or true. The average Roman reader, however, would be qualified to discover at least some examples of interplay with a model. And we may confidently believe that to the majority of the readers Ovid was already a name when they started unrolling the *Metamorphoses*.

III

The Ovidian Context

It is certain, then, that what the reader knew, or rather, perhaps, what he thought he knew of the letters and life of Ovid would influence his experience of the *Metamorphoses*. The different works of a poet always tend to form a complex unity: we feel that the production of one man could not be made up of entirely isolated pieces, but must follow certain organic laws. So—as it may have appeared from the previous chapter—ancient literature in general and Roman literature in particular should not be regarded by the reader only as a sum of *monumenta* but also as a living structure in which the single works are determined by inheritance and environment: On the one hand they retain their individuality on the other they exert influence upon and are in turn modified and transformed by other works throughout their lifetime, *i. e.* the period during which they are read. To use an analogy from another field of art to illustrate this point, the effect of *Palazzo Massimo alle colonne* in Rome upon the beholders—*i. e.*, in a sense, its architectonic structure—is now influenced by the broadness of *Corso Vittorio Emmanuele II.*, which itself receives some of its character from that noble building which is now forming part of an architectonic milieu including the church of *Sant' Andrea della Valle* and *Palazzo Farnesina;* but before the *Corso Vittorio Emanuele* was made a century ago the effect of the façade was quite different, as it could only be seen in its full height from the narrow *Via del Paradiso* of which the open *loggia* on the ground floor seemed to form a continuation; and the curving of the façade was parallel to the opposite side of the narrow *Via della Valle.*—

What holds good of Roman literature as a whole is also true of a poet's literary production: however different the individual poems may be, they always remain expressions of the same mind. We should not, however, rashly identify what appears from the poems to be the mind of the poet and what was actually the mind of the man. Poets are prone to put on magic garbs, making themselves either invisible or unrecognizable, and to

try to use their poems as biographical evidence where they do not explicitly give it (and even in that case they may not say the whole truth) seems to me almost as unsafe as to form an idea of the private personality of an actor by studying his *roles*. But actors, too, have an identity as *actors*, ranging within certain limits. In the same way *as poet* Ovid is always *sui similis* to some extent, however different his attitudes may be, and whatever he was like in real life. Some readers knew Ovid personally but we have no evidence to show us if and how that acquaintance affected their appreciation of his poems. The overwhelming majority of readers knew him only from his poems, besides, of course, knowing his career as a poet. Implicitly and—sometimes—explicitly Ovid has made himself part of his poems, but his personality as revealed by his works may not at all cover his historical individuality or at least not the whole of it; the "Ovid" of the *Amores* seems to be almost as composite [1] as Corinna, and at another level he characterizes his work as the better part of himself [2]. But from our point of view this problem does not have to disturb us, because what matters for the understanding of his poems, are the attitudes the poet takes as a poet. And contemporary readers would have his identity as a literary personality, his works, and his career in mind when reading the *Metamorphoses;* in other words: the other works would be models of reading for the *Metamorphoses* and the reader's knowledge of Ovid's literary career would form part of the background against which he saw his poem. As observed by Wilkinson [3] Roman poets wrote more about themselves than most Greek authors, and this seems to be due to the fact that they supposed that their readers wished to know something about themselves as well as about their message. In a general sense Roman literature might be said to be more subjective than Greek literature. In Ovid's case, however, the readers would not have been able to extract very much autobiographical information from his poems, had it not been for the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. When, for instance, he mentions that both his parents found it necessary to economize, or to make him economize [4], probably few ancient readers would take that as a real piece of autobiographical evidence, seeing that *qua* elegiac poet he had to be *pauper (i.e.* not *very* rich), whether or not he was so as a citizen. And the information that his wife came from Falerii is not given because the readers were supposed to be interested in that fact but in order to motivate in a natural and human way the description of a festival in that town [5]. The only factual autobiographical information in the *Amores* then is that his name was *Naso* [6] and that he came from the land of the Paelignians [7]. The *Ars,* the *Remedia,* the *Heroides,* the *Metamorphoses,* and

the *Fasti* do not add anything new about the author himself, and it seems most unlikely that the lost *Medea* should have contained any such information. Ovid's readers had to content themselves with his poetical attitudes: the *nequitia* and *lusus* of the *Amores*, the peculiar role of magister in the *Ars* and *Remedia,* the *connoisseur* of female hearts in the *Heroides*—and probably in the *Medea* as well, the teller of tales in the *Metamorphoses*, and the aetiologist in the *Fasti*. Not until the catastrophe of the exile did it become necessary for him to tell his readers about his own person, and then it was not only because he assumed that the recipients of the poems and the general public after them might be interested but for an ulterior purpose.

In the present chapter I shall try to investigate how the poems before the exile could have prepared the reader for the *Metamorphoses* by their complex of poetical attitudes, and how the biographical information and personal poetry from the exile may be assumed to have determined the background against which the reader would experience the *Metamorphoses.*

Ovid often alludes to his other poems, inviting his readers to compare them. It may serve as an illustration of his ironic elusiveness as a poet that the first time he refers to another project of his, *viz.* in the first line in the first book of the *Amores,* he is not to be believed; he was, so he says, about to write an epic poem in hexameters—as a matter of fact an *Aeneid* [8]—when Cupid stole one foot, thus reducing him to elegy. The fiction is quite transparent, but—surprisingly enough—the completely similar *locus* in *Amores* II, 1 about the frustration of the poet's epic ambitions by his mistress' slamming her door has induced a considerable number of competent scholars [9] to believe in the existence of an Ovidian *Gigantomachia,* the plan of which has ingeniously been reconstructed by Owen [10]. This epic poem is one of the ghostworks in the history of ancient literature [11]—and somehow I feel that Ovid would have enjoyed the misunderstanding. What he did was to introduce new variations of a poet's apology for writing as he does. And as demonstrated by Reitzenstein [12] and, from another point of view, by Wimmel [13] the novelty consists in apparent lack of seriousness. Any sensible reader must have felt that this was not a poet who wrote elegies because he was forced to do it by the nature of his talent or experience. His disguise is charming and humourous and this effect is partly brought about by the fact that the disguise reveals itself as a disguise—and yet the verses show that the poet is deeply in love with elegy. Ovid retains the apologetic form while slyly hinting that he has nothing to excuse. He makes a choice because he

likes the genre and thus the reader is prepared for his choosing a new field after exploiting the possibilities of elegy. And because literary apology in Ovid is not to be accepted at its face value as an indication of some necessary obligation but has become a device to mask a wilful choice, it is quite natural that Ovid can use the apologetic tradition to explain his going from low to high poetry and not only *vice versa*. True, that had been done before him, *viz.* by Vergil in the proem to the third book of the *Georgica* [14]. But the difference between the attitudes of the two poets is considerable in spite of the apparent similarities—both poets promise greater works but want to finish the present ones first; as demonstrated in detail by Wimmel [15] the Callimachean distinction between high and low poetry, fundamental until then for all apologetic poetry, is now losing the absolute value it had before in the sense that here a choice had to be made and that no poet could do both or rather that no poet could aspire to the greatness of, say, Homer and the classical tragedians; both poets envisage their projects as results of their maturing as poets and men. But whereas Vergil had to modify and change the generally accepted theories on literature in order to justify both the promise and the performance of the *Aeneid,* Ovid found the pattern already made, ready for use; as a matter of fact, after the *Aeneid* nobody would deny the possibility of emulating the Greek masterpieces. Vergil had to conquer neotericism—and did so by modifying neoteric categories; for Ovid there was no difficulty, as far as literary theory was concerned, in exchanging the low key with a higher one. The solemnity of Vergil's promise is brought about in part by the very difficulty of making it, and in Vergil it does not at all compromise the decision he has made that he wants to finish the *Georgica* first—on the contrary, that is what a serious and responsible poet would do. Another element constituting the solemnity of the Vergilian passage is the connection between his project and the national revival of Rome in the person of Caesar. That this element is absent in Ovid is natural as it is not national epic poetry but tragedy he is going to write; it should, however, be noted, that Caesar and the feeling of obligation to write about his deeds is not found elsewhere in "programmatic" passages in Ovid, except in the proem of the *Fasti,* which belongs to the exile. An experiment might illustrate to some extent why: if the abortive project in *Amores* II, 1 had not been war between Giants and Gods, but instead between Rome and her enemies, if Gyes had been replaced by Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra, and Jupiter by Caesar, the whole thing would have been extremely tactless and rather close to *lèse-majesté*. As it is, only the gods are deprived of literary fame.—Ovid, placed between Elegy and Tragedy

is not in any serious trouble: he may choose either—and, unlike Hercules, he finally chooses both of them. One might say that the allegory in Vergil serves to illustrate the inward necessity of the poet's development, while the allegory in Ovid serves to give the poet a formal *alibi* for doing as he pleases. Here again Ovid warns his reader against taking him too seriously; the allegory goes to extremes which produce a comical effect instead of the solemnity normally associated with that device [16]. And few readers having read his facile suggestion of a compromise, which Tragedy accepts, apparently unable to resist his charm, would expect him to remain faithful to her in spite of his words *Tu labor aeternus* [17]. Actually tragedy did not become the life-work of Ovid but only a brief interlude [18], and Ovid seems to play upon this irony—the laugh being directed against himself; the irony would not escape readers of the second edition of the *Amores*—this was later than the *Medea* as can be gathered from *Am.* II, 18. In that poem nothing is said about a divine vocation of the poet to write tragedy; on the contrary Ovid says that he had taken the tragic sceptre *privata manu* [19] and had to give it up again and occupy himself with elegiac production, *viz.* the *Ars* and the *Heroides*. *Am.* II, 18 is evidently an addition made in the second edition, and the contradiction between that and *Am.* III, 1 has therefore been explained by assigning the latter to the first edition [20]. That explanation implies the presupposition that the *Amores,* as we have them, are a kind of chance anthology. And evidently they are not. So, if we suppose that III, 1 was part of the original 5-book-edition and even follow Wimmel's assumption [21] that it formed the prologue to the fifth book there, it has been transformed by its new context, implicitly because readers knew that Ovid had written a tragedy and then abandoned the genre again, and explicitly because Ovid actually says that he has done so. The self-ironic attitude of the poet as poet is not so different from the self-irony of the poet as lover in the *Amores*. So in *Am.* II, 7 Ovid carefully disguises himself as the faithful lover (he may persuade the girl but the very perfection of the argument makes the reader suspicious), and in the following elegy he demasks himself—but only to disguise himself equally cleverly as the unfaithful lover. The most important problem in the contrast of attitudes in *Am.* II, 18 and *Am.* III, 1 is not one of chronology or literary history but concerns the *function* of that contrast in the *Amores* as we have them and in Ovid's amatory poetry. And part of that function may be demonstrated by a short survey of the poet's attitudes in the prologues and epilogues in the three books of the *Amores:* in I, 1 it is evident that the poet has to fall in love in order to write elegy and not *vice versa* as in Propertius

and Tibullus. In I, 15 the poet defied Envy, glories in his achievement, and ends by promising himself immortality; few readers would fail to remember Horace's epilogue to the Odes [22] and might then believe that the poet has finished his work. But the explanation follows in II, 1: he would actually have been through with elegy had it not been for the fact that his girl closed her door. That is a reversal of the theme in I, 1: now he must write elegy because he *is,* unhappily, in love. The contradiction is not a serious problem but an element of the play, as neither of the attitudes is to be taken quite seriously. Then in II, 18 the theme is again reversed: this time it is the very happiness of his love that forces him to go on as an elegist, but now with new kinds of elegiac production. This poem should be regarded as the epilogue of the second book although it is not the last one in the book. II, 19 is not however, a sort of *Anhang oder Beigabe,* as Lenz [23] puts it, but has an intimate relation to II, 18. The theme is reversed once again: first the happy love constrains the lover to go on with amatory poetry, then the very lack of obstacles threatens that love; and the result of that threat is—an elegy (which is, however, at the same time an elegiac letter and a lesson in the art of love as well). Also at the end of the second book the reader might wonder how the poet would manage to go on with another book of elegies. But once again, in III, 1, an unpredictable event, the intervention of *Elegeia* and *Tragoedia,* helps the poet to keep his promise of three books. After II, 18 the reader knows that this device is only a device, and that is one of the points. At last III, 15 is a farewell to elegy; now the poet heads for bigger enterprises without saying exactly what kind. After III, 1 the reader might believe that the *Medea* is hinted at but he knows from II, 18 that it cannot be so. The effect of surprise—or rather of pseudo-surprise is used in the very beginning of the work, in both book-transitions and in the transition from the *Amores* to Ovid's ensuing works. By confusing the chronology of his own works of this period in the second edition of the *Amores* Ovid has ruined our possibilities of establishing a neat sequence in literary history and this has sometimes caused the irritation of scholars. But—more important to the reader—he has indicated by his subtle play that the *Amores* are at the same time his first and his last amatory work and that the whole of this group—with the *Medea* as an interlude—should be regarded simultaneously as a diachronical sequence and a synchronical structure: The reader is not allowed to forget that *e. g.* the *Ars* was written quite a long time after the bulk of the *Amores;* but he is also reminded that yet he can use and must use the *Ars* as a model of reading.

Ovid's amatory poetry, viewed in its totality, embraces almost every aspect of love, and the poet constantly changes the point of view: the young man in the *Amores,* young women in the *Heroides,* the professional in the *Ars* and the *Remedia* advising both sexes how to love and how to stop loving, the interpreter of tragic love in the *Medea* and the expert of cosmetics in the *Medicamina.* There is something new and surprising about all these works. In an admirable paper, to which I have already referred, Reitzenstein has demonstrated that the *Amores,* for all the similarities they may have to their predecessors, have an entirely new artistic aim [24], and, accordingly, the experience of the readers must have been quite different. The *Heroides* are, as Ovid states himself [25], a new genre although the pattern is found among the elegies of Propertius. As for the *Ars* and the *Remedia,* Ovid accepted the principle that poetry should be useful—and turned it inside out as R. Syme puts it [26]. We know hardly anything about Ovid's tragedy but although the *Medea* and Varius' *Thyestes* are mentioned together by Tacitus [27] it seems rather unlikely that Ovid's play should have corresponded to Horace's idea about a revival of classical tragedy in Rome, a program which was, apparently, in accordance with the cultural policy of the government; in any case Ovid did not receive a million as a reward. The *Medicamina* may be a specimen of a genre *à la mode;* in *Tristia* II, 471 ff. Ovid mentions a whole series of didactic poems on various "low" subjects as games, sport, and the entertaining of guests. But these poems may have been the aftermath of Ovid's poems and not their models. Compared with the scientific didactic poems of Aratus and Nicander the novelty in Ovid's *Medicamina* consists in a choice of subject matter which makes a "little" but serious genre funny and in comparison with Vergil and Lucretius Ovid's message is ostensibly trifling. Where Lucretius is saving the soul of men and Vergil the spiritual welfare of the nation, Ovid invites his female readers to save—the beauty of their faces. In poetic technique the *Ars* is more akin to the *Georgica* [28] and the *De rerum natura,* and here, too, the effects is partly due to a contrast between form and subject matter. It might be said that Ovid's works are not really what they pretend to be. The *Amores* pretend to be subjective erotic elegies but the identity of poet and lover, fundamental for elegy in Propertius and Tibullus, is wavering in the *Amores.* It would certainly be wrong to read their elegies as autobiographical confessions of factual experiences. The personal feeling is thickly overgrown with topics of erotic literature, a fact which certainly would not have escaped ancient readers. The point is, however, that in Propertius and Tibullus personal

passion forms the *point de départ,*—is, as it were, the historical truth behind the mythology and the topical expressions. But in the *Amores* the attitude of *servus amoris* is not to be believed. The *Heroides* have the form of letters, but this fiction is evidently only a device to make possible the elegiac monologues; here, sometimes the illusion is corroborated, in Penelope's case by mention of the means to get the letter through and in Leander's case by his explanation why his letter comes instead of himself; but that Ariadne, left alone on Naxos, should have sent a letter to the unfaithful Theseus is so impossible a thing that Ovid does not make any attempt to make it rationally acceptable. The *Ars* and the *Remedia* are didactic poems in form, but their content is rather descriptive; and the apparently cynical attitude taken by the professor of love or "non-love" is modified almost to the opposite when Ovid slyly declares that while conquest is partly a matter of chance, the preservation of a woman's affection is a matter of art alone; it then appears, as observed by H. Fraenkel [29], that the actual directions and suggestions add up to a recommendation of constant loving care and thoughtful, patient, humble devotion; the really important thing in this frivole art of love is—to be earnest. But this "message" is presented in the disguise of cunning shrewdness. Ovid pretends to give advice only for the *demi-monde* but it is not easy for the readers to see that distinction work in the poems and actually the supervisor of civic morals failed to see it. The *Medicamina* are supposed to instruct women how to enhance their beauty, but there can be little doubt that the poem was more seldom found in the boudoir than in the salon. Finally, as for the tragedy, one of the few things we know about it is that it was not a real tragedy to be acted on the stage as the *Thyestes* of Varius but apparently meant for reading or for the auditoriums [30].

The character of Ovid's production before the *Metamorphoses,* his playfulness and irony, his elusiveness and ambiguity would have prepared the public for reading the *Metamorphoses.* What readers find in a work depends in part on what they expect to find, and it may safely be inferred from the nature of Ovid's earlier production that readers would not have expected to find in the *Metamorphoses* an epic poem which could easily be placed in one of the known categories of that genre: mythological epic in a Homeric or Apollonian sense, *Kollektivgedicht* in a Hesiodeic or Callimachean sense, historical epic in the hellenistic manner, transferred to Rome by Ennius and later, with a new approach, by *e. g.* Varro Atacinus, or national Roman epic in the manner of Vergil or Varius. As demonstrated in the previous chapter readers would have recognized elements from all these kinds of epic poetry in the details of the *Metamorphoses.* It may be added that of course the poem was a *carmen perpetuum* (it continues without breaks for fifteen books), that of course it was a historical poem (it describes the world from the creation to contemporary times), that of course it was a mythological poem (mythology forms the main content and the historical events in the later books are transformed into mythology), that of course it was a collective poem (it contains hundreds of shorter and longer stories), that of course it was a national poem (the *finale* of the poem—and of the world's development—is the apotheosis of Caesar and Augustus). There are so many "of courses" that the whole thing turns out to be no matter-of-course at all. But it is not for the normal reader to be too much troubled by questions of classification; he leaves that to the critic or the scholar. However, the antecedents in literature, especially Callimachus and his school would have prepared him to follow a poet's fancy, individual and idiosyncratic as it might seem to be. In the *Aetia,* however, the poet himself was present throughout, as Ovid in his *Fasti,* and such presence would naturally tend to make the caprices of the poet more acceptable; it should be noted, however, that, unlike the *Aetia,* the *Fasti* have a constant and evident principle of composition, *viz.* the calendar itself; the paradoxical outcome of this procedure is that the stories appear to follow each other in a completely fortuitous order. In the *Metamorphoses* Ovid combines a Callimachean capriciousness with epic anonymity. From a theoretical point of view this may have seemed a hazardous experiment, and Ovid—never much given to theoretical speculations—does not make any attempt to justify it but simply declares that his mind inclines to write a *carmen perpetuum* about metamorphoses from the creation to his own time. The outcome has justified the procedure, and the very idea of combining Callimachus and epic objectivity might—along with a number of other things—be said to justify to some extent Ovid's repeated claim for *ingenium.* So, if the readers were prepared for the *Metamorphoses* both by Ovid's earlier appearance in literature and by literary antecedents, they would certainly not miss that element of surprise to which they were accustomed in Ovid.

Some copies of the *Metamorphoses* were in circulation at the moment when Ovid was relegated to the shores of the Black Sea. The work was almost finished but the final touch—so Ovid tells his readers—had not yet been added. Already on his journey away from Rome Ovid instructed a friend and admirer—who carries a golden ring with the portrait of the poet—to publish an edition with the preface:

Orba parente suo quicumque volumina tangis,
his saltem vestra detur in urbe locus.
Quoque magis faveas, haec non sunt edita ab ipso,
sed quasi de domini funere rapta sui.
Quicquid in his igitur vitii rude carmen habebit,
emendaturus, si licuisset, eram [31].

We do not know whether this Roman knight, receiver of the elegiac epistle, did actually publish an edition. But the publication of the first book of the *Tristia* would in itself have been sufficient to carry out the poet's intention. Although relegated from Rome as a man he would stay in Rome as a poet. The official reason for his relegation was his poetry, especially his *Ars amatoria,* and with that background in mind it seems to me that the fact that he insists to live on as a Roman poet after the catastrophe implies a clear defiance. It has often been maintained that the *Metamorphoses,* along with the *Fasti,* were meant as a kind of recantation, that Ovid, in an attempt to prevent the impending doom, wanted to assert himself as a respectable poet. And as a matter of fact the *Metamorphoses* seem to have a certain Augustan tendency and the *Fasti* have as their subject-matter that past which Ovid had once gladly left it to others to glorify. But whatever was the intention, the *Metamorphoses* did not appease the Emperor, and it seems reasonable to assume that Ovid knew that before his relegation, seeing that the work was all but finished by that time and that, at least some time before it was finished, the general character of it must have been known to interested circles, including the Emperor himself. Roman poets did not keep their works secretly in their desks until they could publish them in book-form. For contemporary readers the *Metamorphoses* would be intimately connected with the fate of its poet and would inevitably be read with that in mind. Besides, the relation between literature and public life had a long tradition in Rome and although the tradition had been fundamentally changed with the fall of the republic and the instalment of the principate, the relation between politics and literature had never been more intimate than it was under Augustus. It would not be correct to assume that in the first decades of the empire literature was guided and directed from above as a kind of propaganda. Men like Horace and Vergil are not likely to have lent their talents to political and ideological purposes which were not compatible with their own views. But there is ample evidence that personally or through members of his government the Emperor stimulated by advice and subsidiaries such literary production as could be supposed to increase the prestige of

the new *régime*. Under the republic, too, leaders had been intensely aware of literature as an instrument in the political struggle. And with the monopolization of political power literature became an *instrumentum regni* and played an important part in that great *sistemazione* of Rome which Augustus endeavoured to bring about. There is nothing surprising in this. Whenever a monarchy, in whatever disguise it may prefer to present itself, is established it tries to make the forces of the nation—political, economical, and intellectual—serve its own interests. It seems that political efforts cannot actually make art and literature arise, but under favourable conditions it can accelerate their development to a considerable degree. In other cases the efforts to make literature serve the ends of the state seem to have rather disastrous effects. The Emperor may have been tempted to overrate the possibilities of exerting a positive influence through his cultural policy; in the first decades of his administration this policy was extremely successful. Under the Emperor's personal leadership the religion of the Roman state was restored, temples were rebuilt and rituals were revived and this seems to have been not only an empty façade but to have corresponded to what may be termed a temporary revival of the people's religious instincts. The capital was filled with splendid public buildings and monuments symbolizing the new and better Rome that had emerged out of the chaos of the civil wars. The leading poets of the age were actively cooperating in the work of restoration. The restored republic was flourishing under guidance of its first citizen, and although the historian may discard the republican constitution of the principate as an illusion, the Emperor may have believed in it himself as well as *e. g.* Vergil. We should not underestimate the retrograde effect of political cant. Not everybody was satisfied and there was still some grudging in the corners but nevertheless there was a general feeling that the Golden Age had returned to Rome and Italy. But the whole movement proved to be a temporary wave of public feeling more than a real return to what was supposed to be the ideas and character of the ancestors. The national consensus and enthusiasm was a reaction against the depression and anxiety of the revolutionary period, destined to fade away together with the memory of the bad times. It may be added that the economic miracle after the restoration of peace was probably more due to the influx of Egyptian gold and other capital from the east and to the fact that enormous capital resources, reserved for military purposes for over 20 years, was now released to serve the civil economy, than to any fundamental change in the conditions of economic life. In the later years of Augustus' reign the economical progress was slowing down considerably [32], and the govern-

ment's attempt to restore a free population of farmers in Italy, which was so important for the cultural policy, were baffled by the economical realities. The moral policy and legislation was in itself a symptom that the intended regeneration of the leading classes had not succeeded, and the remonstrance against accepting the laws, let alone following them was a hard blow for Augustan policy; the moral degeneration and extravagance went on, and the imperial family itself was not spared of scandals. The laws against luxury proved utterly ineffective and the example set by the Emperor who insisted to wear homespun and to live in a comparatively modest house had no effect upon the upper classes whereas it may have increased his popularity with the *plebs*. His purging of the Senate and recruiting of new nobility from the *municipia* of Italy did not recreate the virtues which the old republican senators were supposed to have possessed. The older generation was dying out and a new generation succeeded, who was unable to perceive the principate as a deliverance from chaos and bloodshed but saw it as the established order. It is a historic irony that the better part of the Golden Age had already passed away when the *ludi saeculares* were celebrated in 17 B. C.; this is not least true in the case of poetry. Vergil and Tibullus were dead already and within a few years Propertius, Horace, and Maecenas were to follow: as in architecture and art the classicistic movement, inseparable from the national program of Augustus, was beginning to end. The *Ara Pacis* is a monument—in more than one sense of the word—of a glorious period in Roman art, one of its finest flowers but also one of its last flowers. The *Ars poetica* of Horace closes a chapter in Roman literature although it contains directions for poetry to be written; in a similar way we find the *Poetics* of Aristotle at the end of classical Greek literature. There were many poets but no great talents—with the exception of Ovid; and the nature of his talent did not harmonize very well with Horatian or Augustan classicism.

As other members of the Italic gentry had done before him, Ovid's father, who belonged to an ancient and rich family among the Paelignians, sent his sons to Rome in order to give them the best available education and prepare them for a career in the service of the state. It had been difficult enough under the old republic for *homines novi* to attain to the magistrates necessary to enter the senate. But in the New State the candidates were carefully selected and appointed by the *princeps*. Ovid's father obtained for his sons the privilege of the broad purple stripe [33] and the Emperor might look forward to the moment when the first representative of the sturdy Paelignians would enter the senate. As the number of seats in the senate was limited and mostly reserved for members of already

senatorial families, the appointment of the young brothers to future senators was a *beneficium* granted only to few; the Ovidii had every reason to be grateful, and the Emperor might be confident to have laid another stone in the foundation of the new Rome. How effectively the scheme might work can be seen from the example of the three younger Senecas [34]. But Ovid's brother died at the age of twenty and P. Ovidius Naso was not disposed to serve the Roman People. He deserted from his duty either with no excuse at all or with those given later in his autobiography. Of these the first, that he had a delicate health, was not likely to carry any great weight in the eyes of the Emperor whose health was always precarious, and the second, that he did not like hard work and had no ambition, was no real excuse [35]. By Roman standards to refuse a *beneficium* was always an act likely to cause unfriendly feelings. And to refuse it as a matter of little or no importance without adequate excuses was an insult. Serving the state was supposed to be attractive, but Ovid did not care. At the moment, however, he was a *quantité négligeable*, a poetaster from the circle of Messalla, not yet a great name.

Ovid left his public duties [36] for the benefit of poetry and it never seems to have occurred to him that he might prove useful to the state in that field, too. Nor did the poetry he preferred to write harmonize very well with the semi-official literary policy as expressed by Horace. Elegy was not a respectable genre in the rigidly classicist sense. According to Horace's point of view poetry was not really poetry if it did not contain any element of utility or edification. Amatory elegy, concerned with private and individual sentiments and experiences—however common they were to most men—,was not useful to society; on the contrary it might have a corrupting effect by adding charm to vice. Nor could it be said to edify the individual reader, nourished as it was almost exclusively by extra-matrimonial erotic affairs. The profession of *nequitia* was incompatible with the doctrine of *utile dulci*, which Horace took over from Neoptolemus with implicit polemic against Philodemus [37]. From another point of view, too, elegy was placed low in the hierarchy of genres by Horace. Elegy was a mixed genre, neither epic, lyric, nor dramatic, but containing elements of them all, and according to Horace (and Neoptolemus) there was a fixed relation between form, including metre of course, and subject-matter. The verses in the *Ars Poetica* concerning elegy:

> *versibus impariter iunctis querimonia primum,*
> *post etiam inclusa est voti sententia compos;*
> *quis tamen exiguos elegos emiserit auctor,*
> *grammatici certant et adhuc sub judice lis est* [38].

would give us a very inadequate idea about Roman elegy, had it not survived. Apparently Horace is not describing a contemporary genre but pointing out the proper place for elegiac verse according to its original use for lament (*e. g.* on epitaphs) [39] and in votive epigrams. This implies a harsh verdict on amatory elegy: it is omitted altogether as the name of Gallus is omitted in *Sat.* I, 10 as observed by Brooks Otis [40]. Horace is fighting the surviving Alexandrinists and their literary aims [41] and the *poetae-grammatici* of the *collegium poetarum* provided a suitable target. Gallus was known as a friend of Valerius Cato and Furius Bibaculus and belonged to that circle. But Gallus was not only the inventor of a new —and successful—"Alexandrine" genre but also a friend of Augustus and patron of Vergil. "It was thus not possible to name him in company with his *déclassé* friends Bibaculus and Cato. It would, however, have seemed rather foolish to put him in the opposite list since his literary *parti pris* was too well known. Horace, therefore, simply omitted him altogether" [42]. We should not, however, think that Horace was brought into difficulties by his own poem against his will, as it were. He did not approve of amatory elegy, but as he did not, apparently, want to attack it directly he deliberately passed it over in silence. In his analysis of Horace's poem to Valgius [43], to Tibullus [44], and the probable allusion to Propertius in the epistle to Florus [45], Otis has shown that Horace had very important reservations against the genre throughout his career. Otis speaks of hostility, and that is perhaps to overemphasize the thesis; but the unfriendly attitude is clear enough.

Whether Horace liked it or not, elegy formed part of Augustan literature. Gallus was officially doomed to oblivion but, as far as we know, no attempt was made to suppress his poems [46]. And although Horace was undoubtedly right when he saw in elegy a potential tendency against the moral and literary revival of the period, against the dignity and greatness of Augustanism, the two masters of elegy, Tibullus and Propertius, did actually, each in their own way contribute positively to that revival. They were both decent enough to be embarrassed by their servitude to passion and to consider their own genre as intrinsically less valuable than epic *etc.* They knew their place. And sometimes with their little instrument they voiced the national pride. The atmosphere of Tibullus II, 5 is extremely Augustan, and his dreams about a modest life in rural surroundings are perfectly in accordance with the somewhat nostalgic Augustan idealization of the countryside—and with the Horatian formula of achieving progress by seeking back to less sophisticated times. Propertius was even more touched by the patriotic theme and proved responsive to the exhortations of Maecenas. He celebrates the victory of Actium [47] and pleads for the avenge of Crassus [48]. His romanticism as well as his sympathetic and elegant recounting of ancient legends and rituals must have pleased the Emperor. And, as justly observed by Syme, "the lament which he composed in memory of a Roman matron, Cornelia the wife of Paullus Aemilius Lepidus [49] reveals a gravity and depth of feeling beside which much of the ceremonial literature of Augustan Rome appears hard, flashy and hollow" [50].

In Ovid's case, however, there were no such redeeming features. In the *Amores* he concentrates more consistently on the fascinating game of love than his predecessors, especially Propertius. If we leave the prologues and epilogues out of account for the moment, there are in the whole collection only two poems that do not deal with an erotic situation, *viz.* the poem on the feast of Juno at Falerii [51] and the lament on the death of Tibullus [52]. And in spirit or treatment neither of these can be said to comply very much with Augustanism in the narrow sense of that word. In the aetiological poem there is no pretensions of any actual belief in the religious or even in the symbolic value of the rituals. The Propertian (or Vergilian) mood of the hexameter:

Stat vetus et densa praenubilus arbore lucus

is immediately contrasted by the implicit scepticism of the pentameter:

adspice: concedes numinis esse locum [53].

The reader is not really invited to believe anything, nor is he invited to return to the habits of the ancestors, *religiosissimi mortales,* but to enjoy the folklore. And the concluding wish:

sint mihi, sint populo semper amica suo (sc. *Iunonia sacra*)

does not seem to betray any deeper feelings but shows Ovid as an educated and tolerant man who takes off his hat, as it were, when in church. The elegy on the death of Tibullus is as serious as anything Ovid ever wrote. But from a strictly Augustan point of view it might be considered a little too much to let Amor mourn the death of Tibullus as much as that of his own brother Julus; after all Julus was the eponyme hero of the imperial house and the son of Aeneas, the founder of the Roman People whereas Tibullus was a contemporary poet of a minor genre. A similar deflation of the Augustan symbolic values can be found at the end of the poem, where Tibullus is promised a place in Elysium together with Calvus, Catullus and the unfortunate Gallus. The population of the *sedes beatae*

in Vergil's sixth *Aeneid* is considerably different and the category *pii vates et Phoebo digna locuti* mentioned there [54] is hardly meant to include poets like Catullus, who lampooned Caesar, and Gallus, who proved disloyal to the new Aeneas. For all the good things that might be said about Tibullus and his talent, his *pietas* did mainly consist in loyal service to love.

So there is nothing to compensate for the poet's concentration upon his private love affairs. On the contrary there are, scattered here and there in the collection, a number of points which must have irritated the Emperor and his surroundings because they invite the reader to smile at the expense of the national virtues and symbols. One of the greatest of these symbols was the triumph. In a solemn simile Propertius had represented himself as a triumphator; his achievement in poetry was analogous with military victories. But he carefully defines the limitations of his achievement [55]. In Ovid not the poet but the god of love is the triumphator to whom the poet (and his generation) [56] surrenders unconditionally. By this procedure the power of love is placed at the same level as that of the Emperor —or even higher [57]. The final point is that Amor is asked to show the same clemency as his cousin Augustus did:

Ergo cum possim sacri pars esse triumphi,
parce tuas in me perdere victor opes.
Adspice cognati felicia Caesaris arma:
qua vicit, victos protegit ille manu.

The verses recall the famous *parcere subjectis et debellare superbos,* but here the argument is not based on the historical and moral duty of the Roman People but on the obvious self-interest of a monarch. The illusion that Rome was still a republic simply does not work in Ovid. In another elegy the poet elaborates on the topos *militia amoris.* Tibullus and Propertius had used that commonplace to illustrate the troubles of a lover, but Ovid goes further than that. He ventures to suggest—with his tongue in his cheek—that erotic service has an educational and moral value of the same nature as military service. The final point:

Qui nolet fieri desidiosus, amet! [58]

is a message which flatly contradicts that of *e. g.* Horace in the Roman Odes, to say nothing about the moral legislation. The moral standards of the good old days, praised by poets and—in vain—imposed by laws are repeatedly branded as *rusticitas* by Ovid—and it does not help very much

when he tries to justify his point of view by a reference to the founder of the City:

Rusticus est nimium, quem laedit adultera coniunx,
et notos mores non satis Urbis habet,
in qua Martigenae non sunt sine crimine nati
Romulus Iliades Iliadesque Remus [59].

Only when the girl scorns him and his songs in favour of a *nouveau-riche* soldier does he long back to the lost paradise of Saturnus. And the description of contemporary Rome does not follow the line that the Saturnian age was about to return. Money is almighty and the impiety of mankind has advanced so far as to the outrageous deifications of mortal men:

Qua licet, adfectas caelum quoque: templa Quirinus
Liber et Alcides et modo Caesar habent [60].

As far as we know, no attempts were made to direct the talent of the young Ovid into more useful channels as Horace had tried without much success with Tibullus and Maecenas more successfully with Propertius. Valerius Messalla gave himself a certain air of independence and as a patron of letters he does not seem to have laid any pressure upon the members of his circle. Besides, Ovid was independent. Vergil and Horace had come from the people and had Maecenas and the Emperor to thank for everything they had. Propertius was probably a knight by birth, but his family had lost all their property during the civil wars; he, too, owed his position to Maecenas. Tibullus had been with Messalla in Aquitania and some of his wealth probably derived from that source. Ovid was his own master, having once given up the privilege of the purple stripe. Before the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto* no poem of his is addressed to a patron.

Ovid can hardly have believed that his *Ars Amatoria* would find favour with the government. The whole idea is implicitly anti-Augustan. To contemporary readers some of the thrill of the work undoubtedly derived from the fact that the frivolous show was merrily unfolding itself with the *mene tekel* of the moral laws written on the wall. The magnificent Augustan porticoes, the Portico of Octavia, erected in memory of the promising young prince Marcellus, the Portico of Livia, replacing the immoral luxury of Vedius Pollio's house, the Portico of the new Apollo-temple, close to the house of the Emperor, are mentioned, but only as suitable hunting-places for young lovers [61]. And so are other splendid public buildings. The theatres provide him with an occasion for the excursus on the rape of the Sabines with the witty final point:

Romule, militibus scisti dare commoda solus:
haec mihi si dederis commoda, miles ero.
Scilicet ex illo sollemnia more theatra
nunc quoque formosis insidiosa manent [62].

The climax of this section is the future triumph over the Parthians [63]. Here the poet uses all the colours of the patriotic palette and the flattery of the imperial family is almost without restraint. But the point of this lavish Augustanism is that the triumph opens the prospect of a really fine *mercato d'amore*. Brooks Otis [64] has drawn attention to the context of the well-known declaration by Ovid that others may praise the good old days while he is satisfied with his own: now, *cultus* has banished the ancestral *rusticitas*. But Augustus had not saved the state in order to enable Ovid and his kind to practise *la dolce vita*. Of course people were supposed to be satisfied with the New Order, but Ovid was too satisfied and in a thoroughly unsatisfactory way. Later, in the *Fasti*, Ovid describes epigrammatically and precisely—too precisely from an Augustan point of view—the slightly schizophrenic attitude of Augustanism:

laudamus veteres sed nostris utimur annis [65].

In a similar way, as shown by Otis [66], Ovid's *credo* in the *Ars* [67] is completely in accordance with Augustan theology but by its very rationalistic preciseness and the "strikingly flippant and off-hand manner of its expression" it exposes Augustan religiousness naked, as it were, and deprived of its dearest illusions. Naively or pseudonaively Ovid plays the part of the little boy in Hans Andersen's "The Emperor's New Clothes". It was a dangerous game, not least because he had the laughter on his side. The *Ars* was criticized for lack of morality, the charge being not obscenity but levity and wantonness. Ovid's answer was given implicitly and explicitly in the *Remedia*. He reversed his theme and the outcome was permeated by exactly the same *protervitas* as the *Ars*. He refutes the charge eloquently in the middle of his book [68]. His critics are not mentioned by name but vaguely referred to as "certain people":

Nuper enim nostros quidam carpsere libellos

but the wording of the pentameter:

quorum censura Musa proterva mea est

leaves the reader in little doubt about the semi-official provenance of the attack; moreover, a few lines above the reader was advised to read between the lines [69]. Ovid defends himself by referring to his popularity: he can

afford a detractor or two [70]. The motive underlying the criticism is branded as envy, and then Ovid proceeds to give a lecture on literature. The critic—now referred to by *quicumque es* [71]—does not know what he is talking about and receives an elementary lesson on style. Ovid flatly acquits himself and leaves the grumbler with the prospect of vexing himself to death. Contemporary readers may have followed with some interest the mouse's play with the cat. Augustus did not forget.

By reducing the whole problem of seriousness versus wantonness to a question of style Ovid himself damaged the credibility of his patriotism in the *Fasti* and instructed his readers to interpret his positive attitude to the national values in that work in the same terms as his wanton play with them in his earlier works. He did not change his character but his style. Six books of the *Fasti* were reasonably complete by the time of Ovid's exile, and we may believe that the general character of the work was known also to the Emperor to whom it was originally dedicated. But Augustus was not softened by the unbridled adulations. He could hardly deny that Ovid was a *praestantissimus poeta* but there was some reason to doubt that the praise was composed *serio* [72]. In a comparison between Romulus and Augustus Ovid reduces the founder of the City and its first king to almost nothing in order to extoll the *pater patriae* beyond all previous limits. This is a shrewd variation of the formula *prisca iuvent alios etc.*, and the contrast to *e. g.* the treatment of Livy is evident. The poet cheerfully reverses his own treatment in the *Ars* of the rape of the Sabines:

Tu rapis, hic castas duce se iubet esse maritas [73]

and refers to the well-known aversion of Augustus against the title *dominus*

Tu domini nomen, principis ille tenet [74].

By this wording he draws attention, consciously or unconsciously, to the actual status of the Principate as a disguised monarchy. The readiness of the Roman People to accept the fact that Augustus was a monarch and the corresponding tendency to disregard the official version of the constitution irritated the Emperor [75]. In the Ovidian passage in question it might have seemed more to the point to contrast Romulus' official title of *rex* with Augustus' official title of *princeps*. But as nobody would venture to call Augustus *rex* while everybody felt that he was entitled to be called *dominus* the actual wording of Ovid's verse achieves its peculiar effect.

The whole atmosphere of the *Fasti* is considerably different from other antiquarianism of the Augustan age. The effect does not derive from any

attempt to become an ancient in soul like Livy. The subject-matter required a certain amount of "faith" or at least the avoidance of too much open scepticism. Ovid affects that naive "faith" but here again it is obvious that his attitude is determined by the demands of the genre and not by any personal persuasion. Livy's motive is *pietas* and his purpose edification; Ovid tells the ancient legends, rites, and customs out of *curiositas* and wants to amuse.

These remarks on the *Fasti* anticipate to some extent the question how the poems from Ovid's exile were likely to have prepared and determined the readers' experience of the *Metamorphoses*. The *Fasti* were probably not published in their present shape until after Ovid's death, and Ovid reworked the first book according to his new situation after the disaster. Two lines of action were open to Ovid: he could be quiet and by means of private diplomacy try to further his transfer or recall; or he could appeal publicly to the Emperor, which was equivalent to an appeal to the public opinion. He chose both possibilities. His fear of being forgotten seems to have been almost as strong a motive as his wishes for recall. As his poetry had had a considerable share in his condemnation his prospects might have been better if he had stopped writing; but this thought does not seem to have occurred to him. On the contrary he never allowed his case to be forgotten. Ovid's discreteness about the nature and circumstances of his *error* has tantalized classical scholars for generations and streams of ink have been wasted on the subject. The effect upon contemporary readers was different, as everybody knew or thought to know what the poet was hinting at; and if anybody was not already informed, correctly or incorrectly, rumours would be easily available. The Roman upper class indulged freely in gossip, and scandals in the imperial family were no doubt one of the favourite themes. It is quite possible that Ovid really and honestly meant to spare the Emperor's feelings by not reopening the wounds; on the other hand it is not quite impossible that he felt a secret pleasure in vexing his oppressor with repeated and apparently tactful reminders. Whatever Ovid's motive was, his perpetual hinting at his *error*, inseperable as it was from the disgraceful scandal, would evoke the displeasure of the Emperor and nurse the malicious pleasure in the clubs and salons of the gay set in Rome. The assiduous and boundless flattery of Augustus in the poems from the exile is distasteful to a modern reader but was at that time more or less accepted as inevitable. It is true in principle that Ovid's flatteries are not different from those of his Augustan predecessors. But the reader would feel that in Horace and Vergil the "flatteries" stemmed from real gratitude, while in Ovid's case they were dictated by necessity. Ovid's adulation reveals the reality of monarchy behind the republican disguise. "It is painful to see a dog fawning on a master who is cruel to it" [76]. But in such a case most beholders would sympathize with the dog. And to the Roman upper classes it would be extremely painful to see a Roman knight reduced to such servitude by a man who by birth was a Roman knight himself [77]. They would pity him and even despise him, but who deserved the blame? Ovid's flatteries belonged to the *indecorae adulationes*, but the question is for whom they were most disgraceful. As to his mysterious *error* Ovid—of course—pleads guilty but there is evidence that he had broken no law [78] and there was no trial. Readers might themselves draw the necessary conclusions about the nature of the legal protection of a citizen in the New State. As to the charge of literary immorality Ovid pleads not guilty. As demonstrated by Wilkinson [79] in the second part of *Tristia* II Ovid appeals to public opinion over the Emperor's head and by means of a spirited *reductio ad absurdum* ridicules his attitude towards literature, not without certain gibes and irreverences, as when rather demonstratively he alludes to the Emperor's well-known propensity for dicing [80], mentions the Emperor's *ex voto* temple of Mars with the adulteress Venus standing by the god's side and her lawful husband outside the doors [81], or refers to the most popular part of the national epos with the irreverent phrase:

contulit in Tyrios arma virumque toros [82].

In his defense of the rights of the poet, questioned in his own case, Ovid was unable—or pretended to be unable to understand that the whole thing was not a mistake. The underlying theory is almost the same as that of Oscar Wilde: "There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written or badly written. That is all" [83]. In the eyes of Augustus Ovid's defense was probably another proof of his guilt. In another poem Ovid frankly declares that as far as his genius is concerned the Emperor has simply no power:

En ego, cum caream patria vobisque domoque,
raptaque sint, adimi quae potuere mihi,
ingenio tamen ipse meo comitorque fruorque:
Caesar in hoc potuit iuris habere nihil.
Quilibet hanc saevo vitam mihi finiat ense,
me tamen extincto fama superstes erit,
dumque suis victrix omnem de montibus orbem
prospiciet domitum Martia Roma, legar [84].

The *quilibet* might be taken to be some Sarmatian; but the couplet makes perfectly good sense as a reminder that the better part of the poet would always escape from the power and punishment of earthly masters. Apart from this it is not without interest to compare this passage with the answer to the criticism in the *Remedia*. The tone there is arrogant, here it is soberly proud; but the attitude of the poet is the same nevertheless. He had a place among the greatest Roman poets, and no Caesar could ever deprive him of that. As we have seen, the motive is the same in the epilogue of the *Metamorphoses*.

For the Roman upper classes, the bearers of literary culture, the Tacitean tragedy of servile opposition had already begun. The constant feeling of insecurity induced only few to abortive conjurations, the majority resigned themselves to private luxury, to the comfort of philosophy, or to literary occupations. But *otium* was a source of suspicion because of the implied protest against the conditions of public service; so was philosophy —Epicureanism because it made people shrink from their duties to the state, Stoicism because it induced its adherents to interpret the constitution more literally than was convenient [85]; after Ovid's case it was evident that poetry did not provide an asylum; the declamations of the auditoriums, instituted by the upright and independent Asinius Pollio, in spite of their often abstruse subjects, detached as they might seem from any reality, might easily give occasion to unfortunate and ruining remarks. The unhealthy atmosphere of the totalitarian state, so familiar to our century, was fully developed under Tiberius as described by Tacitus and Seneca who was an eye-witness: *Sub Tib. Caesare fuit accusandi frequens et paene publica rabies, quae omni civili bello gravius togatam civitatem confecit; excipiebatur ebriorum sermo, simplicitas iocantium; nihil erat tutum; omnis saeviendi placebat occasio, nec iam reorum expectabantur exitus, cum esset unus* [86]. But as stated by Seneca [87] and demonstrated in detail by d'Elia, the last period of Augustus' reign marks the beginning of totalitarianism: "Contro la tendenza di molti a sopravalutare i valori individuali di fronte ai doveri civici, la reazione di Augusto, dovuta sopratutto alle sue concezioni, ai caratteri del suo potere e alle reali condizioni politiche di Roma e dell'impero, si manifesta negli interventi sempre più profondi dello stato nella vita civile, economica, privata e familare dei *cives* Romani, mentre la situazione generale, col prorumpere del problema militare, di quello della successione e di quello delle finanze publiche, tendeva ad assumere dei toni drammatici" [88]. The pressure was warping the mind of men and forcing them to servile flattery as a necessary precaution and was reducing them to using the poisoned weapons of falsely motivated compliments, oblique malice and double entendre, not so much as an expression of political opposition but as a psychological defense of a minimum of personal freedom against the overwhelming power of the State. Ovid's readers, trained in this way, would welcome anything that could be understood as a gibe at the Emperor. Against this background there can be little doubt that R. Marache is right when he says about the relegated poet: "Victime d'Auguste, il est par ses malheurs et en dépit de lui-même, le symbole de la résistance au pouvoir totalitaire" [89]. Marache's interpretation of the verses

> *Nec me, quae doctis patuerunt prima libellis,*
> *atria Libertas tangere passa sua est* [90]

"ce qu'il évoque dans cette allégorie, c'est le comble du despotisme: la liberté domestiquée au point de servir de geôlier ou tout au moins de concierge et, au mépris de sa noble nature, interdisant au petit livre le plus légitime des séjours. Ovide forge l'épigramme sans même y songer" [91] illustrates the probable reaction of Ovid's readers. It might however be added that we cannot rule out the fact that Ovid derived a certain measure of satisfaction from discomforting his oppressor in this oblique way. We should not forget that he and his readers belonged to a generation who was desperate enough, sometimes, to risk their heads rather than forego a jest [92].

CLASSICA ET MEDIAEVALIA · DISSERTATIONES X

CHANGING FORMS

STUDIES IN THE METAMORPHOSES OF OVID

BY

OTTO STEEN DUE

GYLDENDAL
COPENHAGEN 1974