EMPIRE OF THE IMAGINATION:
THE POWER OF PUBLIC FICTIONS IN OVID'S
'READER RESPONSE' TO AUGUSTAN ROME

by

Nandini B. Pandey

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Committee in charge:

Professor Kathleen McCarthy, Chair
Professor Erich S. Gruen
Professor Ellen Oliensis
Professor Albert Ascoli

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ABSTRACT

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The idea of an 'Augustan discourse' represents a valuable step forward from the twentieth-century belief that Augustus ruled through patronage and propaganda, insofar as it better accommodates the polyvocality of the literature of his age as well as the delicacy of the *princeps*' political position between republic and empire. I seek to expand on this approach by drawing literary works into more thoroughgoing dialogue with contemporary 'texts' in other media, including coins and architecture, and by treating all these as examples of reader responses to Augustus that both construct and reflect public interpretations of the emperor. This work focuses in particular on Ovid's readings of the visual iconography of the principate, arguing that these influenced both ancient and modern historians' conception of Augustus as the master architect of his own public image.

My project is inspired by poets' creation of a sense of professional rivalry between themselves and the *princeps*, particularly Ovid's portrayal of Augustus as a fellow manipulator of fictions. However, individual chapters deconstruct this idea by examining how specific 'pro-Augustan' icons cannot be regarded as a tool of propaganda, but rather, exist only within individual representations that often embed critical, evolving, and dialogic perspectives on the emperor. The first chapter analyzes historical evidence for the appearance and interpretation of a comet over Caesar's funeral games in 44 BCE, as well as representations of this *sidus Iulium* in Roman coins and the poems of Vergil, Horace, Propertius, and Ovid. I argue that the imagistic metamorphosis of the *sidus* from a star into a comet over the course of Augustus' reign reflects the growth of an ahistorical sense that the young Octavian took a proactive role in deifying Caesar, and a larger tendency to retroject Augustus' mature power onto his early career. My second chapter interweaves an analysis of the archaeological remains of Augustus' temple complex on the Palatine with close readings of Horace, Propertius, and Ovid's literary responses to its architectonics; I argue that these poets' reappropriations of public space for private purposes, particularly Ovid's critique of the Palatine iconography and urban topography, have encouraged modern scholars to overread triumphalist intentions into the Augustan building program. In my last chapter, I compare visual and verbal representations of the triumph ceremony, culminating with Ovid's use of the subject to explore how ritual may be extended

through time and space, how writing may be employed to serve empire, and how readers may intervene in a text's creation of meaning.

Building on this latter idea, a brief conclusion explores how Ovid's exile poems treat Augustus himself as a text – that is, as a publicly circulating representation of power that was potentially unrepresentative of reality, subject to audience interpretation in defiance of authorial intention, and beholden to the imaginative participation of reader-subjects throughout the empire. Ovid also gives Augustan readers the tools by which to take interpretive control over texts and to examine their own complicity in constructing Augustan power. This parallels my broader theme that modern scholarly interpretations of the period cannot be disentangled from these subjective reader responses to Augustan Rome, and thus become part of a succession of imaginative rereadings and reinterpretations of the figure of Augustus.

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CHAPTER 1
FICTIONALITY, READER RESPONSE, AND THE POWER OF PUBLIC IMAGE
IN THE AUGUSTAN TEXT

.… posito triumviri nomine consulem se ferens et ad tuendam plebem tribunicio iure contentum, ubi militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit, insurgere paulatim, munia senatus magistratuum legum in se trahere, nullo adversante …

Casting off the title of triumvir, he [Augustus] carried himself about as consul, claiming he was content with a tribunician's power for protecting the people; meanwhile he seduced the army with gifts, the common people with grain, and everyone with the sweetness of peace; and little by little increased his strength, absorbed the offices of the senate, officials, and laws into his own person, with no opposition.
– Tacitus, *Annales* 1.2

I. Introduction

Roman historians from Tacitus to our own age have held that Augustus manipulated public opinion in order to gain and maintain power. In the middle of the last century, for instance, Ronald Syme made the influential argument that Augustus marshaled all aspects of society to convey his public image and rhetoric; though this idea has since met with resistance from some scholars of Augustan literature, it continues to influence approaches to the politics, religion, art, and archaeology of the period.[1] This dissertation, however, argues that Augustus' public image was not constructed by the *princeps* himself, but rather, emerges from a dialogue between texts in a variety of media that reflect subjective, evolving, and sometimes critical responses to the principate. In fact, both ancient and modern perceptions of the *princeps* have been mediated as much by these subjective responses as by historical evidence.[2]

I make this argument by examining the evolution, over the course of Augustus' reign, of three specific icons associated with Augustus' power: the *sidus Iulium*, the Palatine complex,

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[1] Syme devotes a chapter of *The Roman Revolution* (1939) to Augustus' "organization of opinion," though his cynical idea of Augustus as an autocrat prevails throughout. Some scholars, for instance Galinsky 1996, have since recognized that his analysis was strongly shaped by his own experience of twentieth-century fascism, and there is a whole volume devoted to *La révolution romaine après Ronald Syme* (2000). Yet many others, too numerous to review thoroughly, have continued to default to this position long after it has proven inadequate. Walker and Burnett, for instance, declare that Augustus organized "a concerted propaganda campaign aimed at dominating all aspects of civic, religious, economic and military life with Augustus' person" (1981: 25). Wallace-Hadrill notes that the most potent propaganda is the kind that "coalesces unnoticed with the existing values of a society," but sees Augustus as an "aggressive and uncompromising … intruder [who] inserted himself into every corner of Roman life and consciousness, transforming it in the process" (1987: 223). More recently, Hannestad writes that "most of what we normally perceive as art during the Roman period may be regarded as more or less direct manifestations of propaganda" (1988: 9). In fact, even scholars who see 'subversion' in Augustan literature tend to see material culture as part of an Augustan orthodoxy. Bartsch, for instance, believes that Augustus had an unmistakable "ideological artistic program at Rome" and that "Augustan official art … attempted to enact the very process of ideological containment and control that Vergil suggests may be art's role in the political world" (1998: 331), though she does acknowledge Elsner's idea that art gives viewers "the possibility to look not only in collusion with the prevailing ideology governing such images but also against its grain" (1995: 209).

[2] My analysis of the history of the period is indebted to Crook 1996, Eder 2005, and especially the thinking of Erich Gruen. All take a subtle and measured view of the twin claims that Augustus restored the republic and founded an empire, finding that these apparently paradoxical outcomes in fact reflected the complicated politics of the principate, and exploring how modern preconceptions have often prevented objective analysis of extant evidence.

and the Roman triumph.   The poetry, visual art, and architecture of the age argue against any centralized control over the representations of these icons; rather, individual authors continually interpreted and reappropriated them in order to debate various aspects of the principate. Ovid's own reworkings of these icons, late in Augustus' reign, were particularly influential within Roman culture and later scholarship. Expanding on previous authors, Ovid explores the process by which imperial meanings are constructed, insinuating a high degree of control on Augustus' part. He thus effectively creates a master narrative that recasts Augustan culture as propagandistic rather than polyvocal – one that helped originate the perception of Augustus as a manipulator of his public image. Yet Ovid also shows that the meaning of any text – including his own poetry, but also the public image of Augustus, as woven through the fabric of Roman discourse – relies fundamentally on the interpretation of its audience.[3] He thereby suggests that empire, like poetry, derives its legitimacy from the imaginative participation of its public, even as he teaches his readers to examine and question representations of power.[4]

This introductory chapter lays the groundwork for this argument by (1) re-examining Augustus' public image not as a propaganda ploy but as a pluralistic text; (2) analyzing how texts gain their meaning, particularly within Ovid's analysis of this problem as it applies to his own poetry; and (3) showing how Ovid applies these same rules to the text of Augustus' public image, exposing its potential to be reinterpreted and challenged. Subsequent chapters will provide specific examples of how he does so and thereby invites readers to re-think their interpretations of particular icons associated with imperial power.

II. The Image of Augustus

Ovid is not alone in suggesting that Augustus ruled through image. We find traces of this idea in Tacitus, who emphasizes the *princeps*' use of traditional Republican titles and offices in order to disguise his burgeoning power (*Ann.* 1.2-3). Closer to Augustus' time, Antony had called Octavian "the youth who owed everything to his name" (Cic., *Phil.* 13.11.24). Modern scholars like Paul Zanker, Christopher Pelling, and Walter Eder continue to attribute Augustus' ascendancy over Antony in part to his superior image campaign.[5] And it seems that Augustus himself was deeply concerned with his public persona. The *Commentarii*, *Res Gestae*, and other texts he produced for public consumption, the countless temples and monuments he erected for public display, the various honors he decided to accept or reject, and the many public statements and actions for which we have evidence all suggest that Augustus had great concern for his *fama* both in Rome and abroad.[6] Most powerful of all is the story that the old *princeps*, on his deathbed, asked if he had played his part well in the mime of life (Suet., *Aug.* 99) – implicitly acknowledging that the judgment of the audience, and not just the performance of the actor, finally determines his success or failure. Certainly, it was the Roman public's general approval

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[3] For the Latin significance of the word 'textum' and its association not only with weaving but also narrative, see Bartsch 1998: 327-8.

[4] My approach shares some of Holliday's interest in how "cultural productions at once express and constitute ideology" (2002: xxv), in that "they are active ingredients of the social matrix and are socially formative products in their own right, making statements that can both change perceptions and mold ideas" (2002: xxii).

[5] Cf. Zanker 1988: 33 and his chapter on their 'rival images,' 33-77; Pelling 1996; and Eder 2005.

[6] *Fama* can refer to either the medium or the message of reputation, and therefore is a useful concept by which to discuss the Augustan Text, which both creates and conveys Augustus' image; cf. Philip Hardie's forthcoming book on *Rumour and Renown* (Cambridge University Press, December 2011), and also his 2002 work on Ovid.

of Augustus that helped him stay in power so long – witness the contrary fortunes of 'bad' emperors like Nero, whose public personae alarmed or alienated powerful segments of their audiences.[7]

It would, of course, be naïve to think that Augustus ruled through public image alone, or to forget that his supremacy was underwritten by a vast accumulation of wealth, military force, and client relationships.[8] Yet scholars have observed that, in a pre-modern world where it was impossible to maintain the loyalty of a far-flung empire through troops alone, the stability and cohesion of the Roman empire depended in large part upon ideology: the propagation of the *idea* of loyalty to a central authority, rather than the forceful imposition of that authority. Jon Lendon, Clifford Ando, Tonio Hölscher, and others have examined at length the origin and operation of this system of belief, and have determined that cultural means such as art, architecture, and religion in many ways ensured provincial loyalty as much as brute military presence.[9] In other words, far-away Rome was made manifest in the hearts and minds of its most remote citizens by symbols and systems – texts, coins, buildings, statues, and rites – rather than troops. And *fama*, as dispersed by report, rumor, poetry, and art, was the chief means by which the *princeps* himself could know and be known to the vast majority of his subjects.

A. Brief review of scholarship

This idea is not dissimilar to the idea of Augustan propaganda, expressed so powerfully by Syme and still common within the scholarship, though it has recently ceded ground to other models such as that of Augustus as 'universal patron.'[10] It is therefore worth briefly examining some of the problems with this concept before moving on to offer a new model that will underlie this dissertation: Augustus' image as collective text.

For one, modern conceptions of propaganda tend to assume a level of state organization and control over media that was alien to pre-modern societies of any size, due to an absence of the necessary technology and bureaucracy.[11] Certainly, in Rome itself Augustus' triumphs, portraits, and public edifices must have created a spectacular effect, and his name and image were widely circulated throughout the provinces. But one may still fairly ask by whom, for what

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[7] As Champlin 2003 argues.

[8] Tacitus, in *Annales* 1, mentions tools of seduction and coercion beyond Augustus' Republican language; cf. also Crook 1996. Though it ignores all these, Ovid's representation of a rivalry between himself and Augustus has been imaginatively compelling to many (witness Oliensis' claim that "what Ovid wants is not just to destroy Augustus but to take over his place and his power," 2004: 316). However, Ovid makes "the territory of representation" his battlefield (2004: 316) only because this is one of the only grounds on which poetic and political power can engage in the first place; otherwise the two are hardly comparable.

[9] See in particular Lendon's 1997 *Empire of Honour*, Ando's 2000 *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* and Hölscher's 2006 "'The Transformation of Victory into Power: From Event to Structure." The idea of totalizing cultural influence is of course essential to Syme and receives excellent updated treatment in Galinsky's 1996 *Augustan Culture* and the 2005 *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*.

[10] For patronage models see especially Fergus Millar's 1977 *The Emperor and the Roman World*, as well as Saller 1982 and Wallace-Hadrill 1989.

[11] Though 'propaganda' is notoriously difficult to define and has been the subject of much scholarship over the last century, I offer as an example Garth and Jowett's definition: "Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (2005: 7).

purposes, and with what level of consent or even knowledge by Augustus himself. The *Res Gestae* is one of the few elements of so-called 'propaganda' where we need not question Augustus' sole and conscious authorship. However, even in the case of his building projects, where the *princeps*' involvement and approval is undeniable, many details were left up to architects, builders, and artists. Moreover, many ancient objects that we might today regard as propagandistic can by no means be assigned to a single centralized source or conscious design.[12] For instance, Walker and Burnett assert that "the explosion in the number of Augustan portraits attests a concerted propaganda campaign aimed at dominating all aspects of civic, religious, economic and military life with Augustus' person," but elsewhere reveal that many of these images, such as those that decorated gaming pieces, were manufactured and distributed among the lower rungs of the social ladder rather than handed down from on high.[13] Moreover, even coins and portrait types, those crucial instruments of modern propaganda, were subject to less supervision in the ancient world: the *tresviri monetales* responsible for the mint could and did strike coins for their own personal motives, even though this often resulted in designs that flattered the *princeps*.[14]

      Leaving aside the basic problems of authorship and intentionality that arise when we attempt to view Augustan imagery as propaganda, we might note that, as scholars have devoted further attention to social structures such as patronage, they have come to view power relations as a series of negotiations and accommodations rather than a strict hierarchy wherein the powerful simply dictate their demands down a chain of command.[15] Many famous elements of so-called Augustan 'propaganda' – for instance, the *clupeus virtutis*, the Ara Pacis, and the Pantheon – were not commissioned or coerced by Augustus himself. Rather, in an elaborate

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[12] Here I, like many others, am influenced by Ellul's innovation of regarding "propaganda as a sociological phenomenon rather than as something *made* by certain people for certain purposes" (Kellen, in the introduction to Ellul 1965: v). Ellul regards modern mass media as essential to propaganda, although Evans 1992: 1-16 discusses how his ideas may nevertheless helpfully be applied to the ancient world. Particularly useful to my discussion is the idea of "integration propaganda," the type of propaganda that encourages people willingly to participate in society (as opposed to "agitation propaganda," which encourages them to take specific action). My thinking on covert readings of the principate has also been influenced by James Scott's model, in his 1990 *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, of "public" and "hidden transcripts" through which oppressed groups discuss and resist dominant forces.

[13] 1981: 25-7. For the manufacture and circulation of unofficial portrait types; see also e.g. Tonio Hölscher's study of private artworks that commemorate Actium (1985).

[14] Galinsky 1996: 30-34 surveys this vexed issue. Levick (1982: 107) argues that coins represented initiatives from below (i.e., the *tresviri*) designed not to appeal to the public but to flatter emperor himself, though see Sutherland 1986 *contra*. Galinsky nuances this view, arguing that "a careful study of the evidence indicates no pattern of control by the *princeps* himself" (30), and drawing on Crawford's assertion that "there is little evidence for official interest in coin types" (1983: 57). Somewhat paradoxically, though, Galinsky betrays occasional echoes of the old belief of total Augustan control : for example, he writes that Augustus "solicited the participation" of known independent thinkers such as the republican Calpurnius Piso and "actively sought to convey the *auctoritas* of the senate through the new coinage" via the letters 'SC' and other devices suggesting that he and the senate had complementary roles (1996: 34).

[15] See Feeney 1992 for a review of the scholarship, with the healthy attitude that "'Augustanism' was not a dogma conceived by a small band and handed down to a receptive, passive audience … [Augustus] and his apparatus were themselves conditioned by responses, even initiatives, from 'below': the ideologies by which Romans constructed their world were a product of contestation and dialogue" (3). See also Kennedy 1987 and Zanker 1988 ("what appears in retrospect as a subtle program resulted in fact from the interplay of the image that the emperor himself projected and the honors bestowed on him more or less spontaneously, a process that evolved naturally over long periods of time," 3).

dance of diplomacy and decorum, the senate or various individuals voluntarily dedicated them to their benefactor in recognition of his past service and anticipation of future favor.[16]

In a similar vein, literary critics writing since Syme have challenged his view of the Augustan poets as mere mouthpieces of empire. This began with the so-called 'Harvard School,' which began finding voices of resistance in Vergil.[17] Since then, scholars have detected differences of perspective, approach, and opinion among Augustan authors, although they are still working to break down the reductive binary between "pro-" and "anti-Augustan" readings. In his 1997 book *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse*, Alessandro Barchiesi lends the name "Augustan discourse" to this new model, defining it as an "unprecedented campaign of persuasion and revision" enacting "universal diffusion at all levels."[18] Certainly, in their recent scholarship, Denis Feeney, Philip Hardie, Stephen Hinds, and Barchiesi himself, among a great many others, have exemplified the critical riches yielded by such an intertextual and decentralized approach to the literary culture of this period.

However, currently scholarly approaches to Augustan discourse retain some flaws that this dissertation hopes to address by better acknowledging the diversity of media that represent Augustus, the evolution of the principate over time, the heterogeneity of Roman authors and audiences, and the role of readers as well as authors in the construction of meaning. As Galinsky points out, Barchiesi continues to see Augustan discourse as "firmly emanating from Augustus" and Ovid's role as "oppositional."[19] However, I would like to see this discourse as a conversation surrounding Augustus rather than emanating from him, and as a dialogue too complex to be reduced to simple oppositions. Moreover, though the discourse model theoretically includes all aspects of culture, it tends in practice to focus on literature[20] – only one of many means by which Augustus' image was constructed and discussed, and one that reached a relatively small and elite population. I seek to more fully explore audiences' capacity to draw connections between 'texts' in a variety of media, not just literary but also artistic, architectural, numismatic, and beyond. I also resist the tendency to treat Augustus as an all-powerful and relatively static force or "idea."[21] Rather, I focus on how his image evolved over the course of his reign, and how he might have been understood differently by different generations in different regions. Also, most current scholarship focuses on the literary and political intentions of the authors who write about Augustus. I follow modern literary theory – and Ovid's own inclinations – in analyzing the role of audiences, too. As I discuss in the second half of this chapter, little evidence remains for ancient reading practices beyond ancient authors themselves. However, they and particularly Ovid explore the role of readers, and not just authors, in constructing a text's meaning. They also model ways of 'reading' Augustus' public image within their own poetry that may influence their own larger readerships' interpretation of the principate. In fact, I argue that Ovid's 'rereading' of prior voices within the Augustan discourse helps recast this conversation within the eyes of his audience, ancient and modern. It is by framing his own voice as "oppositional" that Ovid constructs the impression – received by

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[16] Galinsky conducts an especially useful discussion of Augustus' *auctoritas* and the idea of reciprocity in his first chapter of *Augustan Culture* (1996).

[17] Important bibliography includes Parry 1963, Clausen 1964, Putnam 1965, Johnson 1976, and Lyne 1987.

[18] 1997: 253.

[19] Galinsky 1998; Barchiesi is essentially falling back into the pro-/anti-Augustan trap he has attempted to avoid.

[20] Notable exceptions include Zanker 1988, Galinsky 1996, Gurval 1997, Miller 2009, and Elsner (1996 and 2007).

[21] Though this latter term of Kennedy's is a useful one (1992), and I return to it in my conclusion.

Barchiesi among others – that this conversation emanated from and was controlled by Augustus in the first place.[22]

B. Methodology

Scholars of Augustan discourse have typically focused on the dialogues between literary texts treating the *princeps*. However, much recent work has focused on how visual objects – from paintings and statuary to architectural edifices and urban development projects – may be just as ordered, meaningful, and 'legible' to an audience as written texts. Diane Favro, for instance, argues that "in a society in which few could read, visual imagery functioned as a literal text legible to all." Thus Roman viewers were trained in the act of viewing, and could decode the message of a painting or a building just as readily as that of a poem.[23] She further argues that the urban space of Rome itself functioned as a text, in that it was a structured and meaningful place designed to create a 'narrative' in a viewer's mind as he passed through and responded to various edifices, gardens, and monuments along his path.[24] I add that even events in time, such as triumphal processions, funeral orations, and other rituals, constitute 'texts' – albeit ones that are particularly difficult for us to recover – in that, much like dramas, they were meaningfully structured, conveyed a narrative, and could evoke intellectual and emotional reactions in an audience via means such as music, costumes, speeches, and *tituli*.[25] I argue that such non-literary texts, along with irrecoverable ones such as songs, rumors, and perishable elements of day-to-day life, contribute in essential ways to the discourse surrounding the principate, though the interplay between texts in different media has not yet been fully studied. In this work I therefore explore the evolving representations and responses, within as wide a variety of media as possible, to Augustan icons that themselves originated in very different forms: the historical appearance of a comet (the *sidus Iulium*), an architectural monument (the Palatine complex), and a ritual (the Roman triumph).

This study also attempts to acknowledge the chronological and ideological heterogeneity of the principate, which is too often treated as a singular and unified regime. C. R. Phillips, for instance, has pointed out that "literary critics have usually not attended to the protean nature of

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[22] As Bartsch points out, the aim of ideology is to create "binary oppositions: pairs that we are taught it is natural to value positively or negatively" (1998: 339). I argue that Ovid creates this idea among readers with regard to Augustus, though leaves them the decision of which side to choose.

[23] 1993: 231. She adds that "Rome's inhabitants relied on images as much as verbal sources for everyday information. For example, they learned about political dealings not only from speeches and graffiti, but also from artwork, buildings, and places."

[24] See also Mary Katherine Jaeger's 1990 dissertation *The Poetics of Place: The Augustan Writers and the Urban Landscape of Rome*, which explores how writers "set up a dialogue between the material and the literary city, one that asserts the power of writing to record and to define the city's meaning" (abstract, page 2). Most relevant to my own work is Jaeger's treatment of the material city as a repository of memories and history, "an archive to be referred to as if it were a text, but a silent text that could never offer a definitive significance, a living archive that could receive meaning as well as give it" (1990: 1). She is particularly interested in how writers use words to affect places' meanings in the collective consciousness, particularly after the disruptions of the civil war, and to assert the primacy of verbal over visual communication; I focus on the interaction and dialogue rather than competition between verbal and visual texts, and the ways in which writers 'read' places to comment upon larger social or political issues. See also Edwards 1996, Vasaly 1993: 13 for the Roman *ars memoriae* and the strong association between place and thought, and Cancik 1985 for Rome as a "sacred text" imbued with memories.

[25] As I discuss below, what really seems to matter is not whether the text was intended as such, but whether an audience can read it as such.

the principate – about what, precisely, were the authors ambivalent?"[26] In a useful summary of prior scholarship, Denis Feeney reminds us that the regime was "multifaceted in many ideological matters."[27] The Palatine complex is a striking example of the ambivalences that could therefore arise. Gransden observes that it is difficult to reconcile "the literal goldenness of the temple with the metaphorical goldenness of the conspicuously self-effacing dwelling of the *princeps*."[28] In a similar vein, Philip Hardie points out the discrepancy between the "violent subject matter" of the doors of the Palatine Temple of Apollo, founded in 28 B.C., and the more peaceful and harmonious composition of the Ara Pacis, dedicated in 9 B.C.[29] – two monuments that represent distinct points in the evolution of the Augustan visual language of power, as admirably described and documented by Paul Zanker. Yet despite this valuable work on the changing image of the *princeps* himself, much work remains to be done on how particular symbols of Augustan power came to evolve and assume their meaning in the popular imagination. These symbols, it turns out, were just as 'protean' as the principate itself before they stabilized in the imagination of posterity. For instance, in my next chapter, I argue for an iconographic and semantic evolution of the Julian star over the course of Augustus' reign, finding that Ovid's belated treatment was responsible for subsequent audiences' impression that it was a symbol with a fixed meaning meant to serve Augustan interests.

Finally, even if there did exist some 'Augustan ideology' that was entirely unitary, self-consistent, or controllable by Augustus, there is no guarantee that all readers would interpret its expressions uniformly.[30] As Stephen Hinds has warned, "We should not fall into the trap of regarding the Augustan reading public as a monolith."[31] For that matter, since Augustus' persona was expressed through non-literary as well as literary means, it reached an even wider audience than Hinds indicates: every man, woman, or child, of whatever literacy level, socioeconomic status or political leaning, who used a Roman coin, followed a Roman calendar, or entered a Roman temple during and well after the years of Augustus' supremacy.[32] Equally important, each member of this audience brought his own set of educational, cultural, and

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[26] 1983: 782.

[27] 1992: 2. Similarly, Barchiesi states that "scholars who study the subject of 'Augustus and the poets' are generally highly aware of the ambiguities, tensions and nuances that belong to poetic discourse; but they are not sufficiently aware of the ambiguities, tensions and nuances that belong to the category 'Augustus'" (1997: 8).

[28] Gransden 1976, commenting on *Aeneid* 8.25-32 and cited in Feeney 1992: 2.

[29] Hardie 1989: 136, also cited in Feeney 1992: 1.

[30] I am influenced by reader response critics' challenges to the traditional conception of the text as a transparent vessel by which an author conveys meaning to a reader, and I discuss the work of specific theorists below. To summarize their objections, it is difficult if not impossible ever to recover an author's intentions, and thus tying authorial intention to textual meaning only renders the latter equally impossible to recover. Moreover, even if the flow of meaning from author through text to reader were unidirectional, it would not be infallible – a text might imperfectly reflect an author's intentions, or a reader might misread a text. Finally, this model presumes that a text has discrete and identifiable meanings and authors in the first place – both problematic assumptions, as I suggest in my discussion of the inadequacies of the 'propaganda' model, and argue below regarding Ovid's explorations of texts that are 'legible' despite having no author (e.g. the dawn 'blushing' in *Amores* 1.13).

[31] 1988: 26, cited in Feeney 1992: 4.

[32] Gregory makes the valuable point that scholars "too frequently forget that individuals at all levels of society continue to respond to and interact with images, in public and in private, long after the creative work has ceased. The history of an image or artwork does not end simply with the last paintbrush or chisel stroke or even with the establishment of the image within its designated area of display. Images continue to have meaning in and of themselves but also over a broader time span, as individuals and groups react and respond to them (perhaps on a daily basis, perhaps only on specific occasions" (1994: 80-1).

ideological experiences to the text.[33] The problem of their resulting divergences in interpretation has largely been neglected.[34]

Alison Sharrock has made the valuable observation that "in the end a text of itself cannot be either 'pro-' or 'anti-Augustan'; only readings can be."[35] Though this does not escape the somewhat reductive binary between 'pro-' and 'anti-Augustanism,' rightly criticized by Duncan Kennedy,[36] this emphasis on the reader raises interpretive possibilities that I explore throughout this dissertation. It obviously forces us to revisit the standard conception of Augustus' public image as a stable construction of the *princeps*, handed down to the public via statues, monuments, and other means. Rather, Augustus' image was comprised of many texts in many media, and their interactions not only with one another but with their audiences. An author may have conscious intentions to convey certain messages in his work, but in the end meaning is created only through individual readers' active mental engagement. Taking into account the heterogeneity of Augustus' audience, this means that there may be as many readings of Augustus as there are readers; these may be historically situated anywhere from Augustus' time to our own; and for that matter, readers decide for themselves which texts do and do not seem to relate to Augustus, rendering fluid and subjective even the bounds of Augustan discourse. So, in place of the idea of Augustan propaganda, and as a refinement to the idea of Augustan discourse, I view all texts that concern Augustus – in whatever medium, and of whatever period – as comprising a single Augustan Text, woven together by the mental associations and interpretations of individual readers, much as a hypertext comprises an indefinite number of individual sites joined by links that must be activated or pursued by diverse readers with disparate interests and goals.[37] Though I continue to employ the term 'discourse,' I regard it as a composite and changing intertext that in effect is constituted within the mind of each individual observer, and takes on a unique meaning according to that observer's experiences, set of referents, political views, and habits of reading.[38]

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[33] My emphasis on the background that the reader brings to the text is by no means unique. For instance, Ann Kuttner states that "in visual, as in verbal, communication, true comprehension depends on a shared language of forms and symbols; an iconographer must, like a historian, strive to the best of her necessarily limited powers to reconstruct the relevant *prior* experience and assumptions of the persons whose perceptions she investigates. This truism is very seldom made explicit" (1995: 199-200).

[34] Proponents of the 'discourse' model have recently done much valuable work in examining ideological dialogues between Augustan texts, but in avoiding the unfashionable concept of the 'intentions of the author' they have tended merely to substitute the 'intentions of a text' without further pressing the problem of the audience's role in creating meaning.

[35] Sharrock 1994: 98.

[36] Most influentially, in his 1992 article "Augustan' and 'Anti-Augustan': Reflections on Terms of Reference," though also in 1984. This idea has not, however, convinced everyone: see e.g. Wallace-Hadrill's rejoinder that the best propaganda "coalesces unnoticed with the existing values of a society" and thus influenced poetry in many unseen ways (1987: 222). I prefer Hardie's idea that "given our sources, we cannot even imagine what it would mean to be anti-Augustan"; he points also to an "ineluctable collusion" between Ovid and Augustus which I seek to explore throughout this dissertation (1997: 151).

[37] Holliday makes the similar observation that historical commemorations are embedded in what Geertz has called "webs of significance" that humans spin around themselves (2002: xxii); because of the largely textual nature of my evidence, I adopt a more literary/intertextual model.

[38] Each individual observer also decides the bounds of this discourse for himself; i.e., one reader may interpret a text as reflecting upon Augustus, and connect it with other texts that he feels relate to the same topic, while another may not make this interpretive connection and thus may understand Augustan discourse to constitute an entirely different set of texts.

Within this dissertation I therefore treat Augustus' public image as a composite 'text' subject to the interpretation of 'readers' – the Roman audience who participated in its construction and analysis. This emphasis on the reader, of course, raises as many problems as it hopes to address. Readers' responses are in many ways just as irrecoverable as authorial intentions. Ironically, our only evidence for ancient reader responses, which by their nature are ephemeral, are recorded texts – which in turn represent the opinions of only a privileged few. I therefore use these texts as evidence for individual and not necessarily representative responses to Augustus, which do however serve as examples for contemporary and future readers, perhaps influencing their own reader responses to Augustus. Moreover, these texts themselves build certain relationships with their readers and, although they can never control a reader's response, prompt some readings more naturally than others. Though my analysis is necessary limited, I hope that my focus on the reader's role in constructing meaning, and my treatment of these recorded texts as mediating and enacting reader responses to Augustus, will shed some new light on Augustan discourse – in particular, on how public perceptions of Augustus evolved over the course of his reign.[39] Those 'readers' of Augustus who shared their interpretations – through extant public media like coins and poetry, or through lost ones like rumor, speech, and song – in effect became 'rewriters' of Augustus, helping to shape and change his image in the eyes of a wider public. Many generations later, scholars are still reshaping and contesting Augustus' image and bringing their own historical and ideological perspectives to the collective and continuing discourse surrounding the *princeps*.

III. Reading and the construction of meaning: ancient and modern examples

My model of a vast, associative, evolving, and reader-driven Augustan (inter)text has sympathies with Roland Barthes' ideas of the Text.[40] He defines it as "not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message of an Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash." Moreover, readers themselves bring many of these writings *to* the text at hand, via texts that they have already internalized, and thus participate in constructing its meaning. As Barthes puts it, "The 'I' that approaches the text ... is itself already a plurality of other texts, of codes which are infinite or, more precisely, lost (whose origin is lost) … Subjectivity is generally imagined as a plenitude with which I encumber the text, but in fact this faked plenitude is only the wake of all the codes that constitute me."[41]

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[39] I am sympathetic to Habinek's goal, following Said, of 'contrapuntal reading'– that is, observing "the antitheses between text and context, or one text and another" and describing their interaction as well as what is excluded (1998: 167).

[40] Barthes' essay "From Work to Text" (1977) provides a good introduction to his conception of the Text (as opposed to lower-case texts or works) as the undefined, paradoxical, plural, radically symbolic field of readerly intellectual 'play.'

[41] 1975: 10, also quoted in Culler 2002: 68, in a good general discussion of structuralist views on the text. Barthes believed that the goal of literature was to make the reader "no longer a consumer but a producer of the text" (1975: 10) and that "the birth of the reader must be requited by the death of the Author" (1986a: 55). Culler accordingly analyzes the view that the meaning of literature depends on codes produced by prior discourses of a culture, and explores readers' role in producing meaning (2002: 68). Bennett offers a comparison of Barthes, Benjamin, and Fish (1987: 250-2).

Though Barthes' model best encompasses the operation of readers upon the Augustan Text as a whole, Stanley Fish well describes how I envision readings performed upon component texts. According to his "affective stylistics," there is no 'correct' reading of a text, nor does a text have an existence independent of the reader; in fact, what we call 'text' is already an interpretive action performed by a reader, whose mental operations define the bounds of the text and whose interpretive experiences take the place of any essential meaning. In Terry Eagleton's formulation, "reading is not a matter of discovering what the text means, but a process of experiencing what it does to you. … What the text 'does' to us, however, is actually a matter of what we do to it, a question of interpretation; the object of critical attention is the structure of the reader's experience, not any 'objective' structure to be found in the work itself." This model acknowledges the reader's independence from the text – indeed, her ability to define what does and does not constitute a text – while at the same time positing that readers share similar "interpretive strategies" with their larger community, thus allowing for a certain consistency amid difference.[42]

This modern interest in the relations between author, text, reader, and society has deep antecedents in the ancient world; though Roman writings never deny the reality of authors and texts, they often assign a surprising degree of interpretive independence to the reader. I would like to discuss a few Augustan depictions of reading before turning to a more extended analysis of Ovid's conception of texts, authors, and readers. This will prove crucial to my own discussion of his 'reading' of Augustan iconography, and in particular, my thesis that Ovid – while himself implicated in Augustan Text – performs upon it what we might now think of as a Barthesian deconstruction of the ways that signs come to produce meanings and mythologies.

A. Reading in Vergil

Though Ovid makes the exploration of subjectivity, fictionality, and the creation of perceptions a cornerstone of his poetics, he is not the only Augustan poet to explore the interactions between text, author and audience in constructing meaning.[43] Shadi Bartsch observes that the *Aeneid* "announces its status as the counterpart of the very forms of art it presents for readerly viewing."[44] For instance, immediately upon arriving in Carthage, Aeneas encounters images of the fall of Troy on a temple to Juno (*Aen.* 1.446-497).[45] Yet Vergil strongly focalizes his description around Aeneas' subjective response:[46] it follows the trajectory of Aeneas' gaze, foregrounds his acts of interpretation through frequent verbs of perception, records his grief-stricken outburst in response to the images (459-63), and employs phraseology that

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[42] I draw from Fish's 1976 *Interpreting the Variorum*, as well as the analyses of Eagleton (2008: 74-7) and Bennett (1987: 251-2).

[43] To Leach, the idea that works of art make "suggestive address" to their spectators is consistent with ancient theories of the imagination, which "stress the experience of the receiving audience over that of the creator"; she cites, for example, Quintilian's rhetorical discussion of *enargeia* (which prompts a listener to build up a mental picture from select details) and of the orator's manipulation of his audience (1988: 323).

[44] 1998: 328.

[45] Leach makes this point at 1988: 311, before a more thorough and subtle exploration of Aeneas' interpretation of the temple than I can afford here; I endorse her discussion of reading and art in the ancient world, although her emphasis (on drawing links between verbal narrative styles and landscape painting) is quite different from my own. Holliday also looks at the Carthaginian friezes as an example of historical commemoration (2002: xix).

[46] As has been observed by Bartsch 1998: 337, Clay 1988: 202, Laird 1996: 89, and Segal 1981.

embeds Aeneas' point of view (for instance, "non aequae Palladis" at 479 suggests Aeneas' bitterness toward the Trojans' enemy Athena, and the phrase "exanimumque auro corpus vendebat Achilles" at 484 suggests moral outrage at Achilles' behavior).[47] All of the above narrative methods convey the sense that Aeneas is reading these images as evoking pity for the Trojan side. But, as Eleanor Leach points out, these images occur in the specific context of the Carthaginians' temple to their patron goddess Juno, a deity notably hostile to the Trojans. In this context, the scenes of the Trojan War would hardly express pity for the Trojans – if anything, they would commemorate the goddess' power in vanquishing her enemies and guaranteeing the success of the Greeks.[48] Thus, Aeneas seems to be reading these images against their intended meaning,[49] allowing his personal experience to shape his interpretation of the text. Even more significantly, Vergil's own text privileges this subjective interpretation over any 'original' or 'authentic' meaning the temple art may have been meant to convey.[50] Thus, this first and paradigmatic act of 'reading' in the *Aeneid* supports several points I have made about Augustan discourse: we may 'read' images and buildings as texts; a reader actively participates in a text's creation of meaning; and a reader's interpretation, though often conditioned by the works' immediate context, is subjective and may not conform to an author's intentions.[51]

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[47] The narrative follows Aeneas' gaze first as it takes in the grandeur and form of the bronze temple (448-9), then as it glimpses the pictures, recognizes their subject (453-458), and interprets the images as though they are unfolding before him in present time (464-493). Vergil also draws attention to Aeneas' imaginative participation by frequently using active verbs of perception and response, e.g. *lustrat* (453), *miratur* (456), *videt* (456), *animum ... pascit* (464), *umectat* (465), *videbat* (466), *gemitum dat* (485), and *agnovit* (488). One can detect further focalization in Vergil's choice of words and in Aeneas' attraction to episodes that depict the Trojans as more sympathetic than the Greeks.

[48] As Leach notes at 1988: 317. However, she argues that Aeneas' misreading makes these paintings an "incomplete communication," whereas I contend that he reads a message into them and that his response is valid and meaningful, despite its difference from apparent authorial intent. Bartsch makes a similar point when she writes that this scene invites the participation of the viewer in making his own, positive meaning out of art" (1998: 338). I attempt to add greater subtlety to her model by also acknowledging the split between author and art and by thinking of Augustan material culture in less propagandistic terms.

[49] Bartsch 1998: 337 and Boyle 1972: 75 have made similar observations, the latter pointing to Vergil's apparently negative description of this as a "pictura inani"; it would seem the viewer fills them with meaning.

[50] According to Leach, Aeneas' "interpretive bias" accomplishes "the transformation of a record of Greek triumph into an expression of compassionate sympathy for Troy that is effected by the hero's subjective eye" (1988: 318). Leach characterizes this as a "misreading" of the images on Aeneas' part that "casts doubts on the reliability of factual communication through pictured narrative" (1988: 323). I argue on the contrary that readers create their own meaning upon a text; thus there may be no 'misreadings,' only readings that themselves may be textualized (as Vergil embeds Aeneas' response within his own poetic text, foregrounding and asking readers to contemplate this subjective interpretation rather than any meaning that may have been intended by the (fictional) temple's own (fictional) builders).

[51] A similar analysis can be applied to Vergil's depiction of Daedalus' pictures on the Cumaean Temple to Apollo (*Aeneid* 6.14-41), which uses the word 'perlegerent' (6.34) to underscore the similarities between Aeneas' viewership and the act of reading; cf. the analysis of Leach (1988 *passim*) and Bartsch (1998: 327). Here, the Vergilian narrator fills in the gaps in Aeneas' knowledge and presents these pictures as artifacts in a historical context: he explains Icarus' tragic death, revealing that Daedalus had twice tried and failed to depict his son's death before giving up out of grief (14-19). Thus, to an informed reader, the silence of the pictures – their failure to depict Icarus' fall – speaks as loudly as the narratives they *do* convey. In other words, meaning emerges not from the author or text alone, or even from their interaction with the reader, but also from the reader's ability to compare a text with other versions and to situate it within its historical or political context. See Boyle 1972, Fitzgerald 1984, Conte 1986, and Bartsch 1998: 335 for the interactions between art, grief, and empathy as figured by this temple, and Jaeger 1990: 179 and Austin 1974: 64-5 for parallels between this and Augustus' temple to Apollo on the Palatine, which I discuss in Chapter 3.

B. Ovid and the reader

Ovid is even more overtly interested in the role of subjective interpretations in constructing meaning. In this section I will explore (i) Ovid's depictions of readers imposing meaning upon texts, (ii) how these interact with Ovid's grand claims elsewhere for the power of authors, and (iii) how Ovid depicts his own exile from Rome as the result of Augustus' reader response – one that trumps Ovid's authorial intentions. In the subsequent section I will discuss how Ovid turns the power of the reader against Augustus himself, creating an analogy between *princeps* and poet, depicting the emperor as someone who exists through his public image, and revealing that image as a 'text' over which Roman readers may exert interpretive power.

(i) Imposing readers: the comic version

Throughout his corpus, Ovid frequently depicts readers imposing their own interpretations upon indifferent or even resistant 'texts' (often to comic effect). This illustrates how meaning can be created through subjective interpretation even in the absence of authorial intent. Thus, the narrator of *Amores* 1.13 thinks that the dawn 'blushes' in response to his pleas, even though Ovid's reader knows that this 'sign' is an unchanging fact of nature rather than a means of communication. He depicts even himself subscribing to the pathetic fallacy as narrator at *Tristia* 1.2.107-110, where he reads a lull in the storm as a response to his prayers. Ironically, he stops to wonder whether he is being deceived by a mere accident of the weather ("fallor, an incipiunt gravidae vanescere nubes," 107), before his fervent wish for his prayers to be heard overrides this momentary skepticism. And, in a comical but somewhat disturbing symbol for the act of reading, Apollo at *Metamorphoses* 1.557-567 effectively continues his rape of Daphne by imposing his own meaning on her still-resistant arboreal form. He decides what the newly-created laurel will 'mean,' appropriating even her metamorphosed body to serve Roman power – and believes that the laurel nods ("adnuit") in consent to his request. Ovid here creates a greater interpretive problem for his readers, and one that better parallels the problems of the text. It is impossible to know whether the tree's 'nod' represents a trace of conscious consent, or merely the effect of a stray breeze; Daphne herself is buried mute within the thin paper-like bark, [52] like the author who recedes behind his text. Yet the phrase "visa est" suggests that the scene is focalized around the comically naïve Apollo and represents his own subjective desire to read the laurel's motion as a nod of consent ("finierat Paean; factis modo laurea ramis / adnuit, utque caput visa est agitasse cacumen"). Through all these examples, Ovid shows how readers can appropriate even natural phenomena as texts, and how they can and do manufacture those texts' meanings according to their subjective desires – even in the absence of an author.

(ii) Readers v. authors in Ovid

The situation becomes more complex and more charged, however, when a reader encounters a text created by an author to convey a particular message. Ovid at times seems to exalt the power of the author. Expanding upon prior poets' comparisons of themselves with the *princeps* (e.g. Vergil, *Georgics* 3.1-48; Horace, *Odes* 3.30; Propertius, *Carmina* 3.1),[53] Ovid

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[52] Cf. *Met.* 1.549, "mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia <u>libro</u>.".
[53] I discuss several of these passages in Chapter 4, including the parodic 'triumph of love' at *Amores* 1.2; see also Galinsky 1969 for an overview of the triumph theme in Latin poetry, and Balot 1998 for its Pindaric antecedents.

seems to assert a quasi-imperial level of power over readers. He concludes the *Metamorphoses*, for instance, first by predicting the future apotheosis of Augustus (15.852-70), but finally by prophesying the even greater immortality that awaits himself through the fame of his poetry (15.871-9):

> iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
> nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
> cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
> ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi:
> parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis   875
> astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum,
> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,
> siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam.[54]

This passage is often thought to express Ovid's defiance of Augustus ("Iovis ira"), and his faith that his genius will survive.[55] But it is important to note that Ovid's immortality is based on an alliance between himself and his reading public – he will live "as long as the people read him" ("ore legar populi"). Ovid thus acknowledges the audience as a necessary medium for the creation of *fama* even as he suggests that the poet enjoys its glory and some degree of control.[56]

In fact, within his early work, Ovid creates a comic gap between his claims for authorial power and readers' ability to ignore or warp his intended meaning. In *Amores* 2.1, for instance, he makes a series of grand claims for the power of song to affect reality: it can draw down the moon (23), call back the sun (24), reverse running water (26), and even open the doors of a stubborn mistress (22; 27-8). But time after time, throughout the book, readers see poetry fail to have any such effect. In *Amores* 1.13, for instance, his mistress' doors remain resolutely shut against his song (though he does persuade himself, in a parody of lovers' self-delusion, that the dawn blushes in response; 47-8). And in *Amores* 3.12, Ovid denies that verses can be good for anything (13); in fact, readers should not give them any weight (19-20) and should disregard

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[54] "And now I've completed my work, which neither Jupiter's wrath / nor fire nor sword can erase, nor gnawing old age. / Let that day which has power over nothing but this body / end, when it will, the span of my uncertain years: / nevertheless, the better part of me will be borne, immortal, / beyond the high stars, and my name will be indelible, / and wherever Roman power extends over the lands it has conquered, / I will be read by the mouths of the people: and through all the ages, / if there's truth in poets' prophecies, I shall live on in fame." This and all otherwise unattributed translations throughout this dissertation are my own.

[55] My thinking on this topic bears similarities with Feldherr's 2010 *Playing Gods: Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Politics of Fiction*, published too recently to be fully incorporated here. I applaud Feldherr's desire to "replace an old model of Ovid's self-representation as enacting a clear-cut, indeed timeless, battle between the resistant artist and all-powerful tyrant with a more specific and complex picture of the pressures and constraints acting on the writer in a society where the emperor was already an artist and the artist uses his text as a way of pursuing an immortality very like that sought by the *princeps* himself"(2010: 61). On the other hand, Davis (2010) points out problems with the claim that Augustus was an 'artist,' citing Feeney and Hardie's distinction between poetic immortality and Augustan apotheosis. My own analysis, especially in Chapter 2, seeks to accommodate these problems while tracing how such conceptions of Augustus emerge from and shape subsequent interpretations of the Augustan Text.

[56] Hardie's 2002 book on Ovid, *fama*, and the construction of presence and illusion through readerly credulity has been influential on my own study; I seek to expand on his ideas about Ovidian poetics by reapplying them to the principate itself, as Hardie begins to do at 316-7.

poets' stories as fantastical and unreal.[57] This latter poem is worth closer examination for the insight it provides into the paradoxical nature of poetic power. Ovid begins by lamenting the fact that his poems have turned his beloved Corinna into common property, enjoyed by many (*ingenio prostitit illa meo*, 8). He argues, however, that according to custom (*mos*), poets should not be considered true witnesses; he had wished that no weight be assigned to his words (*malueram verbis pondus abesse meis*, 19-20). It was poets, after all, who turned Scylla into a monster, who laid low Tityus, who captured Aeolus' winds, who turned Niobe into a rock, and who turned Jupiter into a bird, bull, or any other shape (21-40). These examples of poetic 'lies' are themselves somewhat ambiguous, since these stories are often treated as truths in Roman art, religion, and literature (most famously, by Ovid in his own *Metamorphoses*); giving poets sole credit for the invention of such pervasive myths already seems to assign literature great power to propagate belief. But Ovid here emphasizes their fictionality in order to chide his readers for being over-credulous when it comes to his own poetry: readers should have assumed that Corinna, too, was invented rather than real. Ovid returns, at the end of the poem, to the reason why he hopes readers think Corinna is a fiction – she would then remain obscure, and he would be spared the inconvenience of having to share her with others (*credulitas nunc mihi vestra nocet*, 44)! Thus, in the Mobius-strip logic of this poem, Ovid continues to maintain the illusion that Corinna is a real girl even after he berates his readers for their gullibility in thinking so. Of course, this is the punch-line of the poem, and not just for the reader who construes 'Corinna' as pseudonymous for Ovid's love poetry rather than his lover, and *prostitit* as referring to the act of publication rather than prostitution. This poem also illustrates the more general and somewhat paradoxical point that, though fictions are constructed by authors, it is from readers that they acquire power, popularity, and even a sense of reality – a point that echoes certain lines of thinking within reader response theory, and that will be useful for my analysis of Augustus' persona.[58]

The gaps between author and audience are often exploited to comic effect within the love poetry: they open up the possibility of a radical disjunct between the meaning an author intends and the one an audience creates for a text. But this early poetry also, I think, begins to explore how this gap can be healed – how an author can get an audience on his side – by encouraging readers to adopt particular habits of interpretation. For instance, with the paired poems *Amores* 2.7 and 2.8, Ovid encourages readers to read intertextually and be more skeptical about assigning truth to words. In the first, Ovid passionately defends himself against Corinna's accusation that he has slept with her serving-girl Cypassis; in the second, Ovid covertly berates Cypassis for letting Corinna find out about their affair. He thus performs his ability, as an author, to present different versions of reality to different audiences (here, Cypassis and Corinna, internal to the poetic fiction), and illustrates their potential gullibility in accepting those versions at face value. This also establishes a certain complicity between Ovid and the external reader of the *Amores*, who enjoys a privileged vantage from which he can watch Ovid creating fictions in order to manipulate other audiences. In fact, and somewhat paradoxically, Ovid establishes a particularly trusting, intimate, and intellectually stimulating relationship with his reader in part by letting this reader in on his authorial acts of deception – in other words, by giving the reader a free factory

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[57] McKeown 1979 and Feeney 1991: 226 also discuss this poem.

[58] In this point I have been influenced by Hardie 2002. For some good approaches to fictionality and realism in the ancient world, see Gill and Wiseman's 1993 *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, Malaspina 1995: 14, and Oliensis 2004: 318.

tour of his workshop for creating reality through fiction (and, later, by hinting at the analogous inner workings of Augustus' own illusion factory). Ovid's reader may even enjoy this inside perspective so much that he forgets he is a willing consumer of these same fictions – that in admiring Ovid's deception of Corinna, for instance, he too is implicitly subscribing to a fiction (the fiction that Corinna really exists).

In other words, Ovid encourages his readers to read with him, and not against him, by making them feel invested and satisfied in the author's perpetration of fictions – by giving them both an intellectual payoff and a moment of superiority over more naïve readers (even if the latter are in fact constructed by the text). Nowhere is this better illustrated than in *Amores* 2.17, where he claims that one Roman woman, recognizing the elegiac convention of pseudonymity without understanding the poetic one of fictionality, boasts that *she* is the famous Corinna. This story, of course, is flattering to Ovid, in that it suggests that his poetry is so popular and convincing that some audiences have mistaken its illusionism for reality. Yet it is also flattering to the reader, in that he is allowed to share in the author's comic dismay at the gullibility of others – even though this is simply an exaggerated case of the basic readerly suspension of disbelief (or act of imaginative participation) that gives any poetry its power.

(iii) Imposing readers: the tragic reprise

Yet readers' belief in Ovid's fictions, so comical in the love poetry, takes on a tragic cast with his exile.[59] In *Tristia* 2.207, Ovid states that Augustus relegated him to the Black Sea because of two charges – a poem and a mistake (*carmen et error*).[60] He refuses to discuss the error, veiling his exile in a sense of mystery, and establishing an atmosphere of fear and circumspection that characterizes his exilic attitude toward Augustus. He does, however, discuss the 'carmen,' which appears to be the *Ars Amatoria* – a poem through which Ovid was accused of teaching shameful adultery:

> perdiderint cum me duo crimina, carmen et error,
>   alterius facti culpa silenda mihi …

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[59] For a still useful summary of scholarship surrounding Ovid's exile as well as the historical background of the event, see Wiedemann 1975. He sensibly seeks to counter prevailing assumptions such as Otis', that Ovid was "querulous and sycophantic," or Vulikh's, that Ovid was unpolitical (264), while avoiding the opposite problem of reading sarcasm into all of Ovid's flattering references to Augustus (268). He also tackles the difficult issue of Ovid's audience, arguing that these poems could not have been aimed at Augustus on the grounds that they fail to flatter him appropriately and at times might embarrass him; he suggests instead that the poems are designed to show elite Romans "the absurdity of Augustus' grounds for exiling Ovid" (271). My analysis seeks to complicate Ovid's relationship with his readers, analyzing how he models certain strategies for interpreting the *princeps* that have been construed as either propagandistic or subversive (though in fact they are neither).

[60] For recent scholarship on this important poem, see Gibson 1999 and McGowan 2009. Some scholars explore the interesting argument that Ovid never went to exile after all, citing the lack of any evidence other than Ovid's own poems: see e.g. Fitton Brown 1985, the rejoinders of Hofmann (1987) and Green (1994), and Little's sensible analysis of the literary effects and exaggerations of exile (1990). Oliensis calls it a "marvelous irony … that some readers are able to deny Ovid's exile poetry any referential standing, to interpret it as yet another Ovidian fiction"; she finds this mode of reading highly Ovidian but believes it drains the poems of their meaning (2004: 319). I prefer Williams' argument (1994: 3-49) that, whatever their (unknowable) historical accuracy, the poems still create a textual reality (4); if they were complete fictions, their exploration of reader responses to Augustus would be no less powerful. I also endorse Habinek's view that, despite gaps in Ovid's representation of Tomis and its reality, we can still productively ask why Ovid portrays exile as he does (1998: 218).

> altera pars superest, qua turpi carmine factus
>   arguor obsceni doctor adulterii.
> fas ergo est aliqua caelestia pectora falli… (207-8, 211-3)[61]

Ovid's cautious suggestion here that Augustus was deceived in his interpretation of this poem becomes part of his defense later:

> crede mihi, distant mores a carmine nostri –
>   vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea –
> magnaque pars mendax operum est et ficta meorum:
>   plus sibi permisit compositore suo. (353-6)[62]

As Ovid constructs the situation for his overreader , the error is Augustus' rather than Ovid's: the emperor has misunderstood his poem as a reflection on Ovid's true character. But in doing so, he has committed the same error as the woman in *Amores* 2.17 who went around pretending to be Corinna – he has mistaken Ovid's fictions for fact. This credulity is now tragic rather than comical, since it has real-world consequences for Ovid's life. Yet here, too, Ovid appeals to his external reader to referee the game of meaning: any reader of fiction, he argues, should know not to conflate it with life. Ovid thus invites his reader to 'correct' Augustus' interpretive mistake and to side with Ovid.   His reward is a sense of readerly sophistication, even superiority over the emperor himself – and he is also confirmed in a style of reading that, as I will argue, has interesting consequences for the emperor's public image.

Ovid's representation of his exile in *Tristia* 2 has important implications. On the one hand, it questions texts' relationship to the world. Augustus has read his poems as though they indicate Ovid's true character. But in Ovid's view, the two are perfectly separable, and there is a clear gap between representation and reality ('his life is chaste, his muse is playful'). On the other hand, Ovid is staging a contest of authority: who gets to decide the meaning of a text? Ovid says that Augustus has 'read' the *Ars Amatoria* against Ovid's own intentions as an author. Yet Augustus' interpretation prevails – and results in Ovid's banishment. This is in part because Augustus, as emperor, is an exceptionally powerful reader; [63] but it also forms the culminating example of Ovid's recurring argument that readers can usurp a text's meaning from its author. So, these poems depict Ovid's authorial persona struggling to determine the meaning of his texts, but paradoxically also reveal that reader response matters more than his own intentions. Augustus' continued refusal to reinstate Ovid, or to revise his understanding of the *carmen et error,* means that the *Tristia* continue being *tristia*; their very existence and identity is based on

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[61] "Though two charges have ruined me, a poem and a mistake, I must keep silent about my fault in the one … The other part remains, according to which I am accused, through an immoral poem, of becoming a teacher of wanton adultery. So it must be possible for divine minds somehow to be deceived…"

[62] "I assure you, my character differs from my verse / (my life is chaste; my muse is playful), / and most of my work, unreal and fictitious, / has allowed itself more license than its author has had."

[63] Though it is a mistake to subscribe too fully to Ovid's motivated presentation of events, as Nisbet seems to when he writes that Ovid "gives an insight into the nature of power under the Principate which in spite of his necessary discretion is more revealing than anything in Vergil or Horace" (1982: 56). McGowan adds, "Augustus' power in the exile poetry derives, it seems, not from his right to punish the guilty, but from his ability to exact guilt from the accused: the accused is forced to admit guilt simply by virtue of having been accused" (2009: 62); I suggest that Ovid elides this power, which McGowan envisions in political terms, with that of the reader.

his reader response.[64] On the other hand, these poems also convey certain messages to the larger Roman audience reading over Augustus' and other addressees' shoulders.[65] Most obviously, Ovid attempts to persuade his readership of his innocence, elicit their goodwill toward his cause from exile, and even side with him over Augustus. He does this, in part, by acknowledging the importance of audience complicity in meaning. This lesson applies most obviously to Ovid's exile poems, which rely on friendly readers in order to help convey Ovid's voice to Rome.[66] However, Ovid also reveals Augustus' own public image as a 'text' that, like Ovid's poetry, can be read as a true or inaccurate reflection of his real self.

IV. *Princeps* as Text

Thomas Habinek and Peter Davis have explored Ovid's obsession with rendering himself 'present' in Rome by means of his exile poetry.[67] Yet, as I have argued, a text's meaning is always subject to its readers; thus Ovid's dependence on writing in order to traverse the distance between Rome and Tomis only highlights his dependence on his readers, his lack of authorial control, and even his inability to perceive their reception of his text. But in the exile poetry, Ovid also makes a remarkable step: he realizes that this problem conversely applies to the *princeps* himself. Though Ovid is at the periphery of the empire and Augustus is at its center, both face the problem of making themselves 'present' across great distances. And Ovid's desperate attempt to construct himself in Rome despite his absence is mirrored by Augustus' need to construct his presence throughout the empire – to make his power felt everywhere, even though he can be in only one place at one time.[68]

In one view, Augustus does this by 'authoring' not poems, but another type of text – a public image for himself, through which he was able to convince Romans of his legitimacy and convey his authority abroad.[69] Yet Ovid points out not only that the emperor's authority rests on his reputation – which he often equates with *fama* – but also that this is analogous to poetry and therefore subject to the same rules that he defines in *Tristia* 2: it does not necessarily reflect

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[64] Oliensis notes the duality of the word *tristia*, which can refer either to the poet's sorrow or the emperor's anger (2004: 297).

[65] On the issue of audience I adopt Oliensis' conceptualization of readers and 'overreaders' in her work on Horace (1998: 7), in that this allows for a single text to create different 'transcripts' and support different modes of reading. For some discussion of audience in the exile poetry, with bibliography on prior scholarship and epistolary addressees in general, see Davisson 1985.

[66] See e.g. Habinek 1998: 153-4 and my Chapter 4.

[67] In *The Politics of Latin Literature* (1998: 151-70), and "The colonial subject in Ovid's exile poetry" (2002) respectively.

[68] I explore this idea in greater depth in Chapter 4, including Ovid's emphasis on the difficulty of information travel, not only from Tomis to Rome (cf. *Tristia* 3.1) but also from Rome to Tomis (cf. *Tristia* 3.12). Where Habinek 1998 argues that Ovid's exile poetry performs important ideological work for empire and presents subjection as a condition for enjoying its benefits, I take the opposite tack, looking at how Ovid questions the possibility of constructing oneself as Roman abroad. Following Habinek's mention of the empire's increased dependence on writing (1998: 115), I also explore how empire not only governs writing but also is governed by and through communication (an idea that Ovid develops from exile).

[69] The idea of Augustus' authorship emerges from Ovid's discussions of iconography associated with his reign, and will be problematized over the course of this dissertation. The idea of ruling through public image links with my brief discussion above on recent historical scholarship (particularly Lendon, Ando, and Hölscher) on the role of ideology, patronage, culture, and other non-military means in constructing Rome's power abroad.

reality, it can be created according to an author's intentions, and it can also be read against those intentions. Ovid had already joked about this in his love poetry, where he showed that even imperial texts are merely vessels for meaning that must finally be supplied by the reader. In *Ars Amatoria* 219-228, for instance, he gives readers license to explicate a triumph at will, with total disregard for its 'correct' or intended meaning, in order to impress potential lovers ("quae nescieris, ut bene nota refer …ille vel ille, duces; et erunt quae nomina dicas, / si poteris, vere, si minus, apta tamen"). The amatory reader may effectively wrest control of the triumph away from its author, putting it in service of his own goals and imposing upon it whatever meaning he desires.

Such contests of power recur in the exile poetry, where they are more subtly expressed due to Ovid's changed stance toward the *princeps*. On the other hand, the state of exile allows Ovid to emphasize his dependence, as a Roman citizen away from Rome, on symbols and messages of the emperor (both of which, like poetry itself, can be inadequate to reality or misinterpreted by an audience). It also allows him to make an argument for his own potential usefulness to the project of constructing Roman authority abroad – an argument that underscores the similarities between imperial representations and Ovid's own poetry. For instance, the poet proclaims to Germanicus in *Ex Ponto* 4.8 that even the gods are 'created' by verse. Thus Caesar owes his divinity in part to the talent of poets, and Ovid would be glad to render similar service to Germanicus himself (55-66).

> di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt,
> 	tantaque maiestas ore canentis eget. …
> et modo, Caesar, avum, quem virtus addidit astris,
> 	sacrarunt aliqua carmina parte tuum.
> siquid adhuc igitur vivi, Germanice, nostro
> 	restat in ingenio, serviet omne tibi. (55-6, 63-6)[70]

Ovid's suggestion that poetry creates even the gods ironically recalls the argument of *Amores* 3.12.21-40, discussed above, that it was poets who turned Scylla into a monster, captured Aeolus' winds, turned Niobe into a rock, and metamorphosed Jupiter into various new forms. In the context of *Amores* 3.12, however, these are examples of the tall tales that poetry can propagate – and constitute reasons why Ovid's reader should not believe in Corinna. *Ex Ponto* 4.8 reverses the train of this argument. Instead of warning readers not to believe poetic fictions, it offers poetry's service to empire as a means for propagating belief.

In *Ex Ponto* 4.8, therefore, Ovid seems to be suggesting that his poetic skills make him useful as a propagandist: it is through poetry, which 'creates' *maiestas* and otherwise influences public belief, that the gods were created, that Caesar was deified, and that Germanicus too may attain renown.[71] This is, of course, quite a subversive idea, even as it appears to pander to

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[70]"Even the gods, if I may say so, come into being through poetry; / such great majesty requires the voice of a singer. / And recently, Caesar, your grandfather, whose virtue added him to the stars, was consecrated in some part by songs. / Therefore if any life still remains in my genius, it will wholly serve you."

[71] I further discuss in Chapter 2 the idea that greatness and even godhood are created as much by reputation – as transmitted through poetry – as by intrinsic merit. Thus a *princeps* has use for the poet for the same reasons that he is like a poet: his power derives in part from reputation.

power. Note that the passage above offers two separate reasons for Caesar's deification: his own innate *virtus*, and the power of song. Ideally, the two would be linked: a man's true *virtus* would be publicized through song, which would grant him the fame, immortality, and power that he deserved. Yet, as discussed above, Ovid elsewhere insists that songs can lie, manipulate, and otherwise fail to reflect reality. And Ovid's separation of *virtus* and *carmen* here further suggests that one's reputation may not always match one's true merit. The narrator, of course, has an obvious, even humorous self-interest in propounding such an idea.[72] Yet it also hints at a separability of person from persona which is very much a concern for Ovid. It also suggests some important commonalities between political reputation and poetry: both can be constructed, fictitious, and reliant for their power upon the imaginative participation of an audience.

The idea that leaders may gain or maintain power through potentially deceptive public images is itself nothing new: it has many parallels among the classical historians, both Greek and Roman.[73] In a famous episode in Herodotus often interpreted as a criticism of popular gullibility, the Athenian tyrant Pisistratus gets a local woman to pose as Athena and ride in his chariot in order to persuade the Athenians that he has the support of the gods (1.61.3).[74] Among the Augustan authors, Livy frequently depicts Roman leaders carefully fabricating their public personae, even when other versions of history were available to him.[75] For instance, according to legend, the nymph Egeria was the consort of Rome's second king, Numa Pompilius. Yet in Livy's account, Numa himself falsely propagated the belief that he consorted with the nymph, in order to gain popular support for his laws (1.19). This accords with Livy's rationalistic mode of historiography, but also with his larger theme that leaders sometimes warp the truth not only for their own gain but also for the benefit of their subjects.

What is interesting about Ovid is not merely his suggestion that Augustus used similar means to gain power, but his strategy for making this suggestion. For, even as Ovid offers poetry as a tool for creating power in *Ex Ponto* 4.8, he also uses it throughout the exile poetry to demystify power – to show how 'gods' like Augustus could be 'made' (and unmade). He does so by focusing on the reader: on himself as a reader of imperial iconography, and his own readers as audiences of Augustus' public image. Accordingly, this dissertation will examine how Ovid, particularly in the exile poetry, performs double-edged public readings of Augustan symbols and ideology – readings that simultaneously propagate these while pointing out their artificiality. Individual chapters focus on Caesar's deification (as figured by the *sidus Iulium*), Augustus' clemency (as represented in the Palatine complex), and Augustus' ability to exert power abroad (as discussed via triumphal poems). These chapters, however, are unified in their concern for the relationships that Ovid establishes between himself, Augustus, and his reader. In particular, in part through creating an exilic atmosphere of fear and flattery, Ovid encourages

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[72]Gareth Williams has compared Ovid, the *poeta relegatus*, to the *exclusus amator* of his earlier amatory poems (1994: 124) – in which case, it is unsurprising that he similarly alternate between desperate and tongue-in-cheek arguments.

[73] See, for example, the 2010 *Private and Public Lies: The Discourse of Despotism and Deceit in the Graeco-Roman World* (ed. Turner, Kim, Chong-Gossard and Vervaet).

[74] For a discussion of Pisistratus' rise as a critique of the gullibility of the demos, see Gray 1997.

[75] Livy's story of Julius Proculus (1.16), who testifies to Romulus' apotheosis in order to quell public unrest and perhaps dispel the contentious rumor that he was murdered, is an especially good parallel for Julian manipulations of belief (most obviously, the deification of Caesar). For more examples where people of authority fabricate stories in order to manipulate others, see Sailor 2006.

readers to identify split meanings and motives within his text: as superficially serving 'pro-Augustan' aims, but subtextually advancing 'subversive' interpretations of the principate.[76] In doing so, Ovid also models a style of double-reading that anticipates the doublespeak that Bartsch has observed in authors writing under Nero.[77] It may also help encourage the modern tendency to regard Augustus as the master of a successful image campaign, and to think in reductively 'pro-' or 'anti-Augustan' terms about that image.

V. Ovid and the construction of 'propaganda'

Before I discuss specific examples of Ovid's deconstruction of symbols associated with imperial power, I would like to outline some general strategies he employs in representing Augustus, and to explore in brief how he constructs relationships between himself, his readers, and the *princeps*. Building on Ellen Oliensis' exploration of the "competing representational projects of poet and emperor,"[78] I examine how he enlists his audience to mediate this implicit rivalry. In the exile poetry, especially, he frequently advertises his service to an image of Augustus that presumably serves the emperor's political advantage, while at the same time encouraging readers to question that image. He thus propagates a strategy of 'double-reading' imperial imagery that creates the sense that there exists some ideological orthodoxy to subvert.

It is difficult to resist the temptation to map Ovid's exilic representation of his punishment by Augustus onto his depictions of artistic rivalry within the *Metamorphoses*, a work begun before the *relegatio* but likely revised afterwards. As Oliensis notes, it is a text that seems designed to produce overreadings,[79] and she draws some compelling connections between the rivalries of Minerva/Arachne and Augustus/Ovid. For instance, Arachne's tapestry depicts the gods as possessing superior force rather than superior virtue, but does not necessarily make a moral judgment; it is Minerva who reads this message into the work and consequently punishes Arachne. This reaction ironically vindicates Arachne's obsession with power – and in many ways parallels Augustus' punishment of Ovid. Particularly interesting is Oliensis' observation that "Minerva's art lies (because it claims to be the truth) while Arachne's tells the truth (because it flaunts its power to deceive)." She connects this to Augustus' enhancement of his *auctoritas* by obfuscating his "authorial and authorizing role" in the production of the images that underlie his power: by representing Minerva as a creator of a self-serving representation, Ovid is exposing "the interestedness of Augustan (self)representations." I agree that Minerva and Augustus reflect upon one another, but in the opposite direction: Ovid's depiction of a self-aggrandizing Minerva creates the impression of a self-aggrandizing Augustus, despite an absence

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[76] To borrow Scott's terminology again (1990), Ovid is creating a 'hidden transcript' in plain view, one around which so-called 'oppressed' groups may find social and interpretive solidarity and covertly discuss their dominators.

[77] In Chapter 3 of *Actors in the Audience* (1994), for instance, Bartsch explores how acts of political conformity are recognized as polyvalent by their audience; thus the audience can even create unintended allusiveness by interpreting an author's words subversively. She situates her argument squarely in the Neronian period, but I am trying to explore how such ideas may have an antecedent in Ovid's earlier response to empire. Later in the empire, of course, Tacitus applies this 'double' model of reading back to the Augustan period: in his famous summation of Augustus' reign (*Ann*. 1.2), he suggests that Augustus gained supreme power – and sounded the death knell for Roman freedom – in part by concealing his unprecedented power behind deceptively republican terms .

[78] In "The Power of Image-Makers: Representation and Revenge in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 6 and *Tristia* 4" (2004: 286), acknowledging Barchiesi, Hardie, and O'Gorman (all 1997) as influences.

[79] 2004: 296; cf. Barchiesi 2001: 83-103 and Casali 1993.

of evidence that he controlled Augustan discourse (or attempted to obfuscate such control). In fact, Oliensis' article illustrates the extent to which readers continue to subscribe to Ovid's intertextual portrayal of an artistic 'rivalry' with Augustus; thus, for instance, she simultaneously acknowledges the rhetorical force of his exilic "posture of helplessness" and his desire "not just to destroy Augustus but to take over his place and his power."[80] More recently, and with reference to a somewhat different set of stories,[81] Patricia Johnson has argued that such scenes of god/mortal rivalry reflect the growing difficulties that writers faced late in Augustus' reign, when earlier freedoms of speech were curtailed. According to this analysis, Ovid uses these stories to convey certain imperatives for poets under emperor: "meet the needs of a powerful listener and do not confront him or her directly; prioritize their needs over artistic concerns; and beware the hidden audience."[82]

Though Johnson believes these messages predate Ovid's punishment, his poems from exile certainly bring his own personal narrative further into line with these fictions. For instance, he asks readers to add his own story to the *Metamorphoses*:

> sunt quoque mutatae, ter quinque uolumina, formae,
>   nuper ab exequiis carmina rapta meis.
> his mando dicas, inter mutata referri
>   fortunae uultum corpora posse meae,
> namque ea dissimilis subito est effecta priori,
>   flendaque nunc, aliquo tempore laeta fuit. (*Tristia* 1.1.117-22)

Statements such as these encourage readers to revise their understanding of Ovid's corpus, rereading his poems intertextually and biographically, as points along the tragic arc of his life.[83] Though he blames the *Ars Amatoria* as the cause of his downfall, the *Metamorphoses* clearly marks the high point, particularly his claim to an everlasting popular fame that appears to surpass that of the Caesars (15.871-9). In other words, due to his special poetic relationship with *fama*, the medium of immortality, the poet can trump the prince. These claims are, of course, ostensibly ironized by his exile, which shares all the tragic archetypes of Arachne's fall: the skill that represents a challenge to the gods, the art that incurs the god's implacable wrath, and the helplessness of the artist-victim. Yet, even in the humbled state of his exile, Ovid does not entirely relinquish his claim for a special relationship with *fama* and his readers. Rather, he explores the similarities between poetic and political power, showing how both rely on *fama* (as discussed above, with reference to *Ex Ponto* 4.8). He also frames a struggle between himself and the *princeps* for control over public image – and invites a third party, his readers, to intervene imaginatively.

For one, Ovid frequently calls attention to his own poetic efforts to serve Augustus' public image.[84] This ostensibly depicts Ovid as a good citizen while hinting at his point in *Ex*

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[80] 2004: 300 and 317.
[81] In her 2008 *Ovid Before Exile: Art and Punishment in the Metamorphoses,* which focuses on Emathides and the Muses (*Met.* 5), Arachne and Minerva (*Met.* 6), and the story of Orpheus (*Met.* 10-11).
[82] As usefully summarized in Green's 2008 review.
[83] See Hinds 1999: 49 for the *Tristia* as a rereading and rewriting of the *Metamorphoses*, including his prediction of immortality.
[84] For some of Ovid's potential 'services' to empire, see Millar 1993 and Habinek 1998.

Ponto 4.8 that poets can help 'create' even the great. Yet this also suggests that Augustus'
public image is manufactured, if not directly by the *princeps*, then by his subjects – and that
these subjects' speech can never be wholly sincere or unmotivated, given the vast power
discrepancy between themselves and the *princeps*. For instance, at *Metamorphoses* 1.175-6,
Ovid fears to compare Augustus' Palatine complex to Olympus ("hic locus est, quem, si verbis
audacia detur, / haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli"),[85] hinting that those who fail to curtail
their speech may face the wrath of the god. But Ovid's subsequent punishment, though
unrelated to these specific lines, reveals that the god to be feared is Augustus rather than Jupiter,
and suggests that Ovid' offense was not insulting the gods through an unworthy comparison, but
rather, piercing the illusion of collegiality that Augustus attempted to maintain among elite
Romans.[86] In fact, *Tristia* 2 frames his exile as a punishment for poetry that innocently caused
offense to the emperor, thereby appearing to confirm his earlier fear of over-bold speech ("si
verbis audacia detur"). Thus, despite a remarkable lack of evidence for censorship in this
period,[87] Ovid frames his poetry as an attempted negotiation between fear and free speech, and
creates an implicit tension between his own writing and the *princeps*' public image.[88] This
suggests that Augustus is consciously controlling public discourse, and punishing those who
speak out of line. But it also encourages readers to search for veiled meanings; to borrow a
phrase from Sergio Casali, it prompts his audience to 'read more' into Ovid's words, not all of it
flattering to the emperor.[89] Ovid thus beckons his audience to read between his lines, looking for
hints of subversive feeling – and the exile poetry is indeed often double-edged, able to entertain
both 'Augustan' and 'anti-Augustan' readings, depending on the allegiances of an observer.

In fact, Ovid's insistence on reading Augustus 'correctly' misleadingly suggests that
there is an 'incorrect' interpretation, as well as a desire on Augustus' part to control his public
image. I make this argument in Chapter Two via a case study of the evolution of the star of
Julius – a symbol of Caesar's deification – within Augustan poetry and coins. Historical
evidence suggests that Octavian began his career as an accidental beneficiary of the people's
loyalty to Caesar, rather than a conscious artificer of Caesar's deification. For that matter, early
appearances of this symbol are remarkably diverse and independent, showing little sign of

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[85] Though of course, at the same time, he has already spoken these words, and is thus already guilty of the
potentially dangerous speech-act (*dixisse*).

[86] Though he accepted divine honors in the Greek East, in Rome itself Augustus seems to have avoided the
appearance of regal or divine ambition that had resulted in Caesar's assassination; Suetonius, for instance, reports
that he hated to be likened to a *dominus* (*Aug.* 53.1). Though the bibliography is immense, see Pollini's 1993 article
"Man or God: Divine Assimilation and Imitation in the Late Republic and Early Principate," Chapter 6 of
Galinsky's 1996 *Augustan Culture*, and Chapters 4-5 of Ittai Gradel's 2002 *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*
for good overviews of Augustus' evolving relationship with divinity.

[87] Augustus advised Tiberius in a letter to tolerate criticism (Suet., *Aug.* 51.3); Tacitus seems to confirm this when,
speaking through Cremutius Cordus, he praises the license that Augustus allowed for free speech (*Ann.* 4.34). On
the other hand, it is important not to flatten out Augustus' reign historically; Feeney 1992: 7-9 provides a good
analysis of evidence for shifting levels of tolerance, and it seems his later years were more hostile to literature (cf.
for instance Johnson 2009). Raaflaub and Samons 1993 document evidence for political resistance but find little
evidence for intellectual opposition; the fourth section of Crook's 1996 "Augustus: Power, Authority and
Achievement" also treats resistance and free speech under the principate.

[88] He also waffles in his portrayal; as Davis observes (2002: 271), at *Ex Ponto* 3.6.41-2 he favorably compares
Augustus with the tyrants of Egypt or Sicily, who imprisoned men in bronze, but in *Tristia* 3.11.39-54 he compares
one of his detractors with the inventor of a bronze bull, and likens himself to the bull's victim, arguing that even its
original victim was allowed to utter his complaints (*Tristia* 5.1.53-54).

[89] "Quaerenti plura legendum: On the Necessity of 'Reading More' in Ovid's Exile Poetry" (1996).

control or manipulation by Augustus. However, Ovid later folds this symbol into an overarching meta-narrative which revisits Caesar's deification as part of a self-serving campaign on Augustus' part to gain power.   He does this in part by overenthusiastically attempting to reconcile discrepant versions of this symbol as they appear within Augustan discourse, thereby exposing certain inconcinnities within the rhetoric and ideology surrounding Caesar's deification. Thus, throughout his discussion of the *sidus Iulium*, Ovid advertises his 'pro-Augustanism' but also prompts readers to fit the image into a more cynical understanding of Roman history wherein Augustus willfully deployed certain images and stories in order to gain power.[90] This idea ignores the diversity and polyvalence of Augustan imagery, but has helped support Ovid's subtextual portrayal of Augustus as a poet-like manipulator of appearance.

In Chapter Three, I explore another example of Ovid's simultaneous affirmation and critique of Augustus' public image: his 'visit' to Augustus' architectural complex on the Palatine Hill through the proxy of his book of poems in *Tristia* 3.1. I first explore archaeological evidence as well as poetic treatments of the area in order to illustrate the reactions that this building project may have elicited. Though it is often considered a triumphalist expression of Augustan supremacy, recent scholars have begun to detect greater subtlety in its imagery, and even speculate that Augustus may have revised its architectural text later in his reign to tone down any autocratic connotations.[91] However, Ovid plays up this impression by using his surrogate, the book, as a naïve audience for Augustus' public image. In his tour of Rome, the book accidentally points out apparent contradictions and deceptions in Augustus' self-representation – including the increasingly monarchical topography of Rome, the autocratic power behind Augustus' Republican guise, and the failure of his benevolent public image to match reality. Ovid thus adds to his implicit characterization of Augustus as someone who wields godlike power but conceals it behind 'fictive' imagery. Moreover, the book's interpretive confusions invite Ovid's external audience to reconsider the implications of Augustus' massive redevelopment of urban Rome, and to question the validity of certain symbols and attributes – from the *corona civica* to the abstract virtue of *clementia* – commonly associated with the *princeps*. In what Hinds refers to as Ovid's 'hermeneutic alibi,'[92] Ovid in *Tristia* 2 had blamed any perceived 'subversiveness' in a poem on the minds of its interpreters rather than the intentions of its author.   But the fact that Ovid's text encourages ironies – multiple ways of reading the same lines at once – also *creates* subversiveness, in that it encourages readers to look for hidden meanings behind apparently normative ones, even when no orthodoxy existed.

In my fourth chapter, I argue that visual and verbal representations of the triumph during the age of Augustus meditate upon the twin problems of representing and experiencing empire. Drawing on Mary Beard's 2007 *The Roman Triumph*, I treat this ritual as a political 'text' which is meant to represent foreign victories to Roman audiences in the *urbs*, and which therefore

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[90] In fact, following a line of thought present already in Dio 47.18, modern scholars sometimes further argue that the true motive for Caesar's deification was Augustus' own desire for quasi-divine status, both on earth and after death. For instance, White argues that Augustus treated the cult of Divus Julius as a "maquette which he had liberty and time to shape in preparation for his own apotheosis" (1988: 355).

[91] In the chapter, I discuss influential interpretations of this temple as propounded by Gros 1976, Carettoni 1987, Lefèvre 1989, and Zanker 1983 and 1988, among others; I also discuss elements of regret or revision, especially in Wiseman 1987, Balensiefen 1995, and several poems of the age (Propertius, *Carmina* 2.31; Horace, *Odes* 2.14 and 3.11; and Ovid *Tristia* 3.1).

[92] 1988: 29.

raises the same hermeneutic anxieties that Ovid explores with regard to literature. Thus, in the 'author' role, Roman triumphators had already manipulated the triumph's potential to create false impressions, and in the 'audience' role, poets like Propertius humorously reveal its potential for misinterpretation or reappropriation. Ovid, however, turns this problem on its head from exile: he uses the triumph in order to foreground the difficulties of transmitting information through empire, particularly news of Rome and representations of the emperor. Though the triumph was meant to represent the periphery of the Roman empire to its center, the exiled poet lacks and craves information from the *urbs* in order to continue constituting himself as Roman on the periphery. The triumph motif therefore underscores the similarities between the poet and *princeps*,[93] particularly in their shared project of making themselves present across great distances. Both do so via texts that, as Ovid points out, are subject to misreading and failures of transmission; yet he also explores how poets and, via them, princes can appeal to audiences' imaginations in order to construct and be constructed by the interpretive community that constitutes Rome.

Building on this latter idea, my conclusion explores how Ovid's exile poems treat Augustus himself as a text – that is, as a publicly-circulating representation of power that was potentially unrepresentative of reality and subject to audience interpretation. But at the same time as he conducts this deconstruction of imperial power, he gives Roman readers the tools for understanding their own complicity in its creation – for in some ways, it is their interpretive participation in the Augustan Text that makes them Roman.

VI. Ovid and the Augustan Text

Throughout this study, I avoid claiming that Ovid's interest in the iconography of Augustus or the nature of Augustus' power is qualitatively unique among authors of the age; in fact, I explore how these ideas emerge from Vergil, Horace, and Propertius, among others. Some factors do, however, set Ovid apart. For one, he is writing later in Augustus' reign, and thus has a relationship to Augustus and Roman discourse that is informed by hindsight. Whether consciously or not, he often retrojects his experience of Augustus' mature power onto his early years: he thus reads Augustan domination backwards into earlier texts of the principate, seeing them within a teleological trajectory designed to serve the *princeps*. As another consequence of Ovid's late position within Augustan history, he is able to create a totalizing narrative that makes sense of previous versions of Augustan myths, folding them into a meta-story about Augustus' control of Roman discourse. Finally, though other Augustan poets share a deep interest in readers, texts, and the construction of meaning, none examine this process more closely or self-consciously than Ovid. In fact, throughout his corpus, Ovid publicizes and politicizes the act of 'reading' the Augustan Text by *making reading the subject of his writing*.

Ovid frequently depicts himself (or a surrogate) in the act of contemplating symbols of Augustus' power and deciding between the various interpretations that acculturation and experience lay open to him.[94] To cite examples discussed later in this study, *Tristia* 3.1

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[93] Hardie has observed that *Tristia* 4.2 "comes close to making the imperial triumphator an allegory of the poet" (2002: 311; for this theme see also Oliensis 2004: 310 and Hardie 1997: 193).

[94] Jaeger seems to foreshadow this idea of activating alternate meanings by viewing the city as "a community text … open to interpretation as such, as a text in the public domain. It can be read, misread, translated, mistranslated.

contemplates Augustus' doors; *Ex Ponto* 2.8, statues of the imperial family; and the story of Caesar's deification in *Metamorphoses* 15.745-860, I argue, constitutes a response to the *sidus Iulium*. The fact that Ovid nearly always settles upon the interpretation most favorable to Augustus does not make such acts of reading any less politically meaningful. In fact, more than the decision itself, the poems foreground the process by which the narrator arrives at his decision. This process, in turn, by laying bare the availability of multiple submerged interpretations with equal claims to truth, exposes the sometimes fallacious reasoning by which favorable interpretations are selected – and Augustus' *fama* has been constructed.[95]

Modern scholars including Zanker and Galinsky have posited that Augustus' public image, though initially controversial, slowly stabilized around a set of widely-acceptable core values such as *virtus, pieta*s, and *clementia*.[96] But symbols do not become widely accepted by themselves: the power of images in the age of Augustus rested fundamentally on the Roman public's development of certain habits of viewing and interpreting them. Ovid not only reveals "the gap between Augustus and 'Augustus,'"[97] but also defamiliarizes the process of reading as he depicts it within his writing; he exposes the essential emptiness of symbols and reveals the reader's role in investing them with a meaning that, although it may appear 'natural' enough through cultural convention, remains fundamentally arbitrary. Thus, for Ovid to conduct public 'readings' of the Augustan Text (in the written form of these exile poems) is inevitably to participate in it, to help to write it, to teach others new methods of viewing it – and it is here that Ovid's powers as a reader and as a writer finally coincide.

It is always difficult to strike a balance between acknowledging a text's power to shape a reader's interpretation, and a reader's power to shape a text's meaning.[98] In many ways, this tension maps onto Ovid's oscillation "between representing himself as the squashed victim of Augustan *ira* (sometimes also known as *clementia*) and as Augustus' superpotent double and rival, a figure readily capable of squashing the emperor in turn," in Oliensis' vivid formulation.[99] Yet Ovid, I think, purposely walks this knife's edge within his poetry, and I follow his example within this dissertation. Ovid's conclusion to the *Metamorphoses* – in which he predicts his own glory as an author, based on the continued remembrance of his audience – remains a valuable

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Anyone who can catch an audience's ear can reinterpret it. The orator, the historian, the poet, all attempt to determine what a city means by changing their audience's perception of the familiar landscape" (1990: 8).

[95] This is similar to Barthes' view that literature "should not try to tell us what things mean but call attention to the way meaning is produced" (Culler 2002: 41); in fact, Barthes thought that the "only effective way for an intellectual to take political action" was through analyzing a culture's myths, by which he meant demystifying signs that are presented as 'natural' even though (like all signs) their meanings are fundamentally arbitrary and dependent on cultural codes (see Culler on Barthes as 'mythologist,' 2002: 23-30).

[96] These values, of course, were promulgated by Augustus in works such as his temple restorations and clearly influence the content of the *Res Gestae*, but they were also upheld by the senate e.g. with the *clupeus virtutis*. In many cases it is futile to seek to determine who originated or stabilized such concepts; the point is that the many writers of the Augustan Text simultaneously and dialogically engaged with and developed them for their various reasons.

[97] As Oliensis well puts it (2004: 303); my approach is sympathetic to her idea that Ovid sets out to "bury Augustus, as it were, under the weight of his own golden clupeus" by using his representations against him (303), but attempts to explore specific examples of how he does this with various Augustan symbols.

[98] Culler points out that "the story of the reader structuring a text flips over into a story of the text manipulating the reader" (2002: 103); he briefly but cogently discusses this and other problems of poststructuralism (2002: 98-109).

[99] 2004: 296.

example of the symbiosis that Ovid establishes between author and reader. The exile poems, if anything, increase Ovid's sense of dependence on his readers and his urgency in soliciting their complicity.[100] Moreover, despite the ostensible somberness of the exile poems, they have an important commonality with the love poetry. There, he established a special relationship with his readers by teaching them the rules according to which games of seduction – and games of fiction – both operate. In the exile poetry, he delights readers by training their critical attention on a new text entirely: Augustus' public image, and the representational play that underlies power as well as poetry. In fact, the coyly critical relationship that he adopts toward the Augustan Text gives Ovid, the teacher of pleasure, a chance to maintain his emphasis on readerly joy and instruction even from exile. As Barthes puts it, readers find mere pleasure in texts that easily conform to convention, but they seize true *jouissance* from "the text that imposes a state of loss, that discomforts (perhaps to the point of a certain boredom), unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tasks, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relationship with language."[101] Ovid, in turn, creates *jouissance* by disrupting and creating crises of meaning within the symbolic language of Augustan culture. It is this special relationship that Ovid establishes with his own readers, and with Augustan discourse, that has made him so captivating to audiences. In his rivalry with Augustus, he may have lost the battle over exile – but he won the war for the imaginations of posterity, insofar as his stories continue to challenge and invigorate our understanding of the way that political power, versions of history, and interpretive communities are constructed.

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[100] This has interesting consequences in the light of Nagle's argument that Ovid presents himself to Augustus as a model of how power should be exercised; Ovid, unlike the emperor, is willing to forgive the repentant, and thus serves as a reprimand to the emperor's unrelenting wrath (1980: 152). Might Ovid be suggesting that the emperor, like the poet, acknowledge his reliance on his audience? I return to such ideas in my conclusion.

[101] Barthes 1975b: 14. He also asserts that "neither culture nor its destruction is erotic; it is the gap between these that becomes so … it is not violence that impresses pleasure; destruction does not interest it; what it desires is the site of a loss, a seam, a cut, a deflation, the *dissolve* that seizes the reader at the moment of ecstasy" (1975b: 7, quoted in Culler 2002: 83). This parallels the exile poetry's tendency to hover on the edge of irony and sincerity, and to back off from a total and unequivocal rejection of Augustan symbolism.

CHAPTER 2
INVENTING AUGUSTUS' SELF-INVENTION:
THE EVOLUTION OF THE *SIDUS IULIUM* WITHIN AUGUSTAN DISCOURSE

I. Introduction

This chapter explores how Augustan literary and numismatic representations of the *sidus Iulium*, a symbol of Caesar's divinity, have influenced modern understandings of that icon, Caesar's deification, and Augustan discourse more generally. Many scholars assume that Augustus exerted significant control over the use of the image in order to advance his own political ambitions, but have failed to account for inconsistencies in its representation. This chapter seeks to address these problems by adopting Robert Gurval's useful 1997 analysis of the *sidus Iulium*'s iconographic evolution from star into comet form, but comes to different conclusions based on a reader-response approach to the literary and numismatic texts in which the *sidus* is embedded. In particular, it finds that there is little evidence for Augustan control of the icon, but rather, that Ovid's retrospective reading of Augustan discourse surrounding the star accounts for modern conceptions that Augustus deployed it as part of a propaganda campaign. This chapter thus not only addresses particular interpretive problems surrounding the Julian star, but also comments on the evolution of Augustus' power and of conceptions of that power, and on the creation of history from competing narratives.

Though scholars tend to agree that Octavian relied upon his connection with Julius Caesar in order to rise to prominence, they tend to fall into opposing schools of thought about his subsequent relationship with his predecessor. Syme influentially states an opinion that prevailed for much of the twentieth century: that Octavian sought to distance himself from Caesar once he secured primacy at Rome.[1] Caesar's deification in particular "drove an effective wedge between Augustus the man and Caesar the god and made it possible to relegate Caesar to … the stars, so that attention could be focused on Augustus' achievements here on earth."[2] This narrative has appealed to scholars who believe Augustan literature to be relatively silent about Caesar. This 'silence,' however, does not extend to the material record – which is full of epigraphs, coins, and temples to 'Divus Julius' even if Augustan literature is not – and thus a second account has recently gained ground. This holds that Augustus used the cult of Caesar not to dissociate himself from the dictator but rather "as a maquette which he had liberty and time to shape in

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[1]Stating the party line clearly, William Green writes that "the one great achievement of Caesar was to make possible the more glorious reign of his son and heir"; accordingly, the poets portray Caesar as "a man of blood" and Augustus as "the prince of peace" (1932: 411). Syme is the most familiar proponent of this theory, and his view is worth recounting: "The picture is consistent. Livy, Virgil and Horace of all Augustan writers stand closest to the government. On the whole, better to say nothing of Caesar, or for that matter of Antonius, save as criminal types. The power and domination of Augustus was in reality far too similar to that of the Dictator to stand even a casual reminder, let alone pointed and genuine comparison" (1939: 318). These scholars refer primarily to the principate, and for the most part acknowledge that Octavian's connection with Caesar may have helped him ascend to power from 44-31 BCE, although Ramage 1985 goes so far as to deny even this (as White notes at 1988: 336, he is the only significant exception to this idea).

[2] Ramage 1985: 236, with the 'Julian star' serving as one of the primary imagistic means by which the deified Caesar was represented, depersonalized, and dismissed, when he was mentioned at all (cf. e.g. Syme 1939: 318).

preparation for his own apotheosis."[3] In other words, Augustus encouraged posthumous worship of Caesar in the hopes that he too would someday enjoy a similar cult. To simplify these complex arguments for the sake of clarity, both camps generally agree that Augustus took an active hand in Caesar's deification, but disagree as to the results and motives: the first argues that Augustus wanted to separate himself from the ugly memory of Caesar, and the second maintains that Augustus wanted to claim for himself some of Caesar's majesty and indeed divinity.

The fact that one of these narratives views Augustus' relationship with Caesar as fundamentally dissociative and the other as fundamentally associative may not on the surface be much of a problem. To be sure, during the forty-odd years of the principate, Augustus' attitude – toward Caesar as well as other matters – must have evolved and may certainly have been inconsistent at times. Moreover, nothing stopped the Romans (or any culture, for that matter) from simultaneously holding mutually contradictory ideas. Yet there remain certain problems with each of these narratives. For instance, scholars agree that, during his rise to power, Octavian did not dissociate himself from Caesar, but rather, strongly and consistently evoked the dictator's memory. How did Romans view Octavian's earlier self-portrayal as Caesar's heir and avenger once he had gained supremacy and ruled in his own right?[4] Moreover, where is the evidence that Augustus consciously shaped the cult of Caesar with an eye toward his own deification, particularly from its very beginnings in the chaotic years after the dictator's death? Finally, despite their differences, one similarity between these two narratives is striking: both assign Augustus a remarkable degree of power and intentionality in deifying Caesar, shaping Caesar's posthumous public image, and controlling his own self-presentation as *princeps*. And this shared idea, as I will argue, is the single biggest problem with both of these narratives – though it is a problem that can lead, in turn, to some answers about how both power and history are created.

In this chapter, a careful rereading of various coins, poems, and historical works that depict Caesar's deification will suggest that these competing modern stories are exactly that: imaginative narratives rather than verifiable statements of fact, concocted in response to successive centuries of interpretation and revision of the Augustan Text rather than founded on concrete evidence from antiquity.[5] As such, the deification of Caesar – particularly as symbolized through the image of the *sidus Iulium* – is an ideal topic with which to begin my exploration of the Augustan Text, its mutability and revisability, and its power to shape subsequent interpretations of the *princeps*. I begin this chapter with an exploration of the origin and meaning of the term *sidus Iulium*, which, as I argue, actually refers to two separate icons that acquire different connotations: a star and a comet. In its guise as a star, the *sidus* is frequently 'read' in the earlier years of the principate to explore the nature of Caesar's divinity and his

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[3] White 1988: 335. Gurval is less precise about Augustus' role in the deification of Caesar and preparation for his own deification, and acknowledges that "political ideology is rarely so rigid, uniform, and spontaneous" as modern notions of propaganda suggest (1997: 45). However, he still envisions a strong and conscious role for the *princeps* from the beginning: "Vaunting the extraordinary title of 'son of a god' (*divi filius*), the dutiful son embraced the claim of Caesar's apotheosis and laid down the foundation for his own divine cult and worship, already anticipated by the images and words of public inscriptions and coins, provincials and poets" (1997: 39-40).

[4] In fact, he mentions avenging Caesar's death early and prominently in the *Res Gestae* (2), suggesting his relationship with Caesar formed part of the reputation he wished to convey to posterity.

[5] See Gurval 1997 for a good compilation of sources on the comet in particular.

relationship to Augustus. The comet, in contrast, gains popularity later in the principate and is used to comment instead on Augustus' role in the process of deification. After exploring the various historical accounts of his actions, with an eye toward how such narratives evolve over time, I conclude with an examination of Ovid's reappropriation of the symbol within a larger imaginative depiction of Augustan power. As I argue in my conclusion, the modern view of Augustus as a manipulator of the Caesarian cult for his own gain (whether by associating or dissociating himself with Caesar) derives to some extent from Ovid's own view of Augustus – a view that itself responds to and rewrites prior elements of the Augustan intertext.[6] In other words, we are still subscribing, two thousand years later, to the fiction, propagated by Ovid among others, that Augustus was himself a maker of fictions.

II. Some problems with the *sidus Iulium* as a piece of Augustan propaganda

According to the first narrative of Caesar's deification, the star was the primary imagistic means by which Caesar was represented, depersonalized, and dismissed in Augustan art and literature, when he was mentioned at all. In Ronald Syme's words, "Only the *Julium sidus* is there – the soul of Caesar, purged of all earthly stain, transmuted into a comet and lending celestial auspices to the ascension of Caesar's heir."[7] Yet, even if one accepts Syme's assumption that Augustan symbols were centrally controlled,[8] its actual manifestations within the Augustan Text are hardly so simple to interpret. There, the star neither unambiguously dissociates Caesar and Augustus, as proponents of the first modern narrative would have it, nor does it bind them inextricably together, as the second narrative implies; in fact, it is not a unitary icon itself. Therefore, in this section, I will examine what is meant by the term *sidus Iulium*, before next turning to historical evidence surrounding Caesar's deification and exploring some concrete examples of the ambiguity with which the symbol is actually 'read' by Augustan writers and coiners.

Despite the modern popularity of the term *sidus Iulium*, it appears nowhere in Augustan literature save for Horace's *Carmina* 1.12.46-48. Moreover, there it refers to Augustus as much as to Caesar, and in a context that evokes the *princeps'* godlike supremacy over the mortal realm – ironically, the antithesis of the modern claim that the star was meant to dissociate the two men and to neutralize memories of the dictatorship.[9] In fact, the association of great men with stars is a long one: Nisbet and Hubbard trace it back through Greek panegyric to Homer, though they cite only two Latin uses of the term *sidus* (and these by Ovid, who may well himself have been thinking of Horace's ode).[10] Moreover, the term *sidus* has a broader semantic range than other Latin terms for stars (e.g. *stella* or *astrum*): it can indicate a wide variety of heavenly bodies, from whole constellations to individual stars, planets, and even the sun and moon, particularly

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[6] Although this accords with Davis' idea that Ovid sets out "to challenge and resist the Augustan regime at the level of discourse" (1999: 13), Davis posits an Augustan ideology which Ovid is resisting, whereas I argue instead that Ovid and other writers help create our very sense of such an ideology.

[7] 1939: 318.

[8] I argue in Chapter 1 for replacing the notion of Augustan 'propaganda' or discourse with the idea of a less centralized intertext, created by the associations that readers form between various texts in any medium that prompt reflection upon Augustus and his principate.

[9] I discuss this poem at greater length below.

[10] In their 1970 commentary on *Odes* I they cite *Trist.* 2.167 and *Pont.* 3.3.2; their only mention of a star in association with Augustus is from a Greek epigram (Kaibel, *EG* 978.1ff.).

when "considered as having a direct influence on human affairs."[11]   But precisely because of its flexibility, the term *sidus Iulium* obscures a deeper historical and iconographical confusion. Though the *sidus Iulium* is typically understood to refer to a star, and a star frequently symbolizes Caesar in Augustan coins and poetry, several ancient historians associate this star with the comet that shone over Caesar's funeral games in 44 BCE and was widely considered to have been instrumental in prompting his deification. Moreover, this comet sometimes appears in tandem with or in place of the star in the literary and material culture of the principate. Modern scholars tend to refer to both star and comet under the blanket term the *sidus Iulium*.   But the relationship between the two symbols is one neither of identity nor of equivalence; and examining it will shed some light, in turn, on the similarly entangled relationship between Augustus and Caesar.

In his 1997 article "Caesar's Comet: The Politics and Poetics of an Augustan Myth," Robert Gurval provides an extensive survey of the appearances in the material and literary record of the astronomical sign(s) associated with Caesar's divinity.[12] Though Gurval himself tries to avoid the term *sidus Iulium*, he follows other scholars in examining both the star and the comet as manifestations of the same phenomenon. However, he surpasses them in his concern for problems and inconsistencies among its representations[13] – most obviously, the fact that the *sidus* appears sometimes as a comet, sometimes as a star. I propose reformulating this problem: why do we continue to think of both the comet and the star as interchangeable variations on some theoretically unitary icon that we have termed the *sidus Iulium*, without more closely examining the relationship between the two? The difference is significant, for stars already had a long history of signifying divinity,[14] whereas comets did not necessarily signal the dawn of a bright new age (as the *sidus Iulium* is often thought to do). In fact, comets in antiquity were often interpreted as portents of evil: the outbreak of war, the downfall of governments, or natural disasters such as drought, disease, storms, and earthquakes.[15] Moreover, though Augustus (*Commentarii* fr. 6 [Malcovati], ap. Pliny *NH* 2.94), Pliny (*NH* 2.93-94), Seneca (*NQ* 7.17.2), and Suetonius (*Vit. Div. Iul.* 88) mention that a comet appeared over Caesar's funeral games in 44 BCE,[16] several contemporary sources from whom we might expect commentary (e.g. Cicero

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[11] *OLD* s.v. 6, used thus by Cicero in *Div.* 2.91, though the *sidus Iulium* itself seems to influence the use of the term in post-Caesarian writers; thus definition 3c, "(in references to deification, and applied by way of flattery to members of the imperial family during their lifetime)"; and 4, "(applied to a meteor or a comet, esp. the Julian comet, adopted by Augustus as a symbol of his own eminence; also to St. Elmo's fire)."

[12] Gurval draws from Scott's important 1941 collection of literary and material testimonia for the comet; Ramsey and Licht 1997 also collect and translate the relevant texts; and as far back as 1887, de Schodt discussed the coinage.

[13] It is interesting that the title of Gurval's article classes this as a "comet," even though Augustan sources privilege the star and Gurval's own analysis casts doubts on the existence of the comet as a historical phenomenon.

[14] See Weinstock 1971: 371-84 for a brief history, Gurval 1997: 45-46 for Roman precedents and some further bibliography, and my own discussion below.

[15] Ramsey and Licht have helpfully compiled these referents: for the outbreak of war, *Div.* 1.18; *Nat. D.* 2.14; Tibullus 2.5.71; Virgil *Geo.* 1.488; Manilius 1.866; [Sen.] *Octav.* 236; the downfall of leaders, Lucan 1.529, Tac. *Ann.*14.22, 15.47; Suet. *Claud.* 46, *Nero* 36, *Vesp.* 23.4; *Sil. Ital.* 8.637; and natural disasters, Isid. *Orig.* 3.71.16; Serv. on *Aen.* 10.272; Sen. *Nat. qu.* 7.28.1; Claudian 33.234-36; Manilius 1.894; Avienus, *Aratea* 1814-19. See Gurval 1997: 42-45 for similar references. Close observers will note that most of these sources are rather late; I discuss this problem below.

[16] I thank Ramsey and Licht for compiling this helpful list; they also include Zonaras, Epitome of Histories 10.13, which is obviously indebted to Dio, and Julius Obsequens, Book of Prodigies 68 (for the year 44 BCE). See them also (1-15) for arguments concerning the name and date of the games at which the comet appeared.

and the late-Augustan astronomical poet Manilius) do not testify to its appearance; in fact, the comet does not appear on Augustan coinage until twenty years after Caesar's death, and even then is surprisingly rare.[17] The star, on the other hand, appears earlier and more frequently in Augustan coins, and a few late historical sources mention a star rather than a comet.[18] Finally, though Gurval himself does not point this out, most of the historical references to a comet that we do possess may feasibly derive from a single source: the *Commentarii* of Augustus, itself written twenty years after the event and with an obvious interest in its outcome.[19] From these inconsistencies in the story, Gurval concludes that we should regard the comet "as a construction of Augustan politics, an ideological myth whose origins and developments are more complex than an immediate and full embrace of an astronomical phenomenon."

Gurval's point that the comet's meaning is 'constructed' and complex is a valuable one, but this is no reason to ignore the historical realities surrounding its appearance, usage, and interpretation, since these affect its meaning within Augustan discourse. Ramsey and Licht, a classicist and astronomer working together on the problem, provide good evidence that the comet could not simply have been invented for Augustus' political benefit. The pair point out that some sources seem to preserve traces of anti-Augustan interpretations, which would have been unlikely to occur had the comet been a mere political contrivance.[20] Moreover, they argue, precisely since comets are traditionally so ill-omened, that there would have been no point in fabricating one: surely a less ambiguous symbol could be found, if one needed to be invented at all. And finally, independent Chinese sources, which "cannot be suspected of having fallen under the spell of the portentous Ides of March or Augustan propaganda," attest to the appearance of a comet that Ramsey and Licht identify with the Caesarian one.[21] They further argue that the confusion between star and comet could have arisen from the absence of a prominent tail on the comet of 44. "We can only conclude," they write, "that the future emperor possessed in 44 both the luck and the skill needed to turn what was potentially a very baleful omen into a powerful symbol of his adopted father's divinity. This stroke of genius on Augustus' part has to be regarded as one of the most remarkable examples of 'spin' control in the whole of antiquity."[22]

III. The historical circumstances of Caesar's deification

Though Ramsey and Licht are convincing in their argument that the comet was a real historical phenomenon, they share with the other modern deification narratives the problematic tendency to attribute the interpretation of the comet, and its subsequent adoption as a symbol,

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[17] Gurval discusses this problem at 1997: 41.

[18] Dio 45.6.4-7.1 and Servius on Virgil, *Aen.* 1.287, 6.790, 8.681, and *Ecl.* 9.47, discussed below. See also Gurval 1997: 45.

[19] Cf. Ramsey and Licht 1997: 64.

[20] Though Ramsey and Licht are perhaps overcredulous in accepting previously-unattested 'eyewitness accounts' from Servius – a source who is not only far removed from the event, but whose account differs significantly from earlier and more reliable ones. See my discussion below.

[21] 1997: 65.

[22] Ibid.

directly to Augustus himself.[23] Our ancient sources for this period, which include Cicero (106-43 BCE), Plutarch (45-125 CE), Suetonius (70-140 CE), Appian (90-160 CE), and Cassius Dio (155-235 CE), differ in their accounts of the period between 15 March 44, when Caesar was assassinated, and 1 January 42, when he was formally deified by decree of the senate.[24] One common pattern that emerges, however, is that Octavian had far less power over events around this time than modern scholars, and even some ancient poets, assume. This section will explore the historical circumstances surrounding Caesar's deification, showing that Octavian cannot be regarded as having originated and propagated this symbol either to neutralize Caesar or to exalt himself, as the modern narratives hold. The next section will argue that he also exerted no discernable control over its later usage, and that Augustan poets 'read' the *sidus Iulium* in independent and double-edged ways that cannot be imagined to have been controlled by the state.

In one sense, the process of deification began even during Caesar's lifetime, long before Octavian arrived on the political scene. Caesar himself emphasized his familial connection to Venus, on coins and through other means such as the Temple of Venus Genetrix[25] – a strategy which was by no means unique among leading Romans of this period,[26] but which helped pave the way for his posthumous reputation. Perhaps just as important were the honors that others willingly bestowed upon Caesar, whether or not he set out to acquire them. Suetonius directly attributes Caesar's assassination to the fact that he accepted honors that were too great for mortal men ("sed et ampliora etiam humano fastigio decerni sibi passus est," *Div. Iul.* 76), among which he lists the following:

> sedem auream in curia et pro tribunali, tensam et ferculum circensi pompa, templa, aras, simulacra iuxta deos, puluinar, flaminem, lupercos, appellationem mensis e suo nomine; ac nullos non honores ad libidinem cepit et dedit. (76)

Dio provides a more detailed list of the many extravagant honors granted to Caesar over his lifetime, culminating with a quadrennial festival to Caesar as a hero, a golden chair and crown set with gems to be carried into theatres "like those of the gods," and a special day of honor during gladiatorial combats; finally they "addressed him outright as Jupiter Julius and ordered a temple to be consecrated to him and his Clemency, electing Antony as priest like some *flamen Dialis*" (Dio 44.4-6; see also 45.2-4).[27] Dio argues that, though envy of Caesar and his honors was "not entirely unjustified," the senate was even more blameworthy for both proposing such honors and then resenting Caesar for accepting them.[28] These honors seem to reflect attempts to curry political favor, or even to arouse animosity toward Caesar, rather than any actual belief in Caesar's divinity. Dio points out that one decree regarding Caesar's tomb clearly pointed out to

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[23] Gurval tries not to posit a propaganda campaign run by Augustus, but nevertheless frequently seems to assume one: for instance, he refers to "Augustus' appropriation" of the *sidus Iulium* within the coinage, and suggests that the comet may have been invented to serve "the ideology of an emergent Augustan Principate" (1997: 45).

[24] Later, apparently, confirmed by the *comitia*: cf. *ILS* 72 (Aesernia), "Genui Deivi Iuli parentis patriae, quem senatus populusque Romanus in deorum numerum rettulit."

[25] Cf. Weinstock 1971: 80-90.

[26] Cf. Pompey and his theatre, also vowed to Venus.

[27] All translations of Dio in this chapter are from Earnest Cary's 1914-27 Loeb edition, now in the public domain.

[28] Perhaps Dio's assignation of blame reflects the kind of thinking found in Tacitus, where servile flatterers are equally blameworthy as the monstrous emperors whom they indulge.

Caesar that he was mortal, and claims that these semi-divine honors were largely proposed through flattery, ridicule, or the (apparently successful) desire to incite hatred against Caesar (44.7).[29] Balsdon moreover argues that such honors may have been somewhat exaggerated in retrospect as the conspirators sought to defend their actions and later historians accepted and sensationalized these claims.[30] But whatever the motivations behind them, such measures nevertheless show that the senate had begun to associate Caesar with a god even while Caesar was still alive, if not in their own minds then at least in ritual and iconography. For instance, the inclusion of Caesar's statue amongst the procession of the gods must have made a strong visual and ideological impression upon audiences at the circus; similarly, the appointment of Antony as Caesar's flamen must have underscored the vast power differential between Caesar and other great men in Rome.[31] Thus the deification of Caesar should not be seen as a manipulative political innovation on Octavian's part from the start; rather, it had firm roots in Roman politics years before Octavian came onto the scene.

Moreover, Caesar's divinity was not entirely a product of political contrivance on the part either of the senators or of Octavian. Immediately after Caesar's death but before his official deification by the senate, the Roman *vulgus* seem spontaneously to have treated Caesar in a godlike fashion. Members of the *plebs* had paid such honors, perhaps in unofficial and even unwitting imitation of Eastern soteriological cults, to Marius (Plutarch 27.9), Marius Gratidianus (Seneca, *De Ira* 3.18; Cicero, *Off.* 3.80), and most notably Gaius Gracchus (Plutarch 18.3). For Caesar, the people erected a 20-foot-high column of Numidian marble inscribed 'PARENTI PATRIAE' and at its base sacrificed, made vows, and settled disputes by the name of Caesar for a long time (Suetonius, *Caes.* 85). They also built an altar ("βωμός") on the site of Caesar's funeral pyre, where they sacrificed and offered victims to Caesar as to a god (Dio, 44.51.1-2, θύειν τε ἐπ᾿ αὐτῷ καὶ κατάρχεσθαι τῷ Καίσαρι ὡς καὶ θεῷ ἐπεχείρουν).[32] Weinstock summarizes the contradictions and interpretational difficulties associated with the many passages regarding posthumous worship of Caesar. But, whatever the specific form these rites took, there is plenty of literary evidence that Cicero, Cassius, and Brutus among other senators interpreted these expressions of popular loyalty to Caesar as threatening to their own safety and status, and were grateful when Dolabella destroyed the altar and crucified Caesar's early worshippers amongst the *plebs* – thus reasserting senatorial authority against the threatening popular appeal of Caesar.[33]

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[29] This measure, "which clearly indicated their disposition," granted Caesar the right to a tomb within the pomerium; it was inscribed with gold letters on silver tablets and deposited beneath the feet of Jupiter Capitolinus, "thus pointing out to him very clearly that he was a mortal" (44.7). Dio provides further examples of 'joke' honors and argues that they contributed both to the senate's own resentment of Caesar and the overconfidence that prevented Caesar from perceiving any threat to himself.

[30] Balsdon 1958: 81. I am also inclined to agree with Balsdon that such honors were offered to Caesar (and in fact often rejected) rather than procured by him. However, these accounts are still valuable in that they show the kind of status that Caesar had been accorded by his contemporaries or was remembered as accruing. I also endorse Balsdon's conclusion that such extraordinary honors, blamed as they were for Caesar's assassination, taught Augustus a valuable political lesson.

[31] Gradel in fact argues that this vast power inequality, rather than religious sentiment as we would recognize it today, underlies the Roman practice of deification (2002: 26).

[32] As Dio relates it, they were inflamed by a speech of Antony's that referred to Caesar as a 'hero and a god' (44.49.1) and angry at the senate for attacking a man to whom they had granted so many honors in life (44.50.1).

[33] Weinstock 1971: 364. Posthumous worship of Caesar may have excited particular controversy in part because it seemed to pit an angry mob against the senate, many of whom either helped to murder Caesar or appeared to

Yet Cicero was not above making reference to Caesar's divinity when it suited his purposes. In *Philippics* 2.43.110, for instance, he berates Antony for failing to be consecrated as Caesar's flamen (see also *Phil.* 13.19.41).

> et tu in Caesaris memoria diligens, tu illum amas mortuum? quem is honorem maiorem consecutus erat, quam ut haberet pulvinar, simulacrum, fastigium, flaminem? est ergo flamen, ut Iovi, ut Marti, ut Quirino, sic divo Iulio M. Antonius. quid igitur cessas? cur non inauguraris?

This first known usage of the term 'divus Iulius' turns out to be somewhat hollow if not sarcastic: here Cicero clearly treats the phrase as a tribute to the dead Caesar's memory rather than an assertion of his immortality, and he subsequently reveals that he does not approve of Caesar's being awarded divine honors in the first place (2.43.111).[34] On the other hand, he argues, since Antony was instrumental in awarding these honors, he should be consistent in upholding them – unless he had created them not out of respect for Caesar but for his own personal advantage.[35] This, of course, suggests that treating Caesar as a god could be a political tool, but one that Antony (long before Octavian) had innovated, exploited, and subsequently discarded after it ceased to be useful.

However – and here we come to the crux of the matter – it was the appearance of a comet over Caesar's funeral games[36] that most solidly seemed to confirm Caesar's divinity within the popular imagination and that may also have helped prompt Caesar's official deification in the senate.[37] According to Suetonius,

> periit sexto et quinquagensimo aetatis anno atque in deorum numerum relatus est, non ore modo decernentium, sed et persuasione vulgi. siquidem ludis, quos primo consecratos ei heres Augustus edebat, stella crinita per septem continuos dies fulsit exoriens circa

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condone his murder (cf. Dio 44.50). Cicero's letters of the end of 44 reflect outrage at these pro-Caesarian gestures on the part of the urban riffraff and a fear that this 'malum urbanum' (*Ad Fam.* 327/12.2.1) might threaten the safety of the conspirators as well as public order. The language of *Phil.* 1.2.5 is particularly strong: "serperet in urbe infinitum malum … et cotidie magis magisque perditi homines cum sui similibus servis tectis ac temples urbis minitarentur." Hence it is with unbridled relief that he greets Dolabella's destruction of the column and cruel punishment of Caesar's worshippers (*Att.* 14.15.1). See also *Phil.* 1.2.5, *Phil.* 2.42.107, *Att.* 14.16.2, *Fam.* 9.14.1, *Fam.* 12.1.1, and Brutus and Cassius' complaint to Antony that Caesar's veterans intended to re-erect the altar, Cic. *Fam.* 329/11.2.2.

[34] Note, however, his use of the term *divinus iuvenis* for Octavian (*Phil.* 5.43).

[35] "quaeris, placeatne mihi pulvinar esse, fastigium, flaminem. mihi vero nihil istorum placet; sed tu, qui acta Caesaris defendis, quid potes dicere, cur alia defendas, alia non cures? nisi forte vis fateri te omnia quaestu tuo, non illius dignitate metiri" (*Phil.* 2.43.111).

[36] See Ramsey and Licht 1997: 1-15 for the name and date of these games and for information on the appearance of the comet. The bulk of our sources refer to the games as the *ludi Veneris Genetricis*, which had been celebrated in September and were soon to be discontinued, but Ramsey and Licht conclude that in 44 they were moved to the end of July and combined with Caesar's funeral games (later to be renamed the *ludi Victoriae Caesaris*). They further argue that Octavian was instrumental in this change (1997: 10), although there is no evidence for this assumption.

[37] Weinstock finds the portent of ascension a vital part of Caesar's and his successors' apotheoses, adding that a portent was also said to have been part of Romulus' ascension (cf. *Vir. Ill.* 2.13, Suet. *Aug.* 100.4; Dio 56.42.3; Weinstock 1971: 389). Livy's story of Julius Proculus (1.16) might appear to support this, but may also reflect on Caesar's own deification.

undecimam horam, creditumque est animam esse Caesaris in caelum recepti; et hac de causa simulacro eius in vertice additur stella.

> He died in the fifty-sixth year of his life, and was numbered among the gods, not only by formal decree, but also in the conviction of the common people. For at the sacred games which his heir Augustus gave, a comet shone for seven successive days, rising about the eleventh hour, and was believed to be the soul of Caesar, who had been taken to heaven; and this is why a star is set upon the crown of his head in his statue. (*Vit. Div. Iul.* 88)[38]

In this account, it was the appearance of an actual comet (*stella crinita*) in the skies over Caesar's funeral game that prompted a widespread belief in Caesar's katasterism, subsequently symbolized by the iconographical device of the star (*stella*) and confirmed somewhat later by his official deification by the senate (on 1 January 42). Suetonius connects the comet with the deification only through a casual 'siquidem,' and mentions Augustus only insofar as he was the host of the games. The perfect passive impersonal "creditum est" simply states that the crowd believed the comet to be Caesar's soul ("creditumque est animam esse Caesaris in caelum recepti"), and does not suggest any prompting or manipulation on the part of Octavian or the senators; moreover, Suetonius mentions no particular agent when he states that a star was added to Caesar's statue ("hac de causa simulacro eius in vertice additur stella").

This bears strong similarities with Augustus' own account, an important though not disinterested source for both Suetonius and ourselves.[39]

> iis ipsis ludorum meorum diebus sidus crinitum per septem dies in regione caeli sub septentrionibus est conspectum. id oriebatur circa undecimam horam diei clarumque et omnibus e terris conspicuum fuit. eo sidere significari vulgus credidit Caesaris animam inter deorum immortalium numina receptam, quo nomine id insigne simulacro capitis eius, quod mox in foro consecravimus, adiectum est.
> (*NH* 2.23.94 = *Commentarii de vita sua* fr. 6 [Malcovati])

> On the very days of my games, a comet was observed for seven days in the northern region of the sky. It rose around the eleventh hour of the day and was bright and visible from all lands. The crowd believed that the reception of Caesar's soul among the spirits of the immortal gods was signified by this star, on which account this sign was added to the bust of him which we then dedicated in the forum.

Augustus' extreme specificity as to the time and location of the comet's appearance[40] creates an impression of great accuracy and objectivity in the narrative. Yet he provides no indication as to when, how, or why the *vulgus* arrived at its interpretative decision; it simply "credidit," and a

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[38] Translations by Rolfe (1998).

[39] Our earliest source. Nicolaus of Damascus mentions the games but not the comet, which is itself suggestive (*Life of Augustus* fr. 130.28.108); of all our sources he most stresses Octavian's lack of political power at the time, although he mentions that the common people and Caesar's veterans applauded the young man at the festival.

[40] Ramsey and Licht (1997: 159) analyze the specifications that the comet appeared "in regione caeli sub septentrionibus," in the northern region of the sky, and "oriebatur circa undecimam horam diei," at approximately 5:00-6:15 p.m. This passage occurs in a section about how the Romans are the only people to worship a comet, suggesting that by Pliny's time the comet had become thoroughly associated with the deified Caesar.

star was accordingly added ("adiectum est") to Caesar's bust, presumably but not necessarily by Octavian.[41] This silence about Octavian's own role in the proceedings has not thwarted modern scholars from constructing one. In fact, they seem to have assumed, somewhat anachronistically, that because his reputation later benefited from the appearance of the comet, he must actively if covertly have encouraged its original interpretation. Yet we have absolutely no evidence that he did any such thing; he acknowledges no role in Caesar's deification other than the dutiful celebration of his funeral games. And according to Augustus' narrative, it is the people, not himself, who originate the symbol of the star. Octavian, in turn, exerted no monopoly on the symbol; it appears on coins first of Antony, then Octavian and Agrippa, and arguably even Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus in order to declare allegiance to Caesar's cause and at the same time exalt the claimant.[42]

In fact, Augustus' simple explanation of how the people arrived at their belief – however much we may want to mistrust it – is perfectly in keeping with the unprecedented levels of popular adulation Caesar had already begun to receive in the days and months immediately after his death. And Caesar's prior adoption of the star as a symbol of his ancestress Venus,[43] not to mention the planet Venus' visibility in the sky not long after the comet rose in the evening of 23 July 44,[44] could only have contributed to popular belief in a connection between the goddess and the *gens Julia*. Why, then, do modern scholars insist that Octavian invented this meaning for the comet in order to further Caesar's glory and with it his own political aims? These scholars construe a need for Octavian's active intervention from their assumption that comets in antiquity were interpreted negatively and that the appearance of the comet in 44 would therefore have necessitated a healthy dose of 'spin.' Yet all the passages that Ramsey and Licht cite for this 'normatively' negative interpretation of the comet *postdate* the comet of 44.[45] In fact, the earliest of these – Vergil's at *Georgics* 1.488, discussed below – may itself have helped to set the precedent for such negative associations by (re)reading Caesar's comet as a portent of civil war. To be fair, as mentioned earlier, there may be some ancient evidence for competing interpretations of the Caesarian comet: Dio notes that while some of the *vulgus* believed that it showed that Julius Caesar had been enrolled among the stars (τῶν ἄστρων ἀριθμὸν; 45.7.1), others viewed it as a baleful comet (κομήτην) portending nothing but evil. And Servius, citing

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[41] Our modern tendency is to assume that this was a dramatic public gesture on Octavian's part, but, if later imperial statues are any indication, adding a star to a statue would not be a simple or especially picturesque operation: a skilled worker would have had to drill a hole into the bust's forehead, a metalworker would have had to create the star to the correct specifications, and someone would have had to permanently affix it.

[42] Gurval 1997: 50ff. has compiled examples of such coins. For Antony, see especially Crawford, RCC 528/2a; BMCRR II, p. 498, East no. 121; for Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, see Crawford, RRC 521/1 [aureus] and 2 [denarius]), though this is difficult to interpret and I share Gurval's skepticism (1997: 50). and For Octavian, see Figures 2 and 3 below, and also an aureus of Agrippa depicting a male figure with a star in front of his forehead on the obverse (Crawford, RRC 534/1 and BMCRR II, p. 411, Gaul no. 102), though note that some scholars debate the identification as Caesar and propose Augustus instead (Gurval 1997: 51-2).

[43] Weinstock 1971: 378.

[44] As adduced by Ramsey and Licht, 1997: 138; however, no ancient source specifically mentions the planet at this event, so it may not have made a great impression.

[45] See my footnote above for the list compiled by Ramsey and Licht: for the comet signaling the outbreak of war, *Div.* 1.18; *Nat. D.* 2.14; Tibullus 2.5.71; Virgil *Geo.* 1.488; Manilius 1.866; [Sen.] *Octav.* 236; the downfall of leaders, Lucan 1.529, Tac. *Ann.*14.22, 15.47; Suet. *Claud.* 46, *Nero* 36, *Vesp.* 23.4; *Sil. Ital.* 8.637; and natural disasters, Isid. *Orig.* 3.71.16; Serv. on *Aen.* 10.272; Sen. *Nat. qu.* 7.28.1; Claudian 33.234-36; Manilius 1.894; Avienus, *Aratea* 1814-19. See Gurval 1997: 42-45 for similar references.

the reports of two eyewitnesses nowhere else attested, asserts that an Etruscan *haruspex* named Vulcanius (Servius, at *Ecl.* 9.47) vigorously propounded the apocalyptic interpretation that the "cometes" indicated the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth age, declared that he would die on the spot for announcing hidden matters against the will of the gods – and promptly did so.[46] But these are both late sources that themselves may have been influenced by these negative post-Caesarian depictions of comets.[47] It is an intriguing possibility that these writers, in reading the different and highly individualized representations of the *sidus Iulium* from the Augustan age, may have concluded that this discrepancy reflected some great debate about the meaning of the sign in 44.

Thus, it is plausible if not probable that the crowd came to believe in Caesar's divinity on its own, given their well-documented association of Caesar with the gods after and even before his death. In fact, the notion that Octavian must have stepped in to manipulate their opinion – so prevalent in our modern narratives – deserves further questioning upon reexamination of the scanty and problematic historical evidence on which it is based. For instance, after reporting Augustus' published statement on the comet, Pliny adds, "haec ille in publicum; interiore gaudio sibi illum natum seque in eo nasci interpretatus est. et, si verum fatemur, salutare id terris fuit" (*NH* 2.23.94). This, however, refers to Augustus' thoughts not at the funeral games, but years later, as he wrote the *Commentarii* – when the outcome of history allowed the *princeps* (and Rome) retrospectively to view the funeral games as one step on his path to supremacy, and the comet as ushering in a new age for Rome at the same time as it ushered out Caesar's soul. Moreover, though Pliny's account constitutes imaginative speculation informed by his own historical hindsight, it still falls short of assigning Octavian an active role in propagating the positive interpretation of the comet. So too does a later source, Cassius Dio, who adds that Octavian had conducted the funeral games in order to win popularity and demonstrate his family connection to Caesar (45.6.4). In his account, though Octavian's fear of Antony had previously prevented him from taking certain actions to honor Caesar, the comet's appearance gave him greater political confidence and caused him to set a star upon the bronze statue of Caesar in the temple of Venus Genetrix (45.7.1). Yet Dio still portrays Octavian in a position of relative vulnerability, as someone who benefited from the comet rather than actively manipulated its reception.

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[46] Immediately after relating Baebius Macer's account of the episode, Servius adds "hoc etiam Augustus in libro secundo *De memoria vitae suae* complexus est"; to explain what would otherwise seem an odd rhetorical choice, Ramsey and Licht rather speculatively argue that Vulcanius represents an apocalyptic Etruscan line of thought, which was promptly reinterpreted into the 'dawning of a new golden age' motif that finds such prominence in *Eclogue* 4 (1997: 140-5). Yet I find it suspicious that Servius does not then cite Augustus' own words, and suspect that this "hoc" may originally have applied to a different referent – e.g. to the fact that Augustus does confirm the appearance of the comet. Vulcanius also bears suspicious resemblance to fictional prophets like Lucan's Figulus (*Bellum Civile* 1.649-65).

[47] There are many problems, in partiular, with Servius' account. He states that the star appeared at midday, that Octavian 'confirmed' that it was his parent, that the eyewitness Baebius Macer said that it rose during the eighth hour and was surrounded with rays like streamers, and that the haruspex Vulcanius furthermore stated that it was a *cometes* heralding the end of the ninth age. Servius says that all of this was also written in the second book of Augustus' memoirs. But aside from the sheer improbability of the story of Vulcanius' sudden death, this account already differs in many significant details from other ones, including Pliny's quotation from what would have been the same passage of Augustus' memoirs. This and other accounts have the comet rising later toward the evening, do not mention the streamers, and never attest the existence of Baebius Macer or Vulcanius.

In fact, the first and only ancient source to assign Octavian such a role is Servius, in the late fourth century. In his note on *Ecl.* 9.47, he asserts that when Augustus saw the comet, "ipse animam patris sui esse voluit." He elsewhere states that, though apocalyptic interpretations of the comet were offered, the crowd was won over "Augusto persuadente" (ad *Aen.* 8.681).[48] Thus, from Servius' account and this account alone, we can construct a story wherein Octavian sees the comet, wants it to 'be' (*esse*) Caesar's soul ascending to the heavens (whether through private belief or recognition of its public expedience), and actively convinces the crowd to adopt this interpretation of the comet even when they are inclined to read it apocalyptically. Where there was a will, there was a way – at least in Servius' picture of Augustus. Yet Servius gets many details about the comet wrong, and several times posits dubious sources or endorses far-fetched stories (recall the otherwise-unattested Baebius Macer, and Vulcanius' dramatic death). Moreover, as I have argued, there is little evidence to support Servius' idea that 'oppositional' interpretations of the comet were prevalent among contemporary observers, and good reason to speculate instead that Servius was responding to the bad reputation of comets in later imperial sources – a reputation which itself may stem from a retrospective reading of the comet of 44 as commemorating Caesar's assassination or heralding the ensuing civil war (as in Vergil's *Georgics* 1, discussed below). Finally, Servius' assumption that Augustus persuaded the people is logically based on his prior assumption that Augustus wanted the comet to be the soul of Caesar. However, it seems doubtful that Servius, in the fourth century, could find evidence for any such personal desire when it is missing from earlier texts, and very likely that he is extrapolating such a motive from his knowledge of later Roman history and literature. Thus, by crediting Octavian with 'authorship' of the comet's interpretation, Servius is in essence filling a logical lacuna that does not need to be filled – and does so, as I argue below, by responding to representations of the *sidus Iulium* within the Augustan Text.

Modern historians appear to have done the same. Though our two modern deification narratives posit alternately dissociative and emulative relationships between Augustus and Caesar, both tend to assign Octavian a level of control over the interpretation of the comet in 44 that he could not possibly have exercised even if he had needed to. Moreover, both tend to confine our attention to the figure of Octavian himself when in fact he was merely one of many people jockeying for power and for popular support; he would eventually become Augustus, to be sure, but was hardly august yet in the days and years after Caesar's assassination. As noted above, the people themselves seem spontaneously to have started worshipping Caesar, against the wishes of powerful members of the senate – individuals whom the young Octavian, newly arrived on the political scene, would hardly wish to defy. In fact, around the time of Caesar's death, it was Antony rather than Octavian who stepped in and actively attempted to harness the people's loyalty to Caesar.[49] During the funeral, for instance, he inflamed their emotions by displaying Caesar's mangled body (Dio 44.35) and by delivering a provocative speech, apparently reminding his audience of all the honors both divine and human that they had voted to Caesar only then to murder him.[50] Partly as a consequence of this stage-management, the

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[48] Servius also states that "[stellam] persuasione Augusti Caesaris esse populus credidit" (as *Aen.* 6.790), though see above for problems with Servius and his sources.

[49] Octavian did not even arrive in Rome until May of 44, since he had to journey all the way from Illyria and then gathered troops and resources near Brundisium (Chisholm 1981: 29).

[50] Antony is clearly very manipulative in all extant accounts of the funeral. In Suetonius' version, certain lines of tragedy were sung "in order to rouse pity and indignation at his death" ("ad miserationem et invidiam caedis eius," 84.2); after this, Antony had a herald recite the decree in which the senate had voted Caesar all divine and human

populace were sufficiently outraged to take over proceedings, burn Caesar's body in the Forum itself using benches as kindling, and hunt down some of Caesar's assassins, even killing the innocent Helvius Cinna on the mistaken belief that he was the conspirator Cornelius Cinna (Suet., *Div. Iul.* 84-85; Dio 44.50). This runaway reaction shows that the *plebs* were not simply a tool to be manipulated at will; whether Antony intended to unleash such chaos or merely mismanaged the affair, it is clear that the people could be appealed to but not necessarily controlled.

Moreover, Dio suggests that even the young Octavian perceived that his political fortunes depended on his ability to appeal to the people, who had formed Caesar's own power base (45.5).[51] Indeed, his account of the second half of 44 suggests that Octavian and Antony were vying for the people's support (cf. especially 45.5-11). Thus, Dio states that Octavian held the games at private expense "to win the favor of the populace" (45.6), although Dio depicts no attempt on his part to influence the people's interpretation of the comet. Rather, it is their favorable interpretation that acts upon *him*, giving him the courage to set up a bronze statue of Caesar with a star above his head in the temple of Venus Genetrix. Moreover, it is the senate's fear of the people, in turn, that prevents it from stopping this move and reining in Octavian as he began to find his political feet. In other words, even though Dio is often ready to see manipulation on the part of the powerful, he here depicts the people as a force to be reckoned with. During the turbulent and dangerous months after Caesar's death, it is their whims that seem to determine the senators' responses, rather than the other way around.

Later on, when the new triumvirate was in power, Dio states that the triumvirs vied to magnify Caesar because they individually hoped to attain the same power and honors as Caesar had (47.18).[52] This statement may well have helped originate the second deification narrative, but the antiquity of the hypothesis does not render it true. It is easy to see why Dio would choose to psychologize the triumvirs' behavior this way, though less easy to see where he might have obtained sources that would shed such light on their motives. If anything, ancient sources tend to suggest that Caesar's career served as a negative example for Octavian at least, illustrating the dangers of aspiring too far (and perhaps giving rise to the first modern deification narrative).[53] On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine what choice the triumvirs might have

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honors, as well as their oath to watch over his safety, and then added a few words of his own (84.2). Dio writes that the people were already excited to discover Caesar's generous bequeathal to them in his will; Antony then fans the flames with a eulogy that, in Dio's no doubt embroidered version, calls attention to Caesar's divine honors. Dio's version of Antony's speech is rather sophistic but displays an interesting attitude to Caesar's godhead: "He not only confirmed the renown of his forefathers who were believed to have attained divinity through their virtue, but actually enhanced it… for, although in times past some unworthy sons have been imputed to the gods, yet no one could deem this man unworthy to have had gods for his ancestors" (44.37).

[51] E.g., he claims that Octavian was annoyed by Antony's high-handed treatment of him, "but as he was unable to speak his mind freely, he bore it until he had won over the multitude, by whom he understood his father to have been raised to honor" (Dio 45.5).

[52] "While these three men were behaving in this wise, they were also magnifying the former Caesar to the utmost degree. For as they were eager for sole rulership and were striving for it, they vindictively pursued the rest of the assassins, with the idea that in this way they would be preparing, long in advance, immunity for themselves in what they were doing as well as safety; and so they eagerly did everything which tended to his honour, in expectation of some day being themselves thought worthy of like honours, and for this reason they exalted him, not only by the honors which had already been voted him, but also by others which they now added."

[53] Balsdon 1958 is a good example of this line of thinking.

had other than to honor Caesar, given that he was their predecessor in power and that supporting the conspirators instead would seem to undermine their own position. For that matter, this hardly constitutes manipulation in the strong sense of the 'maquette' theory. It seems that, rather than create belief in Caesar's divinity and shape his cult from scratch, the triumvirs were largely subscribing to and enlarging honors that had already been awarded to Caesar by the senate and people, in order to guarantee their own political safety and advancement. (Octavian's reference to the Temple of Divus Julius in the coin in Figure 3, below, is a good example of how such public gestures toward Caesar might enhance the reputation of the honorer as much as the honorand, and would also have underwritten Octavian's public image as Caesar's dutiful son.) In other words, Octavian by no means single-handedly manipulated the people into believing that Caesar was a god in order to procure supremacy for himself. Rather, he and the other triumvirs were jockeying for position with one another in part by riding upon the people's pre-existing goodwill toward Caesar.

So, where do the two modern deification narratives originate, if not from concrete evidence from antiquity? For one, they each represent imaginative ways of connecting certain factual dots. The first deification narrative responds to the supposition that the memory of Caesar might have helped Octavian rise but could have been embarrassing to Augustus' more mature image, and to a perceived dearth of references to Caesar as a man rather than a god (though, to this scholar at least, it is hardly surprising that Caesar, once he had become a god, would be referred to by his new title). The second narrative responds to the fact that the cult of Divus Julius received state support under Augustus, that Augustus himself was the subject of a cult even during his lifetime in the provinces, and that he was officially deified and worshipped after his death.[54] So both narratives are convenient ways of explaining a few known facts, even if (as we have seen) they themselves are not fully substantiable. But these two modern narratives were not manufactured entirely from whole cloth. They were prompted in part by the *sidus Iulium*'s trajectory through the Augustan Text, which forms the subject of the remainder of this chapter.

IV. The *sidus Iulium*: star or comet?

Though modern historians often treat the comet and the star together as manifestations of some unitary *sidus Iulium*, deployed by Augustus for political gain, a closer examination will reveal that the two were not interchangeable nor did they bear a stable meaning in antiquity. In this section, I will discuss how the star, in the early and middle years of Augustus' reign, was subject to continual questioning and revision by individual readers. In fact, it was often 'read' and recirculated in ways that comment upon the philosophical nature of Caesar's divinity and, more indirectly, upon Augustus' sometimes disturbing resemblance to Caesar – arguing against the modern idea that it was used as a propagandistic device. In the next section, I will explore how later artists begin to represent the sidus as a comet rather than a star, and use this to call new attention to the historical *process* by which Caesar was declared a god. Ovid in particular offers a powerful (if fictive) rereading of earlier representations of the *sidus* within the Augustan Text, and helps originate the idea that they were circulated with propagandistic intent. I will conclude by examining how Ovid implicates Augustus in Caesar's deification and may have shaped modern deification narratives in the absence of historical evidence.

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[54] For the imperial cult see, for instance, White 1988 and Price 1984.

Despite the slippage between comet and star in modern scholarship on the *sidus Iulium*, the ancients appear to have distinguished the two. For instance, in Suetonius' account (*Vit. Div. Iul.* 88, quoted above), the appearance of a comet (*stella crinita*) in the skies over Caesar's funeral game prompted belief in Caesar's katasterism, subsequently symbolized by the star (*stella*) and confirmed somewhat later through official deification. This follows the ancients' verbal distinction between comets (*cometes*, *stella crinita*, or *stella comans*) and stars (*astrum* or *stella*).[55] Augustus' own account of the funeral games, also quoted and discussed above, is our first extant use of the unusual term *sidus crinitum*, and further seems to elide the historical comet with the symbol of the star.[56]

> iis ipsis ludorum meorum diebus sidus crinitum per septem dies in regione caeli sub septentrionibus est conspectum. id oriebatur circa undecimam horam diei clarumque et omnibus e terris conspicuum fuit. eo sidere significari vulgus credidit Caesaris animam inter deorum immortalium numina receptam, quo nomine id insigne simulacro capitis eius, quod mox in foro consecravimus, adiectum est.
>
> (*NH* 2.23.94 = *Commentarii de vita sua* fr. 6 [Malcovati])

> On the very days of my games, a comet was observed for seven days in the northern region of the sky. It rose around the eleventh hour of the day and was bright and visible from all lands. The crowd believed that the reception of Caesar's soul among the spirits of the immortal gods was signified by this star, on which account this sign was added to the bust of him which we then dedicated in the forum.

Though it bears many similarities to Suetonius' version (for which the *Commentarii* were doubtless a source), Augustus' careful word choice reveals an interesting semantic transition. The initial description "sidus crinitum" clearly acknowledges that the apparition was a comet, yet it elides via the generic pronoun "id" into an unqualified star – "eo sidere."[57] This star, in turn, is grammatically though of course not physically identical with the "id" of the next sentence, now an ornamental star added to the bust of Caesar as a symbol of his soul's reception amongst the "deorum immortalium numina" – or rather, as an acknowledgement of the common people's collective and spontaneous *belief* that this is what the 'star' signified ("eo sidere significari vulgus *credidit*…"). Thus, Augustus' treatment accords with Suetonius', in representing the comet as a historical phenomenon, interpreted by some as Caesar's soul rising to heaven, whereas the star was an iconographic marker of Caesar's deification and a symbol of his divinity.

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[55] See Ramsey and Licht 1997: 144, although they put too much stock by Servius' belief that *sidus* should refer to multiple stars (on *Aen.* 8.681). Ramsey and Licht believe the star is used to refer to Caesar's apotheosis and the comet to his death (1997: 144), and assume that Octavian attempted to rephrase the comet, if it were originally a baleful omen, as a star. However, this distinction is somewhat too easy, and, as I note above, is based on an anachronistic list of sources. Moreover, it fails to explain the absence of the comet from the early material record in favor of the star, and its subsequent (late) popularity; surely the order would be reversed if Octavian/Augustus had successfully been able to 'spin' its appearance.

[56] Ramsey and Licht argue that the term *sidus crinitum* is "without precedent as a term for a comet" (1997: 144), although it is also without precedent as a term for a star or any other single astronomical body; cf. Lewis and Short, who cite only Augustan and post-Augustan sources for this use (it had originally denoted a constellation).

[57] Perhaps treating the comet almost as a special case of a star (due to their linguistic similarity and the lack of specificity of the term *sidus*), contrary to the well-documented ancient awareness that the two were different natural phenomena.

Yet, within the grammar, we can see how the comet quite literally 'becomes' the star, and with it, witness in miniature the evolution of a chance astrological phenomenon into a symbol of Caesar's greatness.

Following a pattern noticed by several scholars but taking a very different interpretive slant, I argue for a similar evolution in representations of the *sidus Iulium* within the Augustan Text.[58] Just as ancient writers were capable of making a verbal distinction between star and comet, so too were ancient mints capable of making a visual distinction, as Gurval points out:[59] the star simply had a number of rays, whereas the comet was distinguished by the streaming 'hair' of its tail (cf. the etymology of the term *stella crinita*). It follows that ancient audiences would similarly have distinguished the comet that appeared over Caesar's funeral games from the star that symbolized his divinity. In Suetonius and Augustus' accounts, this comet and star did not have a relationship of identity, merely one of causality: the appearance of the comet seemed to ratify Caesar's attainment of divine status, which was then symbolized by the star. The star already had a long history of symbolizing godhood, and carried particular philosophical connotations regarding the nature of divinity, as I discuss below. Such prior uses of the star may explain why it is more common than the comet within the Augustan Text, particularly during Octavian's early years. Those who used it for partisan purposes may have felt that it made a more confident and readily intelligible statement than the comet. It is not until the time of the so-called second Augustan settlement that we find any manifestation of a comet within the coinage, and that only within two separate issues.[60] Moreover, within the literature, mentions of the Julian comet are rarer and more charged than those of the star, and references to comets in general are more likely to be negative. Thus, just as comet and star are non-interchangeable visually and verbally, so too do they bear different valences within the Augustan Text – although even there, neither symbol has a static meaning, but rather is subject to continual reinterpretation and contestation by individual readers.

Vergil provides brief yet telling examples of both star and comet from the decade or so following Caesar's deification, which I will briefly discuss before turning to discussions of each icon within other Augustan texts.[61] The star, as I have observed, seems a more generally positive sign than the comet, and *Eclogues* 9 – the first 'reading' of the Julian star within Augustan literature – appears to demonstrate this point. Coins and Caesar's bust itself had already used the visual device of the star to indicate Caesar's divine status. In *Eclogue* 9.46-50, Vergil reimagines the symbol as an actual star in the sky, exerting its beneficial influence over the lands:

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[58] E.g. Ramsey and Licht note a "pronounced shift in the imagery, from star to comet," in the comet coins of 17 BCE and Ovid's work (1997: 144); Gurval also argues for an iconographical evolution, although many (e.g. Scott 1941) do not observe one.

[59] "To those who seek to interpret the star on the early coinage of Octavian as an allusion to the story of the comet, the significantly later artistic representation of a comet – a star with a tail – suggests that the Roman engravers could distinguish between the two" (Gurval 1997: 59). One could, however, also argue that engravers never *had* to distinguish between the two until now.

[60] With the coins of Marcus Sanquinius of 17 and the 'provincial mint' issue from Spain, probably a few years earlier; cf. Gurval 1997: 59, Ramsey and Licht 1997: 64 n. 11, and my discussion below. Ramsey and Licht point out that, prior to these coins, the only other Greek or Roman coin to depict a comet is a bronze Pontic issue of the late 2nd century BCE (cf. Imhoof-Blumer 185-7).

[61] Scholars generally date the composition of the *Eclogues* to 42-37 and the *Georgics* to 37-30 (cf. Williams 1979).

'Daphni, quid antiquos signorum suspicis ortus?
ecce Dionaei processit Caesaris astrum,
astrum quo segetes gauderent frugibus et quo
duceret apricis in collibus uva colorem.
insere, Daphni, piros: carpent tua poma nepotes.'

'Daphnis, why are you looking to old risings of constellations? Behold, the star of Dionian Caesar has come forth – the star under whose influence the crops might rejoice and the grape might take on color on the sunny hills. Daphne, graft your pears; your grandsons will pluck the fruit.'

Here, the newly rising star that is contrasted with the *antiquos ortus* of 46 most obviously refers to Caesar's ascent as a god to the heavens, where he may exert a benevolent posthumous influence over the world; but the *astrum*, reiterated emphatically at 47 and 48, may also refer to the political ascendancy of a second Caesar.[62] In particular, the imagery of biological fertility (47-49) and the succession of generations (49) might prompt readers to think of Caesar's heir, and not just Caesar's spirit, as helping to guarantee the peace and productivity of a new age. In this sense, it is easy to see how modern historians might read Vergil's *Caesaris astrum* in support of the first deification narrative, wherein the memory of Caesar is whitewashed in order to support Octavian's political ambitions. Yet the passage also suggests that, far from separating Caesar from Octavian, the star could refer to both of them simultaneously. Moreover, this star appears in highly embedded discourse: it is part of a song that the character Lycidas sings to Moeris, quoting one of Moeris' own earlier compositions.[63] Moreover, Moeris himself goes on to rescind the song's hopes for peace and prosperity (51-55), adding a melancholy counterpoint that prompts readers to reconsider whether the Julian star truly had a positive influence upon the world.[64] Thus, this first reading within Augustan literature of the Julian star, though it is often understood to show optimism, was already being problematized within the context of the *Eclogues*. It must, moreover, have acquired another degree of irony a few years after publication, when Rome was embroiled in yet another civil war conducted by Caesar's heir under the auspices of the *Caesaris astrum*.

In fact, a few years later, Vergil begins his *Georgics* with an echo of the passage at *Eclogues* 9.46 in which the star appears ("quid faciat laetas segetes, quo sidere terram / vertere, Maecenas, ulmisque adiungere vitis / conveniat," 1.1-3) and a panegyric of Octavian as an benefactor of the world and of Vergil's own poetic endeavor (24-42). But the bright hopes associated with that star fade away by the end of *Georgics* 1, where Vergil associates baleful comets with the death of Caesar and the advent of civil war.[65] In the midst of an exegesis on heavenly signs in *Georgics* 1, the narrator lists the many terrible omens that followed the death of Caesar (1.466) and preceded the bloodshed at Philippi (1.490): among these were volcanic

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[62] In that the duplication of the word may echo the duplication of the Caesars, and that Caesar's heir may be seen as about to preside over this new era.

[63] See Williams 1979: 128 *ad loc.* for the assignation of these lines to Lycidas.

[64] Moeris' answer also questions the permanence of spirit, memory, and song (51-55), the very things that underlie the Stoic conception of divinity that I will discuss below.

[65] Though Vergil did not publish the *Georgics* until after Actium in 31, at line 490 he refers to Philippi (in 42) as 'yet another' civil war, with the adjective *iterum* pointing even further back to the battle of Pharsalia between Pompey and Caesar in 48 (cf. Thomas 1988, Williams 1979, Page 1910, etc.).

eruptions (471-3), earthquakes (475), monstrous voices (476-7), and the frightening appearance of comets – one of which, if we can take this poetic list of omens to reflect historical events, must have been the comet of July 44.[66]

> non alias caelo ceciderunt plura sereno
> fulgura nec diri totiens arsere cometae. (1.487-8)

> At no other time did more lightning fall from a calm sky or baleful comets so often blaze.

It is unclear whether the narrator views these comets as indicators of nature's anger at the death of Caesar, or as predictors of the civil wars to come; but in either case, it bodes nothing but ill, and is part of the natural disorder that reflects Rome's civic tumult. Here, moreover, the interpretational focus by no means on the dawning of a new age but rather on the death throes of an old one: from Vergil's perspective, at this moment in the poem or in history, the chaos and devastation of civil war (partly enacted in the name of avenging Caesar) seem to eclipse whatever hopes could be attached to Octavian's recent ascendancy. Moreover, though the conclusion of *Georgics* 1 revisits the hopes pinned on Octavian at the beginning, they now feel more tentative and qualified. These lines hinge upon whether the gods will allow Octavian to remain long on earth, suggest that the work of peace is just as demanding as Octavian's pursuit of military triumphs, and end "on a note of uncontrollable despair" with the image of a charioteer careening out of control (498-514).[67]

V. The Julian star as a comment on the Caesars' divinity

Vergil's early works represent stars and comets very differently, though they tie only the star specifically to Caesar; the baleful comets of *Georgics* 1.487-8, though they may encourage later negative interpretations of the phenomenon, are not specifically identified as Caesar's. In fact, in the earlier part of Augustus' reign, the *sidus Iulium* appears only as a star. Yet even so, representations of it are remarkably heterogeneous, and argue against centralized control or standardization of the icon. In particular, it is frequently re-read within the Augustan Text in ways that comment upon the status of both Caesar and Augustus, and that explore their

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[66] Mynors 1990: 92 is the best commentary on the historical chronology and verisimilitude of this list, and points out Cicero *n.d.* 2.14, *div.* 1.97, and perhaps even Ennius, as possible sources for prodigies that then became standardized and were listed in Julius Obsequens 68ff. He links some of the events that Vergil listed to natural phenomena (e.g. the comet, and volcanic activity in Sicily that resulted in tremors and lurid light), and most of the others to "the popular imagination." Williams claims that many of these portents are attested by Plutarch and Dio (46.33) and have parallels in Livy, Tibullus, Ovid, Lucan, and others; but all of the authors he mentions, with the exception of Cicero (*De Div.* 1.98) and Apollonius Rhodius (4.1280), may have been drawing from Vergil's own list. For instance, Ovid *Met.* 15.785ff., Lucan 1.522ff., and even Shakespeare's *Hamlet* 1.1.114ff. mention the dimming of the skies in the year of Caesar's assassination, but this may reflect (and constitute) literary expectation rather than comprise evidence for such an occurrence. Similarly, Williams cites only Tib. 2.5.71, Lucan 1.529, and *Suet.* Ner. 36 (see also Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecl.* 1.77-83) as evidence for comets being ill-omened, although all these sources postdate the *Georgics* and may well be drawing from this very passage. Thus I am reluctant to declare this list of portents is entirely stereotypical, because the stereotype itself may well derive in part from Vergil, as may the historians' accounts.

[67] Quoting Mynors 1990: 99. This passage does, however, clearly envision a place for Octavian, like Divus Julius, in heaven (503-4), and innovates the theme more famous from Horace *Odes* 1.2.45-9 and Ovid *Metamorphoses* 15.868 of praying that the gods will allow him to linger long on earth.

relationship to one another and to divinity. This has obvious relevance for our two modern narratives of Caesar's deification: were Augustan writers using the star as a way to cleanse and dissociate Caesar from his deeds, as the first narrative would have it, or to suggest that Augustus might share in the divine glory of his father, as the second narrative implies?

First, let us pause to discuss briefly what deification might have meant to the Romans. Later imperial practices, such as the release of an eagle from the emperor's funeral pyre, might seem to indicate some degree of belief that the emperor's soul ascended to heaven by means of some airborne vehicle (or at least, a willingness on the part of the organizers of the funeral to propagate such a belief).[68] Simon Price suggests that this was an echo of the first funeral games culminating in a deification, Caesar's own, where the comet provided a precedent for some physical vehicle by which the leader's soul could be viewed as gaining its rightful place among the stars.[69] Certainly, there is evidence that some people began worshipping Caesar as a god long before he was officially deified, which Weinstock and others take as denoting some degree of belief in Caesar's literal divinity.[70] At the same time, much of our evidence suggests that Caesar's deification was often read metaphorically, as an acknowledgment of his greatness. For that matter, a strict division of 'literal' from 'metaphorical' conceptions of Caesar's divinity may not always be productive or possible. As Denis Feeney argues in the first chapter of *Literature and Religion in Rome*, whereas Judaeo-Christian scholars tend to look for a "constant kernel of agreed and revealed belief," in Roman culture, "the critera of truth and belief are variable because they are radically contextual, being always produced from ever-changing conditions of dialogue."[71] Thus, rather than attempt to stabilize and anatomize ancient conceptions of deification – to posit, for instance, that the lower classes believed Caesar's soul literally rose to the stars by means of the comet, and that the elite regarded Caesar's deification and association with the star as a metaphorical acknowledgment of his undying fame – I instead examine specific examples of how icons of Caesar's divinity were 'read' both locally and intertextually within the Augustan Text. Readings of the *sidus Iulium* often draw simultaneously upon multiple conceptions of godhood, in ways that create tensions between different beliefs – but these tensions themselves comment upon the difficulty of conceptualizing Caesar's relationship with Augustus.

A. The coins

Though discussions of the Julian star have tended to focus on the Augustan poets, these cannot be understood, as I argued in Chapter 1, in isolation from the surrounding visual discourse and the range of intertextual associations it evoked. Weinstock and others have documented the long Greco-Roman history of depicting divinity, and in Hellenistic times particularly the divinity of kings, via the star.[72] But within Roman coinage, it is associated earliest and especially with Castor and Pollux; in fact, according to Gurval, the star appears *only* in association with the Dioscuri until the end of the second century, when it also starts appearing

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[68] See Price 1987 for a history of this tradition among other rituals associated with imperial apotheosis.
[69] 1987: 72-77; on the last page Price also cites a poem of Germanicus' that imagines the constellation Capricorn bearing Augustus' *numen* up to heaven (*Arati Phaenomena* 558-60).
[70] See especially his Chapter 13, "Kingship and Divinity," for a still-excellent overview of the sources (1971).
[71] 1998: 46.
[72] Weinstock 1971: 371-84; see also Kyrieleis 1986, cited in Gurval 1997: 45.

on coins featuring Roma and Mars. Its use is then extended to Mercury, Jupiter, Victory, and Apollo in the mid-first century, causing Gurval to suggest that by the end of the Republic the star was "a well-recognized, though not standard, attribute of divinity."[73] However, it was Caesar who innovated its use for Venus, in one coin type that Crawford has connected with the victory at Munda in 45. If this identification is correct, the coin may also commemorate Caesar's conclusive victory in his iconographical rivalry with Pompey for the special protection of Venus, and certainly seems to build upon Venus' prior association with the evening star that led Aeneas to Italy.[74]

The star again appears in conjunction with Venus on some reverses, and behind the portrait of Caesar himself on the obverse, of a type of P. Sepullius Macer, one of the *quattuorviri* of 44 (Figure 1).[75] The placement of the star behind Caesar's head echoes depictions of the star in conjunction with the Olympian gods,[76] and does not yet seem to allude to Octavian's placement of a star upon the head of the statue of Caesar in the temple of Venus Genetrix (compare Crawford, RRC 534/1, which depicts a star in front of the forehead).[77] Whether this coin predates or postdates Caesar's death on the Ides of March,[78] it is significant that Caesar is the first mortal to be represented with a star in Roman coinage, and certainly in keeping with his acquisition of unprecedented and godlike honors during life and his eventual formal deification after death. On this coin, the repetition of the star at the back of Caesar's head and at the base of Venus' staff certainly seems to betoken Caesar's divine favor and close association with the goddess, if not the semi-divine status that he had already attained by reputation. And, as Gurval notes, whenever the coin had been issued, it would have continued to circulate long after Caesar's death: "The star of the goddess must have thus later been commonly understood as the symbol not only of Caesar's divine ancestry but also of his own divine aspirations."[79]

Figure 1: Denarius of P. Sepullius Macer:
laureate head of Julius Caesar (obverse), standing Venus holding victory (reverse)
Crawford, RRC 480/5b; BMCRR I, p. 548, Rome no. 4165

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[73] See Gurval 1997: 45-60 for a helpful summary of Roman coinage featuring stars and particularly the Julian star, including figures.

[74] Crawford, RRC 468/2 (see also Gurval 1997: 48) features Venus with the star in her hair, gathered into a bun in the back; a similar figure appears on a sestertius of 44, but has been identified as Diana or Luna because of a crescent above her head (Crawford RRC 480/5a and b). Cf. also Crawford RRC 480/26 for a sestertius of 44 featuring a divinity with a crescent on the obverse and a star on the reverse.

[75] For which see Gurval 1997: 48.

[76] See Gurval 1997: 45-46 and figures 4-9 of Mars, Mercury, Apollo, etc. on page 47.

[77] Also BMCRR II, p. 411, Gaul no. 102 (Gurval 1997: 51, Fig. 21), though note Gurval's suggestion at 1997: 51 against the *communis opinio* that this figure is Octavian rather than Julius Caesar. I agree this is suggested by the legend, although to me, it looks like the figure is wearing a diadem rather than a laurel wreath, which would seem to argue in turn for Caesar.

[78] For issues of dating cf. Gurval 1997: 48-9.

[79] 1997: 49.

Of course, the prior use of the star in conjunction with Caesar during his own lifetime provided good precedent for its continued use after his deification. Gurval convincingly argues that after Caesar's death in 44 and his official deification in 42, the star initially appears in conjunction with portraits of Caesar as a token of his divinity, but then comes to stand on its own (alongside the legend 'DIVUS IULIUS') to denote Caesar's godhood.[80] Moreover, just as Caesar himself had used the star of Venus to claim divine support, his would-be political heirs - first Antony, then Octavian and Agrippa, and perhaps even Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus - subsequently adopt his star in order to declare their allegiance and claim his blessing.[81] It is a pity that we have little evidence from this pre-Augustan period to assess how such intentions were received by Roman audiences.

This imagistic inheritance worked especially well on behalf of Octavian, who, as many have observed, initially had little to recommend him beyond his connection with Caesar.[82] On one Southern Italian coin of 38, for instance (Figure 2),[83] the star accompanies not Caesar, but a portrait of Octavian labeled 'DIVI F[ILIUS]'; 'DIVOS IULIUS' is written on the reverse inside a laurel wreath denoting Caesar's eternal glory. The close linking of Octavian and Caesar on obverse and reverse, the verbal echo of 'DIVI' and 'DIVOS,' the clear assertion of familial relationship, and the transference of the star from Caesar's to Octavian's side of the coin all seem to unite rather than dissociate the two figures and, if anything, seem to claim Caesar's glory for Octavian. In this sense, this coin is typical of the issues featuring the Julian star, and argues for a close relationship between Octavian and Caesar in the public imagination; one can even see how it might seem to betoken, according to the second modern deification narrative, an early ambition on Octavian's part to become a god like his father.[84]

Figure 2: Bronze of Octavian: head of Octavian (obverse), laurel wreath (reverse)
Crawford, RRC 535/2; BMCRR II, p. 413, Gaul nos. 108-12; Burnett, RPC, p. 161, no. 621

A subsequent issue of *aurei* and *denarii* from a moving mint in the mid-30s (Figure 3) makes a similar claim in more subtle fashion, and reveals an important strand of thought about Caesar's deification as read within the Augustan Text. Though it, too, features a portrait of Octavian, unshaven in mourning, on its obverse, the reverse features a tetrastyle temple with a star on its pediment, bearing the legend 'DIVO IVL' in the architrave and containing a veiled

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[80] "The divinity of Caesar is beginning to be expressed not by the image of a man but by a title and the symbol of a star" (Gurval 1997: 57). I would add that by this point there is little discernable reminiscence of Venus.
[81] In coins mentioned above at note 42 and compiled by Gurval 1997: 50ff.
[82] E.g. Gurval 1997: 51.
[83] Crawford, RRC 535/2; BMCRR II, p. 413, Gaul nos. 108-112; and Burnett, RPC, p. 161, no. 621 (see Gurval 1997: 58).
[84]Though according to such logic, Antony would have shared this same ambition since he too made use of the icon.

statue inside. Though this obviously refers to the Temple of Divus Julius and its cult statue of Caesar, the coin cannot be used to prove that the temple had yet been completed; on the other hand, it does at least testify that Octavian was by now claiming the temple as his own special project – perhaps a pointed criticism of Antony, who had been accused of neglecting his duties as Caesar's flamen and who may have stalled the temple's dedication.[85] Moreover, in identifying Octavian as *divi filius* and in closely connecting him with the construction of his father's temple (which he would eventually dedicate in 29), this coin seems to credit Octavian with a leading role in the cult of Caesar. Octavian had already demonstrated his filial piety toward Caesar by avenging his murder at Philippi; now he would again exercise it by the more peaceful means of ensuring his father's posthumous worship – something that, as I discuss below, was likely to have pleased the people if not the senate. This coin thus introduces yet another possible interpretive context for the star: not only as a sign of Caesar's divinity, of Octavian's allegiance to Caesar, or even of Octavian's own divine favor, but also as a symbol of Octavian's filial loyalty in honoring his adoptive father.

Figure 3: Denarius of Octavian: head of Octavian (obverse), temple of Divus Julius (reverse)
Crawford, RRC 540/2; BMCRR II, p. 580, Africa no. 34; Sydenham 1338

B. Literary texts

Literary intertexts for the star, both philosophical and poetic, add further insight into Octavian's relationship with Caesar as it might have been perceived by Roman viewers. It is significant that, even within coinage, the star had a strong early association with Hellenistic rulers and, within Roman coins especially, with the Dioscuri – figures who bridge the gap between mortality and immortality and who were envisioned as actively intervening in men's affairs. This imagistic use of the star as a symbol of divinity, and in particular, of divinity as attained by men, in turn has strong roots in Stoic philosophy. Writers like Cicero and Posidonius would have been well-known in Rome at this time, and, though modern scholars continue to debate the specifics of their views on immortality,[86] they shared a common metaphorical language that adds to the cultural connotations of the star. Typical is Varro's assertion that "Stoici virorum fortium animas existimant in modum siderum vagari in aere et esse sic immortales."[87] The phrase "in modum siderum" seems to denote a figurative similarity with the stars, rather than literal transformation. Moreover, the choice of "vagari in aere," rather than "aether" or "caelum," further marks a difference: "aer" denotes the lower regions of the air in which speech and *fama* are exchanged, rather than the pristine higher reaches in which the stars

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[85] Cicero *Phil.* 2.110, cited above; Gurval discusses the chronology and speculates that Antony, as Caesar's flamen, may have delayed the project until he returned from Egypt (1997: 59). .

[86] See e.g. Ju 2009 for an overview of the issue of the soul's immortality, from Plato's Phaedrus to Posidonius and Cicero's reactions.

[87] *Ant. rer. div. 1,* fr. 25a Ag. (Comm. Lucan 9.6), cited also by Weinstock (1971: 372).

move.[88] Thus the type of immortality that great men enjoy is one of public reputation: their 'souls' continue to exist in the sense that they are remembered well among the living. This idea strongly evokes the Euhemeran doctrine, popular especially in Hellenistic times, that the gods were ancient leaders who were remembered with gratitude by their subjects.[89] Roman historians apply some of the same rationalizing language to the idea of imperial deification. Tacitus, for instance, has Tiberius reject a temple on the grounds that he prefers to leave temples in the hearts of his people (4.36), and Dio similarly has Maecenas advise Augustus to leave his image not in gold and silver but in Roman hearts and minds (52.35).

It has troubled modern scholars, apparently more than the Romans, that such metaphorical ways of thinking about divinity could coexist with the trappings and rituals of the imperial cult. Yet the Greeks had awarded divine honors to Roman imperators for many years now, and even contemporaries of Caesar, the first recipient of such a cult in Rome, could both worship Caesar once he had 'ascended to the stars' and provide rational explanations as to how he got there. Diodorus Siculus, for instance, explains the epithet *Divus Caesar* as "Γαΐου Καίσαρος τοῦ διὰ τὸ μέγεθος τῶν πράξεων θεοῦ προσαγορευθέντος" (4.19.2), viewing divinity as a reward for Caesar's great works. And though Cicero notoriously opposed the deification of Caesar, his famous *Somnium Scipionis* envisions great men finding a sure place "in caelo" through their deeds; this suggests that his opposition must have been either toward Caesar or toward the specific honors awarded him rather than to the very idea that men may become immortal (*De Re Publica* VI.13). So if the star connotes a Stoic conception of godhood, the coins discussed above may not make as bold a claim as modern scholars imagine: rather than squarely assert that Octavian is entitled to godhood himself, they celebrate Caesar's attainment of divine status through great works, and suggest that Octavian as the 'son of a god' is capable of similar achievement.

Such connotations are corroborated by the poets of the era, who show that Roman readers enjoyed a great deal of leeway in interpreting apparently 'official' iconography. Though they differ regarding, for example, the level of literalness with which they depict Caesar's divinity, the poets tend to envision Caesar as providing some precedent for Augustus, and the star as reflecting Augustus' glory as much as Caesar's. At the same time, they are often double-edged or ambivalent, arguing against the idea of a normative state-propagated meaning for the *sidus Iulium*. In fact, poetic references to the *sidus Iulium* and to the deification of Caesar discourage uncritical acceptance of Caesar's divinity, instead opening out and exploring certain tensions or dissonances in the idea of deification.

i. Horace, *Odes* 1.12

Aside from the brief and ambiguous references to the Julian star in Vergil's *Eclogue* 9 and the comet in *Georgic* 1, discussed above, Horace's *Ode* 1.12 is the first poem to discuss it and in fact the only poem to use the term *sidus Iulium*. But even here, the term is used not to praise Caesar without qualification, but to explore the implications of semi-divine status in ways that comment upon Augustus' own reign. Though the first modern narrative had posited that the

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[88] Cf. Varro, *Ant. rer. div. 1,* fr. 25a Ag. (Comm. Lucan 9.6), cited by Weinstock (1971: 372).
[89] See Brian Bosworth's 1999 article on possible echoes of Euhemeran philosophy, as transmitted by Ennius, in the *Res Gestae*.

star was used to isolate Caesar from Augustus, here the star is read as closely binding the two figures, in ways that are not unequivocally positive. The poem opens with a Pindaric question (cf. *Olympian* 2.2) that introduces a tripartite ontological division which the poem itself will proceed to question: "quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri / tibia sumis celebrare, Clio? / quem deum?" ("What man or hero do you choose to celebrate with lyre or shrill flute, Clio? What god?" 1-3).[90] In keeping with its priamel structure and this early emphasis on fame through song ("lyra vel acri / tibia sumis celebrare"), the poet does not directly identify his object of praise, but rather, spends the first three stanzas envisioning how the name of this chosen person will resound through the landscape – evoking the power of Orpheus to move even the oaks (7-12). Following the Stoic view of *fama* as the medium of godhood, here, too, it is implicitly because of poets' power that the gods enjoy their reputations among men; in fact, this introduction sets up the figure of the poet himself as a godlike power to balance the men or gods who will be the ostensible subject of the poem.

The poet first offers the 'customary praises' (*solitis ... laudibus*, 13-14) of Jupiter as incomparably greater than all other beings (17-18), again evoking the idea that a body of 'texts' has formed the god's reputation,[91] and devotes the next stanza and a half (19-24) to other Olympian gods: Pallas, Liber, Diana, and Phoebus, the latter especially dear to the Augustan building program (discussed in Chapter 3).[92] At the stanza break, though, the poet shifts his attention from the Olympian gods to the ἀλεξίκακοι who originated as deified mortals, citing Hercules, Castor and Pollux for their ability to help men[93] (Castor and Pollux, notably, in the form of a bright star that calms rough seas for sailors).[94] And subsequently, the poem's initial man/hero/god division begins to break down. The next stanza treats several illustrious figures from Roman history, from Romulus (said to have been deified as the god Quirinus) to Numa Pompilius, Tarquinius Superbus, Cato, Regulus, and other great men who, though not officially deified, in a sense live on within Roman legend – a point that Horace underscores with his phrase "gratus insigni referam Camena" (39, using *insigni* causatively to denote the 'Muse who grants fame').[95] Finally, in the next stanza, he arrives at the climax of the priamel:

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[90] I use Shackleton Bailey's 2001 Teubner edition. Many scholars have noted the allusion to Pindar *O.* 2.1.ff, but Nisbet and Hubbard find this a pervasive influence; they point out that Theocritus' similar opening to Ptolemy Philadelphus has more of an effect on Horace's structure and thought since it too deals with "divinized" mortals and begins and ends with Zeus (1970: 144).

[91] Also, as Nisbet and Hubbard point out, the use of the verb "temperat" implies a Stoic conception of the universe (1970: 130), which seems to me in keeping with the Stoic idea of immortality I find implicitly expressed here.

[92] Fraenkel finds that they all "stand for peace and order against the forces of destruction" and symbolize "the ideals of the Augustan regime" (1957: 294), though I will go on to problematize such 'pro-Augustan' readings of this nuanced text.

[93] See Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 153 for the many parallels for this list of "benefactors of mankind, who by their deeds had won immortality"; such lists often include Liber/Bacchus, here placed by Horace among the gods in a further acknowledgment of the fluidity of such boundaries.

[94] "Alba … stella," 27-28; cf. the coins discussed above. To me, this imagery recollects that of the 'ship of state' passages (cf. *Aeneid* 1 and Horace *Odes* 1.14) wherein the Roman republic is being tossed and turned by civil war and needs a strong leader to save it. Just as Castor and Pollux's star calms the waters for actual sailors, perhaps the Julian star is envisioned as calming the waters for Rome and allowing Octavian to steer the ship to safety.

[95] Thus Garrison 1991 and Heinze 1960 *ad loc.*, though Nisbet and Hubbard take this as an imitation of "naïve Pindaric self-glorification." The accompanying list of Roman figures has flummoxed commentators. Fraenkel calls it "one of the most bewildering passages in Horace's odes" (1957: 294); Nisbet and Hubbard merely conclude that Horace's "drift becomes obscure at this point" and "perhaps the divisions of the poem are not quite so clear-cut as is sometimes supposed" (1970: 155); though see Brown 1991 for some attempts to justify this selection. Aside from

> crescit occulto velut arbor aeuo   45
> fama Marcelli; micat inter omnis
> Iulium sidus velut inter ignis
>   luna minores.

This reference to the *Iulium sidus*, which outshines all lesser lights – apparently, the reputations of all other great men – hearkens back to the star of the mortals-become-gods Castor and Pollux described at 27-32. It also creates a ring structure in tandem with the mention of Romulus at 33, whereby the discussion of Roman historical figures from 33-48 both opens and closes with deified rulers (interestingly, both associated with kingship as well as divinity). Yet it is difficult to pin down a precise referent for the *sidus*; though many scholars have taken it as referring to Julius Caesar, leading some to characterize it as a gauche political misstep on Horace's part,[96] it seems equally to refer to Augustus, who is the subject of the rest of the poem and as represented there clearly answers to the description at 46-8. Perhaps it is safest and most accurate to take the *sidus* here as standing in for the entire Julian house, including Augustus himself, all the divine backing of his ancestry and fortune, and all the promise of his heirs and successors – of whom Marcellus, married to Augustus' only daughter Julia in 25, was the foremost, at least until his untimely death two years later at the age of 18, right around the publication of the first three books of the *Odes*.[97]

In fact, the reference to Marcellus which shares this stanza with the *sidus* is highly controversial, not least because it is unclear which Marcellus is meant. Some critics detect no "hint of sorrow" in this passage, as in the laments for Augustus' young heir at *Aeneid.* 6.863ff. and Propertius 3.18, and therefore assume that he was still alive at the time of publication.[98] Pointing to his youth and lack of accomplishment, especially in the face of the list of great Roman figures that precede this passage, they conclude that Horace is referring to Marcus Claudius Marcellus, the conqueror of Syracuse and winner of the *spolia opima* in 222 BCE. This, however, would be a strangely unmotivated choice for the honor of this penultimate position in his list unless Horace were already making indirect reference to the hopes placed in the younger Marcellus. Moreover, even if Horace wrote or published this poem while Marcellus

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the non-chronological order, this confusion seems due to the inclusion of the deified Romulus with these men rather than heroes like Castor and Pollux, the fact that not all of these persons can be considered equally admirable (e.g. Tarquin the Proud), and the story that Cato was disliked by Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 85.1) despite his popular eulogization after death – hence the unsatisfactory attempts to emend "Catonis" (Shackleton Bailey has merely obelized it). Clearly, then, the point is that the only thing these disparate figures have in common is their prominence in Roman history and thus the greatness (not necessarily *good*ness) of their *fama*.

[96] Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 162, illustrating yet again the tautology of the modern deification narratives: because scholars think that Augustus would have wanted to suppress the memory of Caesar, they find mentions of Caesar to be miscalculations on the part of the poets, where really they should use them to revise their understanding of the situation. Brown uses this sort of logic to argue that the star cannot refer specifically to Caesar, nicely illustrating the first modern narrative: "It hardly needs to be added that there were aspects of Julius Caesar's career from which Augustus wished to distance himself and that, perhaps accordingly, there are few unambiguously enthusiastic references to Caesar in Augustan poetry" (1991: 332).

[97] Garrison states that Marcellus died in the same year that the *Odes* were published and is the subject of this reference (1991: 222), though the relative chronology is still subject to debate.

[98] So Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: xxxvi, though they make the good point that this ode influenced Vergil and Propertius's poems on his death. This confusion has, for example, encouraged Shackleton Bailey to follow Peerlkamp in amending to a plural *Marcellis* – though I agree with many commentators that this makes the line heavy-handed.

was still alive, his death would have followed so shortly thereafter and received so much public attention that subsequent audiences could hardly help but think of the young Marcellus when they read line 46. Yet what would they make of the inclusion of someone so relatively unaccomplished in this list of men who have attained some level of Stoic divinity? Horace in some ways appears to acknowledge this incongruity via his mixed metaphors: whereas the Julian star and the reputations of other men are depicted as stars in the heavens, Marcellus' *fama* is envisioned as a tree growing with the hidden passage of time (*occulto aevo*, 45). This seems to evoke and revise the metaphor of a young man's body growing imperceptibly like a tree in the tragic context of *Iliad* 18.56[99]; though Marcellus' life was cut short, his *fama* at least could continue to grow strong beyond his death. Moreover, the organic image of the tree, the idea of growth, and the emphasis on *fama* naturalize the process by which a lofty reputation may be obtained – and that process, as suggested by the poem's introduction and its later mention of the fame-bestowing Muse, is mediated by poetry as a primary means by which an audience assigns and perpetuates greatness.[100] Incidentally, in Marcellus' case it is especially true that poetry invisibly nourishes fame; our modern understanding of his importance within the principate is based not so much on the mark Marcellus left in the historical record as on the literary responses to his death in Horace *Ode* 1.12, Propertius 3.18, Vergil *Aeneid* 6, and elsewhere.

Yet, just as the Augustan Text does more than simply propagate the *sidus Iulium*, so too can poetry do more than exalt the reputations of great men: it can also perform 'readings' of public figures which, by influencing an audience's judgment, help shape those men's reputations for better or worse. And the last three stanzas of Horace's *Ode* 1.12 help do so, despite the poem's announced purpose as an encomium. Readers will have noted that, in Horace's formulation, the *sidus Iulium* outshines other reputations like a *moon* among lesser lights.[101] This statement of praise leaves conspicuous room for a sun, and the rest of the poem proceeds to place Jupiter squarely at the top of that hierarchy. Already described as incomparably greater than all other beings (17-18), Jupiter is re-introduced at 49 as "gentis humanae pater atque custos" – a phrase that, abutting the description of the *sidus Iulium* dwarfing lesser lights at 48, makes it clear that Jupiter dwarfs the mere *pater patriae* by the same distance.[102] And the end of the poem continues in this vein:

> gentis humanae pater atque custos,
> orte Saturno, tibi cura magni   50
> Caesaris fatis data; tu secundo
>   Caesare regnes.
>
> ille, seu Parthos Latio imminentis
> egerit iusto domitos triumpho

---

[99] Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: xxxvi point out this similarity but use it to argue that the growth of *fama* is quite a different thing from the growth of a body and therefore the younger Marcellus cannot be meant.
[100] E.g., to return to Stoic thought, it is a ruler's subjects who, by making him the subject of their thought and literature, guarantee his immortality. This is a self-interested claim on the part of the poets, as I discuss in my introductory chapter, but it nevertheless influences how they conceive of fame.
[101] See Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 163 for many literary precedents for the idea that the subject of encomium surpasses all rivals as the sun, moon, or Lucifer surpasses all other heavenly bodies.
[102] Augustus did not officially receive this honorary name til 2 BCE, although Suetonius reports that Caesar did before his death (Suet., *Div. Iul* 76).

<pre>
    sive subiectos Orientis orae   55
        Seras et Indos,

    te minor laetum reget aequus orbem;
    tu gravi curru quaties Olympum,
    tu parum castis inimica mittes
        fulmina lucis.   60
</pre>

Read one way, this conclusion simply states that the fates have charged Jupiter with the protection of Augustus (50-1); that Augustus is Jupiter's special regent on earth (51-2); and that, with Jupiter watching over him, Augustus will conquer widely and rule fairly (53-7).[103] Why, then, does Horace address this to Jupiter, of all people, and in the future rather than present tense? If we reread the poem from a different implied perspective, that of Horace's poetic audience (including the *princeps* himself), the tone of the poem becomes prescriptive rather than unqualifiedly laudatory. In fact, "te minor" appears to have a conditional or provisional force that I think carries over into the rest of the poem. Augustus will accomplish great things *so long as* he holds himself as lower than Jupiter ("te minor") and *so long as* he rules second to Jupiter ("tu secundo / Caesare regnes"). But we have already heard that no living creature thrives that is *simile aut secundum* to Jupiter (18), and this may add another note of caution: it is not only impossible to attain Jupiter's omnipotence, but also inadvisable to imitate his style of governing.[104] According to this reading, Jupiter's chariot and thunderbolt, which occupy the last three lines of the poem, come into focus as the instruments by which Jupiter avenges violations of this rightful order.[105] Perhaps it is no accident, in turn, that the poem prevents readers from focusing upon a single antecedent for the term *Iulium sidus*. The mention of the exalted height of the Julian star (47) certainly reflects well upon Augustus, his entire family, and his past and future accomplishments, and seems to blur the line between men and gods; but it also, if referred futher back to the past, recalls the immense aspirations of Julius Caesar – aspirations which led to his controversial assumption of the name Juppiter Julius (cf. "tu secundo / Caesare regnes," 51-2), which unequivocally violated the man/god hierarchy, and which led to a murder only retrospectively whitewashed via deification.[106]

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[103] See Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 164 for the many precedents for this idea in Alexandrian poetry and Stoic and neo-Pythagorean philosophy; they see this passage as part of an ambitious but unsuccessful attempt on Horace's part to transplant Hellenistic ideas of kingship onto the Roman principate (1970: 145). Fraenkel, I think more wisely, instead finds here "expressions reminiscent of Roman constitutional life … (as if he were thinking of a minor and a maior magistratus)" and argues that "it is in no grudging language that Horace extols Augustus, but the religious setting here has a restraining effect and limits the glorification of the mortal" (1958: 297). Even he, however, sees this as reflecting Horace's growing senstitivity to the moderate and restrained manner in which Augustus ("no less prudent than tactful") wanted himself to be praised.

[104] Here I oppose Nisbet and Hubbard, who admit that 51 is "formally inconsistent" with 18 but see no reason to press this further given their acceptance of the poem as an unqualified praise of Augustus (1970: 166).

[105] Augustus, of course, vowed a temple to Jupiter Tonans in 26 after narrowly missing being killed by lightning during the Cantabrian wars, and dedicated it on 1 September 22 (Suet., *Aug.* 29; Dio 54.4.2; cf. Nisbet and Hubbard 157); it must have been nearing completion by the time this poem was written.

[106] As least, according to several contemporary stories, even if these are biased (see Balsdon 1958 and my own discussion above). This is again reminiscent of the episode in Livy 1.16 in which Romulus' disappearance (thought by some to be a murder) is explained as his ascension to the heavens by none other than Julius Proculus; this chapter unfortunately lacks scope for this rich and obviously relevant passage.

ii. Propertius, *Carmina 3.18*

Propertius 3.18, written slightly later and also touching on the death of Marcellus,[107] reads the *sidus Iulium* in an equally ambivalent but altogether different way: rather than demarcate the limits of Augustus' greatness, as Horace's *Ode* 1.12 seems to do, it expresses reservations about the meaning of deification. The poem begins by envisioning the dead Marcellus' spirit wandering around gloomy Avernus (1-10), and proceeds to a familiar trope: a noble lineage, virtuous behavior, and any amount of earthly influence, wealth, and fame cannot stave off death (11-20). Yet after dwelling on the transience of life and the inevitability of death for all men (21-30), Propertius adds a strange coda at 31-4:

> at tibi nauta pias hominum qui traicit umbras
> > hac animae portet corpus inane suae
> qua Siculae victor telluris Claudius et qua
> > Caesar ab humana cessit in astra via.

> But may the sailor who transports the shades of righteous men carry your body empty of its soul on that route by which Claudius victor in the land of Sicily and by which Caesar passed from the human road to the stars.[108]

This is an obvious attempt at consolation; yet the idea of Marcellus' celestial afterlife, expressed only in the last line of the poem ("ab humana cessit in astra via," 34), is undercut by the first 34 lines of the poem, particularly the strong and extensive picture of Marcellus' *spiritus* in the underworld and the poem's insistence that all men must tread the path of death ("cunctis ista terenda via," 22).[109] It is clear that Marcellus is dead and that any 'immortality' signified by the phrase 'in astra' refers to the figurative longevity of his reputation rather than any literal transformation into a god.

It is interesting, therefore, that Propertius lists both Caesar and Marcus Marcellus Claudius, conquerer of Sicily, as Marcellus' predecessors in this journey *in astra*. Caesar was, of course, the first man to be officially deified in Rome, and had the same rites and temples that would have been granted an ordinary god. However, Propertius chooses to treat his divinity as parallel with the figurative 'immortality' of the far earlier (and officially undeified) Marcellus Claudius.[110] Propertius' reference to Caesar's divinity in this context seems to keep the idea of the Divus Iulius squarely on the plane of the metaphorical; moreover, while it leaves the door

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[107] Camps uses this fact to date the book's composition to the period between 25 and 20 (1966: 1); Goold suggests publication in 23 or 22 (1990: 2). He also argues that 3.11 may have been suggested by the quadrennial celebration of the victory of Actium held in 24 (Dio 53.2).

[108] Here I adopt the text and translation of Heyworth 2007 (386-7 and 582, respectively), as I agree with his reasoning about the corruption into the second person (prompted by 'tibi') of lines 31-2, and the good sense of Paley's emendations.

[109] Camps says that this sudden hopeful note may strike a modern reader as "implausible," but argues that "we must not expect a uniform eschatology in Propertius, or in any poet of his date; traditional ideas, often mutually inconsistent, are exploited as suits the poetic imagination at the moment" (1966: 140). I believe, on the other hand, that readers were capable of noticing such inconsistencies and factoring them into their interpretations of the poem.

[110] Plutarch says that Marcellus' body was never found afer his death in a military skirmish, but nobody except Propertius suggests he was regarded as a god (Camps 1966: 143), and, as I argue, this latter is hardly unambiguous.

open for Augustus, too, to attain this kind of godhood, it questions what this divinity really means. If Caesar can be grouped with Claudius and Marcellus, if their 'divinity' means nothing more than everlasting fame, and if someone as young and relatively unaccomplished as Marcellus can be said to have acquired this sort of fame himself – however much this latter argument is influenced by Propertius' eulogistic mode – then 'deification' would seem to become little more than a polite figure of speech, a way of referring euphemistically to the famous deceased. Thus, Propertius 3.18 seems to end on the same note as Horace 1.12, with the possibility of life beyond death. On the other hand, the hesitant and self-contradictory thought process by which the narrator displays himself as arriving at this conclusion suggests that deification may ultimately have more to do with the mental state of the living than with the ontological state of the dead, and represent a bereaved grasping at hope more than an expression of belief. It seems doubly significant that two out of the handful of poetic references to the *sidus Iulium* employ the image in the context of a recent death in the Augustan family; though the permanence of the *sidus* is consoling insofar as it represents the eternal glory of the Julian house, it is also almost poignant insofar as it contrasts with the mortality of its individual members.

iii. Vergil's *Aeneid*

As it is read within the Augustan Text, the Julian star is hardly a mere propagandistic attempt on Augustus' part to appropriate Caesar's divinity or to purify the memory of Caesar. The image belongs to the poets as much as to Augustus. Moreover, it does not create an unbridgeable gap between Caesar and Augustus, but rather, reveals the path to the bridge; in their own ways, Horace and Propertius both suggest that the border between man and god is more permeable and rationalizable than either of our two modern deification narratives admit. On top of this, both poets use the *sidus Iulium* in ways that suggest parallels between Caesar and Augustus – parallels that can be complimentary but also on occasion disturbing. In fact, a particularly remarkable example of the two figures' similarity stems from the most famous 'proof' of their difference: Vergil's shield of Aeneas at *Aeneid* 8.626-728.[111]   According to Syme, a proponent of the first modern deification narrative, Virgil notably omits Caesar from the shield in order to avoid the 'obvious' implication that Caesar's place was in hell with Catiline rather than in Elysium with Cato.[112] But it is worth reexamining the portrait of Augustus which takes pride of place at the center of the shield and in the middle of the ekphrasis[113] (8.678-81):

> hinc Augustus agens Italos in proelia Caesar
> cum patribus populoque, penatibus et magnis dis,
> stans celsa in puppi, geminas cui tempora flammas
> laeta vomunt patriumque aperitur vertice sidus.

In his gloss on "aperitur vertice sidus" at 681, Servius reports that, after the comet appeared over the funeral games, Augustus set stars on the foreheads of all the statues he devoted to Caesar's

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[111] Virgil died in 19, with the epic more or less finished, but had been composing and revising it for many years.
[112] "The shield of Aeneas allows a brief glimpse of the future life, on the one side Catilina in hell, tormented by furies for ever, on the other an ideal Cato, usefully legislating among the blessed dead… Virgil did not need to say where Caesar belonged – with his revolutionary ally or with the venerable adversary whose memory he had traduced after death" (Syme 1939: 318).
[113] I thank Gransden 1976: 162 for this observation, and for pointing out that the name 'Augustus' is used in the *Aeneid* only here and at 6.792.

godhead, and began wearing a star on his own helmet – something which would have linked the two inextricably, in art and in life. Though there are problems with Servius' account,[114] his note does make an important observation: in the mind's eye of the reader, the image of Augustus with a star above his head, as depicted in this literary ekphrasis, must have evoked real artistic representations of Caesar with a star above his head, as stamped on so many coins and as displayed in the Temple of Venus Genetrix.[115] Moreover, Servius' commentary elsewhere reminds us that the terms "sidus crinitum" and "cometes" derive etymologically from the 'hair' that appears to stream out behind comets.[116] This effect finds an imagistic correlative in the miraculously flaming hair of Lavinia at 7.73-80 and Iulus at 2.682-4,[117] and resurfaces in the 'flames' that surround Augustus' head here on the shield ("geminas cui tempora flammas"). These flames recur, with a striking variation, in the description of Aeneas returning to battle against Turnus at *Aeneid* 10.270ff. – presumably carrying this very shield, in an interesting literary *mise en abyme*.[118]

> ardet apex capiti cristisque a uertice flamma   270
> funditur et uastos umbo uomit aureus ignis:
> non secus ac liquida si quando nocte cometae
> sanguinei lugubre rubent, aut Sirius ardor
> ille sitim morbosque ferens mortalibus aegris
> nascitur et laeuo contristat lumine caelum.   275

This description of Aeneas bears obvious resemblance to the portrait of Augustus at 8.678-81, not only verbally, but also circumstantially: both great leaders are arriving by sea to battle, standing high on a prow with flames dancing round their heads. Yet they both go on to attack

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[114] See above for problems with Servius' historical account of the comet. Other authors mention only one statue that Augustus adorned with a star (in the temple of Venus Genetrix). Perhaps Servius, in here referring to multiple statues, is thinking of copies that were made subsequently. I would caution against Weinstock's unhesitating acceptance of this passage as proof that Augustus really did have a helmet emblazoned with the star, given the absence of any other evidence. Servius or one of his sources, reading the ekphrasis literally, may well have assumed the "stellam in galea" depicted here on Aeneas' imaginary shield to reflect Augustus' actual usage of the *sidus* on his helmet. In a useful note, Gransden points out several literary depictions of helmets, most notably *Iliad* 5.4-7, but favors Henry's idea that the star represents not a physical helmet but rather "divine favour … in the form of a star" (1979: 177). My point is that, even in this case, Vergil's representation of Augustus here would closely resemble actual depictions of Caesar in Augustan art.

[115] And in fact, both resemble Aeneas too, who has just received a flaming helmet from Venus at 8.620 ("terribilem cristis galeam flammasque uomentem"). Williams 1973: 266 notes its similarity to the helmets of Turnus (*Aen.* 7.785f.) and Diomedes (*Iliad* 5.4, this given him by Athena), which would seem to underscore Aeneas' unsettling similarity to his enemies.

[116] Avienus (*apud* Servius on *Aen.* 10.272): "est etiam alter cometes, qui vere cometes appellatur; nam comis hinc inde cingitur. hic blandus esse dicitur. …. hic dicitur apparuisse eo tempore quo est Augustus sortitus imperium; tunc denique gaudia omnibus gentibus future sunt nuntiata." This supports the idea that these flames derive directly from the comet associated with Julius Caesar, rather than the evening star associated with Venus.

[117] Lavinia at 7.73-80: "praeterea, castis adolet dum altaria taedis, / et iuxta genitorem astat Lavinia virgo, / visa (nefas) longis comprendere crinibus ignem / atque omnem ornatum flamma crepitante cremari, / regalisque accensa comas, accensa coronam / insignem gemmis; tum fumida lumine fulvo / involvi ac totis Volcanum spargere tectis. / id vero horrendum ac visu mirabile ferri: / namque fore inlustrem fama fatisque canebant / ipsam, sed populo magnum portendere bellum." Iulus at 2.682-4: "ecce levis summon de vertice visus Iuli / fundere lumen apex, tactuque innoxia mollis / lambere flamma comas et circum tempora pasci."

[118] Cf. Gransden 1979: 176.

fellow Italians, broadly defined, and the disturbing aspects of this fact finally emerge in the comparison of the light around Aeneas' head to that of bloody comets ("cometae sanguinei") or a baleful star. Thus, Caesar is by no means absent from this most famous literary work of the Augustan age; in a way, he is at its very center. For Aeneas' shield transforms Augustus into the Caesar of Augustan iconography, and even *pius Aeneas* in some lights looks disturbingly like Caesar, "the man of blood" who (according to Syme) had no place in this ultimate expression of Roman values. These fluctuating cross-comparisons between Aeneas, Augustus, and Caesar may in turn be read as positive or negative by individual readers, but the family resemblance between the three figures is undeniable.

Thus, the flames in the hair of all these Julians – Iulus at 2.682-4, Lavinia at 7.73, Augustus at 8.678-81, and Aeneas at 10.270ff. – strongly evoke the *Caesaris astrum*, but show that its valence can change greatly based on context and readership. In fact, Vergil's various evocations of the *sidus Iulium* often also represent internal audiences in the act of 'reading' it. In Book 2, Aeneas and Creusa are horrified when flames appear in Iulus' hair and attempt to put them out, until Anchises suggests they may be a sign from the gods; when he asks the gods to confirm the omen, a meteor blazes through the sky, and Anchises concludes that the gods still care for his family and for Troy – even though the city is burning down all around them, and though his other interpretations will frequently be proven wrong over the course of Books 2 and 3. At 7.73-80, Lavinia's flaming hair is interpreted by observers as foretelling fame and fortune for Lavinia, but a great war for the common people – suggesting that the Julian star, too, might be read as bringing glory to the Caesars but death to many Romans. On Aeneas' shield in Book 8, the star over Augustus' head has no obvious valence, perhaps because Aeneas' position in history renders him an *ignarus* observer (730). But by Book 10, and as described by the narrator himself rather than as interpreted by any internal audience, the flames over Aeneas' head obviously portend doom. Moreover, even if this depiction is negative because it is focalized around the perspective of Aeneas' opponents, then Vergil's audience too is being asked to step into this viewpoint and regard Aeneas (who bears a striking similarity to Augustus in the *Aeneid* and to the statue of Caesar in the temple of Venus Genetrix) as a fearsome and potentially destructive figure. In any case, it is remarkable that, within the text of the *Aeneid*, the *sidus Iulium* has no intrinsic meaning but rather is portrayed as an object of human interpretation, and that successive interpretations seem to become more negative – and more aligned with the narrator's own perspective – as the action progresses. Moreover, if these successive interpretations seem to revise one another over the course of this single poem, one wonders whether, in life as in literature, they might prompt Roman readers to reconsider their own interpretations of the *sidus* as it appears here and elsewhere in the Augustan Text.

iv. Propertius, *Carmina* 4.6

If the *Aeneid* problematizes the act of interpreting the *sidus Iulium*, then it might seem strange that the next surviving Augustan poem to treat the star – Propertius 4.6 – seems to 'read' it in a fairly positive and unproblematic light. In his earlier poem 3.18, discussed above, Propertius had taken a melancholy and Stoic view of deification in the light of Marcellus' recent death. But by around 16 BCE, the year of a quadrennial festival in honor of Actium (Dio 54.19) and the year after the celebration of the Ludi Saeculares,[119] his attitude is much more festive. In

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[119] See Camps 1965: 104 for the date and occasion.

his depiction of the deified Caesar at 4.6.59-60, Propertius portrays divinity in bright and concrete terms; rather than treat the *sidus Iulium* as a mere metaphor for Caesar's fame, he literalizes the image and portrays the deified Caesar looking down from his star upon Augustus' victory at Actium:

> at pater Idalio miratur Caesar ab astro:
>   'sum deus: est nostri sanguinis ista fides.'[120]

This poetic depiction of Divus Iulius is much more vivid and concrete than the rational and philosophical language of 3.18: here Caesar is envisioned as watching "Idalio … ab astro," that is, as being literally katasterized and present with Apollo and the other anthropomorphic divinities who observe the scene.[121] In one reading, Augustus' great victory is the proof ("ista fides") that he shares in Caesar's great bloodline: "nostri sanguinis" and of course "pater … Caesar," especially as it occurs only three lines after a reference to Augustus as "Caesar" in the same metrical position, reinforce the idea that the son takes after his father.[122] On the other hand, the insistent linkage of Augustus directly to the deified Caesar rather than all the way back to Venus[123] implies that greatness is more than a product of divine ancestry. In this sense, great deeds – like Augustus' victory at Actium, or Caesar's own triumphs – prove and may even produce the potential for deification.

This hearkens back to the Stoic philosophical ideas discussed above, and also to the memorable passage of the *Aeneid* in which Apollo looks down from the clouds and praises Iulus' first military exploit (9.641-4) – a scene very much like the one at hand:

> aetheria tum forte plaga crinitus Apollo

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[120] Here as above I employ Heyworth's 2007 Oxford Classical Text with reference to the accompanying commentary *Cynthia*. Line 60 is particularly difficult and has engendered much critical attention. Heyworth notes that Markland and manuscripts known to Gebhard write "en" for the awkwardly-positioned "est," which would make it clear that Caesar's statement refers to the battle he is watching. Richter amends the first three words to "tu deus es," arguing that Caesar's divinity underpins Augustus' rather than vice versa, with reference to *Met.* 15.746-61. But Heyworth cites this same Ovidian passage to justify his own reading and the interpretation of many scholars: "I am a god: this is proof of our divinity." "Sanguinis" in this case could be amended to "numinis," but might be used in the extended sense of 'inborn quality' (Camps) or, better, 'bloodline' (Hall, referring to the Julians' descent from Venus; as Heyworth explains it, "the victory at Actium gains credit for the myth of the origin of the Julii, and so ensures the godhead of Diuus Julius," 2007: 461). I find this line of reasoning problematic since the myth of Caesar's ancestry originated long before Actium, but I accept Heyworth's reading and it is certainly in accord with my own interpretation, discussed here and then revisited below in reference to *Met.* 15. Hutchinson identifies good, if inexact, parallels to this statement in Zeus' speech in Pind. *Nem.* 10.80 and Laertes' on his son's victory in *Odyssey* 24.351. In contrast, Caesar "rather affirms his own deity, as if it had been uncertain even to him until Augustus proved it. The position of *sum* and *est* marks assertion of something striking or controversial … Augustus above all makes Julius a star. Augustus is clearly a god; this suggests that his 'father' was" (2006: 165, referencing Adams 1994: 69-76).

[121] Weinstock, incidentally, saw this and *Aen.* 8.681 as suggestive that a star really did appear at Actium (1971: 378) – but those who wish to read so literally may as well assume that Apollo, too, appeared and spoke there.

[122] The emendation of 'est' to 'en,' proposed by Markland and following manuscripts known to Gebhard (Heyworth 2007: 460; see note above), would add to the deictic quality of Caesar's statement and support this interpretation: 'Behold this victory! This proves your greatness, and therefore, that you must be related to me.' Of course, it does not resolve the peculiarity of 'sum deus.'

[123] Though the Julian ancestry is of course implicit in "Idalio," it is less forceful.

> desuper Ausonias acies urbemque videbat
> nube sedens, atque his victorem adfatur Iulum:
> 'macte nova virtute, puer, sic itur ad astra,
> dis genite et geniture deos. iure omnia bella
> gente sub Assaraci fato ventura resident,
> nec te Troia capit.'

The image of Apollo, "crinitus" like a comet ("stella crinita")[124] and encouraging Iulus from the clouds, may well have inspired Propertius' own depiction of Caesar exhorting Augustus from above, and may argue for reading Caesar's much briefer speech here along similar lines. It also brings out a tension latent in the Propertius poem: "dis genite et geniture deos" and "gente sub Assaraci" seem to imply a genealogical conception of godhead, whereas the emphasis on *virtus* and the phrase "sic itur ad astra" seem to favor a Stoic conception of deification through good works.[125] Interestingly, this parallels a larger sociopolitical tension about achievement-based versus familial conceptions of political advancement in general – what Crook has called the "paradox of a regime carefully founded on the ostensible principle of election to offices, all of whose successive rulers… thought in exclusively dynastic terms about the succession."[126] In Crook's estimation, Augustus solved this problem by double-determining the advancement of his blood relations by having them proceed through the Republican *cursus honorum*. Vergil and Propertius seem to do something similar here; rather than choose between two models of divinity, they employ both, and argue that Augustus takes after his father both genetically and in that for him, too, "virtute … sic itur ad astra." Their readings of the *sidus Iulium* thus strongly analogize rather than dissociate Augustus from Divus Iulius, and in fact offer Caesar as a model for Augustus – though this analogy could rightly cause discomfort among Augustan audiences.

On the other hand, this self-consciously 'late' poem[127] begins to anticipate a reading that I will explore further as it relates to Ovid's depiction of the *sidus*: that it is Augustus who confirms Caesar's godhood, rather than the other way around. Much critical confusion, and several attempts at emendation, have focused on the grammatical and logical oddity of Caesar's statement "sum deus: est nostri sanguinis ista fides" (4.6.60). As Hutchinson points out, Caesar here "affirms his own deity, as if it had been uncertain even to him until Augustus proved it."[128] In other words, the victory at Actium seems to endorse Augustus' divinity, which in turn seems to endorse Caesar's – rather than the other way around.[129] Thus, whereas other poems (and this

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[124] For which observation I thank Ellen Oliensis.

[125] Hardie (1994: 206) sees this tension in a similar way but puts it into different terms, as one between "the heaven-reaching fame of immortal deeds (e.g. [*Aen.*] 4.322-3 "qua sola sidera adibam, / fama"; 7.98-9 "nostrum / nomen in astra ferant"), or of the apotheosis of the hero (Aeneid, Romulus, Augustus: e.g. [*Aen.*] 1.259-60 "sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli / magnanimum Aenean"; cf. *Geo.* 4.560-2 "Caesar … viamque adfectat Olympo"; Hor. *Carm.* 3.3.9-16 "hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules / enisus arces attigit igneas"); at *Ecl.* 5.51-2 "Daphnin … tollemus ad astra; / Daphnin ad astra feremus" the nature of the journey is deliberately ambiguous." Yet I see this latter reference as clarifying the prior ones, in that, in its context, it refers to 'our' ability to raise people to the stars through song; this suggests a Stoic conception of immortality through *fama* that suits the first set of referents and that explains some of the wording of the second set (e.g. the 'art' by which Pollux and Hercules, through earning a good reputation, acquire their place in the stars).

[126] Crook 1996: 83. This tension may also underwrite Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 15, discussed below.

[127] Hutchinson 2006 *ad loc.* points out that it is self-consciously secondary to Propertius 3.11 and *Aen.* 8.671-728.

[128] 2006: 165, as observed above.

[129] E.g., "I am a god, because your greatness as demonstrated here proves that I must share in your blood."

poem too, read one way) suggest that Augustus can aspire to divine status through good works just as Caesar has done, this poem also raises the possibility that Augustus has already earned a level of greatness that in turn ratifies the official deification of his father. This new reading turns on its head the idea that Octavian gained power as *divi filius*, instead suggesting that it is Caesar who attained divinity on the basis of his relationship with Augustus.

At the same time, in his useful 2006 commentary, Hutchinson also points out a 'manneredness' and univocality in this poem which are important for our purposes. For one, this poem omits any hint of the tragedy of civil war, and in fact seems to reduce the conflict to one between Augustus and Cleopatra; moreover, rather than represent a historic conflict between West and East, these two figures are merely a (godlike) man and a (straw) woman – reducing the complex gender dynamics that usually characterize Propertian love elegy to a one-sided triumph of masculinity. Furthermore, as Hutchinson points out, this poem lacks the implicit antagonism between narrator and embedded speaker that adds life to the 'female speech' poems in 4.4, 5, 7, and 8; Cleopatra is deprived of a point of view and of the narrative sympathy she receives in Horace's *Ode* 1.37, the narrator and the speaking god Apollo are in complete harmony, and even the members of the symposium – the metapoetic setting with which the poem begins and ends – agree completely with the narrator in celebrating Augustus. Hutchinson does identify a slight tug between panegyric and metaliterary modes, but the sheer *lack* of tension between different voices or points of view is striking and adds to the cartoonishly unidimensional effect – an effect only enhanced by the literal treatment of the *sidus Iulium*. Everyone depicted in this poem – the narrator, his poet-friends, the god Apollo, the deified Caesar, and even the implied audience – is engrossed in the process of reading Augustus, but they all seem to be reading him *the same way*: as the victor of Actium, as the son of a god, as the steward of Roman peace and prosperity. Whether or not Propertius is consciously suggesting that this also applies to Rome in 16 BCE, the poem's bright flatness of tone illustrates the aesthetic dangers of such homogeneity of opinion. As I argue in the next section, Ovid adapts some of Propertius' techniques a decade later, to livelier effect, in his own (re)readings of the star and particularly the comet; and it is in Ovid's hands that Propertius' literalization of the *sidus Iulium*, intimation that Augustus in some way 'proves' Caesar's godhood, and tonal ambiguity reach their fullest potential.

First, though, let us pause to observe how these ancient 'readings' of the star, and with it of the meaning of Caesar's deification, have already begun to undermine the two modern narratives with which I introduced this chapter. According to the first narrative, the star was used to neutralize Caesar's morally ambiguous actions within life and to dissociate him from Augustus so attention could be focused on the *princeps*' own accomplishments. Yet the star, which has strong Stoic connotations within Roman culture, acknowledges rather than suppresses Caesar's works on earth and directly connects them to his later deification, as Valerius Maximus implies when he says that Caesar "operibus suis adytum sibi ad caelum struxerat" (1.7.2). Nor does deification drive a firm wedge between Caesar the god and Augustus the man, as we saw from the portrayal of divinity as something mortally attainable (at Propertius 4.6) or even as a figure of speech (at Propertius 3.18). In fact, as I argued of Vergil's *Aeneid* 8 and Horace's *Carmina* 1.12, representations of the star as an image often leave its referent ambiguous: at least as portrayed within the Augustan Text, it often seems to refer equally to Augustus as to Caesar, and not always positively.

On the other hand, the star cannot be regarded as a propaganda device deployed in service of Augustus' aspirations to divinity, as the second narrative suggests. Though the ambiguous use of the star and its Stoic connotations of divinity open the possibility that Augustus too may be deified for his great works, they hardly guarantee this as a matter of course; he must work to incur the everlasting gratitude of his people, and cannot simply use Caesar's cult as a 'maquette' for his own. In other words, as Horace's *Ode* 1.12, Stoic philosophical works like Cicero's *Republic*, and perhaps even Vergil's *Aeneid* (by foregrounding the problem of interpretation) suggest, it is a ruler's audience that grants him divinity, rather than the ruler himself who goes out and procures it. The poets I have discussed are all part of the 'audience' of Roman politics, and their readings of the star form part of the text that supports and confirms Caesar's deification. But they also clearly retain, as audience members, the power to judge Augustus during his own life and after his death – and, in their very act of judging and 'reading' the deified Julius within the poems I have examined, they remind us that Augustus' own future divinity will depend in part on the continued good will and positive judgment of interpreters such as themselves.

VI. The comet in Augustan iconography

I have argued that, in the first few decades after Caesar's death, the star symbolizing Caesar's divinity received more attention with the Augustan Text than the comet, and was used in ways that suggest a close relationship and resemblance between Augustus and Caesar – though this was not always read in an entirely complimentary fashion. Moreover, the Augustan poets interpret the Julian star in independent and double-edged ways that imply a fair amount of interpretive power on the part of the poet and others to judge the *princeps* and his achievements. This concords with my earlier analysis of the historical events surrounding Caesar's deification, which suggest that Octavian could not have taken a strong role in originating the star as an icon. Where, then, do the first and second modern narratives of Caesar's deification originate, along with their tendency to regard the *sidus Iulium* as a propaganda device, whether it neutralizes Caesar or exalts Augustus?

In the present section, I argue that they derive from the acts of interpretation that intervened between the appearance of the comet in 44 and the historical accounts that have shaped our own: the texts which, during Augustus' own lifetime, 'read' the comet to imply a very different relationship between Augustus and Caesar than did the star. Later in the principate, when Augustus was more settled in his power, the *sidus Iulium* begins to appear as a comet rather than a star within the Augustan Text. Moreover, whereas the star had been read in ways that explore the fact or philosophical nature of Caesar's divinity, the comet is often a touchstone for inquiries into the process by which Caesar 'became' a god. In particular, Ovid rereads prior representations of the *sidus Iulium* – despite their actual diversity and heterogeneity – as though they had been designed and controlled by the *princeps* in order to serve his political interests. He thus creates a metanarrative around the *sidus Iulium* that gives rise to many of the elements that are so familiar to us from modern scholarship, and so conspicuously lacking upon closer examination of the ancient evidence: Augustus' great control over public opinion and the course of history, his use of Caesar as a political tool to be manipulated at will, and his self-interested fabrication of his own divine origin. In fact, Ovid's deification narrative, though self-

consciously fictitious, has shaped subsequent readers' interpretations of the Augustan Text, including our own.

A. The coins

It is significant that our few numismatic examples of the comet, as opposed to the star, date to the late 20s and early 10s BCE. Augustus' *Commentarii* were published in the mid-20s and revisited the circumstances surrounding the comet and Caesar's deification; around this time, an arch displaying the Fasti Capitolini and Triumphales added new prominence to the temple of Divus Julius, perhaps commemorating military successes in 20 and 19 including the return of the standards captured long ago by the Parthians; and the celebration of the Ludi Saeculares in May and June of 17 framed Augustus' reign as the beginning of a new age for Rome.[130] While such events may have renewed interest in the process and circumstances of Augustus' ascendancy, others may simultaneously have caused anxiety about his succession: Augustus' arrangement in 24 of a marriage between his two closest blood relations, Julia and Marcellus; his grave illness in 23 and the so-called 'second constitutional settlement' that followed; the death of Marcellus in 23, in the midst of plague and food shortages; the mysterious conspiracy against Augustus' life by Fannius Caepio and Murena; and the equally obscure threat of Marcus Egnatius Rufus in 19.[131] It is in the context of all of these events, which must have pushed to the fore the questions of Augustan accession and succession, that we must read the emergence of the comet within two separate coin issues during this period.

The first set of coins featuring comets cannot be precisely dated, but comes from the "uncertain Spanish mints" which issued gold and silver coins from the late 20s into the early 10s.[132] These denarii bear the head of Augustus on the obverse, now labeled as 'AUGUSTUS' in his own right rather than as Caesar's son, and an eight-rayed comet with the legend 'DIVUS IULIUS,' variously placed, on the reverse (Figure 4).[133]

Figure 4: Denarius of Augustus: head of Augustus (obverse), eight-rayed comet (reverse)
Sutherland, RIC², p. 44, no. 37a; BMCRE I, p. 59, nos. 323-25

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[130] See Crook 1996: 83-94 for an overview of this period, though note his observation on the last page that Dio "stresses the un-popularity of Augustus at this time, and even makes 18 B.C. the beginning of plots against him and against Agrippa."

[131] Ibid.

[132] Gurval 1997: 59 cites coins depicting the return of the Parthian standards in 20 BCE to argue that the provincial mint may well have continued for a few years after the reestablishment of the college of senatorial moneyers at Rome in 19.

[133] Again, I take my citations directly from Gurval (1997: 59): Sutherland, RIC², p. 44, no. 37a-b and 38a-b; Giard, CBN 1292-1308; and RIC² 102; Giard CBN 1339- (p.196), 1340.

These are remarkable not only in that they constitute our first glimpse of the comet within Augustan material culture, identifiable by the 'hair' streaming from its top ray; they also seem to treat the comet metonymically as a symbol of Caesar (hitherto commonly represented by means of a bust or, on occasion, a laurel wreath). One can see how this coin might lend support to the deification narrative according to which Augustus wished to replace concrete memories of Caesar, the flawed man, with the abstract and perfect image of the *sidus Iulium*. To apply Syme's words to this coin, "Only the *Iulium sidus* is there – the soul of Caesar, purged of all earthly stain, transmuted into a comet and lending celestial auspices to the ascension of Caesar's heir."[134] Yet why does the designer of this Spanish issue select a moving comet, rather than the changeless star, to stand in for Caesar? As I have argued, the star was generally viewed as a static represention of Caesar's state of godhood and divine protection of Augustus. The comet, on the other hand, because of its mobility within the heavens, its precise role in 44 BCE, and its wider interpretability as a symbol, here seems to raise questions about the *process* of his deification: how Caesar 'reached the stars,' how he came to be regarded as a god, and how his deification was enacted – perhaps also inspiring viewers to wonder about Augustus' role in the process. Moreover, Augustus was seen to take an active role in the cult of Divus Iulius (e.g. with the mid-30s coin that seems to credit him with building the temple, Figure 3), and here in the West he permitted if not encouraged cults to himself; the first known one was established with his permission in 19 BCE in Celtic Spain, right around the time and place that this coin was minted.[135] Given this context and Augustus' recent poor health at Tarraco, the close association on this denarius between the comet on the reverse and the head of Augustus on the obverse seems to suggest that Divus Julius' august son might be capable of making a similar transition to the stars – an idea that finds a visual echo in the 'hair' that streams downwards from the top ray of the comet, thus hinting at upwards motion toward heaven.

Figure 5: Denarius of Augustus: herald of games (obverse), youthful head with comet above (reverse)
Sutherland, RIC², p. 66, no. 340; BMCRE I, p. 13, no. 17

These coins may shed some light on the later set depicting a comet, issued by M. Sanquinius in 17 (Figure 5). The obverse, which bears the legend 'LUDOS SAE' and depicts the herald of the games, clearly associates this issue with the Ludi Saeculares held in this year. The reverse features the head of a young man surmounted by what has been identified as a comet with four rays and a tail.[136] Scholars have long debated this figure's identity: Gurval variously proposes the deified Caesar "rejuvenated," the Genius of the games, or the Genius of the Julian

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[134] 1939: 318.
[135] See e.g. Fishwick 1987 and Zanker 1988, Chapter 8.
[136] Described by Gurval 1997: 59 and reprinted as his figures 41-42. To me, this looks more like a six-rayed comet, whose top ray is covered with the 'hair' that marks it as a *stella crinita*, and whose bottom ray is obscured by the head of the young man.

gens.[137] However, the metonymic relationship between the comet and Caesar in the Spanish coins discussed above suggests that this comet, too, could be closely associated with Caesar and his family's divinity. If, as some sources report, a comet appeared in this year, it likely evoked memories of the earlier comet over Caesar's funeral games.[138] Even if not, the fact that this is clearly a 'bearded' comet, and that it is placed at the top of the head rather than to the side as in coins featuring gods, seem to make visual reference to this comet of 44 and the subsequent placement of a star upon Caesar's statue. Moreover, this coin rereads that comet not as a marker of Caesar's death or even the validity of his divine status, but rather, as the indication of the beginning of a new age as marked by the Ludi Saeculares.[139]

Such readings find strongest support from one remarkable denarius (Figure 6) issued by L. Lentulus in 12 BCE, the year Augustus at last succeeded Lepidus to the office of pontifex maximus and also became the subject of a great imperial cult center founded by Drusus at Lugdunum.[140] On the obverse, an eternally youthful Augustus is identified simply by his honorific name 'AUGUSTUS'; evidently, as in Figure 4 (above), his legitimacy no longer derives from his relationship to Caesar via the title 'DIVI FILIUS.' And on the reverse, Augustus – identifiable by his *clupeus virtutis* – is setting a star upon the head of a heroically semi-nude statue of Caesar, which in turn is carrying a spear and a figure of Victory (as Venus herself had carried a scepter and Victory on the reverse of an issue featuring Caesar and a star on the obverse, at Figure 1, above).[141] This coin makes obvious reference to the historical occasion on which Octavian, heartened by the appearance and public reception of the comet in 44, symbolically confirmed Caesar's divinity by adding a star to his statue in the temple of Venus Genetrix. But it is unusual in that it calls attention to Augustus' *act* of deifying Caesar rather than the mere *fact* of Caesar's godhood. The design thus seems to indicate a renewed interest in the historical events surrounding Caesar's deification and Octavian's accession to power – two events that did not follow smoothly upon one another in actual fact, but which nevertheless could now retrospectively be depicted as logically and causally linked.[142] Moreover, the striking image of Augustus in the very act of crowning the bust of Caesar also had great symbolic potency: one can easily read it as suggesting that Augustus in some sense 'made' Caesar into a god. Here, in

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[137] Gurval 1997: 60.

[138] Julian Obsequens reports a comet in this year, and Dio Cassius one in the next year, which Weinstock (1971: 379, n. 3) suggests he has misplaced. Gurval, here as with the comet of 44, seems quick to dismiss these as mere rumors, "part of the traditional congery of omens that reflects the fear and uncertainty resulting from Augustus' sudden departure from Rome to settle the military unrest in Gaul" (1997: 60). He suggests more convincingly that such rumors may themselves have arisen at a later date in part due to the coin itself (1997: 60, esp. notes 86 and 87).

[139] Moreover, whether the coin commemorates some comet of 17, depicts the comet of 44, or merely puns on Sanquinius' name and the traditionally *sanguineus* comet (Gurval suggests the latter and provides citations for *sanguineus* as an adjective often applied to comets, 1997: 60, n. 87, but except for Verg. *Aen.* 10.272-73 all of his citations postdate the Ludi by many years), by now the comet may have been strongly enough associated with the changing-over of eras and reigns to be appropriate in the context of the Ludi Saeculares. Zanker finds it singularly appropriate that the image of the *sidus Iulium* alongside Caesar would reappear this year to mark the new *saeculum* for Rome under Augustus (1988: 193).

[140] See Fishwick 1987: I.97 for this center, dated to 12 BCE on the evidence of Dio (54.32.1), though he also discusses Suetonius' confusing testimony for an altar dedicated in 10 (*Claud.* 2.1).

[141] Somehow overlooked by Gurval but in Weinstock Plate 28.10; Mattingly 1.26.24; Giard 555-9; Sutherland 44, no. 37-8, and Zanker 198: 34 (fig. 25a-b); White 1988: 338, n. 15, summarizes the scholarship. Note the (to me unconvincing) arguments that these figures represent Augustus and Agrippa rather than Augustus and Caesar (cf. Mattingly), or that the smaller is Roma.

[142] As in Ovid, *Met.* 15, discussed below, and the second modern deification narrative.

marked contrast to earlier coins, the identification of the princeps as AUGUSTUS rather than as Caesar's son, combined with the relative sizes and positions of the two figures on the reverse, suggests that power is flowing from the *princeps* to his father rather than the other way around. Again, this raises the vexed but fascinating issue of Augustus' role in the process of deification: what responsibility did he claim for himself, and what level of responsibility did others 'read in' for him?

Figure 6: Denarius of Augustus: head of Augustus (obverse), Augustus placing star on head of half-clad figure of Divus Julius carrying Victory and spear (reverse)
RIC I 415; RSC 419; BMCRE 124-5 = BMCRR Rome 4674-5; BN 555-9

B. The literary texts: Ovid's metanarrative of Caesar's deification

Ovid, writing even later in the principate, provides some provocative but influential answers to the questions that the comet coins begin to raise. Though Ovid's references to Augustus' divinity, particularly from exile, have been regarded as self-interested proto-panegyric, it is worth repeating the obvious observation that Ovid was the only one of the canonical Latin poets to grow up and live almost entirely under Augustus' reign (43 BCE - 17 CE). He never experienced a Rome that did not obey Augustus, and spent most of his life using Augustan coins, walking among Augustan edifices, and enjoying the leisure and luxury of the *pax Augusta* (a fact for which he famously expresses gratitude at *Ars Amatoria* 3.121-2; "prisca iuvent alios: ego me nunc denique natum / gratulor").[143] Consequently Ovid, as the most 'Augustan' poet of them all, reads the comet in ways that retroject his experience of the mature principate onto the events of 44 – an anachronistic interpretation which has nevertheless powerfully shaped our own modern understanding of the Augustus' role in Caesar's deification. My analysis has been deeply influenced by the work of Denis Feeney (1991), Alessandro Barchiesi (1997), and Philip Hardie (1997), but attempts to contribute to their conversation a specific analysis of how Ovid's fictions influence both ancient and modern conceptions of historical fact, specifically, the events surrounding Caesar's deification and the iconographical rise of the *sidus Iulium*.[144]

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[143] "Old stuff may please others; as for myself, I pat myself on the back for having been born in this age." It is remarkable how different Rome must have looked in 8 CE, when Ovid left it for exile, from 40 or so BCE., when Vergil began his *Eclogues*; Augustus' mark was all over the city, and vast projects such as the Forum Augustum – with its Temple of Mars Ultor featuring Divus Julius among the cult statues, and a statue of Augustus outside – made powerful visual statements that were almost unprecedented in Republican Rome. This will form part of the theme of my next chapter, on Augustus' Palatine complex.

[144] As Feeney notes at 1991: 225, "no Latin poet shows such a systematic or inventive engagement with the issues of fiction and authentication"; see also my introduction.

i. Ovid and Manilius on deification

Before proceeding to *Metamorphoses* 15, in which Ovid most thoroughly 'reads' the *sidus Iulium*, we might look at a few important texts in which he discusses Caesar's deification more generally. In *Fasti* 2.143-4, during an extended comparison of Augustus and Romulus, he portrays the deification of Caesar as an expression of Augustus' filial *pietas* – ostensibly, a standard reading that is supported, for instance, by the denarius of Octavian commemorating his dedication of the temple of Divus Julius (Figure 3).[145] But Ovid goes on to contrast Augustus' filial piety with Romulus' filial dependence: directly addressing Romulus as if to take him down a peg, he says, "caelestem fecit te pater, ille patrem" ("Your father made you a god, he made [his own] father [a god]," *Fasti* 2.144). That is, Romulus – who is, after all, a long-established deity – is imagined in some sense to have less power than the earthly *princeps* Augustus.[146] This is a neat Ovidian irony, but it also constitutes an interesting public rereading of Caesar's deification: rather than view it as a collective and merited acknowledgment of Caesar's greatness, on the part of the Roman senate and people or of the gods themselves, Ovid assigns responsibility to Augustus alone – who actively *turned Caesar into a god* ("caelestem fecit"). Ovid leaves readers to guess whether Augustus may have done so by persuasion, political force, or sheer influence within Rome or Olympus itself. But we cannot ignore the logical implication that god-makers are greater than gods – one that comes up more overtly in subsequent works treating deification. The first-century poet Manilius declares that every man contains a spark of the divine precisely because "iam facit ipse deos mittitque ad sidera numen," "now he [man] himself makes gods and sends divinity to the stars," 4.934). But the subsequent and final line of the book reaffirms that this power belongs principally to Augustus and extends over Olympus itself: "maius et Augusto crescet sub principe caelum" ("and beneath the dominion of Augustus will heaven grow mightier yet," 4.935).[147] Here, again, metaphorical and literal ideas of divinity coexist side by side in a way that elicits readers' interpretive intervention and causes them to reexamine Caesar's deification as a manifestation of Augustan power.

The language with which these two later poets describe Caesar's deification is, at first glance, very much at odds with the texts we have so far discussed. Gone are the turbulence of the triumviral period, the precariousness of Octavian's political position, and the silence about the role Octavian might have played within the proceedings. Instead, formulations like "facit … deos," "mittit … ad sidera numen," and "caelestem fecit … pater" all imply a clear power and purpose on Augustus' part to set Caesar among the stars. I have argued that earlier authors – ones who had seen the death of Caesar and the rise of Octavian – tended to read the star as a

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[145] This coin (Crawford, RRC 540/2; BMCRR II, p. 580, Africa no. 34) likely dates to the mid-30s and may only indicate Octavian's vowing the temple and claiming at his special project; cf. Gurval 1997: 59 and my discussion above. For a clear later example of the deification being treated as an act of piety, see Manilius 1.802, where Augustus upon his ascension into heaven views "quemque novum superis numen pius addidit ipse," Julius Caesar. The line may be spurious, but the linkage of piety, Caesar's deification, and Augustus' own apotheosis is interesting and not atypical.

[146] Augustus had, of course, once contemplated taking the name Romulus in honor of his second 'foundation' of the city, so the comparison is an apt and pointed one.

[147] Even Manilius' ostensibly egalitarian argument finally confirms that only Augustus can make even heaven greater by adding new stars to the sky ("crescet … caelum"). Line 764 of the book confirms that Tiberius reigns and thus Augustus has already been deified, though Tiberius is not mentioned in Book 2 and Augustus seems to rule in Book 1, supporting the idea that the *Astronomica* was composed during both reigns.

metaphor for the people's everlasting remembrance of great men, and held this idea out to Augustus, their implicit overreader, as a potential reward for governing well. Yet toward the end of Augustus' reign, Ovid was able instead to depict Caesar's godhood as a product of the *princeps*' own godlike *auctoritas* – even though it clearly served as a means to power before the successful attainment of that power made such interpretative retrojection possible in the first place. In other words, more fully articulating an idea that appears to have been present in the Lentulus coin, Ovid sees godhood as something Augustus *bestowed* upon Caesar, and takes as a 'proof' of Augustus' greatness not the fact that he shared blood with Caesar, but the fact that he was able to deify Caesar.

ii. The deification narrative in *Metamorphoses* 15

Ovid positively encourages such inversions of logic and chronology in his other readings of the deification. For instance, he asserts at *Met.* 15.760-1 that, *in order for* Augustus not to be born of mortal seed, Caesar *had* to be made into a god:

> ne foret hic igitur mortali semine cretus,
> ille deus faciendus erat.

Though Caesar's deification was logically and chronologically prior to Augustan claims of divine descent, Ovid's decision to frame it as a *result* prompted by a pro-Augustan purpose should pique readerly interest. The question is whose desires this inverted purpose clause reflects: did the fates, the course of Roman history, or the gods require Augustus to have a divine origin – or did the desires of Augustus himself by now seem virtually identical to all of these?[148] Ovid's treatment of Caesar here ignores the fact that, before his death, Caesar had attained honors, adulation, and supremacy that had rarely if ever before been seen in Rome; it was on grounds such as these, and not out of some prescient reverence for the teenage upstart Octavian, that the people and the senate voted Caesar a god in the first place.[149] Yet according to Ovid's rereading, the deification is purely instrumental, rather than an end in itself, and does not testify to the greatness of Caesar so much as it serves that of Augustus.

Ovid again subordinates Caesar to Augustus through teleological thinking in *Metamorphoses* 15.746-51, where he envisions Augustus as Caesar's primary contribution to Roman history. Ovid claims that Caesar was deified less because of his triumphs or civic accomplishments than because of the greatness of his progeny.

> Caesar in urbe sua deus est; quem Marte togaque
> praecipuum non bella magis finita triumphis
> resque domi gestae properataque gloria rerum
> in sidus vertere novum stellamque comantem,

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[148] Ovid frequently reminds us that Augustus' power is so immense as to make him a god on earth; I discuss this point below. Feeney 1991: 211 regards such language and logic as panegyrical: I am trying to argue that Ovid draws attention to his own panegyrical qualities, thus casting Augustus in a negative light as someone who *requires* panegyric.

[149] Feeney 1991: 212 has a different angle on this, arguing that Ovid's wording at *Met.* 15.746-51 obscures the fact that the deification was a collective endeavour, and assigns sole credit to Augustus.

> quam sua progenies; neque enim de Caesaris actis
> ullum maius opus, quam quod pater exstitit huius…

> Caesar is god in his own city – Caesar, outstanding in war and peace, whom, more than wars concluded with triumphs, deeds accomplished at home, and the fast-won glory of his accomplishments, his own progeny turned into a new star and a flaming comet; for, from the works of Caesar, there is no greater achievement than the fact that he became the father of this man [Augustus].

This passage may be read in at least two ways, as so often in Ovid.[150] According to the first, this statement flatters Augustus as the greatest of the many great accomplishments that prompted Caesar's deification (here treated as a Euhemeran reward for virtue), even though Augustus' potential could hardly have been apparent at the time. But according to a second and more cynical reading, Augustus is literally the instrumental force behind Caesar's deification: it was Augustus' image control, more than popular respect for Caesar's own merits, that "turned Caesar into a new star and a comet."[151] Even this odd choice of two heavenly bodies – why does Caesar become *both* a star *and* a comet, rather than one or the other? – questions the elision in Augustan iconography, as discussed above, between the star as a general symbol of divinity and the comet as suggesting Augustus' participation in the process of Caesar's deification (see Figure 6, above).[152] When we read the passage this second way, Caesar's transformation into a star thus becomes yet another manipulative 'metamorphosis' among the *Metamorphoses*, this time enacted not by the Olympian gods but by a man whom Ovid often elsewhere terms a 'god on earth' and frequently likens to Jupiter.[153]

Such apparently flattering terminology, in fact, chimes with the line "Caesar in urbe sua deus est" – a line that is momentarily ambiguous, since it could at first apply either to Augustus or to Caesar – and proves the family resemblance between the two men. On the other hand, such assertions are not entirely flattering to the *princeps*, who is known to have avoided being honored as a god within Italy and to have disliked overt references to his supremacy (cf. Suet. *Aug.* 53), perhaps out of fear of sharing Caesar's fate – a fate retroactively justified by the conspirators as a valid response to the dictator's acceptance of pseudo-divine honors.[154] In this light, Ovid's frequent references to Augustus as a *praesens divus* or a Jupiter on earth – especially in the exile poetry, where these names ostensibly evoke Augustus' power both to condemn and to rescue him – may not only represent self-interested flattery, but also enact a covert criticism of the absoluteness and arbitrariness of Augustus' power.[155]

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[150] See e.g. Hinds 1988: 25 for Ovid's encouragement of double-readings; as Feeney asks of another passage, "is Ovid being too fulsome, or too frank?" (1991: 219).

[151] Hardie interprets this passage similarly (2002: 750): "an equivalence is established between the way that characters operate within a poetic fiction and the way that Roman rulers operate." I am trying to push this idea further, to examine issues of authorship, fictionality, and self-referentiality as they apply not only to poets but also to princes.

[152] Hill 2000: 225 argues that here *-que* must mean "or [rather]," but this is still an odd choice that deserves examination.

[153] The bibliography on Augustus and divinity is extensive, but for some influential approaches see Scott 1930, Syme 1978, Price 1984, Wallace-Hadrill 1986, Barchiesi 1997, and Feeney 1991, *passim*.

[154] See again Balsdon 1958 for this argument and Caesar's assassination more generally.

[155] Feeney 1991: 222-3 develops this point well, pointing to Millar's 1977 work on the arbitrariness of imperial power (9-10, 74, 112-13, 300, and especially 527).

The crucial difference between Caesar and Augustus, of course, was that Caesar had incurred criticism for allegedly aspiring to godlike honors in his lifetime; yet, as Ovid points out, Augustus managed to grant him those same honors under the guise of *pietas*, and would eventually incur them for himself. This suggests yet another possible reading for Caesar's statement to Augustus at Propertius 4.6.60, "sum deus; est nostri sanguinis ista fides." In the previous section, I explored the possibilities that this means (a) 'I am a god, and this [your victory] proves that you too share in my greatness' and (b) 'I am a god, because this [your victory] proves your own greatness, which I too share.' But perhaps the proof ("ista fides") is not the victory itself but rather the sheer fact that Caesar is a god ("sum deus"): 'I am a god, and this [the fact that I am a god] proves the commonality between us.'[156] Such power and ambition are characteristic of a Caesar, whether Julius or Augustus, and god and man reflect one another, though it becomes difficult to discern which is which. As we saw in the previous section, after reporting Augustus' own public account of how the comet in 44 was hailed as the soul of Caesar, Pliny reports that in private Augustus really considered the comet to have been 'born' for him and himself to have been 'born' in it ("haec ille in publicum; interiore gaudio sibi illum natum seque in eo nasci interpretatus est," *NH* 2.23.94). In fact, from his perspective a few generations later, Pliny agrees with this interpretation: "et, si verum fatemur, salutare id terris fuit." In essence, Pliny re-reads the Julian star as an Augustan star, a reflection of the *princeps*' good influence upon the world as much as Caesar's protection from the stars. Though the *sidus* began its life as an image by referring to Julius Caesar, and then enabled a conflation between Caesar and Augustus, it seemed by Pliny's time to reflect Augustus' greatness more than Caesar's – a reading that may have been encouraged or propagated in part by Ovid's own public treatment of the image.

Ovid's assertion that Augustus personally 'made' Caesar a god is, of course, only one among many possible readings. Moreover, Ovid's version itself may be read two ways: as a flattering tribute to Augustus' power and piety, or as a cynical exposé of Augustan 'propaganda.' Yet in my introductory chapter I argued that the twentieth-century concept of propaganda, used to describe highly-centralized and technologically-advanced societies, is inadequate to describe the realities of Roman imperial culture and communication – just as the terms 'pro-' and 'anti-Augustan' are inadequate to describe the complexities of Augustan discourse.[157] Rather, the very idea of 'pro-Augustan' propaganda has in part been *constructed* in the modern imagination by our reactions to poets like Ovid – poets who, in opening up apparently 'subversive' readings of the Augustan Text, end up constructing a phantom mirror-image 'orthodoxy' that may never

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[156] This would solve the tortured problem of the 'sum deus' in that it would finally have a reason to be stated; on the other hand, as Kathleen McCarthy observes to me, it makes the least sense of the possible second-person association of *ista*. It may also detract from the motivation of the situation, in that Caesar is no longer directly commenting upon the action at Actium. Yet in a sense Augustus can still be seen as the one who 'put' Caesar on a star above Actium – by portraying Caesar as inspiring and protecting his actions during the civil war. Various commentators have debated these problems and the sense of the line (for a survey see Heyworth 2007: 460-1), though Heyworth himself favors a reading much like the one I suggest, pointing to *Met.* 15.746-61 as a parallel in viewing Augustus' greatness as securing Caesar's godhood rather than the other way around; he goes so far as to suggest amending 'sanguinis' to 'numinis.' Though I find this overbold, I support his general analysis of the line and consider Ovid one of Propertius' best readers, often rendering explicit interpretive possibilities latent in the Propertian text.
[157] Following Kenney 1992 and also Sharrock 1994, whose articles have deeply affected my conception of Augustan discourse and are discussed more fully in my introduction.

actually have existed.[158] As I have shown, there is little contemporary evidence for concluding that Octavian was primarily responsible for the interpretation of the comet and the deification of Caesar. In fact, this idea surfaces only later in the principate, when Augustus' power made it possible to retroject such control onto past events. Yet Ovid's narrative, that Octavian deified Caesar in an act of piety that also guaranteed his own power, is a satisfying one in that it connects temporally and iconographically diverse parts of the Augustan Text, fills in gaps of agency and motivation within the deification story, and resonates intertextually with other stories of ascension to power.[159] And this story appears to have been so appealing that it, too, played an influential role within the Augustan Text: Dio and Servius follow the broad outlines of a deification narrative that Ovid, if he did not wholly invent it, gave powerful and explicit form. Thus, in the case at hand, history was shaped not only by those who acted within it, but also by those who reread and rewrote it – a process which continues with modern scholarship.

On the other hand, it is important not to credit authors with sole control over such narratives: just as Augustus did not single-handedly invent the story that Caesar became a god, so too did Ovid not single-handedly popularize the story that Augustus did so. Though perhaps never meant as such, Lentulus' denarius (Figure 6, above) seems to symbolize man's creation of god even more vividly than Ovid does, and may itself form part of a larger body of texts now lost to us. But the best symbol for deification is not the coin itself, but its minting and circulation; not the mere claim of Caesar's divinity, but rather the publication and persuasion of that claim. In fact, as Ovid states quite clearly, if man trumps god, then fame trumps man – sometimes defying even the will of a Caesar (852-4).

> hic sua praeferri quamquam vetat acta paternis,
> libera fama tamen nullisque obnoxia iussis
> invitum praefert unaque in parte repugnat.

> Although he forbids his own deeds to be set above those of his father, nevertheless fame, free-ranging and obedient to no commands, sets him above despite his wishes, and in this one thing fights against him.

Though Ovid here asserts that fame obeys no man, he frequently seems to exempt himself from this rule.[160] For instance, immediately before the passage above, Ovid depicts Caesar looking down upon Augustus from heaven and declaring Augustus' deeds greater than his own (15.850-1). In other words, Ovid portrays himself as helping to create and control the *fama* that, in disobedience to Augustus' wishes, exalts the son above the father. In Chapter 4, I will examine how, in the exile poetry, Ovid modulates the idea of the poet's special relationship with *fama* –

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[158] Far from implying that there is only one correct way of reading Ovid and that that reading is subversive, I believe his text is particularly open to multiple simultaneous readings. However, as I discuss more fully in my discussion of *Tristia* 3.1 in the next chapter, he seems to invite readings that create a sense of readerly subversion and complicity in winking at elements of the Augustan Text.

[159] E.g. Herodotus' tale that Pisistratus, when trying to regain power at Athens, dressed up a tall and beautiful girl as Athena and had her ride with him into the city in his chariot, thereby convincing everyone that he had divine support (1.61.3).

[160] Hardie 1997 in particular attributes a vast degree of control over *fama* to Ovid; however, as I discuss in my introduction and Chapter 4, passages from the exile poetry and particularly *Tristia* 2 also acknowledge an author's dependence on audience interpretation.

the vehicle of Stoic apotheosis – in order to present himself as potentially useful to empire and to the imperial image. At one point, in fact, he comes close to offering to help immortalize the Caesars through song:

> di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt.
>   tantaque maiestas ore canentis eget. (*Ex Ponto* 4.8.55-6)

> Even the gods, if it is right to say so, come into being through poetry;
> such great majesty requires the voice of a singer.[161]

The phrase "si fas est dicere" signals the flippant boldness of this claim, but Ovid elides a crucial intermediate stage: gods are 'made,' and power is conferred, not only by the voice of a poet but also in the ears of an audience. Neither Octavian nor Ovid could create their respective *famae* on their own: both rely, for the power and credibility of their narratives, on the persuadability or complicity of their audience. Ovid comes close to acknowledging the importance of an audience at the end of the *Metamorphoses*, when he claims that, if the words of poets have truth, he will live forever in the mouths of the people.[162] What he does not spell out but remains implicit is that Augustus' power, too, resides within the minds of the people – people who include himself. And, as I will argue in subsequent chapters, the audience is an equal colluder in any narrative's construction of meaning – and in Ovid's case, perhaps even a co-ludor.

iii. Ovid's construction of a 'pro-Augustan' narrative of history

Let us look, to anticipate this important point, at the remainder of Caesar's deification at *Metamorphoses* 15 – a narrative already analyzed by Philip Hardie for its construction of a story of imperial succession, but one that also shows how Ovid's work ostensibly 'obeys' the will of Caesar even as it teaches an audience to resist.[163] When Venus sees that Caesar must be made a god, she reacts with horror since she realizes that this ostensibly happy event will entail his assassination. (Here, years before Vespasian's deathbed joke that he is 'becoming a god,' Ovid approaches the blackly humorous treatment of deification as a euphemism for death.[164]) Venus, trying to enlist the help of the other gods, then laments at *Met.* 15.767 that Caesar was the last of the Julian line ("caput … quod de Dardanio solum mihi restat Iulo"), contradicting the narrator's earlier assertion that Caesar's greatest achievement was being 'father' (*pater*) to his 'offspring'

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[161] Hardie also refers to this passage at 1997: 190 to introduce his analysis of verbal constructions of immortality.

[162] Ovid's ascension "super alta … astra" (875-6) strongly recalls the good Stoic's rise "in modum siderum," as his conveyance "ore … populi" (879) corresponds with the "aere" of Stoic glory. I refer to Varro, *Ant. rer. div. 1,* fr. 25a Ag. (Comm. Lucan 9.6), cited by Weinstock 1971: 372. See also Maecenas' advice to rulers as Dio imagines it at 52.35; the good emperor, through good deeds, leaves his image not in gold and silver but in the hearts and minds of his people. I discuss such claims below.

[163] Hardie 1997: 190-193; Hardie is concerned throughout his article about the operations of *fama* (especially at 183 and 190-195), arguing that "only within the circle of the poet and his readers can the relationship between *fama* and *verum* become unproblematical." I argue that even and especially within his own poem Ovid problematizes this relationship, and that his version helps enact fame's disobedience to the emperor (cf. *Met.* 15.852-4, "libera fama tamen nullisque obnoxia iussis / invitum praefert unaque in parte repugnant").

[164] Cf. Suet., *Vesp.* 23; this line of thinking is touched on in Propertius 3.18, above. Ovid also plays on this by treating Augustus as already a *praesens deus* in life, and wishing his deification (i.e., death) is long delayed because he will then become an *absens deus* (15.868-870).

(*progenies*) Augustus (15.746-51).[165] Then, despite the clear and present danger to Caesar, she launches into a historical digression on Aeneas that is so bizzarely out-of-place that even she comments on its irrelevance to the present: "quid nunc antiqua recordor / damna mei generis?" (774-6). Given the speech's close resemblance to the plot of the *Aeneid* (770-774), I take this as a meta-commentary on the tendency of certain voices within Augustan discourse – particularly Vergil's epic – to draw conversation away from contemporary problems and toward Rome's less divisive past.

Yet such distractions often do work upon readers, and at first seem to work here. Venus attempts to protect Caesar with the same cloud she used to hide Paris and Aeneas from danger on the battlefield (803-6); but by the time the narrative clouds clear, Augustus is standing in Caesar's place at the political summit of Rome. In fact, Jupiter's eleventh-hour introduction of the adopted Augustus as Caesar's natural and fate-appointed heir might strike some readers as similar to Augustus' own political sleight-of-hand in making the same substitution.[166] Ovid, of course, does not explicitly point out that Augustus was merely Caesar's great-nephew and became his heir only by an unusual testamentary adoption,[167] though his frequent use of biological words to describe Caesar's relationship with Augustus ("progenies," 750; "pater," 751; "genuisse," 758; "semine cretus," 790; "natus … suus," 819), seems at least partly to mock the naturalization of the relationship.[168] On the other hand, for its power as a parody, this passage depends on the fact that the language and imagery of biological relationship were already standard elements of Augustan discourse; as we saw in the coins and inscriptions discussed earlier in this chapter, the idea that Augustus was 'DIVI FILIUS' was quite literally in public circulation since 44. Ovid's text simply exaggerates these commonly-accepted terms and brings them into close and suggestive juxtaposition with his insistence that Caesar was the last of the Julian line, thus calling readers' attention to the logical discrepancy between these two ideas, as well as to their own role in accepting and using them over the years. Furthermore, even as Ovid's poem teaches readers to look for dissonances in different aspects of Augustan discourse, and perhaps even to find elements of this discourse suspiciously convenient to Augustus' own interests, it nevertheless continues to circulate and propagate some of the very ideas (e.g. that of Caesar's biological paternity) that it critiques.

In fact, Ovid is interested less in the biological specifics of Augustus' relationship with Caesar than in the *princeps'* general ability to shape an audience's perceptions of power – in other words, to create 'stories' without ever lifting a pen (often with the complicity of his 'professional rivals,' the poets). This emerges from the end of the *Metamorphoses*, where Ovid continues to track the artificial dynastization of the Caesars. Ovid's version of Augustus'

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[165] Recall also that Caesar only 'fathered' Octavian after his death, through testament, and thus Octavian was not a Julian until Caesar, the last of the Julians, had perished (as Oliensis observes).

[166] I am not arguing they are right in thinking this – quite the contrary. But cf. e.g. Ramsey and Licht 1997: 65 for a modern example of this kind of reasoning among scholars.

[167] Problems with the legality of this adoption had to be settled with Augustus' *lex curiata* of 43; for more on wills, see Champlin's 1991 *Final Judgments*. Adopted sons had the same legal standing as natural ones (though Octavian's adoption by testament was unusual); what is pointedly problematic is Ovid's insistence on biological engenderment.

[168] Hardie also explores this wording (1997: 191), following Bömer (1986:455), but with an emphasis on the verbal actions (e.g. Caesar's decrees and Vergil's *Aeneid*) that construct this relationship. Feeney also discusses issues of genealogy in this passage with regard to Venus Genetrix, 1991: 211-14

appointment of Tiberius as his heir illustrates how an 'Augustan' version of history might be created, even as it reminds us that Augustus' successor was related to him just as tangentially as he was to Caesar. Ovid is painfully correct when he describes Augustus' successor Tiberius at 15.836 as "prolem sancta de coniuge natam" ("offspring born from his [Augustus'] venerable wife"). The epic diction and synchysis, despite the air of majesty they lend, also point out that Tiberius was not Augustus' natural son, but simply the son of Augustus' wife by the man whom she divorced for him when pregnant.[169] Augustus' lack of a blood connection with Tiberius, coupled with his personal antipathy toward him, led him to groom several other heirs over the decades; only after their successive deaths (Marcellus in 23 BCE, Agrippa in 12 BCE, Lucius in 2 CE, and Gaius in 4 CE) did Augustus formally adopt Tiberius in 4 CE.[170] Yet Ovid's narrative makes it sound as though Augustus' appointment of Tiberius as his successor was a smooth and natural process that had been written into the iron tablets of fate, which here seem to record the will of Augustus as much as Jupiter ("ferre simul nomenque suum curasque iubebit," "he will command him to bear together his name and his concerns," 837). Hill seems to regard this as a mere inaccuracy or invention on Ovid's part, stating that "the truth was startlingly different."[171] But the point here is that Ovid's story is startlingly *accurate*, even as it is wholly misleading. His story perfectly connects certain factual dots – Augustus' marriage to Livia, Tiberius' descent from Livia, Augustus' adoption of Tiberius – with a narrative that omits inconvenient or embarrassing details and that makes a believable and satisfying story. In doing so, Ovid is pointing out how history is made, and how history can be made to mislead; but he is also, of course, colluding in that process even as he exposes it, by adding to the Augustan Text another reading of Augustan succession that can itself be read triumphally as well as ironically.[172]

Ovid teaches readers the same lesson[173] at the climax of his deification narrative, Caesar's actual katasterism. This is the most extended treatment of the *sidus Iulium* within the Augustan Text, and the one that most subverts while purporting to subscribe to the 'fictions' that underlie representations of the *divi filius*.[174] As we saw above, at *Met.* 15.751 Ovid attributes Caesar's divinity above all to his progeny Augustus, and at 15.760-1 states that Augustus' need to come from divine stock is the logical cause of Caesar's having to become a god. Later this point is repeated, with interesting consequences, in the voice of Jupiter. Though Jupiter is elsewhere often portrayed as an autocratic decision-maker, here he claims to have pored over the *tabularia* of fate (810) before reporting to Venus, much as Augustus was known to have consulted (and even built a library for) Republican legal documents.[175] Jupiter informs the

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[169] Tiberius Claudius Nero; she was pregnant with Tiberius when she married Octavian.

[170] As Hill also notes at 2000: 230.

[171] Ibid.

[172] Hardie quotes Knox's assertion that "Augustus [is] … as much a literary motif as a political issue" (1986: 79) and expands on it, noting that "Ovid reveals the seamless continuity between the representations of imperial ideology – of all ideologies – and those of literary texts" (1997: 192).

[173] The conclusion of this dissertation more fully discusses Ovid as teaching certain interpretive strategies to readers, who can then reapply them to the larger Augustan discourse, and use them to analyze their own readerly complicity in the construction of Augustus' power – much as Ovid plays on necessity of readers' credulity in assigning power to fictions.

[174] Compare *Fasti* 4.21ff

[175] Hill states that "there is something amusingly incongruous about the picture of Jupiter studying the particulars of an adamantine inscription of what is fated" and setting out to memorize it (2000: 229). Part of the humor stems from the pedantry of Jupiter's behavior (compared with his reputation elsewhere in the *Metamorphoses* and other epics) and the Roman-ness of the *tabularia* – maybe underlining the idea that, in Ovid's portrayal, the wills of

anxious Venus that nobody can prevent Caesar's death, but that she and Caesar's son will together be responsible for deifying him (818-21):

> ut deus accedat caelo templisque colatur,
> tu facies natusque suus, qui nominis heres
> inpositum feret unus onus caesique parentis
> nos in bella suos fortissimus ultor habebit.

> That he as a god mount to heaven and be worshipped in temples –
> you will accomplish this, you and his son, who, as heir to his name,
> alone will bear the burden placed upon him and, as most brave avenger
> of his slain parent, will have us as his ally in war.

Thus Jupiter portrays Caesar's deification as multiply determined, not only by the fates (whose *tabularia* are here being summarized) and the gods ("tu facies") but also by Augustus ("natusque suus"). Ovid's narrative then depicts Venus swooping up Caesar's freshly-liberated soul, conveying it toward the stars, and finally releasing it to ascend on its own when it gets too hot to handle (843-851). Trailing a comet-like tail of fire, Caesar's soul finally becomes a star and admires his son's work from the heavens.[176]

It is a good story – perhaps too good a story. It glibly unites all the disparate information and iconography surrounding Caesar's death: it explains why Caesar died in the first place despite his supposed protection by the gods, frames his death within a teleological narrative culminating in the righteous ascent of Augustus, makes imagistic sense of the appearance and interpretation of the comet, and charmingly literalizes the star as the outcome of Caesar's bodily metamorphosis rather than treating it as a mere Stoic metaphor (848-51). The only thing it does not explain is how the statement "tu facies natusque suus" ("you and your son [Augustus] will make [Caesar a god]," 819) is true – that is, what Augustus is doing on earth to deify Caesar while the gods are carrying his soul to the sky.[177] Ovid's decision to tell the deification story on the plane of the gods, and to tell it so well, so seamlessly, and in such a way as to fully justify the deification on its own, jars against Jupiter's earlier suggestion that the deification also had a human agent. This, in turn, may cause suspicious readers to search for alternate ways of telling the story – and of connecting the dots of Augustan history. And Ovid certainly suggests one when he introduces Caesar's deification as an 'accomplishment' of Augustus' (at 15.751, 760-1, and 819), encouraging a readerly suspicion that it might be a politically manipulated act with human motivations and benefits.

Jupiter, Rome, and Augustus are all aligned. This description renders Jupiter a different and more Augustus-like figure of authority. It also seems significant that Jupiter's act of consulting the scholarship is not vouched for by the narrator but directly reported by Jupiter; do we know he has really consulted these documents, given that we cannot see them ourselves, or do we have to take his word for it? The same might apply for Augustus' control over information, even in terms of physical location (cf. the transferring of the Sibylline books to the Temple of Apollo Palatine, discussed in my next chapter along with its libraries).

[176] I.e., the comet metamorphoses into a star in Ovid's story, just as the comet of 44 'became' the image of the star within Augustan culture.

[177] One could regard Augustus' role, as at 758, as that of proving Caesar worthy of godhood by being an exemplary 'son' – but I have argued for skepticism about Caesar's paternity and explore a different, more cynical reading below which I believe is better suggested by the text.

Thus, Ovid's decision to center the story on Venus and Jupiter has the effect of further calling attention to the *invisibility* of Augustus' role, making readers wonder where he is in the plotline. But, just as Caesar was implicitly at the center of Aeneas' shield via his conflation with Augustus at *Aeneid* 8.678-81, so too is Augustus invisibly at the center of Ovid's narrative. As we have seen, this whole story is motivated by what may be read as Augustus' desire to be born from a god; beyond that, even the specifics of Jupiter's narrative seem to serve a version of events that favors Augustus. For instance, Jupiter ends his speech by commanding Venus to make Caesar a star "ut semper Capitolia nostra forumque / divus ab excelsa prospectet Iulius aede" ("so that Julius may always look upon our Capitol and the forum from his high temple," 841-2). But this purpose clause more truly applies to the *princeps*: it was Augustus, not Jupiter, who built the lofty temple from which Divus Julius looks out upon Rome, and apparently Augustus in tandem with Venus who caused Caesar to 'become' a star ("tu facies natusque suus," 15.819).

Moreover, in Ovid's story, Jupiter favors Augustus at the expense of the Roman state. In particular, Jupiter portrays Augustus as a noble avenger of his father, and vows that the gods will be his allies in bloody encounters at Mutina, Pharsalia, Philippi, on Sicilian waters, and against a Roman general's Egyptian mistress ("Romanique coniunx Aegyptia taedae"). But, in marked contrast to Caesar's wars of expansion against external enemies at 752-7, all of these bloody victories are against fellow-Romans (as well as Cleopatra, who was Caesar's "coniunx" before Antony and whose son Caesarion was executed by Octavian for his rival claim to Julian blood).[178] A skeptical reader might begin to sense some wordplay in Jupiter's decision to leave off speaking of such barbarities ("quid tibi barbariam gentesque ab utroque iacentes / oceano numerem?" 829-30). "Barbaria" ostensibly refers to the foreign nations Augustus has conquered, but, given the fact that Augustus' foreign exploits were generally less successful than his wars against fellow Romans, it might also be understood to hint at Augustus' youthful savagery against his enemies.[179] Yet Jupiter continues his grand depiction of Augustus' ascent without a second thought for the Roman lives that have been lost along the way. And Ovid's co-lusive reader may well pause to wonder where such celebratory treatments of the principate originated and whose will they really reflect: Ovid's, Jupiter's, or Augustus' own.

In essence, Ovid is here performing a comically overenthusiastic reading of Caesar's deification, one that depicts the complicity of the gods, fate, and *his own narrative* in serving Augustus' interests. Ovid has designed his story so that it makes a public show of 'reading' the *princeps* as the *princeps* might want to be read: as having been born from a god, as freely choosing Tiberius as his heir, as enjoying the support of the gods and the Fates, and as not merely having fabricated the appearance of all of the above. But it is precisely in his overt

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[178] But see e.g. Balsdon 1958: 87 for the view that, because of chronology, sterility, and the absence of contemporary comment, Caesar could not have been Caesarion's father; Balsdon argues instead that Cleopatra presented him as such in order to aid his position, and that Antony took up this identification as part of his image campaign against Octavian, little realizing that this would eventually result in Caesarion's being hunted down and murdered. It would be ironic and would complement the argument of this chapter if Caesarion's relationship with Caesar, like Octavian's own, were constituted more through the popular imagination than any biological connection.

[179] Note, too, that Jupiter – like Venus in the earlier passage – asks a question calling attention to his narrative choices, a tactic that Ovid seems to use to arouse readerly suspicion. Of course, the *Res Gestae* and other Augustan sources tell the story of Augustus' military exploits quite differently.

obedience to all these goals that Ovid most defies them, by silently implicating Augustus as a manipulator of public narratives – including his own. It is not that Ovid, with this vivid and imaginative depiction of the katasterism, is toeing some Augustan party line that actually existed; rather, he is constructing the impression of absolute conformity to such a line, and thus also constructing the shadow of an opposition, in composing a narrative that so fervently attempts to explain and justify all the 'facts' of Caesar's death, deification, and Augustus' rise to power.[180] In doing so, it parodies (and helps construct as 'propaganda') all the other texts that might be read as supporting the principate – even ones capable of sustaining much more subtle and ambivalent readings, like the *sidus Iulium* poems disussed above, Vergil's *Aeneid,* and the *Metamorphoses* itself. Like Ovid's insistence on Caesar's biological paternity of Augustus, this katasterism story, in its very excess – of reasons for Caesar's deification, of agents for that deification, of explanations for Augustus' rise, and for that matter of eagerness to encompass all of the many different interpretive levels on which Caesar's godhead might be understood – ends up commenting indirectly on its own underlying paucity of logic, even as it testifies to the extent of its acceptance. Indeed, the fact that Servius, centuries later, believed that the katasterism story gained credence with "Augusto persuadente" seems to reflect his own and intervening generations' acceptance of the level of control over *fama* that Ovid here attributes to the *princeps*. For, though Ovid never specifies whether such stories were actively originated and circulated by Augustus, or whether Romans' fear and awe simply rendered them eager to mythologize him, he certainly frames his own version of Caesar's deification as a way to narrate history in total conformity with the interests of the *princeps*. Ovid is thus complicit in the creation and propagation of a self-consciously 'pro-Augustan' account – one that affects subsequent understandings of Augustan history – even as he points out its fictionality.

Yet Ovid's reader response to Augustus not only shapes but also reflects contemporary interpretations of the principate.[181] I have attempted to demonstrate in this section how, through a remarkable combination of silence, innuendo, and overenthusiasm in *Metamorphoses* 15, Ovid insinuates that Augustus – whether through filial piety or unrestrained ambition – helped 'author' the metamorphosis of a corpse and a comet into the sanctified *Divus Iulius*. This meshes with his general portrait of the *princeps* as a fellow-author, discussed in my introductory chapter,[182] and teaches readers to view the star as 'pro-Augustan' propaganda – despite evidence from earlier texts that the *sidus Iulium* never bore a standardized or centrally-controlled meaning. But of course, Ovid's story would have no punch unless the idea of the *sidus Iulium* (and of Caesar's 'fatherhood' of Augustus) were already in common circulation within the Augustan Text. Moreover, Ovid's reader response to the deification is itself a tribute to the prevalence and strength of belief in Augustan power. What had in July 44 been an extemporaneous

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[180] See Oliensis 1997: 178 for another approach to encomiastic vs subversive readings of Ovid, in the context of the exile poems; she argues for Ovid's creation of a 'superabundance' of meanings in order to establish 'plausible deniability' (188). I also endorse Davis' 1999 work on Ovid's challenges to Augustus on the level of discourse, which covers issues such as succession.

[181] Operating within the framework of the poet/prince rivalry that Ovid defines, Hardie treats Ovid as though he wins the epic contest of manipulating *fama* (cf. especially 1997: 192-5), but I am interested in treating Ovid's reading/rewriting of Augustus not just as the inspired act of a *soi-disant* writer-hero but as a symptom of his times and background. In later chapters I also discuss how his exile poetry begins to assign readers a greater role in the construction of meaning than is evident from the *Metamorphoses,* when they sometimes seem mere conductors of fame (e.g. 15.878)

[182] For which see especially Hardie 1997 and Oliensis 2004.

interpretation of a chance astronomical phenomenon now seemed a deliberate decision of the august *princeps* himself, who in turn exceeded his father's accomplishments by securing his own immortality even while alive: "tarda sit illa dies et nostro serior aevo, / qua caput Augustum, quem temperat, orbe relicto / accedat caelo faveatque precantibus absens" (*Met.* 15.868-70).[183] As Ovid jokes by imagining Augustus here as an *absens deus*, it would hardly be possible for Augustus to enjoy more power in the heavens than he did living as a *praesens deus* in his own city.[184] Thus, even in propagating a self-consciously and perhaps falsely 'subversive' interpretation of Caesar's deification, Ovid is weaving the concept of Augustan supremacy even more deeply into the Augustan Text – and subsequent readers, ancient and modern alike, have escaped the tangles only with difficulty.

VII. Conclusion

This provides an added context for the concept of professional rivalry between Ovid and the *princeps* with which I began this dissertation and which finds its most famous expression here at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid's proleptic depiction of Augustus' deification (*Met.* 15.868-70) contrasts the nature of his divinity with the kind of immortality Ovid proceeds to claim for himself in the last lines of the poems (*Met.* 15.871ff.). Whereas an elaborate divine mechanism was required in order to deify Caesar, and whereas the gods will eventually remove even Augustus from earth ("orbe relicto," 869), Ovid will live forever through *fama* – not only the means of ensuring posthumous reputation, but also the only thing that can defy the will of the *princeps* (15.852-4).[185] Yet Ovid's poetry also helps create the *fama* of Augustus as we know it today. As I have argued in this chapter, there is little historical evidence that Octavian actively manipulated the interpretation of the comet of 44; furthermore, early literary and numismatic representations of the *sidus Iulium* as a star suggest that it bore no standard or propagandistic meaning, but was rather used as a touchstone for contemplation and even critique of Augustus' ascent to power and resemblance to Caesar. Yet by retrojecting Augustus' mature power onto the events surrounding Caesar's deification within the fictionalized narrative of *Metamorphoses* 15, Ovid recasts the *sidus Iulium* – and its prior representations within Augustan discourse – as subservient to Augustus' interests. Ovid's own narrative encourages double readings: on the one hand, it flatters and serves Augustus' greatness, while on the other hand, it insinuates that Augustus was an expert propagandist who succeeded in portraying his ambitions as identical with the dictates of fate. It is this poetic vision that, despite the lack of historical evidence for Octavian's active manipulation, suggested to Pliny, Servius, and, via them, modern scholars that Augustus must have been responsible for Caesar's deification. Moreover, as I argue in subsequent chapters, it is only one of the many ways in which Ovid helps create, in the minds of generations of readers, the portrait of Augustus as a rival 'poet' who concealed his godlike ambitions behind a mask of civic rhetoric.

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[183]"May that day be delayed and later than our lifetime when the Augustan chief leaves the bereft world which he governs and, from away, favors those who pray." For similar prayers that Caesar's apotheosis be delayed, see Vergil, *Georgics* 1.24-42; Horace, *Odes* 1.2.45; and Lucan 1.46 (cf. Hill 2000 *ad loc.*). Jupiter had already prophesied, in *Met.* 15.838-9, that Augustus would take a place in heaven when his years had finally equaled his good works – another sentiment subject to double-reading.

[184] For Augustus as *absens deus* see Barchiesi 1997.

[185] Cf. my discussion in Chapter 1 of *Met.* 15.871-9.

In this chapter, I have tried to expose certain inadequacies in two widely-held modern understandings, one associative and one dissociative, of the relationship between Augustus and the deified Caesar: I have argued that both derive ultimately less from 'historical fact' than from a palimpsest of dialogic representations of the *princeps* and the *sidus Iulium*. In the end, though, it is impossible and perhaps even undesirable to disentangle ourselves from 'fictions' like Ovid's – for it is through narratives such as these that we make sense of history, and from them that history is composed. I count myself as no exception, and my own argument has been influenced by my own readerly reaction to Ovid's text – in particular, my imaginative construction of some 'Ovid' who creates a sense of ideological normativity even as he contests it, opens up double meanings in order to deconstruct Augustan rhetoric, and creates an intellectually rewarding, even pleasurable sense of complicity with his reader in order to enlist them in the project. Yet I hope that, whatever the merits and failings of my own reading of Ovid, I have at least demonstrated a more chronologically sensitive and interdisciplinary approach, one that takes into consideration not only the historical narratives themselves but also the interactions and dialogues between them, across time, genre, and medium. For that matter, as I discussed in Chapter 1, both Ovid and Augustus are themselves also subject to imaginative narratives which are in the hands of the readers rather than actors of history. As Stoic philosophy asserts, it is in the hearts and memories of the people, rather than as autonomous agents, that the great figures of history continue to exist. Thus, though the poet and prince (as resuscitated by modern readers) continue to vie with one another for control over their own and each other's reputations, neither of them can win or even exist except through our own intellectual mediation; for it is largely through others' interpretations, handed down through the centuries, that we may constitute them in our imaginations – the only place in which either may be known at all.

I. Introduction

Ancient and modern writers agree that Augustus' great architectural complex on the Palatine was one of the earliest and most important expressions of his power.[1] Modern scholars argue that the building project, dedicated in 28 BCE, served as a triumphalist monument to Augustus' recent victory over Antony at Actium; moreover, the architectural integration of this temple with a library, a portico, and Augustus' own house seemed to signal Augustus' ambitions to insert himself into the heart of Roman religion and culture.[2] Yet no other edifice receives so much discussion by Augustan authors,[3] and their readings diverge sharply from our own. While modern scholars focus on Augustus' 'authorship' of the complex as a demonstration and justification of his supremacy, the Augustan poets instead exert their power as readers in order to question such a message.   After examining Horace and Propertius' responses to the complex, I will conclude with an analysis of Ovid's *Tristia* 3.1 – a poem which closely reads the imagery of the Palatine complex in order to deconstruct Augustan symbolism and expose multiple possible readings of the *princeps*' power.

II. Augustus' Palatine complex: the material text

A. Patterns in modern scholarship

Even notwithstanding its exceptional beauty and costliness,[4] certain aspects of the temple complex's layout and iconography have made it an irresistible subject for commentary by readers both ancient and modern who are interested in representations of Augustan power. Augustus vowed a temple to Apollo in 36 during his campaign against Sextus Pompeius and began building it shortly thereafter, but did not dedicate it until 9 October 28.[5] Because of this timing, aided perhaps by details such as the spoils in the temple, it seems to have been associated more closely with the recent climactic victory at Actium rather than Naulochus;[6] Pierre Gros, for

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[1] For good overviews of the complex and its historical background see especially Miller 2009: 185-252, Gurval 1995: 111-131, Galinsky 1996: 213-224, and Zanker 1983.

[2] For archaeological analyses see Carettoni and Zanker's publications of the excavations; more recent discussions of the architectonics by Balensiefen 1995 and Iacopi 2005; and Quenemoen's 2006 article and forthcoming book.

[3] White notes that poets mention the complex more frequently than any other Roman monument (1993: 321 n. 89).

[4] Asconius calls it "his temporibus aedes … noblissima" (in Cic. *Orat. In Tog. Cand.* 90); see also Josephus *B. Iud* 2.6.1, Vell. Pat. 2.81, and Platner & Ashby 1929: 16-19 for further details and references.

[5] Vel. Pat. 2.81; Dio Cass. 53.1.3; Degrassi, *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2, 209.

[6] Contemporary documents refer to 'Actius Apollo,' 'Actius Phoebus,' or 'Navalis Phoebus'; see Miller 2009: 191 for a discussion. Miller writes, "It is debatable whether in the Augustan period the epithets *Actius* and *Actiacus* ever apply univocally to the Palatine temple (as opposed to the god's shrine near the battle site), but one should not on that account subscribe to the recent, eccentric view that Octavian and his contemporaries did not in fact see the shrine as a celebration of his pivotal victory" (as Gurval 1995: 118-27 argues). To be fair, the term 'Navalis Phoebus' could also apply to Naulochus; an association with Actium may be a simple consequence of the timing of the temple's dedication, eight years after Naulochus but only three years after Actium, or may have been encouraged by the temple's own plan of ornamentation and inclusion of spoils from the victory against Antony, seemingly

one, conceives of it as "un veritable ex voto de la victoire sur Marc-Antoine."[7]   Moreover, this represents an interesting phase in Augustus' power: after the final defeat of Antony had given him supremacy within Rome, but before the so-called first constitutional settlement of January 27 helped define and normalize his status.[8] Indeed, scholars regard it as asserting an early and more autocratic phase of Augustus' power, before the more mature and balanced iconography of the later principate had evolved. Paul Zanker, though he identifies an impulse toward expiation, calls it one of Augustus' "clearest statements of self-glorification": "between the Mausoleum and the 'house' which the young Caesar put up by the temple of Apollo in the heart of the ancient city of Romulus, he left no doubt as to who would determine Rome's fate from now on."[9]

Moreover, in closely connecting Augustus' own house with the temple to Apollo, this complex seemed to draw on a representational strategy that Octavian had already begun to develop: his identification of himself with Apollo.[10] Suetonius preserves some verses that refer to Octavian's notorious attendance at the 'feast of the twelve gods' dressed as Apollo (*Aug.* 70), in an early public-image misstep. However, Octavian appears to have learned to circulate this association in subtler and more appealing form, and scholars link this image campaign with his ascendancy. In response to Anthony's self-identification with Dionysus as he moved eastward, Octavian renewed his claims to the special protection of Apollo – and, according to Zanker, prevailed in part because his iconography was more adaptable and universal in its appeal.[11] After attaining supremacy, Octavian continued to strengthen his connection with Apollo. He used the sphinx as his seal – a symbol of the "regnum Apollinis" prophesied by the sybil (Suet., *Aug.* 50) – and was granted the right to wear the laurel crown on all public occasions.[12]   His famous portrait type of 27 BCE has often been compared with Apollo.[13] And scholars view the Palatine complex itself, the first temple to Apollo within the pomerium, as Octavian's strongest assertion yet and perhaps ever of his special relationship with the god. It simultaneously contributed to Augustus' self-representation as an Apollonian champion of order and art,

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added after work on the temple began. Syme states the consensus opinion that, although the battle itself was "a shabby affair," Augustus' official version added "august dimensions and an intense emotional colouring, being transformed into a great naval battle" that symbolized a clash between East and West and mythologized the birth of the principate (1939: 297). However, Gurval argues that the importance of the battle of Actium – an event which Zanker, for instance, calls "The Great Turning Point" and Syme regards as the "foundation-myth of the new order" (1939: 335) – has been exaggerated in the scholarship (he provides a bibliography of said scholarship at 1995: 2, n. 4). I agree with Gurval and believe the temple refers as much to Egypt as to Actium, though, as I examine below, contemporary writers tended to link it with Actium in order to explore issues surrounding the civil war; this therefore became part of its meaning within the Augustan text.

[7] Gros, *LTUR* I, 54-57.

[8] And, in fact, granted him the title 'Augustus,' which I use here anachronistically for the sake of simplicity.

[9] 1988: 72 and 77, respectively.

[10] For an examination of the Apollo/Augustus identification within literature and art, see John Miller's 2005 article and especially his 2009 book, though see Gurval 1995:87-111 for a passionate if not always convincing attack on this conventional wisdom. Zanker 1988: 33-77 provides an overview of the association.

[11] Zanker 1988: 48-53.

[12] For the laurel crown, see Dio 49.15.1. The association would eventually be woven into the myth surrounding Augustus: Pliny writes that an eagle dropped a laurel branch into Livia's lap soon after her marriage with Octavian, which was planted at her villa and became the tree from which future Caesars would cut their victory wreaths (*NH* 15.136).

[13] Cf. Zanker 1988:50 and his figure 83 at p. 99; it is difficult to discern whether Octavian was claiming a relationship with Apollo or going so far as to identify himself with the god, but this of course is the point.

testified to Octavian's *pietas*, and made him and the god co-habitants of the Palatine.[14] This accords with the view that the complex was also a comparatively naked assertion of Octavian's power, as opposed to later and more subtle expressions.[15]

B. The historical record

Yet this modern *communis opinio* – that the Palatine complex was an autocratic assertion of Augustus' quasi-divine supremacy in Rome – tends to break down upon examination of the historical evidence. Dio (49.15.3-5), among others, preserves an account of the somewhat complicated process by which arrangements for the complex were reached, after Octavian returned victorious from his campaign against Sextus Pompeius in Sicily in 36. Octavian had bought a prominent piece of land on the Palatine for his own residence.[16] However, according to contemporary soothsayers, the god himself showed his desire for part of the house by striking it with lightning (Dio 49.15.5; Suet., *Aug.* 29).[17] In a display of piety and propriety, Octavian accordingly made the whole area public property; in return, the people offered to fund the construction of Octavian's house ἐκ τοῦ δημοσίου (Dio 49.15.5).[18] This dynamic of exchange, in which the people, senate, and *princeps* vie to reciprocate acts of respect and generosity, would become an important part of what scholars consider 'mature' Augustanism.[19] So, too, would the project's innovative integration of public and private roles and spaces.[20] For the Palatine complex combines a modest private residence built at public expense with a lavish public temple built at immense private expense, closely connected physically and associatively in the

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[14] Zanker 1988: 51-2.

[15] Zanker provides the standard and still best discussion of Octavian's Hellenistic or monarchical phase and its iconographical tendencies, which prevailed as long as Octavian was competing with Antony for control of Rome (1988: 33-77): some examples are coinage emphasizing Octavian's role as son of Divus Julius, images linking Octavian with Apollo as discussed above, and the immense Mausoleum. Zanker at first seems to class the temple to Apollo as part of this first phase in his chapter on 'Rival Images' (1988: 67-9, 72, 77), but then treats it more thoroughly in his next chapter on 'The Great Turning Point: Intimations of a New Imperial Style' (1988: 79-100). This confusion suggests, as I believe, that the temple complex marks a transition between the two phases, and of course the chronology would seem to bear this out.

[16] For Augustus' gradual purchase of land in this area see Vell. Pat. 2.81.3; this would have been part of his ongoing public-image rivalry with Antony. For the use of private residences in the competition between aristocrats, see Wiseman 1987.

[17] For a discussion of this lightning bolt and its role in the temple's foundation, see Hekster and Rich 2006.

[18] Josephus *Bell. Iud.* 2.6.1 shows that, at least by his time (and after some rebuilding), the temple was felt to be within and part of the palace; this suggests that ancient writers thought of this as a unified compound enclosing multiple parts, including the temple, house and library.

[19] As Zanker puts it, "there developed a rather charmingly old-fashioned system of gift and countergift, which was expressed exclusively in visual imagery" (1988: 132); he cites, for example, the New Year's tradition whereby the people gave Augustus gifts of money, which he then used to set up public images of the gods (Suet., *Aug.* 57).

[20] Such ambitious architectural projects are not wholly without precedent in Rome (witness Pompey's theater complex, which included a temple to his patron goddess Venus), but Augustus' close integration of private residence with public temple was striking. Milnor is especially useful on the slippage between public and private. She sees the house as "a performance of self for the benefit of other members of the community – as, in other words, a kind of public space" (2005: 66).   She follows Barton's argument that Augustus adapted his house to "the needs of a situation in which the whole Roman people – Senators and all – had become the clients of one man, the *princeps*" (1996a: 84). Milnor also discusses the level of modesty of the house (2005: 81-86). Erich Gruen objects that integrating house and temple was "hardly an act of modesty," but I believe that the linkage and contrast between the two was significant and made a certain rhetorical point.

perceptions of viewers.[21] The humility of Augustus' own home comments on his modesty, while the splendor of the temple next door demonstrates his *pietas*, public munificence, and literal and figurative proximity to the gods. Moreover, even the temple's architectonic details could be read to reflect upon its dedicator Augustus as much as upon its dedicatee Apollo, not only in their lavishness but also in the hermeneutic possibilities they raise.

Yet it is striking is how cynically such apparent acts of generosity on Augustus' part could be and in fact *were* interpreted by some. Dio reports a widespread rumor that Octavian's public gestures of magnanimity at this time were calculated to shift blame upon Antony and Lepidus for recent acts of injustice (49.15.4).[22] Octavian's declaration of the Palatine land as public property, and his use of the land for a splendid public temple, portico, and library, was certainly in keeping with this perceived campaign to present himself as a friend of the public welfare in order to represent Antony and Lepidus as its enemies. Significant, too – and essential, I will argue, for our understanding of the temple imagery – is the idea that blame needed to be assigned in the first place. In fact, contemporary readings, which are inextricable from attempts to reconstruct the complex, suggest that the temple may have sought not merely to trumpet Octavian's supremacy but also to diffuse tensions regarding the civil war. And Roman observers themselves are far from 'reading' the complex as monolithically as most modern scholars do. Rather, they help create our sense that the temple embedded a 'pro-Augustan' message precisely by offering independent, sometimes skeptical interpretations of their own.

C. The archaeological remains

It would be logical, before examining the Augustan poets' reader responses to the Palatine complex, to reconstruct the architectural 'text' which they are reading: how the complex would have looked, for what purposes it was built, and what impressions it was designed to evoke. But there are already problems with such an endeavor. First, even if we regarded Augustus as the sole author of the complex – thereby ignoring the various architects, artists, and other workers who contributed to its design – it would be impossible to reconstruct his precise motivations and intentions. Moreover, given the scant and difficult archaeological evidence, scholars have reconstructed the physical appearance and even location of the complex primarily via numismatic and literary evidence – though these, as I will argue, are hardly objective, and may feed back into modern understandings of the complex.

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[21] Many scholars have followed Carettoni (e.g. 1983) in believing the two structures to be connected by means of a ramp, but some have recently questioned his reconstruction; in fact, Peter Wiseman now argues for a revision of the temple's orientation (as facing NE rather than SW), further arguing that the ramp and the traditional large 'house of Augustus' are misidentifications. I thank him for his valuable observations and for sharing with me his article on "The Orientation of Palatine Apollo," to be published in *JRA* in 2012. I find his argument compelling but encountered it too recently in order to fully revise my own work accordingly; I have, however, attempted to note his arguments *ad loc.* and await further developments from the archaeologists.

[22] According to Dio, others alleged that Octavian was attempting to appear magnanimous when he remitted debts owed to the state before the civil war: the people were not able to pay anyway, so he was able to disguise this practical step as a generous favor from himself (49.15.4). Dio dismisses these rumors as idle talk, but apparently only on the flimsy grounds that the people did go on to present Octavian a house – a fact that comments less on Augustus' motives than on the success of his self-representation.

The absence of concrete evidence meant that for many years, scholars debated even the temple's location, though they by now accept its identification with the remains on the southwest side of the Palatine excavated in the nineteenth century.[23] In the middle of the twentieth, Gianfilippo Carettoni identified a large nearby structure as Augustus' house, connected by means of a ramp to a southwesterly-facing temple, and his reconstruction (as shown in Figure 1) has represented the prevailing view for the last fifty years. However, Peter Wiseman, following a suggestion of Amanda Claridge, has recently opened up debate about whether this house is really cotemporaneous with the Augustan temple.[24] He also uses literary evidence to argue that the temple faced northeast rather than southwest, looking out over a larger and more open *area Apollinis* to the Curia rather than the Circus Maximus. I find Wiseman's argument compelling insofar as it makes good sense of a variety of literary sources, although since archaeologists such as Stephan Zink remain adamant about the southwest orientation, all reconstructions must currently be taken with a grain of salt.

Yet, though its specific layout is debatable,[25] it does seem the temple was integrated into a complex that included Augustus' house, a portico, and both Latin and Greek libraries, and was thus one element within a wider nexus of meaning. To many scholars, Augustus' house and its close connection with Apollo's temple was the most significant and boldly innovative element of the site. If Carettoni is correct in his identification of the house of Augustus and his dating of the vaulted ramps leading from this structure up to the sanctuary terrasse, the *princeps* and his family would have been able to enter the home of the god without, in a sense, having to leave their own home. Gros goes so far as to state that the entire sanctuary was "conceived to establish a confusion between the *princeps*' residence and the home of the divine protector of the *princeps*."[26] Yet the date of the ramp has recently come under attack, and I believe that this 'confusion' between the house and temple may have been encouraged by Augustan poets, to the extent that it has affected modern reconstructions. The magnificent temple certainly could not be mistaken for the *princeps*' relatively humble house, and the juxtaposition of the two itself could itself be regarded as a political statement – at least, as I argue below, the poets seem to construct it as such, even as they break it down and question it for reasons of their own. At the same time, according to Wiseman, Apollo's temple and Augustus' house may have shared the same view, upon the ancient hut of Romulus and the site of Rome's foundation. And the extreme proximity of Augustus' house to the god's did establish a certain kinship between the two. After Augustus moved the fire of Vesta to his own home in 12 B.C., Ovid could say that "three gods live on the Palatine: Apollo, Vesta, and Augustus himself" (*Fasti* 4.951; cf. *Met.* 15.864). Moreover, in its dominant position and architectural ambition, the Palatine complex certainly recalled Hellenistic palace complexes like the acropolis of Pergamon, from which the Attalids' palace and a splendid

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[23] The identification was by Pinza (1913) and the excavations by Rosa (begun 1865); see the first page of Wiseman's forthcoming article for a brief history of the site with bibliography. For the earlier confusion as to its location, see the three sites proposed in the 1929 Platner & Ashby article, or the 1956 article by J. H. Bishop discussing problems with its location even among the poetic sources; for a long while this area was erroneously assigned to the temple of Iovis Victoris (or Propugnatoris).

[24] Claridge 1998: 131; cf. again Wiseman's forthcoming *JRA* article as well as personal conversation during the April 2011 meeting of the Classical Association at Durham.

[25] For recent excavations and analyses see Tomei 1990 and Iacopi 1995; debate has centered in particular on the portico (e.g. Balensiefen 1995; Iacopi and Tedone 2006; Quenemoen 2006). Miller 2009: 185ff. provides fuller bibliography and analysis of this complicated issue than I can afford here.

[26] 1993: 54-7.

temple of Athena looked down upon the theatre.[27] It therefore prompted reflection and debate within the Augustan Text on the relationship between rulers and divinity – reflections that may have informed later receptions, including modern reconstructions, of the complex.


ZUR DANAIDENHALLE AUF DEM PALATIN
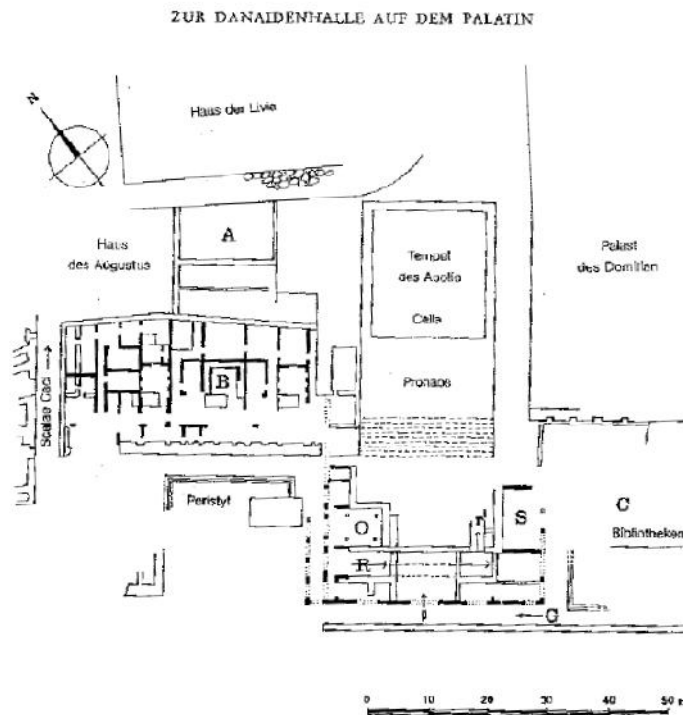
Abb. 1 Haus des Augustus und Tempel des Apollo, Plan nach G. Carettoni

Figure 1: Now-debated plan of the Palatine complex (Balensiefen 1995, following Carettoni)[28]

In fact, it is possible to say very little about the Palatine area with certainty, given that all identifications hinge on the precarious alignment of literary sources with the scanty and confusing archaeological palimpsest of the site. Some fragments of architectural décor confirm the poets' attestation that it was made in grand style from Luna marble: it thus fits in with Augustus' pride in finding Rome brick and leaving it marble (Suet., *Aug.* 28.3), and testifies to the opening up of the new quarries at Luna during his principate (Pliny 36.14, Strabo 5.2-5). The temple itself was hexastyle with an almost square cella (20.5 x 19 m); although only one capital has been preserved, its dimensions allow archaeologists to estimate the column height at 14 meters, and its style confirms the poets' dating of the temple to the early part of the Augustan era. As for ornamentation, a few fragments have been identified with a colossal statue of Apollo,[29] although Propertius 2.31 mentions two statues: one in the cella and one outside by the altar. Particularly interesting are the approximately 20 large polychrome terra cotta 'Campana

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[27] Cf. Rehak 2006: 6; Gros 1996; Pensabene 1997. Aside from the temple of Apollo, there were pre-existing temples on the Palatine to Magna Mater and Victoria, and Augustus later installed a shrine to Vesta in his own home; thus, "through the manipulation of space and architecture, Augustus created a direct physical link between himself and some of the major divinities of the Roman pantheon" (Rehak 2006: 6; see also Thompson 1981, Zanker 1983, Kellum 1985, Lefèvre 1989, Royo 1999).

[28] Unfortunately at the time of writing no image is yet available of Wiseman's suggested northeast orientation.

[29] C. Last 1952: 27-29 for the identification of these fragments.

plaques,' datable to 36-28 BCE: one depicts a scene of combat between Apollo and Hercules for a tripod bearing a frieze of boughs and winged victories, others show the adoration of sacred objects including a candelabra, thymiaterion, and betyl, and another shows a sphinx, an Apollonian symbol that Octavian had already started using and that hints at Apollo's prophetic capacities.[30] On the face of it, such evidence seems to confirm the modern readings of the complex as supporting Augustus' claim for the special protection of Apollo, in opposition to the Dionysian Antony.[31] However, the Augustan Text itself constantly thwarts such attempts to stabilize the complex's meaning, even as it provides the primary means by which the complex can be understood – and it is to this text that I now turn.

III. The Palatine 'text' as read by the Augustan poets

Scholars' attempts to posit an original form, meaning or intention for the Palatine complex cannot be separated from their readings of the visual and particularly literary representations of it within Augustan culture – even though these offer subjective and often divergent interpretations. Thus, it is impossible to recover some original 'message' which subsequent poetic readings may support or subvert; rather, our sense of its primary meaning has itself been constructed by the edifice's readers as much as its builders. These authors' selection, omission, and amplification of certain details – their individual ways of running their eyes over the temple and exploring the associative intertext surrounding it – tell us a great deal about contemporary possibilities for understanding the complex and, through it, Augustus' role in Rome.

The Palatine complex, first and foremost, is thought to have linked Augustus to Apollo. But Apollo evoked many different and sometimes rather contradictory associations in the minds of contemporary Roman viewers. Zanker has argued for an evolution of Augustus' use of these associations at different points in his career.[32] According to this argument, in the young Octavian's iconography, Apollo stands for order, discipline, and morality – thus framing a stark moral and ideological opposition between Octavian and his rival Antony, who associated himself with Dionysus and thus perhaps inadvertently helped frame the triumvirs' rivalry as an opposition between Roman morality and Eastern decadence.[33] After Actium, however, Apollo is used less polemically and comes to represent peace: images of this era often depict him playing a lyre and singing, this musical harmony perhaps mirroring the hoped-for political reconciliation. Finally, when Augustus' reign was secure, Apollo often appears as the prophetic god, accompanied by sibyl and sphinx, who ushers in a new golden age.

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[30] For the Campana plaques cf. especially Strazzulla 1990: 22-29; Ritter 1995 analyzes the ones pertaining to Hercules. About 40 smaller ones were also collected during excavations starting in 1968 in the front gallery.

[31] It also seems to integrate Egyptian themes into Octavian's imagery: see e.g. Turcan 1996: 88 for a (perhaps somewhat overstated) argument for an emerging 'Egyptomania' here.

[32] Zanker 1988: 52-3.

[33] See especially Beacham 2005: 152-160 and Zanker on 'Antony Betrayed by His Own Image' (1988: 57-65). Zanker argues that Octavian came to be associated with 'Atticizing' rhetorical and artistic styles, Antony with 'Asiatic' styles, and that this came to determine the look of Augustan art. Note also the negative comparison between Antony in thrall to Cleopatra and Hercules enslaved to Omphale (Plutarch, *Ant.* 3.3). Zanker links this to the finely worked early-Augustan silver bowl by Perennius in Arezzo which depicts Antony/Hercules in effeminate guise being driven by a drunken Cleopatra/Omphale (1988: 59). The terra cotta plaques depict Hercules in more dignified form, balanced against the figure of Apollo, perhaps denoting some respect toward the defeated enemy.

Zanker's schema is ingenious, but in many ways, all three Apollos seem to operate simultaneously on the Palatine, in complex ways that redound upon Augustus himself. For instance, Propertius 2.31.9-11 attests to a chariot of the sun on the acroterium, and temple doors representing Apollo's punishment of the Gauls and Niobe. These would seem to indicate Zanker's 'early' Apollo of order and justice, and support the conception that Augustus in his early days portrayed himself as the righteous avenger of Caesar – a message that seems underlined by the portico featuring the Danaids in their pose of eternal punishment.[34] Yet (also according to Propertius) the cult statue featured Apollo playing music,[35] as did the colossal statue of Apollo Citharoedus outside the temple (at 2.31.15-16 and 5-6, respectively). These peaceable activities, and the presence of the library, seem to underscore Augustus' role as a patron of the arts, in contrast to the warlike tone of the temple doors. This dissonance must have been enhanced by the presence in the cella of vast amounts of votive offerings and spoils from the victories for which Augustus thanked Apollo. Yet there are also signs of Zanker's third mode of representing Apollo: as a figure of prophecy, watching over the future of Rome. This role was visually reaffirmed, for instance, by the sphinx imagery on the terra-cotta tablets associated with the temple site. But it was most strongly expressed through the fact that, in 12 BCE, Augustus had the Sibylline books re-copied and transferred from their traditional depository in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus to the temple of Apollo (Suet., *Aug.* 31).[36] This relocation must have been extremely symbolic: the destiny of Rome, in the form of these prophecies, was placed under Apollo's feet and via him under Augustus' aegis. But it also remarks, on a less metaphorical level, upon Augustus' actual control over information; Augustus not only conducted some clarification of the books, hinting at his power as an editor and reader, but also presided over the space in which the *quindecemviri* could consult these prophecies. Thus, Zanker's neat schema of Augustan Apollonianism begins to break down; multiple versions of Apollo coexisted in the same time and place, sending quite different messages about Augustus. The remainder of this chapter will examine how Augustan poets explore some of the resulting tensions in Augustus' self-representation – in particular, his dual identities as enforcer of punishment and patron of the arts, the contradictory claims of justice and *clementia*, and his control over information.

A. Horace, *Odes* 1.31

Horace's *Odes* 1.31, written for the occasion of the temple's dedication ("quid dedicatum poscit Apollinem / vates," 1-2), hardly mentions its physical structure.[37] But because it poses as

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[34] These have been subject to much debate and are discussed at greater length below.

[35] Here in the cella, Apollo stands together with his sister Diana and mother Latona ("deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem / Pythius in longa carmina veste sonat"), as presumably in the Niobe section of the temple doors. Pliny specifies that the state of Apollo was by Scopas (*NH* 36.25), Diana by Timotheus (*NH* 36.32), and Latona by Cephisodotus (*NH* 36.24) – in which case they must have been unusually precious works of art, and added to the classicizing tone of the temple. This 'Palatine triad' appears again on the Sorrento base, leading scholars to conclude that the background must constitute a rare depiction of the Temple of Apollo (Rizzo 1932, 7-109, fig. 11; Hölscher 1988b, 375-78, no. 208a-d provides bibliography).

[36] They were placed in two gilded receptacles under the pedestal of the cult statue of Apollo; the Sorrento base seems to allude to this fact by including what appears to be a representation of the Sibyl. This can be viewed as an aspect of Augustus' monopolizing of control over information, or an attempt to clarify a by now almost hopelessly confused prophetic tradition (cf. Smith 1875: 1043-4 for their history, drawing from Suet. *Aug.* 31, Tac. *Ann.* 6.12, and Dio 54.17).

[37] Though the unusual matronymic "Latoe" seems to refer to the cult group.

the poet's mental response to a first visit, it says a great deal about the feelings the Palatine complex may have evoked. Horace opens the poem by asking what a *vates* should request from Apollo, delicately hinting that he has a special relationship with Apollo as a patron god of the arts. He goes on to reject worldly concerns and exotic riches (3-15) – things that others might pray for at this temple – in favor of a simple life as a poet (15-20). Might this constitute a corrective aesthetic response to the extraordinary splendor of the complex, with its sumptuous materials from all over the Roman world? The temple to Apollo was itself, after all, built in thanks for Octavian's fulfilled prayer for victory, and commemorates his attainment of the land and riches that Horace rejects at lines 3-15. Moreover, at 2-3, Horace imagines himself pouring a libation from a patera, in the same pose as the cult statue;[38] he confirms this with his concluding prayer for a life not bereft of the cithara ("nec cithara carentem," 20), again representing himself in the image of the cithara-holding god. Augustus had famously assimilated his own image with that of Apollo, perhaps even via a statue in the Palatine library;[39] here, Horace co-opts the god as a symbol not for the *princeps* but for the poet himself. Thus, of all the possible readings latent in the temple, Horace privileges Apollo in his capacity as patron of the arts rather than enforcer of justice or guarantor of military victory; he moreover reappropriates the public monument to make a private statement about the validity of art over war. In doing so, he shows that the complex was subject to the individual uses of its viewers – ones that might run against or parallel to the intentions that modern scholars have attributed to the *princeps*.

B. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 2: Palace of the Sun

Ovid's description of Phaeton's visit to the house of his father Phoebus, in *Metamorphoses* 2, also reworks the Palatine complex for new purposes. The temple's acroterium was adorned by a chariot of the sun (Prop. 2.31.9-11), pointing to the connection and occasional conflation between Apollo and Phoebus, as well as the association of both with light and order.[40] Yet Ovid's story of Phoebus in *Met.* 2 explores the disturbing possibility of a breakdown in this order, and may apply it to Augustus' own reign. Both Apollo's temple and Phoebus' are spectacular edifices built on prominent ground and accessible only via steep pathways, inspiring a sense of awe in the viewer even from a distance ("quo simul adclivi Clymeneia limite proles / venit et intravit dubitati texta parentis," *Met.* 2.19-20). Both are associated with paternal figures: in the *Metamorphoses*, Phoebus is Phaeton's father, and on the Palatine, Augustus was *pater patriae* (at least by the time of Ovid's reading) and claimed Apollo as his own father.[41] Both contained magnificent double doors: Palatine Apollo's depict scenes of justice (Prop 2.31.13-14), while Phoebus' establish a sense of the cosmic harmony that the sun oversees (*Met.* 2.1-18). Moreover, both housed a chariot of Phoebus, and the one at the summit of the Palatine pediment ("in quo Solis erat supra fastigia currus," Prop. 2.31.11), presiding over the city of Rome, may have represented a restoration of order after the ravages of the civil war.[42]

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[38] Judging from the numismatic evidence as understood by Zanker (1983: 31-32) and upheld by Miller 2009: 201.
[39] Many critics accept the commentators' attestation of a statue of Augustus as Apollo in the library (Servius on *Ecl.* 4.10; ps.-Acro and Comm. Cruq on Hor. *Epistle* 1.3.17); cf. also Miller 2009: 191. I am skeptical about relying solely on these late sources, who may be responding to other conflations of Apollo and Augustus within the Augustan text, rather than a real statue; however, without further evidence, it is impossible to evaluate the claim.
[40] E.g. Anderson points out that the doors depict an orderly cosmos at 5-18 and at 19-30 contain allegorical figures that symbolize the sun's "close association with the orderly passage of time" (1997: 229).
[41] Cf. Dio 45.1.2; Lambrechts 1956; Becher 1965; and Rehak 2006.
[42] See also Pliny 36.13, Rehak 93, Jacquemin and La Roche 1986.

Yet instead of celebrating peace restored, Ovid's passage threatens the dissolution of order. In two anxious speeches, Phoebus emphasizes the more-than-mortal strength and careful governance required to keep his horses in line (2.49-102; 2.126-149). Yet, when the inexperienced Phaeton assumes his father's place at the head of the chariot, he nearly destroys the world with his inability to control the immense power that has been transferred to him. This story thus chimes with Ovid's interest in Augustus' dubious 'paternity' of Tiberius in *Metamorphoses* 15, discussed in the previous chapter. Perhaps for Augustus, as for Phoebus, a misplaced sense of fatherly loyalty may prompt him to transfer the reins of power to an illegitimate 'son' (in Augustus' case, not even a blood relation) who lacks the strength and experience to govern temperately. In any case, the Phoebus/Phaeton episode in *Metamorphoses* 2 seems to rework the Palatine temple in order to argue that great power often entails great power to harm – a point that Ovid more clearly applies to Augustus himself in *Tristia* 3.1 (discussed below).

C. Propertius, *Carmina* 2.31

It is ironic that Propertius 2.31 has been used by scholars to recreate the iconographical features of Augustus' supposedly triumphalist building project, since this poem also reads the complex to focus on Apollo's role as a patron of the arts and elide his connection with war. The poet explains at the beginning of the poem that he is late to meet Cynthia because he has been to Apollo's portico (1-2), and proceeds to enumerate the splendors of the complex: the portico of the Danaids, the handsome marble statue of Apollo Citharoedus, the four lifelike bulls of Myron, and the splendid marble temple itself with its chariot of the sun, its ivory doors, and its cult statues of Diana, Leto, and the singing Apollo (3-16).[43] Though this poem has been mined for aid in reconstructing the complex, it is clear that this is a highly subjective impression, designed to recreate a visitor's experience.[44] Yet, though the complex itself seems to have allowed for multiple readings – suggesting, for instance, both militaristic and musical roles for Apollo – Propertius chooses to focus on the complex as an aesthetic object rather than a piece of propaganda.[45] In fact, the poet does more than merely express "an elegiac perspective," as Miller has argued;[46] he suggests to his Roman interpretive community that this architectural 'text' might be read to express sympathy for the victims of war as much as joy at Augustus' victory. In fact, Propertius' evident reappropriation of the monument for poetic purposes may help create the very sense that it was originally meant to serve propagandistic aims.

Propertius makes the portico's opening, rather than that of the temple of Apollo, the reason for his delay (1-2), suggesting that leisure rather than devotion is his primary motive for visiting the complex. He also focuses not on the Danaids' eternal punishment, but rather, their function as an object of aesthetic enjoyment. The Danaids feature briefly in Vergil's *Aeneid*, on the belt that Turnus strips from Pallas' body (10.495-505); Aeneas is prompted to kill Turnus

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[43] The cult group is also attested and attributed by Pliny, *NH* 36.24, 32, 35 (see note above).

[44] Richardson writes, "Each part comes in its proper sequence … We move with him along the main axis, drawn along in the experience of the architect's conception and development, the ritual of architecture that is supremely Roman" (2006: 302). Miller 2009: 198 also notes that Propertius "has chosen to capture the perspective of a visitor approaching the site," remarking on some of his acts of selection.

[45] And of course, in doing so, creates his own aesthetic object; Miller 2006: 198 rightly emphasizes the poem's status as a separate artistic creation.

[46] 2009: 200-201.

when he glimpses it (12.941-9), showing the power of art and memory to evoke emotion and spur action.[47] Propertius, however, reads no moral lesson into the Danaids or the complex as a whole, but rather, quietly enjoys their artistry.[48] In fact, throughout the poem, he betrays a great interest in material and craftsmanship, dwelling on the golden stone of the portico (1-2), the shining marble of the temple itself (9), and the African ivory from which the doors were carved (12). Moreover, he praises the realism of the bulls of Myron, and 'animates' the statues of Apollo in his imagination: they excel nature in their beauty ("hic quidam Phoebo visus mihi pulchrior ipso," 5), and are so lifelike that they already seem to play and sing, an effect which Propertius enhances through the power of his own poetry (using, for instance, the present-tense verb "sonat" to describe the 'action' of the statue at 16).

In favoring the artistry of the temple, Propertius seems to omit Apollo's role as divine avenger as well as the religious function of the temple. As Miller points out, the depictions of both the cult statue (15-16) and the one before the temple (5-6) echo one another and emphasize Apollo's role as citharode and thus patron of poetry. Miller further argues, based on numismatic evidence, that in describing the cult statue Propertius "airbrushes away the offertory bowl to keep the focus on Apolline song."[49] Several scholars have moreover noted echoes of Callimachus in Propertius's description of the marble statue of Apollo outside, frozen mid-sound (2.31.6: "marmoreus tacita carmen hiare lyra"). In Callimachus' Hymn to Apollo (2.25), Niobe, transformed into marble, ceases her lamentation when she hears hymns to Apollo.

> καὶ μὲν ὁ δακρυόεις ἀναβάλλεται ἄλγεα πέτρος,
> ὅστις ἐνὶ Φρυγίῃ διερὸς λίθος ἐστήρικται,
> μάρμαρον ἀντὶ γυναικὸς ὀιζυρόν τι χανούσης.   25

But a closer look reveals that this may be no "covert piece of eulogy, suggesting the equivalence of Augustus and Apollo," as Heyworth has suggested.[50] Rather, through allusion to Callimachus, Propertius rewrites the Palatine Apollo. On the Palatine it is Apollo, rather than his victim Niobe, who seems to gasp out a sound; could this suggest that he is frozen in a similar act of lamentation, instead of a paean to Augustus' victory at Actium? The allusion shows how victims like Niobe can be silenced or pacified by their conquerors – effectively rendering Apollo himself in her place, silenced and perhaps co-opted by Augustus' victorious display. The full Callimachean passage contains further implications:

> ἰὴ ἰὴ φθέγγεσθε: κακὸν μακάρεσσιν ἐρίζειν.
> ὃς μάχεται μακάρεσσιν, ἐμῷ βασιλῆι μάχοιτο:
> ὅστις ἐμῷ βασιλῆι, καὶ Ἀπόλλωνι μάχοιτο.

Propertius is certainly thinking of these lines, given his imitation of the sound 'ἰὴ ἰὴ' with the Latin 'hiare' at 6. But Callimachus' passage explicitly links Apollo with the king, framing a complicity between political and divine might that commands submission and obedience. This subtle Callimachean echo, though audible only to Propertius' more learned readers, may suggest

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[47] For the significance of Pallas' baldric, cf. Vance 1973, Breen 1986, Conte 1986: 185-95, and O'Higgins 1995.
[48] Also observed by Miller 2009: 201.
[49] Ibid.
[50] 1994: 56.

that after Actium, Augustus, too, was in a position to demand submission or silence opposition. [51] Propertius' allusion thus testifies to the power of song – but also to the coercive force that may lie behind it and even, perhaps, triumphal architecture. Moreover, Callimachus' poem ends with Apollo's vindication of fine, delicate songs over larger if more majestic ones (2.106-114), which seems to support Propertius' own understated elegiac response over more epic ways of commemorating the *princeps*. Thus, by activating this Callimachean intertext, Propertius quietly hints at the voices that may have been suppressed by Augustus' supremacy, and begins to suggest an elegiac way of rereading Augustus' monumental architecture.

Propertius makes this sympathy for the victims even more explicit in his description of the temple doors' ivory bas-reliefs depicting the Gauls driven from Delphi and the legend of Niobe's children (12-14). Both scenes appear to present Apollo as an agent of justice and order, occupying among the gods precisely the position that Augustus may have wished to occupy in Rome.[52] The Gauls were said to have been driven back from their attack on Delphi by a snowstorm, thunder, and lightning: this would seem a clear *exemplum* of the god's protecting his rightful territory against a foreign threat, and might suggest that Augustus' own use of violence against Antony and Cleopatra was necessary and even righteous. In the latter myth, Niobe's children were killed by Apollo and Artemis in order to avenge Niobe's immoderate boast to Leto. [53] This seems to emphasize Apollo's capacity for keeping order and also for avenging his parent – filial piety, of course, being Octavian's self-declared motive for pursuing civil war (cf. *Res Gestae* 2). Both scenes might therefore represent attempts to disambiguate the moral connotations of Actium – to re-phrase and re-present the civil war in simpler moral terms.

On the other hand, Propertius' own reading casts these modern interpretations into doubt. He writes not that the doors celebrate or even depict Apollo's victories, but rather, that they *mourn* the victims of the god's vengeance ("maerebat," 2.31.14).[54] Certainly, though Niobe's punishment is justified, it may suggest the possible excessive or tragic quality of divine vengeance upon hopelessly outmatched victims.[55] Though he would later come to be associated with clemency, the young Octavian, too, might be accused of excess in his zeal to punish Caesar's assassins, not only by pursuing civil war generally but also by more individual acts of

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[51] Miller refers to the Apollo statue's "wondrous contrast between silence (*marmoreus tacita*) and sound (*carmen hiare lyra*)" (2009: 200); but since Niobe's silence suggests her victimization, perhaps Apollo's, too, suggests that he has been reappropriated to voice Augustus' ideology.

[52] Jaeger finds the temple and sanctuary in general attest "to the value of *pietas*," and feels the depictions on the door are "*monumenta* of Apollo's vengeance, and probably an unvoiced allusion to Antony" (1990: 13), but pursues this analysis no further.

[53] Niobe had boasted that she was superior to Leto (Latona) since she had 14 children whereas Leto had only two. Note that this story makes reference to Apollo, Artemis, and Latona, all three members of the 'Palatine triad' represented by cult statues in the cella.

[54] Miller 2009: 201 argues this shows an "elegiac perspective" in highlighting grief.

[55] See, for instance, Ovid's treatment in *Met.* 6, which emphasizes Niobe's audacity in boasting to the gods, but also the slaughter visited upon her children and her consequent deprivation of speech. The Gauls are admittedly far less sympathetic figures. However, Propertius' verb "maerebat" suggests that it was possible to construe them, too, as objects of lamentation; after all, in classical thought, pity can extend even to subjects who deserved their punishment. I believe Propertius is engaging in the imaginative exercise of activating pity for marginal figures in order to explore alternative readings of the complex, just as Aeneas upon encountering the Carthaginian temple of Juno experiences pity for the Trojans as well as the Greeks who are privileged by the visual text ("sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangent," *Aen.* 1.462; cf. my discussion in Chapter 1).

cruelty. For instance, after the surrender of Perusia in 40 BCE – very near to Propertius' home – the future *princeps* was rumored to have sacrificed 300 *equites* and senators to Divus Julius.[56] Insofar as it alludes to this action, Aeneas' sacrifice of eight *iuvenes* at Pallas' funeral (*Aeneid* 10.517-20, 11.81-2), which is clearly motivated by his grief and anger over Pallas' death, seems to confirm Suetonius and Dio's suggestion that this was an act of revenge. Propertius' description of the doors' 'mourning' may thus reread the Palatine complex as expressing sympathy for the victims of such punishment. Yet there is nothing to say that such sympathy would have been out of place on the Palatine. Interestingly, Appian, our best source for the Perusine war, presents Augustus' act as the result of a real attempt to strike a "reasonable balance between amnesty and punishment"[57] and to maintain his own authority as well as order among the troops. Octavian likely realized that civil war had its costs even as he was fighting it. Perhaps the doors, too, might have embedded some sorrow for the victims even as it showed their punishment as inevitable and even deserved.[58]   The Gauls and Niobids, in such a prominent position in a temple so closely associated with Octavian, might be a tacit and diplomatic acknowledgement of the other side of the story. Propertius' reading certainly shows that this allegedly triumphal monument to Augustus was capable of bearing such subtle interpretation.[59]

It is striking that, despite all his artistic concerns within this poem, Propertius never mentions the Greek and Latin libraries that Augustus is known to have established on the Palatine, with their gallery of noted writers.[60] Given the widespread reading of Cynthia as an allegory for elegy itself, this omission offers yet another way of reading the Palatine complex to comment on Augustus' patronage of the arts. The narrator begins the poem defensively by offering Cynthia an excuse for his lateness, as though she suspects him of cheating with other women ("quaeris, cur veniam tibi tardior," 1). He then tries to distract her with an elegiac recreation of the Palatine's splendors. But even though her very name suggests a natural linkage to Apollo, it becomes clear that she (and elegy) have no place in this precinct. This library was closely integrated into Augustus' complex, and may also have been integrated into his moral program, if we believe Ovid's statement at *Tristia* 3.1.65-8 that his elegies were banned from it; the fact that Augustus used it to hold meetings of the senate in his old age[61] further underscores his proximity and perhaps perceived ownership over the space. In the remainder of the poem (I follow Heyworth in regarding 2.32 as immediately continuous with 2.31),[62] the narrator states

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[56] Suet. *Aug.* 15.2; Dio 48.14.4; cf. Appian *BC* 5.6.192-5.49.207.

[57] According to Kraggerud (1987: 78), who is disinclined to view the *Aeneid* passage as related, but provides a helpful analysis of sources on Perusia.

[58] The personification of the doors as 'mourning' the scenes they depict suggests a certain vividness and emotional quality to the art, perhaps even possible focalization around the victim.

[59] Lundström argues that Augustus would have been angered by Ovid's version of Apollo slaughtering the Niobids in *Met.* 6.146-312, since it did not show his patron god in a flattering light (1980: 25-27), but of course (as Feeney points out, 1992: 3) this very image is on the doors to his own temple on the Palatine.

[60] For other attestations cf. Suet. *Aug.* 29.3, Dio 53.1.3, and (for the gallery) Tacitus *Ann.* 2.37.3 and 2.83.4. Miller 2009: 189 also cites P. Oxy. 2435.29-34. Augustus appointed the scholars Pompeius Macer and Julius Hyginus as head librarians (Suet. *Iul.* 56.7; *Gramm.* 20) and epitaphs provide names of some staff (*CIL* 6.5184 and 5188-91).

[61] See Thompson 1981.

[62] Heyworth 2007: 246 notes that the transposition of 32.7-10 led to a separation between the two, but follows Hetzel and Luck 1979: 85-8 in arguing for continuity between 2.31 and 32, and prints them as a single poem, using 32.7-8 as a bridge (a reading which I endorse and follow here). Even those who do not accept Heyworth's decision must acknowledge that 32 would have been read immediately subsequent to 31, and as such seems to form a coda – especially given the connection through "hoc utinam spatiere loco."

that he wishes Cynthia would stroll around the complex in her free time: "hoc utinam spatiere loco, quodcumque vacabis, / Cynthia!" (32.7-8). The next several lines depict Cynthia as a marginalized figure with a poor public recognition,[63] again suggesting the awkward relationship of elegy and the elegiac mistress to the moral authority represented by Augustus. Yet the poet then calls upon Phoebus himself, since he sees and knows all things, to vouch for Cynthia's innocence. He proceeds to cite a host of literary, historical, and mythological women who have cheated on their husbands (2.32.41-60). Propertius' invocation of Phoebus in his capacity as universal witness – here, to the natural law that people and even gods will commit adultery, as inscribed in so many myths and poems – overturns Apollo's moralistic role as guardian of order and justice as envisioned on the Palatine temple doors. In fact, though the Palatine library is integrated into a complex that seems to serve masculine and militaristic values, Propertius' list of precedents for adultery suggests that he retains access to a mental library of exempla, along with control over how to deploy them. In fact, as Propertius reimagines him, Phoebus is a perfect presiding deity for the library and its promise of open access to information; instead of serving as a god of order, he testifies even to truths that run contrary to any Augustan moral program. The concluding couplet commands Cynthia, if she imitates Greek or Latin predecessors (playing on the *docta poema/puella* conceit), always to live "libera" in his judgment (62, where the word seems to span a range between 'free,' 'noble,' and 'without punishment').[64] Propertius' poetry may have no place in Augustus' Greek and Latin libraries, just as they have no place in his poem; yet it nonetheless remains free of Augustan control over the circulation of ideas, and exercises power over how to interpret the imagery of the principate.

Thus, expanding on Miller's observation that the poem expresses an "elegiac perspective," I argue that it reappropriates the complex as an aesthetic object rather than a piece of propaganda – an architectural text that Augustus may have intended triumphantly, but that Propertius reads and rewrites elegiacally. In fact, though Cynthia and perhaps elegy may be unwelcome in the complex, Propertius effectively writes her into the Palatine despite her absence; the aesthetic qualities and marginalized perspective which she symbolizes are everywhere present within his rendering. Moreover, the latent tensions here between Apollo, Augustus, and the arts are taken up again and made explicit in Ovid's *Tristia* 3.1 – a poem that literalizes the Palatine's rejection of elegy and confirms Propertius' insinuation that not all voices and perspectives are equally welcome in Augustan 'public' space.

D. The portico of the Danaids

Prior to *Tristia* 3.1, though, some of these issues emerge within a series of poems that respond to the iconography of the Palatine portico, made from Numidian marble columns interspersed with statues of the fifty daughters of Danaus. No element of the temple complex

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[63] The crowd ("turba") prevents him from trusting Cynthia, since they see that she carries torches for the goddess Trivia, seeks oracles at Praeneste, and travels to Tibur and Lanuvium. All of these places are far from the center of Rome and are associated with cults of female gods, perhaps opposing the marginal and feminine elegiac genre to the masculine complex to Palatine Apollo which is situated at the center of Rome both topographically and culturally. The poet then states that Cynthia should not yield to a hostile tongue ("inimicae … linguae," 2.32.25), that scandal has always been the penalty for beauty ("semper formosis fabula poena fuit," 2.32.26), and that Cynthia's good name has not been destroyed by charges of "venenum" (2.32.27, evoking the true historical charge of poisoning associated with Clodia, Catullus' Lesbia, but also perhaps the idea of moral poisoning).
[64] Ovid similarly plays on *liber/libertas* at *Tristia* 3.1.72, discussed below.

excited more attention from contemporary poets,[65] yet few are more difficult to interpret. The paucity of material remains has engendered much debate regarding the statues' form, placement, and particularly attitude,[66] all of which might affect their interpretation within contemporary culture. If the Danaids were depicted as suppliants, for instance, a viewer might recall their journey from Egypt to Argos and their father's subsequent attainment of the local throne with the help of Apollo. According to mythology, Danaus thereafter founded the sanctuary of Apollo Lykos, and thus might provide a parallel with Augustus in his roles as a divinely-sanctioned leader and the builder of a great temple to Apollo.[67] Some scholars, on the other hand, have envisioned the Danaids as poised to strike the sons of Aegyptus, who according to one rather dubious scholion were depicted as equestrian statues opposite.[68] In this case, the statues might suggest the validity of self-defense against a barbaric Egyptian enemy, a theme with obvious parallels to Octavian's recent victory against Antony and Cleopatra.[69] However appealing the neatness of this interpretation, it presents obvious difficulties: the Danaids' murder of their new husbands is more often represented as a crime than as an act of self-defense, and their ultimate punishment in Hades tends to confirm this negative interpretation.

Most convincing of all, from an archaeological and semantic point of view, is the third possibility: that the Danaids of the portico, as so often elsewhere in art and literature, are represented as enduring their eternal punishment of bearing leaky jars on their heads.[70] Marie Antoinette Tomei's 1990 identification of the Danaids with herms in nero antico found in the area, arm stubs facing outwards as if to support such a weight, is now widely accepted. Perhaps, given that these statues were composed of exotic foreign marble and represented the Egyptian Danaids, they would serve as surrogates for the Egyptian captives that Augustus would have paraded in his triumph of 29 – permanent reminders of the submission of Cleopatra, suffering a permanent punishment for their crime. Certainly, these splendid figures are a powerful material reminder of Octavian's immense gain in wealth and power upon annexing Egypt.[71] The poets in

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[65] For the porticoes cf. Prop. 2.31.1-4, Ovid *Tristia* 3.1.61-2, Vell. 2.81.3, Suet. *Aug.* 29.3, and various references to the Danaids in Vergil (*Aen.* 10.495-505 and 12.941-9), Horace (2.14 and 3.11), and Tib. 1.3.

[66] Cf. Tomei 1990, Balensiefen 1995, and Leach 2008.

[67] As Gruen has pointed out to me, one problem with this interpretation is that the Danaids, though descended from Argive stock, were considered Egyptians (cf. Aeschylus, *Suppliants*) and thus might seem a strange parallel for Augustus.

[68] According to Ovid, a statue of their father Danaus with his sword drawn stood near them (*Ars* 1.73-4); a scholion on *Persae* 2.56 furthermore attests that (equestrian?) statues of the fifty sons of Aegyptus stood in front of them in the open air. This seems somewhat dubious to me given the lack of attestation in other sources that concern themselves with the Danaid group, but several archaeologists accept this view (cf. e.g. Tomei 1990).

[69] Leach 2008: 21 provides a useful summary of the scholarship on the Danaid statues. Milnor 2005 also explores the idea that the Danaids refer to Actium "as another instance of a conflict between civilization and barbarism which is ultimately resolved by the power of the gods" (52), so that their rejection of their grooms at their father's orders parallels Rome's rejection of Antony under the command of Augustus. (Note, however, the anachronism of regarding Octavian as *pater patriae* at the time the temple was built in 28 BCE.) Other supporters of such a view include Simon 1986: 19-24, Lefevre 1989: 12-19, Spence 1991. Kellum 1998: 80-1, Harrison 1998: 233-42 further see the Danaids as representing Antony and the barbarians.

[70] Though note Eva Keuls' argument that this water-bearing pose is a late Roman innovation (adopted by Leach 2008: 18). Bartsch 1998: 331 discusses the idea that caryatids hold up buildings as punishment; cf. Vitruvius *De Architectura* 1.5 and Pausanias 3.11.3.

[71] Gurval sees the conquest of Egypt, rather than the victory at Actium, as the primary focus of Octavian's propaganda upon his return to Rome in the summer of 29: see his first chapter (1995: 19-85), and particularly his discussion of the three-day triple triumph that culminated with Egypt rather than Actium (1995: 19-36). For

particular emphasize their numerousness and uniformity in subjection: Propertius calls them a 'turba' (2.31.4), and Ovid refers to them as an 'agmen' (*Amores* 2.2.4). And their emphasis on justice and atonement seems powerful and undeniably connected with the iconographic plan of the temple, for instance, the imagery on the doors of the temple.

Yet these statues are often revisited within the Augustan Text, in ways that seem to debate such an interpretation and that frame themselves as 'disobedient' readings. Tibullus 1.3, for instance, revisits them not as examples of obedience, but as "offenders against Venus"[72] – changing the value system that they appear to serve. Similarly, Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* 1.73-4 identifies this portico as a good hunting-ground for young lovers; in cheekily appropriating this site for amatory purposes, Ovid seems to suggest that he is contesting some moral message that it may have conveyed. Yet the Danaids may already have been far more open to interpretation than he lets on. Their crime – murdering their own kin in obedience to their father – makes them particularly appropriate symbols for the guilt, conflict of values, and mixed loyalties that characterize civil war.[73] Tomei makes the interesting if unsubstantiable argument that the black Danaids would have alternated with red ones, comprising a grouping of statues whose similarity amidst contrast might suggest that both the victors and the vanquished in the civil war were in some sense equally guilty.[74] Though her reconstruction is highly speculative, the statues do seem to have 'alternated' with columns,[75] in a rhythm that recalls the metrical alternation of elegy.[76] Poets read the statues elegiacally, too, as suggesting reservations and regrets about violence. Moreover, the Danaids' punishment was incurred as a result of their obedience to their father – something that Horace suggests in *Ode* 3.11, and that Ovid hints at when he describes an accompanying statue of their father Danaus with his sword drawn (*Ars* 1.73-4).[77] Thus, though the Danaids may be interpreted as signs of righteous punishment and symbols of Augustus' power, they also hint at the dangers of blindly obeying authority and the difficulty of assigning blame. Whatever Augustus' authorial intentions with the complex, then, the sheer variety of ancient and modern 'readings' of the Danaids hints at the multiplicity of meanings that were available to – and exploited by – interpreters of the complex.[78]

Egyptian elements in the temple complex, see Orlin 2008: 239-40, although Orlin is not sure quite how to regard them; he feels they cannot simply represent "anti-Egyptian triumphalism" and believes that though "public policy pronouncements of the 30s and literature of the 20s may display antipathy toward Egypt and Egyptian culture, artistic decorations, especially those sponsored by Octavian and his immediate family, reveal a greater level of acceptance of Egyptian elements."

[72] Leach 2008: 20.

[73] Postgate writes that Hypermnestra "enlarges on the text that doing our duty sometimes brings us into trouble" (1926: lxxx; see also Thomas 1964: 157). Bartsch (1998: 332) and Spence 1991 view the Danaids as serving to mediate and suppress signs of fratricide.

[74] Tomei 1990. Zanker suggests they may hint at the possibility of reconciliation after civil war (1983: 21-40).

[75] See Quenomoen's convincing 2006 reconstruction.

[76] For instance, Ovid seems to link them in *Tristia* 3.1 through the word 'alternus,' used to describe both the statues ("signa peregrinis ubi sunt alterna columnis," 61) and the elegiac book's 'feet' ("aspicis alternos intremuisse pedes," 55).

[77]Milnor finally regards the portico as "a celebration of the politicization of a family bond, as the daughters' obedience to their father becomes the (rather bloody) solution to the dynastic and territorial quarrel between Danaus and Aegyptus" (2005: 64-5).

[78] I am not alone in reading anxieties about the civil war into even such an ostensibly celebratory monument as the Palatine complex; Gurval, for instance, criticizes the received opinion that Actium was a universal and uncomplicated focus for glorification of the *princeps* (1995: 2-7).

E. Horace, *Odes* 2.14

Though Horace's brief mention of the Danaids in *Odes* 2.14.19 does not specifically reference the portico, it envisions them in the same pose of eternal punishment and thus may suggest one potential reading of the figures. The poem, addressed to an aptly-named Postumus, laments that no piety may stave off the inexorable approach of age and death. In this context, the Danaids appear to signify not crime or its punishment, but rather, the universal fate that awaits all. For Augustan readers familiar with the portico, the darkness, numerousness, and sameness of its nero antico statues would resonate with the blackness of Cocytos and the eternal punishment of Sisyphus as depicted at 17-20. They might also underscore the poem's point that everyone, whatever his life, must endure the single fate of death; not even notable acts of piety, such as sacrifice (or, presumably, votive offerings such as this temple), will stave it off (13-4). If the logic of Horace's poem is applied to Augustus' Palatine complex, even if the Danaid statues represent the 'losers' of Actium, the 'winners' will eventually join them in Hades. The statement that "none of the trees which you cultivate will follow you, their brief master, except for the hated cypress" (22-4) evokes the fact that mourners carrying cypress branches followed the bier of dead Romans. Might this insinuate that the trees which 'follow' great living Romans, such as the laurel and oak which accompanied Roman generals during triumphal processions and which decked Augustus' door, have no relevance after death? The reference to the heir who wastes stronger wine than the pontiffs drink (25-8) further suggests the futility of much human achievement; even moderation, piety, and careful custodianship of the future may be thwarted by future generations. Though the connection is neither necessary nor overt, individual readers with experience of both poem and portico might read the former as a comment on the latter – as suggesting that even grand monuments such as the Palatine complex, not to mention the victory and virtue it commemorates, are merely testaments to the impermanence of all achievement.

F. Horace, *Odes* 3.11

Horace's *Ode* 3.11 also treats the Danaids in a way that may reflect or influence Roman audience's understanding of the Palatine portico.[79] Though this poem, like 2.14, makes no specific mention of the Palatine complex, its opening invocation to the lyre, "amica templis" (6), recalls Apollo in his guise as citharoedus in the cult statue of the temple. The poem ostensibly uses the story of the Danaids in order to convey a moral to its addressee, a spirited young girl named Lyde who is reluctant to submit to a husband (7-12). In this context, the Danaids, who are suffering punishment in Hades for murdering their bridegrooms, seem to illustrate the dangers of non-submission. By extension, might the Danaids of the Palatine portico, in their exotic uniformity and pose of eternal suffering, represent the consequences of contesting Augustus' own supremacy? Such a reading chimes with the complex's depiction of Apollo as a guardian of justice, for instance, on the ivory doors to the temple. At the same time, the moral ambiguity of the Danaids' murder of their kin and husbands – the fact that it could be condoned as well as condemned – mirrors the Romans' own recent fratricidal conflict and may undermine attempts to assign blame or guilt to one party alone.

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[79] Leach 2008 provides a fuller discussion of this poem, including historic background for the Danaid figures; she is especially concerned with the issues of persuasion and seduction.

But the poem then zooms in on the one Danaid who is missing from Hades: Hypermnestra, who is never mentioned by name but is described as "splendide mendax et in omne virgo / nobilis aevum" (35-6) for heroically disobeying her father and refusing to murder her husband.[80] This enhances the meaning and complexity of the poem, especially insofar as it may comment on the Danaid portico. The narrator's praise of Hypermnestra suggests that true heroism belongs to those who practice mercy, rather than those who enact violence even in the name of vengeance (as Danaus had urged his daughters to avenge Aegyptus' past wrongs). In fact, it suggests a certain nobility in nonconformity and disobedience – a message that undercuts the most obvious reading of the Danaid portico as an indication of the just punishment that awaits those who oppose Augustus. The Danaids were wrong not only to kill their husbands, but also to obey the orders of their father; this links the crime of civil war to over-obedience of paternalistic authority (such as Augustus' avenging of Julius Caesar, and Romans' own submission to Augustus).

But if Hypermnestra was outstandingly absent from Horace's Hades, was she also absent from the portico? Yes, in the sense that no source attests her presence on the Palatine, and it is difficult to imagine how her resisting figure would have been depicted amid the ranks of her sisters – statues that gave off above all an impression of conformity. But, in another sense, no. Hypermnestra represents softness and clemency (40-44), is associated with "Nox et Venus" (50), urges her husband to write an epitaph on her tomb (51-2), and is said to have gained everlasting fame for her action (35-6) – an action which is rather a refraining from action, and marked by the lyric speech-act reported in Horace's final four stanzas (37-52). In this sense, Hypermnestra represents poetry itself, in its opposition to savagery and concern for remembrance. This creates a ring structure in 3.11, which begins with an encomium of poetry's power to move hard hearts (1-6) and ends with a moving poetic speech against harshness (37-52). But it also creates an added parallel with the Palatine complex, for there, the 'missing' figure of Hypermnestra is present, in spirit, in the library itself – a repository for poetry, in all its associations with fiction, immortality, and potentially even resistance.[81] Thus *Ode* 3.11 helps us envision how the Danaid portico might have been read as a simple parable of crime, punishment, and obedience, but also questions those messages and depicts poetry itself as a humanizing and independent force.[82]

Ode 3.11's emphasis on the value of poetry gives added intertextual weight to Propertius' complaint at 2.32 that Cynthia does not stroll the grounds of the Palatine, and to Ovid's even later poem (*Tristia* 3.1, discussed below) describing his books' exclusion from the library. The complex itself, as I have argued, allows many possible interpretations, and seems to present Apollo in various guises as an enforcer of order, patron of art, and god of prophecy – reflecting on the diverse roles of Augustus himself. Yet the very poems that allow archaeologists to reconstruct the area also help shape its meaning, both for the Augustan public and within our own consciousnesses. Propertius 2.31-2 helped critics construct a 'normative' reading of the complex's iconography even as it conveys a self-consciously resistant elegiac perspective; it

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[80] Leach 2008: 28 also notes Hypermnestra's absence and her 'uncomfortable' position within the lesson of the poem, one that may parallel the difficulty of interpreting the Danaids within this portico.

[81] Ovid pursues this latter idea in *Tristia* 3.1, following Horace and Propertius' exploration of the opposing values that can be seen as embodied by the portico and the library, and evaluating where poetry fits into that spectrum.

[82] Though Ode 3.11 makes no specific mention of the Palatine portico, Horace proves he was familiar with the complex at Ode 1.31, and given the frequent linkage of the Danaids with the portico elsewhere in Augustan poetry, I believe both Horace and his readers would be able if not likely to make the intertextual association.

constructs sympathy for the victims of divine justice and questions whether public spaces like the Palatine have room for private expressions such as elegy. Horace's odes, too, question the relative values of military versus poetic achievement and suggest a value in non-conformity. These poems all explore tensions between possible interpretations of the Palatine complex. Yet of all these literary treatments of the Palatine complex, Ovid's *Tristia* 3.1 stands out for its thoroughness and self-consciousness in pursuing such latent frictions within imperial rhetoric and iconography, and in deconstructing the image of Augustus that emerges.

IV. Ovid's reading of the Palatine complex: *Tristia* 3.1

In *Tristia* 3.1, Ovid speaks through the persona of the third book of the *Tristia* (technically, of course, a papyrus roll), which has recently arrived in Rome after the long journey from Tomis.[83] Scholars have already pointed out that the book serves as a surrogate for Ovid in Rome, and that its status as an outsider allows it to make observations that might not otherwise be allowed to the poet himself.[84] The book begins by addressing readers to forgive its disheveled appearance, poor verse, and other deficiencies (9-18): this is due to its master's sorrow in exile and the exhausting journey the book has undertaken.[85] The book also swears that its master's fortune is so bad that he may no longer dissimulate via jokes (5-6); this seems to claim that the following verses will be 'serious,' but of course, they are still written from an obviously fictional perspective – one that sees the world with an almost comic literality[86] and that applies this mode of reading to the *princeps* himself. The book then begs readers (*lectores*) to tell it where a foreign guest (*hospes*) should go to find a place to stay (*sedes*) in the city (19-20). In the next line, we realize that the book has not been speaking directly to us in present time, but has been reporting the speech it gave when it first arrived in Rome; only one of Ovid's readers heeded his plea, just barely ("vix fuit unus," 22), and showed it the way to a haven it should seek as a "hospes in urbe liber" (20).[87] The book thanks him effusively, wishing him the happy life in

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[83] For more about representations of the book-roll, cf. Williams 1992, and for the transition from papyrus roll to codex, Roberts and Skeat 1983.

[84] See in particular Newlands 1997: 58-60; her analysis has much in common with my own, although her focus is on the book's materiality and desire for preservation rather than its interaction with the cityscape and Augustan iconography. She also tends toward a more flatly anti-Augustan approach (viewing the book as really exposing the falsity behind Augustan claims) whereas I aim to examine how the poem invites readers to choose between falsely polarized 'subversive' and 'orthodox' interpretations. Relevant to my view is M.H. Abrams' analysis of 'structural irony' created through "the invention of a naïve hero, or else a naïve narrator or spokesman, whose invincible simplicity or obtuseness leads him to persist in putting an interpretation on affairs which the knowing reader—who penetrates to, and shares, the implicit point of view of the authorial presence behind the naïve *persona*—just as persistently is called on to alter and correct" (2005). I argue, however, that the reader's reaction works in the other direction too: the naïve observer's common-sense questions about Augustus' symbols prompt her to question her own interpretive conventions.

[85] As Williams points out, in *Tristia* 1.1 and 3.1, Ovid "sets up a negative correlation between his book's shabby appearance, his own miserable circumstances in Tomis, and the mournful nature of the verse he composes there" (1992: 181). Newlands 1997: 60-3 shows how the "personification of the book is developed through punning on parts both of the body and of the book," and also through the multi-functionality of materials like pumice (used both on human bodies as a depilatory and on books for smoothing sheets of papyrus). Hinds 1985: 15 notes that the book's *lituras* at 3.1.15 allude to the *litura* that mark the barbarian Briseis' difficulty in writing Greek at the beginning of *Heroides* 3.

[86] E.g. the characteristic 'limp' of elegy is now due to the book's tired feet, 11-12.

[87] I return to the issue of the guide's identity below. Schmitzer 1999 takes him as a *monstrator* or *periegetes*, a tour guide waiting to show recently-arrived strangers around the city, but makes this more of an assumption than an

Rome that has been denied to Ovid, and is conducted past a series of monuments to the Palatine complex. This journey, which culminates in the book's encounter with Augustus' house, allows Ovid to show us how the book 'reads' (or fails to read) various aspects of the physical city of Rome, and thus enables him to comment on more general habits of interpreting symbols of the principate.[88]

A. 'Reading' the Palatine

It may be useful at this point to explore what it might mean for the book to 'read' the topography of the Palatine and its environs. As discussed in Chapter 1, Diane Favro has argued that the urban space of Rome can itself be treated as a 'text' composed of various roads, buildings, monuments, gardens, and other physical structures.[89] Moreover, Favro argues, no public figure exerted greater control over this text than Augustus; his power, wealth, ambition, and longevity allowed him drastically to affect the physical appearance of vast swaths of the city, and let him arrange certain regions – most notably, the Campus Martius – in such a way that a viewer passing through the city and reading the visual language of its monuments would process its various elements into a coherent urban 'narrative.'[90] Favro's argument, though useful, also contains a certain unresolved ambiguity. On the one hand, she seems to acknowledge that readers' active interpretative participation is necessary for the creation of this narrative, but on the other, she writes as if readers are passive recipients of a meaning that is literally 'built in' to the urban text by Augustus. We see signs of this problem in her perhaps overschematic identification of the roles assumed by ancient observers:

> Looking at new Augustan projects, they were passive readers. Varying their route
> through the Campus and their length of stay, observers became commanding storytellers
> called upon to connect diverse, nontangential messages. Furthermore, by being physically

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argument. Schmitzer links this poem with another so-called 'guided tour,' Horace's *Satire* 1.9; though I believe his classifications and analyses are sometimes oversimplistic, a comparison may nevertheless yield fruit. For instance, the 'bore' in *Satire* 1.9 accosts Horace in order to seek Maecenas' patronage, follows him through the forum, and ends up being called away by a legal case; in *Tristia* 3.1, the book seems to use the guide in order to seek Augustus' patronage (or at least, a place in Augustus' library), and gets embroiled in a dispute between Ovid and Augustus that occupies the final portion of the poem. I believe that this guide is one of Ovid's readers (lines 19-20 set up this expectation), one who tries to help undo the work of the *delator* who earlier brought Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* to the ears of the *princeps*, resulting in Ovid's exile.

[88] Horace similarly structures several poems around walks through the city, although to somewhat different effect. Jaeger 1990, Chapter 4, argues for a "moral relationship between topography and character" – generally, the character of the narrator – in *Satires* 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, and 2.6. She also examines references to the Campus Martius in Horace's *Odes*, arguing that "inasmuch as the city is a meaningful system of symbols, i.e. a text, it can change meaning when it is confronted with other, written, texts" (1990: 139). Yet Jaeger focuses on Horace's use of public monuments' stability and permanence to comment upon the fragility of human life (1990: 141). Here Ovid is performing a much more sustained and political reading of a particular urban text, using it to comment directly on Augustus' public image.

[89] See especially her 1996 *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*, but also her 1993 article. Zanker 1997 also explores reader responses to pictorial landscapes in Rome.

[90] According to Favro 1993, due to rhetorical training and contemporary habits of mining visual material for messages, ancient viewers would string urban landscapes into 'narratives' of a sort; however, the diversity of Republican monuments conveyed "episodic, disjointed messages," whereas Augustus' control enabled him to compose a much more coherent narrative.

in the Campus Martius observers became active participants in the Augustan narrative, for their very presence affected the narrative reading of others.[91]

Favro states that "on the microurban scale, individual elements, like individual words, clarified the Augustan narrative and left little room for ambiguous readings"; she moreover believes that Augustus wove his urban projects "together into a recognizable, unambiguous narrative."[92] At the same time, she concedes that "urban authors can exert some pressure through the arrangement of their text, yet they can never totally determine the paths taken by readers."[93]

Expanding on this latter point, I posit that each individual urban 'reader' had a fair amount of autonomy to determine his own path through space, interpret individual monuments, and also connect such interpretations into a narrative. Moreover, it is nearly impossible to speak of 'an audience' in the singular, for the viewers of a public building in Rome would have included people of all socioeconomic classes, levels of education, and ideological leanings. Favro herself acknowledges that only an educated observer could fully appreciate the "complex tale" of an urban narrative, whereas others might recognize individual elements even though they "may not have understood the subtleties of the text or been able to interweave the different isolated messages into a true narrative."[94] It logically follows that there is no one normative 'urban narrative' but rather that every reader imposes his own upon a topographical text. Therefore, even if urban texts like Augustus' were *designed* to be monolithic, unambiguous, and unitary in meaning, readings would necessarily vary according to the abilities, experiences, and background of the individual.

This latter is the crucial point, for this is what Ovid exploits in *Tristia* 3.1: the ability of the reader – here, the ignorant and unacculturated book – to *mis*-read architectural texts. By failing to weave them into a coherent narrative, or reading them into the 'wrong' narrative, the book 'accidentally' creates the impression that there is a right way to understand the Augustan urban text.[95] The book's confusion on encountering certain Augustan signs has the effect of defamiliarizing these signs for the poem's overreader, prompting him to rethink his own prior interpretations. Moreover, the book notices only a few of the many images on the Palatine, thus offering the reader an unusual and somewhat skewed selection of elements from which to construct a unifying 'narrative.' In fact, the book frequently demonstrates its inability to create a topographical 'narrative' on its own: its common sense and lack of familiarity with contemporary culture prevent it from being able to overlook the dissonances between Augustan representation and practice. The book's interpretive difficulties prompt the reader to step in and supply a reading on its behalf; but the book itself is an actor in the urban landscape, and its sorry plight becomes another textual element that the reader must accommodate, further destabilizing the benevolent image of Augustus that the Palatine complex has been thought to convey. Thus,

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[91] 1993: 238.

[92] 1993: 247 and 249.

[93] Though she maintains her insistence on the supremacy of the author ("To maintain control over the narrative, authors must develop a text that is legible regardless of the sequence followed," 1993: 232).

[94] Favro 1993: 249.

[95] Huskey makes a similar point in his 2006 article, but argues that Ovid, by omitting major monuments, subverts Augustus' intention of making himself central to Roman topography, and does not reconcile this with the centrality of Augustus to the poem as a whole. I attempt to examine how perceptions of 'normativity' and 'subversiveness' emerge in the first place from texts such as these.

readers of *Tristia* 3.1 are encouraged to weave the book's experiences into an urban narrative that resists certain aspects of Augustus' public image – thereby creating a sense that there are authorized and suppressed interpretations, and falsely polarizing the polysemous Augustan Text.

B. The path to the Palatine

In *Tristia* 3.1, the *liber*'s route to the Palatine complex receives a significant amount of attention and conditions readers' response to the destination. Scholars have long identified this route with the path that Aeneas and Evander take in *Aeneid* 8.306-69, and conclude that it is meant to remind the reader "of the city's founding ideals."[96] Yet the two routes are described in very different terms, and thus convey different 'urban narratives' even if they do trace the same physical space. The *Aeneid,* on the one hand, seems to create a sense of the layering of history by linking various stages of Rome's mythological past with its modern urban present. Among the sites that Aeneas and Evander pass or observe in *Aeneid* 8.306-69 are the Carmental altar and gate, sacred to Evander's prophetic mother and connected with his foundation of the city; the grove which Romulus would use as an asylum; the Lupercal, later home to Romulus and Remus' mother, but first named by the Arcadians in honor of Lycaean Pan;[97] and the Argiletum, where (according to Virgil's false etymology) Argus was killed after plotting against his host Evander. Vergil's description also intercuts Rome's sacred ancient topography with hints of the splendid modern city to rise on the same ground. Thus he mentions the Tarpeian rock and the Capitol, bare of the grand buildings that would ornament it in Augustus' age (347-8); the ruined remains of Janus' and Saturn's towns (on the Janiculum and Capitoline), establishing a sense of a golden (pre)history prior even to the legendary past of Evander (355-8); the Forum and the Carinae, a fashionable district of 1st-century Rome where cattle used to low in Evander's time (360-1); and finally Evander's own humble house on the Palatine, which provides an analogue for Augustus' modern residence on the same hill (362-5).[98] Vergil's descriptions of this pastoral landscape thus tie it to later stages in Roman history and especially the relative grandeur of Augustan Rome, providing a sense of the city's rich and unbroken history as well as a respect for the immense changes wrought by the passage of time.

It is debatable whether Ovid's book follows the same physical path: Evander clearly leads Aeneas through the Capitoline ("et Capitolia ducit / aurea nunc," *Aeneid* 8.347-8), whereas Ovid's book proceeds straight from the imperial *fora* through the Forum Romanum to the Palatine gate. Moreover, Ovid's book creates a different *associative* path by describing the journey through an entirely different set of landmarks – ones that are hardly the most prominent

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[96] Newlands 1997: 64; see also Fowler 1917. Geyssen 1999 compares it instead with the route of Martial 1.70.

[97] Vergil is thus playing with the multiplicity of meanings that were available to some sites as a result of Rome's many-layered history: this site is, in a sense, overdetermined as the 'Lupercal' because it is associated with wolves in two separate legends (that of Romulus and Remus' mother, and that of Evander's Arcadian origins and hence appreciation of Pan). It might have taken on yet another association for Roman readers insofar as it was restored by Augustus (Suet., *Aug.* 31).

[98] For the positioning of Augustus' house on the alleged site of Evander's, see Gransden 1976: 30, Huskey 1996: 27 and Binder 1971: 137-41. Particularly intriguing for my purposes are Evander's words to Aeneas upon inviting him to enter his house: "aude, hospes, contemnere opes et te quoque dignum / finge deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis" (364-5). Williams 1996 and many others link this praise of humility to the "studied simplicity of Augustus' own house" on a nearby site in contemporary Rome (cf. Suet., *Aug.* 72), though several modern scholars feel that this should be read as a reproach to Augustus for favoring spectacular and expensive building projects, including the Palatine complex. I discuss these issues below.

or famous edifices in this place during this period, and are described in unusual terms. In other words, though Ovid presents the book as innocently or subrationally observing, selecting and describing these particular landmarks, there is a reason for this list: its elements form a set of symbols that the reader is invited to assemble into an 'urban narrative,' with an eye toward their many intertextual associations within history and culture.[99]

Though Ovid chooses unusual landmarks with which to describe the book's route, it is easy for those with any familiarity with the area to reconstruct it; I supply a clear and accurate map commissioned by Samuel Huskey for his 2006 article (Figure 2, below). In a useful 1987 article, Peter Wiseman analyzes the topography of the Palatine as it changed from Republic through empire, and identifies the route described in *Tristia* 3.1 with the second of two approaches that Augustus built to his complex on the Palatine.[100] According to Wiseman's argument, which is very much in line with the modern interpretations of the complex discussed above, Augustus had built the original steep western approach up the Clivus Victoriae in order to highlight the singularity and majesty of the Palatine complex. Such an urban-planning choice may have reflected the influence of Hellenistic ideas of kingship on Octavian's early self-representation.[101] By contrast, this new route, built after the fire of 3 CE, runs from the forum and past many other great aristocratic houses before terminating at the Palatine complex. In keeping with scholars' belief that Augustan expressions of power grew more moderate as the principate matured, this new path may better have appealed to republican sensibilities in presenting Augustus' house as the greatest among many great ones, just as the *princeps* himself was *primus inter pares*.[102] But even if we accept that Augustus had carefully planned this new route in order to rescind his earlier monarchical self-representations, Ovid's book has a different story to tell.

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[99] Moreover, it has been well-established that Romans were trained to associate memory with topographical space, e.g. by imagining themselves walking along familiar routes and linking its landmarks with items to be memorized. For memory and its associations with the urban landscape of Rome, see Jaeger 1991, Chapter 1, and Favro 1993: 232-4, 249-50; for memory and topography in general, Yates 2001. Thus, this list – written as it was by Ovid himself, albeit through the persona of the book – might strike the Roman reader as a window into Ovid's own memory of Rome from exile, as well as an index of the book's memory of Rome.

[100] Wiseman 1987: 403-405. See also Huskey 2006, who provides several commissioned maps; map 2 in Kenney 1992; and Bishop 1956: 187-92 for the book's route through Rome. It is important, though, to bear in mind that works like *Tristia* 3.1 themselves have helped scholars reconstruct such routes (although by now sufficient material evidence has been recovered to encourage confidence about this particular path). For instance, Coarelli's reconstruction has helped make sense of the turn that Ovid describes after the temple of Vesta and the Regia; Boni in 1901 excavated the road leading from the Palatine gate up to the ridge where the Arch of Titus now stands; and the piazza that would have stood before Augustus' complex has been identified as the area later dominated by the vestibule of the Flavian palace (see also Wiseman, forthcoming).

[101] Wiseman 1987: 400-5 provides a thorough description of this approach and the dramatic impression it might have made, which would have suited the more naked ambition of Octavian's 'Hellenistic' early career (see also Coarelli 1983: 44, Zanker 1990: 33-77). Wiseman also argues that Vergil was alluding to this approach in *Aeneid* 6.777ff., where he mentions Romulus, the walls of his citadels, Magna Mater, and the Julian line culminating in Augustus; this replicates the order of landmarks associated with these personages that a traveler would have passed on his way up this path (1987: 403).

[102] Wiseman 1987: 405-7.

C. The book's itinerary

Instead of beginning its Roman itinerary with the port, the Campus Martius, or some other natural point of entry for foreigners, the first identifiable landmark the book mentions shows that it is already within the pomerium: after wandering for a while in search of a guide, it mentions passing the "fora Caesaris" (27).[103] But what, exactly, does this mean? Julius Caesar had begun a forum featuring a temple to his divine ancestor Venus Genetrix, and famously received senators from its entrance (Suet. *Jul.* 78)[104]; Augustus completed this project after Caesar's death, in an act that could be read equally as an indication of his own ambitions or a gesture of piety toward his adoptive father.[105] In 2 BCE he also completed the spectacular Forum Augustum, whose magnificent Temple of Mars Ultor and portico framed all of Roman history as a stately progression culminating in the divinely-ordained reign of the Caesars.[106] Either of these could legitimately be referred to as a 'forum Caesaris.' But where is the Forum Romanum itself, the famed and ancient repository of so much Republican history, and the place where one might expect any foreign tourist to linger longest?[107] The book would certainly have had to pass through it in order to reach the next point on his itinerary, the Temple of Vesta: so the omission of its name must mean either (a) that the fora built by Augustus are so magnificent as to eclipse the old Roman forum completely, or (b) that the Forum Romanum itself is numbered among the 'fora Caesaris' and therefore merits no special mention.[108] Perhaps the Roman Forum by now felt like it 'belonged' to Caesar, in the sense that during the principate it had become more and more a testament to Augustus' accomplishments and authority. Certainly, along his itinerary, the book must have passed, but does not mention, the arch of Augustus and the temple of Divus Julius, monuments which helped 'Augustanize' the forum.[109] Either way,

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[103] Wiseman (1987: 403) and Huskey (2006: 18), among others, believe that the book begins asking for directions in the Argiletum before entering the Roman Forum. I find this suggestion attractive not only for its geographical probability but also because this was a common marketplace for books; I discuss this below.

[104] Westall 1996 treats this forum as a "representation" of Caesar.

[105] Suet*., Div. Iul.* 78. For a history of the Forum Iulium, see Platner & Ashby 1929: 225-7; for a description and historical/archaeological contextualization, see e.g. Zanker 1999: 44, 143-4. Caesar had begun buying up land in the area as early as 54, probably began work around 51, vowed the temple at Pharsalus, and finally dedicated the forum and temple on the last day of his triumph in September 46; however, he did not finish it (Nic. Dam., *Caes.* 22; Plin. *NH* 35.156), and it was Octavian who completed it after his death (Mon. Anc. iv.12; Dio 45.6.4). Platner and Ashby record that its official name was the *forum Iulium* (Mon. Anc.) but it commonly appears as the *forum Caesaris* (Not. Reg. VIII; Plin. XVI.236, etc.).

[106] "Augustus in effect appropriated select Romans up to his own day as members of a virtual 'family'" (Rehak 2006: 6; see also Ganzert and Kockel 1988, La Rocca 1995a, 1995b; Ganzert 1996, 2000). For a basic overview of the site see Platner & Ashby 1929: 220-3; this forum was generally called the Forum Augustus although could be referred to as the Forum Martis (Schol. Juv. XIV.261-262; Pol. Silv. 545; CIL XV.7190). Ovid visits this monument at *Fasti* 5.533ff.

[107] See Edwards 1996 for Rome as a city of monuments, memory, and empire, as well as for several discussions of a tourist or exile's view of the city.

[108] Remarkable since the Forum could be viewed as a "topographical mirror of Roman constitution and society," at least during the republic (Schmitzer 1999); perhaps this new focus on the 'fora Caesaris' instead suggests a concomitant change in the Roman constitution.

[109] Simply in order to get from the Forum to the temple of Vesta, the book would have to have passed through the arch dedicated to Augustus for his triple triumph in 29, just southwest of the Temple of Divus Julius. Huskey argues that the omission of these monuments was purposeful, "subversive both of the emperor's building program and his efforts at religious reform," and enacting "a kind of rhetorical *damnatio memoriae* against Augustus" (2006: 24); though I disagree with the argument, his maps remain useful (2006: 39, figs. 2 and 3). Lugli (1959: 399, n. 1) explained the omission of Caesarian monuments as an attempt to prevent the dictator's memory from

whether 'fora Caesaris' is meant to describe two or all three *fora*, the term suggests the extent to which Augustus had overwritten this area's palimpsest of Republican temples and monuments with his own architectural text. Perhaps by omitting them, Ovid is suggesting that Augustus had managed to reduce their relevance to viewers' mental landscapes even without erasing them from Rome's physical topography.
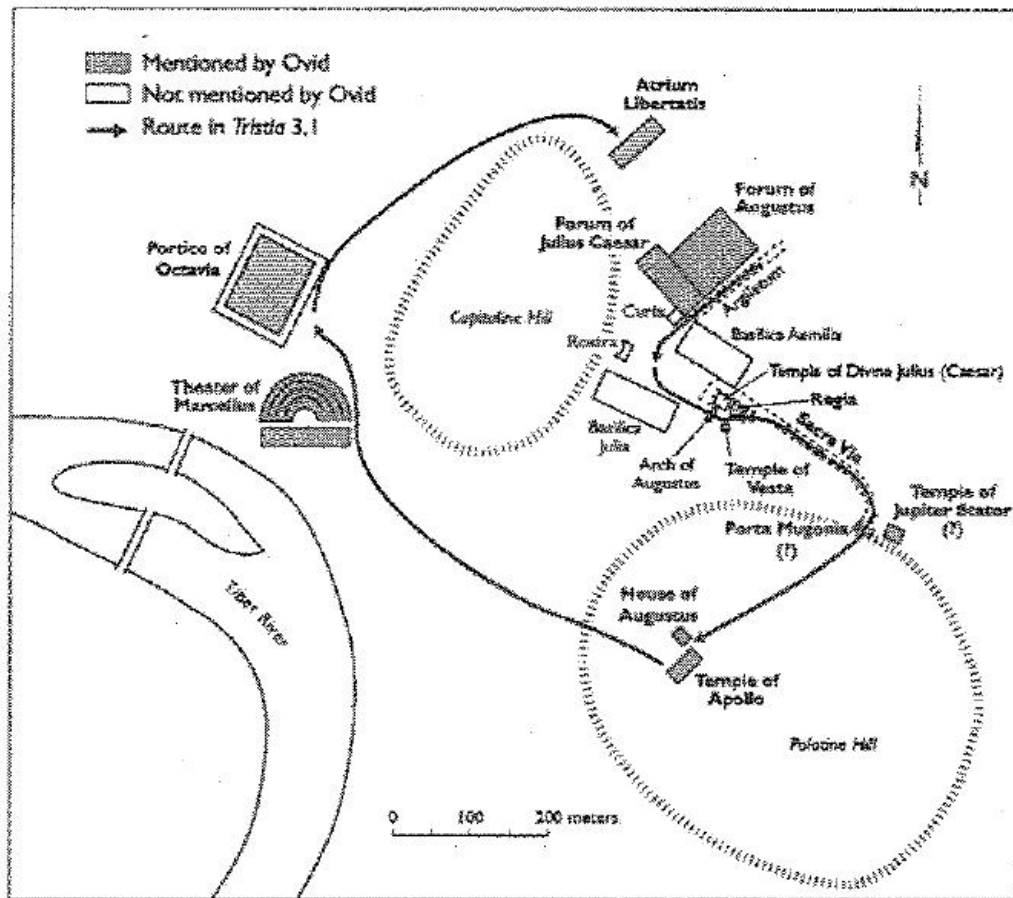
Figure 2: Huskey's map of the path of Ovid's book (2006: 38)

After proceeding down the Sacred Way, the book passes "the place of Vesta, who preserves the Palladium and fire" ("locus … Vestae, qui Pallada servat et ignem," 29). But a Roman reader would know something that the book does not appear to know. In 12 BCE, after becoming *pontifex maximus*, Augustus had part of his house declared public property and built a shrine of Vesta in his own home.[110] This move further conflated public and private space,

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overshadowing Augustus', though, as Huskey points out, this does not explain the omission of Augustus' arch (2006: 21). Wiseman believes that the ambitious Octavian, who was buying up local property around that time, may originally have planned this arch to serve as a monumental entrance to the Palatine complex: "the whole Forum Romanum was to be his dynastic monument, and his 'triumphal' arch would act as a formal entrance to the *domus Augusta*" (1987: 406).

[110] See Bowman 1996: 826 for this transfer (*IItal* xiii.2, p. 452) and the close relationship between Augustus and Vesta more generally. According to Bowman, "the public hearth of the state, with its associations of the success of

arrogated Vesta's state function to Augustus' own home, and allowed Ovid to joke that three gods now lived on the Palatine: Apollo, Vesta, and Augustus himself (*Fasti* 4.949-54). The book's wording in *Tristia* 3.1 is strictly accurate in stating that this is the temple of Vesta, "*who preserves the fire*," but it might remind Romans of the recent and striking change of *where* the *pontifex maximus* tended that fire. Thus this description of Vesta, like the mention of the *fora Caesaris*, quietly testifies to Augustus' influence over the physical city of Rome, the increasing identification between the *princeps* and the state, and his revision of Republican architecture and tradition. This is underscored by the book's subsequent mention of the "antiqui regia parva Numae" (30), the small palace of ancient Numa. The Regia had hitherto been used as headquarters for the *pontifex maximus*, who traditionally lived in the assigned *domus publica* nearby, next to the temple of Vesta. Yet Augustus' bold step of having part of his own house declared *domus publica* in 12 BCE further conflated his private person with his public figure and integrated the private and public functions of the buildings on the Palatine.[111] Moreover, given that Augustus was sometimes identified as a new Numa, this apparently casual description may suggest similar regal connotations for Augustus' own home despite his self-representation as *princeps civium*.[112]

Finally, the book and its guide turn off the path to proceed through the 'porta Palati' (31) – a rare name for what was more commonly known as the 'porta Mug(i)onia.'[113] Its change of name here serves to point attention upward toward the Palatine complex that formed the culmination of this path, marking the renewed sense of local identity and importance that Augustus' building project gave to this area. In fact, it is around this time that the word 'Palatium' (originally denoting the hill itself) came to mean 'palace,' in an innovation for which Ovid himself is partly responsible. Lewis and Short first cite it in this sense in Ovid *Ars Amatoria* 3.119 ("palatia fulgent"), *Met.* 1.176 ("magni palatia caeli"), and *Fasti* 4.953 ("palatina laurus"), suggesting that Augustus' house and its location were so strongly identified with one another that the place came to denote the person.[114] While the old name 'porta Mug(i)onia' evoked lowing cows and Rome's pastoral past, the name 'porta Palati' points to the splendid palace that now presided over this location, and would eventually become part of Rome's imperial future.

From the gate, the book passes the temple of Jupiter Stator, identified as the place where Rome was first founded (32). This structure, probably less an *aedes* than an enclosed altar, was founded by Romulus and is the first Roman temple mentioned by Livy; like Romulus' hut on the

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the Roman empire, was now confused with the private hearth of Augustus" (1996: 826). Some scholars have read this appropriation as a 'violation' of Vesta; cf. Edwards 1996: 62 and Barchiesi 1997: 133-40.

[111] Cf. Lecamore 1994-5.

[112] Cf. e.g. Galinsky 1996: 34-7 for comparisons between Augustus and Numa in coinage and art; Littlewood 2002: 175-199 for Ovid's sustained comparisons of Augustus to Numa; and Rehak's 2001 article "Aeneas or Numa? Rethinking the Ara Pacis Augustae." Huskey also argues that this might draw attention to Augustus' appropriation of a traditional function (2006: 22).

[113]This old name recalls the lowing (*mugire*) of the cows that used to graze on this very hill in Rome's legendary past; the root is also used in descriptions of the Palatine site at *Aeneid* 8.215, 218, and especially 8.361 (where it occurs immediately before the mention of Evander's humble house, a natural point of comparison to Augustus'). Propertius also mentions the "mugitus" of cows on the Palatine in his own treatment of the Cacus myth at 4.9.19. Only Livy (1.1.12 and 3.9) refers to the 'vetus porta Palati,' the 'vetus' perhaps suggesting a change of name.

[114] Thanks in part, of course, to the usage of people like Ovid. See Dio 53.16.5-6. Miller observes that the 'palace' meaning is not regularized until the Flavian era (2009: 186; but cf. Milnor 2005: 50).

other side of the Palatine, it was praised for its simplicity and humility. Augustus had famously toyed with taking the name 'Romulus' as a mark of his new foundation of Rome,[115] but his splendid temple to Apollo up on the summit of the Palatine would have created a stark contrast with this humble Romulan temple. Moreover, Augustus himself was a 'stator' and could be regarded as a 'Jupiter' in his city, as Ovid frequently reminds us.[116] The presence of Jupiter's temple toward the bottom of the path up to Augustus' complex certainly brings the two structures into an interesting geographical, chronological, and semantic relationship with one another: Augustus and his patron god Apollo, reigning supreme over the city from their splendid joint dwelling-place, now take precedence over Romulus' old temple to Jupiter and re-found a new, more magnificent Rome. Moreover, though Apollo possessed an obvious relation to the arts, Newlands notes that the temple of Jupiter Stator already had a traditional association with Roman literature: during the dark days of the Second Punic War, it was chosen as the place where 27 maidens were to learn a hymn composed by Livius Andronicus for public performance.[117] Ovid's banishment, in contrast, seems to suggest that Augustan Rome is less friendly than the Republic was to its writers – a point that the book's arrival at the Palatine complex underscores.

First, though, let us pause to observe what this itinerary *omits*. For one, though the book would have passed such famed and specifically Augustan monuments as the Temple of Divus Julius and the arch for the triple triumph of 29,[118] it makes no mention of them. We may therefore discard the widely-held idea that this list of buildings is meant merely to laud Augustus and his achievements. [119] What is interesting is that these monuments are reminders of very ancient Rome, and regal Rome at that: the book seems to progress on his journey directly from the age of the kings to the age of Augustus, with nothing on the way that strongly evokes specifically Republican people or institutions (e.g. the Rostra, Curia, or other institutions whose fame would seem to prompt inclusion on a visitor's itinerary). Even the Roman Forum itself is verbally bypassed in favor of the *fora Caesaris*, thus creating a neat ring structure in the book's journey: Augustus was at its beginning and Augustus is at its end. Moreover, all the edifices that the book *does* mention have undergone some change of meaning or function due to Augustus, even though their names have stayed the same: though they are relics of Rome's

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[115] Cf. e.g. Suet., *Aug.* 7 and Galinsky 1996: 84.

[116] For comparisons between Augustus and Jupiter in Ovid, see e.g. Müller 1987, Segal 2001, and my argument below. Horace among others also compares Jupiter with Augustus (cf. for instance Galinsky 1996: 314 and 318).

[117] Livy 27.37; see Newlands 1997: 65 and Huskey 2006: 26. Newlands also notes at 1997: 64-5 that it was the site of Cicero's first speech against Catiline, on 8 November 63 BCE (Cic., *In Cat.* 1.11,33) and argues that the temple is mentioned in order to suggest that the Augustan state treats the humble book as "an enemy, another Catiline" (1997: 64-5).

[118] A single arch here has historically been associated with Actium, but Gurval cautions against the identification: the arch could have been associated with Naulochus, and anyway ten years later was replaced by a triple arch commemorating campaigns in the east (1995: 36-47). Some scholars argue that this was part of Augustus' attempt to deemphasize the civil war in favor of new victories (see Kleiner 1985: 26, although Gurval 1995: 44 suggests that a structural flaw in the previous arch rather than political concerns may have prompted the change). Gurval further argues that 'commemorative arches' – the term 'triumphal' is itself a late use – were virtually unknown in Rome before the Augustan age (1995: 37-40).

[119] With it, also, Huskey's also problematic idea that this itinerary accomplishes a *damnatio memoriae* against Augustus (2006: 24). Newlands 1997: 65 feels that the book's path seeks to evoke Rome's "founding ideals," ideals from which Augustus falls short; however, out of all the monuments the book passes, she discusses only the temple of Jupiter Stator to make her case. Furthermore, she focuses only on Augustus' treatment of literature and of Ovid, whereas I feel Ovid is making a more broadly political point.

ancient past, they now also testify to Augustus' recent and extensive changes to republican roles, institutions, and urban spaces. The book's very purpose in this journey underscores this point; for it not only steps off the boat into a Rome that looks as if it has always been a monarchy, but also *behaves* as if it is by immediately proceeding toward Augustus as the sole focal point of power.

Thus, despite the book's ignorant perspective, this urban narrative is carefully constructed to elicit overreaders' reanalysis of Roman topography. Within the poem, it is mediated by the Roman guide who appears to be one of Ovid's 'friendly' readers, as the book's initial search suggests ('lector amice,' 2; 'dicite, lectores,' 19). Perhaps this brave reader's loyalty to Ovid entails a willingness to create a selective (and covertly 'subversive') urban narrative. Augustus' supremacy was certainly no secret in Rome, although in the *Res Gestae* he claims this was due to *auctoritas* rather than *potestas*, and most scholars believe that he attempted to emphasize his authority's continuity with the Republic and derivation from public support.[120] Yet the narrative of *Tristia* 3.1 frames Augustus as the climax of a regal tradition instead, perhaps prompting Roman readers to revisit their own understanding of Roman history as embedded within topography. Every element of the book's itinerary points toward the accumulation of power in the hands of Augustus, who resides literally and figuratively at the pinnacle of Rome: at the top of the Palatine, at the end of the book's uphill journey, at the end of Rome's long history, and in a position from which he has eclipsed Republican achievements and appropriated traditional institutions. In fact, as I argue below, this guided tour may encourage Ovid's other Roman readers to activate autocratic meanings within ordinarily multivalent Augustan texts – from the Roman cityscape itself to the iconography of the Palatine complex.

D. Arrival at Augustus' doors

At the top of the Palatine, after passing "singula" marvels (33) – likely the great aristocratic houses that flanked the path, reminders of Rome's Republican past again elided through this single adjective – the book beholds the greatest marvel of all: "fulgentibus armis / conspicuos postes tectaque digna deo" ("doorposts conspicuous for their shining arms and a house worthy of a god," 34). The book immediately asks "Iovis haec … domus est?" (35), a question that at first might seem an inversion and reworking of his comparison of the Palatine to Olympus at *Metamorphoses* 1.175-6 ("hic locus est, quem, si verbis audacia detur, / haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli"). On the surface, Ovid might seem to fear offending heaven by comparing it with the lowly Palatine. However, it becomes obvious that Ovid's *audacia* works in the opposite direction; Ovid seems to fear offending *Augustus* by comparing his hill with Olympus, either for fear of excessively flattering the *princeps* or of exposing his godlike dominance. Here at *Tristia* 3.1, Edwards understands the book's insistence on the splendor of Augustus' house as a reproach to Augustus, for his failure to display the personal humility that Evander had recommended to Aeneas when inviting him into his humble house in *Aeneid* 8.364-5 ("aude, hospes, contemnere opes et te quoque dignum / finge deo, rebusque veni non asper egenis").[121] In fact, several scholars have argued that Augustus' house was built on the former

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[120] Of the massive bibliography on this subject (some discussed in Chapter 1), see Eder 1996 for a well-balanced historical view, and Galinsky 1996 for a cultural one.

[121] See Edwards 1996: 120, Newlands 1997: 67, Miller 2002: 131-3, and Huskey 2006: 27. Interestingly, in this passage of the *Aeneid*, Evander's house is described as a *regia* – perhaps an association Augustus may have wanted

site of Evander's, making comparisons between the two figures inevitable.[122] But, as Edwards herself acknowledges, Augustus' house was famously modest,[123] which means either that Ovid is willfully misrepresenting the house or that something else is going on.

To solve this problem, recall that the book is looking only at a set of doors, not at Augustus' actual house – to which it never gains admittance.[124] Given that Augustus' house, Apollo's temple, the Danaid portico, and the library were all part of one and the same complex, the book seems to have mis-identified the whole complex as 'belonging' to Augustus. The book's misreading threatens to upset the careful balance between private modesty and public munificence that scholars have attributed to the *princeps*. This mistake would have been facilitated by the proximity between the house and temple, and suggests that Augustus may have attempted to make the complex *dignum deo* in two senses: both worthy of the god Apollo, and able to support his own aspirations for divine status.[125]

The book proceeds to read (and misread) the symbolism of the doors, demonstrating to his Roman overreaders the potential ambiguity or deceptiveness of Augustan iconography. These doors were famously decorated with an oak crown and flanked by laurels, both awarded to Augustus by the senate and people in thanks for his services. These are depicted in many coins (such as the *aureus* in Figure 3), suggesting that they were widely circulated and readily recognizable as symbols of the gratitude and *auctoritas* voluntarily accorded to Augustus.[126] In fact, Augustus himself mentions the oak and laurel in *Res Gestae* 34.2 immediately after describing his voluntary surrender of power after the civil war (34.1) and before proclaiming that, while he had more *auctoritas* than anyone, he exceeded nobody in terms of *potestas* (34.3). Yet Ovid's book exposes such interpretations of the oak and laurel as a polite charade, re-reading the doors in a way that emphasizes the *princeps*' sheer power instead.

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to avoid – and its claim to fame is that it has admitted even the great Hercules, a god much more closely associated with Antony than with Augustus.

[122] Bishop 1956: 110 insists that "Ovid places the house of Augustus and the temple of Apollo at precisely the spot where Vergil places the house of Evander"; see also Fowler 1917: 75, Binder 1971: 137-41, Gransden 1976: 30, and Newlands 1997: 66 for the placement of the hut.

[123] Cf. Wiseman 1987: 398-406 and Newlands 1997: 67. Suetonius mentions this modesty at *Aug.* 72-3, though the house was rebuilt, perhaps in somewhat grander style, after the fire in 3 CE.

[124] Wiseman's forthcoming article makes good sense of the space here at the top of the Palatine as a wide *area Apollinis* overlooked by Augustus' house as well as the temple. Scholars have sometimes viewed the book in *Tristia* 3.1 as an *exclusus amator*; e.g. Newlands 1997: 67 seems to expect that it should be welcomed into Augustus' home. Yet this term should more correctly describe its exclusion from the Palatine library; it lingers near the house, apparently, solely for the purpose of conducting this public 'reading' of the symbols on the doors.

[125] Compare my discussion in the previous chapter of Augustus' role in Caesar's deification. Williams rightly points out that Evander's phrase can be read two ways. "*Deo* is deliberately very ambiguous: it can mean 'of heaven' or 'of Jupiter' (his] ancestor and Hercules'), and it also suggests that Aeneas like Hercules will become a god" (1996: 252). Many public works, of course, ostensibly glorify the gods and benefit the Roman people, but were also designed to redound upon the giver to his own political benefit; what is unusual is the complex' close relation of Augustus to the god himself.

[126] For a good discussion of *auctoritas* and Augustus, see Galinsky 1996: 10-41 (especially 34 for specific reference to this coin type).

Figure 3: Aureus of L. Caninius Gallus (12 BCE; *RIC* I 419; *BMC* 126)
Obverse: bare-headed Augustus (DIVI F[ilius]).
Reverse: oak wreath 'OB C.S' (= *ob civis servatos*) above doors flanked by laurel branches.

The book, as a newcomer to the city, initially thinks that the doors signify the house of Jupiter (35), and proceeds to justify this act of reading by explaining that the oak wreath on the door gave this 'augurium' to its mind (36). Even the foreign-born book knows that the oak is traditionally sacred to Jupiter and therefore signifies the god; in this sense, Ovid's choice of the word 'augurium,' which is often used to indicate divine communication, seems to underscore the book's conviction that the house belongs to the god.[127] On the other hand, the word 'augurium' also contains strong etymological echoes of the name 'Augustus,' pointing to the double signification of the oak wreath.[128] Any Roman living under Augustus, and familiar with Augustan iconography, has been conditioned to read the oak crown as the *corona civica* given to Augustus "ob cives servatos"; many coins, for example, feature this legend (abbreviated to 'OB C. S.' above on the reverse of Figure 3).[129] Augustus has effectively reappropriated the symbol of the oak from the king of the gods himself, and has become its primary referent within Roman culture. Moreover, the verbal pun of 'augurium,' combined with the visual pun on the oak, serves to underscore the dangerous similarities between the father of the gods and the *pater patriae* – as well as undermine Augustus' message of modesty.

Of course, such an analogy could be read in two different ways according to the inclinations of an audience: some might read it as a compliment to the *princeps*, whereas others could see it as an accusation that Augustus had aspired to pseudo-divine power and had even stolen some honors from Jupiter. Ovid refuses to resolve the question by continuing to speak through the persona of the book, which, when corrected about the true referent of the oak crown ("cuius ut accepi dominum," 37), nevertheless continues to insist upon an identity between Augustus and Jupiter: "non fallimur," inquam, / "et magni verum est hanc Iovis esse domum"

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[127] In a neat irony of history, archaeologists themselves had long associated this site on the Palatine with a temple to Jupiter rather than the temple to Apollo before Carretoni's excavations. See the entry for 'Apollo, Templum (Palatium)'in *Mapping Augustan Rome*, which cites, for example, Lanciani, *FUR* pl. 29: '*Aedes Iovis Propugnator in Palatio.*'

[128] It also tends to mean not just 'interpretation' but 'omen' or 'augury'; could the imagistic conflation of Jupiter and Augustus via the oak not only represent Augustus' Jupiter-like power in Rome, but also prophesy his eventual ascent to the stars here, as Ovid predicts in *Metamorphoses* 15?

[129] See *Res Gestae* 34.2, and Galinsky 1996: 34 for a survey of the many coins featuring the oak crown, the laurel tree, and the legend "OB CIVIS SERVATOS."

(37-8). How should we understand the book's response, in light of Augustus' attested dislike of being called a 'dominus' (Suet. *Aug.* 53.1) and being overtly identified with a god?[130] On the one hand, if we accept the book's earlier claim of sincerity (3.1.6), we might think that this is simply the book's naïve response to the magnificence of Augustan Rome: the book has such admiration for Augustus' achievements that it spontaneously equates Augustus with Jupiter, not realizing that this innocent compliment is actually a threat to Augustan decorum. However, this compliment might strike some readers as rather cynical. While Roman citizens have grown accustomed to Augustus' power and the Republican terms in which it has been framed, it takes a new arrival to the *urbs* to vocalize the equivalences that exist between the *princeps* and the king of the gods. This chimes with Ovid's comparisons of Augustus to Jupiter elsewhere in the exile poetry, where the similarity between the god and the *princeps* hinges on the immense power differential between themselves and their subjects.[131] Thus the book, though naïve and respectful, ironically reads the oak crown to expose the growing convergence between Augustus and Jupiter. In fact, it effectively points out that the Palatine has become a new Capitoline, with Augustus ("magni … Iovis" at 38 and "maxime dive" at 78) supplanting Jupiter as Rome's highest god.

But the book quickly detects an inconsistency in the visual text of Augustus' door, signaling his confusion with the adversative "tamen" (39): if the oak shows that this is the house of 'Jupiter,' why is his door also ornamented with the laurel, sacred to Apollo? Ovid uses the 'aug-' root twice in this poem, with "augustas" in line 40 and above with "augurium" in line 36. Both occur in places where the book is not sure how to read signs on the door, since these signs are traditionally linked with the gods rather than with men; but by marking each such moment with an 'aug-' word, Ovid builds into the text the impression that these signs already belong to Augustus as much as to the gods. The book itself, on the other hand, has enough knowledge of Roman culture to understand many of the traditional associations of the laurel, but not enough – as a recently-arrived foreigner – to anticipate how far its meaning has changed under Augustus. The book thus proceeds, with a schoolboy eagerness that seems to indicate his readerly goodwill, to ask a series of questions about why the laurel befits Augustus' doors. However, to the more historically knowledgeable overreader, these questions also begin to expose a problematic gap between the sign and what it purports to signify (here, between the laurel's many cultural meanings, outlined at *Met.* 1.557-565, and Augustus' public actions and persona).[132]

The book first asks whether the laurel signifies that this house ("ista domus")[133] has deserved unending triumphs. The obvious answer might be yes, but the use of the perfect-tense

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[130] For the problematic issue of the degree to which Augustus was worshipped in his own lifetime, see Chapters 4 and 5 of Ittai Gradel's 2002 *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*. Dio and Suetonius both claim that Augustus prohibited worship of himself, but Gradel explores the private and provincial worship that existed nonetheless.

[131] Gradel argues that this power differential, rather than religious sentiment as we would recognize it today, underlies the Roman practice of referring to emperors as 'divus'; emperor worship was "ultimately an aspect of the honours-for-benefactions structure found in all relationships between parties of vastly unequal power and social standing in Roman society" (2002: 26).

[132] Newlands 1997 similarly observes that Ovid "mockingly exposes the gap between imperial title and practice" and "the potential gap between official fictions of power and actual practice" (1997: 66), but discusses only the obvious point of Augustus' failure to apply his famous clemency to Ovid.

[133] The narrative switch from "haec" (used to describe the house at 35 and 38) to "ista" (41, 44) is interesting, and corresponds with the switch of focus from the oak/Jupiter to the laurel/Apollo. Perhaps this indicates some

verb "meruit" (41) complicates matters by opening up a gap between expectation and actuality. It is well known to us (if not to Ovid) that, after Balbus' triumph in 19 BCE, only the emperor and his family were ever awarded triumphs, whatever the merits of others.[134] But the only triumphs Augustus himself ever celebrated were at the beginning of his career, on three consecutive days in 29 BCE over Dalmatia, Actium, and Egypt – Actium being quite an anticlimactic skirmish, except that it removed Augustus' last true competitor for power.[135] Moreover, Rome at the time of *Tristia* 3.1 had experienced several setbacks that might make the laurels seem more a wishful symbol, or a memory of past victory, than a reward for present military prowess.[136] Augustus' power might feel *perpetuus*, and was memorialized as such via the Palatine temple, but it ultimately derived from a hardly savory or spectacular moment in history.[137]

Moreover, the idea of 'unending triumphs' is itself an interesting and potentially problematic one. Triumphs originated as celebratory but carefully-contained affairs that allowed a temporary extension of a general's *imperium* into the city walls, authorized by a vote of the senate. Attempts to extend triumphal honors beyond this day generally met with great hostility, most memorably with the extraordinary honors awarded to Julius Caesar before his death and sometimes cited as a cause of his assassination.[138] But Mary Beard points out that, beginning with Augustus, triumphal imagery was more closely (and exclusively) associated with the person of the emperor, even as the actual number of triumphs diminished.[139] The Palatine complex, with its plentiful spoils and suggestive architectonics, can certainly be understood as a triumph in stone that gave permanent form to Augustus' victories, whatever his recent merit. Perhaps the book's naïve comment here at *Tristia* 3.1.41 is an early foreshadowing of the emperor's exclusive, permanent, and autonomous association with the laurel crown – one that stands in stark contrast to its restricted Republican usage.

On the other hand, though the Palatine temple was vowed at Naulochus and makes frequent visual reference to Egypt, the Augustan poets tend to associate Apollo with Actium and to read the temple as referring to that battle.[140] This effectively marked Augustus' attainment of supremacy, but also was the most morally problematic of his triple triumphs, in that it could be

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discomfort with the complex' claim of a special relationship between Apollo and Augustus, given Augustus' problematic status (for Ovid) as a patron of the arts, and suggests that he is more properly identified with Jupiter.

[134] Dio 54.24.7-8; Beard 2007: 69.

[135] Augustus refused all other triumphs (*Res Gestae* 4).

[136] In particular, the Varian disaster of 9 CE, though it is debatable whether Ovid would have heard about this in Tomis. Wiedemann notes that the years of 6-9 CE were difficult ones for the *princeps*, between Varus' loss of three legions; famine; problems with conscription and taxes; the conspiracy of Publius Rufus; and the removal of Agrippa Postumus, Cassius Severus, and Julia the Younger, among others (1975: 265-6). Wiedemann finds that *Tristia* 2 makes surprisingly frequent reference to these "embarrassing" problems, and concludes (perhaps oversimply) that Ovid's poem is designed not to flatter Augustus but to appeal to Roman aristocrats, who would be reminded of current grounds for dissatisfaction with Augustus and encouraged to work toward Ovid's return (1975: 271).

[137] According to Gros and Beard, Augustus built the Palatine complex in order to glorify and perpetuate this one historical accident upon which his power rested. Williams 1994: 184 points out that *Tristia* 2.225-34 refers to successes achieved by Augustus 20-40 years before and that many of these places were in revolt by the time of Ovid's exile, though does not speculate whether these references would have seemed ignorant, untactful, or pointed.

[138] Cf. Suetonius *Iul.* 76 and White 1988 for discussion.

[139] 2007: 69-71; for a fuller discussion of this concept, see Chapter 4.

[140] E.g. Propertius 4.6 and the shield of Aeneas (discussed in Chapter 4). However, I oppose Miller's assumption that this temple was designed for 'Actian' Apollo; I think this association was created within the Augustan Text.

understood as a victory over fellow Romans. Later in his reign, the *princeps* may have been embarrassed by the zeal with which he first commemorated his victory in monuments like the Palatine temple; Mary Beard, for instance, suggests that Actium may deliberately have been omitted from the Fasti Barberiniani, the famed triple triumph now rendered as a double one.[141] Yet Ovid, writing late in the principate, keeps pressing the uncomfortable issue of Actium. Immediately after asking about Augustus' triumphs at 3.1.41, the book goes on to wonder whether the laurel adorns Augustus' house because it has always been beloved by the Leucadian god. This god is, of course, Apollo, to whom the laurel was sacred; and the language here echoes that of *Met.* 1.557-67, where Apollo vows that the laurel will always be beloved to him and will someday ornament Augustus' doors.[142] But the fact that Ovid specifically refers to him as the 'Leucadius deus' again ties Augustus' power to the specific instance of his victory at Actium, near the temple of Leucadian Apollo. Though line 42 seems to emphasize the perpetuity of Apollo's favor ('semper amata'), the specificity of the adjective 'Leucadius' reminds us of the accident of history – years ago, far away, and against a fellow Roman – to which Augustus owes the power now made manifest with his Palatine complex in Rome.

ipsane quod festa est, an quod facit omnia festa?	43
quam tribuit terris, pacis an ista nota est?	44
utque uiret semper laurus nec fronde caduca	45
carpitur, aeternum sic habet illa decus?[143]	46

The book then asks whether the laurel indicates that the house is "festa" or makes all things "festa" (43), another problematic question. The house itself certainly would not have been joyous after the disgrace of the younger Julia in 8 CE or Varus' military disaster in 9, and of course "festa" is an antonym of "tristia" – it is clear that the house has not, at least, brought joy to Ovid. Perhaps, the book then asks, the laurel marks the peace which the house has given to the world (44) – but of course, in several poems of the *Tristia*, Ovid goes out of his way to point out that the Pax Augusta does not extend as far as barbaric Tomis.[144] Or, the book offers, perhaps the evergreen laurel is being used metaphorically as a sign of the house's unfading glory ("aeternum decus," 46)? Even here, the mention of a fallen leaf being plucked from the branch ("utque viret semper laurus nec fronde caduca / carpitur," 45-6) might remind readers that, while the glory of Augustus' house might be evergreen, the lives of its members were impermanent. As I discussed in the last chapter, the premature deaths of Marcellus in 23 BCE, Agrippa in 12 BCE, Lucius in 2 CE, and Gaius in 4 CE, as well as the fall from grace of both Julias, meant that

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[141] This triumph does not survive in the Forum list so we cannot compare its treatment there. Beard states that this omission has been "put down to sloppy stone carving. But a more political explanation is also possible. Actium had been a victory in a *civil* war, without even a euphemistic foreign label such as Julius Caesar had pinned onto his own victories over Roman citizens. It is tempting to imagine that whoever composed or commissioned this particular triumphal list was attempting to 'clean up' triumphal history by finessing Actium out of the picture" (2007: 303-4).

[142] Thus Ovid builds in an amusing reference to his earlier poem; even in the distant heroic age of *Metamorphoses* 1, Apollo already shows his love for Augustus' house by envisioning the laurel before his doors.

[143] "Or because it's joyful, or makes all things joyful? / Or is it the mark of peace which it's given the world? / And just as the laurel is always green and is not plucked with / fallen foliage, does it too possess everlasting glory?"

[144] Habinek 1998: 159 discusses Ovid's insistence on the threat posed by barbarian peoples (e.g. at *Ex Ponto* 2.5.17-18, 2.7.67-8), although others have pointed out that Ovid's representation of Tomis surely overstates its unpleasantness (cf. Nagle 1980 and Williams 1994: 18).

the Augustan family tree was alarmingly thin on branches – so much so that Augustus had to graft in Tiberius as his heir in 4 CE, despite his apparent dislike of the man.

Throughout this passage, the very multiplicity of the book's questions has the effect of underscoring the oak and laurel signs' indeterminacy and exposing a reader's potential difficulty in interpreting their connection with Augustus.[145] But even more powerful is the fact that the book's questions go unanswered. For while the next couplet ostensibly offers a firm reading of the doors at last – an inscription "indicates" that the crown has been awarded because citizens were saved by Augustus' help (48) – this refers only to the oak crown and not to the laurel trees. Moreover, the clarity of this inscription serves to throw into high relief the book's confusion about other aspects of the iconography, and the potential for Augustan signs to misrepresent. For instance, the book suggests many excellent readings for the laurel, which seem to apply its 'normative' meanings (as defined in *Met.* 1) to Augustus. But Ovid phrases his questions in ways that point toward the inadequacy of each of these significations, revealing problems with the Roman interpretive community's conventional modes of reading these symbols.

Even the inscription on the door ("seruatos ciuis indicat huius ope," 48), which ostensibly explains the meaning of the *corona civica*, is problematic. Though the book encounters the crown in lines 35-6, and spends several lines trying to 'read' the iconography of the doors, it does not observe the accompanying written text until 47-8.   This long delay reminds us that a 'text' (here, Augustus' door) can open an array of interpretive possibilities and questions, not all of which can be closed by a clearly-announced 'authorial' meaning. This matches the lesson on reader response that Ovid offered Augustus, whom he characterizes as another 'late' and overliteral reader, in *Tristia* 2.[146] And even this couplet continues to problematize the meaning of the oak crown even as it purports to pin it down. The inscription bears witness only to the immediate *cause* of the crown's being placed on Augustus' door: it indicates that because of Augustus' help citizens had been saved. But the book's response points out that what Augustan signs indicate and what they mean are sometimes different things. The book never retracts its supposition that the oak represents Augustus' Jupiter-like power – and in fact, the same Jupiter-like power that allows Augustus to save Romans also allows him to *refuse* to save them.

The next lines plead for Augustus to add Ovid to the list of citizens he has saved (49-50), echoing Ovid's earlier addition of his own tragically changed fate to his *Metamorphoses* (at *Tristia* 1.1.119-120).

<div style="margin-left:2em">

adice seruatis unum, pater optime, ciuem,	49
qui procul extremo pulsus in orbe latet,	50
in quo poenarum, quas se meruisse fatetur,	51

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[145] Newlands similarly argues that the persona of the book shares styles of inquiry with the narrator of the *Fasti* in that (1) it turns to others for information in his aetiological investigations, and (2) he provides alternate explanations without deciding between them. Both styles, she asserts, allow Ovid to "promote specific biases or agendas that may well challenge or undermine official discourse" (1997: 64). However, I argue that Ovid is less constructing a new oppositional discourse than deconstructing the premises of the discourse.

[146] I.e., Augustus does not punish Ovid for the *Ars Amatoria* until long after it was published, and does so on the grounds of an overly simplistic reading (if we accept Ovid's story in *Tristia* 2), much as the book seems to notice the inscription belatedly and read it with little critical subtlety.

The first couplet vividly reminds readers that the *princeps* has not saved but rather destroyed Ovid (he is the agent behind the passive participle "extremo pulsus in orbe," 50), suggesting that the inscription "ob civis servatos" is by now false advertising. As in *Tristia* 2, he continues to insist that the cause was a mistake ("error," 52) rather than a crime ("facinus," 52); this causes the reader, in turn, to step in as a secondary intercessor, questioning whether Ovid has really deserved this literally 'extreme' punishment (50). But Ovid, triangulating this plea for mercy through the intercessor of the book, underscores his own good will by confessing that he has deserved his punishment ("poenarum, quas se meruisse fatetur," 51).[148] In fact, his language is almost exaggerated in its obedience to Augustus, advertising that he has effectively lost his power of free speech through his need to placate the emperor. This creates an impression that there are punishably 'correct' and 'incorrect' ways of discussing as well as reading Augustus, who by this point resembles the arbitrary and all-powerful Jupiter much more than Apollo.

Ovid then brings up a striking example of the problems of reading – one that comments on Augustus' own (mis)reading of his 'error' as a punishable crime, as well as on Roman audiences' (mis)readings of Augustan iconography.

me miserum! vereorque locum uereorque potentem,	53
et quatitur trepido littera nostra metu.	54
aspicis exsangui chartam pallere colore?	55
aspicis alternos intremuisse pedes?	56
quandocumque, precor, nostro placere parenti	57
isdem et sub dominis aspiciare domus!"[149]	58

The book asks the reader to witness its fear of Augustus (53-4): do we see how pale its paper is, and how its alternating feet tremble (55-6)? The book is pointing to certain physical signs – paleness and shakiness – that readers typically associate with fear; but in this case, the book is merely pale because it is made from paper, and shaky because of its elegiac 'limp.' In other words, a sign can be intelligible without necessarily being true. Ovid is fond of jokes that revolve around the subjective fallacy, but usually they are focalized around the gullible narrator and poke fun of his tendency to assign agency where it does not exist.[150] Here, the book's over-literal thinking makes fun of gullible readers – but, of course, the entirety of *Tristia* 3.1 both mocks and educates Roman readers, by suggesting that they have too credulously accepted Augustus' public image at face value. The poem effectively argues that, just like the paper's paleness, Augustan symbols can mislead. They convey a pretty picture of Augustus as the savior

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[147] "Best of fathers, add one more citizen to those you've saved, / Who hides expelled far away at the edge of the world, / whose punishment, which he admits that he deserved, / was caused not by a conscious crime, but by his own mistake."

[148] Compare *Ex Ponto* 3.6.9-10 and 27-32, where he argues that though the gods are unjust and punish many who do not deserve it, their victims do not deny they deserve their suffering (cf. Davis 2002: 271).

[149] "Wretched me! I fear this place and I fear its ruler, / and my letters shake with anxious fear. / Do you see my paper grow pale with bloodless color? / Do you see my alternating feet have begun to tremble? / Some day, I pray, may your house be reconciled with my parent / And may he look upon it under its same masters!"

[150] Cf. the dawn blushing in answer to the speaker's rebuke at the end of *Amores* 1.13, or the laurel tree seeming to nod in consent to Apollo in *Metamorphoses* 1.

of the Republic – but one that is more fiction than fact. So, though Ovid emphasizes the book's fear of Augustus, its timid questions perform a powerful deconstruction of Augustan imagery. This, in turn, helps empower Roman readers to assert their own interpretive power over Augustan images – and to re-read them as potential fictions, 'authored' for Augustus' gain.

E. The temple and library

Notably, it is before Augustus' house, and not at the temple of Apollo, that the book prays for his father's rescue; this is another reflection of the fact that Augustus is Rome's greatest 'god,' as well as the only person capable of recalling Ovid. In fact, Apollo's temple itself is barely mentioned: the book climbs the steep steps to the "intonsi candida templa dei" (60), but is most interested in it as the place where the statues of the Danaids and their father stand among columns of foreign marble (61-2). Also there, and mentioned as part of the same list, are "quaeque viri docto veteres cepere novique / pectore, lecturis inspicienda patent" (63-4): the great library of the Palatine, here described in terms of its openness to ideas both old and new. Yet here, again, there is a "contradiction between the library's purported liberalism and its actual practice."[151] It is in vain that the book searches for his 'brother' books, excepting those whom their father wishes he had never engendered, the *Ars* (65-6). All of Ovid's 'children,' and not just the offending ones, have been exiled from public life along with their father himself.[152]

The repetition of *pater* at the ends of lines 62 and 66, first for Danaus and then for Ovid, draws some interesting parallels between the two figures.[153] Most obviously, both fathers are betrayed by a child: in Danaus' case, by the disobedient Hypermnestra, and in Ovid's, by his own treacherous *Ars*.[154] And just as Hypermnestra was absent from the ordered ranks of the Danaid portico, Ovid's books are conspicuously absent from the ordered shelves of the library. Yet Hypermnestra's act of disobedience to her father was also heroic (Horace describes her as *splendide mendax* at *Odes* 3.11.35). While her sisters were condemned to eternal punishment for their obedience, Hypermnestra was saved from her father's wrath by Aphrodite, and ended up in Elysium. This posits a separation between divine and temporal justice that, in turn, questions Augustus' punishment of Ovid's books. The books got Ovid in trouble, and were banned from Augustus' library, because they failed to conform to Augustus' moral program; the 'father' that

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[151] Newlands 1997: 68.

[152] For such family imagery in Ovid, see e.g. O'Gorman 1997 and Davisson 1984. Ovid often explicitly refers to the *Ars* as a traitor or parricide since it betrayed his authorial intent and lent itself to immoral misreadings.

[153] This connection has not gone unnoticed: see especially Newlands 1997: 68-70. O'Gorman argues that the Danaids in the temple portico illustrate the concept of *patria potestas* (1997: 117), although Newlands points out the obvious problems with this (e.g. that Danaus urged his daughters to commit a crime, for which they suffered eternal punishment). Newlands in turn takes the *barbarus pater* as a stand-in for Ovid, the poet exiled to barbarous lands who unwittingly caused the punishment of his own children, as well as for Augustus, a 'father' who does not guarantee the welfare of his children. I attempt to go beyond these correspondences to look at the shifting relations between these figures. Moreover, Newlands attempts to view Ovid's evocation of the Danaid portico as a sort of 'defense,' but takes a different tack than I do here. She argues, with reference to *Ars* 1.73 and *Tristia* 2.279-300, that such porticos are just as much an invitation to promiscuity and seduction as Ovid's own poems; Ovid's mentioning the Danaids thus serves as a reproach to Augustus, and also asks why Ovid's 'guilty' poems cannot be treated as "serious art works" just as statues of the guilty Danaids are on public display on the Palatine.

[154] Note, too, that the book of the *Tristia* and the Danaids both are used by their fathers for supplication in hostile lands; the word 'peregrinis' ("peregrinis columnis," 61) ostensibly refers to the Danaids' exotic stone but may also hint at their situation as suppliants from abroad.

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they are truly 'disobeying' is not Ovid but Augustus, the *pater patriae*. Yet, as in the case of Hypermnestra, there may be something heroic in this act of disobedience – and in all books' ability resist political authority for the sake of other values.[155] The book hitherto has examined Augustan signs' potential to lie, but the Danaids and the absent Hypermnestra hint that deception can be used to resist authority as well as support it. In fact, Danaus' drawn sword suggests another possible commonality, in the fact that both sets of offspring – daughters or books – may be marshaled against their fathers' enemies for vengeance. This is precisely what Ovid is doing with the *Tristia*, in showing how we may 'read' aspects of Augustan iconography subversively, and in turn deconstruct the process by which power is created and sustained through symbol. Just as poetry can be useful in creating *maiestas* (*Ex Ponto* 4.8.55-6), so can it expose the mechanisms by which *maiestas* is created, both by splendidly lying and by exposing public lies.

In this poem, of course, the book does not succeed in gaining help, much less in exacting revenge. In contrast to the hospitality Evander shows Aeneas on this site, the book is chased away from Augustus' library by a *custos*, a household slave of Augustus' who has apparently been charged with keeping out books that the regime may find objectionable (67-8). This signals the falsity of the claim that the library is open to all learned books, new and old (63-4); it seems that Augustus' private grudge against Ovid has caused him to prevent public access to his works. The book's rejection seems to draw upon and expand Propertius' creation at 2.31 of a sense that his elegiac *puella* Cynthia is unwelcome or uncomfortable on the Palatine. It, too, belies Augustus' self-presentation as a savior of citizens and also as a patron of the arts, as connoted by this very complex, with its libraries, portico, and statues of Apollo in his guise as a musician.

Moreover, Augustus' influence extends to the rest of Rome: the book is also turned away from the library at the porticus Octavia, and even from the famously Republican-minded Asinius Pollio's library,[156] "which first was open to learned books" (71-2). Readers might have expected this one at least to offer the book safe harbor, since Augustus had teased Asinius Pollio for his Republican sympathies, and his library was in the atrium of the Temple of Libertas.[157] But again, labels prove misleading, and Ovid underscores the hopelessness of his situation by framing Libertas herself as the author of his book's rejection: "nec me … atria Libertas tangere passa sua est" (71-2). With the next couplet, "in genus auctoris miseri fortuna redundant, / et

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[155] I refer to their ability to be read in multiple ways, as discussed in Chapter 1.

[156] In this sense the book "ironically plays the role of *exclusus amator*" (Newlands 1997: 63), although the comparison cannot be taken too far: the book, for instance, does not offer much of a soliloquy upon its rejection, and readily turns to other, friendlier 'lovers' in the form of its reading public.

[157] It goes without saying that the book's rejection "ironically raises the question of the meaning of intellectual 'liberty' in Augustan Rome" (Newlands 1997: 71). Newlands goes on to discuss Ovid's troubled presentation of Libertas in the *Fasti* (4.623f.), juxtaposed with a reference to the battle of Mutina (625-8; recall that both sides of the civil war invoked *libertas;* cf. Newlands 1997: 72). Barchiesi also points out that Ovid's ambiguous remark "ni fallor" could suggest that Ovid is no longer certain whether Libertas exists in Augustan Rome (1994: 76-9). Newlands further remarks that Pollio's library, famous for its eclectic art collection and for the open-mindedness of its sponsor (cf. Pliny the Elder, *NH* 36.33-4), was once "the sign of a cultural new age in Rome"; but now, in rejecting Ovid's books, it suggests "cultural ossification," censorship, and the ratcheting-back of former liberties (Newlands 1997: 72). The atrium of Libertas also recalls the book's earlier play in line 1 on *liber* ('book') v. *liber* ('free'), which works best in Barchiesi's Italian: "il libro non e 'libero'" (1994: 78). However, the meaning of the Atrium Libertatis had already been contested: for instance, Cicero asserts that it means the opposite of what it purports, given the behavior of its original founder Clodius (Jaeger 1990: 37; see also Milnor's discussion of its mixed cultural meaning at 2005: 71-75).

ferimus nati, quam tulit ipse, fugam" (73-4), Ovid explains why the book is so untouchable as to be denied hospitality everywhere it seeks rest; Ovid's crime, however small it was, angered the god Augustus enough that Ovid and even his offspring must suffer unending and tragic exile.[158] Ovid expresses hope that time may wear out Augustus' resolve (76), a sentiment that recalls his earlier statement at the end of the *Metamorphoses* that his poetry could withstand time, fire, and the wrath of the gods. Yet the next couplet, in which Ovid prays to Augustus as "maxime dive" instead of to the throng of all gods ("di"), reminds us that the *princeps* held more-than-mortal power and might seem a more potent bestower of favors than the Olympian gods. It also throws into relief the cruel irony that Ovid's punisher is also his only potential savior, pointing to the dangers that arise when a single figure accumulates a range of positions and powers that had traditionally been distributed among many.[159]

The book goes on to express the hope that, since it has been denied a public position ("statio … publica," 80), it may be permitted to "have hidden" ("delituisse," 80) in some private place until the *princeps'* anger should soften. This is a remarkably paradoxical sentiment. On the one hand, the hortatory "liceat" (80) suggests respect and obedience toward the *princeps'* orders; on the other, the perfect infinitive 'delituisse' suggests that the book will have (or already has) defied the spirit of these orders. (The modesty trope "si fas est," 81, which Ovid seems to employ any time he prepares to say something immodest, merely seems to confirm the delicacy of this position; Feeney further notes that the *fas* root seems to bring up the problems of free speech under the principate.[160]) The next couplet, which urges the hands of the people to take up the rejected book for safekeeping, makes it even more clear that anyone who reads this poem is aiding and abetting the outlaw book in seeking shelter from the *princeps'* anger. Ovid's reader is therefore, by definition, cast as someone who is 'subverting' the *princeps'* will in providing the *clementia*, hospitality, and readerly sympathy that Augustus himself has denied the book. This anti-Augustanization of the reader culminates Ovid's tendency throughout the poem to suggest antithetical 'pro-' and 'anti-Augustan' interpretations of images like the laurels, even when no such binary need exist. The end of *Tristia* 3.1 thus creates, even necessitates, a complicity between the reader and the book in helping it evade Augustus' ban. Its division between the unfriendly aristocratic halls of the libraries and the welcoming *plebeiae manus* creates an 'us versus him' mentality and may even give the reader a certain subversive thrill. It reminds readers (and perhaps the *princeps*) that, although Augustus may control official

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[158] Ovid thus frames Augustus as having set in motion a tragic cycle of punishment which may operate across generations. Here, to borrow his familial metaphor, it threatens not only his children (the books) but also his grandchildren and great-grandchildren (the successive copies made of these books, a process which presence in the public libraries was meant to facilitate). Where Propertius turned the Palatine into an elegiac text, Ovid makes it a backdrop for tragedy.

[159] Newlands also notes that "the poem has set about inquiring into what it means to act in a way worthy of a god, and the answer of *Tristia* 3.1 is quite different from Vergil's in *Aeneid* 8, where humility is presented as a divine quality. Rather, divine power in *Tristia* 3.1 is manifested as arbitrary and cruel" (1997: 73). However, Ovid's portrait here seems descriptive and even critical rather than prescriptive as Vergil's.

[160] Particularly concerning the *Fasti*, in his valuable 1992 article. See also Newlands 1997: 74, who adds that "the phrase gives religious solemnity and urgency to this appeal to a friendly public" and serves to point out the failure of Rome's traditional public or religious institutions to preserve literature. This important job ends up going to Ovid's private readers and personal friends rather than to the state, though see Luck for the strange argument that the 'friend' addressed in *Tristia* 3.14 may be Hyginus, the librarian of the Palatine (1967: 227; I agree with Newlands' grounds for rejecting this argument, 1997: 74).

institutions of Rome, he cannot fully exert power over private homes and minds, which may silently and collectively resist him by an act as simple as harboring a book of poetry.

It has rightly been pointed out that the exile poetry – although it exalts the freedom of the mind to escape physical bounds – betrays an anxiety about the materiality of literature.[161] A book of poetry, though its ideas may not be bounded in space or time, must physically survive a long journey merely to arrive at Rome; in order to gain readers, it needs to be circulated or to be consulted; and in order to survive the ages, it needs to spawn many copies that themselves may be reproduced over generations. Being banned from the libraries, therefore, was not just a blow to Ovid's ego but also a threat to the survival of his memory as a poet. Yet of course, even this constraint could be evaded, via private circulation and commercial copying. Perhaps it is no wonder that the book appears to meet his guide in the Argiletum,[162] where books were often bought and sold. That is, it was copied and began to circulate publicly even *before* it sought admission to the Palatine library, through the aid of a 'friendly reader' willing to take Ovid's case. Newlands points out that the book's search in the first couplet for a friendly reader to lend him a hand ("da placidam fesso, lector amice, manum," 3.1.2) is echoed by his plea in the last couplet for safe reception in the hands of the people (3.1.82 is also end-stopped with *manus*).[163] But of course, as the reader must realize by this final couplet, the fact that he is holding a copy of this poem in his *own* hands testifies to Augustus' lack of control – and to the invisible resistance of all the readers, including herself, who harbored, read, or passed on copies of the poem. Ovid's book does not need a place in the Palatine library or the Atrium Libertatis, for Libertas continues to thrive in the dark – in the private places, whether mental or physical, where even Augustus' eye could not touch. Moreover, whereas the Danaids were assembled into an *agmen* in the open, in the controlled public space of the Palatine complex, the various copies of Ovid's *Tristia* and of his other works – alike despite occasional dissimilarities or miscopyings, like siblings should be – formed an *agmen* distributed throughout various homes and libraries, but no less powerful for their separation. The reader himself necessarily participates in this vast conspiracy to maintain the free circulation of ideas, and the last couplet makes him conscious of what this participation means. Merely by banning a book from his libraries, Augustus could not exile its ideas; on the contrary, under the pressure of censorship,[164] the mere act of reading becomes an act of resistance.

V. Conclusion

In support of my general argument that readers determine the meaning of Augustan texts, I have attempted to explore how Romans responded to the Palatine complex and thus how it acquired its cultural meaning.   This architectural text is often considered to have been 'authored' by Augustus in order to trumpet his supremacy, commemorate his victory against Antony, and

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[161] Newlands 1997 examines *Tristia* 3.1 in terms of Ovid's anxiety about the preservation of his books and therefore his memory in Rome; she finds that even the book's lack of cedar oil (3.1.13), which was used as a preservative, "suggests the book's fragility and, consequently, its perilous literary status in Rome" (1997: 63).

[162] See e.g. Wiseman 1987: 403.

[163] As Newlands points out: "The taking of the personified book *by* hand mirrors the crucial act of reception, of taking the book *in* hand and thus acknowledging its significance" (1997: 63).

[164] Whether this censorship is real or merely imputed by Ovid; see also Ovid's decision in the early exile poetry to act as though he cannot reveal his friends' names for fear they will be punished (for which see Oliensis 1998, though I believe this is largely a pose designed to create an atmosphere of fear reflecting badly on the *princeps*).

advertise his closeness with the god Apollo. However, these modern impressions – and even modern reconstructions of the site – have been powerfully shaped by the responses of Augustan writers. Ovid's *Tristia* 3.1, in particular, insinuates that the Palatine complex and its environs are political texts that propagate a self-serving image of Augustus as patron of the arts and savior of citizens. It does so in part by deconstructing and defamiliarizing the complex's imagery through the device of the naïve reader, enlisting Roman overreaders in the task of 'subverting' its supposed authorial message and siding with the poet against the *princeps*.[165] Yet it seems unlikely that the Palatine had a single message to subvert. In responding to architectonic elements such as the temple doors and the Danaid portico, Propertius and Horace understood it as expressing not a triumphalist message, but sadness over the recent civil war. Their responses show that, whatever Augustus' (irrecoverable) original intentions for the complex, Romans were already able to interpret this architectural text freely and use it to think critically about the principate. In this light, *Tristia* 3.1 creates a compelling but false binary between 'pro-Augustan' and 'anti-Augustan' interpretations of the complex – thereby encouraging the modern belief that it was meant to convey a single (deceptive) message in favor of Augustus, when in reality, it was already a complex and polysemous text open to multiple interpretations. Yet Ovid's *reductio ad absurdum* of Augustan symbolism within *Tristia* 3.1 still has an important effect upon readers. It encourages them to regard symbols associated with Augustan *auctoritas* as potentially arbitrary, misleading, and fictive, thereby contributing to the sense of rivalry over public image that Ovid creates between himself and the *princeps*. Yet it also spurs them to think harder about the ways in which they themselves read the Augustan Text; for its readers, as much as Augustus himself, bear ultimate responsibility for its meaning, its power, and its consequences.

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[165] There is another side to this: though Ovid here defamiliarizes Augustan symbols, he also sees poets as able to serve as cultural mediators who can help create and sustain the meaning of symbols, and it is in this capacity that he argues he can be useful to Augustus (cf. e.g. *Ex Ponto* 4.8.55-6). I explore this idea in my next chapter.

I. Introduction

The previous two chapters have examined how the meanings of an Augustan icon, the *sidus Iulium*, and an Augustan building project, the Palatine complex, are constructed and critiqued within the Augustan Text in a way that informs how we view them today. This chapter will explore how a Roman ritual, the triumph, not only appears within the Augustan Text, but also is used to comment upon the workings of the text itself. The triumph was originally a ceremony celebrated in a specific time and place, as well as a representation of foreign peoples and victories to an audience within the *urbs*. It thus is a text that incorporates various media and is performed and read within a ritual context. However, it was undergoing changes at the time of Augustus due not just to the concentration of power in Augustus' hands, but also the changing nature of Rome itself: the expansion of its power abroad, the wider circulation of symbols of this power, and the growing impossibility for all Romans to participate firsthand in rituals and activities, such as the triumph, associated with *Romanitas*.[1] The triumph itself encapsulates some of these problems because it represented the margins of empire to the *urbs*, and then was re-presented (via coins, art, and writing) to the rest of empire.[2] Discussions of the triumph within Augustan discourse thus raise some issues fundamental to both poetry and empire: representation and communication across distance and even time.

I will begin by examining how recent scholars have identified the triumph as the moment in which the *princeps*, by marshalling images in order to make faraway victories visible and legible to the Roman public, becomes most like an artist.[3] On the other hand, triumphs are essentially texts and therefore may be reappropriated by their audiences; moreover, they are rituals tied in space and time to Rome, and may be known to non-eyewitness audiences (including ourselves) only through secondary representations. The rest of the chapter explores the questions and interpretive strategies these representations raised in the minds of contemporary viewers. I first turn to Vergil's ekphrasis of Aeneas' shield and to ancient visual depictions of triumphs, which focus on the figure of the triumphator, seek to perpetuate his moment of glory, and attempt to justify his victory by linking it causally with his achievements, personal qualities, or support from the gods. The visual arts focus on the triumph as a public event in Rome rather than a report of victory, and respond to the triumph's transience as ritual by seeking to render it more permanent – increasing its textual qualities and disembedding it from

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[1] The triumph also occurs on the intersections between culture, symbol, and ideology. If we with Holliday regard "all culture as an act of symbol-making" and "culture as an interlocked system of construable signs" (2002: xx-xxi, following Greenblatt's idea of "cultural poesis"), the triumph collapses the process by which society constructs the real, and becomes a cultural text that constructs *Romanitas* both at home and abroad.

[2] The triumph's ability to re-present victory and bring the margins of empire to Rome's center are prominent themes in Mary Beard's 2007 *The Roman Triumph*, a work which has replaced and improved upon much that has gone before, and an important influence on this chapter. Beard cites Pompey's famous quip that he found Asia a frontier and left it "mediam patriae" – a pun not only on the name 'Media' but also on the idea of Rome's frontiers becoming folded into the middle of empire (2007: 33, citing Pliny *NH* 7.99).

[3] Holliday argues that the triumph gave commander "unparalleled means for fashioning an auspicious public image," despite its origins as a purification ritual (2002: 21).

its time and place of performance.   The elegies of Propertius and Ovid, on the other hand, explore the relative power of author and audience over the meaning of a text, thus questioning the imperator's authority and challenging the triumph's status as a true representation of reality. The representational aspects of the triumph become especially prominent in Ovid's exile poetry, which itself implies a spatial separation between author and audience even as it desperately attempts to bridge the gap between the margins and center of empire.   Ovid therefore uses triumphal imagery in order to explore broader questions about communication and self-representation – questions that concern both the prince and the poet as they work to make themselves 'present' throughout the empire.[4]

II. Modern views of the triumph

It is striking that, when Augustan poets represent their own poetic power, they frequently draw from the imagery of the triumph – using it to frame an implicit poet/prince analogy or even rivalry that will inform much of this chapter.[5] In *Georgics* 3.8-48, Vergil describes his quest for poetic immortality (8-9) via imagery that specifically evokes Octavian's triumph after Actium: he envisions himself returning home from Greece (10-11), leading the Muses in triumphal procession while dressed in the victor's purple (17), presiding over sacrifices and victory games (19-25), and founding a marble temple to Caesar (16; 26-39). Horace, in *Odes* 3.30, depicts himself ascending the Capitol like a triumphator (8-9), a poetic *princeps* (13) to be crowned by a laurel (16).[6] Propertius, in *Carmina* 3.1, depicts himself as a triumphator at the head of a band of poetic imitators; and Ovid imagines himself first triumphed over by Love in *Amores* 1.2 and then triumphing himself at *Amores* 2.12.[7] What about the triumphator, as opposed to other Roman figures of authority such as priests or consuls or even the *princeps* himself, made him so compelling a figure for power?

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[4] Ovid's attempt to create illusions of presence is central to Hardie's 2002 Ovid's *Poetics of Illusion* and is an important theme of this chapter, though I seek to expand on his work by showing how imperial power also relies on such illusions and how Ovid relates himself to this project.

[5] Galinsky discusses the 'triumph theme' in Augustan literature in a 1969 survey, but concludes merely that the triumph is an emblem for the honors of public life (75); Athanassaki 1992 also links these poems, connecting them to the Pindaric motif of the chariot. I attempt instead to use them to launch a deeper analysis of fame and poetic/imperial power.

[6] He moreover frames a poet/prince rivalry that Ovid's triumphal poems, discussed below, will recall. For instance, he claims that his fame will endure as long as the pontifex climbs the Capitolium with the Vestal Virgin (8-9), but strips the *pontifex maximus* of any individual characteristics and treats him merely as an office, just as Ovid depersonalizes the triumphator. The poet himself, a *princeps* (13), leader ("deduxisse," 14), and powerful person ("ex humili potens," 12), supplants other authority figures as the subject of this ode. The laurel crown, with its multiple significations, crystallizes the analogy between poetic and political power. For this poem see Solomon and Nielsen 1994:67, Hardie 1983, and Nisbet and Rudd 2004.

[7] He also concludes the first book of the *Amores* with a strong statement that poetic power surpasses temporal power, defending its legitimacy in the face of more practical pursuits such as military service and politics (*Amores* 1.15.1-6), and substantiating this claim with a long list of immortal poets (7-30). Finally, he exclaims "cedant carminibus reges regumque triumphi, / cedat et auriferi ripa benigna Tagi" ('let kings and royal triumphs yield to songs, / let even the kind banks of gold-bearing Tagus yield,' *Amores* 1.15.33-34). Poetry is deathless (32), and because of poetry a great part of Ovid will survive his mortal frame (39-42) – an anticipation of the conclusion of the *Metamorphoses*. This boldly reworks Vergil and Horace's analogies between the immortality of their own achievements and those of the *princeps*; where the latter had complimented Augustus' accomplishments, not least by using them as the measure by which all other attainments are judged, Ovid frames a rivalry between poetic and political achievement in which poetry emerges victorious. This theme will reemerge in my discussion below.

The most obvious answer is that the figure of the triumphator was at this time becoming identical with that of the *princeps*, and thus represented the pinnacle of power and achievement. After Balbus' triumph of 19 BCE, only members of the imperial family conducted triumphs, though this seems to have been a convention rather than a rule.[8] Yet Vergil and Horace wrote their poems well before this, and even by Ovid's day this convention would not necessarily yet have been visible as such. Perhaps, then, this image appealed because the triumphing general was as close as a Roman could get to being a god on earth. Yet this 'godhood' lasted only for the duration of the ceremony, and the triumph itself insisted that this godhood was merely figurative through devices like the *servus publicus*, who in some accounts rode behind the general reminding him that he was mortal.[9] Most compelling for our purposes is Mary Beard's argument that the triumph is the ultimate exploration of the power of *representation*.

> The triumph was about display and success – the success of display no less than the display of success. As the Greek historian Polybius put it … it was "a spectacle in which generals bring right before the eyes of the Roman people a vivid impression of their achievements." The general was, in other words, the impresario of the show and almost (as Polybius' language strongly hints) a consummate artist, restaging his own achievements in front of the home crowd.[10]

In other words, the triumph is the moment when the prince becomes most like the poet: when he is most clearly seen to preside over an ordered series of semantic 'events,' often involving words and images, that progress over time, proceed toward a destination, and are designed to create a certain effect upon audiences.[11] Thus, via placards, paintings, tableaux vivants, and other artful means, the triumph both "re-presented and re-enacted the victory" and "brought the margins of the Empire to its center"[12] – something that parallels the representational powers of all poetry and particularly concerns Ovid's poems from exile.

Equally interesting for our present purposes is Beard's assertion that ancient authors "return repeatedly to how the display was staged, as if *representation itself* – its conventions, contrivances, and paradoxes – was a central part of the show. The triumph is, in other words, construed as being a ceremony of image-*making* as much as it is one of images. It is the place where, in many written versions, representation (or mimesis) reaches its limits, and where the viewer (or reader) is asked to decide … where the boundary between reality and representation is to be drawn." Yet to make this point, Beard includes no Republican author at all, and draws only from Ovid, Appian, Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius.[13]

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[8] Beard 2007: 68-9 argues that the Fasti Capitolini were designed to ensure this was the "last official triumph." I regard the Augustan period as transitional; his early triumphs were in keeping with those of the late Republic, albeit confronted with the delicate issue of treating civil war as a matter for celebration, and his reign witnessed a narrowing of triumphal privilege to members of the imperial family.

[9] Though Beard among others discusses the problems with the evidence (2007: 85-92), and I address this below.

[10] Beard 2007: 31, drawing on Polybius 6.15.8.

[11] Gregory calls the triumph a "truly multi-media event" (1994: 84).

[12] Beard 2007: 32, though she does not incorporate interesting recent research on the idea of these 'margins.' For instance, in his 1998 *Frontier and Society in Roman North Africa*, Cherry argues that the Romans had no such concept as 'frontier,' treating frontiers instead as a 'cultural process' or zone of interpenetration (27).

[13] Beard 2007: 181-6 (quotation from 181). In fact, given Beard's concern with the ways that particular triumphs such as Pompey's could be "subsequently remembered, embellished, argued over, decried, and incorporated into the

In this chapter I argue that Beard's perception, far from being endemic to the Roman triumph tradition, may in fact derive from Ovid's deep concern with representation and fiction in his own poems on the triumph. Moreover, his poems may help fill the gap Torelli has identified between Republican triumphs, which vividly depict a general's *res gestae* and details of battles, and imperial ones, which substitute abstractions and allegories in order to concentrate on the charismatic figure of the emperor.[14] Beard herself acknowledges that Ovid powerfully interrogates the triumph as a representation of reality, and other scholars have made similar points: Hardie, for example, has described Ovid's *Tristia* 4.2 as an illusion of an illusion, a fictive representation of a triumph that itself would have been "largely a parade of feignings, images of events and places far off, pictures, tableaux, personifications, imitations which supply the matter for the second-order fictive imitations of the poet."[15] But the great scope of Beard's project, and the different emphasis of Hardie's, mean that no one has yet fully explored the ways in which Ovid's 'triumphal' poems dissect the self-representational strategies of the *princeps*, analogize them to the poet's, and use them to comment upon the nature of empire. It is this gap that this chapter seeks to fill, as the final step of my inquiry into the 'fictiveness' of imperial Roman power as represented by Ovid.

III. The triumph in history: text and ritual, author and audience

The triumph as we know it today – perhaps as many ancients would have known it – lives largely within texts. Beard, Hardie, and ourselves can understand the phenomenon of the triumph only indirectly, through visual or literary *representations* from antiquity which themselves debate and interpret its meaning. So how do these representations mediate our own understanding? In this chapter I argue that different types of representations teach an audience different ways to 'read' a triumph. For instance, Ovid's poetry teaches us a very different style of interpretation than do most depictions in the visual arts. More important, though Ovid's readings of the triumph reached a far smaller audience in antiquity than some other representations, its influence upon subsequent audiences, from early modern poets to postmodern scholars, has been profound. Specifically, though Ovid's poetry does not originate the idea that triumphs can be invented or manipulated, its insistence on their fictional qualities propounds an association between imperial glory and feigning.

Before appreciating Ovid's innovation, however, we must examine how triumphs were depicted elsewhere in Roman culture. Long before Ovid, Polybius wrote that the point of the

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wider mythology of the Roman triumph as a historical institution and cultural category" (2007: 41), she has a surprising tendency to flatten out the chronology of the accounts upon which she depends.

[14] In *Roman Historical Reliefs* (1982), Torelli argues that Republican triumphal art conveyed vivid *simulacra pugnarum* with inscriptions (121), created a narrative of the battle as well as a geographic map, and carefully separated myth from reality (128). During the empire, however, the story of the military campaign is reduced to symbolic moments such as *profectio, lustratio, adlocutio, captivi, clementia,*and *liberalitus* (126-7). Triumphal paintings, moreover, "cease to represent *res gestae* or *honores* and become descriptions of expected ceremonial performances and exaltations of virtues. *Commentarii* and *elogia* become *panegyrici*" (132; Torelli has in mind here particularly Trajan). This trend toward symbolization will become important to my argument, which finds the Augustan period crucial to what Torelli calls "the very fast development of the whole Roman culture toward symbols and metaphors" (1982: 125).

[15] 2002: 309, also quoted in Beard 2007: 181.

triumph was to put directly before Roman viewers' eyes a vivid spectacle of the general's achievements (6.15.8). Modern scholars often fixate on this self-representative aspect of the triumph: Holliday, for instance, argues that despite its ritual origins, the triumph gave commanders an"unparalleled means for fashioning an auspicious public image."[16] Yet, as Holliday himself notes, this laudatory function was intertwined with an expository, almost didactic one: it provided concrete proof of the rumors that had drifted back to the city from the field, and 'explained' events to Romans who would have had little independent understanding of the geography, ethnography, or events concerned.[17] As Richard Brilliant well states, the triumph was "the center of social memory, shared by many more Romans than ever went to war."[18] For instance, the display of captives illustrated the enemy's prowess and physiognomy, spoils demonstrated their wealth and culture, and painted tableaux vividly represented the narrative of the campaign and the topography of the conquered territory.[19] Though these various elements must have been carefully chosen and arranged, their display context itself would tend to present them as *facts*. Paintings and inscriptions simply asserted what had been done, without eliciting dissenting voices or interpretations: recall that Caesar's famously bold statement 'VENI VIDI VIDI' was an inscription paraded in his Pontic triumph (Suet., *Iul.* 37). Effigies of conquered towns or rivers were labeled as simple statements of fact (e.g. 'TOWN'), thus claiming a strong and certain connection between sign and signified, even though the town under question might itself already have perished.[20] Similarly, even the most apparently outlandish spoils – Appian is particularly skeptical about a 'cloak of Alexander' paraded in Pompey's triumph of 61– were displayed and dedicated as authentic.[21] In other words, the triumph could be (and was) viewed as a text designed by an author-imperator for the purposes of glorifying his own achievements.

Modern scholars tend to focus on the authorial intentions behind this text, and with fair reason; Marcus Aemilius himself, after a lavish three-day triumph over the Macedonians, remarked that spectacles had to be planned as carefully as military campaigns (Diod. Sic. 31.8).[22] Yet the triumph's meaning, like that of any text, could not entirely be controlled by its 'author,' but was also subject to the interpretation of its 'readers,' the Roman audience. For instance, Caesar's decision to display the young Egyptian prisoner Arsinoe as a captive in his triumph of 46 backfired, evoking the pity and lamentation of the Roman audience (Dio 43.19.2-4).[23] And

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[16] 2002: 21.

[17] To illustrate the didactic quality of the triumph (2002: 29), Holliday points, for instance, to its use of historical paintings to teach the public about new territories.

[18] 1999: 221, though he notes that the presence of the campaign's soldiers establishes a connection between the victory and its representation.

[19] Torelli 1982 is especially useful on these latter, and argues for a significant amount of detail and explication, particularly in Republican times; for instance, in 174, Ti. Sempronius Gracchus displayed a *tabula* shaped like Sardinia with his victories depicted on it, later dedicated in the temple of Mater Matuta. Thus these tableaux could be 'animated' maps, and had *simulacra pugnarum* and also an inscription summarizing the *res gestae* (121). Torelli links this type of reportage from the frontier with genres like the *Commentarii* (1982: 122), which concentrate on the narrative of the campaign rather than the moment of triumph. The empire witnesses an increasing focus on the triumph itself and the symbolic acts that surround it, which I argue begins with Augustan representations.

[20] Referring to Ovid's use of the past tense to say that 'this was some upland Achaemenid city' at *Ars* 1.223-8, Beard points out that it may already have perished (2007: 185), and thus the representation really was the reality – a point I pursue below.

[21] Appian *Mith.* 117, as Beard notes at 2007: 178; she also devotes a section to the "limits of gullibility"at 167-173..

[22] Also mentioned by Brilliant (1999: 224); however, Aemilius is responding to people who were surprised by the care he took over the spectacle, perhaps suggesting such elaborate staging was unusual at this time.

[23] Cf. Beard 2007: 136-7.

one might argue that some of the triumph's claims might have been so outrageous as to *provoke* audience skepticism (recall Appian's response to 'Alexander's cloak'). Moreover, though the triumphator was the most prominent figure in the ceremony, the ritual was based on the approval and participation of its audience, and could itself be regarded as a form of social mediation.[24] The celebration of any triumph had first to be authorized by the senate, whose consent underwrote the performance of the 'text.' It seems significant, too, that ancient descriptions frequently mention the response of the people, suggesting that their viewership was an important component. For instance, Ovid emphasizes the face-to-face encounter between the general and the Roman people, and describes the emotional power of presence among the throng of applauding observers.[25] Modern scholars argue that Augustus recognized the civic importance of interactions between the *princeps* and the *populus*, of which the triumph must have been one of the most festive and spectacular.[26] Cicero hints at the appeal of this mutual gaze even as he criticizes generals for valuing such ceremonies so much: 'What is the use of such pomp? Mere vanity – to hunt applause and to be looked at" (*Pis.* 60).[27] Two centuries later, the early Christian apologist Tertullian moralizes that the pleasure such spectacles afforded could do violence to observers' spirits.[28] The triumph, then, mediated interactions between triumphator/author and the Roman audience, and contained the same latent tensions as any text. On the surface it was the most imperialistic of all political texts, designed by and for the triumphator in order to represent himself at the height of his power; but it was nevertheless aimed to please an audience and might still be reappropriated by that audience – as some Augustan writers explore.

Moreover, the triumph was not only a representation but also a ritual: a part of the religious life of the city, following procedures prescribed by tradition, sanctioned by the senate and people, and limited to a particular space and time. It therefore, in its nature as a ritual, could reach only people who were present on the scene – people who saw the triumphing general before their eyes, witnessed his procession through Rome and his sacrifice on the Capitoline, and enjoyed the ensuing feast. Their presence and participation were a crucial part of the triumph's ritual nature, just as they were the target audience for the imperator's self-representation. Much as the triumph itself reified the events of the campaign, an audience's *observation* of the triumph confirmed and in a sense constituted the glory the general had earned on the field. In fact,

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[24] I endorse Guy Debord's statement that "the spectacle is not a collection of images; rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images" (Brilliant 1999: 222). Brilliant focuses on the emperor as a "single, hegemonic presence and his many spectating subjects" (222), whereas I examine how the Augustan Text contests this authorial hegemony. Even Brunt, who takes a more traditional view of the triumph, writes that the plebs were enlisted in the idea of Roman glory (1990: 292) and notes Cicero's statement in *Philippics* 1.29 that fame depends on the opinion of the multitude (1990: 319).

[25] At *Ex Ponto* 3.4 he emphasizes the emotional power of glimpsing the general's face (35), and longs for the inspiration that derives from presence among the mass of people watching the triumph and expressing their collective excitement (29-32). At *Ex Ponto* 2.2.92 he specifies that he longs for the sight of the triumphing general's godlike face, creating a feeling of near-epiphany. I discuss these passages below.

[26] Bell finds the interaction between people and authority figures crucial to the civic dynamic of Rome (1999: 268), arguing that Augustus, unlike Caesar, was careful to be present and visible at public events, or to appoint someone in his stead.

[27] Quoted in Brilliant 1999: 225, and ironic, given Cicero's desperation for a triumph (cf. Beard, 2007, Chapter 6). Brunt observes that the philosophers reject the irrational desire for power and glory in favor of the pursuit of virtue (1990: 442), though the triumph as portrayed in the Augustan Text seems more about the former than the latter.

[28] *De Spect.* 20, cited also in Brilliant 1999: 225.

though the triumph's ritual origins remain obscure, it seems an important way of mediating the power of soldiers and civilians and controlling the interaction between the general and people: it begins by exalting him to almost godlike status in recognition of his singular authority in war, but ends by purifying him of blood, reintegrating him into the city, and reconfirming his mortality in a way that is controlled by the senate and people and therefore underscores their balancing authority.[29] Again, while the triumph exalts the general, it also acknowledges the power of its audience: they authorize its creation, oversee its performance, exert checks on the power of the author (e.g. a *servus publicus* to remind him that he is mortal), and receive him back into their midst at the end. Finally, the triumph serves an important societal function. Veyne sees the empire as depending on mutual expressions of consent between emperor, senate, and urban *plebs*, for which the triumph would have been a powerful symbol.[30] Like all rituals, it helped construct society, but more than most, in juxtaposing Roman soldiers with barbaric spoils and captives, it helped its audience define for itself what it meant to be Roman and non-Roman.[31]

But the triumph arose when Rome was a humble city-state with a small population and a narrow area of influence.[32] As Rome's geographical extent grew larger, and as ever more spectacular triumphs celebrated victories over ever more exotic places, it became more important to convey a sense of those places back to the *urbs* – but, ironically, also more difficult for all citizens to bear direct witness.[33] If the triumph was a ritual requiring audience participation and face-to-face interaction between the general and people, how might it include those Romans who were not physically present at Rome? And how might a general keep alive the memory of this lavish spectacle, and the glory it reflected upon him, after the brief duration of the ceremony itself? Generals from the Republic onwards dedicated spoils, issued coins, and erected monuments in order to represent their moment of triumph to a broader audience reaching into posterity.[34] Thus, the growth of empire was marked not only by successive triumphs but also by an increase in the triumphs' representationality: both their need to make exotic places and

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[29] See Beard, North, and Price 1998 on religious aspects of the triumph and Bruce Lincoln's 1992 *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification* for general background to ritual theory. Favro identifies the triumph's purpose as threefold: (1) to purify the army after war; (2) to justify the war to the senate and people; (3) to appease and honor the gods, especially Jupiter (1994: 153-156). She argues that triumphators sought to leave their mark on the city, pass by edifices that were significant to them, and control the motions of future triumphs, e.g. by building triumphal arches that subsequent generals would have to pass through. It would be interesting to pursue the idea that triumphators did not merely 'author' the procession, but also used it to revise and reappropriate the urban landscape, furthering the analogy between the projects of poet and prince.
[30] See also Flaig's forthcoming analysis and updating of this argument.
[31] Price 1984, drawing from Geertz's idea of ritual as a cognitive system (1966), argues that imperial rituals were not a series of 'honors' to emperor, but "a system whose structure defines the position of the emperor" (1984: 8). He argues that we should think of ritual as a public cognitive system, rather than focus on individuals' subjective experiences – something that, I argue below, Propertius and especially Ovid attempt to undo by re-privatizing the ritual. Östenberg has focused on the triumphator as dividing Romans from non-Romans; in some sense, however he also presides over the process by which non-Romans became Romans, as I argue below.
[32] The first triumph was famously celebrated by Romulus himself, the first person listed in the Fasti Capitolini, which draws attention to the line of continuity between ancient and Augustan triumphs; see Beard 2007: 73 for the legendary history of the triumph.
[33] Price also identifies the problem that many Roman rituals were located in and created by the center, and explores imperial cults as one solution; he argues that they were "created and organized by the subjects of a great empire in order to represent to themselves the ruling power" (1984: 1), much as I argue Ovid's exile poems function.
[34] Cf. Tonio Hölscher's 2006 article, "The transformation of victory into power: from event to structure," as well as Beard's section on 'The Art of Memory' (2007: 18-31).

peoples 'present' in Rome, and their need to *be* represented for a wider population of people living under Roman rule.[35] At the same time, extending the triumph to a wider audience via various 'texts' compromised its ritual character as a ceremony confined to a particular time and context. This problem comes to the fore in the age of Augustus, when greater numbers of Roman citizens than ever before lived outside the city of Rome, and when artists and authors became increasingly concerned with the problem of communication over distance.

Useful here, with some modification, is Beard's theory that the triumph underwent a fundamental change in the early empire: though its celebration became rarer, it paradoxically became an important symbolic part of imperial culture – a 'ritual in ink' more than in reality.[36] After the triumph of Balbus in 19, triumphs were celebrated less frequently, and began to be restricted to the emperor and members of his immediate family.[37] Accordingly, triumphs began to be abstracted from their original performative context and treated as a permanent attribute of the emperor. These representations thus no longer reflect direct experience of the triumph so much as they invent triumphal tradition, and themselves affect public understandings of the ritual. Yet as Beard herself acknowledges, the age of Augustus was a transitional period. Even though Augustus himself refused further triumphs after celebrating his triple triumph in 29 BCE, he received 21 imperial acclamations, and the Fasti Capitolini commemorate several triumphs between Augustus' and Balbus'.[38] I seek to explore how depictions of the triumph within Augustan culture are also transitional, and begin to explore some of the issues of fictionality and representation that preoccupy Beard's analysis of later imperial triumphs. The term 'ritual in ink' does not do full justice to the fact that the vast majority of Romans would have experienced the triumph not through the elite form of literature, but through representations within the visual and material arts, not to mention the less documentable means of hearsay, rumor, or (for increasingly fewer) eyewitness experience.[39] Moreover, these representations did more than simply re-depict or re-perform the triumph in order to reflect the glory of the emperor. Rather, as I will argue, they conduct a wide-ranging dialogue about the expansion of empire, the transmission of information, the nature of representation, and the negotiation between author/imperator and reader/audience that underwrite both political and poetic power.

IV. Reader responses to triumph in the Augustan Text

The remainder of this chapter will examine different responses to the triumph within the Augustan Text. I speak of 'the triumph' in generic terms because these texts discuss a wide

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[35] Ovid describes the people who flocked to see the spectacle, bringing the whole *orbis* into the *urbs* (e.g. *Ex Ponto* 2.1.21-4). But what of the people who cannot attend this celebration of membership in the Roman polity, arguably one of the most important if elections have come to mean less – are they any less Roman simply because they cannot be in Rome to witness it? Put another way, though the victorious general used the triumph to represent his achievements, its symbolic significance far eclipsed its limited extent as a physical event; in order for the triumph's impact to be extended beyond the time and space of the actual ceremony, and to reach an audience beyond its original eyewitnesses (including posterity), it itself needed to be represented and retold.

[36] 2007: 71.

[37] Beard 2007: 69, though she notes some problems with this idea, e.g. Suetonius' depiction of this age as a "bumper period" for triumphs (71). I also wonder whether this change would have been visible to Augustan writers.

[38] For a brief history of Augustus' victories and honors, see Brunt 1990: 446-450.

[39] I am especially concerned with how ancient audiences might have been able to 'observe' a triumph in their minds, even if they had never seen one in person – whether they lived in the provinces or even the *urbs* as the number of triumphs dwindled dramatically during imperial times.

variety of triumphs – from Augustus' triple triumph of 29 to wholly imagined ones with no real-world referent – but in doing so, raise a similar set of issues. P. A. Brunt sees the poets as spokesmen for Rome's desire for dominance.[40] I argue, however, that they use the triumph to raise a host of issues that affect literary texts too: the relations between fact and fiction, authorial intent and audience interpretation, and center and periphery. I conclude with an analysis of how Ovid, denied the opportunity to experience triumphs first-hand and even through representation, invents a series of imaginative triumphs that show the power of poetry to construct Roman power abroad along with a sense of shared participation in empire. It is here, too, that we find the first traces of concern for the triumph's ability to feign – a theme that emerges more clearly in Tacitus and that influences modern perspectives like Beard's.[41]

A. The triumph in Vergil: the shield of Aeneas

Vergil's depiction of Augustus' triumph on the shield of Aeneas sets some standards and frames some issues that preoccupy subsequent representations of triumphs within Augustan discourse.[42] This triumph serves as a visual shorthand for Augustus' military achievements and popular acclaim; given its position in the middle of the shield that Venus gives to Aeneas, it also suggests the victorious Augustus as an analogy for Aeneas and frames Augustan Rome as the goal toward which Aeneas is working. Recent criticism has focused on its service to empire and its folding the chaos and violence of Roman history into a unified epic narrative.[43] But even more interesting, for my purposes, is how the triumph is portrayed. It closely connects the triumph with the victory it represents, is deeply concerned with its own representational status, highlights its inadequacy to the real event, and explores how different audiences may react.

Though the parade of future Romans in *Aeneid* 6 bears suggestive resemblances to a triumphal procession,[44] the triumph figures more overtly in Book 8, where it forms a central device on the shield of Aeneas (8.626ff.).

> illic res Italas Romanorumque triumphos
> haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi

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[40] 1990: 443, stating a traditional view that echoes Syme's conception of Augustan culture.

[41] Beard 2007 is extremely concerned with the triumph's potential to misrepresent; see especially her fifth chapter, on "The Art of Representation." Östenberg, for instance, argues that M. Claudius Marcellus and Fulvius Nobilior may have included siege engines in their triumphs in order to persuade doubtful Romans that their victories were authentic.

[42] Holliday points out the anachronism that art representing the triumph does not occur until the 3rd century. For scholarship on the shield, see Bartsch 1998: 330 (including bibliography), Gurval 1988: 276-313, Thomas 1983, West 1975, Williams 1981, and Hardie 1986: 104 (re. the gigantomachy).

[43] Bartsch 1998 further connects this with the control that art exerts: "the textum of the triumph is the triumph of the textum, and the triumph of everything the textum seems to stand for" (331). She follows the line that Augustus performed "Roman ideology via artistic representation," following Hardie 1986 in seeing a programmatic emphasis on the Augustan peace in monumental art and architecture. See also Quint 1993: 32.

[44] Bartsch discusses this description as itself an aesthetic object reminiscent of friezes or the statues in the Forum Augustum (1998: 329), also noting the fact that Augustus was said to have designed his own funeral around *Aeneid* 6 and the statues in his forum. However, funerals also resembled a reverse triumph, underlying the similarity between all these visual processions. For ancient evidence for Augustus' funeral, see Dio 56.33-34, Suet., *Aug*. 100.2 and Tac., *Ann.* 1.8; for brief discussions, see Flower 1996: 109, 133, 244-5, although Beard is more inclined to connect it with the idea of apotheosis implied by the triumphator's being close to the gods (2007: 284-6).

> fecerat ignipotens, illic genus omne futurae
> stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella …

It is tempting to construe, from the opposition of "res Italas Romanorumque triumphos" on the one side and "genus omne futurae / stirpis ab Ascanio pugnataque in ordine bella" on the other, a spatial structure similar to that of the yet-incomplete Forum Augustum, with its rows of Roman triumphators arranged facing the Julians.[45] These two themes are united in the person of Augustus, whose Actian victory and triumph dominate the center of the shield ("in medio," 675) much as the statue of Augustus in his triumphal quadriga would dominate the Forum.[46] In fact, Augustus' triple triumph is the only one narrated by Vergil, and thus seems to stand in for all the "Romanorum … triumphos" promised at 626; just as Caesar owned all the Roman fora at *Tristia* 3.1.27, so too his triumph eclipses all other triumphs and belongs to all Romans.

Vergil's description in Book 8 not only assigns Augustus' victory a climactic position in Roman history, but also presents the triumph as a justified representation of real-life victories. In the ekphrasis, the narrator describes the triumph (714-728) only after he has related the battle of Actium and the defeat of Cleopatra (675-713); readers thus have already witnessed in their mind's eye the victory to which the triumph testifies. The shield in a sense imitates the mimetic action of the triumph itself, by parading before the viewer's eyes scenes that illustrate the military prowess of its central figure, Augustus, and thus underscoring the validity of the triumph. By narrating the two events as immediately sequential and on the same level of representational reality, and by calling no attention to the acts of omission and selection that underlie the poetic and triumphal texts,[47] Vergil narrows the epistemological gap between the triumph and the victory it represents (a concern that preoccupies Ovid and, perhaps through him, Beard). In fact, by admiring the shield, Vergil's reader implicitly becomes part of the Roman throngs who witness, approve, and thereby validate the triumph (717-719) – a scene that Vergil and his contemporaries themselves may well have witnessed in 29. Thus, Vergil's account integrates the facts of Augustus' victory, the triumphator's self-representation during his triumph, the approbation of onlookers at Rome, and the experiences that Vergil's own audience might bring to the text.

However, the relationships between art, author, and audience are not as simple as they seem. Vergil asks readers to perform a complicated mental action: to imagine the legendary character Aeneas in the act of contemplating a shield which itself depicts a triumph far in Aeneas' future, though in the viewer's recent past. It thus prompts readers to consider the interactions between Vergil's narration and the art it depicts, between Aeneas as viewer and the 'text' he attempts to read, and between themselves and representations more generally. Vergil's description offers place of honor to the visual arts, in that it purports to be secondary to Vulcan's

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[45] For a discussion of the relative chronology see Zanker 1988: 213; I discuss the Forum Augustum briefly below.

[46] Bartsch believes that this shield, and much of Augustan art, favors the moment of victory over the struggle and elides the losers in order to concentrate on the triumph and bounty of the winner (1998: 332).

[47] Vergil does describe exotic captives at 724-8 whose defeat we have not witnessed in this particular narrative; he also illustrates only one temple, that of Apollo on the Palatine, despite his claim that Augustus dedicated 300 temples (a generically large number which far surpasses Augustus' own claim in the *Res Gestae* to have built 12 and restored 82). See Williams' notes *ad loc.* (1999: 275). Note also, in contrast to Ovid, that these captives receive little sympathy within the narrative, though they are briefly individuated as part of a colorfully exotic catalogue of Rome's defeated enemy (cf. Reed 2007 on Vergil's sometimes exoticizing gaze).

images, and confesses its own inadequacy to describe them with the phrase "non enarrabile textum" (625).[48] In doing so, it seems to privilege the importance of the act of viewing, an essential component of the triumphal experience. Though Aeneas' chronological separation from Augustus precludes the mutual gaze between triumphator and audience, this shield becomes a visual text by which Aeneas can connect with Augustus across time, become an observing and admiring audience of his triumph, and use this experience to construct himself as Roman, insofar as the shield and its narrative inspire him and confirm his mission.

Obviously, though, Vergil's literary text is no mere handmaiden to the visual one; it both constructs and animates the images on the shield, devoting special effort to reproducing the imaginative experience of viewing them. In fact, the very phrase "non enarrabile textum" (625) enhances the impression that there is a real "textum" out there, ironically confirming the 'reality' of this fictitious shield.   Adding to this sense of immediacy, second-person potential subjunctives directly address the reader across time. For instance, lines like 649-50, "illum indignanti similem similemque minanti / aspiceres," (['if you had been there,'] "you would have seen him similar to an angry person, similar to a threatening person"), suggest that anyone viewing these images would interpret them the same way. Moreover, though the images on the shield are static, Vergil suggests their potential to come to life in the mind of the viewer.[49] For instance, as Williams points out, Vergil's description of the wolf licking the twins Romulus and Remus in alternation ("alternos," 634) "could not be portrayed pictorially, and is an extension of the visual art towards narrative."[50] Among many other examples, Vergil writes that Vulcan "fecerat … uiridi fetam Mauortis in antro / <u>procubuisse</u> lupam," using an infinitive rather than a participle to suggest Vulcan is not merely depicting an event but making it happen.[51] Moreover, Vulcan not only conveys these events with artistic *enargeia*, but also has prophetic knowledge of the future ("haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi / fecerat ignipotens," 627-8). In other words, Vulcan's shield is a visual prophecy, and Vergil is retranscribing Vulcan's visual art into words, creating an interdependence between visual and verbal information and demonstrating how art may span time and audience. Vulcan's workmanship can move Aeneas with wonder despite his ignorance of events and his distance from them in time, and Vergil's own poetry can recreate the shield for an Augustan Roman readership equally far removed from the time of the story. Vulcan and Vergil are thus parallel artistic figures, both capable of conveying prophecy,

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[48] This phrase has intrigued commentators from Servius onward. Servius relates it to the pictures themselves; Williams to the workmanship whereby the layers are made into a unity (for *textum* citing Cat. 64.10, Lucr. 6.1054); Bartsch suggests it refers to the text of the poem (1998: 327); and Faber simply feels it refers generally to the 'fabric' of the shield (2000: 49), citing its precedent in the Pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*.

[49] Williams points out that "Virgil wishes us to be constantly aware that he is describing pictures; throughout his narrative he interweaves comments like *addiderat, extuderat, cernere erat, fecerat ignipotens,* and indications of position like *in summo, hinc procul, in medio, parte alia, hic, hinc, desuper*" (1999: 266).

[50] 1999: 267; Williams refers also to 8.695, 708 and 1.483. The duration of the triumph over three days might also be hard to depict pictorially, but is indicated through Vergil's phrase "triplici invectus Romana triumpho" at 714. Perhaps Vergil signals the similarity of his own role to Vulcan's with the phrase "corpora fingere lingua" (634), an echo of his own statement that he licked his verses into shape as a bear licks her cubs clean (Aul. Gell. 17.10.3; *Vita Donati* 22; cf. also Williams 1999: 267). Bartsch anticipates my comparison at 1998: 330 but takes it in a different direction, suggesting that Vergil is licking Roman history into shape in order to aestheticize the violence behind empire. Certainly the simile at 8.407-415, where the blacksmith-god is compared to a woman waking up early to supervise the household weaving, seems as fitting to the gentle craft of poetry as to metallurgy, and recalls the weaving image behind his "non enarrabile textum," discussed above.

[51] Williams, ibid.

creating strong effects on their audience, and transcending time. However, though Vergil focuses readers' attention on the imagined surface of the shield, this 'text' is an effect of his own text, and Vergil himself the ultimate creator of this "fama" (731); moreover, the shield requires Vergil's verbal intervention – his naming and narration of the images – in order to become legible to a readership.

Of course, it remains incomprehensible to its primary audience, Aeneas, who lacks the cultural referents to identify the figures through mere visual cues, and is deprived of verbal exegesis of the sort that Anchises provided in Book 6. In fact, there is a significant informational gap between the various authors and audiences here depicted. From their position in history, Vergil and his readership have foreknowledge of the episodes of Roman history depicted on the shield; within the story, Vulcan the artist is acquainted with prophecies about the future ("haud vatum ignarus venturique inscius aevi," 627, the word *vates* reinforcing the slippage between literary, visual, and even prophetic texts). But Aeneas, trapped at a great chronological distance from the events the shield depicts, and deprived of any verbal explanation, can enjoy the shield only for its artistic merit and not for its meaning or prophetic accuracy. Yet this does not seem to concern him; he simply admires it unknowingly ("miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet"), shoulders his burden, and carries on setting in motion the historical processes that result in the events on the shield.[52] It therefore seems to have accomplished Venus' purpose: to excite confidence in Aeneas rather than to convey information ("ne mox aut Laurentis, nate, superbos / aut acrem dubites in proelia poscere Turnum," 613-4). And it is tempting to see this, in turn, as a reflection upon triumphal ceremonies: their purpose is not to educate or inform the Roman public so much as inspire a sense of shared purpose and celebration – notwithstanding their potential ignorance.[53]

Finally, in the last line of the book, Vergil refers to the shield as the *fama* and *fata* of Aeneas' descendents ("attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum," 731). This striking metonymy, by equating the concrete shield with the abstract idea of fame, points out that reputation can survive across time only insofar as it is embodied in specific texts, whether visual or verbal. This fits with my more general argument that Augustus' public image exists largely within and because of discrete, heterogeneous, and idiosyncratic textual representations – whether these transmit his *fama* backward in time to Aeneas (via the fictional conceit of this shield), across the geographical expanse of empire, or forward in time to the present day. But Vergil has already shown that rumor and reputation can be misleading, with his portrait of Fama in Book 4 (173-190) as a many-tongued, -eyed, and -mouthed monster who mingles truth with falsehood ("tam ficti pravique tenax quam nuntia veri," 188). In the case of the shield, readers are told outright that Vulcan knows the future (731), and can use their own experience of history to evaluate the accuracy of the god's 'prophecy.' Yet even so, the shield was created by Vulcan and bestowed by Venus to work a particular purpose on an ignorant audience, and Vergil has his own artistic and political reasons for representing it as he does, with its concealed omissions,

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[52] In fact, Venus almost seems to stage this encounter in order for Aeneas to demonstrate his conscious choice of the future that awaits him; rather than put the arms on her son herself, she leans them against a tree, forcing him to make the decision to accept and wear them.

[53] As Veyne argues, the function of rite is "to celebrate, to solemnize, not to symbolize and inform" (1988: 14) Here, Aeneas' ignorance prompts the external reader to fill in the intervening historical facts for Aeneas, as well as the value judgment that Aeneas cannot make: whether the Augustan future is worth it.

selections, and composition emphasizing Augustus' role within Roman history. Thus, this passage reveals the constructed nature of artistic texts and asserts their importance in constructing viewers' understanding. At the same time, Vergil suggests that his own version has a strong relation to factuality, and does not explore the potential deceptiveness and misinterpretability of *fama*, though these issues emerge elsewhere within the epic.[54] He therefore reveals alternate possibilities for viewing texts – as true or as constructed – that contemporary visual and literary artists work through as they re-present Augustan triumphs.

B. Some visual representations of triumph

Extant material references to the triumph within the Augustan Text include the Fasti Capitolini, the Forum Augustum, the Boscoreale cups, the Gemma Augustea, and a wide variety of coins – and this is not to mention what is lost.[55] Many of these material representations originate from or seem to reflect more 'official' perspectives,[56] but raise issues and viewing habits that are adopted or contested by written representations. In particular, these renditions often share Vergil's tendency to eternalize the ceremony, stabilize its meaning, and appeal to the viewer. Yet, where Vergil represented Augustus' triumph as part of a larger historical narrative including the victories that merited it, these visual representations focus on the triumph itself, and begin to represent it as a series of symbols rather than a documentation of *res gestae*. This follows a general evolution from detail toward symbol that Mario Torelli documents in his 1982 *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs*, and opens up the potential, in later literary representations (especially by Ovid), for these symbols to be wholly divorced from the reality they purport to represent. Moreover, in turning the triumph into an artifact, some material representations divorce it from its original ritual context, enhance its textuality, and ironically turn it into an object of consumption – thus privatizing the public ritual, much as later writers will do.

Material culture of the Augustan period often takes a documentary approach toward the triumph, and is characterized by a drive to order and eternalize triumphs as part of a progression of history, recalling a similar tendency in Vergil's *Aeneid* 6 and 8. Beard points out that even the Romans had difficulty ascertaining whether certain triumphs had ever been celebrated; some were claimed by generals but never approved by the senate, some were invented years later by families who wished to exalt their lineages, and others simply left no trace in the historical record.[57] Perhaps reflecting an anxiety about the misinformation that could and did attach itself to the Roman historical record, several Augustan monuments make clear and confident visual displays of triumphal information. For instance, the Fasti Capitolini purport to reflect (and thus

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[54] It would theoretically be possible for the shield to bear a misleading depiction of Rome's future, or even for Aeneas to mistrust, misunderstand, or refuse to carry on the shield's version of events; in fact, over the course of the *Aeneid*, particularly in the first half, he is frequently misled or kept in ignorance, often by the gods themselves.

[55] The arch in the Roman Forum commemorating Octavian's victory of 31, which is thought to have been the site of the Fasti Capitolini, is particularly tantalizing (Beard mentions it at 2007: 64, referring to Coarelli 1985: 258-308, Simpson 1993, Nedergaard 1994-5, and others). Kuttner also mentions the frieze of Apollo Sosianus as depicting Augustus' triple triumph of 27 (1995: 150), but this identification is contested by others. The Palatine complex, too, discussed in the previous chapter, can be thought of as a monument to this victory.

[56] E.g., the Fasti Capitolini and the Forum Augustum were direct commissions of Augustus; Kuttner (1995) believes the Boscoreale Cups were modeled after a now-lost triumphal monument.

[57] Beard 2007: 65-8, citing for instance Cicero's *Brut.* 62

create) an authentic list of all Roman triumphs – presenting their own version of history as an authoritative record culminating in the Augustan present.[58] And of course, by inscribing them in marble and putting them on public display, the Fasti monumentalize the triumphs they list and propagate the primacy of their own text within Rome's historical record.

Where the Fasti seek to order triumphs chronologically in a list that culminates in Augustan times, the Augustan Forum orders triumphators spatially around the figure of Augustus; however, it shares the Fasti's concern for authentication, eternalization, and the establishment of a definitive public record. Around the centerpieces of the Forum, the temple of Mars Ultor and the statue of Augustus on his quadriga as *pater patriae*, were arranged 108 statues, each bearing a *titulus* and *elogium* explaining his achievements: on the right, the great Julii, and on the left, *summi viri* in triumphal guise.[59] In his useful 2007 study, *The First Hall of Fame*, Joseph Geiger argues that these statues' intent was moral and didactic: they reflect "a well-designed historical education imposed from above to instruct the political consciousness of the Romans" that for the first time attempted to reach "the widest sectors of the population."[60] With its careful spatial arrangement, it certainly seems to have presented its version of history as complete and authoritative,[61] and the verbal apparatus accompanying each statue suggests an anxiety to connect sign with signified and to control readers' interpretation. Yet ironically, this

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[58] Beard points out that the list ends with Lucius Cornelius Balbus' triumph in 19 BCE, the last one awarded to someone outside the imperial family, and has no space for additions (2007: 68-9). On the other hand, to leave empty spaces for indeterminate future triumphs would look messier and less momentous, and perhaps suggest the possibility of living triumphators like Augustus being supplanted.

[59] See e.g. Suetonius, *Aug.* 31.5; Sehlmeyer 2000: 191-2, 222-4; Beard 2007: 44 n. 5; and especially Geiger 2008: 61, 95-98. The *tituli* contained the person's name and offices in the nominative, while the *elogiae* referred to their exemplary deeds; Torelli discusses this mode of statue documentation and finds its origin in Etruscan funerary monuments (1982: 127). The question of who composed these is troubled. Though only one source attributes Augustus (Pliny the Elder says that the *princeps* inscribed the statue of Scipio Aemillianus, *NH* 22.13), Geiger makes a somewhat specious argument that Augustus' ideology can be detected in the remnants of the inscriptions (2008: 74). He does, however, provide an excellent discussion of artistic and literary antecedents and analogues for such an ordered grouping, though he focuses on ancestor masks and funeral processions rather than triumphs. He notices an analogous interest among historians like Varro, Nepos, and Atticus in personalities around this time (2008: 42), and links the statues with *Aeneid* 6 and Horace *Odes* 1.12 (2008: 51). He notes also the suggestive balance of the achievements of the Julian *gens* with the entirety of the Republican aristocracy (2008: 95). Though it is unclear to what extent the statues emphasized the depicted men's triumphs, as opposed to their other achievements, it seems significant they were portrayed in triumphal guise.

[60] 2008: 33, 35. He rightly emphasizes that they could communicate with a much broader audience than literature (63), but does not deal with the questions of literacy that the *tituli* raise, although he points to certain visual means (such as a crow on the statue of Corvus) that could communicate with the illiterate. I disagree with the level of cultural control he assigns to Augustus as well as his failure to accomodate the power of reader response. Thus, according to Geiger, Augustus shaped this Forum to fit a "grand design of providing his, that is the official, version of the summing-up of Roman history, and a means of educating the Roman public" (63). He does at one point acknowledge that "the *princeps* would need the help and cooperation of many," shows awareness of work on reciprocity (Galinsky 1996: 121, Zanker 1990: 102), and points to the quadriga statue as an expression of Romans' views of Augustus, but generally regards the Forum as designed by Augustus to convey certain ideological messages, substituting the term 'education' for that of 'propaganda' (2008: 72).

[61] Geiger discusses the acts of selection and, as crucially, omission, that went into it; he believes Marius, Sulla, and even Pompey were included, while Brutus and Cassius were not (2008: 98). In order to balance the numbers of the *summi viri*, Geiger argues that some less famous Julians were included, like Julius Caesar's father and perhaps even some Julian women (2008: 110-112). The original plan included 108 statues in marble, but there was space to add statues in bronze of future heroes whose achievemement rivaled theirs (Suet., *Aug.* 31.5, Dio 55.10.3); there remain some questions surrounding their placement (Zanker 1968: 15, Geiger 2008: 61).

static procession of statues bearing explanatory *tituli*, even in this public monumental context, echoes the triumph's own display of captive cities and chieftains. It subjects these great men to Augustus' supremacy – and to the gaze and intellectual ownership of a wide audience – just as triumphators displayed conquered peoples as well as their own conquering selves to the people. Thus, while on one level the Forum Augustum celebrates the accomplishments of individual triumphators, on another, it reappropriates them to reflect on the focal point of the forum – Augustus himself.[62] Geiger seems to assume that the forum's meaning was perfectly transparent to readers:[63] "Thus Augustus produced a version of Roman history that was both attractively accessible to the greatest possible number of citizens, and also presented to them the one correct rendition of events. It was to be an history whose moral would not be lost on anybody."[64] Yet the Forum also exemplifies a strategy of purposeful reappropriation that Augustan writers would deploy themselves in order to read triumphal imagery resistantly, separating symbol from signified, appropriating the ceremony for their own private motives, and replacing its didactic tone with an emphasis on pleasure.

If the Fasti Capitolini and the Forum Augustum sought to standardize a list of 'legitimate' Roman triumphs and triumphators, many other public visual displays sought to expand the glory of an individual triumphator and propagated certain ways of viewing textual and political authority that are resisted by other Augustan texts. Many, like the statues in the Forum Augustum, combined word with image to document the triumphator's *res gestae* and stabilize the relationship between sign and signifier. Thus, for instance, generals dedicated the spoils of their victories in various temples, which were identified via written titles or oral histories and would have constituted documentation of the triumphator's achievements and consequent triumph.[65] Moreover, the many Republican temples that were built *ex manubiis*, from the spoils of victory,[66] immortalized the general's name and deeds via inscriptions, friezes, and other architectonics. In imperial Rome, as both power and the right to triumph were concentrated in the hands of the imperial family, these building projects became more momentous, their iconographical schemata became more complex, and new forms such as the triumphal arch were articulated.[67] The arches of Titus and of Constantine and the columns of Trajan and of Marcus Aurelius, for instance, present vivid narratives of the emperors' campaigns as well as illustrations of their virtus and divine favor, rendering faraway and momentary victories permanently visible at Rome.[68] Yet such large-scale public edifices were also the least

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[62] Though Augustus himself declared that he set up these statues in order to serve as an example to himself and future leaders (cf. e.g. Brunt 1990: 443).

[63] It was "clearly comprehensible… effective and instantly intelligible" (2008: 72).

[64] 2008: 72.

[65] See Torelli 1982 for an analysis of historical reliefs and also triumphal art.

[66] Though see Eric Orlin, *Temples, Religion, and Politics in the Roman Republic* (1997), for the interesting argument that such temples were often built with more financial and political support from the senate than previously thought (8), and testify less to individual generals' claims to greatness than to their ability to work with the senate.

[67] For which, see Kleiner 1985 and Wallace-Hadrill 1990.

[68] The scholarship on these is vast; see Torelli for brief analysis of this later style of representation, and the imperial tendency to concentrate on "symbols" and "significant moments," thus turning a Republican interest in continuous narration into the "psuedonarration of the triumphal arches" (182: 125). The Column of Trajan is an obvious exception, although Veyne among others comments on the fact that it would have been impossible for a viewer to take in its continuous narration; to Veyne, "The Column does not inform people; it simply lets them see the evidence of the greatness of Trajan faced with time and the weather" (1988: 3). Zanker sees the later columns of Marcus Aurelius and Arcadius, which have more pronounced and larger reliefs, as a "reaction to the frustration

transportable, rooted to their physical locations and therefore limited in audience. How, then, might a general spread the *fama* of his triumph to a broader audience, and how might this audience read the triumph?

One obvious means are triumphal coins, which similarly present themselves as authoritative texts, and again do not invite questions about the triumph's ability to misrepresent or invent facts. Though they are by no means unique to this period, they announce that a triumph has happened, name the imperator and the defeated nation, and present this information as fact in order to validate the imperator's authority. However, given their small size, they must be extremely selective in the details and images they present, and almost always select the image of the triumphant imperator himself, the captured nation, or Victory. These are some of the very few Augustan texts which treat the fact of victory, and the granting of the triumph, as more important than the triumphal procession itself. In a sense, the coins do some of the symbolic work upon the triumph that the triumph itself did upon the victory: they simplify its message, closely unite image and text, and are designed to be handled and understood by a wide audience.

More interesting for our purposes are circulable private representations of the triumphal procession or triumphal monuments, such as the Boscoreale cups and the Gemma Augustea. If the triumph is itself a first-order 'translation' of a military victory into ceremonial form, each subsequent representation of the triumph becomes another, second-order 'translation' and re-reading. The representational choices and sacrifices of works of private art tell us something about how ideas of the triumph were received and circulated among private citizens. These luxury items reached a much smaller market than the coins – though the support of such elites, in Rome and in the provinces, has been considered particularly crucial to empire, and representations of the quintessentially Roman ritual of the triumph might have helped such elites construct their identities.[69] Moreover, their way of reading the triumph begins to revisit the strong author/audience power differential that more official versions of the triumph seem to embed, prefiguring a similar dynamic among Augustan writers.

i.   Case study of the Boscoreale cups

Let us explore, as an example of a private, circulable, and visual representation of an Augustan triumph, the Boscoreale skyphos pair – or, more specifically, the cup that depicts a sacrifice and triumph of Tiberius. In her thorough 1995 *Dynasty and Empire in the Age of Augustus: The Case of the Boscoreale Cups*, Ann Kuttner identifies this as the triumph of 8/7 BCE.[70] She further argues that these cups are domestic reworkings of a set of monumental reliefs

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viewers of the column of Trajan must have felt" (1997: 189), although I am inclined to agree with Veyne that this was a deliberate choice.

[69] Lendon, for instance, discusses the role of provincial elites in maintaining imperial power, drawing from von Premerstein and MacMullen's idea that "the empire was a single enormous spider's web of reciprocal favours" through which a few powerful people could govern many (1997: 12). In a valuable work examining frontiers as a "cultural process," Cherry adds subtlety to Haselgrove and Millett's idea that provincial elites were an important motor driving Romanization: elites copied Rome, then other classes copied the elites (1998: 80). See also Veyne 1976 and Flaig forthcoming.

[70] For her argumentation, see especially 1995: 148-54; she cites its inclusion of the *servus publicus* and other figures that underlined Tiberius' mortality as showing that it must have been created while Augustus was still alive (151, though see my argument *contra* below); argues that the lack of specificity in the triumphal imagery suggests that at

that were erected in Rome after this triumph and that, though they do not survive to the present day, continued to influence later and still-visible monuments such as the Arch of Trajan at Beneventum.[71] But, as Kuttner points out, this cup is simply too small to include the amount of detail that might have adorned the larger monumental reliefs, which themselves selectively depicted the triumph, which in turn edited details from the field. This results in what she terms an "artful telescoping,"[72] but which I also link to a trend in Roman triumphal art toward collapsing narrative and geographic detail into a set of symbolic moments. Either way, the representative choices made on the cup tell us something about which details a Roman artist or patron considered most important, and thus, how observers might have read the triumph.[73] For instance, the cup omits the captives, war booty, and triumphal displays which most likely were present on the public monument, thus forcing its viewer to focus on the triumphator himself, along with a few attendants and a sacrificial victim that stand in for the multitude. Moreover, the artist has taken care to render Tiberius "easily recognizable" from his physiognomy here, and distinguishes him as imperator by his full triumphal regalia.[74] This emphasis on the specific person of the imperator matches that of the triumphal coins, the Fasti Capitolini, the Forum Augustum, and the shield of Aeneas.

On the other hand, in all other aspects, the scene is remarkably generic and does not prompt the reader to inquire into the specific historical situation of the victory. No other individual is identifiable, even in terms of his nationality,[75] and no *ferculum* bearing triumphal spoils or parade of recognizable barbarian captives is depicted. In fact, this absence of detail makes it difficult to tell which triumph this depicts at all – a problem attested by the debate that still surrounds its identification.[76] We have seen that Vergil verbally explicates and animates the visual text of Aeneas' shield, that the Fasti Capitolini relied on inscription, and that written *tituli* stabilized the meaning of the statues in the Forum Augustum. Even in the Boscoreale horde itself, a pair of beakers employs detailed labels in order to identify the skeletons of poets and philosophers thereon depicted.[77] In comparison, the cup's lack of verbal cues or visual individuation of figures other than Tiberius assigns a great deal of interpretive freedom (or

this point Tiberius had only completed one triumph so no confusion with his second triumph of 13 would have been possible (152); and suggests that the pairing of the cups positions Tiberius' triumph in BR2 as a continuation of the Drusus tableau in BR1, framing it Tiberius' victory as a continuation of Drusus' campaign after his death in 9 BCE (as Tiberius himself seems to have done by vowing much of his *manubiae* toward restoring temples, in Drusus' name jointly with his own, to Castor and Pollux and to Concord, both "highly symbolic of fraternal love," 153).

[71] See Kuttner's Chapter 7 (155-171) for the argument that in later visual arts we can see 'echoes' of an original monument upon which the cups were based; she later speculates that this was the quadratic base of a monumental column, made by the same atelier that produced the Ara Pacis (194-8).

[72] Kuttner 1995: 150.

[73] If Kuttner's identification of this as Tiberius' triumph of 8 BCE is correct, then this is a triumph that Ovid would likely have witnessed and that may have colored his own subsequent representations of imperial triumphs.

[74] Kuttner 1995: 145.

[75] Kuttner argues that the *torquatus* is a Gallic officer (1995: 146), but even in this capacity, is a generic representation of a "good" non-Roman and shows the spread of Rome's imperium and alliances.

[76] Kuttner suggests that the very absence of information shows that at this point Tiberius had accomplished only one triumph, so no confusion would have been possible; she further argues that its juxtaposition with the other cup, depicting Drusus, would have linked this triumph closely with Tiberius' continuance of Drusus' campaign in Germany after his death in 9 (1995: 152). However, it is unusual that this triumph bears no indication of the peoples triumphed over, and many scholars continue to find the triumph of 12 CE, awarded in 8, a more compelling identification (cf. Zanker 1988: 229, Künzl 1988 and 1989).

[77] Héron de Villefosse, *MonPiot* 5: 1899, plates 7-8.

responsibility) to the viewer. Thus, the cup displays little concern for the identity of the conquered nations or, apparently, the historical events that resulted in the triumph; its sole focus is the glory of the triumphator, and it reduces the rest of the procession to aesthetic symbols that are unanchored to real-world antecedents. This aids in the idealization of the triumph as an eternal and archetypal form whose iterations are identical except for the identity of the triumphator, and also helps enable the poets' later separation of triumphal sign and signified.

The cup does, however, share some of the ordering and legitimizing impulses that seemed to inform the Fasti Capitolini, the Forum Augustum, and Vergil's shield of Aeneas. Kuttner sees the cup as creating an "*explanatory* sequence, which gives a logic of cause and effect to the fact of military success." In effect, it attributes Tiberius' victory (depicted on one side of the cup) to his *pietas* in discharging the correct rites before his departure (depicted on the other, and identified by Kuttner as *nuncupatio votorum*; see Figures 1 and 2 below).[78] His humility may also be signaled with the unusual inclusion in Tiberius' chariot of a *servus publicus* – a figure traditionally thought to have reminded the triumphing general of his mortality, although Beard elegantly deconstructs this idea.[79] Kuttner uses this to argue, somewhat tenuously, that this underscored Tiberius' inferiority to Augustus and that Augustus consequently must still have been alive at the time of depiction.[80] In fact, this cup was paired with one depicting Augustus at the head of the conquered provinces; since this is reminiscent of Augustus' funeral procession,[81] I am tempted to argue the opposite – that Augustus was already dead and deified at this point, and the *servus publicus* reminds us that Tiberius has not yet rivaled his father's achievements. Yet this pairing would have informed a viewer's response to both, perhaps legitimizing and glorifying Tiberius' triumph by way of his connection with Augustus. Moreover, the cup seems to emphasize Tiberius' re-use of Augustus' quadriga for his own triumph – further underscoring the connection between the two, legitimizing Tiberius' succession, and analogizing him with his great predecessor.[82]

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[78] 1995: 150-4; I am convinced by her arguments against other identifications, e.g. that of the sacrifice after triumph.

[79] Beard concludes that our modern conception of this slave has been stitched together from scanty and contradictory evidence, most memorably Tertullian's account ("respice post te, hominem te esse memento," *Apol.* 33.4), and provides a range of interesting interpretations (2007: 85-92); cf. also Kuttner 1995: 149.

[80] 1995: 151.

[81] See Dio 56.33-34, stating that Augustus left detailed instructions for his funeral, which included a wax image of him in triumphal garb, the imagines of his famous ancestors, the *summi viri,* and the nations he had acquired, with characteristic details (it is unclear whether these are Pompey's fourteen nations, represented as statues in his Theater; see Beard 2007: 25 for these latter). For other accounts of the funeral see Suet., *Aug.* 100.2 and Tac., *Ann.* 1.8; for brief discussions, see Flower 1996: 109, 133, 244-5, although Beard is more inclined to connect it with the idea of apotheosis implied by the triumphator's being close to the gods (2007: 284-6).

[82] Cf. Kuttner 1995: 147-8. By way of contrast, Kuttner argues that the Gemma Augustea subordinates Tiberius to Augustus by having him dismount the quadriga in order to pay respects to the divine Augustus (1995: 151, though this seems comparable to the presence of the *servus pubilicus*).

Figure 1. Boscoreale cup II.1: Tiberius sacrificing[83]

Figure 2. Boscoreale cup II.2: Tiberius in triumph

The rhythmic placement of the figures in the Boscoreale cup lends a sense of stateliness and order to a ceremony that must actually have been quite chaotic on the ground,[84] and that itself was an ordering and clarification of the even messier experience of battle. In the historical moment, a triumphal procession paraded by masses of bystanders, who got a partial and changing view of its 'text'; some Augustan poets explore the individual perspectives of observers on the sidelines, who must have had to jockey to snatch glimpses of the parade as it

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[83] This and other Boscoreale images courtesy Joe Geranio.
[84] Beard provides amusing examples of some of the many public-image disasters that could and did happen on the day of a triumph; "more things, after all, could go wrong than could go right with a triumph" (2007: 253).

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moved by.[85] Yet the Boscoreale cup, like any larger-scale visual depiction, is able to freeze the triumph and unfold it spatially so the whole thing can be comprehended within the viewer's gaze. It also subjects the triumphal to the physical control of the reader, who moves the cup in order to view the whole scene. This has some interesting effects on the audience. Though the cup does not depict the triumph's bystanders, it enlists is own real-life viewers as a substitute for the triumphal audience; their continued gaze validates and preserves Tiberius' glory long after its historical occasion has passed. On the other hand, the cup renders a large public ceremony, the triumph, into a small, manageable, and usable artifact. Its user has visual control over the triumph, in that he can take it all in at one glance; he has a great deal of interpretive power over it, given the indeterminacy of its images; and he also enjoys physical ownership over it as an object designed for use and display. Thus, the cup in a sense reverses the power dynamic implicit in the triumph: it transfers ownership over its imagery from imperator to citizen.

Kuttner argues that such vessels would be used in a sympotic setting, their decoration allowing the owner and his guests to discuss their content.

> The Boscoreale Cups… were meant to be observed carefully and discussed knowledgeably by the owner and his friends, who would muse over details as well as over the general themes of the decoration. Each cup can be read as having a discrete historical and politial theme… Though each cup can be enjoyed singly, the two are obviously pendants, which give up the fullness of their message only in apposition…. This particular cup pair was meant to stimulate not a literary discussion but a discussion of the historical glories and campaigns of the Augustan house.[86]

Her analysis reflects her belief that these cups belonged to a family that established prosperity under Augustus.[87] Certainly, he was someone who valued Tiberius' accomplishments enough to want to memorialize them in silver, continue contemplating them, even 'own' them as a viewer. In doing so, he was constructing a relationship between himself and the imperial family – one that may not have marked 'loyal subjecthood' so much as an active and independent approval. This would have been part of his own social self-representation as a well-to-do citizen with an investment in the Roman state and its achievements. Thus, just as the triumph ceremony itself may have helped construct a sense of shared *Romanitas* among its observers, artifacts of the triumph may have served a similar function for an audience separated in time and distance.

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[85] This movement in time and incompleteness of vision is well-reflected in verse, which unfolds unidirectionally along a temporal dimension. It also allows for great shifts in time, space, and mood, and can readily prompted readers to think of the present, past, or future – a fact that Ovid exploits, as I argue below. Kuttner does, however, argue that viewers could read movement into the representations (1995: 205; see also 154 for the cup's creation of a sense of the passage of time between departure from Rome and triumphant return).

[86] Kuttner 1995: 11.

[87] The Boscoreale cups were part of a hoard stashed in a wine cellar in a *villa rustica* on the slopes of Vesuvius, stored in 79 CE before its owners fled the eruption (Kuttner 1995: 6); one set of dishes is inscribed with what may be the name of a freedman of Octavian (1995: 6-7). Kuttner argues these silver vessels showed signs of wear and tear and so were relegated to "home use" in the country house of a family that owned a more opulent residence closer to the coast (1995: 10). She further argues that the fact that they were kept so long despite their poor condition, and appear to be commissioned 'copies' of a public monument, must reflect the owner's personal relationship to Augustus (1995: 12).

In sum, the Boscoreale cup shares several tendencies I have identified in other Augustan triumphal art: to give permanent physical representation to the impermanent event of the triumph, to celebrate the figure of the triumphator to the diminution of others, and to publicize and justify his glory as causally related to his virtue, *pietas*, and (here) his lineage. On the other hand, it aestheticizes the triumph rather than drawing didactic connections between its symbols and real-world events; it also turns the triumph into a visual text over which readers exercise significant interpretive and physical control. Building on the Boscoreale cup's increased attention to audience reception over authorial message, I turn now to Propertius and Ovid's exploration of new and self-consciously 'subversive' strategies for imagining and interpreting imperial triumphs – ones that comment on the larger Augustan Text and the project of imperial representation.

Figure 3. Boscoreale cup I.1: Augustus' world rule

C. Elegiac reappropriations of the triumph

In opposition to monumental art's attempt to authorize and objectify the triumphator's glory, the elegists explore the role of the audience in constructing meanings around the triumph – thus exposing its susceptibility to plural interpretations, without directly contesting the one 'intended' by the triumphator. They also recenter their attention around the subjective experience of the bystander on the margins of the ritual. They make his potential ignorance a matter of humor, prioritize his concerns over those of the triumphator, and show how he can reappropriate the triumph's purpose and meaning to serve his *militia amoris*.[88] Moreover, rather than describe actual triumphs, they invent triumphs wholesale – showing that the poet's power of imagination can rival the *princeps*' power as an impresario in bringing this great spectacle to life in the minds of their audience. In doing so, they comment on the reappropriability of any text, and emphasize the audience's role in validating the glory of a triumphator, be he poet or prince.

i.   Propertius, *Carmina* 3.4

I briefly discussed above several poets' appropriations of the triumph in order to symbolize their own artistic victories. Equally interesting, though more subtle, is the poem in

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[88] For general overviews of this latter theme, see Thomas 1964 and Murgatroyd 1975.

which Propertius imagines a Roman triumph over the east yet reappropriates the public moment for private purposes. *Carmina* 3.4, rather like the Boscoreale cup, falls into the two halves depicting a *profectus* (1-10) and a triumphant return to Rome (11-22), with conspicuously little concern for the battles that take place in between. However, unlike the Boscoreale cup, it shows little concern for the figure of the triumphator or the justice of his victory, focusing instead on the private enjoyment the triumph affords to its viewers.

In the first section of the poem, which resembles a propempticon, Propertius advertises his loyalty to Augustus by referring to him as "deus Caesar," predicting good omens, and praying for the triumph to come before his death (11). His explanation of the expedition, however, reveals significant confusions not only about Rome's goals but also its motives for war. He introduces it as a war against "rich India" ("dites Indos," 1), and describes the sea that must be crossed as "gem-bearing" ("gemmiferi … maris," 2); these hint that Rome may be seeking war in the East not for reasons of justice or honor, but for the riches that may be derived and displayed. He then suggests its goal was to acquire territory, writing that the Tigris and Euphrates would flow under new law (4) and that a new province would be added to empire (5) – this slippage between India and Parthia hinting that perhaps the nation conquered matters less than the fact of conquest itself. He returns briefly to the idea of the trophies to be won and dedicated at Rome (6) before finally coming closer to the official justification for war: it will enact vengeance for Crassus' defeat (9), and become an important historical occasion ("Romanae consulite historiae," 10). In a marked departure from the celebratory clarity of the *elogiae* in the Forum Augustum, Propertius' confusions quietly expose the mixed motives that drive Roman imperialism and underlie the triumph. On the one hand, it celebrated Rome's military values and honor, but on the other, it represented a quest for spoils, introduced luxury, and was seen as encouraging vanity (cf. Cicero, *Pis.* 60, cited above).

Propertius' depiction of the resulting triumph, which occupies the second half of the poem, acknowledges its public value but shows that it can be subordinated to private purposes. In fact, as 'inventor' of this imaginative triumph, Propertius effectively supplants Caesar and appropriates the ritual to serve his wider program within these poems.[89]

Mars pater, et sacrae fatalia lumina Vestae,	11
ante meos obitus sit precor illa dies,	12
qua videam spoliis oneratos Caesaris axes,	13
< ……………………………………. >	
tela fugacis equi et bracati militis arcus,	17
et subter captos arma sedere duces,	18
< ……………………………………. >	
ad vulgi plausus saepe resistere equos;	14
inque sinu carae nixus spectare puellae	15
incipiam et titulis oppida capta legam.	16

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[89] His switch to a hortatory voice here in the second half of the poem may inspire Ovid's own shift to prophetic mode in order to predict the future at the end of *Ex Ponto* 3.4, discussed below. This text has suffered some disruption so I follow Heyworth's reordering of the lines (17, 18, 14, 15, 16), which is in itself uncontroversial; he also detects two missing lines, and in attempting to reconstruct one, draws from Ovid to further emphasize the crowd ("et laetos fremitus turba cantante triumphum," placed between 18 and 14; Heyworth 2007: 296-7).

<div style="text-align: center;">

ipsa tuam serva prolem, Venus: hoc sit in aevum,   19
   cernis ab Aenea quod superesse caput.   20
praeda sit haec illis quorum meruere labores: 21
   me sat erit Sacra plaudere posse Via.   22

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Propertius can render this imaginative depiction because the triumph follows certain conventions: he will view Caesar's chariot adorned with spoils (13), the conquered leaders with their exotic arms (17-18), and the people will applaud (startling the horses at 14). Yet, where other representations made the triumphator their focal point, Propertius looks to the audience on the periphery. This magnificent triumphal panorama zooms in on, and finds meaning from, the peaceful image of himself and his *puella* united in their private enjoyment and reading of the spectacular text before them ("titulis oppida capta legam," 16). Propertius rounds this theme out by praying to Venus, as Augustus' ancestor, to preserve her offspring; this invocation, along with the slippage from Mars at line 11 to Venus at 19, suggests that the triumph ultimately celebrates the benefits of peace over the glories of war.[90] He further signals a separation between military and amatory values in the final couplet of the poem, when he says that the soldiers may have their deserved spoils but that it is enough for him to cheer on the troops (21-2). This conclusion suggests that soldiers and lovers can coexist, but in separate worlds reflecting separate values – and the poet gently privileges the private life and its quiet joys of spectatorship over the militaristic search for spoils and glory.

Propertius' 'reader response' to this triumph (a triumph that he, ironically, is also authoring within this very poem) models that of an urban civilian. He is concerned for the general's actions only as they affect the city of Rome, envisioning the general's departure and triumphant return with conspicuously little concern for the battles that take place in between. Morever, he looks forward to the triumph less as a public celebration of Roman values than an opportunity for private enjoyment. Resisting the moralistic style of interpretation that the statues of the Forum Augustum seem to encourage, he does not inquire into the *virtus* or achievements of the emperor. He imagines the East rather fancifully in terms of gem-bearing waves and famous rivers (hinting at the fact that these would be borne in effigy at the triumph), and is content to observe the captured arms and 'read the titles' of captured towns without inquiring into their history or location. This follows the tendency of the Boscoreale cup to dissociate these symbols from reality, treating them as objects of aesthetic enjoyment. Propertius' imaginative description seems to present itself as evidence that viewers' eyes are drawn not so much the glory of the triumphator as to the luxury, spoils, and captives on parade – things that need not represent real achievement in order to be appreciated by their audience. Thus, with *Carmina* 3.4, Propertius has patriotically authored a Roman triumph over the east, but also reappropriated it to serve his valuation of private values over public ones, vindicating the perspective of the audience and exposing representations' detachability from truth and authorial intent.

ii.   Ovid's *Amores* 1.2 and 2.12

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[90] He plays on this further in the next poem, which celebrates Love as the god of peace and revisits the elegiac commonplace of amatory war ("Pacis Amor deus est, pacem veneramur amantes: / sat mihi cum domina proelia dura mea," 3.5.1-2).

Ovid's *Amores* 1.2 boldly reworks many of the issues that Propertius raises in 3.4, as well as the latter's prediction of his own poetic triumph in 3.1, by depicting the triumph of Amor himself in vivid pictorial terms.[91] As has been stated often in the scholarship, this represents a culmination and extreme literalization of the by-now conventional elegiac inversion of love and war; Beard, for instance, calls the poem "dazzlingly subversive,"[92] while others suggest it is a parody.[93] Yet I prefer to think of it differently: not so much as undermining any expressed ideology, but as exploring the potential of conventions within the Augustan Text – here, the formal structure of the triumph ceremony – to be conscripted to serve new readings and assume new meanings. Though Propertius began exploring these ideas in the poems discussed above, Ovid more than any other Augustan author presses the issues of power and audience that underlie his own poetics as well as political representations.

In this poem, Ovid whimsically imagines Amor's triumph over himself and his fellow-Romans, and thus a celebration of the values of peace rather than war.[94] Cupid's brow is bound by myrtle rather than the laurel (as was Ovid's Muse in 1.1.29); his chariot is drawn by his mother's doves; in place of captive chiefs, he leads conquered young men and women, along with the subdued Mens Bona (31) and Pudor (32); and he is aided by Blanditiae, Error, and Furor, who have helped him vanquish all (35).[95] His mother looks on from Olympus and throws down roses (40), while Amor continues to spread his flames even among the onlookers of the present triumph (43-6). Finally, the poet pleads for Amor to follow his "kinsman" ("cognati") Caesar in protecting the vanquished (51-2). Harvey reads this coda as a covert reference to the exclusion of triumphs to members of the imperial family, but it also revisits Propertius' invocation of Venus as Augustus' protectress, while humorously inverting the direction of power: Augustus here serves as a model to his divine relatives, rather than an object for their protection.[96]

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[91] For the pictorial quality of Ovid's imagination, especially in contrast to Propertius, see Benediktson 1985. Athanassaki 1992: 125 raises the possibility that Ovid may merely be parodying Propertius' self-grandeur in 3.1.

[92] "The most public celebration of Roman military prowess is playfully (and pointedly) conscripted into the celebration of private passion" (2007: 113).

[93] Mentioned by Athanassaki (1992: 125). Following Reitzheimer's suggestion that the poem was programmatic and Cameron's that it was the opening poem of one of the *Amores*' original five books, Athanassaki sees it as using love as a metaphor for poetry (1992: 127): "Ovid's association of Amor with brilliance and seduction … may reflect the illusory character of poetry as well as the inherent power of illusion" (133). Athanassaki's attempt to sustain this metaphor is interesting if at times somewhat forced; better, I think, simply to regard Love and Elegy as related concepts rather than substitutes for one another.

[94] The analogy between love and war in the *Amores* is explicitly stated in 1.9 and has attracted plenty of scholarship; for this poem in particular see especially Miller 1995, Cahoon 1988, and Davis 1999a, who sees it as mockingly anti-Augustan.

[95] I discuss these briefly below; Phillips 1980 provides a far more detailed analysis of these allegories and their intertextual referents, but comes to the rather obvious and over-simple conclusion that this group allows Ovid "to mock Augustan religious reforms, abstractions and morality all at the same time" (276).

[96] Cf. Harvey 1983 on Cupid's kinship with Caesar; however, this was not necessarily a formal policy of the princeps, and Ovid and his contemporaries could not have known with certainty that Balbus would be the last non-imperial triumphator in 19 (though they certainly could have detected a pattern). Athanassaki (1992: 140) believes that "not only does Ovid bring the Julian claim to divine descent to its logical and rather unwelcome conclusion, but he implicitly associates Augustus' *clementia* with the violence which necessarily precedes a military triumph." Also intriguing is Miller's analysis of this passage as expressing unresolved tensions between Antonian excess and traditional Roman manhood (2004: 166-9)

Ovid seems to have chosen the triumph to represent Love's victory because it shows a leader at his most all-powerful; more than other poets, he zeroes in on the master/subordinate relationship implied by the figure of the triumphator and his victims (who here include even the gods, 37).[97] The ceremony also activates the conventional elegiac interplay between love and war, and plays on the kinship between the triumphator Augustus and his triumphant relatives Venus and Amor (one that Propertius, too, had employed at 3.4.19-20).[98] But Ovid is also demonstrating the separability of the triumph from its original meaning as a public ritual. Instead of commemorating military victory against foreign enemies, here, it comically glorifies Love's conquest of his fellow Romans, to the applause of their compatriots (who shot "io triumphe!" according to convention, 34). Moreover, in keeping with the elegists' sustained inversions of ROMA and AMOR, it celebrates behaviors that run directly contrary to the virtues celebrated in the triumph – not only the pursuit of love, but the "error" and "furor" that accompany it.[99] (Ovid's comical willingness to yield to love, in the hopes that 'the burden borne well becomes lighter,' 10, seems to mock the unwarlike constitution of this writer of "inbelles elegi," *Amores* 3.15.19.) Moreover, the fact that ownership of the triumph has been transferred from Mars to Amor, his double and inversion, suggests a larger historical process in which war cedes to peace and its accompanying benefits; recall Propertius' transition in 3.4 from Mars to Venus, his statement at 3.5 that the god of peace is Love ("Pacis Amor deus est," 1), and Ovid's famously apolitical ode to the joys of the Pax Augusta (*Ars Amatoria* 3.121-2).[100]

Thus, further pursuing an idea implicit in the poetic triumphs of Vergil in *Georgics* 3 and Horace in *Odes* 3.30, Ovid explores the triumph's ability to be separated from its ritual context and to bear new ideological content. Moreover, even more than Propertius 3.4, Ovid foregrounds this triumph as the product of his imagination. It begins with a small, intimate view of the poet tossing and turning at night (1-8) – though ironically, there is no object for Ovid's love (and in fact, he complains at *Amores* 1.1 that he lacks a love interest). The poem is far more interested in recounting his psychological self-subjugation to love (9-18) – something that is at once a surrender and an active and willful choice of lifestyle. Though the poem zooms outward to a vision of love's grand and universal triumph (19-52), it is entirely psychological, and takes

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[97] Though my own approach differs, I appreciate Cahoon's argument that Ovid "suggests that the love of the *Amores* is inherently violent and linked with the Roman *libido dominandi*. In such a context, amorous *nequitia* becomes a domestic manifestation of the same impulses that have motivated both civil war and military aggression aborad" (1998: 294).

[98] Davis (1999a) mentions some other points in the *Amores* when Ovid views war as serving or helping love (for instance, the victory over the Sugambri at 1.14 means German wigs for Roman girls). He views the *Amores* as political but, in attempting to redeem the terms 'pro-' and 'anti-Augustan,' flattens out the poems somewhat.

[99] This may evoke Apelles' painting of War or Madness in Augustus' Forum (cf. Pliny, *NH* 35.27 and 93-4; Servius on *Aeneid* 1.294; Daut 1984: 115-23; the painting is briefly mentioned in Phillips 1980: 275, Beard 2007: 44 and also Bartsch 1998). Yet in the forum it is depicted in chains, whereas here in Ovid, it is triumphing and aiding Amor's cause – underlining Ovid's inversion of 'official' ideology. In fact, we could almost regard this as the conclusion of a miniature civil war, with Love enslaving his fellow Romans and those Romans easily yielding to the burden – just as Tacitus would later claim that the Romans barely resisted the sole domination of Augustus.

[100] "prisca iuvent alios: ego me nunc denique natum / gratulor: haec aetas moribus apta meis," "Let ancient times please others: I congratulate myself that I wasn't born until now: this age suits my character." While Ovid's descriptions of love analogize it with war and portray it as a far from peaceful activity, my point is that it is nevertheless an activity associated with and enabled by peacetime and which the elegists, particularly Ovid, put into a dynamic opposition with war and its values.

place within the mind of the poet.[101] Thus the observer's consciousness is literally the battleground over which the victory takes place and the arena in which the triumph is staged; here, rather than the triumph appealing to the individual subjectivities of its bystanders, as at Propertius 3.4, the individual subjectivity is what *creates* the triumph. Ovid's use of the concrete and public image of the triumph in order to celebrate the figurative and psychological self-subjection of love may be purposefully jarring.[102] But it also reveals that the immense power of the triumphator rests in the subjectivity of his observer, opening a theme Ovid will explore more thoroughly in the exile poetry.

Equally important to subsequent triumph poems is the slippage that Ovid establishes in *Amores* 1.2 between triumphator, victim, and bystander. The shield of Aeneas and the Boscoreale cup carefully individuate members of the triumphal procession; Propertius, too, separates the soldier-participants from the private bystanders (3.4.21-22). Here, however, Ovid shows that these roles can be split or shared, even despite the strong master/subordinate relationship that his tableau vivant implies. Amor, as a manifestation of the poet's consciousness, is treated as Ovid's opponent but also represents Ovid's own impulses: he is thus enemy and hero at once, just as the poet himself 'observes,' reports, and creates the very triumph in which he claims to participate as a victim. (Amor's flame pierces other observers, too, over the course of the triumph, transforming them from bystanders into victims, 44-6). In fact, by *Amores* 2.12, Ovid makes explicit this role reversibility by depicting *himself* as victorious triumphator, though he was a mere captive in *Amores* 1.2. [103] This suggests that part of the triumph's function is to assimilate victims into the ranks of the victors. Thus, the triumph is a way of representing social power structures, but also of breaking them down – not only by questioning the values on which they are based, but also the potentially fluid relations between author, audience, and captive.

iii.   Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 1

Like Propertius 3.4 and *Amores* 1.2, *Ars Amatoria* 1.177-228 depicts an imagined triumph – that of the young Gaius Caesar. Here, as in *Amores* 1.2, Ovid twists the triumph to serve love rather than war, but does this by adapting the method Propertius innovated in 3.4: he zooms in to the sidelines to privilege the bystander's private experience over the triumph's public 'message.' He also explores how individual elements of the triumph can be subject to misreadings, misidentifications, and misappropriations on the part of individual observers. In doing so, he effectively contests rulers' authority over triumphs, revealing that they can belong

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[101] Amor is easily understood as an abstract force rather than a person, his 'victory' is simply a psychological change in Ovid, and even this change may well have been invented for the sake of poetry: Ovid himself implies as much in *Amores* 1.1, where he depicts himself longing for a poetic subject, and again here in 1.2, where his 'falling in love' seems motivated less by any love interest than the sheer desire to write love poems. In more subjective terms, this poem describes the inner battle experienced by Romans who resist and finally succumb to love, and perhaps hints at the split consciousness that Miller 2004 has identified in elegy.

[102] Athanassaki sees this transition "from the realm of Amor to that of Augustus" (1992: 140) as purposely violent, following Lanham's view that Ovid uses love as a metaphor for private life.

[103] In *Amores* 2.12, the spoils of this amatory battle are the *puella* Corinna; the enemy comprise her *vir*, her doorkeeper, and her door (3); and Ovid is soldier, horseman, and standard-bearer all at once (13-14), fighting in the service of love (27-28). There are, of course, a variety of permutations on the soldier/general/enemy relationship: Murgatroyd 1975 points out that at various stages, the poet's rival, mistress, and her husband all are depicted as the enemy and that in *Amores* 2.9 Amor is both enemy and commander.

as much to an audience as to an imperator, and provide amatory pleasure as much as they teach military pride.[104]

Throughout the *Ars* and especially in the section immediately preceding the triumph (1.163-176), Ovid reappropriates Augustan public events as an excuse and occasion for the amatory exploits of their bystanders. As Ovid comments of a youth who falls in love on the sidelines of a gladiatorial show, "saucius ingemuit telumque volatile sensit, / et pars spectati muneris ipse fuit" (169-70). Ovid's attention is not on the official event, but rather on the amatory spectacle that is both its double and its inversion ("pars spectati muneris"); the lover becomes the real show, the real victim of wounds, and the public event is subordinated to the private. Similarly, when Ovid discusses Augustus' recreation of the battle of Salamis, his gaze rests not on the spectacular new man-made lake but on the audience of young men and women who have flocked to the city to check out one another rather than the naval battle: "nempe ab utroque mari iuvenes, ab utroque puellae / venere, atque ingens orbis in urbe fuit" (173-4). Ironically, 'foreign' love ("advena… amor," 176) has conquered the conquerors.[105] Ovid thus explores Rome's expanding domination not as it reflects on Roman power, but as it brings the "ingens orbis" to the *urbs* (174), creates a more cosmopolitan population, and provides further erotic opportunities. Moreover, Ovid's interest in the spectators rather than the spectacle effectively rewrites these Augustan events. By focusing on the periphery of Augustus' events, Ovid relegates those events to the periphery of his own text. At the center he places instead the audience – one whose private reappropriation of a public event illustrates the primacy of reader response over authorial intentions, and which itself forms the subject of Ovid's poetry.

Ovid shows audience members exerting even more power over the triumph itself, of all these events ostensibly the one most designed to convey imperial power. Ovid conveys a sense of the triumph's grandeur when he strikes a new, more vatic tone to predict the triumph of Gaius Caesar over the Parthians: "ecce, parat Caesar domito quod defuit orbi / addere: nunc, oriens ultime, noster eris."[106] Yet, if the whole world is already present in Rome, as stated at 174, why would Rome need to expand its dominion? Gaius' drive to gain new territory and the resultant glory mirrors Ovid's own impulse here to appropriate new public events for readerly pleasure, be that erotic or poetic. Moreover, his wholesale invention of this triumph in his imagination shows that authors, like emperors, can invent and stage triumphs for their own purposes.

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[104] This is in keeping with the *Ars Amatoria*'s "'privatization' of public space" and reappropriation of Augustan monuments as "private opportunities for personal conquest" (Williams 2009: 211; see also Wyke 2002). However, the *Ars* also performs a similar operation upon other cultural institutions, from games to races to banquets, and its discussion of the triumph is particularly interesting for its examination of the semantic as well as ideological malleability of imperial symbols. Note in particular Labate's view (1984) that Ovid's didactic love poems run not counter but parallel to Augustan policy, mirroring some of its ideology along with its tensions.

[105] This appears an amatory reworking of Horace's statement that conquered Greece overthrew her Roman conquerors with art ("Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit," *Epistles* 2.1.156).

[106] See Hollis 1977: 65-73 for a discussion of the historical context of this poem and current affairs in the east. Hollis sees this passage as somewhat "fulsome" and reminiscent of Hellenistic court poetry, rejecting traces of "anti-Augustanism" detected by Galinsky (1969: 97); others view it as a tangential digression. I feel that with this sudden juxtaposition, Ovid is pointing out the discrepancy between two imperial clichés that he is helping to propagate: that the whole world is already present in Rome, and that Rome's unconquered enemies will soon be incorporated into the empire. Moreover, the passage itself contains meaningful dissonances between its twin goals of predicting this imperial triumph and teaching Roman audiences how best to take amatory advantage of it.

Holleman has argued that Ovid's emphasis on Gaius' youth is meant as a "sardonic" criticism of his immaturity and Roman failures in the East, as well as a jab at Augustus, who was the same age when he rose to power.[107] Yet, in tone and in detail, the portrait of Gaius in triumph recalls nothing more than that of his youthful "relative" Cupid at *Amores* 1.2. Gaius is wielding his weapons and conquering under the auspices of his soon-to-be-divine father Augustus ("auspiciis annisque patris, puer, arma movebis, / et vinces annis auspiciisque patris," 191-2).[108] Cupid, similarly, triumphs with the tokens and arms of his divine parent Venus and his stepfather Mars (*Am.* 1.2.23-26). Gaius, like Cupid, is flanked by personified abstractions ("stabit pro signis iusque piumque tuis," 200), and both wear gold rather than the usual purple of the triumphator ("ibis in auratis aureus ipse rotis," *Amores* 1.2.42; "quattuor in niveis aureus ibis equis," *Ars* 1.214).[109] Thus, in its recasting Gaius in the role of Amor, its tongue-and-cheek tone, and its reliance on the imagination rather than reportage, *Ars* 1 evokes *Amores* 1.2 and continues its interest in repurposing military symbols for amatory purposes – though it uses real historical personages in order to do so.

This becomes more evident after 205, when Ovid offers a 'votive song' for Gaius' triumph – anticipating his later declaration that his poetry can be useful to the *princeps*, and his promise to celebrate Germanicus' future triumphs in verse.[110] Ovid offers to make a rousing speech to exhort Gaius' troops ("consistes, aciem meis hortabere verbis; / O desint animis ne mea verba tuis," 207-8), but the précis he provides is somewhat surprising:

> "tergaque Parthorum Romanaque pectora dicam,
> telaque, ab averso quae iacit hostis equo.
> qui fugis ut vincas, quid victo, Parthe, relinquis?" (209-11)

> I shall speak of Parthian backs and Roman breasts,
> And arrows, which the enemy shoots from his retreating horse.
> You who flee to conquer, Parthian, what do you leave yourself once conquered?

It is notable that these lines, ostensibly spoken to the Roman troops, end up addressing the Parthians instead.[111] Though the Parthians are ordinarily depicted as Rome's eternal enemies, their vanquishment would ironically mean their incorporation as allies of the Roman state, and Ovid's apostrophe to them within his address to the Romans foreshadows this process of inclusion.[112] Moreover, the answer to the question at 211 – if the Parthians turn their backs on us when they win, what will they do if they lose? – is foreshadowed already in the description of the

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[107] Holleman 1971: 464. On the other hand, Gaius was *princeps iuventutis*, so his youth was an obvious attribute to emphasize. Some regarded Gaius' expedition itself as orchestrated precisely to gain a triumph and support his status as Augustus' heir (Gruen 1996: 161 provides some ancient and modern references).

[108] Cf. 204 for Augustus' divinity, "nam deus e vobis alter es, alter eris."

[109] The comparison of Gaius to Bacchus (189-90), rather than, for instance, Mars, is also somewhat surprising and underlines this triumph's celebration of the senses.

[110] *Ex Ponto* 4.8.55-66, discussed in Chapter One: "di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt, / tantaque maiestas ore canentis eget. … / Siquid adhuc igitur vivi, Germanice, nostro / restat in ingenio, serviet omne tibi." See also his promise specifically to celebrate a future triumph for Germanicus, at the end of *Ex Ponto* 2.1 (discussed below).

[111] Heyworth identifies *Ars* 1.177ff. and *Fasti* 5.593 and 6.467 as 'imitations' of the vocative at Propertius 3.4.3 that "retain the style of vocative but substitute the enemy" (2007: 292).

[112] Beard wisely observes that triumphs could mark a "key moment in the process by which the enemy became Roman" (2007: 140).

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whole world flocking to the city for love at 174.[113] The conquered Parthians will present not their backs but their breasts to their Roman conquerors, in amatory embrace, just as Roman conquest has added the rest of the world's peoples to the erotic melting pot that is Rome.[114] Ovid here, developing ideas in Propertius 3.4 and 3.5, exposes war and peace as two sides of the same coin; Ovid celebrates war not for victory's sake, but insofar as its objective is peace and peace nurtures love (with its opportunities for sexual conquest).[115]

But Ovid's amatory reappropriation of the triumph takes most concrete form when he depicts the long-anticipated day when Gaius will ride in triumph. As in his other treatments of Roman spectacle, he quickly refocuses from the event itself to the crowd, which seems to derive joy from the erotic potential of the event as much as civic pride ("spectabunt laeti iuvenes mixtaeque puellae, / diffundetque animos omnibus ista dies," 217-8). This scene recalls Propertius' focus on an intimate moment amid the public ceremony at 3.4.11-19. Yet there, Propertius mentions reading the names of captured towns, reflecting the fact that displays were painstakingly crafted to represent particular peoples and places. Ovid, on the other hand, urges and authorizes the bystander (his reader) simply to make up referents at will – ironically returning to his erotodidactic mode in order to unravel the didactic potential of the triumph. He tells the reader that, if a girl in the crowd asks the referents of the kings, towns, or rivers being carried along in the triumph, he should answer all her questions – even if he does not know the answer ("omnia responde, nec tantum siqua rogabit; / et quae nescieris, ut bene nota refer," 221-2). In other words, even an ignorant or illiterate observer may usurp the authorial intention of a symbol and make it mean whatever he wants. He proceeds to demonstrate how easy this can be by stepping into the role of the inventive bystander: "hic est Euphratos, praecinctus harundine frontem: / cui coma dependent cerula, Tigris erit. / hos facito Armenius; haec est Danaeia Persos: / urbs in Achaemeniis vallibus ista fuit" (225-6).   Beard regards this as a bravura demonstration of the arbitrariness with which such distinctions may be made; it is unlikely, for instance, that even the most informed observer would be able to tell apart the twinned rivers Tigris and Euphrates without reading the *tituli*.[116] But what really matters is that Ovid's 'invented' identifications are never contrasted with any implied 'accurate' account of this triumph, which in any case already exists only in Ovid's imagination. Moreover, Ovid completely ignores any of the more complex narrative paintings, geographical indicators, or accounts of *res gestae* that

[113] P. A. Brunt observes that both Pompey and Caesar were praised for making Rome's boundaries coterminous with the *orbis terrarum* (1990: 292), but links this with his belief that the triumph was "the institutional expression of Rome's military ideal" (293) – an assumption the elegists question.

[114] It also hints at the role-reversibility latent in the triumph, and echoes Ovid's own transition from love's victim in *Amores* 1.2 to love's victor in *Amores* 2.12. Beard 2007: 133-142 discusses the triumph's emphasis on change of fortune (i.e. displaying kings who have become captives), and the potential of subjugated nations to enter the Roman polity, as in the famous song that Caesar first conquered the Gauls and then let them into the senate. Östenberg 1999 has focused on triumphator as dividing Romans from non-Romans, but in some sense, he also presides over the process by which non-Romans became Romans.

[115] This is especially interesting when one considers the successional aspect of Gaius' assuming the auspices of his father at 191-2: if Augustus presided over the end of civil war, then perhaps Gaius will preside over the end of foreign wars, ushering in the amatory battles that accompany peace. This meshes with Beard's point that triumphs did not just parade luxury, but brought luxury to Rome (2007: 68). It also points to the intermingling (and intermarriage) of populations necessary for true assimilation.

[116] Beard 2007: 184. also observes that this scene shows the "slipperiness of triumphal imagery" and the "under-determinacy of the images," but does not press the epistemological implications that this raises: "who cares when the 'real' conquest is the girl standing next to you?"

might have been paraded in a triumph.[117] He continues the Boscoreale cup's tendency to focus instead only on a few readily visible symbols, but also exploits those symbols' arbitrary relationships with their referents, at least in the mind of ignorant viewers. Thus, in *Ars Amatoria* 1, and in opposition to many other Augustan representations, the triumph is completely stripped of any referentiality to the real world. It exists only insofar as it provides pleasure to its audience – the bystanders who use it to meet and impress girls, or the readers who admire Ovid's impudent reappropriation of a sacred Roman ritual.

This game of meaning is roughly parallel to the ones Ovid plays in the private banquet contexts of *Amores* 1.4 or *Ars Amatoria* 1.569-574, where he sends and receives secret messages to his *puella* through stolen glances, hidden gestures, and wine traced upon the table – or rather, thinks he does so, though they may neither be received nor intended as such by the *puella*.[118] Yet his appropriations of the triumph here in *Ars Amatoria* 1, though equally comic, have important consequences for the project of imperial representation. The triumph iself constitutes a public proof that otherwise unknowable parts of the world have submitted to Roman domination, and does this by bringing concrete evidence and lifelike representations before the eyes of the people. However, if all that Roman citizens see is what is displayed in the city of Rome, then the representation becomes more 'real' than the actuality, and the symbol threatens to substitute for the thing. Representations of the triumph such as the coins or the statues in the Forum Augustum therefore strive to assert a connection between symbol and reality – something that was increasingly important in imperial Rome, when the decreasing frequency of triumphs combined with the geographical expansion of citizenship meant that many Romans experienced triumphs only through secondary representations. Yet, insofar as they depend on symbol, the triumph and its representations require greater mental cooperation from an audience than some other public texts. Rather than passively observe a play or a sporting event, viewers are asked to read placards, identify floats, reconstruct battles, and otherwise participate intellectually in the text's attempt to convey information. Ovid exposes the liabilities of this process in *Ars Amatoria* 1 by showing how the connection between symbol and reality may be ignored, misunderstood or even coopted by its 'reader.'

For that matter, by widening the gap between symbol and reality, Ovid is not merely suggesting that the Tigris may be mistaken for the Euphrates, or vice versa; he is suggesting that it *does not matter*. For in the *Ars Amatoria*, in pointed opposition to some other triumphal texts, symbols do not derive their value from their referents in the outside world, or even from their artistry in representing those referents, but simply for their ability to be used and enjoyed by readers – here, as pawns within the flirtatious dialogue between the bystander and the girl. It thus rewrites the triumph as a text which (like his own poems) has no definite referentiality, can be subjected to its viewer, and can comment on the problems of representation and readership that underlie both poetry and political power. It also anticipates an idea Ovid explores further in the exile poetry: that representations of the emperor derive their meaning not from any true

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[117] For which see Torelli 1982: 119-134, although he uses the *Ars* itself to reconstruct an Augustan triumph and to argue that it was already beginning to substitute symbol for information, whereas I argue that this is Ovid's representational choice. As I note above, Torelli has observed a "development of the whole Roman culture toward symbols and metaphors," especially in triumphal art (1982: 125); Ovid seems to be hastening this process as well as noting its dangers.

[118] As *Amores* 1.4 in particular suggests; I thank Kathleen McCarthy for observing this parallel.

relation to Augustus himself (who in any case is unknowable except through such representations), but from the ability of an audience to reflect on them and, in doing so, construct their own sense of Romanness.

D. The triumph in Ovid's exile poetry

From exile, Ovid writes several more poems longing for, imagining, or commemorating imperial triumphs. These have struck many as the work of a chastened poet, eager to contruct himself as a model 'imperial subject' in the provinces.[119] However, these poems also subtly deconstruct the transfer of knowledge and information across distance, the imperial substitution of symbols for reality, and the reliance of imperial power on audience's willing viewership. As I have argued, the elegists resist the documentary and didactic impulse of many prior triumphal representations, inventing imaginary triumphs and widening the gap between sign and signified. This problem preoccupies Ovid even more from exile. At *Tristia* 2 he blames his punishment on a hostile (mis)reading;[120] yet from exile, he becomes more and more reliant on his audience, who are crucial intermediaries not only in his ostensible goal of getting recalled from Tomis, but also in his larger project of continuing to be 'heard' and therefore making himself present in Rome.[121] Thus Ovid, in representing his experiences on the frontier for an audience at Rome, is doing something similar to the triumph: attempting to make faraway experiences seem real. And, like Coriolanus banishing Rome, he uses the image of the triumph in order to turn the problem on its head, asking how Rome and imperial power may be made to feel 'real' on the frontiers.[122] The triumph is both a means for representing the periphery to the center, and also a news event that must itself be communicated from Rome back out to the margins. It therefore forms a mirror for Ovid's own exile poetry, and helps Ovid explore how his anxieties about constructing presence might also apply to the emperor's attempt to represent Roman power abroad.[123]

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[119] Evans 1983: 10-13 provides a useful summary of past lines of thinking on the exile poetry, which often center around the extent to which it is flattering or subversive. Evans himself tends to see it as an apolitical part of more general literary evolution toward imperial court poetry, but acknowledges that its outward respect may be read as subverting propaganda about Augustan *pax* and *clementia* (1983: 11). Williams 2009: 221 makes some similar points, arguing that Ovid portrays limits to Augustus' power and knowledge regarding Tomis, and shows "uneasy accommodation" rather than total dominance of Rome over Tomis. I try to expand on these by showing how Ovid questions the project of imperial representation in general.

[120] As I discuss in my introductory chapter; for a fuller discussion and bibliography, see Williams 1994, especially Chapter 4, and more recently, Gibson 1999 and McGowan 2009.

[121] For Ovid's construction of illusions of presence, often fuelled by audience desire and credulity, see especially Hardie 2002: 1-13. For his doing so specifically through his letters, see Walker 1997a: 4; for his keeping his name alive in Rome as a reproach to Augustus, Oliensis 1997: 190; and for his treatment of Augustus as a *deus praesens*, McGowan 2009: 84.

[122] I discuss the problem of the 'unreality' of Ovid's exile in Chapter 1, and side with the critics (e.g. Williams 1994 and Claassen 2008) who believe that, though we will never conclusively prove whether Ovid went into exile, we are presented with a 'myth' of exile which affects our reading of the poems (and, I emphasize, of the *princeps* as portrayed within the Augustan Text). In effect, Ovid in the exile poetry is turning the unreality of his own exile back onto Rome, showing how for provinicial subjects it exists only in the mind. I also discuss below how certain poems (e.g. *Ex Ponto* 1.2.71-2) reveal Caesar as someone who can be 'known' and 'seen' indirectly by all his subjects, even though he cannot see them, further suggesting that the epistemological problems raised by distance affect the center just as much as the periphery.

[123] These poems also crystallize what Fraenkel 1945 has called Ovid's 'wavering identity' between his roles as *poeta, exsul,* and *vates,* perhaps reflecting the triumph's own exploration of Caesar's multiple roles as *princeps, imperator,* and public figurehead. One might also read these poems as juggling Ovid's identities as a Roman and a provincial subject. In this sense, he might appear to serve two opposing goals that Mary Pratt identifies in later

My analysis takes on several aspects of Habinek's influential view of the exile poems, as stated in the final chapter of *The Politics of Latin Literature* (1998). He argues that Ovid's exile poetry illustrates the necessity and benefit of Roman imperialism:

> Both the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto* do the important ideological work of fostering empathy for fellow Romans abroad, disdain for the non-Roman peoples who threaten the stability of the imperial system, and a patronal attitude toward those who are to be absorbed. They present dependency and subjection on the part of the Roman reader and barbaric Tomitian alike as the necessary condition for enjoyment of the benefits of the imperial system.[124]

In Habinek's view, writing serves several functions for Ovid: it is a "consolation for the separation of Rome and the sole means for securing a return," and at the same time "a paradoxical reassurance of the possibility of maintaining one's Romanness in the farthest reaches of the empire."[125] Yet Habinek's argument itself contains several unresolved paradoxes. Ovid's complaints about his physical and cultural discomfort at Tomis question the value and success of Roman 'culture work' abroad.[126] Furthermore, Habinek raises but does not fully explore the tension between center and periphery. On the one hand, he argues that Rome is the "sole source of both artistic and political authorization" in the exile poems; on the other, that "the reader of Ovid's exile poetry is invited to turn her or his attention to the periphery of the empire, to understand that what happens there matters at Rome, even though what happens there derives all significance from its relation to Rome."[127] Such contradictions are, of course, innate to the exile poems themselves, but deserve fuller exploration.

While my own analysis is concerned with the questions Habinek raises, it is more sympathetic to Davis' approach in his 2002 "The Colonial Subject in Ovid's Exile Poetry." Aside from observing Habinek's anachronistic dependence on modern European colonialist thought, Davis points out the absence of historical evidence for a Roman 'civilizing ideology'[128] and complicates Habinek's reading of Ovid's attitude toward the Getae. His main point is that

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European travel writing in her 1992 *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*: an imperialist culture's "obsessive need to present and re-present its peripheries and its others continually to itself," combined with the process of "transculturation" by which "subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant or metropolitan culture" (1992: 6).

[124] Habinek 1998: 151.

[125] 1998: 153.

[126] As Davis notes, this argument "overlooks the fact that Ovid's presence is not voluntary"; moreover, "a 'culture worker' whose endlessly repeated desire is to abandon his post is of little value" (2002: 266). Particularly paradoxical is Habinek's argument that Ovid "demonstrates and enacts the transferability of Roman institutions to an alien context. Naming the source of the contagion – that is, isolation from Rome – becomes the most effective cure" (1998: 164).

[127] 1998: 153.

[128] I commend Davis' appreciation of the complexity of Ovid's poems and also of his stance regarding Rome (2002: 272), something which Habinek simplifies in order to fit it into his imperialist model. He observes that Habinek is conflating 18th-century American colonial experiences with the later idea of the 'white man's burden' as applied to Asia and Africa (2002: 258). Davis moreover argues that the only evidence for a Roman imperialistic ideology is Anchises' three words, 'pacique imponere morem,' in a speech which attributes cultural superiority to the Greeks (1998: 260).

the exile poetry, far from validating Roman presence abroad, constantly *questions* the "poet's ability to sustain his Romanness in a frontier province."[129] The device of the triumph, I argue, lends Ovid a powerful means of exploring such problems, as well as the role of Roman literary culture and political institutions in constructing a sense of *Romanitas*. Moreover, though the triumph poems ostensibly privilege Rome as the center of all value, they also expose problems of communication between center and periphery that undermine any 'imperialist' message and in some ways render 'Rome' just as illusory to the provinces as the provinces are to Rome.[130] In fact, from Ovid's perspective on the frontier, Caesar becomes a symbol more than a reality, and rather than subjecting others becomes subjected to the public gaze – since here, as elsewhere, Ovid privileges the reader's individual consciousness as the place where meaning and authority are constructed.

Thus, in my view, Ovid's exile poetry uses the triumph to interrogate the mechanisms of empire, expanding on some patterns of thought from the amatory poetry.[131] In some ways, these poems seem to support Habinek's line of thinking. Ovid's imaginative depictions of triumphs demonstrate his desire for emotional participation in events at Rome, and offer poetry as one possible solution for the problems of distance, in its ability to substitute symbol for actuality, replace physical events with mental ones, and recreate a faraway reality through imagination. This strategy allows Ovid to explore how audiences can construct a sense of Rome and *Romanitas* even far from the *urbs*, illustrating his argument that even poets can be of use to an emperor (*Ex Ponto* 4.8.55-66, discussed in Chapter 1). It also helps further the analogy I have drawn, influenced on the literary side by Hardie's 2002 *Ovid's Poetics of Illusion*, between poet and prince as two figures who use representation in order to create illusions of presence despite absence, and who can both potentially manipulate *fama* and public belief. In this sense, Ovid opposes the tendency, especially in the visual arts, to treat the triumph as an objective event in history that deserves monumentalization; rather, he treats it as a symbol that can be invented or manipulated at will and is equally subject to the manipulation or reappropriation of its viewers. As Ovid depicts them, triumphs are very much like *poems*, meant to spread the fame of their author across space and time with the help of a willing audience – thus completing the analogy, and suggesting a symbiosis, between poet and prince.

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[129] 2002: 267. This approach has many sympathies with Williams' 1994 discussion of Ovid's 'literary decline' and cultural and linguistic isolation in Rome.

[130] Walker 1997a: 4 observes that this anxiety is central to the epistolary genre: "More than other genres, epistle dramatizes its presence as provisional, displaying an awareness of the disparities between the now of writing and the (ever) after of each reading, and an anxiety about its status as an object arrived or message received; it is a writing that labours under the threat of being 'returned to sender'." He also notes that epistles raise problems of sign and meaning that are sympathetic with poststructuralist criticism, and makes a few forays into applying it to Ovid (particularly Derrida's suggestion that signification is characterized by rupture and instability). Because exile poetry preconceives absence, it relies on the sign to represent presence, but is obsessed with the unstable relationship between sign and signified.

[131] I.e., in his focus on the triumph as an assertion of power at Rome to the exclusion of other traditional indicators of power (e.g. elections or priesthoods); he is far more interested in the triumph itself as a symbol of power than in the signifieds (victory abroad; military excellence; support of the gods) that it purports to represent; and he raises the issue of whether the triumph-as-symbol can be fabricated, reappropriated, or read/rewritten as fiction.

i. *Tristia* 3.12: the problem of communication and the journey of *fama*

Ovid's first book of *Tristia* describes his long and perilous journey from Rome to Tomis, and works such as *Tristia* 3.1 remind readers that his poems must undertake an equally difficult journey back – underscoring the difficulty of travel throughout empire and the fragility of the letters on which the poet relies to construct himself in Rome. *Tristia* 3.12 turns this private worry into a public concern by asking how news may travel in the opposite direction, from center to periphery – in particular, how citizens abroad might still hear about a Roman triumph (itself, ironically, already a representation of events far from the *urbs*). In doing so, Ovid anticipates Fergus Millar's idea that the frontiers of Rome functioned as an "information barrier," while exploring how to render them more penetrable (and thus, bring them 'closer' to the center of Rome).[132] Yet Ovid also explores how information is simplified and flattened out when it must cross long distances through multiple intermediaries. Moreover, he explores how symbol may come to stand in for reality, and lose its sense of connection with the outside world – a problem that applies to the triumph itself, which is now treated as a ceremony of Romanness rather than a celebration of others' defeat, as well as the emperor, who becomes a mere abstraction even as he stands for Rome.

Ovid opens *Tristia* 3.12 with a series of visions of springtime that explore his imagination's ability to transport him from Tomis to Rome (1-24). Yet these imaginings can be more tantalizing than satisfying: in an echo of Aeneas' wish for death before the walls of Troy,[133] he wishes for life among the delights of Rome ("o quater et quotiens non est numerare beatum, / non interdicta cui licet urbe frui," 25-6). Ovid's one consolation is that, with the advent of spring, he at least may be able to receive news of Rome – news that will supplement his imagination, and help compensate for his inability to be physically present in the city.

> at mihi sentitur nix uerno sole soluta,
>   quaeque lacu durae non fodiantur aquae:
> nec mare concrescit glacie, nec, ut ante, per Histrum
>   stridula Sauromates plaustra bubulcus agit. (26-30)

Yet Ovid proceeds to underscore the material difficulties of transportation and communication – difficulties that affect the travel of information from Rome to the frontier just as much as his own poems' journey in the opposite direction. The winter is so inhospitable that the sea ices over in winter, preventing travel by ship (29-30); even so, few ships venture as far as Pontus; of those, most are merely local to the area (35-6), some are from Propontis (41-2), and only a very few venture the long distance from Italy ("rarus ab Italia tantum mare nauita transit, / litora rarus in haec portubus orba uenit," 37-38). Though Ovid imagines himself running to meet all of these vessels, only a few will contain Greek or Latin speakers, and only a few of those will bear news of Rome (33-42).[134] This passage, while underscoring Ovid's eagerness for news, also

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[132] In a 1982 article, "Emperors, Frontiers, and Foreign Relations"; Cherry discusses this (1998: 33) and also cites Benjamin Isaac's 1990 *Limits of Empire*. The term "contact zone" for "frontier," though favored by Pratt in that it foregrounds the interactive nature of the cultural encounter (1992: 7), seems less applicable to Ovid.

[133] "o terque quaterque beati, / quis ante ora patrum Troiae sub moenibus altis / contigit oppetere!" (*Aeneid* 1.94-6)

[134] For Ovid's complaints about the language gap at *Tristia* 3.11, 3.14, 5.2 and 5.7, see Davis 2002: 263-4, although note also his attempt to see himself from the Getic perspective, as a barbarian, at 5.10. Moreover, as Davis points

emphasizes its dependence on uncontrollable material factors such as weather, geography, ships' routes, language barriers, and crew members' access to information – factors that complicate communication not just between Rome and Pontus, but also between Rome and her other frontiers.

Moreover, though Ovid longs for any news from Rome, he especially hopes for report of a triumph:

> quisquis is est, memori rumorem uoce referre
> et fieri famae parsque gradusque potest.
> is, precor, auditos possit narrare triumphos
> Caesaris et Latio reddita uota Ioui,
> teque, rebellatrix, tandem, Germania, magni
> triste caput pedibus supposuisse ducis. (43-48)

Out of all news that may come from Rome, why does Ovid fixate on this imagined event? In the sense that triumphs represent the pinnacle of Roman achievement and glad news for the emperor, this statement might seem to serve Habinek's theory that Ovid is constructing himself as a model citizen on the margins. Moreover, Ovid's eye is here trained firmly on the triumph, the figure of Caesar, and the subjugation of Germany, revising his earlier fixation at *Ars Amatoria* 1 on the amatory possibilities on the sidelines. But the triumph is also a ritual that relies on a face-to-face encounter between the general and the Roman people – one from which Ovid is pointedly excluded, as he emphasizes at 25-6.   Moreover, since Ovid cannot be physically present at this ritual celebration of *Romanitas*, the report has to substitute, however inadequately, for the real thing. Though the triumph is already indirect news of victory in Germany, transmitted to the *urbs*, the triumph itself can be known only indirectly, "heard" ("auditos") rather than "seen" by the person who reports it to Ovid. This person in turn is only one "step" in the rumor chain ("fieri famae parsque gradusque potest"). In contrast with Vergil's depiction of triumphal *fama* on the shield of Aeneas (*Aeneid* 8.626ff.), Ovid emphasizes the difficulty and lack of immediacy with which information crosses time and space.

Moreover, in contrast to Vergil's all-knowing narrator and Vulcan's prophetic art, Ovid depicts himself as the ignorant final link in a long chain of rumor: the sailor may have heard it from another sailor who himself heard it only indirectly or merely saw it on a coin. In his desperation for news, Ovid does not seem particularly critical of his sources, and anyway is not in a position to be able to do so, isolated as he is from any other news. Ovid says he will accept reports from anyone who happens to speak Greek or Latin ("quisquis is est," 43) and is "able to narrate" ("possit narrare," 45) accounts of triumphs. But being 'able to narrate' something is, of course, very different from knowing or proving what actually happened. In fact, Ovid himself narrates a triumph at *Tristia* 4.2 in total and self-admitted ignorance that any such event has happened, showing that *fama* can be wholly constructed. Ovid is, moreover, clear about his own biases, presenting himself as an eager and perhaps overcredulous audience. He underscores his eagerness for any news at all at 33-4, and later promises a warm reception to anyone who can tell

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out, Ovid claims to have learned to speak Getic and Sarmatian at 5.12.28, *Ex Ponto* 3.2.40, and at *Ex Ponto* 4.13 even to have written Getic in Roman meter; see also Walker 1997a: 5, Barchiesi 1997: 35-8; Williams 1994: 91-9.

a good story.[135] In effect, Ovid sets up an incentive structure wherein bearers of pleasant rumors – whatever their origin or accuracy – will be generously rewarded. He thus portrays himself as more concerned with the story itself than with its truth value, almost as Aeneas valued the aesthetics of the shield without being able to evaluate its accuracy. What matters to Ovid, and perhaps (by implication) other Romans abroad, is not that they receive accurate reports of Rome but that they receive *any* report, so that they can feel themselves connected by some informational chain to Rome and their fellow citizens. In fact, Ovid's hope for the triumph and ability to predict its symbolic language – like his imagined revisitation of Rome at 1-25 – is proof of his own Romanness even as it questions how *Romanitas* can be maintained and dispersed so far from the *urbs*.[136]

ii. *Tristia* 4.2: the victory of the imagination

Of course, reports travel in both directions, as Ovid hints at line 44 with his odd statement that anyone 'can become a part and step of fame': the sailor who bears news to Tomis might also help bear Ovid's poetry to Rome. And in the exile poetry, Ovid explores the potential of poetry to render readers present at a scene despite their inability to be there in person. Ovid's preface to *Tristia* 3.12 makes it clear that, in the absence of rumor from Rome, his imagination must suffice to connect him with the city. In fact, his imaginative picture of springtime (1-24) far exceeds the sailor's report of triumph (45-48) in terms of its vividness and ability to transport.[137] These descriptions call attention to their own immediacy via a series of "iam"s, present-tense indicative verbs, and an emphasis on nature's lack of artifice (the flowers spring up without being sown, "rustica quae nullo nata serente venit," 6; the birds sing without being taught, "indocilique loquax gutture vernat avis"). But these apparently simple descriptions, which make the Tomitian landscape vividly present to his Roman listener (1-13), are demonstrations of the literary artifice known as *enargeia*: art's special ability to transmit events across space and time.[138]

Yet Ovid's art not only describes Tomis to Romans, but also brings Rome back to Ovid – reversing the triumph's direction by bringing the center to the periphery. Ovid's imagined revisitation of Rome begins to overpower his Tomitian reality and becomes much more prominent within his imagination ("quoque loco est vitis, de palmite gemma movetur / nam procul a Getico litore vitis abest," 14). Though he first associates the Roman spring with a return to athletic pursuits at 19-22, his description pointedly culminates with the arts, proposing that literary and theatrical activity, too, can help create a sense of *Romanitas* and be of public

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[135] He says he will be sad not to have seen it in person, without wondering if its narrator himself has done so ("haec mihi qui referet, quae non uidisse dolebo, / ille meae domui protinus hospes erit," 33-4). One recalls the wandering Odysseus' readiness to embroider his tales for the prospect of a warm reception.

[136] As I discuss below, Ovid's description of the anticipated triumph shows that, to an audience in the provinces, it has become a predictable symbol; moreover, the ceremony itself has become detached from and in fact more important than the 'news' it purports to report.

[137] Kenney 1965: 42-3 compares it to Catullus 46 and Horace, *Odes* 1.4, 4.7, and 4.12; see also Nagle 1980: 42, note 47, for specific echoes.

[138] A concept important to Hardie's work on Ovid (2002: 5). The fact that these are Golden Age topoi (as McCarthy observes to me) might reaffirm their artificiality and lack of connection with reality, as might their contrast with Ovid's descriptions elsewhere of the miseries of Tomis.

value.[139] The unusual phrase "scaena viget" at 23, with its pseudo-athletic suggestion of vigor, seems to suggest that theatre is not necessarily a soft or effeminate pastime; in juxtaposing the artifice of the stage (*scaena*) with the organic growth envisioned in the proem (*viget*), it points to the ability of art to come alive or at least produce the illusion of life. The phrase "studiisque favor distantibus ardet" (23) most likely refers to the fans of rival singers or actors,[140] and shows that the arts, just like politics, can rouse Roman passions. And Ovid's vision of the three theaters of Rome now roaring with applause in place of the three fora ("proque tribus resonant terna theatra foris," 24) constructs a balanced and interchangeable relationship between politics and literature, and even the civic spaces with which they are associated. They are certainly presented here as the cultural activities by which Ovid most vividly remembers Rome, just as his own literary activities continue to construct his Roman identity even far away in Pontus.[141]

Thus, already in *Tristia* 3.12, Ovid begins to explore the power of imagination, the difficulty with which news travels, and the possible public role of art – ideas which he pursues more thoroughly in *Tristia* 4.2. Some scholars have viewed *Tristia* 4.2 as a "recantation" of Ovid's treatment of the triumph in the *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria*; they argue that this far more serious and respectful poem shows Ovid subordinating private concerns to public ones, as the poet himself avows at 71-4.[142] Yet I argue that, at the same time, this is one of Ovid's most provocative 'triumph poems': in showing how the triumph can be celebrated on the frontier, it also suggests the private imagination can recreate and even supplant the public triumph. It also explores the fundamental detachability of triumphal symbols from their referents, and even of the frontiers from Rome – a gap that is better bridged through imaginative and poetic intervention than through the occasional report or messenger from Rome.

In contrast to the documentary and even didactic impulses I have identified among other representations of triumph within the Augustan Text, Ovid's *Tristia* 4.2 calls attention to its separation from Roman reality by depicting a triumph that may or may not have been celebrated. The poet begins by imagining that Germany, like the whole world ("totus ut orbis," 1, itself already something of a contradiction), is already 'able to have submitted' to the Caesars on bended knee ("potest … succubuisse," 2).[143] This "potest," which usually indicates present-time possibility, jars against the backward-looking "succubuisse," highlighting the ontological discomfort of speculating in the present about what might have happened in the past. Then switching to a series of potential subjunctives, Ovid imagines the festivals of thanksgiving that 'might' currently be happening in Rome, again pointing out the uncertainty of his account even

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[139] As expressed e.g. in Horace's Sybaris Ode (1.8), where they are viewed as ways of constructing Roman masculinity and opposed to the amatory activities that now occupy Sybaris.

[140] In balanced symmetry with the verbal sparring that occurs in the forum (18).

[141] Even though, ironically, the plays and performances that he misses were likely themselves to have imaginatively transported Roman audiences to faraway places like Greece, much as triumphs were staged in the Roman cityscape but would have helped audiences imagine the conquered territory from which the triumphator had returned.

[142] Cf. Galinsky 1969: 102-3, and Evans' description of this elegy as "elaborate flattery in which the poet proclaims his loyalty, demonstrates good intentions, and attempts to correct what some may have thought was a frivolous treatment of the triumph theme in his preexilic works" (1983: 20). Davis calls this poem a "recantation" of *Ars Amatoria* 1.219ff. (1999c: 11).

[143] Evans asserts that this poem "predicts and describes at length Tiberius' triumph over Germany, the successful outcome of campaigns in AD 10" (1983: 20), and refers readers to Luck 1983: 2: 238 and Syme 1978: 45 for the chronology. However, despite these scholarly efforts to contextualize this triumph within Roman reality, the point is precisely its unreality: Ovid highlights his inability to know whether a triumph has taken place.

as he begins to participate imaginatively in the celebrations. The rest of the poem, however, shows Ovid's gradual immersion in his own imaginative account, even as it emphasizes his exclusion from the ceremony; it thus represents a poetic victory over distance and even reality.[144]

Throughout the poem, Ovid emphasizes his physical exclusion from Roman public events. He depicts a veritable *concordia ordinum* in attendance: the imperial family, Roman women, and "plebs pia cumque pia laetetur plebe senatus."[145] In pointed contrast to the *Ars*, and in an echo of the carefully balanced figures in the Boscoreale cup and other monumental art, Ovid treats this audience not as a self-interested assemblage of private individuals but as a harmonious, orderly, and pious polity. Everybody is there – except, conspicuously, himself. He notes wistfully that he was just recently a small part of the equestrian order, "parvaque cuius eram pars ego nuper eques" (16). He also complains that he has been robbed ("fallunt") of the "communia gaudia" in which he would so willingly participate; instead, he is exiled to a place where even tenuous rumor can barely reach ("famaque tam longe non nisi parva venit," 18). Yet Ovid's 'exclusion' is shared by all Romans outside the *urbs*, and points to their mutual difficulty in participating in the rituals that corroborate their national pride and identity.

However, Ovid's absence does not prevent him from being imaginatively 'present' at the triumph (and, as I argue with reference to *Ex Ponto* 2.1, may even help him imagine it more vividly). He creates a strong contrast between his inability to know what is happening at Rome (17-18) and his confidence in reporting it, using a series of future indicatives (19ff.):

> nos procul expulsos communia gaudia fallunt,
>   famaque tam longe non nisi parva venit.
> ergo omnis populus poterit spectare triumphos,
>   cumque ducum titulis oppida capta leget… (17-20)

It is difficult not to see the subsequent description, in its evident public-mindedness, as a retort to the accusations that led to his *relegatio*. Ovid begins by imagining the people viewing the triumph, and begins to draw himself into the crowd, offering himself as a model for onlookers' imaginative experience. The successive people and images of the parade increasingly draw him in emotionally: though he first identifies the leader in a purely factual way (27-28), he then vividly imagines captives as they must have looked during combat (27-46), and ends with the ecstatic sight of Caesar himself (47-56). This demonstrates the ability of the triumph to transport Roman onlookers to the time and place of the battle, as well as the power of Ovid's imagination

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[144] Citing Quint., *Inst.* 6.2.29-32, Brilliant writes that the Romans were accustomed to visualizing the unseen: "visions (*visiones*), induced by powerful verbal representations, so stirred the emotions and stimulated the imagination that complex scenes could manifest themselves with convincing, vivid immediacy before the mind's eye." I find it interesting that Ovid explores these ideas so thoroughly in his exile poetry; this emphasis on visualizing the unseen may be linked with his increased attention to communication across distance.

[145] His emphasis on the pious behavior of these groups (cf. the repetition of "pia" at 15) is matched by the self-conscious piety of his own description, which here, as elsewhere, seems to serve as a mild reproach for his exile. By constructing this harmonious picture of Roman society, hoping for a triumph over Germany, and propagating the flattering cliché of Roman world conquest ("totus ut orbis," 1), Ovid is again portraying himself as a loyal citizen-writer, toeing some official party line even when there may not have been one in the first place. Note that both adjectives "pia" refer to the plebs; perhaps this suggests that the people, rather than senate, are the Caesars' most loyal supporters. Ovid's emphasis on the members of the imperial family may politely suggest an emerging Julian dynasty.

to transport him to the time and place of the triumph. In other words, the triumph depicted in this poem duplicates the action of the poem itself: it shows how an audience can 'experience' an event despite their absence, illustrating the transportive power of *fama*.

Tristia 4.2 also shows the tendency of poems and triumphs to collapse representation with reality. The onlooker/narrator's emotional commitment to the triumphal illusion culminates with the final victims, the Rhine and Germany. He reads the statue of the Rhine, with its broken horns and green slime, as representing the Rhine itself, "discolored with its own blood" (42); but this latter description suggests that he continues to view the Rhine as a personified figure, rather than as an actual river, and thus his way of understanding the world has been shaped by its pictorial representation. With regard to Germania, this gap between representation and reality has dissolved altogether; the narrator acts as though he is really seeing Germany borne in triumph, rather than simply the effigy of a personification of a land, and focuses on the divide not between image and actuality but between her present and past fortune. As in *Ars Amatoria* 1, all that matters is the symbol as it appears in Rome, rather than any outside referent; the symbol has effectively *become* what it purports to represent. This same logic applies to this very poem; Ovid's depiction of an imaginary triumph becomes so vivid as to become indistinguishable from a poem about a real triumph. Ovid himself points out this when he jokes that he has been robbed ("fallunt") of the "communia gaudia" (17) – a ceremony which he himself has invented, and in which he and his readers participate via this poem. Thus, while appearing to complain about his absence, Ovid really constructs and shares an imaginative experience that renders Rome's glory, and poetry's power, joyfully real to his audience.

In effect, Ovid is creating a problem to which he presents his own poetry as a solution. He had identified in *Tristia* 3.11 a longing to hear of empire and thereby imaginatively participate in it, despite his distance from Rome. Here in *Tristia* 4.2, he complains that he is deprived of the "communia gaudia" because little information penetrates to the frontier (18). Yet he then, mysteriously, writes "ergo omnis populus poterit spectare triumphos" (19), creating an almost causal link ("ergo," 19)[146] between the scant rumors that arrive at Tomis ("parva fama," 18) and the entire people's ability to view the triumph and read the placards (20). In his description from 19ff., Ovid is effectively inventing the *magna fama* that has been lacking: a vivid depiction of a (fictional) Roman triumph that shows how poetry can act in service of empire. And in the rest of the poem, Ovid explores how art can help citizens everywhere 'see' this imperial ritual, itself already a representation, in their minds. For instance, he links the experience of 'observing' the triumph itself ("spectare," 19) with the ability to read the titles ("leget," 20) and to see the people on display ("videbit," 22); even the expressions of captives can be 'read' and classified according to their differing responses to their situation ("et cernet vultus aliis pro temporo versos, / terribiles aliis inmemoresque sui," 23-4). In effect, the act of viewing a triumph is much like the act of reading a poem; it involves the same interpretative processes, and gives an audience the same leeway over meaning. Moreover, revisiting his advice in *Ars Amatoria* 1 for the lover to invent plausible details about the triumph, Ovid adds at *Tristia* 4.2.25-6 that some of the people will ask the names, causes, and affairs of the captives – whether from illiteracy, ignorance, or sheer unavailability of information – and others will answer,

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[146] The "ergo" provides an apparently a logical transition between the lack of information described at 17-18 and the vivid verbal description of the triumph that follows from 19 onward, even though these two things would seem to be contradictory.

although they know little (26). This shows that the triumph requires further exegesis in order to become truly 'legible' to its audience, much as the *tituli* on the statues in the Forum Augustum, the town names in Propertius 3.4, or the Vergilian narrator in *Aeneid* 8 supplement visual information with verbal. This again helps construct a space in which the poet may be useful to the emperor, as someone who can not only convey the feeling of participation in faraway events but also inform an audience's interpretation of imperial icons.[147]

Yet Ovid is rather defiant in his patriotic desire to witness the triumph. At 57-64, he exults in the freedom of his mind to visit those places from which his body has been barred.[148]

> haec ego summotus, qua possum, mente videbo:
>   erepti nobis ius habet illa loci;
> illa per inmensas spatiatur libera terras,
>   in caelum celeri pervenit illa fuga;   60
> illa meos oculos mediam deducit in Urbem,
>   immunes tanti nec sinit esse boni;
> invenietque animus, qua currus spectet eburnos;
>   sic certe in patria per breve tempus ero.

His mind, in its lofty flight and ability to transcend great distances, is reminiscent of his *fama* in *Metamorphoses* 15.875-9, and points to the similarity between the two: the poet's power of invention can create *fama*, for others and himself, just as this imagined triumph at *Tristia* 4.2 helps shape the reputation of the Julians (and has helped modern scholars reconstruct the triumphal ceremony itself).[149] Yet it can also bypass the authority of the emperor, have no basis in truth, and reverse the direction of the triumph, exerting control from the periphery onto the center. Ovid admits at 65-6 that his imagined presence is not quite a substitute for "vera spectacula" – but this very phrase recalls the ability of those spectacles, though real enough in themselves, to represent falsity. Moreover, Ovid jokes at 63 that his spirit will find a position from which to view the triumph – playing on his disembodied mind's lack of need to jostle for space in the crowd, but reminding us that the triumph is difficult to witness even for Romans in the *urbs* as well as abroad.

Most important, though imagination may be a poor substitute for "the real spectacle," for citizens on the periphery, like Ovid himself, there was no other way to 'see' Rome than in one's mind's eye. Though the triumph itself is a first-degree representation of reality, it may be known outside of Rome only through second-degree representations such as poems – and thus, within the Augustan Text, its relationship to reality has become flattened out, a matter of literary convention more than historical actuality. In fact, the ease with which Ovid mentally manifests this ritual in the absence of report suggests that it, too, has no necessary connection with real victories: it has become a set of conventionalized symbols, a "spectacula" that has lost its

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[147]For instance, in *Ex Ponto* 2.1, after he has received a report of triumph, he is able to name only one person, Bato (perhaps indicating the lack of information conveyed by report). This may explain some of the Forum Augustum's anxiety to match statue with *titulus*.

[148] Williams also observes this note of defiance at 2009: 222, and Feeney 1994: 18 suggests that the very act of writing from Tomis can be seen as one of resistance.

[149] Compare this with the freedom of imagination Ovid describes in *Tristia* 3.7, to Perilla; see also Hardie 2002: 308 on this poem and its qualified exaltation of the freedom of the imagination.

connection with "vera" even as it remains compelling for its readers.[150] Thus, despite *Tristia* 4.2's ostensible piety and loyalty to the emperor, it also exemplifies the potential for representations like poems and triumphs to misrepresent or even supplant the real – as well as their inventors' freedom from imperial control. And, ironically, Ovid's invented account itself becomes a *fama* that is sent back via this epistle to Rome, allowing its readers to participate imaginatively in a triumph even in the absence of a real victory. It therefore reverses the directionality of the triumph, showing that the margins can 'create' events at the center of Rome, just as the triumph purported to report marginal events to the center. It also elides the roles of poet and prince, allowing Ovid to replace Augustus as triumphal impresario and provider of the associated pleasure, sense of community, and connection to other Romans.[151]

iii. *Ex Ponto* 2.1: the trouble with *Fama*

In fact, when Ovid finally does receive this longed-for news of a triumph – Tiberius' Pannonian triumph, celebrated in 13 CE and reported in Ovid's *Ex Ponto* 2.1[152] – his ensuing poem falls short of the vividly-imagined *Tristia* 4.2. That poem had used direct speech, close observation, and present-tense imaginative participation in the spectacle to create a sense of immediacy and vividness. *Ex Ponto* 2.1, in contrast, is entirely rendered through past-tense indirect speech attributed to Fama, calling constant attention to its secondariness and the role of report in mediating information. Furthermore, it is almost entirely composed of clichéd 'sound bytes' that substitute formal or official language for a sense of immediacy, and proceeds in an orderly and conventional manner that recalls the composition of art like the Boscoreale cup. This marks a high point on the evolution of triumphal representations within the Augustan Text from the specific to the symbolic. That is, where some representations (like the shield of Aeneas and the Forum Augustum statues) were closely anchored to real events within history, Ovid treats this triumph of *Tristia* 4.2 not as a signifier of specific victory but rather as a symbol with generic ideological associations, which Ovid appears able to recite by rote.

Ovid takes great pains from the beginning to show that he is not narrating this triumph in his own words. Rather, Fame has reported to Ovid ("indice te," 21; "tu mihi narrasti," 25; etc.) that countless peoples assembled to see the face of their leader (21-2); that, though Rome encloses the whole world within its walls, it scarcely had room for so many guests (23-4); that the sun burst from the clouds, and the bright day matched the faces of the people (25-8) – all very polite, very dignified, and exactly what one might expect from an official version of the event. In the next section, Fama recounts the ritually-prescribed order of events: the victor gave

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[150] The narrator of *Tristia* 4.2 is seen to be more and more captivated by the illusion he himself has created, showing how desire – here, Ovid's wish to participate in a triumph – can create its own reality. Thus, where Ovid manufactures a triumph of love in *Amores* 1.2, and in *Ars* 1 explores how an audience can change the meaning and purpose of triumphal symbols, here in *Tristia* 4.2 he shows how a wishful audience can imagine imperial symbols to reflect reality, thus helping maintain imperial power even in the absence of evidence for belief.

[151] My emphasis on readerly pleasure, while in part a response to Barthes, also maps on to Hardie's interest in the role of readerly desire in constructing illusion (2002); I believe Ovid is pointing out that pleasure is what fundamentally animates a text and vivifies its fictions, whether poetic or political.

[152] But awarded as long before as 8 CE; with these various 'expected triumph' poems, Ovid seems to be playing off his prior knowledge that Tiberius would eventually triumph (in fact, Claassen 2008: 10 dates the exile to 9 instead of the traditional 8, in which case Ovid may have been at Rome for this news). If the supremacy of the Caesars is unquestioned, the triumph itself is a foregone conclusion, and its general shape and form are determined by custom, then no wonder these poems sound rather generic; they point out that the triumph itself has become generic.

gifts to the heroes in a loud voice (29-30), and before putting on the sacred triumphal robes (31), burned incense on the sacred altars (32) to honor the justice of his father (33), who always has a temple in Tiberius' breast (34).[153] None of this, of course, is 'news'; in fact, its utter predictability seems to render news irrelevant, suggesting that reportage has become a transmission of conventions. Moreover, as we saw in the Boscoreale cup, and as contradicts Ovid's own prior tendencies to focus on the crowd, the onlookers here are invisible except insofar as they contribute to the aesthetic effect of Tiberius' triumph; all we witness is their applause and the roses they have scattered (35-6). In front of Tiberius as he rides, there are silver models of conquered walls, barbarian towns with "pictis viris," rivers and mountains, heaped-up shields and spears, and so many trophies that the forum turns gold with their reflection (37-42). These are again such standard triumphal elements that their omission would have been more striking than their inclusion. Beard quite rightly fixates on the phrase "pictis viris," which leaves it ambiguous whether these are representations of men who were painted in real life, or painted representations of real men.[154] To me, the point is that, from Ovid's flattened-out account, it is impossible to tell the difference; the phrase "pictis viris" collapses reality and representation until it is impossible to separate the two, as does Ovid's own poem. This is, after all, a secondary narration of belated news from Rome, which may or may not itself be an accurate account of the triumph, which itself is a quite possibly biased 'report' from a province that is closer to Tomis than to Rome itself. Such indirect information seems hardly more reliable than imagination, and even more reliant on convention and platitude. *Ex Ponto* 2.1 itself underscores this point by issuing a description that is pointedly 'obedient' to Fama,[155] but less engaging and immediate than the more imaginative *Tristia* 4.2, where the mind's eye was liberated from the chains of report.

iv. Poetry as prophecy in *Ex Ponto* 3.4

Ovid addresses this problem overtly in *Ex Ponto* 3.4, which doubles as an apology for the limitations of *Ex Ponto* 2.1 and an exploration of how poetry can transmit information and experience across empire. Its purpose is to ask Ovid's friend Rufinus to 'foster' Ovid's 'Triumph' poem (*Ex Ponto* 2.1) – and use it to help Ovid's case with the emperor – if it has succeeded in reaching his hands at all (4).[156] This latter underscores the problem of

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[153] This latter point delicately establishes both Tiberius' piety and Augustus' divinity, in the 'rationalizing' terms that may have constituted the most tactful way of discussing Augustus' godhead at Rome during his own lifetime (cf. the speech in which Maecenas advises Augustus to build shrines to himself in the hearts and minds of the people, Dio 52.35, discussed in Chapter 2).

[154] Beard 2007: 181; I propose they may even be real men, painted and paraded as captives on floats. She adds that some of these towns have been destroyed and now exist only as triumphal representations, so that "representation has become the only reality there is" (185).

[155] Ovid explores obedience toward the end of the poem. Finishing off Fama's orderly depiction of the triumph are the chained captives – so many that they almost suffice to be the entire enemy ("paene hostis quot satis esse fuit," 44), in a testament to the power of representational synecdoche. Of these, most – even the leader, Bato, the only person whose name Fama reports (46) – received clemency. Ovid therefore hopes that, if the god (i.e. Augustus) can be merciful even to enemies, his wrath toward Ovid may also diminish. As Ovid depicts himself, he is reading the triumph (correctly) as a visual representation of Augustus' mercy, and performing his own obedience to Fama and Augustus' reputation; but he is also (incorrectly) regarding this representation as somehow bearing on reality, or at least his own exile.

[156] Ovid's doubt as to whether the earlier poem even arrived at Rome underlines the tenuousness of his lines of communication from exile, rendering doubtful the present poem's assumption that it will reach Rufinus ("haec tibi

communication that Ovid raised at *Tristia* 3.12, and in fact, this poem does more than any other to examine the nexus of themes that Ovid associates with the triumph and that also bear on his own poetry: creating presence despite absence, writing from a spatial and temporal distance, and negotiating the tension between imagination and actuality.

   The next few verses underline the fragility that Ovid attributes to this poem, as well as his reliance on reader response. Where great poets have no need for a compliant reader ("placido … lectore," 9), and 'hold' even an unwilling reader ("invitum difficilemque"), Ovid must lean upon readerly goodwill ("vestro candore valemus," 13) because his sufferings have weakened his poetic powers.[157] Ovid has always depended on readers' favor ("cunctaque cum mea sint propenso nixa favore," 15), but here he claims special indulgence ("praecipuum veniae ius habet ille liber," 16) because of the particular challenges of writing about a triumph from afar.[158] In other words, Ovid is developing a special relationship with his reader, and representing his text as a democratic one that relies upon their support – implicitly contrasting it with those more autocratic texts that compel the cooperation of their readers. Ovid's apology moreover doubles as an exposé of the difficulty that citizens abroad experience in participating in the rituals of *Romanitas*.[159] Those who attended the triumph in person can simply transcribe what they have seen with a "remembering hand" ("memori … manu," 18); mere exposure to the places, people, and battles of the triumph would have nourished his song, too ("sed loca, sed gentes formatae mille figures / nutrissent carmen proelia ipsa meum," 25-6). Yet Ovid's inspiration was deprived of the contagious enthusiasm of the Roman audience,[160] as well as the life-giving force of the presence of the emperor – one glipse of whom would warm even a breast cold from the Black Sea snow (33-36).[161] He lacked even "materia" for his poem (40) since the reports that reached Tomis were lacking in detail (41-2);[162] his eyes had to 'be' rumor, envisioning details that report has not conveyed ("oculi fama fuere mei," 20). For that matter, the time delay involved in communications between center and periphery means that, by the time Ovid hears of an event, writes about it, and sends his poem back to Rome, it will already be outdated by a year upon

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non vanam portantia verba salutem / Naso Tomitana mittit ab urbe tuus," 1-2). Of course, the poet's only proof that his words had been heard at all would be an answering letter from Rome; and the only way they could truly not be in vain would be a recall from exile. Since the modern reader has no evidence for either of these, Ovid's "non vanam salutem" seems tenuous indeed, underscoring the communication difficulties he has outlined.

[157] That, or he never was much of a poet in the first place ("aut etiam nullum forsitan ante fuit," 12). Davis 2002: 267 cites *Tr.* 3.1, 3.14, 5.7.55-64, 5.12.57-8 as examples of Ovid's fear that his literary powers (and command of Latin) are declining in exile. Though these may be examples of Ovid's "strategic dissimulation" (Williams 1994: 91-99), Davis sees them as evidence of Ovid's difficulty in sustaining his Romanness from exile.

[158] In the light of this poem, I regard *Ex Ponto* 2.1 as consciously designed to demonstrate the inadequacy of report.

[159] Ovid's excuse-making here fits in with his general 'pose of literary decline,' to which Williams 1994 devotes a chapter (50-99); he (and I) tend to agree with Nagle's reading that his self-criticism is "strategic, and was meant to arouse in the reader a desire that Ovid's circumstances might improve so that his poetry could, too" (1980: 71).

[160] Presence among such a clamor – that is, the mob of people all watching the triumph and expressing their collective excitement – would have served as a poetic call for arms ("plausibus ex ipsis populi laetoque favore / ingenium quodvis incaluisse potest: / tamque ego sumpsissem tali clamore vigorem, / quam rudis audita miles ad arma tuba," 29-32).

[161] Physical presence in Rome, before the face of the *princeps* ("illa ducis facies," 35; cf. "ducis ore deos aequiperante frui," *Ex Ponto* 2.2.92), is a life-giving force for a Roman citizen. Ovid uses language that smacks of love elegy to imagine his glimpse of the general's face, suggesting a change in his priorities, but also the impossibility of his desire (his breast could hardly still be cold from the Tomitian snow if he were in Rome with the emperor; this suggests he will be able to see the emperor's face only in his mind's eye).

[162] Much as the lover of the *Amores* had lacked the material for his love-poems (1.1.19-20), forcing him to invent it.

arrival (59-60). Ovid therefore highlights the importance of immediate experience to poetic inspiration and the literary market (cf. people's love of *novitas*, 51-2), but also suggests its value in forming citizens' sense of collective pride and identity. He further reminds us at 71-2 of his dependence on faraway readers to connect him with the life of the city (and the favor of Augustus). Revising the language of *Metamorphoses* 15, where he had claimed that his poetry was the immortal 'better part of him' ("parte … meliore mei," 15.875), Ovid now calls his friends 'great part of his soul' ("magna … pars animae," 69), and wishes only for physical presence at Rome rather than immortality. In fact, his distance from Rome has separated his Roman mind from his Tomis-bound body (75-6). He emphasizes this split selfhood by referring to himself as "absens" (70), viewing himself from Rome's perspective in order to emphasize its primacy to his mental world. [163]

Ovid thus uses *Ex Ponto* 3.4 to argue that presence at the triumph, and proximity to the emperor and the Roman people, are sources of poetic inspiration and personal loyalty. However, because of a lack of reliable transmission of information, great events ("tantis rebus") are reduced in scope and importance by the time they reach the provinces ("pars quota de tantis rebus, quam fama referre / aut aliquis nobis scribere posset, erat?" 41-2). Also because of his distance from Rome, Ovid suffers from weakened poetic capabilities, deprivation from firsthand experience, a delay in communication, and a separation of soul from body. Yet the remainder of the poem presents a remarkable solution to the problems Ovid has raised. He considers a change of meter (85-88), but what he really settles upon is a change of *mode* – from poetry to prophecy.[164] He then goes on to predict a triumph for Germanicus in advance of any news, pre-empting urban poets in their quest for *novitas* (51), liberating his imagination from the material need for information, and becoming a creator rather than recipient of *fama*. Ovid signals this resurrection of his vatic persona with an echo from the end of the *Metamorphoses*, where he had claimed immortality *if* the words of poets have any truth ("siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam," 15.879).[165] In *Ex Ponto* 3.4, he states more confidently that the words of poets *do* have truth ("inrita motorum non sunt praesagia vatum," 89). Moreover, he reasserts his poetic power to cross time and distance at will, liberating himself from the dependence on information described at *Tristia* 3.12. Thus, Ovid's newly prophetic stance toward Rome represents a triumph of the imagination over the constraints of time, distance, and the need for real information.

Yet this also cuts the final thread binding triumphal representation to reality. Triumphs' performance and meaning have become conventionalized enough for Ovid to predict and depict

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[163] See Oliensis 1997 for Ovid's relations with his friends and addressees, including a discussion of how "exile has jammed the works of *amicitia*" (1997: 178) and how names suffice for presence in absence. Particularly relevant are her arguments that Ovid (in *Tristia* 1.7 and 3.3) is "invoked and defined as an absence, less a living source of language than an alienated word which will be spoken by others" and that he has prematurely experienced the separation of name from body that most authors experience after death (1997: 190). Since Ovid's exile marks the radical separation of mind from body, here in *Ex Ponto 3*.4 he awaits only a belated burial to make his 'death' complete (75-6).

[164] His use of the 'aug-' root with "auguror" at 80 heralds his assumption of power over information, where earlier he had been subjected to it. Evans has noted the shift from Ovid's ambiguous use of the term 'vates' to describe himself and his fellow-poets earlier in the poem (17, 65, 84) to the reappearance of the term at 89 with the stronger meaning of 'poet-prophet' along with a demonstration of Ovid's poetic and prophetic skills (1983: 132-3).

[165] Hardie 2002: 312 also observes this echo, anticipating my point that these triumphal representations rely on plausibility or *fides*, and also analogizes observing the triumph with the act of reading (310-11).

them even in the absence of news from Rome. Moreover, the fact that he does so suggests that their value lies in their ability to serve as symbols for public use and enjoyment, rather than as representations of historical events. In fact, Ovid collapses the whole triumph – itself already a symbol of victory – even further into the single act of the imperator's dedicating a laurel at Rome (90). This stands in synecdochically for the whole ritual, and becomes an imagistic shorthand for the emperor's evergreen glory. Yet it also further separates the triumph from the larger historical realities it purports to represent, using it instead as a timeless symbol of imperial glory that can be excerpted from its ritual context, performed independently of any victory in the real world, and used not to inform but to entertain and inspire an audience.[166] This anticipates later emperors' exploitation of the separability of representation from reality and later writers' fascination with this charade. For instance, Tacitus characterizes the *simulacra* in Germanicus' triumph as appropriate for his undeserved triumph, while Suetonius reports that Caligula recruited Gauls to dye their hair and pretend to be German captives for his farce of a victory.[167] Ovid's treatment of the triumph – as a set of potentially unrepresentitive symbols that must nevertheless be circulated for the delight of an audience – is therefore more than a literary game. This idea plays out in imperial history, as emperors realize that it is more important to put on a good show for Rome than to achieve victories in the provinces, thus completing the analogy between poets and princes as manipulators of public opinion.

v. Prince v. poet reprised: the defiance of reader response

Ovid's new, vatic mode at first seems designed to render Ovid more useful to empire, and perhaps more worthy of recall to Rome. He is notably more public-minded in *Ex Ponto* 3.4 than in the *Metamorphoses*, using his prophetic powers to predict Caesar's future triumphs (90) rather than his own poetic fame. But he also sees prophesy as a mode for reuniting his mind in Rome with his body in Tomis, figuring himself as an oracle who is literally 'inspired' with the breath of the god:

> Nec mea verba legis, qui sum summotus ad Histrum,
> > Non bene pacatis flumina pota Getis:
> Ista dei vox est, deus est in pectore nostro,
> > Haec duce praedico vaticinorque deo. (91-4)

This solves the problem of inspiration he had identified in the first half of the poem, and recalls the freedom of mental travel that he had discussed at *Tristia* 4.2.57-64. But it also suggests his newfound liberation from the scanty rumors that drifted from Rome to Tomis – as well as any central ideology or control they may have embedded. Ovid's mention of the waters drunk by the "not-well-pacified" Getae (91-2) suggests his own potential, as someone writing on the frontiers, to be "not-well-pacified" by the Roman imperial project.[168] Moreover, it remains ambiguous whether the 'god' to whom he has given over his voice is Augustus himself – the reigning deity of much of this exile poetry – or a higher prophetic power. In fact, though this poem performs a

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[166] At 91-4, Ovid predicts another triumph for Tiberius with the phrase "danda Iovi laurus, dum prior illa viret" (90). This suggests that this simple symbolic act has replaced any need for real victory.

[167] Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.55 (though note the less cynical accounts of Velleius Paterculus 2.129.2, Strabo 7.1.4, and Beard's discussion at 2007: 107-11); Suet., *Cal.* 47 (as discussed by Beard 2007: 185-7).

[168] Contrast Habinek's 1998 argument, discussed above, that he is constructing imperial subjecthood.

self-consciously 'pro-Augustan' prediction of future imperial accomplishments, it also contains resistant ("non bene pacatis") implications about the Caesars and their way of representing power – transferring Ovid's sense of split self onto the reader who must choose whether to agree with the words he is voicing.

Previous chapters discussed how Ovid insinuates that Augustus has feigned or misrepresented aspects of his public persona. Here, however, imperial feigning is brought to the foreground and overtly praised. Ovid's prophecy focuses not on a victory in the field, but rather, a triumph in Rome in which "a feigned thing may be thought to be done in a realistic way" ("fictaque res vero more putetur agi" 106). This privileges the representational artfulness of the triumph over any actual achievement, suggesting that the former may suffice for the latter and that the poet may thus become a useful ally in the *princeps'* representational project. Ovid also adopts a more assertive and even commanding attitude toward the future, one that furthers the conflation of his poetic persona with the inspiring god's. For instance, he orders Livia to make preparations with a series of imperatives (95-112), and appears to command even the future. What he prophesies within his poem also comes true within the poem; it imaginatively performs (and invites readers to participate in) the very triumph it predicts. Despite its shift in tone, this version is of course just as unconnected to news of actual events as *Tristia* 4.2. Yet it also suggests a certain similarity between poet-prophet and prince: both declare the future confidently enough to *make it so*, at least in the eyes of their audience.

On the other hand, a powerful poet is also a potentially dangerous poet, and the old rivalry between poet and prince reemerges: if poetry can help create empire by spreading a feeling of presence and thus encourage loyalty, it can also help deconstruct imperial power by exposing its reliance on representation and encouraging resistant interpretations. I will therefore spend the remainder of this chapter examining Ovid's independent and at times defiant reader response to the emperor, as channeled through his descriptions of triumphs in *Tristia* 4.2, *Ex Ponto* 2.1 and *Ex Ponto* 3.4. In these, he explores the emperor's status as a symbol, the reader's freedom of imagination, and strategies for reading empire with an eye toward change.[169]

vi. Emperor as symbol

Despite the ostensible submissiveness of his exile poetry, Ovid begins to expose the emperor, like the triumph itself, as a symbol – one that derives a great deal of power from convention and expectation. In contrast to the shield of Aeneas or the Boscoreale cup, which carefully individuate Augustus and Tiberius as triumphators,[170] Ovid treats the reigning Caesar in remarkably generic terms: all that matters is what he rules and what he represents, not who he is. (In fact, within these poems, it is often difficult to determine whether 'Caesar' refers to

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[169] As mentioned above, Feeney 1994: 18 has argued that Ovid's very act of writing from Tomis can be seen as resistance, in that he is justifying himself and asserting his right to a voice; Williams also notes his emphasis on Augustus' powerlessness to control his mental and poetic freedom in exile (cf. *Tristia* 3.7.47-8). Many scholars, however, continue to see Ovid's exilic writing as 'constrained,' which, as I argue in Chapter 1, is a construction of the text which plays into Ovid's poetic/political project as I see it.

[170] Compare, too, Tiberius and Augustus in the Gemma Augustea, or the individually-labeled statues of triumphators in the Forum Augustum.

Augustus, Tiberius, or Germanicus; they become interchangeable iterations of one another.[171]) He also explores the fact that this symbol is public property, freely available for poetic reappropriation. Individual triumphs, too, blur together into a remarkably generic picture of the triumph, suggesting that the triumph no longer represents historical realities but has simply come to symbolize a certain set of relationships between author/emperor, reader/audience, and text/triumph. He thus recasts the triumph as a textual rite which is performed through symbols, can include far-flung audiences, and whose purpose is "to celebrate, to solemnize, not to symbolize and inform."[172]

Remarkably, though *Tristia* 4.2 creates a vivid imaginative picture of a triumph, it leaves the triumphant 'leader' (4.2.27-28) wholly anonymous. The 'Caesars' seem interchangeable with one another, and are treated holders of an office or name rather than individual people (Germany bows to "Caesaribus," 1; each Caesar, "Caesar uterque," prepares offerings, 8; future heirs are growing up "Caesareo … sub nomine," 9; and it is not immediately clear which "Caesar" presides at 47-50).[173] On the one hand, Ovid might be hedging his bets; perhaps hoping his 'imaginary' triumph would come true at some point, but unsure for whom, he left these names blank. On the other, it identifies a certain generic quality in these leaders – one suggested also by the predictability of triumphs being awarded to Caesars as opposed to others, and the narrator's lack of concern for the triumphator in *Ars Amatoria* 1.

The Roman audience that observes the triumph here seems rather generic, too, and performs stereotyped actions: they will applaud Caesar riding in triumph ("manibus circumplaudere tuorum," 49) and scatter flowers in his path ("undique iactato flore tegente vias," 50). Their identity is one of praising Caesar, to the point that they are reduced grammatically to a merely instrumental supporting role (Caesar is the subject here, addressed in confident future indicatives). Yet the Romans' participation as onlookers at 47-56 is as important to the triumph scene as the procession of victims at 29-46. Moreover, the fact that Caesar is *witnessed* in his glory – "populi rite per ora tui" (48) – is what *constitutes* that glory.[174] In Ovid's vision here in *Tristia* 4.2, it is Caesar's supremacy as performed through ritual and recognized by the audience (47-56) that distinguishes him from the actual leader of the battle, who was mentioned only briefly and anonymously at 27-8. In fact, this poem and many others omit the senators, army, lictors, and other people who would also have participated, reducing the triumph to a symbolic interaction between imperator, captives, and their witnessing public. Caesar is *triumphator*

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[171] This recalls the bizarre multiplicity of images of Augustus during his funeral procession: aside from his body in its coffin, a wax image in triumphal garb, a gold statue from the senate-house, and another statue on a triumphal chariot were also paraded (Dio 56.34). This suggests the extent to which the emperor may have been envisioned as a symbol or representation rather than a man. Price 1987 does some interesting work on the 'symbolic' quality of the emperor, especially with regard to imperial funerals, and the way this could be used to ease political transitions. See also Kantorowicz's 1997 *The King's Two Bodies* for the king's embodiedness vs. symbolicness as it evolves into the Middle Ages.

[172] As Veyne 1988: 14 describes the function of rite in general. He also writes that "ceremonies are an art, like a painting or a poem" (13); what Ovid is doing is aestheticizing the triumph rather than treating it as a bearer of information.

[173] This poem is thought to refer to a Tiberian triumph against Germany, but fails to provide historical specificity, and seems to suggest that having the name Caesar is more important than being a blood relation (as I argued regarding Ovid's treatment of succession in Chapter 2).

[174] See my general discussion of the triumph in history, above, or, for the viewer's perspective, my discussion of a similar passage in *Tristia* 3.12.

because he behaves like one and is seen as one, the Roman people are subjects because they applaud him and take pleasure in the triumphal 'text' he has created.[175]

Yet, in this description at 47-56, Caesar is remarkably devoid of agency even though he is perceived as all-powerful. Caesar will be "carried above" the triumphal victims "in purple, by custom, before the eyes of his people" (47-8) – in other words, passively paraded before the audience, much as the victims are. Though Caesar is nominally at the helm of the victory chariot, its path and even his clothes are largely pre-determined by tradition,[176] and his progress is controlled by the pace of the procession and the response of the audience (e.g., his horses will start at the noise of their songs and applause, 53-4). Ovid further amplifies our sense that the emperor is being borne along as another spectacular effigy in the triumphal procession when he uses future second-person verbs to address the emperor at 47-56: 'you will be carried, and you will be applauded, and you will give the laurel to Jupiter.' Though Ovid's use of future tenses might be seen to express certainty at the emperor's victory ('x will happen'), his choice to address the emperor in the second person makes these verbs come off as commands ('you will do x'), and his frequent positioning of the emperor as a passive subject ('x will be done to you') show how little power the emperor actually has over a ceremony that, ironically, is supposed to be the ultimate expression of his power. This poem also shows that the emperor's actions are determined in great part by his audience's expectations, which in turn are shaped by centuries of Roman tradition and even by descriptive poems such as this one. The emperor appears to rule in the eyes of the people, but in a sense, it is the eyes of the people that rule him.[177]

Ovid's coda to the poem, in contrast, shows the relative freedom that the poet enjoys. Unlike the emperor, whose path and actions are determined by audience expectation, Ovid can travel wherever he wants in his mind – even where his body has been forbidden.[178] In fact, he defies his *relegatio* in order to imaginatively witness 'such a great good' as the emperor riding in triumph, suggesting that such public images are subject to Romans' use and enjoyment ("haec ego summotus, qua possum, mente videbo: / erepti nobis ius habet illa loci … / illa meos oculos mediam deducit in Urbem, / immunes tanti nec sinit esse boni," 57-8, 61-2). As I discussed above, those in the provinces may take part in this great public ceremony only by imagination ("fingendo") and by indirect rumor ("remotis auribus," in Ovid's charming phrase), supplemented by rare and belated reports from travellers (69-72). But the irony, of course, is that the "true sight" they are missing ("vera spectacula," 65-6) is of a hypothetical occasion that Ovid himself has brought to life within this poem. In fact, this poem offers itself as a solution to the mutual need, on the part of the emperor and the Roman public, to witness and be witnessed performing their roles, despite the scarcity of official triumphs in Rome (and their inaccessibility

[175] The pleasure of the audience must have been an important part of the triumph, if we accept, for instance, Tertullian's criticism of spectacles on the grounds that in giving pleasure to audience they did violence to their spirits (*De spect.* 20, cited by Brilliant 1999: 225).

[176] Though see Favro 1994 for some variations in this route, which was not set in stone.

[177] This meshes with recent scholarship on performance and the gaze; see especially Fredrick's 2002 edited volume on *The Roman Gaze*, Bartsch 1994 and 2006, and Gunderson 2002 for some perspectives on the ambivalence of being the object of audiences' gaze. In Ovid's poem moreover, as I discuss below, these individuals begin to fade out of view compared with the great historical processes of change for which the triumph becomes an icon.

[178] I mention above the joke at 63 where his disembodied eyes will have no trouble finding room from which to view the triumphal procession ("invenietque animus, qua currus spectet eburnos"). Though Ovid qualifies his freedom, it is hardly the concession to imperial priorities that Galinsky feels it is in contrast to the *Ars* (1969: 103).

to Romans on the frontiers).   By putting the triumph into writing, Ovid makes it a repeatable and transportable experience that can be shared with provincial subjects and help them to "lay aside private sorrow for a public cause" (73-4). Like the triumphal procession and the epistolary genre, which bring 'past' events to a present-tense reader, Ovid's poem collapses time – but by making a hypothetical 'future' seem vividly real to a present-tense reader, while calling attention to its own imaginedness. It also reverses and seizes control of the triumph's spatial movement, wherein information and objects are transported from the frontiers of Rome to the center, and makes the emperor himself one of those objects. Ovid's poem therefore helps circulate imperial symbols through empire – a process that is valuable insofar as it allows an audience to feel like part of the triumph and therefore Rome, but also suggests that representations may exert power over the emperor rather than the other way around. This, of course, helps explain and fulfill his promise in *Ex Ponto* 4.8 that even the gods can be 'made' through poetry.

   Ex Ponto 2.8, a poem thanking Cotta Maximus for his gift of three silver statues of the imperial family,[179] makes some similar points while demonstrating why they are important. These statues again reduce the Caesars to unindividuated symbols: the poet refers to "Caesar cum Caesare" at 1 (Augustus and Tiberius), and "Caesare proxime Caesar" at 37 (Germanicus, Tiberius' successor), suggesting that the Caesars alone have exempted themselves from the process of change – they simply replicate one another. Ovid also begins to equate the statues with the 'gods' they represent (i.e., the Caesars), ironically calling attention to the gap between symbols and reality:

> est aliquid spectare deos et adesse putare,
>   et quasi cum vero numine posse loqui. (9-10)

Just like Ovid's imaginative vision of the triumph at *Tristia* 4.2, the statues draw Ovid further into the illusion of presence before Augustus at Rome (11-20), an illusion fuelled (according to Hardie) by readerly desire:[180]

> quantum ad te, redii, nec me tenet ultima tellus,
>   utque prius, media sospes in Urbe moror.
> Caesareos uideo uultus, uelut ante uidebam:
>   uix huius uoti spes fuit ulla mihi.
> utque salutabam numen caeleste, saluto.   15
>   quod reduci tribuas, nil, puto, maius habes.
> quid nostris oculis nisi sola Palatia desunt?
>   qui locus ablato Caesare uilis erit.
> hunc ego cum spectem, uideor mihi cernere Romam;
>   nam patriae faciem sustinet ille suae.   20

This begins a conflation of Caesar with the state that finds its culmination at 19-20, where looking upon the emperor is equivalent to seeing Rome. But it also begins a conflation of Caesar

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[179] For a fuller discussion of this poem, see e.g. Millar's 1993 article on "Ovid and the *Domus Augusta*: Rome seen from Tomoi" and Hardie 2002: 320-1; I agree very much with Hardie's take and endorse his analysis of the role of desire and credulity in creating illusion.
[180] 2002: 320-1.

with these *statues*, one that Ovid follows through to the end of the poem.   At 17, he says the only thing he is missing is the sight of the Palatine hill, but that this is nothing without the presence of Caesar. In other words, Ovid imagines that Caesar is no longer in Rome, but here in Tomis, in the form of these statues. He acknowledges that, since the real sight is taken away from him, he cherishes the figures that art has produced (59-60); after all, it is only through such indirect likenesses that people know the great gods (61-2). But he twists this into a novel argument for recall from Tomis, telling Caesar to take care that his own statues do not stay in a hateful place (63-4). In a double-edged display of loyalty, Ovid calls these statues the safe haven of his exile (67-68), and pictures himself clutching the statues of Caesar to his breast as he is surrounded by Getic arms (69-70). And in fact, Ovid imagines the expression on Caesar's statue growing kindlier as a result (71-76, "aut ego me fallo, nimiaque cupidine ludor…"). This is, of course, a familiar Ovidian subjective fallacy, which shows the power of reader response to construct a desired meaning upon an indifferent text. Yet it also points out that, in the minds of subjects on the edges of empire, Caesar exists as a symbol more than a reality – and that these symbols, as substitutes and representatives for the emperor, are felt to have a certain power, at the same time as they are subject to the use and interpretation of their audience. Caesar cannot stop Ovid from clutching his image as a refuge in Tomis, or from ascribing to it an imagined clemency – in other words, from drawing it into a public discussion that pits the symbolic meaning ascribed to it by its readers against the evidence of reality.

vii. The emperor as public property

In *Ex Ponto* 2.1, Ovid brings out a more defiant side of the poet's freedom of imagination while similarly exposing the emperor as 'public property' – a conventionalized symbol that can be read and reappropriated by all. At the beginning of the poem, Ovid states that Caesar wishes to punish him by depriving him of any joy (7). However, it is possible that Caesar wants everyone to enjoy this one thing, the triumph (8); and anyway, Ovid plans on enjoying the triumph even if Caesar forbids it (11-12). This can, of course, be read as an elaborate praise of Caesar and demonstration of good citizenship; even those with reason to hold a grudge against the emperor cannot help but rejoice at his triumph. On the other hand, like *Ex Ponto* 2.8, it also uses Caesar's status as a public symbol against him.[181] Though Caesar can control the physical lives of his citizens (e.g. by sending Ovid into exile), he cannot fully control these citizens' mental worlds and thus cannot control their reactions to the rumors, rhetoric and imagery through which he is made present throughout the empire. Although Ovid's reaction to the imperial triumph is a self-consciously 'ideal' one demonstrating his good will toward Rome, his air of defiance in propounding it, and insisting on his right to 'participate' in Roman ceremony, nevertheless points out the power of the reader.

Ovid goes on to underscore this theme through an interesting comparison of Augustus to Jupiter – not in his usual capacities as autocratic god or protector of suppliants, but as the personified abstraction of the sky (13ff.). In an amusingly self-deprecating simile, Ovid compares himself to a bur that benefits along with more useful crops from Jupiter's rain (13-4). Then, more defiantly, he points out that he enjoys the benefits of Augustus' reign even against Augustus' will, and, since nothing of the Caesars' is private, their joys belong to him, too (17-8).

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[181]As, I argue above, does *Tristia* 4.2.61-2, where Ovid defies the emperor's punishment in order to travel to Rome and enjoy the 'great good' of the triumph.

This is a remarkable revisitation of Ovid's statement at *Fasti* 2.138 that Augustus holds everything under heaven ("quodcumque est alto sub Iove, Caesar habet"); the flip side of Augustus' control over public space is that he also *is* public property, subject to the response of any of his subjects (cf. "res est publica Caesar," *Tristia* 4.4.15).[182] The phrase "gratia, Fama, tibi" that begins the next line (19) assigns a crucial role to Fame in publicizing information about Caesar, here, in particular, bringing the story of the triumph all the way to Tomis as Ovid had hoped in *Tristia* 3.12 and 4.2. Thus Caesar's fame, at least as Ovid depicts it, works both for and against him; it publishes his greatness to the world, but it also belongs to the rest of the world and may create unintended effects (such as Ovid's experiencing joy even in exile). In other words, Ovid has found a way to turn the perpetual dilemma of poets – one that he himself felt keenly – back on Augustus: 'texts' may be read in unintended ways and by unintended audiences. Moreover, though the emperor may be 'seen' throughout the empire, he himself cannot 'see' all; as *Ex Ponto* 1.2.71-2 reminds, although gods know everything, even Caesar cannot know what life is like in faraway Pontus. In the information gap which Ovid so often complains about through his triumph poetry, the periphery may win out over the center.

Moreover, though Ovid here presents the emperor as a nourishing force and *fama* as the means by which he can be known, his own writings help constitute that very *fama* – sometimes in opposition to other versions. For instance, at the end of *Ex Ponto* 2.1, Ovid depicts an imperial family unified under the name Caesar (e.g. "gaudia Caesareae gentis … sunt mea," 17-18), but then appears to exploit the famous tension between Tiberius and Germanicus. Germanicus himself was not present at Tiberius' triumph of 12, though rumor reports that some conquered towns were displayed under the title of his name ("pertulit hic idem nobis, Germanice, rumor, / oppida sub titulo nominis isse tui," 49-50). Ovid, however, proceeds to expand this report into the focus of the remainder of his poem, writing this Tiberian triumph in such a way as to serve Germanicus' glory instead. Never even mentioning Tiberius by name, Ovid prays that Germanicus, who already contains all virtues within himself (53), will be given years enough to exercise them (54).[183] He states that his prayer for Germanicus' long life will come true because poets' prophecies are worth something ("sunt quiddam oracula vatum," 55), and, in fact, makes it come true within his own poem. He imagines that Rome *will watch* Germanicus climbing the Capitol in triumph ("Roma videbit," 57-58), and that his 'father' (Tiberius) *will view* the adult honors of his son ("spectabit," 59), *perceiving* the joy which he himself has granted ("gaudia percipiens, quae dedit ipse suis," 60).[184] This emphasis on verbs of perception – particularly the double sense of *percipiens* as both "witnessing" and "sharing" – shows that the triumph gains its meaning not by only being performed but by being watched.[185] And Ovid expands this

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[182] In other words, that "since the state is our common good and since Caesar is the state, I have a share in Caesar," as noted by Davis (1999c: 12); he adds that 'res est publica Caesar' could mean 'Caesar is public property' or that 'Caesar is the state' – the latter being a much more absolute assertion of Augustus' power than the *princeps* himself ever makes. Evans also points to *Ex Ponto* 1.1.27-36 and 1.7.21-22 as emphasizing the "public nature of the principate" (1983: 139).

[183] He seems to be alluding to the fact that so many of Augustus' heirs died prematurely, but may also hope that Germanicus – as a poet himself, potentially far friendlier to Ovid than Tiberius – outlasts the phase in which he must yield, as in this triumph, to Tiberius. Ovid envisions Germanicus' 'father' standing back to give place to him at 57-60, just as Augustus did for Tiberius during the triumph that Ovid here relates.

[184] Perhaps pointing out that triumphs, once voted by the senate and people, are now granted by the emperor.

[185] Though Germanicus is climbing the Capitol, the true grammatical and poetic 'subjects' here are the Roman people who witness him.

witnessing audience to include present-day Romans all across empire by vividly predicting this future triumph within his verse – foreshadowing his later promise to Germanicus that poets can make gods, and that he will devote his own creative powers to Germanicus.[186] Yet Ovid's prophecy of future triumph for Germanicus, while inspired by the publicly-circulating report of Tiberius' triumph, runs somewhat contrary to its spirit. To return to Ovid's opening metaphor, it shows that *fama* can nourish both blossoms and burs, which themselves become part of the cultural landscape.

viii.   Reading change into triumph

By regarding Caesar as a symbol, Ovid shows how imperial power can be made manifest through the Roman world. Moreover, he reveals the triumph ceremony as a series of symbolic relations between emperor, audience, and victims – unchanging textual roles whose rotating occupants (as in Germanicus' anticipated succession of Tiberius) allow Ovid to explore how permanence can exist amid change. In doing so, he resists the tendency of Vergil's shield of Aeneas, the Boscoreale cup, and the Fasti Capitolini, among other representations of the triumph, to eternalize the triumphal procession and the individual imperator's moment of glory. In contrast, he encourages his audience to 'read' the triumph much as he writes the *Metamorphoses* and rewrites his own life from exile – with an eye toward change. The ritual of the triumph was carefully limited in time and ordered in space, with senate, captives, triumphator, his family, and his army all marching in order. While Ovid expands the triumph's audience spatially and temporally, to include anyone in any age reading his poem, he still sets bounds on the permanence of triumphal glory. Ovid's descriptions omit senate and army, focusing readers' attention on the triumphator and the groups immediately before and after him, the captives and his successor. It also suggests that all these groups are subject to change, and in fact, maps chronological succession onto their processional order: the captives were once kings, and the triumphator will some day be replaced by his heir. In fact, Ovid more than previous writers explores the latent 'role reversibility' that Beard has identified in the triumph, and that made it such a powerful symbol of the transience of glory in the postclassical world.[187]

Ovid's refusal to individuate between different Caesars, in opposition to the careful physiognomic distinctions of much visual art, suggests that 'Caesar' has become a permanent and self-perpetuating position, and that his sheer power has become more important than his individuality. In Chapter 2, I discussed the *Metamorphoses*' insinuation of an orchestrated transfer of power from Caesar, to Caesar, and by Caesar (specifically, from Julius to Augustus to Tiberius). Ovid makes a similar suggestion in *Ex Ponto* 2.1.60, when he predicts that Tiberius will grant triumphal honors to Germanicus; this seems to symbolize his planned succession, isolate political status from real-world achievement, and suggest an interchangeable and self-perpetuating succession of Caesars. *Ex Ponto* 2.1, for instance, envisions the day when Germanicus will take Tiberius' place in the triumphal chariot, and Tiberius will take Augustus'

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[186] *Ex Ponto* 4.8.55-6, 63-6, discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 ("di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt, / tantaque maiestas ore canentis eget. … / et modo, Caesar, avum, quem virtus addidit astris, / sacrarunt aliqua carmina parte tuum. / siquid adhuc igitur vivi, Germanice, nostro / restat in ingenio, serviet omne tibi").

[187] Beard discusses the latent reversibility of captive and victim at 2007: 133-142 and the similarity between triumphs and funerals at 284-6; Price 1983 and Holliday 2002 also discuss the latter. For postclassical representations of triumph, see my brief note below on Petrarch's *Trionfi*, though much more work could be done on the subject.

as the presiding Caesar; Augustus himself, of course, by this time will have followed Julius up to the gods. Yet though the name Caesar and the symblic structure of the triumph are permanent, each Caesar through his lifetime occupies different positions within the procession. Ovid emphasizes this change amid permanence by fastforwarding time in *Ex Ponto* 2.1; though it began with Tiberius as triumphator, it ends with Germanicus moving forward to occupy that role. In fact, the triumphator's heir, who would have immediately followed him on his chariot, elides with the *servus publicus* both positionally and functionally: he reminds the general of his own mortality, and represents this to his witnesses.[188]

Ovid's concern for change is especially evident in the prominent place he gives the captives, who represent another stage on fortune's wheel. In *Tristia* 4.2, Ovid's narrator-bystander contrasts the triumphal participants' present subjugation with their proud pasts. The man now in Sidonian purple was once a leader in war (27-28), the sad captive was once a proud fighter (29-30), the man hiding his face had earlier betrayed our men (33-4), these rivers were once filled with blood (37-8), here Drusus earned the name which his son has now adopted (39-40), and there Germany wears chains on the hand which once held arms (43-4). In contrast to the static representation of captives in the visual arts, Ovid here conveys a sense of the motion of time, and asks his audience to 'read' the triumph with an eye toward its representation of change. The captives were once kings, and in their own cultures held the symbolic position now occupied by the triumphator; if they have moved forward in the procession, to occupy the role of captives, could the triumphator himself not someday succumb to the same process? Ovid's emphasis on change positions the triumph on a larger wheel of fortune – a moment that marks a pinnacle for the victors, of course, but that suggests the fallen fortunes of the victims, and that threatens to situate Rome's 'perpetual' glory on a similar arc.[189]

Ex Ponto 3.4 builds the idea of change even into its prophesied account of a future triumph for Germanicus. The poet orders Livia to prepare all the triumphal elements his own poems have helped to conventionalize, with an interesting coda (109-112):

> barbara iam capti poscunt insignia reges
>   textaque fortuna diuitiora sua   110
> et quae praeterea uirtus inuicta tuorum
>   saepe parata tibi saepe paranda facit.

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[188] Though, as I mention above, Beard warns that our modern conception of this slave has been stitched together from scanty and contradictory evidence, most memorably Tertullian's account ("respice post te, hominem te esse memento," *Apol*. 33.4); cf. Beard 2007: 85-92 and also Kuttner 1995: 149.

[189] This idea of change seems to have been part of some triumphal processions, although it does not often make its way into the representations. Brilliant, for instance, mentions that Pompey's triumph included a series of images that established a narrative of Mithridates over time (1999: 226, citing Appian, *Rom Hist* 12.117). Beard also wonders, with reference to Pompey's alleged use of the cloak of Alexander, whether the triumph might have prompted people to contemplate whether Rome's own supremacy might be impermanent (2007: 178). Polybius seems to attest to the possibility of such an interpretation; he finishes his account of Marcellus' despoiling of Syracuse, an act which earned an ovation, by directing his remarks "to those who succeed to empire in their turn, so that even as they pillage cities they should not suppose that the misfortunes of others are an honor to their own country" (Polybius 9.10.13; cf. Beard 2007: 178).

The poet imagines that, even now, barbarian kings are calling for adornments that will no longer befit them once they are subjugated in the future (109-110). Yet the impermanence of these kings' power forms an interesting juxtaposition with the supposed permanence of Caesar's, one underlined by the suggestively privative phrase "virtus invicta" (111) and Ovid's emphasis on change elsewhere in his corpus. On one hand, Ovid's ability to identify and predict change seems to set him above it, aligning him with the god who inspires him and reactivating his rivalry with the *princeps*. On the other, it allows him to create a set of dots that he invites his reader to connect – a reader who has learned of the vicissitudes of fortune from the *Metamorphoses*, from Ovid's exilic fall from poetic glory, and also perhaps from his own later perspective in history. In fact, the passage of time must have brought this latent message of change. For example, the early death of Gaius Caesar in 4 CE rendered his humorous appearance in *Ars Amatoria* 1 into a ghost presence; moreover, though Germanicus did celebrate his own triumph in 17, he died only a few years later, thus ironizing Ovid's prayer for his long life at *Ex Ponto* 2.1 and proving the vulnerability even of Caesars to the vicissitudes of fortune. In this context, the absence of specific names here does not merely point out Ovid's failure to receive news of Rome, or parody the ignorance of observers of the triumph. It points out the interchangeability of all the participants in a triumph, since this ceremony – ostensibly so highly individualized – really marks the common vulnerability of all men to the processes of change.[190] This is nowhere better symbolized than by Augustus' design of his own funeral procession to resemble a reverse triumph: an image of himself in triumphal garb, borne upon a chariot, was followed by images of conquered nations, and exited Rome through the *porta Triumphalis* by which he had entered in life.[191]

The Roman audience, too, was implicitly subject to this process of change, as we are reminded by current scholarship on provincial 'Romanization'[192] as well as Ovid's own hints at the issue. Just as the victim of *Amores* 1.1 becomes the victor of *Amores* 2.12, Ovid at *Ars Amatoria* 1 signals the triumph's ability to incorporate new peoples into empire just as it brought the *orbis terrarum* to the *urbs*.[193] The very fact that Ovid was exiled to Pontus suggests that this edge of empire was nonetheless well on the way to incorporation.[194] In fact, it seems to match up with the modern definition of a frontier as a zone of cultural interpenetration;[195] as Ovid describes them, the Getae themselves, though hardly urbane, were in the process of becoming Roman. Despite Ovid's discomfort, he begins to realize their positive traits, and even at *Ex*

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[190] Beard has pointed out that triumphal victors were constantly in danger of becoming or being upstaged by the victim (2007: 133-142, in a section aptly called 'Victims as Victors'), and that some cities depicted in triumphs may already have perished (2007: 185, referring to *Ars* 1.223-8), illustrating the principle of impermanence.

[191] For the similarities between triumphs and funerals, see Price 1987 and Beard 2007: 284-6.

[192] I use quotation marks because I agree with Cherry's criticism of the term as overly reductive "in so far as it implies a unilateral absorption of Roman culture" (1998: 77); he provides a good overview of previous works on the issue and quite successfully addresses many of their flaws.

[193] Suetonius records a popular song lyric that "Caesar led the Gauls in triumph, led them to the senate too; / Then the Gauls put off their breeches, and put on the broad-striped toga," showing the incorporation of new peoples into Rome's political structure (*Jul.* 80; briefly mentioned in Beard 2007: 141). The *orbis/urbs* play was already a cliché by now, and used to praise both Caesar and Pompey; see Brunt 1990: 292 and 298.

[194] Williams writes that, as an exile, Ovid is "ironically empowered either by his 'true' insight into the grim realities underlying Augustan imperial pretension, or by the opportunity to promote one myth (the Getics scarcely under Roman control) in qualification of another (the boundlessness of Augustan imperial domination)" (2009: 222). I believe Ovid purposely leaves these ideas in paradoxical juxtaposition.

[195] And also as an 'information barrier,' to use Millar's term; see Cherry 1998: 27 and 33, respectively.

Ponto 4.13 states that he composed a Getic poem in Roman meter for a ceremony of loyalty to Tiberius.[196] According to Ovid, his Getic audience felt that Augustus should reward him, suggesting that civility may be more alive in Tomis than in Rome. This also hints that the cultural exchange can operate both ways, and that Ovid finds value in learning Getic just as the Getae find pleasure in poems about the emperor. In fact, Ovid here challenges the modern idea that Romanization entailed "gods, pots, and Latin" or was simply a "matter of law, not of culture."[197] Rather, he suggests that it is also matter of learning to participate in the same discourse of images and ideas, whatever the language – to use Cherry's conception, to engage in a process of sharing culturally-embedded concepts and artifacts. By virtue of being willing to listen to Ovid's poems, the Getae become not only Ovid's audience but also Augustus' – and are invited to regard and respond to Augustus' public image.[198] Moreover, the Getae, as people who have already been 'subdued' and are assimilating (as well as influencing their assimilators), represent the future fate of the conquered nations paraded in triumphal floats. Thus, though Ovid reads a lesson of downward fortune into the victims of the triumph, there is an unspoken upward future to their arc. Once conquered, they become 'Roman' in some sense, and turn from victim into audience – the people in whose eyes imperial power exists and is validated.[199] Just as heir can one day move up in the processional order to become triumphator, and king can become captive, so too can captive become audience with the passage of time.

ix. Ovid's inspired reader

In this sense, Ovid's exile poems turn themselves into metaphors for empire. Ovid emphasizes the emperor's role as symbol and the need for an audience to view and validate that symbol. Given the distance of Rome for most of her subjects, the paucity of triumphs, and the disconnect between triumphal representations and frontier realities, Ovid's poems textually enact the process of viewership and validation so that a much wider audience can participate. In fact, in Ovid's triumphal poems, witnessing the emperor is identical with 'seeing Rome' (*Ex Ponto* 4.8), which in turn is identical with the act of reading.

Yet Ovid also pursues this analogy between empire and reading to explore the role of the reader. Though the triumph embeds certain power relations, he also breaks down its autocratic

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[196] Davis, countering Habinek's argument that Ovid shows cultural scorn for the Getae, observes that in some poems, "Where there had been subservience there is now potential partnership; where there had been uniform inferiority there is now the differentiation between loyal and disloyal tribesmen" (2002: 157). Walker 1997a: 4 also notes that Ovid talks about colonizing the barbarians but they also colonize him. See Williams 1994 for Ovid's apparent exaggerations or misinformation about the Getae (7), which Williams believes a 'sophisticated reader' would have been able to perceive (49).

[197] Ramsay MacMullen's and J. F. Gilliam's conceptions of Romanization, respectively, cited by Cherry (1998: 78 and 76). Cherry believes "that the very term 'Romanization' is misleading, in so far as it implies a unilateral absorption of Roman culture," yet that there was "an identifiable Roman cultural matrix" through the first part of the 2nd century CE, defined by language, customs, and material culture (1998: 77) – an impression that Ovid's exile poetry seems to support, if we can regard that as evidence. Cherry's is one of the best in the heavily-studied area of Romanization, particularly in its emphasis on acculturation as a two-way process and reluctance to depend on traditional groups like the elite or the army to explain this highly complex process (1998: 78).

[198] As they already do by suggesting Augustus should reward him; they apparently have bought into the poet/prince narrative that Ovid creates and that I outline in Chapter 1.

[199] Brunt observes that in the third century, the empire was stronger than it was in Augustus' day in that "upper classes everywhere felt themselves to be Romans" (1990: 478).

potential, showing how it depends on audience approval. Paralleling his interest in readers'
construction of textual meaning, he explores their role in sustaining Caesar's presence across
time and space. For instance, Ovid's new vatic tone in *Ex Ponto* 3.4.91-4 enlists the reader as
well as poet as a 'prophet' of empire:

> nec mea verba legis, qui sum summotus ad Histrum,
>> non bene pacatis flumina pota Getis:
> ista dei vox est, deus est in pectore nostro,
>> haec duce praedico vaticinorque deo.

Since Romans generally read aloud, this authorial 'I' becomes revoiced by the reader, to
interesting effect within the poem: the reader transitions from inhabiting Ovid's position on the
edges of empire, at 91-2, to being inhabited by the god, at 93-4.   This reveals that the simple act
of reading is analagous to the experience of prophetic 'inspiration,' and has the same capacity to
bridge time and distance.[200] Ovid's poem not only puts the 'god' into his reader's heart, but also
allows him to predict and command the triumph through the speech at 95-108. The triumph itself
already relied on its audience's approval, viewership of floats and *tituli,* and traditional shouts of
'io triumphe.' Ovid here renders their power more visible – even authorial – by enabling the
reader to vocalize the words of the god, command the triumphator himself, and thereby activate
the role reversibility already latent in the triumph. Thus, though the triumph was by now a
symbol of the Caesars' political primacy, Ovid at *Ex Ponto* 3.4 returns power to the people,
revealing it as a ritual of communal pride performed for and by the people as much as the
imperator. Ovid's text also enlists readers to pray for the fulfillment of this prophecy:

> di, quorum monitu sumus eventura locuti,
> verba, precor, celeri nostra probate fide.

After Ovid's relinquishment of ownership over his own words in 91-4, his individual 'I' is
replaced by the collective 'we' of his readers, who channel the spirit of the god – and
demonstrate their support for the *res publica* – by voicing the text of this poem.[201] This 'we'
collapses differences between readers, defining an imagined community of everyone who reads
Ovid across the centuries – and, in the process, voices this prayer for the empire's success.

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[200] Line 91 plays on the idea that, in order for an authorial 'I' ("mea verba") to exist within a text, there must be a
"you" ("legis") out there to read them – ironic enough already, given that reading reverses the "you" and "I"
positions, such that the readerly "you" revoices the authorial "I." But at line 91, Ovid's authorial 'I' radically
absents himself from the equation, denying that these words belong to him ("nec mea verba") and also emphasizing
his physical distance ("qui sum summotus"). Rather, these words are the voice of the god ("ista dei vox est"), and
Ovid has abandoned you (the reader) to interface with the god directly; when you read these lines, it is you who give
his words voice, it is your heart he occupies, and it is your mouth that he uses for his predictions.
[201] The idea of a god's occupying the body of his prophet was already a familiar one from antiquity, though it is
often portrayed as a violent and rape-like act of forced submission (cf. Cassandra in the *Agamemnon*, the Sibyl in
Aeneid 6, and, after Ovid's time, the Delphic oracle in Lucan's *Pharsalia*). Yet the reader's voluntary submission to
the poetic text seems to reduce this veiled threat of violence. As Ovid says of Amor's forceful occupation of his
heart in *Amores* 1.2.10, "cedamus! leve fit, quod bene fertur, onus." If yielding to the principate is analogous with
yielding to love or yielding to an author, then it is Romans' implicit submission that has brought about the Augustan
triumph within Roman politics and culture – but one that, as Ovid portrays it, is consensual and joyful.

The readerly 'we' constructed by Ovid's poem thus maps on to the political 'we' constructed by the Augustan Text. Roman audiences encountered signs of Augustan power every day, on coins, buildings, the calendar, and even household goods. At the same time, they played important and not always passive roles in constructing their meaning – roles that, I have argued throughout this dissertation, Ovid encouraged them to examine. In Ovid's *Ex Ponto* 3.4.91-4, 'my words' and 'the god's voice' are for all practical purposes indistinguishable, as are the consent of the people and the will of Augustus – that fraught, fascinating, and ever-mysterious alignment of forces that resulted in the principate. Yet if participation in empire is like reading a text, then Ovid's purpose was not to destroy the text but rather to create better readers – ones who, by employing their critical judgment, recognizing their role in the construction of meaning, and finding pleasure in political as well as poetic texts, might create a more powerful interpretive community and thus a richer discourse.

V. Conclusion

The triumph is often considered the ultimate celebration of a commander's power as well as an "unparalleled means for fashioning an auspicious public image."[202] Yet to us and even to some imperial audiences, triumphs were known primarily through representations, and these tell a very different story. Augustan texts do not simply monumentalize this ceremony, but use it to explore wider issues of representation, authority, and *Romanitas*. Significantly, many of the accounts on which we rely (Propertius' *Carmina* 3.4 and Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* 1, *Tristia* 4.2 and *Ex Ponto* 2.1) are imaginative fictions that explore the triumph's ability to be invented or dissociated from reality. This suggestion becomes a reality later in the empire, where certain leaders feigned triumphs in order to shore up their power.[203] Yet Ovid also acknowledges that, whatever their relationship with reality, such representations nevertheless played an important part in constructing Rome and the emperor abroad. He also offers poetry in service of this project, while ironically using it to expose the Caesars as symbols subject to public reappropriation – thus upsetting the purported power balance between emperor and audience. On the borders of empire, where representations of the emperor must take the place of reality, Rome exists largely in the mind – and cannot control the mind.[204]

Ovid also resists the tendency of other Augustan texts, such as *Aeneid* 8, the statues in the Forum Augustum, and the Boscoreale cups, to eternalize the glory of the triumphator. Instead, he teaches audiences to read the triumphal procession as a flattened-out wheel of fortune symbolizing the potential for role reversals. The barbarian captives on parade were once kings; their people will be incorporated into the Roman world, eventually joining the ranks of the

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[202] Holliday 2002: 21.

[203] For instance, Tacitus mocks the *simulacra* in Germanicus' triumph (*Ann.* 1.55), while Suetonius reports that Caligula recruited Gauls to pretend to be German captives (Suet., *Cal.* 47), as discussed above.

[204] In fact, the idea that Augustus was an *idea* as much as a person – one to which I am very sympathetic, and which Ovid I believe foreshadows – has recently become more prominent in the scholarship; see e.g. Williams 2009: 203 for an example (though he assumes that Augustus was "exploiting external energies," following an imperialist model that I hope to resist with my emphasis on how external energies exploited him). Kennedy writes that his power was "a collective invention, a symbolic embodiment of the conflicting desires, incompatible ambitions and aggressions of the Romans, the instrumental expression of a complex network of dependency, repression and fear" (1992: 35, cited also in Williams 2009: 203), but I hope also to have shown in the triumphal poetry how Ovid portrays this collective invention as partly charismatic and even ecstatic, based on the will and desire of the people.

triumph's (and Ovid's) potential audience; and the Caesars, too, may be subject to the vicissitudes of fortune. Though Ovid does not pursue this latter point, his ability to predict and identify change seems to set him above it, continuing his self-identification as *vates* and his implicit rivalry with the *princeps*. In fact, long after Rome's fall, writers like Petrarch and Shakespeare expand on this idea to reappropriate the triumph itself as a symbol for the transience of glory.[205]

The triumph also crystallizes issues of communication between center and periphery and the boundary between Roman and non-Roman. While the triumph brought the frontiers to the *urbs*, representations of the triumph could also be used to satisfy an increasingly far-flung audience's desire for a way to participate in ritual, enjoy a sense of community, and define what it meant to be Roman and non-Roman. Vergil's shield of Aeneas, for instance, emphasized Augustus' achievements and placed him at a climactic point in Roman history; in *Ars Amatoria* 1, on the other hand, the urbane bystander does not care about the specific imperialist 'meanings' of the triumph, and simply uses it as a pretext to start up a conversation with the girl standing next to him. The diverse Augustan representations of the triumph, however, employ a similar set of symbols, and suggest that Romans are constituted not by how they interpret those symbols but by whether they regard them as meaningful. Ovid's exile poems, ironically, both complete and help popularize the reduction of the complex triumphal narrative into a set of conventional symbols, while exploring their epistemological problems as well as their social value. From Tomis, Ovid is less concerned with the triumph's real-world referentiality than its ability to explore what makes Rome, to provide the pleasure of communal spectacle, and to extend that community outside the *urbs* to include all lands where Latin was spoken. The Roman empire itself, then, was not simply a geographical extent of space, but also a shared conversation that drew from a common symbolic language – and that resembles a poetic text in its ability to appeal to the imaginations of its readers, whatever their cultural, geographical, or temporal realities.

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[205] Petrarch's *Trionfi* are a series of poems describing six successive triumphs (of Love, Chastity, Death, Fame, Time, and Divinity (Eternity) as steps on a spiritual ladder. Despite its fundamental ideological and cultural difference, Petrarch's project remains truly Ovidian in its poetics, particularly in his commitment to rendering each triumph's visuality with verbal *enargeia*; his treatment of each triumph as a subjective creation of the poet's imagination; his emphasis on the triumph as a legible if constructed representation; his treatment of each triumph as a transitory and overturnable moment; and his interest in ironical inversions of value, with the difference that in Ovid's case these are caused by the arbitrary wheel of fortune, whereas in Petrarch's they are driven by the purposeful engine of Christian salvation. But Petrarch's most important innovation by far is to reinvent himself and his own age as part of Ovid's imagined community of readers. Shakespeare, among other Renaissance authors, makes himself part of this community in *Julius Caesar*, when he uses the triumph to reflect on the fickleness of popular opinion and also of power (one bystander remonstrates others as "you blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things" for first celebrating Pompey's triumph, then strewing flowers before Caesar as he rides "in triumph over Pompey's blood," I.i).

This study has been informed by an appreciation of two remarkable phenomena within Roman history: Augustus' establishment of a stable monarchical government, and that government's success in administering a far-flung empire. Neither Rome nor Augustus could subsist on force alone; historians have increasingly explored the role of less tangible factors like ideology, patronage, and culture in fostering loyalty to both.[1] Yet the concepts of Augustan propaganda and discourse largely fail to acknowledge the critical role that audiences play in shaping, circulating, and interpreting ideas. My study has therefore examined, in their capacity as 'audiences' of Augustus, those Romans who left traces in the historical record – the great poets Vergil, Horace, Propertius, and Ovid, but also the nameless artists who designed coins, carved reliefs, and executed architectural plans. Each of my chapters shows how these do not merely transmit but rather reinterpret and critique various aspects of the *princeps*, in ways that affect subsequent Romans' understanding of the emperor. In place of the author-based concepts of propaganda and discourse, I therefore envision an Augustan intertext that is continually reconstituted and contested in the imaginations of its viewers.

The Augustan authors whom I discuss are deeply concerned with readers' ability to project their own interpretations into a text. These authors, in turn, represent themselves in the act of 'reading' the *princeps* in ways that reveal their own subjective responses and demonstrate their independence from any 'party line.' Though these authors represented (and reached) only a small subsection of the population, their readings nevertheless constitute evidence of greater heterogeneity of opinion than is commonly acknowledged. They also serve as examples for subsequent audiences' ways of interpreting Augustus. Ovid, in particular, draws upon and expands their techniques of exploring ambivalences within Augustan iconography.[2] He adds to this a remarkable self-consciousness in interrogating the relationship between reader, text, and author, reapplied from his own poetry to the *princeps*' public image. These tendencies, along with his 'belated' position vis-à-vis other authors, allows him to form a compelling and influential metanarrative around prior Augustan texts.

The first two chapters of this dissertation show how Ovid constructs Augustan authorial intention into a set of texts that do not reflect a single unified vision. Though the *sidus Iulium* was used by a variety of authors and artists to express different views of godhood (and, sometimes, reservations about superhuman power), Ovid rereads this symbol in *Metamorphoses* 15 as an ideological tool manufactured and circulated by Augustus in order to uphold his own power. Moreover, though the Palatine complex may have embedded a certain amount of sympathy for the victims of war, and was often read as such by Augustan poets, Ovid reacts to it in *Tristia* 3.1 as though it contains a propagandistic message. Ovid thereby suggests that the

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[1] I have been inspired by Tonio Hölscher in framing the problem thus, though Lendon too notes that "the Roman empire could not be ruled without force and the fear that force inspired, but the modest provision of force available makes it unlikely that it was the sole operative principle of Roman imperial government" (1997: 7). For an imperial ideology dispersed through culture, see Syme 1939; for imperial bureaucracy, see Millar 1977; for the emperor as the center of a vast patronage network, see Lendon 1997; and for fuller bibliography, see my introductory chapter.

[2] With a special debt to Propertius; cf. the relation of his triumph poems with Propertius 3.4, and his exploitation of the ambiguity of the *sidus Iulium* in Propertius 4.6 (discussed in Chapters 4 and 2, respectively).

emperor has risen to power and continues to govern through the conscious deployment of such symbols; the *princeps*, like Ovid, is a 'poet' who has created something out of nothing by manipulating the beliefs of his audience. At the same time, Ovid interposes himself as an interpretive intermediary between Roman audiences and Augustus – thus creating a sense of complicity with that audience, breaking the direct author/audience bond Augustus might otherwise enjoy,[3] and teaching the audience how to read Augustan symbols both 'obediently' and resistantly. Though Ovid's 'Augustus' is in part a literary construct, it has proved remarkably durable. For instance, Ovid's extraordinary statement that Caesar had to be made a god so that Augustus might descend from mortal seed (*Met.* 15.760-1) finds serious analogues in later thought: historians from Cassius Dio to Peter White have argued that Octavian fostered the Julian cult in the hope of securing his own eventual deification. Thus, Ovid ironically testifies to the lack of centralized control over the discourse of his age at the same time as he encourages his readers to construe Augustus' power into all aspects of culture, including his own poetry.

At the same time as Ovid plays up the power of the principate, however, he also shows the fragility of the symbols on which it rests. As I discuss in my fourth chapter, Ovid's exile, in dislocating the poet from Rome, allows him to continue the process of dissociating imperial symbols from the realities they purport to represent. From exile, there is no way of testing these symbols' connection with Augustus; if anything, Ovid depicts his continued punishment as proof of Augustus' failure to live up to his benevolent public image.[4] Yet at the same time, he makes the point that, to subjects away from Rome, the emperor exists *only via* such symbols. This quandary – the knowability of actuality only through texts, and those texts' ability to lie or misrepresent – is central to the often-remarked sense of 'unreality' surrounding Ovid's exile poetry. If all we have is Ovid's poems, we can never know whether he really went into exile. Yet Ovid turns this sense of unreality back onto Augustus: if he could experience Augustus only indirectly, through letters, reports, and images, he could never entirely know the real *princeps* – a problem that affected even the public in Rome.

It is here, in bridging the inevitable gap between sign and signified, that the audience's interpretive participation becomes crucial. *Ex Ponto* 2.8, wherein Ovid receives three silver statues of the imperial family, is especially illustrative. Performing the role of a naïve reader, Ovid shows himself assigning these mere statues the same authority he attributes to Augustus – that is, conflating sign with signified. He envisions himself clutching them in battle, as a talismanic protection (67-70), and imagines they change in reaction to his words (71-76). Ovid's exaggerated misreadings point out the fact that these are inanimate objects which do not share in Augustus' power except to the extent that their beholder imagines.[5] The only thing that connects sign and symbol is the thought process of a reader, and Ovid portrays himself as a self-delusive one in his eagerness to feel the presence of Augustus.

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[3] That is, Ovid presents himself in the dual role of author in his own right as well as audience of Augustus, offering himself as a guide to the *princeps*' creation of meaning.

[4] Of the wide body of scholarship examining Ovid's exilic reproaches to Augustus, McGowan's 2009 *Ovid in Exile* is one of the newest and best (cf. especially his introduction on "the redress of exile," 1-15).

[5] Ovid calls attention to his wavering and erroneous conflation of symbol with reality: "aut ego me fallo nimiaque cupidine ludor…" (71). I concur with Hardie's analysis of this passage (2002: 320-1) as showing the role that readerly desire plays in animating illusions of presence, and believe Ovid is exploring this concept as it applies more generally to the iconography and ideology that sustain empire.

Yet, as Ovid demonstrates over and over again throughout his corpus, imagination – as wrong-headed as it may be – is a powerful force for turning fictions into reality. It is audiences, even more than poets, who are responsible for 'making' the gods and for turning Corinna into a reality (cf. *Amores* 2.1 and 3.12). In fact, Ovid attributes to the audience of his exile poetry the power to resurrect his voice and presence in Rome.[6] It follows that Augustus' ability to construct his own presence in the provinces likewise depends on his audience. Accordingly, Ovid offers himself up as a sample audience, and his readings of the emperor from exile explore readers' role in constructing imperial power abroad – in ways that question any simple views of the poet as either a culture worker or an ideological insurgent. On the one hand, Ovid shows that it is ludicrous to put any faith in imperial representations' reflectiveness of truth. Symbols like the statue do not contain any power in and of themselves; icons like the laurel and oak may misrepresent the *princeps*; and ceremonies like the triumph may be wholly invented. Yet on the other hand, Ovid continues to assign these symbols value and to propagate them from exile. Though he questions the relationship between sign and signified, he never severs it completely. Thus, for instance, in *Tristia* 3.1, he continues to regard the laurel as signifying Augustus in some sense, though he also asks readers to question whether and how Augustus lives up to it.

Ovid thus treats Augustus and the symbolic discourse of the principate as one vast public intertext – one that has certain themes and conventions, but which, like his own poems, are neither a true index to reality nor meaningful without reader interpretation (cf. *Tristia* 2.353-6). Moreover, though Ovid subtly draws his own readers' attention to imperial fictions, he also chooses to continue reading these credulously rather than rejecting them outright. In his continued craving for communication with Rome, the exiled Ovid resembles the elegiac lover who begs his *puella* to lie to him and keep up a deceptive public appearance, in order to allow him to enjoy his foolish belief in her and continue subscribing to their relationship.[7] Similarly, the emperor's image, however misleading, is still public property, and thus the one thing that remains to Ovid of Rome. Ovid's ability to continue 'seeing' and 'reading' Augustus (through a combination of memory, report, and imagination) helps continue his relationship with Rome, even if the ensuing picture represents an imagistic feedback loop that is more fiction than fact.[8] Augustus himself envisioned his life as a public performance, suggesting some of the very issues of fictionality and author/audience complicity that Ovid raises.[9] In this case, precisely because of Augustus' public nature, Ovid could continue performing the role of Augustus' audience even from exile[10] – and this role itself was a consoling reality, even if the play being staged was not.

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[6] Hence Ovid's frequent acknowledgment of dependence on his audience in Rome to aid his poetry and his cause (e.g. at *Ex Ponto* 3.2). For Ovid's attempts to construct presence through his exile poetry, see e.g. Walker 1997a, Rosati 1979, and Hardie 2002; following Hardie's emphasis on *fama* and *credulitas*, I have tried to show that the illusion of presence relies as much on audience as on text or author.

[7] *Amores* 3.14; cf. especially 29-30, "da populo, da verba mihi; sine nescius errem, / et liceat stulta credulitate frui." At the end of the poem he begs her to deny even those crimes that he has witnessed, observing that it will be easy for her to vanquish someone who desires to be conquered (45-50).

[8] In a slightly different vein, the fact that the lover invents explanations for the triumph at *Ars Amatoria* 1 does not (as Beard would have it, 2007: 183-4) mock the gullibility of the girl; rather, it suggests that the initiation of a conversation is more important than the truth value of its referents. These serve as mirrors for Ovid's craving for communication from Rome.

[9] Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 99; cf. also Beacham 2005.

[10] And, just as important, he could continue *being seen* in this role at Rome through his exile poems, thus underscoring his similarity with his readers as fellow subjects of empire, his equation of Rome and Augustus, and his continued Roman identity.

Moreover, though Ovid offers readers ways of rethinking Augustus' image, he cannot escape the Augustan Text because he constitutes and is constituted by it. The iconography and rhetoric associated with Augustus are already an inescapable part of the common cultural idiom upon which Ovid relies in order to communicate with his audience. It would be impossible to write of a laurel or a comet without potentially activating readers' thoughts about Augustus; in fact, Ovid himself helped strengthen these associative connections. Moreover, just like speaking Latin, his continued use of Augustan iconography is how he manifests his Romanness from exile. Thus, in the absence of any other way of participating in Roman social and political structures, continuing to participate in the Augustan Text – whatever its fictions – was as close as Ovid could get to asserting his Roman identity. As he writes at *Ex Ponto* 2.8.19-20, looking upon the statue of the emperor mentally transports him back to Rome.[11] It is not physical presence, but engagement with the idea of Rome, that matters – and ideas, unlike presence, can survive time and distance. To revert to Stanley Fish's terms, Ovid explores a new way to define Rome: not as a political entity, but as an interpretive community[12] – one united by its tendency to read certain texts as reflecting upon Augustus, and vivified by its disagreement as to how.

Moreover, it is as an interpreter of Augustus that Ovid most fully realizes his poetic power. Though the exile poems lament the decline of that power, they also potently portray an unjust contest between poet and prince, and invite readers to correct this imbalance within their own judgments.[13] Moreover, Ovid claims a readership that is coterminous not only with the bounds of empire, but also with Augustus' own interpretive community:

> quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris,
> ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama,
> siquid habent veri vatum praesagia, vivam. (*Met.* 15.877-9)[14]

Ovid uses his voice within that community not to tear down Augustus' public image, but rather, to create better readers – ones more sensitive to the paradoxes, unsettling intertexts, and unanswered questions that surround Augustan iconography.[15] Thus, even in deconstructing imperial signs, Ovid plays an important role in keeping them live, interesting, and subject to debate. Ovid's poetics is inextricably bound up with the *princeps*', and both figures construct and are constructed by one another within the Augustan Text. Yet if Augustus is a symbol, he is one in whose creation and circulation Ovid took an active role. For that matter, the Ovid we know is himself a construction of his own text: a concept absolutely unknowable through fact, but invented through generations of reader response to his corpus. 'Ovid' and 'Augustus' are two of Ovid's most enduring characters – and the story of their rivalry over power, representation, and public belief endures even in modern accounts of Augustus' reign.

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[11] "Hunc ego cum spectem, uideor mihi cernere Romam; / nam patriae faciem sustinet ille suae."
[12] Cf. Fish's 1976 *Intepreting the Variorum*.
[13] Cf. again McGowan's discussion of the exile poems as a counterweight to political persecution (2009: 31).
[14] "…and wherever Roman power extends over the lands it has conquered, / I will be read by the mouths of the people: and through all the ages, / if there's truth in poets' prophecies, I shall live on in fame."
[15] Williams, following Barchiesi, writes, "The ambivalences of Ovid's texts resist the totalizing tendencies of, and the movement towards fixity of authority in, Augustan discourse" (2009: 205). I argue that this affects the entire intertext and teaches ways of reading that keep Augustan discourse from petrifying.

Epilogue: Ovid's split style of reading

It is the work of another study to trace the *Nachleben* of Ovid's Augustus through antiquity to modern times, more fully linking it with a perceived Augustan image campaign and the modern scholarly tendency to read texts in 'pro-' and 'anti-Augustan' terms. As a brief and very preliminary gesture in this direction, I would like to sketch out how Ovidian styles of reading may be present even in a text from which Ovid is notably absent: Tacitus' *Annales*.[16] Ovid might at first seem aligned with the servile or fearful flatterers whom Tacitus mentions at *Annales* 1.1.[17] Yet at the same time, as my analysis has shown, Ovid has many sympathies with Tacitus' own mission of exposing the truth behind imperial feignings.[18] Moreover, when Tacitus discusses the split reactions to Augustus after his death at *Annales* 1.9-10, Ovid's work taken as a whole supports the 'anti-Augustan' more than the 'pro-Augustan' side, particularly on the issues of Augustus' rise to power, succession, and manipulation of public belief through image and rhetoric.[19] Ovid defies these categories in part because he helped define them. By simultaneously offering contradictory interpretations of images like the *sidus Iulium* and the Palatine complex, he encouraged the ambivalent style of reading that Tacitus exemplifies in this passage.[20]

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[16] Early imperial historians' failure to mention Ovid has been cited to call his exile into doubt (see e.g. Fitton Brown 1985, though he acknowledges the difficulty of an *argumentum ex silentio*). Yet it is hard to imagine where Tacitus, in his brief summary of the reign of Augustus, would have had occasion to mention Ovid – particularly because Ovid does not fit neatly into his narrative and its polarities. It is of course impossible to prove that Tacitus' Augustus is specifically an 'Ovidian' one, given the wealth of sources he used to compile his history, but it is certain Tacitus knew the poet (cf. *Dialogus* 12f and verbal echoes identified e.g. by Fletcher 1945).

[17] That is, taking the standard though recently challenged view of Ovid's exile poetry as begging for recall and performing good citizenship. Though he is discussing historians rather than poets, Tacitus complains of "adulatio" in Augustus' late years and fearfulness under Tiberius.

[18] Particularly interesting to me, though I lack the space to pursue it here, is Tacitus' interest in the fictiveness of imperial power. For instance, with the remarkable episode of the slave Clemens' impersonation of Tiberius (*Annales* 2.39), Tacitus shows how image can exert a powerful influence over reality, and approaches Ovid's theme that power can be created through artifice and audience credulity.

[19] I discuss in previous chapters Ovid's insinuations that Augustus deified Caesar for cynical reasons and that contemporary architecture and iconography were meant to justify and normalize Augustus' power. Though Tacitus mentions other, practical means by which Augustus 'seduced' the people – through bonuses, cheap food, and peace – he too assigns a great deal of value to image alone, and emphasizes Augustus' use of misleadingly Republican rhetoric and titles in order to lull the people into accepting his power (e.g. *Ann.* 1.2-3).

[20] I am not suggesting that Ovid invented split readings wholesale: his own works, for instance, are influenced by the rhetorical tradition of *argumentum in utramque partem*. But he allows multiple readings to exist simultaneously, and shows a tendency toward insinuation and ambivalence about the *princeps* that Tacitus here flattens out into two opposing arguments. Oliensis discusses Ovid's split style in different terms, as one of audience: she argues that the poems are "at once public documents and private or even covert communications" with his friends at Rome (1997: 174), and thus "afford contradictory perspectives on the emperor: one (that of Ovid's friends) quite unflattering, the other (Ovid's) enthusiastically encomiastic. And the more Ovid stresses the justice of his own view, the more credence he effectively lends to the opposing view" (1997: 178). I believe that both these readings are available simultaneously to the same readers and that Ovid himself does not come down on one side or another. Moreover, though Oliensis cites "plausible deniability" as the main reason for Ovid's ambiguity, I believe that this takes Ovid's presentation of his punishment too seriously (it was unlikely, once Ovid was sent into exile, that a chance word would incur some new punishment). Rather, his creation of a frisson of ideological danger is part of his aesthetic, and part of his way of engaging with readers. I see this as evolving toward what Barton has called "simultaneously functioning and irreconcilable thought patterns" in Lucan and Seneca (1984: 120), with the difference that Ovid still leaves readers an interpretive choice rather than a dilemma. On these lines, though Tacitus tends to create an

For that matter, just as Ovid's poems elicit split readings of Augustus, so too do they convey a split self – a poet who voices praise of the emperor even as he hints at resistance and propagates resistance among his readers. In his overt insistence on reading the *princeps* 'correctly,' his covert opening of opportunities for resistant reception, and his rhetorical struggle to demonstrate his own sincerity, Ovid serves as an early example of the performativity and 'doublespeak' that would become characteristic of writers under empire, as Shadi Bartsch argues in her 1994 *Actors in the Audience*.[21] To be sure, Ovid is no proto-Stoic martyr; no one could be so comically unphilosophical in his suffering, his willingness to pander to the emperor, or his continued desire for the pleasures and luxuries of Rome. Yet his violent metaphors – his poetic corpus' dismemberment, his books' parricide, his mind's being torn from his body through exile – give visual form to his sense of split selfhood, and foreshadow the more literal violence that occurs in later imperial poetry and history,[22] as the rivalrous dynamic that Ovid depicts between himself and Augustus becomes a dangerous reality.[23] Moreover, despite obvious differences in tone, argument, and philosophy, Ovid develops strategies for resisting arbitrary imperial power that parallel if they do not influence later Julio-Claudian writers.[24] In particular, the Stoics, like Ovid, use their mental freedom in order to escape their physical surroundings and resurrect Rome as a place of the imagination.[25] They also write the exempla of their lives into Roman discourse, calling upon posterity to pass judgment on their own actions and those of the emperor.[26] It has therefore been easy if anachronistic for modern readers to understand Ovid

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authoritative version of history, he still shares with Ovid a love of innuendo and ambivalence: see R. Develin's wonderfully-named 1983 article "Tacitus and the Techniques of Insidious Suggestion."

[21] Bartsch argues that "representations of actor-audience interactions in the imperial theater typically resituated the site of meaning in the audience rather than with the playwright or the actor; in doing so, they privileged the ambiguities of reception over the (unknown) intentions of the communicator. Such a model sets up a context in which the potential for ambiguity may be consciously exploited by an author who is reluctant to commit himself to any one meaning for his text [i.e., doublespeak]" (1994: 100-101).

[22] Hardie 2002b: 41 has identified Ovid's 'aestheticization of violence' as his primary literary legacy to later poets. As for other perspectives on violence in Ovid, Oliensis has noted Ovid's play on the violent etymologies of Tomis and Caesar (1997: 179-180), and Davisson 1984 has focused on the imagery of family betrayal and violence he uses to describe his books from exile. For violence in Lucan see Bartsch 1997 and Masters 1992; for Seneca, Motto 1973, Boyle 1977, and Wistrand 1990 are still useful. But Ovid also anatomizes and aestheticizes his own mental suffering in exile (cf. Walker 1997a: 4), in ways that roughly foreshadow Lucan's "schizophrenic" narrative voice and Tacitus' depiction of the mental tortures of living under empire (as discussed e.g. by Masters 1992: 90, Hershkowitz 1998, and Henderson 1988).

[23] At least as depicted within Tacitus' *Annales*, as increasingly autocratic emperors exact ever crueler punishments upon figures whom they identify as threats to their authority (though scholars have recently held that the biased senatorial portrait of Nero conceals the success and popularity he attained with the people of Rome; see e.g. Elsner and Masters' 1994 collection *Reflections of Nero*).

[24] For instance, Carlin Barton has argued that Lucan and Seneca, in response to their close proximity to an unpredictable despot, develop within their writing a range of "patterned protective responses" in order to cope with their sense of fear and powerlessness (1984: 253). Yet many of these responses – literary tendencies toward symbolism, psychologization, imagery of upheaval, and an atmosphere of paranoia – find prior articulation in Ovid, one of the earliest and most vocal victims of imperial wrath (in fact, Claassen 2008: 39 views Ovid's exile poetry as giving voice to other exiled victims of Augustus, such as Vipsania, Scribonia, the Julias, and Agrippa Postumus).

[25] For instance, Thrasea Paetus' accuser claims that he has renounced Rome, its customs, and its people (*Ann.* 16.28), the irony of course being that Thrasea honors the Rome of his ideals so much that he has mentally exiled himself from its degraded Neronian reality. Stoicism, of course, had a long prior history and, if anything, may have inspired Ovid in his emphasis on *fama* and mental freedom as seen in *Tristia* 3.7 and 4.2 among other poems.

[26] For Ovid's desire for witnesses to his suffering as a rebuke to the emperor, see, for instance, McGowan's general argument about poetic redress (2009), and Oliensis' argument that the *Tristia* ensure "not just the survival but the

through the filter of Tacitus, analogizing his punishment at Augustus' hands with the far more severe fates visited upon Lucan, Seneca, Petronius, and others under Nero, and imaginatively subscribing to his purported struggle with Augustus for poetic and ideological *libertas*.

Yet close analogies between Augustan and Neronian writers remain problematic, given their different historical and political circumstances; for instance, in *Annales* 4.34-5, Aulus Cremutius Cordus cites the Augustan age as a golden one for free speech. Ovid and later imperial writers also differ significantly in their treatment of their audience. Tacitus takes a grim satisfaction in 'unmasking' Augustus as a monarch in Republican disguise, at *Annales* 1.2 and elsewhere:

> …. posito triumviri nomine consulem se ferens et ad tuendam plebem tribunicio iure contentum, ubi militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit, insurgere paulatim, munia senatus magistratuum legum in se trahere, nullo adversante … [27]

In doing so, he is making explicit a portrait of Augustus that Ovid had only insinuated when he quietly but cynically 'reread' the language of Augustan power. Unlike Tacitus, who states his version of history as fact, Ovid gives his readers the intellectual pleasure of unmasking Augustus for themselves, as well as the choice of whether to do so. Critics who cite Ovid's so-called 'hermeneutic alibi'[28] – the argument that readers, not writers, are responsible for the meaning of a text – tend to forget that alibis are often true. Throughout his corpus, by emphasizing his authorial reliance on his readers, establishing a sense of their shared status as an 'audiences' of Augustus, and foregrounding their interpretive agency, Ovid democratizes the authority of texts – texts that include even Augustus' public image. To Ovid, participation in this text becomes a substitute for participation in Roman life – one that, despite its trade-offs, yields its own pleasures and even a certain creative pride. After all, though Augustus may have created an empire, it was the readers, writers, and artists of Rome who created Augustus. Augustus, therefore, can be viewed not only as a historical personage, but also as the imaginative product of a vast, powerful, and often self-contradictory intertext that both constructs and is constructed by its interpretive community. Our understanding of Augustus, Ovid, and Roman history, in turn, is inevitably mediated by the countless acts of imagination from which that text has been woven – not least our own.

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high visibility of Ovid's name in Rome, where it may come to function as an index of the violent power that cut it off" (1997: 190). The Stoics, on the other hand, were extremely self-conscious about their role as moral exempla to future generations; for instance, Seneca, prevented from changing his will, left his example to his friends (*Ann.* 15.62-3). See e.g. Turpin 2008: 389 for the latter and 359 for the argument (*contra* Syme) that Tacitus was concerned with providing moral exempla and not merely with historical analysis.

[27] "Casting off the title of triumvir, he [Augustus] carried himself about as consul, claiming he was content with a tribunician's power for protecting the people; meanwhile he seduced the army with gifts, the common people with grain, and everyone with the sweetness of peace; and little by little increased his strength, absorbed the offices of the senate, officials, and laws into his own person, with no opposition."

[28] Hinds 1988: 29.

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