

**EXEGI MONUMENTUM: EXILE, DEATH, IMMORTALITY, AND  
MONUMENTALITY IN OVID, *TRISTIA* 3.3**

*Tristia* 3.3 purports to be a ‘death-bed’ letter addressed by the sick poet to his wife in Rome (3.3.1-4), in which Ovid, banished from Rome on Augustus’ orders, foresees his burial in Tomi as the ultimate form of exilic displacement (3.3.29-32). In order to avoid such a permanent form of exclusion from his homeland, Ovid issues instructions for his burial in the suburbs of Rome (3.3.65-76), dictating a four-line epitaph to be inscribed upon his tomb (3.3.73-6). However, despite the careful instructions he outlines for his burial and physical memorial, Ovid asserts *maiora libelli / et diuturna magis sunt monumenta mihi* (‘my little books are a greater and more long-lasting monument for me’, 3.3.77-8), expressing his belief in his continued poetic after-life. Scholars have seen this poem’s concerns as above all literary, concentrating on Ovid’s exploitation and development of elegiac and Augustan models which also treat the themes of death and poetic immortality.<sup>1</sup> However, although Ovid’s portrayal of what purports to be personal

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experience draws extensively upon earlier poetry, and, as we shall see, the poem gains much of its power from its engagement with the tradition that poetry alone can memorialize, previous studies have failed to analyse how Ovid consistently plays up the element that marks him out from the predecessors who had imagined their own deaths and poetic afterlives: that is, his status as an exile.<sup>2</sup> Ovid's insistence on burial in his

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<sup>1</sup> Recently, see S.J. Huskey, 'In memory of Tibullus: Ovid's remembrance of Tibullus 1.3 in *Amores* 3.9 and *Tristia* 3.3', *Arethusa* 38 (2005), 367-86, which concentrates on the complex web of allusions between this poem, Tibullus 1.3, and Ovid *Amores* 3.9; see too (e.g.) G. Luck, *Tristia Band I* (Heidelberg, 1977) ad loc., B.R. Nagle *The Poetics of Exile: Program and Polemic in the Tristia and Epistulae ex Ponto of Ovid* (Brussels, 1980 = *Collection Latomus* 170), 48-9, A. Videau-Delibes, *Les Tristes d'Ovide et l'épigramme romaine: une poétique de la rupture* (Paris, 1991), 334.

<sup>2</sup> I follow Ovid's frequent usage of the term 'exile' to describe his situation (found e.g. in the programmatic positions of *Tr.* 1.1.3, 3.1.1, 4.1.3, *Pont.* 1.1.22), despite his insistence elsewhere that he was actually relegated (e.g. *Tr.* 2.137, 5.2.57-8, 5.11.9-10, 21-2); legal differences between these two punishments (for which, see e.g. [Paul.] *Dig.* 48.1.2 or P. Garnsey, *Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire* [Oxford, 1970], 111-22) matter less for Ovid's (*soi-disant*) exile poetry than the emotive effect of Ovid labelling himself an exile. Whether Ovid was actually banished to Tomi or not (for doubts, see e.g. A.D. Fitton-Brown, 'The unreality of Ovid's Tomitan Exile', *LCM* 10.2 [1985], 18-22) is irrelevant to my analysis of Ovid's presentation of his exilic plight in

native land – from which he had been excluded in life – and his assertion of his poetic immortality in a poem which repeatedly stresses his exilic status, thus take on a markedly political angle, which had been absent or more muted in the models he exploits.

This paper explores the way in which Ovid gives a new and specifically *exilic* slant to traditions about death, poetic immortality, and monumentality. It falls into three sections. The first traces the equation between exile and death in Roman life and literature, and explores Ovid's ambivalent characterization of his exile as a form of death, in order to allow us to locate his treatment of death and immortality in *Tristia* 3.3 in the wider context of his exile poetry. The next section analyses how, when dictating his funeral arrangements and epitaph, Ovid manipulates poetic models and motifs to emphasize their contemporary and political aspect. The third and final section examines Ovid's treatment of the theme of immortality, and his exploitation of the motif that poetry bestows immortality, with particular reference to its use in Augustan verse. I argue that, in the light of Ovid's exile, he gives this poetic motif an explicitly and unavoidably political twist, building on earlier poetic hints of poetry's superiority as a means of securing immortality over the massive self-aggrandizing tombs of rulers, as Ovid makes a number of allusions to the largest and most famous tomb in contemporary Rome, the Mausoleum of the emperor Augustus.

In addition to uncovering the ways in which *Tristia* 3.3 develops as well as departs from literary tradition to create an innovatively exilic and political reworking of his poetic forebears, this paper therefore also offers a detailed examination of a previously unrecognised example of Ovid's allusive engagement with the monuments of  

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this poem.

Augustan Rome, a subject which is increasingly of interest to Ovidian scholars.<sup>3</sup>

### 1. 'AND SAY'ST THOU YET THAT EXILE IS NOT DEATH?'<sup>4</sup>

Exile and death were strongly linked in Rome, both historically and legally. Exile was not a punishment until the late Republic,<sup>5</sup> and was in origin voluntary, and a means of escaping the death penalty: those on capital trial could flee from Roman jurisdiction during legal proceedings, provided that they did not later return. Exile was then formalized by the passing of a decree (*interdictio aquae et ignis*) by which those who had fled could be put to death if they attempted to return.<sup>6</sup>

Latin literature too equates exile strongly with death. The equation is encouraged not just by the legal-historical background outlined above, but also because death provides an effective metaphor for the catastrophe of exile (and vice versa).<sup>7</sup> The literary

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<sup>3</sup> See e.g. A.J. Boyle, *Ovid and the Monuments: a poet's Rome* (Bendigo, 2003) and S.J. Green, 'Playing with marble: the monuments of the Caesars in the *Fasti*', *CQ* 54 (2004), 224-39, particularly at 237.

<sup>4</sup> Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* 3.3.

<sup>5</sup> Exile apparently became a legal penalty after Cic. *Caec.*, which can be dated to 69 B.C: Garnsey (n. 2).

<sup>6</sup> See Garnsey (n. 2) and Polybius 6.14.7.

<sup>7</sup> As noted by M. Helzle, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Epistularum ex Ponto Liber IV: A Commentary on Poems 1 to 7 and 16* (Hildesheim, Zurich and New York, 1989), 78, citing (e.g.) Cic. *Att.* 3.20.1, 4.1.8, *Q. Fr.* 1.3.1. Cf. also Hor., *C.* 2.3.25-8 (*omnium /*

equation of death and exile must also owe something to the close connection between the words *exitium* and *exilium*, as exemplified by Virgil, *Aen.* 10.849-50 ([the exiled Mezentius] *heu, nunc misero mihi demum / exitium [exilium: Servius and some MSS.] infelix*, ‘alas, now for the first time unlucky death [/ exile] is bitter to wretched me’), where we cannot be certain which of the two is the correct manuscript reading. Ennius’ *Medea Exul* also clearly plays upon the similarity between the words and concepts.<sup>8</sup>

Ovid turns this equation into one of the characteristic features of his exile corpus, as he repeatedly depicts his banishment as a form of ‘living death’.<sup>9</sup> After earlier hints,<sup>10</sup>

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*uersatur urna serius ocius / sors exitura et nos in aeternum / exilium impositura cumbae*, ‘The lot of each one of us is tossing about in the urn, destined to come out sooner or later and place us in the eternal exile of Charon’s boat’). See further J.F. Gaertner, *Ovid, Epistulae Ex Ponto, Book 1* (Oxford, 2005) on *Pont.* 1.5.86 and J-M. Claassen, ‘Exile, death and immortality: voices from the grave’, *Latomus* 55 (1996), 577-90, at 574-6 on the earlier exile, Cicero, and his use of the exile-death equation.

<sup>8</sup> See Enn. *Scaen.* 231 (Jocelyn): (Medea speaks) *exitium illi, exilium mihi* (‘death for him, exile for me’).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Nagle (n. 1), 22-32; also Claassen (n. 7), 576-85 (who notes of Ovid’s exile poetry at 583 ‘Death is his theme from first to last’). Ovid’s insistent linking of exile and death has influenced later exiled authors: see the index to J. Ingleheart, *Two Thousand Years of Solitude: Exile after Ovid* (Oxford, 2011), s.v. ‘exile and death’.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.3-12 (Ovid’s book is told to go to Rome in mourning garb; cf. in particular *luctibus*, 6), 27 (*me ... ademptum* puns on Ovid as both ‘removed’ from Rome and ‘dead’: for the latter sense, consult *OLD*<sup>2</sup> s.v. *adimo* 8), 118 (*exequiis ... meis*), 1.2.22

Ovid first makes the link between exile and death explicit in *Tristia* 1.3, which depicts his last night in Rome before his forced departure from the city as akin to a funeral.<sup>11</sup> Elsewhere, the theme comes to the fore when (for example) Ovid explores the supposed origins of elegiac poetry in funeral lament,<sup>12</sup> or presents himself as having died by being banished to a region presented as barren and equivalent to the Underworld in earlier poetry.<sup>13</sup>

However, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* also insist upon the fact that the poet continues to live, despite the enmity of Augustus, who is depicted as an angry Jupiter wielding vengeful thunderbolts against the poet.<sup>14</sup> Augustus' anger is presented as

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(the waves on Ovid's journey seem about to touch Tartarus), 40 (*adesse necem*).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. e.g. *Tr.* 1.3.21-4, 89, 97-8, H.B. Evans, *Publica Carmina: Ovid's Books from Exile* (Lincoln and London, 1983), 37, and Videau-Delibes (n. 1), 29-49.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Tr.* 5.1.5-14; for such origins, cf. e.g. *Am.* 1.1.21, 3.9.1-4, *Her.* 1.8, R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes I* (Oxford, 1970) on Hor. *C.* 1.33.2, C.O. Brink, *Horace on Poetry: Ars Poetica* (Cambridge, 1971) on Hor. *A. P.* 75-8, and S.E. Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone* (Cambridge, 1987), 103-4.

<sup>13</sup> See the excellent analysis by G. Williams, *Banished Voices: Readings in Ovid's exile poetry* (Cambridge, 1994), 12-13.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g. *Tr.* 1.1.72, 81-2, 1.3.11-12 (where Ovid survives the thunderbolt), 5.14.27, E.J. Kenney, 'Ovid', in E.J. Kenney and W.V. Clausen (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Latin Literature: II: Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 1982), 420-57, at 444, G. Bretzigheimer, 'Exul ludens: zur Rolle von *relegans* und *relegatus* in Ovids *Tristien*', *Gymnasium* 98 (1991), 39-76, at 43-7, and A. Barchiesi, *The Poet and the Prince*

ultimately futile, since Ovid stresses that his poetry - at least - is immortal.<sup>15</sup> This is a courageous stance, not least because Ovid tells us that one of the two causes of his exile was his poetry, in the form of the *Ars amatoria*, a handbook on how to conduct successful affairs with members of the opposite sex, which Augustus believed promoted adultery, in contravention of his own anti-adultery laws.<sup>16</sup> Ovid equates the emperor's treatment of himself with that of his books, which he claims were banned from public libraries;<sup>17</sup> he also applies the punishment that has been inflicted upon himself to his books, alleging that he burned his unfinished epic *Metamorphoses* before his departure from Rome.<sup>18</sup> Yet just as Ovid's attitude towards his own exile as a form of death is ambivalent, so is his stance on his poetry: while claiming that he destroyed the *Metamorphoses*, he notes that other copies of the epic were in existence, and hopes that the work will continue to live.<sup>19</sup> Again, in *Tristia* 1.6, a poem addressed to his wife, Ovid offers the consolation that his

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(Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1997) , 42-3.

<sup>15</sup> See below and also Claassen (n. 7), 583-5.

<sup>16</sup> For the *Ars* as a cause of Ovid's exile, see (e.g.) the classic W. Stroh, 'Ovids Liebeskunst und die Ehegesetze des Augustus', *Gymnasium* 86 (1979), 323-52. See too *Tr.* 2.207; for the *Ars*' alleged teaching of adultery, see *Tr.* 2.211-12; and, most conveniently, on the link between the *Ars*' offence and Augustus' anti-adultery laws, see J. Ingleheart, *A Commentary on Ovid, Tristia, Book 2* (Oxford, 2010), 2-4.

<sup>17</sup> See *Tr.* 3.1.65-72 with R. Syme, *History in Ovid* (Oxford, 1978), 229.

<sup>18</sup> *Tr.* 1.7.15-20 and 4.10.63.

<sup>19</sup> *Tr.* 1.7.23-6: note especially his prayer *ut uiuant* at 25.

poetry will immortalize her fidelity to her exiled husband.<sup>20</sup> These two motifs – Ovid’s exile as death and, paradoxically, his refusal to accept his punishment as a sentence equivalent to death, which is most apparent in his emphasis on the way in which his poetry can bestow immortality – are combined and developed at length in *Tristia* 3.3, to a detailed examination of which I now turn.

## 2. DEAD POETS’ SOCIETY

After complaining about his lot as a sick man in a strange land, separated from his home and loved ones, Ovid considers the possibility that he will die in Tomi and therefore fail to receive a proper burial:<sup>21</sup>

*tam procul ignotis igitur moriemur in oris,*

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<sup>20</sup> *Tr.* 1.6.29-36.

<sup>21</sup> The theme of Ovid’s burial is anticipated at *Tristia* 1.1.33-4, where Ovid wishes that *ablataque principis ira / sedibus in patriis det mihi posse mori* (‘with the anger of the *princeps* removed, it might be granted to me to be able to die in my ancestral home’) and 1.2.53-6, as Ovid, fearing death at sea, ruefully comments *est aliquid, fatoue suo ferroue cadentem / in solida moriens ponere corpus humo, / et mandare suis suprema et habere sepulcrum / et non aequoreis piscibus esse cibum* (‘It is something, whether falling by one’s fate or the sword, dying, to place one’s corpse in solid ground, and to give some orders to one’s kinsfolk and to hope for a tomb, and not to be a meal for the fish of the water’).



*et fiet ipso tristia<sup>22</sup> fata loco . . .*

*sed sine funeribus caput hoc, sine honore sepulcri*

*indeploratum barbara terra teget!*

So therefore far off on unknown shores I shall die,

and my death will become grim through the place itself . . .

but without funeral rites, without the honour of a tomb, this head

unwept, a barbarian land will cover.

(*Tristia* 3.3.37-8; 45-6)

The reference to Ovid's death on unknown (*ignotis*) shores evokes *Tristia* 3.3.3 (*aeger in extremis ignoti partibus orbis*), which itself recalls Tibullus 1.3.3 (*me tenet ignotis aegrum Phaeacia terris*). As Huskey (n. 1), 370-1, comments on this network of allusions: 'The toponym [*Phaeacia*] lends an element of fantasy [...], recalling the island

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<sup>22</sup> I follow the vulgate's *tristia*; J.B. Hall, *Ovidius: Tristia* (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1990), 89, conjectures *pessima*. However, *tristia fata* may recall the opening of the 'new Gallus' fragment (cf. J. Fairweather, 'Ovid's Autobiographical Poem, *Tristia* 4.10', *CQ* 37 [1987], 181-96, at 190, on *Tr.* 4.10.112: *tristia, quo possum, carmine fata leuo*), and the echo of Gallus here would fit with allusion to Gallus at 76 (see below). Note too the characteristically Ovidian pun: Ovid's death will be *tristia* ('sad' or 'grim') because of its physical location (he will die in Tomi, the grimness of which he outlines in *Tristia* 3.9), but also through its poetic location, by featuring in the verse collection entitled *Tristia*. For puns on the title of the *Tristia*, cf. e.g. *Tr.* 2.133, 493-4, 3.1.9-10, 4.10.112, 5.1.47, *Pont.* 1.1.15-16, 3.9.35; cf. *Stat. Silv.* 1.2.254-5 *tristis in ... / Naso Tomis*.

paradise in Homer, a fact that may undercut Tibullus' claims of suffering. The absence of the name Phaeacia from *Tristia* 3.3, however, suggests that there is nothing fantastic about Ovid's plight. He suffers in a real place that has no association whatsoever with Homer ...'; to Huskey's excellent discussion of these and other correspondences,<sup>23</sup> I would add two points of significance to the contemporary, politicized edge I detect in our poem. Firstly, it matters that Tomi is profoundly unknown to Ovid's Roman readers: it is on the edges of the Roman, civilized world,<sup>24</sup> as Ovid's exile poetry insistently stresses, and Ovid's readers in Rome could thus have been expected to know little about it, in a particularly painful contrast to the 'known' world of Homeric epic. Before the principate of Augustus, poets could imagine their own death in a land immortalized by Homer; now Augustus banishes poets to regions which lie at a great distance from Rome. Secondly, Ovid's mention at line 37 of shores (*oris*)<sup>25</sup> again obtrudes contemporary realities, evoking the fact that under Augustus, relegation to an island (where the outcast may indeed expire on the shore) became the usual penalty for a variety of offences.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. Huskey (n.1), 368-72, which also treats the use of *Amores* 3.9 in Ovid's allusive engagement with Tibullus 1.3.

<sup>24</sup> As is emphasized here by *procul* and *extremis*; cf. also Ingleheart (n. 16), on *Tristia* 2.188 and 195.

<sup>25</sup> *OLD*<sup>2</sup> s.v. *ora*<sup>1</sup> 2b; the alternative sense of 'region' (*OLD*<sup>2</sup> 3, 4) is also possible, although 'shore' is preferable here as evoking the connections outlined in the discussion above.

<sup>26</sup> See S.T. Cohen, 'Augustus Julia and the development of exile *ad insulam*', *CQ* 58 (2008), 206-17 and F.K.Drogula, 'Controlling Travel: Deportation, Islands and the

There are other, more troubling parallels than Tibullus 1.3.3, however. When Ovid envisages his own death as leading to an unburied head in a barbarous land,<sup>27</sup> he evokes the death of Pompey the Great, an earlier opponent of the Julian family, who, according to a variety of sources, was beheaded when he sailed in exile to Egypt, and his body left to lie on the shore where he had disembarked; poets from Virgil onwards allude to Pompey's dreadful end.<sup>28</sup> Ovid's indirect evocation of the fate of Pompey (strengthened by reference to the *shores* where he foresees his own death a few lines before) draws attention to the ruthlessness of the Julian family towards their opponents, and provides an uncomfortable suggestion of what might yet happen to Ovid for having caused offence to Augustus.

Ovid keeps his own status as an exile to the fore here by exploiting another literary model: his description of his fate after death as *sine funeribus ... sine honore sepulcri / indeploratum* (45-6) evokes the treatment of the exiled Polynices, described by his sister Antigone as ἄκλαυτον, ἄταφον ('unwept, without a tomb') at Sophocles,

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regulation of senatorial mobility in the Augustan principate', *CQ* 61 (2011), 230-66.

<sup>27</sup> It is impossible to interpret *caput* in this context as having the frequent sense 'life' (*OLD*<sup>2</sup> s.v. 4 and 5), given that Ovid talks of barbarian earth covering it.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. e.g. Virgil, *Aen.* 2.557-8, an aside which looks forward to the fate on the shore of the headless corpse of Priam, king of Troy, yet is not motivated by its narrative context, and thus strongly evokes the end of Pompey (cf. A.M. Bowie, 'The death of Priam: Allegory and history in the *Aeneid*', *CQ* 40 (1990), 470-81, at 473-4). See two examples post-dating *Tr.* 3.3: Lucan 8.692-699 (where Pompey's fate is contrasted with those who gain pyramids and Mausolea), and Juv. 10.285.

*Antigone* 29;<sup>29</sup> the repetition of *sine*, with its negative effect, recalls Sophocles' double use of the alpha privative, and the Ovidian coinage *in-deploratum* represents a close translation of ἄκλαυτον.<sup>30</sup> This brief allusion anticipates more direct reference to Polynices at 65-8, as Ovid begins his detailed instructions to his wife to bring his bones to Rome and bury them there:

*ossa tamen facito parua referantur in urna:*  
*sic ego non etiam mortuus exul ero.*  
*non uetat hoc quisquam: fratrem Thebana peremptum*  
*supposuit tumulo rege uetante soror.*

But make sure that my bones are brought back in a small urn:

thus I shall not be an exile even when dead.

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<sup>29</sup> Given that Tibullus 1.3 is such a major model for *Tristia* 3.3, it is appropriate that the latter should evoke the myth of Antigone and Polynices: this parallel may have been suggested by the description at Tibullus 1.3.7-8 of the sister who will not be there to mourn him. The sister is a figure otherwise absent from *Tristia* 3.3, as Ovid concentrates on the rôle his wife – or elegiac mistress (cf. *dominae*, 41)? – will not be able to play in mourning him: *Tr.* 3.3.41-4.

<sup>30</sup> *ThLL* VII.1.1136.75 gives as the only other instances of this word *Ibis* 163-4 (where Ovid wishes this fate on 'Ibis': *nec tibi continget funus lacrimaeque tuorum; / indeploratum proiciere caput*) and *Met.* 11.670 (where Ceyx' image goes to his wife Alcyone and begs her not to allow him to be *indeploratum sub inania Tartara*).

Nobody forbids this: the Theban sister placed her

dead brother in a tomb although the king forbade it.

(3.3.65-8)

Ovid's desire for a small urn at line 65 reminds us that he is a love elegist and shares his predecessors' adherence to Callimachean programmatic principles even in death.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, despite parallels with his fellow elegiac poets, these couplets give greater weight to Ovid's exilic *distance* from his elegiac models, with both *exul* (66) and allusion to the myth of Antigone's burial of Polynices. The myth takes on contemporary resonance in the broader context of Ovid's exilic corpus: *non uetat hoc quisquam* reminds us that if anyone might wish to prevent Ovid's wife from burying him in Rome, it is surely the *princeps* who had banished the living Ovid.<sup>32</sup> The mythological allusion is worth exploring further. Ovid thereby casts himself as a tragic figure.<sup>33</sup> Polynices, exiled

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<sup>31</sup> Ovid recalls the *parua ... urna* which holds Tibullus' remains at *Amores* 3.9.40; cf. Huskey (n. 1), 381-2, who recognizes the significance of the size of the urn in relation to the size of the poet's literary corpus, but does not, however, treat Ovid's evocation of the modest rites required by Propertius at 2.13.17-40 and in particular *plebei paruae funeris exsequiae* (24) and *paruula testa* (32)

<sup>32</sup> Cf. e.g. *Tr.* 1.4.21, where Italy is *uetitas ... terras*, with Augustus the one keeping Ovid from home.

<sup>33</sup> For Ovid's exilic self-portrayal evoking characters from tragedy, cf. J. Ingleheart, 'I'm A Celebrity, Get Me Out Of Here: the reception of Euripides' Iphigenia among the Taurians in Ovid's Exile Poetry', in I. Gildenhard and M. Revermann (edd.), *Beyond the*

and debarred from his homeland,<sup>34</sup> even in death. Creon had denied Polynices burial because he had died fighting against his own city, and Ovid's portrayal of himself as another Polynices might therefore throw into some doubt Ovid's repeated claims in the exile poetry that he never carried arms against Augustus.<sup>35</sup> Ovid's wife here plays the part of Antigone, pious in burying her brother, and patriotic despite her defiance of the king: it is she alone to whom the epithet 'Theban' is applied. *rege uetante* in line 68 again evokes Augustus: Creon tried to prevent Polynices' burial, and Augustus, the sole ruler in contemporary Rome, is the only person who might attempt to exclude Ovid from Rome after his death. The repetition of the verb *ueto* in successive lines strengthens the point: Ovid thereby implies that, were Augustus to try to bar him from his city even after death, the attempt would fail, and the behaviour of the *princeps* would be that of a tyrant.<sup>36</sup>

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*fifth century: Interactions with Greek Tragedy from the Fourth Century BCE to the Middle Ages* (Berlin, 2010), 219-46, at 219-20.

<sup>34</sup> For Polynices as an exile, cf. e.g. Eur., *Phoen.* (*passim*), Soph. *Antigone* 200.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. e.g. *Tr.* 1.5.41-2, 2.51-2, 5.2.33, *Pont.* 2.2.11-14.

<sup>36</sup> The employment of this myth may achieve another dig at the *princeps*: *rege uetante* alludes to Creon's punishment of Antigone in the aftermath of Polynices' burial, which ultimately led to the destruction of his own family, by causing Haemon, Creon's son and heir, to commit suicide (at least in the Sophoclean tragedy, here alluded to at 45-6; cf. e.g. *Tr.* 2.402, which includes *Haemona* in a catalogue of the erotic themes of tragedy, and perhaps alludes not to Sophocles, but primarily to Euripides' *Antigone*, which ended with marriage between Haemon and Antigone: see e.g. R.C. Jebb, *Sophocles: The Plays and Fragments: Part III: Antigone* [Cambridge, 1900], xxxvii). The reader might

But why should Augustus object to Ovid's burial in Rome? The answer lies in the imagined scene of Ovid's burial in this poem, and the epitaph he dictates to his wife for himself, at lines 69-75:

*atque ea cum foliis et amomi puluere misce,  
inque suburbano condita pone solo;<sup>37</sup>  
quosque legat uersus oculo properante uiator,  
grandibus in tumuli marmore caede notis:  
HIC EGO QVI IACEO, TENERORVM LUSOR AMORVM,  
INGENIO PERII NASO POETA MEO.  
AT TIBI QVI TRANSIS NE SIT GRAVE QUISQUIS AMASTI  
DICERE NASONIS MOLLITER OSSA CVBENT.*

And mix the bones with the leaves and dust of nard,  
and place them buried in the suburban soil;

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reflect that Augustus is similar to Creon in more ways than one: for he had relegated the two Julias, his own daughter and granddaughter.

<sup>37</sup> There is play here upon *condo* in the sense 'bury' (*OLD*<sup>2</sup> *condo*, -ere s.v. 4) and 'compose' (i.e. a literary work: *OLD*<sup>2</sup> 14); Ovid teases us with what we already suspected: that his death and burial takes place only in *literature*. When we turn to the next poem in the collection, despite Ovid's pose in 3.3 of being at death's door, there is no mention of his continued sickness or recovery, further hinting at the literary-fictional nature of this 'death' foretold.

and verses which the traveller might read with hurrying eye,

cut in large letters on the marble of the tomb:

I WHO LIE HERE, THE PLAYFUL POET OF TENDER LOVES,

NASO, PERISHED THROUGH MY TALENT.

BUT MAY IT NOT BE A BURDEN TO YOU LOVERS WHO PASS BY

TO SAY ‘MAY THE BONES OF NASO LIE GENTLY’.

When Ovid orders his wife to bury him in the suburban *solum* or soil, he evokes a common ancient etymology for *exul* – a word he has employed only four lines earlier – as someone who is banished from the soil of his homeland (*ex – silium*).<sup>38</sup> Ovid had already played upon this etymology in the *Ars amatoria*, where the exiled artist Daedalus asks Minos *sit modus exilio ... / accipiat cineres terra paterna meos* (‘let there be a limit to my exile . . . / Let the land that gave me birth receive my ashes’, 2.25-6); that is, Daedalus’ exile could be ended by burial in his native land – a literal ‘return to the land’.<sup>39</sup> Here, however, the word play is both more obvious and obviously *political*: by specifying that he should be buried in the *solum* of the suburbs, Ovid tries to defy the sentence of exile passed against him by Augustus by returning to his homeland for burial.

Although the inscription of 73-6 at first looks very literary, it also contains politically charged elements which repay close examination. Ovid’s debt to and distance

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<sup>38</sup> Cf. e.g. Serv. auct. *Aen.* 2.638 *exilium dictum quasi extra solum* and R. Maltby, *A Lexicon of Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), 214.

<sup>39</sup> For this play, cf. also *Met.* 3.132 (where Cadmus is described as *exilio felix*, after a description of how he founded Thebes with the help of the brothers sprung from its soil).



from earlier elegy is very clear in the dictation of his own epitaph, which evokes two earlier elegiac epitaphs composed for themselves by elegists:<sup>40</sup> Tibullus 1.3.54-6:

*fac lapis inscriptis stet super ossa notis:*

*HIC IACET IMMITI CONSUMPTUS MORTE TIBVLLVS*

*MESSALLAM TERRA DVM SEQVITVRQVE MARI.*

Make sure a stone stands over my bones with inscribed letters:

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<sup>40</sup> On fictive epitaphs within Latin elegy, see V. Schmidt, '*Hic ego qui iaceo*: Die lateinischen Elegiker und ihre Grabschrift', *Mnemosyne* 38 (1985), 307-33. On inscriptions within literary texts, see M. Dinter, 'Epic and Epigram: Minor Heroes in Virgil's *Aeneid*', *CQ* 55 (2005), 153-69, 'Inscriptional Intermediality in Latin Elegy', in A. Keith (ed.), *Latin Elegy and Hellenistic Epigram: A Tale of Two Genres at Rome* (Newcastle, 2011), 7-18, and 'Inscriptional Intermediality', in P. Low and P. Liddel (edd.), *Inscriptions And Their Uses In Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford, 2013), 431-49; a chapter in this latter volume which I did not see until making the final revisions to this paper, by L. B. T. Houghton, 'Epitome and Eternity: Some Epitaphs and Votive Inscriptions in the Latin Love Elegists', 349-64, at 361, anticipates me in detecting a response to Augustus' epigraphic attempts to self-memorialize (for which, see now J. Nelis-Clément and D. Nelis, '*Furor epigraphicus*: Augustus, the Poets, and the Inscriptions', 317-47 in Low and Liddel 2013, cited above) in the deployment of fictive epitaphs within Latin love elegy; Houghton treats our poem at 355-6 and 360-61, albeit not as an exilic document, nor as a response to the Mausoleum in particular, as I do in section 3.

HERE LIES TIBULLUS BY HARSH DEATH EXHAUSTED

WHILE BY LAND HE FOLLOWED MESSALLA AND BY SEA.

and Propertius 2.13.35-6:<sup>41</sup>

*et duo sint uersus: QVI NVNC IACET HORRIDA PVLVIS,*

*VNIVS HIC QVONDAM SERVS AMORIS ERAT.*

And let there be two verses: HE WHO NOW LIES AS GRIM DUST,

WAS ONCE THE SLAVE OF A SINGLE LOVE.

There are, however, marked differences between these passages.<sup>42</sup> Ovid is alone in specifying his intended audience, and stressing that the inscription is to be *read*, with *legat* (71). While Propertius' third-person epitaph stresses the elegiac themes of the poet's fidelity to one lover and of the *seruitium amoris*, and Tibullus' inscription emphasizes his role as a soldier of Messalla, it is striking that neither of these earlier

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. the elegiac poet's self-epitaph at [Lygdamus] *Corp. Tib.* 3.2.27-30, especially 29-30: *LYGDAMVS HIC SITVS EST. DOLOR HVIC ET CVRA NEAERAE / CONIVGIS EREPTAE CAVSA PERIRE FVIT.*

<sup>42</sup> Also relevant are Prop. 2.1.71-78 (where Propertius envisages that he will be *breue in exiguo marmore nomen*, 72, and that Maecenas will weep over his tomb and the *dura puella* who caused his death, 78) and 2.11.5 (where a *uiator* will pass by the grave of an unnamed woman, who is surely supposed to be Cynthia, *contemnens ossa*).

epitaphs records the poet's chief claim to fame: that is, as love elegists.<sup>43</sup> Ovid's focus is very different: his first-person epitaph continually stresses his fame as a poet of light-hearted love, which, as the exile poetry frequently reminds us, led to his exilic downfall.<sup>44</sup>

Ovid's self-description as 'the playful poet of tender loves' (*tenerorum lusor amorum*, 73) recalls his address to Venus as the 'Mother of the tender loves' (*tenerorum mater amorum*) at *Amores* 3.15.1, where Ovid had claimed that he was abandoning love poetry; that Ovid now uses a similar phrase to describe himself undermines his earlier rejection of erotic poetry. Ovid's self-description as *lusor* recalls his many claims elsewhere that he writes light-hearted, playful poetry,<sup>45</sup> and operates as an implicit

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<sup>43</sup> Tibullus' and Propertius' omission of their activities as elegists (see however below) stand in a long tradition of poets not emphasizing their poetic achievements: for example, in the epitaph recorded in the ancient lives, Aeschylus mentions only his participation at the battle of Marathon, not his poetic claims to fame, and this makes Ovid's insistence that his epitaph note his role as *tenerorum lusor amorum* even more striking. Propertius' epitaph itself, despite the promise of *duo ... uersus* (2.13.35), is not even a complete elegiac couplet, and Propertius remains anonymous in his epitaph; however, Propertius may play on the fact that unswerving slavery to one love is so rare that it can identify the lover as effectively as giving a name. See now Houghton 2013, 358 (n. 41), for the suggestion that this incomplete Propertian epitaph emphasizes that such fictive elegiac epitaphs are embedded within and dependent upon Latin love elegy, which provides the poet's 'true monument'.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. e.g. *Tr.* 2.223 and 241-2 with Ingleheart (n. 16) ad loc.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. e.g. *Am.* 3.1.27, *Ars* 2.600, 3.809, *Tr.* 1.9.61, and 4.10.1 (*Ille ego qui fuerim*,

defence of the *Ars amatoria*, implying that Augustus lacked a sense of proportion in punishing Ovid for writing what was merely playful poetry of love. This stress upon Ovid's role as a playful elegiac love poet is somewhat unexpected, not just in light of the fact that his predecessors had not emphasised their fame as love elegists, but also because it ignores Ovid's other poetic productions,<sup>46</sup> and, perhaps most importantly from a political angle, Ovid often disclaims his role as a love poet in the exile poetry, because this is what led to his exile.<sup>47</sup>

Yet the role of his love poetry in causing Ovid's downfall is fully acknowledged in the pentameter which follows. Line 74 is amusing when read in the wider context of Ovid's exile corpus: in an epitaph we naturally expect 'I have perished' (*perii*) to refer to literal death, but Ovid here reworks an earlier line from the exile corpus, where *perii tenerorum lusor amorum*, disclaiming such a role for himself as an exile in another epitaphic context), and n. 45.

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<sup>46</sup> See T.R. Ramsby, 'Striving for permanence: Ovid's funerary inscriptions', *CJ* 100 (2005), 365-91, at 372 for surprise at the lack of mention of Ovid's more serious poetic works such as the *Met.* and *Fasti*; Ramsby is surely correct in asserting that this concentration on Ovid's elegiac, erotic productions 'forces us to reconsider the importance or relative significance of Ovid's works'.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. e.g. *Tr.* 2.547-556 (where Ovid emphasizes his work in the higher genres, directing Augustus' attention to the *Fasti*, his lost *Medea*, and the *Metamorphoses*), 3.1.4-8 (Ovid's latest work teaches nothing of love and he condemns the *Ars*), 5.1.1-10, 15-20, where Ovid strongly dissociates himself from his fellow love elegists, wishing at 19 that he were not among their number, as his elegiac love poetry has led to his punishment.

refers to the metaphorical death of Ovid's exile, caused by his poetry:

*ingenio perii qui miser ipse meo.*

I who perished, wretchedly, through my talent.

(*Tristia* 2.2)

In *Tristia* 3.3, *perii* refers both to Ovid's poetic downfall, and also his literal death. The claim that Ovid perished through his poetic talent reminds the reader that he was exiled because of his erotic poetry. It is therefore significant that the passer-by who utters a prayer for the dead poet on reading his epitaph will be a *lover*, as the address to *quisquis amasti* shows; this phrase has been argued to range all of humanity on Ovid's side against Augustus' attempts to control love through the pro-marriage and anti-adultery legislation passed in the *princeps*' own name, since all mankind are subject to love.<sup>48</sup> We can go even further: the passer-by on his way to or from Rome is a lover precisely because he has read Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and taken its advice; cf. the allusion via the use of the indefinite to the opening claim of the *Ars amatoria*: *Si quis in hoc artem populo non nouit amandi, / hoc legat et lecto carmine doctus amet* (*Ars* 1.1-2).

Furthermore, even the words that the passer-by is asked to utter on Ovid's behalf reflect Ovid's role as an erotic poet and the exilic downfall it caused: *molliter ossa cubent* is similar in thought and expression to formulae found on real-life Roman gravestones,<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> N.I. Herescu, 'Le Sens de l'épithaphe Ovidienne', 420-44 in N. I. Herescu (ed.),

*Ovidiana* (Paris, 1958) at 440.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. e.g. *CLE* 428.15 for the phrase, and see too 478.8-9 (*dic, rogo, praeteriens*

but the phrase also evokes erotic poetry: at Virgil, *Eclogues* 10.33-4, Cornelius Gallus, the founder of the genre of Latin love elegy, who is perishing from love, exclaims his wish for literary immortality: ‘Oh, how softly then my bones may lie, / if at some time your rustic pipe might speak of my love affairs!’ (*o mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant, / uestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores*). Ovid’s request to lovers to utter similar words on his behalf shows confidence in his own literary reputation: the lovers will say *Nasonis molliter ossa cubent* because they have read his love poetry. There is also a political charge to this allusion: Virgil had presented Gallus as speaking in this way when dying from love, but Gallus in real life committed suicide after he fell foul of the *princeps*, although his misdemeanour was not, apparently, connected with his erotic poetry. Ovid’s allusion therefore aligns himself with another love elegist who ‘perished’ because he had offended Augustus.<sup>50</sup>

Subversive allusions to Gallus may continue at line 77, when Ovid claims *hoc satis in titulo est*; although the phrase has other resonances (which I explore in the next

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*hospes: / sit t(ibi) t(erra) leuis et moliter [sic] ossa quiescant*); F. Cairns, *Sextus Propertius The Augustan Elegist* (Cambridge, 2006), 233 n. 55 suggests, perhaps correctly, that all *CLE* examples of this phrasing derive from Ovid, who also uses it at *Am.* 1.8.108 and *Her.* 7.162. R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (Urbana, 1962) (= *Illinois Studies in Language and Literature* 28), 69, notes that the poets give an individual twist to the formula most often found on actual Roman tombs: *sit tibi terra leuis*.

<sup>50</sup> For a convenient summary of both the circumstances of Gallus’ downfall and Ovid’s exilic identification with Gallus, see Ingleheart (n. 16) on *Tr.* 2.445-6.

section), its juxtaposition with an allusion to the death of Cornelius Gallus looks pointed, given that Dio records that one of the causes of Gallus' downfall was grandiloquent behaviour in erecting statues of himself and inscriptions on pyramids recording his achievements.<sup>51</sup> Ovid may therefore suggest that he is not about to repeat Gallus' offence by going too far in the wording of an inscription,<sup>52</sup> hinting that, like other forms of writing, inscriptions too can be dangerous in Augustan Rome.

### **3. EXEGI MONUMENTUM: POETIC AND MONUMENTAL IMMORTALITY**

At *Tristia* 3.3.77-80, Ovid moves from dictating the words that his tomb should bear to a claim that the words written during his career as a poet are more important and will constitute a greater and longer lasting monument:

*hoc satis in titulo est. etenim maiora libelli*

*et diuturna magis sunt monumenta mihi;*

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Dio 53.23-4 (note that the inscriptions on pyramids recording Gallus' achievements are not to be identified with the extant Philae inscription, *ILS* 8995: see J-P. Boucher, *Caius Cornelius Gallus* [Paris, 1966], 38-45); it may be instructive to compare Ovid's claim that saying too much got Gallus into trouble: *Tr.* 2.446.

<sup>52</sup> Ovid may allude to Gallus going too far in an inscription at *Tr.* 2.445-6, when he attributes Gallus' downfall to his inability to restrain his words in 'real life' if not in verse (*non fuit opprobrio celebrasse Lycorida Gallo, / sed linguam nimio non tenuisse mero*).

*quos ego confido, quamuis nocuere, daturos  
nomen et auctori tempora longa suo.*

This is enough for the inscription. For my little books are a greater  
and more long lasting monument for me;  
I trust these, although they have harmed me, are going to give  
a name and long life to their author.

Despite the previous concern that Ovid has shown both for his tomb and its verse inscription, it now appears that these things, the usual means of memorializing individuals, are less important for ensuring Ovid's enduring reputation than his poetic *libelli* (or 'little books'; the diminutive form of *libelli* should be afforded its full force here, given the surrounding comparative terms, and in particular its juxtaposition with *maiora*, which explicitly evokes size).<sup>53</sup> Ovid thus points out that his short elegiac

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<sup>53</sup> Compare Prop. 2.13, where, despite his short elegiac epitaph, Propertius had envisaged fame of epic and tragic proportions for his tomb, equating it with the tomb of Achilles: cf. 37-8 (*nec minus haec nostri notescet fama sepulcri, | quam fuerant Pthii busta cruenta uiri*, 'No less will the fame of my tomb become known / than was the blood-stained mound of the man from Phthia'). The blood-stained tomb here evokes Euripides' tragic *Hecuba*, where, in the aftermath of the Trojan war, the Trojan king's daughter Polyxena was sacrificed over the tomb of Achilles as an offering to his spirit. Here, Propertius participates in an ongoing debate about the value of different genres of poetry; that the tomb of a love elegist will attain the sort of stature gained by that of an epic hero whose



epitaph is to be read against the whole of his poetic corpus, which will bestow immortality on him. In order to appreciate the full force of Ovid's claim to immortal fame, it is necessary to read it firstly in the context of the poetic models which it clearly draws upon and then against Augustus' own major attempt at posthumous self-memorialising, the Mausoleum, to which I argue that it also alludes.

Ovid's statement that his poetry will give its author immortality draws on a number of earlier such claims by Augustan poets. Most obviously, Ovid here recalls both in theme and language the much-imitated statement of poetry's power to immortalize, Horace, *Carmina* 3.30, too famous to need quotation here. Ovid takes the notion and vocabulary of a poetic 'monument' from Horace (*Tr.* 3.3.78; *Carm.* 3.30.1 *Exegi monumentum*), as well as his predecessor's opening focus on the comparative value of a poetic monument versus the physical monuments that usually immortalize men; compare *perennius* and *altius*, *Carm.* 3.30.1 and 2 with *maiora* and *diuturna* at *Tr.* 3.3.78 and 79, and note how Ovid reverses Horace's order in talking first of size and then the duration of the poetic memorial.

Propertius 3.2.17-26 had given a specifically elegiac twist to Horace's poem and is thus another important model for Ovid.<sup>54</sup>

*fortunata, meo si qua es celebrata libello!*

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tomb plays an important part in Greek tragedy represents an elegiac challenge to epic and tragedy, the two genres that were believed to represent the highest achievement of ancient literature.

<sup>54</sup> This is noted by Houghton (n. 44), 359-60.

*carmina erunt formae tot monumenta tuae.  
nam neque pyramidum sumptus ad sidera ducti,  
nec Iouis Elei caelum imitata domus,  
nec Mausolei diues fortuna sepulcri  
mortis ab extrema condicione uacant.  
aut illis flamma aut imber subducet honores,  
annorum aut tacito pondere uicta ruent.  
at non ingenio quaesitum nomen ab aeuo  
excidet: ingenio stat sine morte decus.*

Happy, whoever she is who is praised in my little book!

The songs will be so many memorials of your beauty.

For neither the cost of the pyramids rising to the stars,

nor the temple of Jove at Elis that imitates heaven,

nor the rich fortune of the tomb of Mausolus

are free from the final decree of death.

Either fire or rain will take their glories away from them,

or they will collapse, conquered by the silent weight of years.

But the name won by my talent will not fall with time:

talent has deathless glory.

Ovid takes from his elegiac predecessor the reference to a generically small *libellus* (placed at the line's end in the opening hexameter on the theme in both elegist) as

the vehicle of immortality, and the closing emphasis on the *nomen* of the poet after death (cf. *Tr.* 3.3.80 with Prop. 3.2.25).<sup>55</sup>

However, at the same time as setting himself in a poetic tradition of claiming immortality via poetry, Ovid departs strikingly from his models in two important ways. Firstly, *Tristia* 3.3's elevation of poetry over physical monuments as a means of gaining immortality is, unlike previous poetic meditations on this theme,<sup>56</sup> prompted by its context, since Ovid claims in *Tristia* 3.3 to be on the brink of death and has just given his wife careful instructions for his tomb and inscription. Ovid thereby strives for greater realism than is found in his models: he repeats the poetic *topos* that long-lasting fame comes from poetry rather than physical monuments, but still displays a very human concern for what he hopes will be his *actual* tomb, in the face of imminent death.

Secondly, Ovid's claim to immortal fame is made on different grounds to those of his predecessors. Horace, *Carmina* 3.30 asserts his fame as a *lyric* poet, summing up his achievement in a highly regarded genre with a lengthy and distinguished pedigree. Horace's grand achievement was then undermined by Propertius' use of his theme and language to celebrate the immortal reputation that Propertius' elegiac poetry, with its generically slight little books, is able to bestow upon his *beloved*.<sup>57</sup> Revisiting Horace's

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<sup>55</sup> Less immediately relevant, yet important insofar as they show Ovid creatively engaging throughout his career with these models, are Ovid's allusions to them at the end of the first book of the *Amores* (1.15.31-42) and the conclusion of his epic *Metamorphoses* (15.871-9).

<sup>56</sup> The end of the *Met.* is an exception.

<sup>57</sup> Ovid's *Metamorphoses* had in turn reworked Horace's claim in a suitably elevated

earlier focus on the poet himself, while combining this with Propertius' generic belittling of Horace's proud claim, Ovid in *Tristia* 3.3 foresees his light-hearted, generically slight books of *love* poetry granting him fame and a future, given the stress upon his role as an elegiac love poet in the epitaph that precedes these lines, and the emphasis on *libelli*; compare Ovid's confident claim already by the end of his first book of *Amores* (*Am.* 1.15.31-42) that he has gained the sort of reputation that Horace had earned with the generically much grander *Odes* in three books. It is not the fame of the epic, fifteen book *Metamorphoses* that Ovid predicts here, but above all that of small books of elegiac love poetry. Ovid provocatively includes the *Ars amatoria* among these books: this must be the sense of *quos ego confido, quamuis nocuere* in line 79, since the only books which had harmed Ovid were those of the *Ars*. This is a very political statement: for the *Ars amatoria* had led to Ovid's banishment, and, according to Ovid, was excluded from libraries associated with the Augustan regime, along with the rest of Ovid's books (see note 17 above). Far from rejecting these officially condemned *libelli*, Ovid still trusts that they will bring him fame: his *ingenium* in the shape of his poetry has caused him to perish (*Tr.* 3.3.74), but it is also, drawing on the final lines of the Propertian passage (where *ingenium* is twice mentioned within a couplet: 3.2.25-6), what gives him *nomen et ... tempora longa* (80).

The political aspect of Ovid's claiming of immortality for his offensive books of poetry deserves further consideration. Both of Ovid's immediate models have a political charge insofar as they evoke the superiority of poetry over the massive physical

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generic context, again stressing that it is the poet – this time, an epic poet - rather than a beloved who will gain immortality.

monuments erected by rulers as a means of bestowing immortality. Where *Odes* 3.30 had compared Horace's poetic monument with those erected by rulers in the opening lines (*regalique situ pyramidum altius, Carmina* 3.30.2),<sup>58</sup> Propertius had made the *topos* more concretely Augustan by moving from the pyramids (Prop. 3.2.18) to refer to the original Mausoleum by name (*Mausolei ... sepulcri*, Prop. 3.2.21), thus alluding to the even more famous Mausoleum of Augustus.<sup>59</sup> Given the literary tradition established by the Horatian and Propertian models that poetic immortality is superior even to the massive physical monuments of rulers, the reader is hyper-alert to any potential evocation of such monuments in a passage on poetic immortality and physical monuments which revisits these models so closely.<sup>60</sup> The figure of Augustus is already foremost in the reader's mind, given the evocation of him as a potential Creon who wishes to debar Ovid's

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<sup>58</sup> B.J. Gibson, 'Horace, *Carm.* 3.30.1-5', *CQ* 47 (1997), 312-14 argues for a contemporary political reference to Gallus' regal posturing in Egypt by inscribing his deeds on pyramids in this ode, published in 23 B.C. Whether the reader recognizes such allusion or not, it is clear that reference to the pyramids plants the notion of rulers' monuments within the *topos* of poetic versus monumental immortality, thus preparing the way for Propertius and Ovid to develop this theme.

<sup>59</sup> Augustus' 'Mausoleum' seems to have been known as such from an early date: the *Fasti Cuprenses* (= *Inscr. Ital.* 13.1.245), which can be dated to A.D. 4, refer to Gaius Caesar's *ossa ... in [Ma]eso[laeum] inlata*. See too Houghton (n. 44), 360.

<sup>60</sup> Compare Ramsby (n. 47), 366 on the large number of epigraphs found within Ovid's poetry: 'The elegiac inscription may be an attempt to mimic the Roman authoritative voice of the public record.'

Polynices from Rome even in death in the lines immediately preceding Ovid's description of his tomb and its epitaph; when Ovid goes on to use the rhetoric of size and competition (*maiora, libelli, 77, diuturna, 78*) while asserting the superiority of poetry over physical monuments as a means of ensuring immortality, I suggest that it would be very hard for the contemporary reader *not* to think of Augustus' massive Mausoleum, the largest tomb in the Rome of Ovid's day.

At this point, a brief sketch of the Mausoleum, the enormous tomb completed in 28 B.C., and its role in immortalizing Augustus, will allow the modern reader to appreciate the extent and effect of Ovid's allusions to this monument, which will be analysed below. Augustus' concern with immortality is apparent from, for example, his building programmes and his encouragement of authors such as Virgil, Horace, and Livy. In concrete terms, however, the Mausoleum provides the most striking example of Augustus' attempts to ensure his posthumous reputation: its name comes from the enormous fourth century tomb of Mausolus at Halicarnassus, which was celebrated as one of the wonders of the ancient world, largely because of its unprecedented size,<sup>61</sup> and Augustus' Mausoleum attempted to rival the original in scale: it is difficult for us to appreciate just how impressive it must have appeared to contemporary viewers, even though the remains are still sizeable, with surviving walls of nine metres high (now dwarfed by the twentieth century Fascist architecture that surrounds them); it originally had walls nearly forty metres high, and was eighty-seven metres wide.<sup>62</sup> The Mausoleum

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<sup>61</sup> See Ant. Sid., *A.P.* 9.58.

<sup>62</sup> On the Mausoleum's impressive dimensions, see P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor, 1988), 72-7.

would have dominated the Campus Martius, a large flat expanse of land in which it was the first and most impressive of many monuments erected by Augustus. It represented a huge public memorial to Augustus and his achievements: the *Res Gestae*, Augustus' own prose record of his life as a statesman and general, was inscribed on tablets erected outside the Mausoleum after his death in AD 14.<sup>63</sup> Augustus encouraged the Roman populace to spend time near the Mausoleum: ancient sources record that groves and walks were opened to the public around the tomb, and it was close to one of the main highways into the city.<sup>64</sup> This can clearly be seen as a way to consolidate the emperor's reputation both in life and death.

I have argued that *Tristia* 3.3's context – both the poem's immediate context of a ruler forbidding Ovid's burial and its broader literary context of play with models which set poetic monuments against rulers' physical memorials – primes the reader to be sensitive to possible evocations of the Mausoleum. Specific allusions to the Mausoleum can be identified in Ovid's description of the tomb he asks his wife to erect for him in Rome. Ovid's instruction to his wife at 72, *grandibus in tumuli marmore caede notis*, evoke the kind of inscription that the Mausoleum would carry, with the scale emphasized by the initial word; scholars of the iconography of Augustan Rome have noted that many contemporary inscriptions in the city were characterized by their large, bronze letters.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *RG* praef. and Suet. *Aug.* 101.

<sup>64</sup> See Strabo 5.3.8, Suet. *Aug.* 100.4, and P.J.E. Davies, *Death and the Emperor. Roman imperial funerary monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius* (Cambridge, 2000), 137-8.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. G. Alföldy, 'Augustus und die Inschriften: Tradition und Innovation', *Gymnasium*

Secondly, the verb which gives the instruction to cut the inscription, *caedo* (*caede*, 3.3.72) is etymologically linked to the dynasty of the Caesars (Ovid puns on this connection elsewhere),<sup>66</sup> and thus alludes to the famous tomb erected to house the dynasty; the Mausoleum was clearly intended as a final resting place for the entire Augustan *gens* and not just the emperor himself, as can be seen from the burial of family members there, starting with Marcellus in 23 B.C.<sup>67</sup> Although marble was commonly used for tombs, given the cluster of references here to the Mausoleum, the specification of a marble tomb may recall that the Mausoleum was finished with marble, a material particularly associated with the *princeps*.<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, Ovid's abrupt words after a brief, four-line epitaph, 'This is enough for the inscription' (*hoc satis in titulo est*, 77) can be read as a sardonic allusion to the lengthy *Res Gestae*,<sup>69</sup> which acted as an extended

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98 (1991), 293-9.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Barchiesi (n. 14), 129 (on *Fasti* 3.709-10), A. Michalopoulos, *Ancient Etymologies in Ovid's Metamorphoses: A Commented Lexicon* (Leeds, 2001), 46-7 (on *Met.* 15.480 and *Am.* 2.14.17-18), and F. Ahl, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and other classical poets* (Ithaca, 1985), 80-1.

<sup>67</sup> The Mausoleum is alluded to as *tumulum ... recentem* in Virgil's reference to Marcellus' death at *Aen.* 6.874. Cf. Dio 53.30.5.

<sup>68</sup> For Augustus' putative claims to have found Rome brick and left it marble, see Suet. *Aug.* 28.3 and Dio 56.30.4.

<sup>69</sup> Fairweather (n. 22) suggests that details in Ovid's 'autobiography' (*Tr.* 4.10) are intended to echo Augustus' own life story, postulating Ovid's use of either Augustus' lost autobiography or early versions of the *RG*. For epitaphs which provide a humorous



epitaph for Augustus by standing outside the Mausoleum after his death. Augustus' intention to erect a lengthy epitaph for himself, detailing his many achievements, may already have been clear in his lifetime, from the statues with inscriptions recording their achievements that he set up for leading Romans of the past in his Forum,<sup>70</sup> and his uncompleted autobiography in thirteen books.<sup>71</sup> Allusion to Augustus' Mausoleum here seems to be confirmed by *nomen et auctori tempora longa suo* (80); here, Ovid refers to himself as an author,<sup>72</sup> but there is surely also a nod to Augustus, whose name was believed to derive from *augeo* ('I increase'): a wordplay that Ovid uses elsewhere.<sup>73</sup> Thus Ovid's statement that his books will give *their* author a name and a long life represents a challenge to Augustus: Ovid hints at Augustus' name here, but he does not give it outright, and he may thereby suggest that the Mausoleum too, named after all for *another*

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commentary on the *RG.*, cf. Petr. *Sat.* 71.

<sup>70</sup> For which, cf. e.g. Suet. *Aug.* 31 and Hor. *C.* 4.8.13 (... *incisa notis marmora publicis*).

<sup>71</sup> For which, cf. Suet. *Aug.* 85. Cf. also Suet. *Claud.* 1, which records that Augustus had his laudatory verses inscribed on Drusus' tomb after his death in 9 B.C., and wrote a memoir of him.

<sup>72</sup> For Ovid's use of *auctor* for poetic authors, cf. e.g. *Tr.* 2.533 (addressed to Augustus, calling Virgil *tuae felix Aeneidos auctor*: Ingleheart [n. 16]) ad loc. posits an allusion to Augustus' name here), 5.14.3 (of himself, talking at line 1 of the *monumenta* he has raised to his wife in his books), and *Pont.* 1.7.3 (of himself).

<sup>73</sup> See e.g. *Fasti* 1.612-14 and *Tr.* 2.45 (with Ingleheart (n. 16) ad loc.); for the etymological link, see Suet. *Aug.* 7.2 and Maltby (n. 39), 66 s.v. *augustus*, -a, -um.

ruler, will ultimately fail to give Augustus a name.<sup>74</sup>

Ovid's tomb and its epitaph thus represent a small-scale, modest elegiac and erotic alternative to Augustus' enormous Mausoleum,<sup>75</sup> with its emphasis on grand public achievements and their public recognition. In stark contrast to this, Ovid's tomb is focused on the amatory and the individual, emphasizing Ovid's audience of lovers, and his achievements as an erotic poet: his epitaph is of course in elegiac couplets, the metre which had brought him both fame and exile. Furthermore, Ovid's assertion that his immortal name ultimately depends on the small *libelli* of his offensive elegiac poetry rather than a tomb and inscription presents a challenge to Augustus' attempts to turn the poet into an outsider by barring him and his poetry from the city, as well as to the emperor's own grandiose pretensions to immortality.

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<sup>74</sup> *nomen* (80) may alert the reader to the play on Augustus' name here.

<sup>75</sup> Similarly, *Culex* 394-414: see W. Ax, 'Marcellus, die Mücke. Politische Allegorien im *Culex*?', *Philologus* 136 (1992), 89-129.