

ecce fugit notumque torum sociosque Penates

that Corinna lives with Ovid, whereas, in 2.12, he equips her with a *uir* and a *custos* who obstruct their love-affair. It is clear, however, that Ovid has juxtaposed the two elegies under the influence of Prop. 1.8, which treats of Cynthia's proposed journey to Illyria and her subsequent decision to stay with Propertius²⁷.

6

The Title

The chief evidence for the title *Amores* is given by *Ars* 3.343f.:

deue tribus libris, titulo quos signat AMORVM,
elige, quod docili molliter ore legas.

deue tribus *A*ç: deque tribus ç: deue cerem *R* (*ut uid.*; deie c. *r*): de ueterum
(*ex* -is in) *Y* titulo *F*¹: titulos *R*: titulus *YA*ω quos *YA*ω: quo *R*
amorum *RYA*ω: amoris ç

At *SHA Ael.* 5.9, the Emperor Aelius Caesar is said to have kept *Ouidii libros Amorum* (*amorum*?) constantly under his pillow, along with his other favourite literary works, the cookery-book of Apicius and the epigrams of Martial. It cannot be ascertained, however, whether that phrase means 'Ovid's books of *Amores*' or 'Ovid's books about his love-affairs'. There is no further explicit testimony from antiquity for the title *Amores*¹, and none for any other.

If Ovid wrote that couplet in the *Ars* as it is here printed², the second edition at least was known as the *Amores*. There is no certain indication that Ovid had used that title at any stage in the composition and publication of the five books of the first edition. Within the collection itself, a possible hint at the title *Amores* is given by Ovid's announcement at 3.1.69f. that he will persist for a short time in writing love-elegies:

teneri properentur Amores,
dum uacat: a tergo grandius urget opus.

At line 41, Elegy had declared that she was accompanied by Cupid, but the antithesis with *grandius...opus* may suggest that *Amores* here signifies love-poems as much as, or rather than, the Amorini. At 3.15.1, however, in what may be an echo of this passage:

¹ Very few mss of the *Amores* show any knowledge of the true title; see the discussions by Oliver and McKie cited in n. 11.

² On the textual problems, see Jacobson (1974) 302, Sabot (1976) 87ff.

²⁷ Some editors begin a new elegy at line 27.

Quaere nouum uatem, tenerorum mater Amorum,

Ovid is clearly referring to the Amorini, not to love-poems. Moreover, the similarity in sound and rhythm of line 19 of the closely related elegy 2.18:

quod licet, aut artes teneri profitemur Amoris

also suggests that Ovid is here thinking of the Amorini rather than of love-poems. By the time that Ovid began to write poetry, love had been firmly established as the theme *par excellence* for the elegiac metre. Hence, in his opening elegy, when he complains against Cupid's interference in his epic, he takes it for granted that to be an elegist is to be a love-poet:

nec mihi materia est numeris leuioribus apta,
aut puer aut longas compta puella comas (1.1.19f.).

It was not therefore necessary *a priori* that a collection of amatory elegies should be endowed with a title specifying that love is to be their subject. It is not certain that any of the older elegists had given their poetry any such title (but see below). It may not have been until he came to publish the second edition that Ovid felt the need of a specific title, in order to distinguish this collection from his other works written in elegiacs.

On the tenuous evidence of Verg. *Ecl.* 10.6:

sollicitos Galli dicamus amores,

34:

uestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores,

52ff.:

certain est in siluis inter spelaea ferarum
malle pati tenerisque meos incidere amores
arboribus: crescent illae, crescetis amores,

and Servius' comment on the opening line of the poem:

amorum suorum de Cytheride scripsit libros quattuor,

it may be inferred that Gallus had given his elegies the title *Amores*. If so, Ovid's adoption of the same title is perhaps an acknowledgment of his debt to the great founder of the genre³. Other elegists, however,

³ See Puelma (1982) 221, n. 1.

may also have used that title. It is possibly alluded to by Propertius as the title for his own love-elegies at 1.7.5, where there is a contrast with Ponticus' *Thebaid*:

nostros agitamur amores

and at 2.1.1f., where there is a contrast with epic poetry in general:

Quaeritis, unde mihi totiens scribantur amores,
unde meus ueniat mollis in ora liber⁴.

Similarly, it is possible to infer from Hor. *Carm.* 2.9.9 ff.:

tu semper urges flebilibus modis
Mysten ademptum nec tibi uespere
surgente decedunt amores
nec rapidum fugiente solem

that Valgius Rufus had so entitled a collection of his poems⁵.

Modern convention dictates that the first letter of *Amores*, when denoting a title, should be written in the upper case. It is reasonable to assume, however, that Ovid, and any other elegist who may have used this title, regarded the word as the plural of *amor*, not of *Amor*. Given the absence of sincere passion from his account of his career as a lover, one might speculate that Ovid was attracted to the ambiguity inherent in that plural. The plural was regularly used with reference to a single beloved, as at e.g. Verg. and Serv. *loc. cit.*⁶, but, being a plural, it could also imply a lack of devotion to a single beloved, as at e.g. 2.4.9:

non est certa meos quae forma inuitet amores.

This possible nuance of detachment is perhaps enhanced if Ovid owes a perceptible debt to Phanocles' Ἐρωτες, the only other poetic work known for certain to have been so entitled. That elegiac poem, which bore the alternative title Καλοί, was a collection of homosexual myths modelled on the Hesiodic *Catalogues of Women*, and presumably contained no revelations about Phanocles' own love-affairs. Phanocles is a shadowy figure, possibly a contemporary of Philotas and Hermesianax⁷, but Ovid seems to have drawn on his

⁴ See Jacoby (1905) 72.

⁵ See Nisbet-Hubbard on line 11.

⁶ See also La Penna (1951) 195ff., *TLL* 1.1970.9ff.

⁷ See *RE* 19.1781ff.

Ἐρωτες at least for the account of Cynus (the son of Sthenelus) in the *Metamorphoses*⁸.

It was conventional to refer to collections of love-poems by the name of the beloved whom they celebrate. The amatory works of Mimnermus, Antimachus and Leontion are known to us as, respectively, the *Nanno*, the *Lyde* and the *Leontion*, even though the poets themselves may not have bestowed those titles. Propertius refers to his first book as the *Cynthia*:

Tu loqueris, cum sis iam noto fabula libro
et tua sit toto Cynthia lecta foro? (2.24.1f.)

Ovid makes use of this convention at 1.15.29f.:

Gallus et Hesperii et Gallus notus Eois,
et sua cum Gallo nota Lycoris erit,

and at 3.9.31f.:

sic Nemesis longum, sic Delia nomen habebunt,
altera cura recens, altera primus amor.

In those passages, the names denote not only the mistresses themselves, but also the poetry written in their honour. There is no evidence, however, that Ovid ever gave the title *Corinna* to his own collection, or to any part of it⁹.

It was also conventional to refer to works of literature by their opening word or words¹⁰. Thus, it is significant that Propertius' first elegy should begin:

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,

and that the cycle of elegies *de Sulpicia* in the *Corpus Tibullianum* should begin:

Sulpicia est tibi culta tuis, Mars magne, kalendis (3.8.1).

The prosody of Corinna's name excludes her from the opening position in the elegiac couplet. *Amor* and *Amores* are likewise

⁸ See Bömer on 2.367-80 (p. 334).

⁹ In 3.12, Ovid laments that his praise of Corinna in his poetry has made her famous and has attracted other lovers to her. Luck (1961) 173ff. speculates that that elegy was written for the second edition and refers to the notoriety gained by the five original books, known collectively as the *Corinna*. That thesis, which Luck omits from both English editions of his book (1959, 1969), has received little support; see Cameron (1968) 324f., Stroh (1971) 157, n. 65, Horsfall (1981) 110.

¹⁰ See Bentley on Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.7, also West on Hes. *Theog.* 1.

inadmissible there. Ovid exploits this convention, however, to give his *imbelles elegi* (3.15.19) the paradoxical alternative title *Arma*:

Arma graui numero uiolentaque bella parabam
edere, materia conueniente modis (1.1.1f.)¹¹.

That joke is perhaps repeated in the opening words of *Ars* 3:

Arma dedi Danaïs in Amazonas; arma supersunt,
quae tibi dem et turmae, Penthesilea, tuae.

¹¹ It is amusing that the *Amores* were sometimes actually referred to as the *Arma* during the Middle Ages; see Alton (1961) 72. The title had a chequered career in the tradition, with some mss even offering the splendid designation *liber de sine titulo*; see Oliver (1969) 148ff., McKie (1986) 233ff.

ARCA

Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs

20

OVID: AMORES

**TEXT, PROLEGOMENA AND
COMMENTARY**

in four volumes

J C McKEOWN

**VOLUME I
TEXT AND PROLEGOMENA**

General Editors: Francis Cairns and Robin Seager
Assistant Editors: Neil Adkin, Sandra Cairns, Frederick Williams

ISSN 0309-5541

X FRANCIS & TAYLOR