DeB.'s approach raises some interesting questions. First among them is the applicability of the concept of thirds to Propertius' elegiac project: three seems to be too few variables for the topic. Put simply, etiology and amatory elegy already contain thirds (or fourths or fifths)—complex and pluralistic discourses that admit of many perspectives. In postulating these forms of discourse as opposites DeB. does a disservice to the complexities of both forms of poetry. Etiology, for example, DeB. frequently glosses as '*Roma*', generally styled as patriotic (e.g. pp. 25, 83, 149, 181). In the book's epilogue she similarly asserts that '(death and) aetiology are associated closely with "fixity" and "closure" ' (p. 242). Scholars of Hellenistic poetry and of its Augustan age adherents have demonstrated ways in which etiology is neither necessarily patriotic nor fixed (G. Zanker, *Realism in Alexandrian Poetry* [London, 1987], and C. Newlands, *Playing with Time* [Ithaca, 1995]). Amatory elegy occasionally suffers a similar simplification in DeB.'s analysis. In an otherwise excellent discussion of the blurred lines between the real battles that enabled Rome's rise and the amatory battles between lovers in Elegy 4.1 (pp.79–85), DeB. aligns the metaphor of *militia amoris* with amatory elegy (*amor*) but without discussing that this metaphor always confounds love and war, as shown in Kennedy's important discussion, present in DeB.'s bibliography but nowhere cited in this section (D. Kennedy, *The Arts of Love* [Cambridge, 1993]).

A second question that arises involves the wider cultural significance of the thirds that DeB. identifies. Though she rightly asserts that *arma*, *patria*, *limen*, costume, Actium, and death are themes of significance to Augustan Rome, with the exception of Actium these symbols emerge in her treatment as purely literary choices with literary ramifications; they could have been written at any time, given a Callimachus in the library. Even her treatment of Propertius' Actium concentrates on the poetic resonance rather than the contemporary political resonance of this poem; the absence of Gurval's work from her discussion is puzzling (R. A. Gurval, *Actium and Augustus* [Ann Arbor, 1995]). Though her readings of individual poems are invaluable to the scholar of Propertius and Roman elegy, those interested in the wider cultural discourses operating in Propertius' last work are encouraged to read DeB. alongside M. Janan's *Politics of Desire* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2001), Stahl's *Propertius 'Love' and 'War'* (Norman, OK, 1985), and P. A. Miller's *Subjecting Verses* (Princeton, 2003).

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FEMININE VOICES

S. H. LINDHEIM: *Mail and Female. Epistolary Narrative and Desire in Ovid's* Heroides. Pp. x + 270. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2003. Paper, US$29.95. ISBN: 0-299-19264-4.

Recent years have seen a growing critical interest in Ovid's *Heroides*, a collection that appears to offer various forsaken women of ancient literature an opportunity to tell their stories from their own point of view. Despite the gender issues inherent in this collection, critics have focused largely on Ovid's manipulation of prior texts and generic categories. In her study, L. sets out to correct this imbalance by examining the power dynamics that lie behind Ovid's use of cross-gendered speech in the *Heroides*.

L.'s primary framework for reading the *Heroides* hinges on the notion of

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'transvestite ventriloquism' (p. 7), originally introduced by Elizabeth Harvey in her study of cross-gendered speech in English Renaissance texts (*Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts* [Routledge, 1992]). Instead of presenting each heroine's tale as part of a larger story about a hero, Ovid extracts the heroines from their traditional narrative contexts and speaks through their voices, effacing his own presence as author behind the text. This creates the impression that the heroines are the actual authors of their epistles and 'draws the reader into the illusion that she is listening to the voices of fifteen heroines, authentically female voices . . .' (p. 7). Although L. often returns to this idea of authenticity, she emphasizes that her readings of the text are not grounded in essentialism; rather, she seeks to bring together intertextual and genre-based observations with contemporary notions of gender, sexuality, and identity in order to analyze how 'Ovid imagines woman and her desire as if in her voice' (p. 8).

Chapter 1 concentrates on the epistolary context and examines in particular how the heroines take advantage of the freedom to narrate their own stories from a subjective perspective. Relying almost exclusively on ancient sources, L. stresses the complexity of the letter as a vehicle for communication and discusses the fundamental tension between the writer and addressee. On the one hand, the epistolary form affords the writer the power to construct an authoritative narrative and shape the outcome of her story; the presence of an addressee, on the other, exerts pressure on the writer to fashion her epistle according to what he wants to hear. As L.'s readings of Penelope, Briseis, and Deianira's letters maintain, the heroines repeatedly fail to make use of the 'self-enhancing possibilities' (p. 32) inherent in the epistolary form. Instead of constructing narratives that reflect their own authority, the heroines yield to the addressees, characterizing the heroes in terms of 'plenitude and power' (p. 32), while portraying themselves as 'marginal, helplessly devoted women' (p. 76). Some readers might attribute this aspect of the poems to the conditions of abandonment which prompt the writing of the letters or to other functions epistolary writing may serve. According to L., however, the heroines' self-effacing behavior stems from Ovid's desire to construct characters 'that conform with a male fantasy that finds it comforting to imagine insignificant women and powerful heroes' (p. 76).

In Chapter 2, L. builds on these initial observations and turns to the elegiac context in order to discuss how Ovid constructs female desire in the letters of Phyllis, Dido, Ariadne, Hypsipyle, and Medea—the archetypal stories of female abandonment that form the backbone of the collection. Drawing on Lacanian notions of subjectivity and desire, L. demonstrates how the heroines manipulate their own self-presentations in order to remain the object of the addressees' desire, by adopting various poses that reinforce the addressees' own sense of power and independence, and, in the case of Medea and Hypsipyle, by also modeling themselves on his former lovers. Although Ovid manages to capture the fundamental nature of female desire as described by Lacan, Ovid neutralizes the multiplicity and variation that form the foundation of women's indefinable nature and instead offers these heroines only two seemingly incompatible rôles: powerful and helpless. This pattern, L. suggests, is not accidental, but part of the collection's attempt 'to generalize about Woman, isolating a universal category, a unifying principle by which to categorize her' (p. 134).

Chapter 3 reinforces these conclusions with a reading of *Heroides* 15: Sappho's letter to Phaon. Because Sappho was a historical woman, whose fragments provide a record of her thoughts, especially those on desire, *Heroides* 15 dismantles the illusion that we are hearing 'unmediated female voices' (p. 8). Reading Sappho's epistle against the backdrop of her lyric poetry, L. argues that Ovid reconfigures the feminine

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homoerotic desire and multiplicity celebrated in Sappho's poems so that she adheres to the pattern established in the earlier letters in this collection. Although L. presents a coherent argument, her efforts to highlight this pattern within the *Heroides* tend to smooth out the complexities of each individual poem.

Overall L.'s analysis of gender in the *Heroides* raises provocative questions about the male representation of the feminine voice. But the concept of 'transvestite ventriloquism' leaves me with reservations, primarily because it inevitably compels us to evaluate these poems in terms of authenticity. Is it reasonable to expect that Ovid can create authentic female voices? Although she returns to this issue faithfully at the beginning and end of each chapter, L. never comments upon it directly, perhaps because she recognizes that it is a thorny issue. Furthermore, while the *Heroides* presents the heroines speaking for themselves, Ovid regularly undermines this illusion, highlighting the artificiality of these epistles and the textuality of the heroines. These features of the text may suggest that Ovid, rather than trying 'to elude the reader's gaze' (p. 176), desires to call attention to the narrative voice(s) behind the heroines' letters. Such reservations aside, L.'s book is useful for anyone interested in the construction of gender in elegiac poetry and will undoubtedly ignite a productive critical discussion of gender in the *Heroides*.

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ARTEM NOVIT AMANDI

R. K. GIBSON: *Ovid:* Ars Amatoria *Book 3.* Edited with Introduction and Commentary. (Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 40.) Pp. x + 446. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Cased, £60, US$90. ISBN: 0-521-81370-0.

G. contributed a thoughtful essay to the current debate on the nature and rôle of the commentary in *The Classical Commentary Histories, Practices, Theory* (Leiden, 2002), which he edited along with C. S. Kraus. Here he provides a practical demonstration of the form—an exemplary blend of traditional philology and literary criticism which treats the *Ars* as a piece of literature, not just a springboard for long lists of parallels and notes on minutiae of grammar, text, and so forth. Every commentator has to make choices about what to include and what to exclude, and G. has chosen well, in the opinion of this reviewer (and commentator). The first full-scale commentary on *A.A.* 3, this goes far beyond Brandt, Lenz, and Cristante, and represents a major advance in our understanding and appreciation of the poem.

The introduction (forty-six pages) covers Book 3 and the didactic, erotodidactic, and anti-cosmetic traditions; the 'puellae' of *A.A.* 3 and the 'lex Iulia de adulteriis'; the date of the book; and the text (wisely he follows Kenney's OCT for the most part, departing from it at eighteen points). Generally thorough, clear, and convincing, this provides decidedly useful background. I have only a few quibbles. A brief section on how Ovid differed from and reacted to those who wrote Latin elegy before him would have sharpened the focus further. G.'s analysis of didactic is sound, but he might have added something on the way in which Ovid subverts it (the application of this elevated genre to conventionally trivial 'amor', the use of its terms, formulae, and set pieces in frivolous contexts, and so on). When considering women as recipients of erotodidaxis,

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