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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G. maintains that it was normally a 'lena' who gave such instruction to them and that Ovid in *A.A.* 3 was usurping her rôle. But oddly he leaves out of account Tibullus 1.8.27–78 (addressed to Pholoe), which tends to undermine his claim. That is an obvious example of a male amatory expert (not acting out of self-interest) offering advice and reflections on love to a girl, and it is contemporary with Ovid (so too *A.A.* 3.61–2, 65, and 69–70 are close to Tib. 1.8.39–40 and 47–8).

There is clarity in the layout of the commentary, which consists of sectional notes (giving an overview of the subject and major theme[s] of the section), followed by notes on individual couplets and (if needed) subsections. G.'s remarks are consistently focused, and it is very seldom that it is hard to see the relevance of what he has to say. Only substantial problems of text are handled. Philological discussion is judicious and economical, although occasionally I would have welcomed extra comment (e.g. on the form 'estote' in line 59). G. eschews blockbuster notes and tends to cite just one or two examples or authorities to support his point rather than reams of them. He also abstains from treatment of such burning topics as the relative frequency of 'ensis' and 'gladius' in Ovid, or third person plural perfect indicative forms in *-ere* and *-erunt*, or 'erat' as a pentameter ending. G. thus leaves himself space for literary criticism, and he exploits that space very profitably. Overall his appreciation is admirably sensible, balanced, and perceptive, and he is particularly illuminating in connection with Ovid's exploitation of the language and themes of love poetry and didactic (although strangely he does not see the analogy from myth, nature and another occupation as a didactic feature; for this topos cf. e.g. Lucretius 4.1197–1200, Virgil *Georgics* 1.204–7 and 3.258–63).

I found quite often that as a literary critic G. started off in the right direction but did not go as far as I would have liked. I felt that he could have written more about style, sound, and in particular rhythm (especially as technical brilliance is such an important part of Ovidian verse in general, and does so much to enliven and give point to the *Ars* in particular). So, for example, he passes over the (mock) solemn spondees at 59–60 and 159–60; he suggests that in 65 the speed is brought out by the weak caesura but fails to note the flurry of short syllables after it in the rest of the couplet; and he does not remark on how the list of poets at 329–48 is embellished by euphony and stylish touches which artfully demonstrate the attractions of poetic skill even as Ovid is recommending poetry. In connection with the first couplet ('arma dedi Danais in Amazonas; arma supersunt/ quae tibi dem et turmae, Penthesilea, tuae'), G. perceives a reference to the opening of the *Aeneid* in 'arma', and this seems very probable, as it is the first word in the book. But it also seems very probable that there is more ingenious sport with 'arma virumque cano' there: Ovid has arms for men (but for Greeks rather than a Trojan, and for use against Trojan allies); he tops Virgil with a second 'arma'; then he moves on to arms for women; and it will hardly be coincidental that this introduction (ll. 1–6) begins with 'arma' and ends with 'viri'. G. spots the verbal play (in 'armatis' and 'nudas') in the fifth line ('non erat armatis aequum concurrere nudas') but not that at 15–16 ('est pia Penelope lustris errante duobus/ et totidem lustris bella gerente viro'), where 'errare' of the lover of Calypso and Circe surely hints at 'stray from the path of virtue' (OLD s.v. 6), in contrast to 'pia Penelope'. G. notes that at 339–48. Ovid slyly devotes as many distichs to his own poetry as he does to the other poets listed earlier at 329–38, but note that by juxtaposing five couplets on himself with one on Virgil (337–8) he is cheekily privileging his own erotic verse over the renowned national epic. So too in a generally splendid handling of the myth of Procris at 687–746. G. mentions that there is extensive retardation there, but not that the effect is to build tension and tease (about the precise form that the story will take); nor does

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he comment on how Ovid tantalizes his readers by holding back the standard digression until such a late point in the book.

Sometimes G. does not even start to go in the right direction but totally ignores topics which do merit consideration. For example, he does not address an important point of Ovidian criticism at 59–78—the question of why Ovid goes on so long there (is this just an instance of the 'nimium amator ingenii sui' running on and on, or is he mischievously holding back the promised 'praecepta' by coming out with obvious remarks at length, or what?). G. misses some typically provocative flippancy too, in 86 (the conception of the revered founder of the Roman race used as an argument for promiscuity) and at 248 and 785–6 (jokes about the devastating tactics of the Parthians, who had killed so many Romans, and against whom a campaign was probably being conducted at the time of writing). He overlooks the diverting allusion with a twist to 1.509 ('forma viros neglecta decet') at 3.153 ('et neglecta decet multas coma'), where what seems initially a parallel in the case of females is suddenly turned into simulated neglect in the rest of the couplet, with the 'praeceptor' now actually recommending artifice rather than decrying it, as at 1.505–24. Another bit of cleverness escapes G. at 535, where Ovid, while recommending poets as lovers, speaks highly of a great benefit that they bestow on women: 'nos facimus placitae late praeconia formae'. This represents a pawky reversal, a positive spin to the earlier use of this phrase at *Amores* 3.12.9 ('quid enim formae praeconia feci?'). There the poet had depicted such a proclamation of female beauty as a bad thing (because it brought his girl many lovers), and he did so in a poem in which he doubted the value of verse, claiming that poets are liars and should not be believed (so there is subtle undermining of his point here and of his claim in 539 that poets are not underhand).

It would be churlish and unfair to continue with niggling criticisms when G.'s commentary has so very much to offer. Let me conclude by stressing the immense value of what is in fact a major piece of research and an indispensible addition to scholarship on Ovid.

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TRISTIA II

I. CICCARELLI: *Commento al II libro dei* Tristia *di Ovidio*. (Scrinia 21.) Pp. 304. Bari: Edipuglia, 2003. Paper, €16. ISBN: 88-7228-362-0.

This handsome and inexpensive commentary on Ovid's 'apologia operis sui' contains a seven and a half page introduction, Luck's text with some variations, 235 pages of commentary, a brief bibliography, and an index of passages cited. The obvious question to ask of any commentary on the Tristia is 'does it replace Luck's standard work completed in 1977?' While C.'s *oeuvre* is in many ways a solid piece of work, I cannot say that it does. It goes far beyond Luck in that it interprets more, it deals with more individual word meanings and tries to evaluate all the rhetorical figures found in the text. Still, that does not mean that the information provided is more useful than what Luck gives.

The introduction is as sparse as the commentary is long. The largest section deals with the contradiction between adulation and polemics *vis-à-vis* the emperor, a theme which recurs in the commentary, e.g. p. 107. Contradictions are part of life and hardly reason for the rampant over-interpretation to which they give rise these days. Besides,

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