

**THE LIVES OF OVID:
SECRETS, EXILE AND *GALANTERIE* IN WRITING OF THE
‘*GRAND SIÈCLE*’**

**Helena Taylor
St Anne’s College**

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Supervised by Dr. Kate Tunstall

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, TRINITY TERM 2013

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Short Abstract

This study examines the constructions and uses of the figure of Ovid in French writing of the second half of the seventeenth century, and explores how they were modulated by contemporary aesthetic and cultural concerns. As the influence of Ovid's poetry made itself felt in various ways – in the mythopoeia of the Sun-King and the fashionable *galant* salons – interest in the story of Ovid's life blossomed. This, I argue, was facilitated by new forms of 'life-writing', the *nouvelle historique* and *histoire galante*, and fuelled in unexpected ways by the escalating *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*. Research has been done on the reception and influence of Ovid's poetry in this period, but little attention has been paid to the figure of Ovid. This thesis offers a new perspective and, informed by recent renewed interest in life-writing, argues that analysis of biographical depictions is vital for establishing a coherent picture of the uses of Ovid in the 'Grand Siècle'.

I explore a diverse range of textual descriptions of Ovid (Vies; prefatory material attached to translations and editions of his work; correspondence; *dialogues des morts*; biographical dictionaries and historical novels), organized according to their different, though intersecting, ways of writing about this poet. He was constructed as a historical figure, an author, a fictional character and a 'parallèle' – a point of identification or contrast for contemporary writers. Through close analysis of a multi-authored corpus, this thesis identifies and examines two instances of paradox: though an ancient poet, Ovid became emblematic of *Moderne* movements and was used to explore aspects of *galanterie*; and, though his creative work was mobilized in the service of royal propaganda, Ovid, as a figure for the exiled poet, was also used to express anxieties about the sway of power and the machinations and pitfalls of the world of the court.

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Long Abstract

This thesis analyses the constructions and uses of the figure of Ovid in French writing of the second half of the seventeenth century, and explores how they were shaped by contemporary aesthetic and cultural concerns. This was a period when Ovid not only had a pronounced presence in literary and visual culture, but the nature of that presence was also undergoing dramatic and unprecedented change. Myths from Ovid's poetry were mobilized in the service of the intense 'fabrication' of Louis XIV's image, decorating palaces and gardens, and providing the themes for fêtes and parades. This 'goût pour Ovide'¹ extended to the ballets and operas performed at the King's court, to the salons of the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* and to translations of Ovid's poetry offered to the Dauphin. Beyond the court, Ovid was increasingly assimilated into the fashionable *mondain* and *galant* circles. His *Metamorphoses* were published serially, no longer restricted to the format of the commentary-laden, learned, folio tomes of the early decades of the century; his *Heroides*, love-letters from abandoned women to their erstwhile lovers, provided the model for the *galant* love-letter that flourished in the later seventeenth century; and the unprecedented attention paid to his love-poetry, the *Amores*, the *Ars Amatoria* and the *Remedia Amoris* placed him firmly, though not unambiguously, as the poet of sensual love in the complex cultural phenomenon of *galanterie*.

As his presence made itself felt in these various ways, a series of narratives and plays about the story of Ovid's life emerged. There were several plays, two of which, Gabriel Gilbert's opéra-ballet, *Les Amours d'Ovide, pastorale héroïque* (1663)² and Louis Fuselier's opéra-ballet *Les Amours Déguisés* (1713),³ are extant, and one, Jean Racine's *Les Amours*

¹ Henri Bardon, 'Sur l'influence d'Ovide en France au XVIIe siècle', *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Ovidiano*, 2 (1959), 69-83, p. 69.

² Gabriel Gilbert, *Les Amours d'Ovide* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1663), first performed: June, 1663, Hôtel de Bourgogne.

³ Louis Fuselier, *Les amours déguisés* (Paris: P. Ribou, 1735), first performed: August, 1713, Théâtre du Palais-Royal.

d'Ovide (1661) has since been lost. His story was also told in novels: Madame de Villedieu's *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste* (1672-8)⁴ proved so successful that the subject matter was taken up again by Louis de Mailly in *La Rome Galante* (1695)⁵ and by Anne de la Roche-Guilhen in the *Histoire des favorites* (1697).⁶ The existence of these narrative versions of his life singled Ovid out from other classical poets,⁷ and formed the starting point for this project: why was his story of interest? And what do these changes in how Ovid was perceived suggest about wider cultural concerns?

In order to build up a coherent picture of Ovid, it was necessary to establish a broader literary and historical understanding of the traditions of characterizing Ovid. This thesis thus surveys and analyses the historiographical tradition of 'Lives of Ovid', examining medieval and Humanist Latin *Vitae*, French *Vies* and biographical dictionaries, as well as the poems Ovid himself wrote from exile in which he gives his own account of his life. It also considers how Ovid was characterized in the prefaces attached to translations and editions of his work, and in the *dialogues des morts* and 'parallèles' of ancient and modern figures that flourished at this time.

There have been studies on the presence and influence of Ovid's poetry in this period;⁸ and particular attention has been paid to the assimilation of his poetry into the *galant* culture that was thriving in the latter part of the century,⁹ notably in the recent study by Marie-Claire Chatelain, *Ovide savant, Ovide galant: Ovide en France dans la seconde moitié du dix-septième siècle* (2008).¹⁰ Chatelain's work is a comprehensive and wide-ranging analysis of all aspects of Ovidian reception (such as his influence on Guilleragues, Racine and La Fontaine); however, she pays only brief attention to the figure of Ovid. The aim of this thesis is to offer a different perspective by combining analysis of the presence of Ovid's poetry with

⁴ Madame de Villedieu, *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1672-8).

⁵ Louis de Mailly, *La Rome Galante ou Histoire secrète sous les règnes de Jules César et d'Auguste* (Paris: J. Guignard, 1695).

⁶ Anne de la Roche-Guilhen, *Histoire des favorites* (Amsterdam: P. Marret, 1697).

⁷ Later Catullus and Tibullus received similar treatment: Jean de la Chapelle, *Les amours de Catulle par le Sr. D. L. C.*, 4 vols. (Paris: C. Barbin, 1680-81) and Jean de la Chapelle, *Les amours de Tibulle par M. de la Chapelle*, 3 vols. (Paris: F. Delaulne, 1712-13).

⁸ Jean-Pierre Néraudau, 'Ovide au chateau de Versailles, sous Louis XIV', *Colloque Présences d'Ovide*, ed. by Raymond Chevallier (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1982), pp. 323-342; Henri Bardon, 'Ovide et le grand roi', *Les Etudes Classiques*, 4 (1957), 401-416 and 'Sur l'influence d'Ovide en France au XVIIe siècle', *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Ovidiano* 2 (1959), 69-83; Benoît Bolduc, *Andromède au rocher: fortune théâtrale en France et en Italie 1587-1712* (Florence: Olschki, 2002); Wes Williams '“For your eyes only”: Corneille's view of Andromeda', *Classical Philology*, 102 (2007), 110-23; *Isis, Narcisse, Psyché entre lumières et romantisme: mythe et écritures, écritures du mythe*, ed. by Pascale Auraix-Jonchière and Catherine Volpilhac-Auger (Clemont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2000); *Lectures d'Ovide* ed. by Emmanuel Bury (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003).

⁹ Stéphanie Loubère, *L'Art d'Aimer au siècle des lumières* (Oxford: SVEC, 2007); Delphine Denis, *Le Parnasse galant* (Paris: H. Champion, 2001); Alain Génétiot, *Poétique du loisir mondain, de Voiture à La Fontaine* (Paris: H. Champion, 1997).

¹⁰ Marie-Claire Chatelain, *Ovide savant, Ovide galant: Ovide en France dans la seconde moitié du XVII siècle* (Paris: H. Champion, 2008).

exploration of biographical portraits of this poet. Taking my cue from renewed interest in life-writing, evident from studies such as James Ker's *The Deaths of Seneca* (2009)¹¹ and José-Luis Diaz's *L'homme et l'œuvre* (2011),¹² I argue that analysis of biographical depictions is an essential form of criticism, crucial for achieving a coherent picture of the uses of Ovid in the 'Grand Siècle'.

While I add to the recent scholarship on the reception of the figure of Ovid, notably Jennifer Ingleheart's edited collection, *Two thousand years of solitude: exile after Ovid* (2011),¹³ which traces his influence across periods, continents and genres, my thesis also has a further intention. I suggest that the particularities of the cultural climate of late seventeenth-century France determined a certain interest in Ovid – one that warrants study and attention. This moment in French history was marked by an intense centralization of power, with which came a strong sense of, and direction over, national culture; by a highly fractious and creative quarrel over the place and authority of the classics; and by the emergence of a new class of readers and writers, heralding new literary fashions and genres, in particular, the *histoire galante*, or *nouvelle historique* – historical novels that freely mixed history and fiction. This thesis explores how the figure of Ovid was used to articulate and disturb issues of contemporary debate.

Through close analysis of a wide-ranging corpus, I place constructions of Ovid within these changing conditions of cultural production. Informed by recent work on the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*,¹⁴ I upset some of the perceived dichotomies of ancient and modern by looking at instances of ancient-modern hybridity in translation, in the phenomenon of 'l'antiquité galante' and through parallels between Ovid and contemporary figures. I examine different methods of writing about the poet's life, from the 'historical' to the 'fictional' – and use Ovid's story as a test case to explore changes and developments in historiography particular to this period. I place these debates themselves within a wider cultural framework and show how characterizations of Ovid are modulated by questions about translation, taste and the role of women in intellectual activity. This study identifies and explores two instances of paradox: that Ovid was constructed in such a way that he, though an ancient poet, was used to explore the richness and complexity of certain *Moderne* and female-orientated movements, such as *galanterie*. And, while his mythology might have been used and

¹¹ James Ker, *The Deaths of Seneca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹² José-Luis Diaz, *L'homme et l'œuvre* (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 2011).

¹³ *Two thousand years of solitude: exile after Ovid*, ed. by Jennifer Ingleheart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁴ Larry H. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: literature and history in early modern France* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011); *La galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Nathalie Grande and Claudine Nèdelec (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012).

exploited in the service of the King's image, Ovid's story was also used to express anxieties about the corruption and machinations of the world of the court.

My approach to this project was based on certain methodological decisions, many of which grew out of difficulties and problems faced during its execution. The first main problem was defining my corpus. While I have tried to range as widely and inclusively as possible, I do not claim to offer synthesis or analysis of every mention of the person of Ovid. Instead, I have chosen texts which demonstrate a broad range of methods for constructing Ovid (as a historical figure, an author, a fictional character and a 'parallèle'), as this allows for scrutiny of the interplay between genres. I have also chosen objects which, mostly, contain sustained descriptions of this figure, as this affords full exploration of the complexity of how his story is told, and, in some cases, examination of the extent of identification between the writer and Ovid. The second methodological issue faced was a question of perspective; I argue that the seventeenth-century French 'Ovide' is a construct based on the nature of the editions and translations of his work in circulation, informed, to varying degrees, by the existing scholarship on his life. In this respect, I have tried as far as possible to use endogenous categories, and to base my analysis on the conditions and views of the time, rather than on contemporary arguments about Ovid, which are shaped by modern critical editions and scholarship.

The thesis begins with an enquiry into the historical figure of Ovid, tracing the historiographical tradition of narrating his life, which dates back to Ovid's own account of himself in his exile poetry. I look at *Vitae* and *Vies* written in both Latin and French, from late antiquity, the medieval period and Renaissance as well as the seventeenth century. My focal point is the article 'Ovide' from Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (first ed. 1697): the thoroughness and erudition of Bayle's approach means he includes many of these *Vitae* and *Vies* in his historical survey. However, Bayle's extremely subtle and erudite article is not simply used in the service of filling in history; through close reading of his rhetoric and argument, I show that he identifies the complexities in the story of Ovid's life, and uses these to pose questions about historiography. Bayle's argument is based on close reading of Ovid's exile poetry but also shaped and informed by knowledge of all of Ovid's works.

In my second chapter, taking my cue from the important relationship established by Bayle between representations of the figure Ovid and readings of his works, I offer an overview of Ovid's presence in print culture from the Renaissance to the period of Louis XIV's reign, covering the Latin editions of his poetry, his presence on the curriculum, school editions of his poetry, *galant* translations and his wider influence on *mondain* culture. I trace

the changes in how he was published, and the wider trends this reveals, to complement the prevailing view that there was something particular, concentrated and unprecedented about the interest shown in Ovid's love poetry in the last decades of the century; this allows for examination of the nature of his assimilation into *galant* culture.

I explore the question of identification between Ovid and cultural movements, such as *galanterie*, further in my third chapter. Here I look at the translations of Ovid's poetry produced throughout the century, including the work of the *belles infidèles* translators of the 1620s;¹⁵ the *burlesque* 'travestissements' of the middle of the century,¹⁶ and the *galant* versions of the later part of the century.¹⁷ I pay particular attention to how translators 'characterised' 'Ovide' in a range of prefatory material (*vie*, *avertissement*, laudatory poems). By also considering how Ovid was portrayed in *dialogues des morts*, namely Gabriel Guéret's *Le Parnasse Réformé* (1669),¹⁸ and Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier's *Le triomphe de Madame Deshoulières, reçue dixième muse au Parnasse* (1694),¹⁹ I show that Ovid was often constructed as a figure who embodies innovation and change, emblematic of movements concerned with departure from established traditions.

In my fourth chapter I consider the fictional versions of 'Ovide' in the *histoires galantes* by Villedieu, Mailly and La Roche-Guilhen. Here I show that Ovide was characterised as a 'galant' poet, and demonstrate that elements of Ovid's story made him easily transportable to *mondain* sociable literary culture. I suggest there was also something more sombre and politicised in these accounts of Ovid's exile, which have been read as references to the contemporary political-literary climate, with 'Ovide' standing for Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's disgraced finance minister. Both Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen exploit the political connotations of Ovid's position as an exiled poet to explore the

¹⁵ *Les Epîtres d'Ovide, traduites en prose française par les srs Du Perron, De la Brosse, De Lingendes et Hédelin* (Paris: 1615); Claude Bachet, sieur de Mézeriac, *Les Epîtres d'Ovide traduites en vers français* (J. Tainturier, Bourg-en-Bresse, 1626); L.-J. Bellefleur, *Les Amours d'Ovide, avec les réceptes aux dames pour l'embellissement de leur visage et les Epîtres de Sapho à Phaon et de Canacé à son frère Macarée, traduits en prose française* (Paris: J. Petit-Pas, 1621); Nicolas Renouard, *L'art d'aimer fidèlement traduit par le sieur Nasse divisé en trois livres avec les remèdes contre l'amour* (Lyon: Jean Lautret, 1625); Jean Binard, *Les Regrets d'Ovide, traduits en prose française* (Paris: H. Sara, 1625).

¹⁶ Louis Richer, *L'Ovide Bouffon, ou les Métamorphoses travesties en vers burlesques* (Paris: T. du Bray, 1649-52); Charles Dassoucy, *L'Ovide en belle humeur* (Paris: C. de Sercy, 1650); *L'Hérato-technie, ou l'Art d'aimer d'Ovide, en vers burlesques, par le sieur D. L. B. M.* (Paris: D. Pelé, 1650); DuFour de la Crespelière, *L'art d'aimer d'Ovide avec les remèdes de l'amour nouvellement traduits en vers burlesques* (Paris: E. Loyson, 1662).

¹⁷ Thomas Corneille, *Pièces choisies d'Ovide traduites en vers français* (Paris: G. de Luynes, 1670); Nicolas Villennes, *Les Elégies choisies des amours d'Ovide* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1668); *Les Œuvres d'Ovide divisées en neuf tomes, traduction nouvelle par Monsieur de Martignac* (Lyon: H. Mollin, 1697); Michel de Marolles, *L'art d'aimer* (Paris: P. Lamy, 1660); Le Président Nicole, *L'Art d'aimer d'Ovide traduit en vers français* (Paris: C. de Sercy, 1668); Louis Ferrier de la Martinière, *Préceptes Galants: poème* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1678); Jean Barrin, *Les Epîtres et toutes les élégies amoureuses d'Ovide* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1676).

¹⁸ Gabriel Guéret, *Le Parnasse réformé* (Paris: T. Jolly, 1669).

¹⁹ Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier, *Le triomphe de Madame Deshoulières, reçue dixième muse au Parnasse, dédiée à Mlle de Scudéry* (Paris: C. Mazuel, 1694).

corruptions and passions at all levels of the court; I argue that this political gesture can also be found in their very deliberate mixture of history and fiction which questions the processes behind official historiography.

I explore the question of alignment between Ovid and contemporary figures of disgrace further in my fifth and final chapter. Here I treat the comparisons made by Dominique Bouhours in his *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1689) between Ovid and two exiles of Louis XIV: Fouquet and Bussy-Rabutin.²⁰ Bussy himself also makes use of this ‘parallèle’ in his self-fashioning *Mémoires* and *Correspondance*. I identify differences between the two French writers’ uses of Ovid, showing how he can be used both for ends that serve and praise and King, and for ends that are more ambiguous.

My corpus is varied and includes texts which might not usually be looked at in the same study, but they are united by more than just their portrayals of Ovid. They are all interested in the ancient past, and how to write about it, in a culture shaped by highly self-conscious confrontations between ancient and modern; and, in different ways, they use Ovid to engage in the arguments surrounding women, taste and translation that these confrontations provoke.

²⁰ Dominique Bouhours, *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1689).

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NOTE: All spellings and titles have been modernised

INTRODUCTION

In Stanley Kubrick's 1999 film, *Eyes Wide Shut*, a Hungarian admirer uses Ovid to woo the beautiful Alice, played by Nicole Kidman. He asks, sipping from her glass, a seduction technique recommended by the Roman poet, whether she has read Ovid's *Art of Love*; she leans forward, and, warding him off, in a deep slow voice replies: 'didn't he end up all by himself, crying his eyes out in some place with a very bad climate?'¹

About ten years later, in 2012, at the Cooper Union in New York, under the auspices of 'The Arthur Miller Freedom to Write Lecture', Salman Rushdie called upon Ovid as a victim of censorship, comparing him to the contemporary Chinese artist, Ai Weiwei – and implicitly to himself.² Rushdie asserted:

Censorship is not good for art, and it is even worse for artists themselves: the work of Ai Weiwei survives; the artist himself has an increasingly difficult life. The poet Ovid was banished to the Black Sea by a displeased Augustus Caesar and spent the rest of his life in a little Hell-hole, a village called Tomis, begging to be returned to Rome. He never was, he died in exile, but the poetry of Ovid has outlived the Roman Empire.³

A lover whose passionate sensuality is reduced to pathetic lament when cast far away from the object, or perhaps objects, of his desires? Or the great ur-exile, a banished poet who stands for censorship in a highly politicized struggle between free expression and state control? A figure with whom the film-maker, writer, or lover – self-aggrandizing, oppressed, sensuous – can identify? Over 2000 years after his exile in 8 AD to Tomis (modern-day Constanța in Romania), from where he wrote two major collections of poems,

¹ *Eyes Wide shut*, dir. by Stanley Kubrick (Warner Bros, 1999).

² Rushdie's identification with Ovid is made explicit in essays included in Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary homelands: essays and criticism 1981-1991* (London: Granta, 1991). For further reading, see also Duncan F. Kennedy, 'Recent Receptions of Ovid', in *Cambridge companion to Ovid*, ed. by Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 320-335.

³ Salman Rushdie, 'Arthur Miller Freedom to Write Lecture', 23/05/2012. <http://www.wnyc.org/articles/talk-me/2012/may/23/rushdie-talk-wraps-pen-festival/>.

Tristia (Sorrows) and the *Epistulae ex Ponto* (Letters from the Black Sea), Ovid, the great poet of changing forms, has himself become a Protean figure.⁴ The author of the *Metamorphoses* has not, however, simply been metamorphosed from one entity to another: Ovid has many different lives, is recast in different lights, is used, as is evident from these two examples, for different ends. Choice details from this poet's life, what Roland Barthes calls 'biographèmes', are emphasised, exploited, or embellished according to the context and intentions of the narrator.⁵

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Ovid's story has been retold and reworked in several accounts. The Romanian writer Vintilă Horia's prize-winning French novel, *Dieu est né en exil* (1960),⁶ is an imagined autobiographical account of Ovid's exile experience told as a discovery of faith – and Ovid has a considerable presence in Romanian literary culture;⁷ the Australian writer David Malouf's *An Imaginary Life* (1978) conceives of Ovid's exile as a journey away from the corruption of the civilised world towards a sort of pre-civilised wilderness.⁸ Northern Irish poet, Derek Mahon, explores questions of dislocation and artistic frustration in his poem 'Ovid in Tomis' (1980).⁹ In *Die Letzte Welt* (1988), translated as *The Last World: with an Ovidian repertory* (1995), Austrian writer, Christoph Ransmayr, imagines the story of Cotta, Ovid's friend and addressee of six of the *Epistulae ex Ponto* as he travels to Tomis to seek out Ovid and instead finds a strange

⁴ Technically he was 'relegated' – this differed from a sentence of exile as he retained his citizenship and property. He wrote a further, lesser known, 'exile work': the long invective poem, the *Ibis*.

⁵ Descriptions of choice, illustrative incidents in the life of an intellectual figure, rather than a comprehensive biography, are defined as 'biographèmes' by Barthes: 'si j'étais écrivain et mort comme j'aimerais que ma vie se réduisît, par les soins d'un biographe amical et désinvolte à quelques détails, à quelques goûts, à quelques inflexions, disons des 'biographèmes'. Roland Barthes, *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (Paris: Seuil, 1971), p. 14.

⁶ Vintilă Horia, *Dieu est né en exil* (Paris: Fayard, 1960). It won the Prix Goncourt in 1960.

⁷ In 1898 a literary review, 'Ovidiu', was founded in Constanța; and several poems and plays about Ovid's time in exile were published and performed from the late nineteenth-century to the mid twentieth century. Romanian stamps in 1957 and 1960 both included an image of the Ovid statue at Constanța. See 'Chapter 7: The Romanian Connection', in Theodore Ziolkowski, *Ovid and the Moderns* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), pp. 112-124.

⁸ David Malouf, *An Imaginary Life* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1978). See I.G. Pana, 'The Tomis Complex: versions of exile in Australian literature', *World Literature Today*, 67 (1993), 523-32.

⁹ Derek Mahon, 'Ovid in Tomis', from *The Collected Poems* (Loughcrew: The Gallery Press, 1999), pp.157-162.

world peopled by figures from the *Metamorphoses*.¹⁰ ‘From the Ovid Complex’ is the title of a series of poems included in Patrick McGuinness’ recent collection, *Jilted City* (2010),¹¹ written as if by Liviu Campanu, an exiled Romanian poet; exploiting the Tomis-Constanța parallel, McGuinness tells a new version of Ovid’s story, evoking the lament and loneliness of exile.

Attention has also been paid to the figure of Ovid by recent scholarship. This is in part thanks to a revival of academic interest in his exile poetry, which had been somewhat disregarded, long overshadowed by Ovid’s other major works.¹² Such interest coincides with a turn in criticism towards the legacy and careers of classical writers.¹³ Raphael Lyne identifies two Ovidian personae, the lover and the exile, and traces their influence from the Renaissance to the modern period, in England and beyond, in his contribution to the *Cambridge Companion to Ovid: ‘Love and exile after Ovid’* (2002).¹⁴ Jennifer Ingleheart’s rich collection, *Two Thousand Years of Solitude: Exile after Ovid* (2011) explores Ovid’s influence as a figure for the exiled poet, bringing together studies on Dante, Petrarch, Du Bellay, Hugo, Marvell, Heaney, Walcott and Bob Dylan to name but a few, covering the personal, political, postcolonial, and aesthetic dimensions of Ovid’s reception.¹⁵ Elsewhere, in his essay on Northern Irish poetry, ‘Ulster Ovids’, John Kerrigan has argued that Ovid is used to articulate political and linguistic experiences of exile.¹⁶ Theodore Ziolkowski has treated the reception of the figure of Ovid in writing of the twentieth century in

¹⁰ Christophe Ransmayr, *The Last World: with an Ovidian repertory*, trans. by John E. Woods (New York: Grove Press 1995).

¹¹ Patrick McGuinness, ‘from *The Ovid Complex*’, *Jilted City* (London: Carcanet, 2010), pp. 63-67.

¹² For example, Stephen Hinds, ‘Booking the return trip: Ovid and *Tristia* I’, *Proceedings of the Classical Philology Society*, 31 (1985), 13-35; Gareth D. Williams, *Banished Voices: Readings in Ovid’s Exile Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Jennifer Ingleheart, *A commentary on Ovid, Tristia, Book 2* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Jennifer Ingleheart, ‘What the Poet Saw: Ovid, the error and the theme of sight in *Tristia* 2’, *Materiali e discussioni per l’analisi dei testi classici*, 56 (2006), 63-86.

¹³ James Ker, *The Deaths of Seneca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); *Classical Literary Careers and their Reception*, ed. by Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁴ Raphael Lyne, ‘Love and exile after Ovid’, in *Cambridge Companion*, ed. by Philip Hardie, pp. 288-300.

¹⁵ *Two thousand years of solitude: exile after Ovid*, ed. by Jennifer Ingleheart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁶ John Kerrigan, ‘Ulster Ovids’, in *The Chosen Ground: Essays on the Contemporary Poetry of Northern Ireland*, ed. by Neil Corcoran (Brigend: Seren Books, 1992), pp. 237-270.

considerable detail in *Ovid and the Moderns* (2005),¹⁷ concluding that ‘unlike any other figure from classical antiquity, the person of Ovid has entered and established for himself a conspicuous place in modern European literature’.¹⁸

It was not only the modern period that was interested in ‘the person of Ovid’. In this thesis I will show that there was a long tradition of constructing Ovid that attributed to him some of the characteristics identified in modern writing: exile, love, metamorphosis. Many of the studies mentioned above span different contexts, languages and historical moments, and are extremely useful in an assessment of the evolution of the figure of Ovid, but they do not allow for an examination of the particularity of each context or for explorations of the specific uses of these Ovid ‘avatars’. This thesis will take a different approach. I will focus on the story of Ovid’s life in the France of Louis XIV to explore what the construction of this figure reveals about the period, and to consider the different modulations of ‘love’, ‘exile’ and ‘metamorphosis’ in this specific context. This was a period when Ovid not only had a pronounced presence in culture, but the nature of that presence was also undergoing dramatic and unprecedented change. The King’s image was fashioned using Ovidian myth, stories from his poetry decorated palaces and gardens, were used in opera, ballets, and theatre; and translations, versions and imitations of his poetry were adapted to suit *mondain* and *galant* contemporary tastes.

This was also a period when a new kind of interest was being shown in Ovid’s life. Interest in poets’ lives was nothing new by this point, but this had previously been confined to erudite Latin *Vitae* attached to editions of the author’s work or recounted as part of a survey of the ‘Life and Works’ of a thinker or writer, based on the model provided by Diogenes Laertius’ *Lives and Opinions of the Eminent Philosophers*. From the 1660s, Ovid’s life was told in accounts that spanned a variety of genres and that no longer served

¹⁷ Ziolkowski, Part II, ‘Ovid and the Exiles’, in *Ovid and the Moderns*, pp. 99-146.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 145.

to introduce his poetry. There were several plays, two of which, Gabriel Gilbert's opéra-ballet, *Les Amours d'Ovide, pastorale héroïque* (1663),¹⁹ and Louis Fuselier's opéra-ballet *Les Amours Déguisés* (1713),²⁰ are extant, and one of which, Jean Racine's *Les Amours d'Ovide* (1661), has since been lost.²¹ This interest seems to be a French phenomenon: in England, Aston Cokain wrote *The Tragedy of Ovid* (1662),²² but this was the first and only play to tell the story of Ovid's life.²³ In France, his story was also told in novels: Madame de Villedieu wrote *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste* (1672-3),²⁴ which in turn proved so successful that this subject matter was taken up again by Louis de Mailly in *La Rome Galante* (1695),²⁵ and by Anne de la Roche-Guilhen in *Histoire des favorites* (1697).²⁶ Dominique Bouhours offered a sustained comparison between Bussy-Rabutin and Ovid in his *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1689);²⁷ Gabriel Guéret used Ovid as a key spokesperson in *Le Parnasse Réformé* (1669),²⁸ and he featured as a central character in Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier's *Le triomphe de Madame Deshoulières, reçue dixième muse au Parnasse* (1694).²⁹

No other ancient poet received this treatment; the mere existence of these re-incarnations must be noted and scrutinized. Why Ovid? Why at this point in time? In this thesis I will pursue these related questions in order to understand what the figure of Ovid is being used to say or do by these authors. This requires that I trace the presence of the figure of Ovid more widely: I do so by exploring the historiographical tradition of Ovid's life; by

¹⁹ Gabriel Gilbert, *Les Amours d'Ovide* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1663), first performed: June, 1663, Hôtel de Bourgogne.

²⁰ Louis Fuselier, *Les amours déguisés* (Paris: P. Ribou, 1735), first performed: August, 1713, Théâtre du Palais-Royal.

²¹ This title was conferred in the nineteenth century. Racine mentions this play in his letter to Abbé Le Vasseur, June 1661. Jean Racine, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Raymond Picard, 2 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), II, p. 397.

²² Aston Cokain, *The Tragedy of Ovid* (London: P. Stephens Jr, 1662).

²³ He did appear as a character in George Chapman's poem 'Ovid's banquet of Sense' (London: J. Roberts, 1595); and as a character in Ben Jonson's play *The Poetaster* (London: M. Loynes, 1601); neither tell the story of his life.

²⁴ Madame de Villedieu, *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1672-8).

²⁵ Louis de Mailly, *La Rome Galante ou Histoire secrète sous les règnes de Jules César et d'Auguste* (Paris: J. Guignard, 1695).

²⁶ Anne de la Roche-Guilhen, *Histoire des favorites* (Amsterdam: P. Marret, 1697).

²⁷ Dominique Bouhours, *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1689).

²⁸ Gabriel Guéret, *Le Parnasse réformé* (Paris: T. Jolly, 1669).

²⁹ Marie-Jeanne L'Héritier, *Le triomphe de Madame Deshoulières, reçue dixième muse au Parnasse* (Paris: C. Mazuel, 1694).

surveying the place and nature of his poetry in print culture (both Latin and French); and by analyzing his characterization and use in the prefatory material attached to translations of his poetry. I place my examination in the context of two interrelated movements which I argue are crucial to the interest shown in Ovid at this time: changing attitudes towards antiquity, which fuelled enthusiasm for Ovid in surprising ways, and developments in historiography which facilitated new methods of ‘life-writing’.

*

The scale of Ovid’s influence in this period is attested by the sheer number of studies devoted to its analysis. Studies by Jean-Pierre Néraudau³⁰ and Henri Bardon³¹ have considered the role of Ovidian mythology in the fabrication of Louis XIV, the ‘Sun- King’, and treat its use in royal architecture and ceremony; other studies have focused on the fate of a particular Ovidian myth, such as Perseus and Andromeda,³² Narcissus,³³ Arachne,³⁴ Diana and Actaeon,³⁵ and Philomela.³⁶ Others still have considered the place of a particular poem: Stéphanie Loubère includes a chapter on the reception and uses of Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria* in the second half of the seventeenth century to introduce her study of this poem in eighteenth-century France (2007);³⁷ Delphine Denis has a chapter on the rewritings of

³⁰ Jean-Pierre Néraudau, *L’Olympe du roi-soleil: mythologie et idéologie royale au grand siècle* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1986); Jean-Pierre Néraudau, ‘Ovide au chateau de Versailles, sous Louis XIV’, *Colloque Présences d’Ovide*, ed. by Raymond Chevallier (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1982), pp. 323-342.

³¹ Henri Bardon, ‘Ovide et le grand roi’, *Les Etudes Classiques*, 4 (1957), 401-416; and ‘Sur l’influence d’Ovide en France au XVIIe siècle,’ *Atti del Convegno Internazionale Ovidiano*, 2 (1959), 69-83.

³² Benoît Bolduc, *Andromède au rocher: fortune théâtrale en France et en Italie 1587-1712* (Florence: Olschki, 2002); Wes Williams ‘“For your eyes only”: Corneille’s view of Andromeda’, *Classical Philology*, 102 (2007), 110-23.

³³ *Isis, Narcisse, Psyché entre lumières et romantisme: mythe et écritures, écritures du mythe*, ed. by Pascale Auraix-Jonchière and Catherine Volpilhac-Auger (Clemont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise-Pascal, 2000).

³⁴ Sylvie Ballestra-Puech, *Métamorphose d’Arachne: l’artiste en araignée dans la littérature occidentale* (Geneva: Droz, 2006).

³⁵ Carl C. Schlam, ‘Diana and Actaeon: Metamorphoses of a Myth’, *Classical Antiquity*, 3 (1984), 82-110.

³⁶ Terence Cave, ‘“Tu facto loquar”: Philomela’s afterlives in Rabelais, Ronsard and Shakespeare’, in *Retrospectives: essays in literature, Poetics and Cultural History by Terence Cave*, ed. by Wes Williams and Neil Kenny (London: Legenda, 2009), pp. 76-86.

³⁷ Stéphanie Loubère, ‘Chapitre 2: ‘Fortunes et influences de l’*Ars amatoria* au dix-septième siècle’, in *L’Art d’Aimer au siècle des lumières* (Oxford: SVEC, 2007), pp. 39-68.

the *Ars Amatoria* in her book, *Le Parnasse galant* (2003);³⁸ and Alain Génétiot considers the uses of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in the salon culture of the mid-seventeenth century in his study, *Poétique du loisir mondain* (1997).³⁹ All three critics note that Ovid's poetry was assimilated into the new cultural movements and styles blossoming at this time. A recent publication of collected essays, *Lectures d'Ovide* (2003), has considered Ovid's influence and presence in the textual and visual culture in France from the Middle Ages to the present day.⁴⁰ All these studies are essential for building a picture of Ovid's reception in this period, but none take Ovid as their focus point – or those that do span such historical time frames that it is difficult to construct a complete picture of his place in this specific historical period. This specificity has been achieved by Marie-Claire Chatelain in her recent book-length study: *Ovide savant, Ovide galant: Ovide en France dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle* (2008).⁴¹

Chatelain offers an extremely detailed and comprehensive account of Ovid's presence and influence in the second half of the seventeenth century. She argues that a shift occurred in the course of these fifty years whereby the 'savant' Ovid reserved for erudite and predominantly male cultural circles was transformed into a key figure for an evolving 'galant' culture. Chatelain surveys Ovid's place in literary culture and on the curriculum, focusing on the 'lectures critiques' that scrutinised or praised Ovid's work, before devoting the majority of her study (parts two and three) to Ovid's influence on the 'galant' writing of Bussy-Rabutin, Benserade and La Fontaine, and on the elegy and pathos of Guilleragues' *Lettres Portugaises* (1669) and of Racine's tragedies. She includes one brief chapter on the

³⁸ Delphine Denis, 'Les Arts d'Aimer', in *Le Parnasse galant* (Paris: H. Champion, 2001), pp. 289-304

³⁹ Alain Génétiot, 'Ovide au XVII^e siècle: les métamorphoses et la fable antique', in *Poétique du loisir mondain, de Voiture à La Fontaine* (Paris: H. Champion, 1997), pp. 52-56.

⁴⁰ *Lectures d'Ovide*, ed. by Emmanuel Bury (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003).

⁴¹ Marie-Claire Chatelain, *Ovide savant, Ovide galant: Ovide en France dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: H. Champion, 2008).

figure of Ovid.⁴² Her study is extremely rich and I am indebted to her bibliographic work. However, her interest lies primarily in the presence and influence of Ovid's poetry; she pays little attention – beyond this brief chapter – to the construction of the figure of Ovid.

Therefore, although the place and uses of Ovid's poetry in this period have been treated in some depth by critics, very little – indeed scarcely any – attention has been paid to the uses of Ovid's life: there has been no sustained analysis of the figure of Ovid. Perhaps this is because of the scepticism with which the concept of the 'author' was treated by much influential literary criticism of the twentieth century, rendering life-writing or biography an unscholarly topic of study and a dated means of literary analysis.⁴³ And yet, arguments for the author's death or fallacy have been systemically contested since it was 'pronounced',⁴⁴ and trends in recent criticism have revealed a wider concern with the lives of authors, early modern life-writing and the relationship between author and work. This is clear from Dinah Ribard's *Raconter, vivre, penser: histoires de philosophes 1650-1766* (2003),⁴⁵ Katherine Macdonald's *Biography in Early Modern France 1520-1630: Forms and Functions* (2007),⁴⁶ Ann Jefferson's *Biography and the Question of Literature in France* (2007)⁴⁷ and José-Luis Diaz *L'homme et l'œuvre* (2011).⁴⁸ These studies not only offer surveys of the role of writers' biographies in criticism, but themselves act as interventions in this rehabilitation of the author.⁴⁹ Far from being the unfashionable subject

⁴² See 'Chapitre 5: Publius Ovidius Naso: De l'homme des *Vies* érudites au personnage galant', in Chatelain, pp. 262-304.

⁴³ W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley, 'The Intentional Fallacy', in *The Verbal Icon: studies in the meaning of poetry*, ed. by W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1954), pp. 3-18. Roland Barthes, 'La mort de l'auteur', *Manteia*, 5 (1968), 12-17.

⁴⁴ This was problematized by Michel Foucault in 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', *Bulletin de la société française de philosophie*, 3 (1969), 73-104. See also, Quentin Skinner, 'Motives, Intentions and the Interpretation of texts', in *On Literary Intention*, ed. by D. Newton de Molina (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1974), pp. 210-221. It has continued to fuel debate, see William Irwin, 'Intentionalism and author constructs', in *Death and Resurrection of the author*, ed. by William Irwin (London: Greenwood, 2002), pp. 191-201; and Roger Chartier, 'Figures de l'auteur', *L'ordre des livres: lecteurs, auteurs, bibliothèques en Europe entre XIVe et XVIIIe siècle* (Aix-en-Provence: Alinéa, 1992), pp. 35-69.

⁴⁵ Dinah Ribard, *Raconter, vivre, penser: histoires de philosophes, 1650-1766* (Paris: EHESS, 2003).

⁴⁶ Katherine Macdonald, *Biography in early modern France 1520-1630: Forms and Functions* (Leeds: Legenda, 2007).

⁴⁷ Ann Jefferson, *Biography and the Question of literature in France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁴⁸ José-Luis Diaz, *L'homme et l'œuvre* (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 2011).

⁴⁹ 'Ainsi donc, passé l'âge où triomphèrent les excommunications par fournées, il est temps de suivre l'histoire corrélée de la biographie d'écrivain et de la critique biographique. Des travaux ont déjà commencé' [...] Diaz, p. 5.

it was for much post-war twentieth-century criticism, ‘the author’ and ‘life-writing’ are now more than ever topics of renewed academic interest.

My thesis aims to trace the evolution of Ovid’s life at this moment when his presence was both intense and changing, and to place it in the context of two important and interrelated movements: the well-documented and highly fractious *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* and the more diffuse, though still fractious, debates about historiography. In this introduction I will briefly sketch out Ovid’s place in the century, which I deal with more thoroughly in my second chapter; I will then offer an overview of the changing attitudes towards the ancients and towards historiography, before giving a survey of my corpus, approaches and chapters.

1. Ovid in Louis XIV’s France

Ovid’s mythology was central to the mythopoeia of Louis XIV, the ‘Sun King’. Although mythology was used in the service of a monarch’s image prior to Louis XIV, the centralisation of power in 1661 meant that the fabrication of his image had a particular ideological intensity, and no monarch prior to Louis XIV had made such extensive use of Ovid’s work in this image-making. In his study, *L’Olympe du roi-soleil: mythologie et idéologie royale au grand siècle* (1986),⁵⁰ Néraudau stresses the singularity of Ovid’s place: ‘seule est notable la place particulière d’Ovide dans l’inspiration mythologique’, building on the argument made by Bardon in his article, ‘Ovide et le grand roi’, in which he argues: ‘jamais en France le goût pour Ovide ne se manifesta avec autant de force que sous le grand roi’.⁵¹ Néraudau demonstrates that Joseph Werner’s portraits of Louis XIV as Apollo were influenced by illustrations attached to translations of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The halls of Versailles were lined with paintings of tales from Ovid and the palace itself

⁵⁰ Néraudau, *L’Olympe du roi-soleil*, p. 327. And see Néraudau, ‘Ovide au chateau de Versailles, sous Louis XIV’.

⁵¹ Bardon, ‘Ovide et le grand roi’, p. 401.

was modeled on Ovid's Palace of the Sun. In *Versailles, ou le palais du soleil* (1963), Edouard Guillou has demonstrated that the ekphrastic description of the Palace of the Sun in Book Two of the *Metamorphoses* served as a guideline for the architect, Mansart, and his team when they set about the renovations in 1677.⁵² The gardens were replete with Ovidian references – the Fountain of Latona is just one example – and the King's retreat, *Le Grand Trianon*, was decorated in a veritable homage to figures from the *Fasti*, Ovid's poem of Roman myth and lore.

Not only did Louis XIV's ministers plunder ancient mythology for their buildings, but comparisons between Louis XIV and the Emperor Augustus were also cultivated. In *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (1992), Peter Burke shows that Louis XIV was compared to the Roman Emperor in treatises and panegyric,⁵³ as well as to Kings of the middle ages, such as Clovis and Charlemagne.⁵⁴ In his study, *Le Roi-Machine* (1981), Jean-Marie Apostolides argues that steeping the crown in classical mythology was intended to facilitate such comparison.⁵⁵ There was also a polemical angle to much of this rhetoric as partisans of the *Modernes* used this comparison to extol the capacities of French culture by arguing that it surpassed those of Augustan Rome: in Charles Perrault's provocative *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* (1687) he suggested that the age of Louis le Grand was superior to that of the Emperor Augustus.⁵⁶

The 'goût pour Ovide' was therefore sanctioned by royal power and used in the service of the King. This spread beyond the King's image-making, as topics from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were popular in theatre, and in particular the ballets and operas performed

⁵² Edouard Guillou, *Versailles, ou le palais du soleil* (Paris: Plon, 1963).

⁵³ For example, Jean Puget de la Serre, *L'Histoire d'Auguste et le parallèle de cet illustre monarque avec notre grand roi Louis* (Paris: Masson, 1664).

⁵⁴ Peter Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

⁵⁵ Jean-Marie Apostolides, *Le Roi-Machine: spectacle et politique au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris: Minuit, 1981).

⁵⁶ Charles Perrault, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand: poème par M. Perrault* (Paris: J-B. Coignard, 1687).

at court and beyond.⁵⁷ Mythological topics also dominated the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture*, which placed the greatest importance on the genres of myth and history.⁵⁸

However, as Néraudau identifies, there was something complex and paradoxical about using the work of a figure who was disgraced and exiled by his ruler, the Emperor Augustus, to serve the ideology of a monarch so favourably compared with that Emperor:

[...] et ce n'est le moindre paradoxe de la poésie ovidienne qu'elle ait pu fournir son imagerie à une idéologie aussi absolutiste que celle de Louis XIV. Le poète, en effet, vivait sous le règne d'Auguste, fondateur d'un système monarchique [...]. Or par ce Prince, Ovide fut relégué aux confins de l'Empire.⁵⁹

This thesis will tease out this paradox and show how Ovid was also used for ends which, if not directly critical of Louis XIV, can be seen to be critical of power structures shared by both the monarchical and imperial systems.

Such predilection for Ovid was also manifest in print culture. The last forty years of the seventeenth century saw a concentration of translations and imitations of Ovid's poetry. Several new versions of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid's epic poem recounting over 250 myths of metamorphosis, and of the *Heroides*, the letters from mythological women to their erstwhile lovers, were printed and reprinted. Many of these translations took a new approach to the poems by moving away from the erudite commentary-laden editions or translations that had prevailed in the Renaissance to instead produce non-annotated verse translations. Whereas the earlier tradition had produced folio or quarto sized tomes, the new translations were octavo or duodecimo sized. But most noticeable in this period was the flourishing interest in Ovid's love poetry: the *Ars Amatoria*, the *Remedia amoris* and the *Amores*. Because these poems were not deemed suitable for education, no scholarly Latin

⁵⁷ For example, Jean-Baptiste Lully and Philippe Quinault, *Cadmus et Hermione*, tragédie représentée par l'Académie royale de musique (Paris: aux dépens de l'Académie, 1674), first performed: Jeu de Paume de Belair, February, 1673; Lully and Jean Galbert de Campistron, *Acis et Galatée*, pastorale héroïque (Paris: C. Ballard, 1686), first performed: Château d'Anet, August, 1686; and Lully and Antoine Danchet, *Apollon et Daphné*, divertissement mis en musique par M. de Lully (Amsterdam: Héritiers d'Antoine Schelte, 1699), first performed: Fontainebleau, October 1698.

⁵⁸ See André Félibien, *Conférences de l'académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* (Paris: F. Leonard, 1669).

⁵⁹ Néraudau, *L'Olympe du roi-soleil*, p. 17.

editions had been produced throughout the sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries, and apart from extracts or sentences included in commonplace books, there were very few translations of Ovid's love poetry in publication. This began to change in the 1660s with a sudden blossom of translations and versions of Ovid's love poetry, manifesting an unprecedented intensity of interest. With this, I will show, came a different conception of the poet, one that saw him as 'galant'.

2. Changing attitudes towards antiquity

The changes in how Ovid was translated and in how these translations were marketed and sold was part of a much wider shift in readership and cultural circles. Intellectual life was no longer dominated by the largely male *savant* circles of earlier in the century; nor was it ruled over solely by the Académie Française. Literary communities that were both male and female, and whose members were not all from the established nobility but of different socio-economic backgrounds, began to emerge in the salons of Mme de Rambouillet and Mlle de Scudéry in particular.⁶⁰ A considerable amount of work has been done on these emerging literary cultures and the interplay between literature and society, notably by Emmanuel Bury and Alain Viala,⁶¹ and important work has been done on women's role and contribution to cultural circles, in particular in studies by Joan Dejean and Nathalie Grande.⁶²

These changing circles were also bound up with evolving attitudes towards the ancients, known in its most public form as the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*. Although this was broadly a dispute about the relative merit of ancient culture and

⁶⁰ For more on the socio-economic make-up of salon members, see Carolyn C. Lougee, *Le Paradis des femmes: women, salons and social stratification in seventeenth-century France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

⁶¹ Emmanuel Bury, *Littérature et Politesse: l'invention de l'honnête homme 1580-1750* (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 1996); Alain Viala, *La naissance de l'écrivain* (Paris: Minuit, 1985).

⁶² Joan Dejean, *Tender Geographies: women and the origins of the novel in France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Nathalie Grande, *Stratégies de romancières: de 'Clélie' à 'La Princesse de Clèves': 1654-1678* (Paris: H. Champion, 1999).

contemporary French culture, with the partisans of the ‘Anciens’, such as Nicolas Boileau, asserting the unrivalled splendor of ancient literature, and the ‘Modernes’, such as Charles Perrault, affirming the importance and achievements of French culture, the repercussions spread beyond figures who self-consciously intervened in this debate, and also beyond the treatises, attacks and replies that made up the dialogue of the *querelle*. In *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (1997),⁶³ Joan Dejean shows how this *querelle* was another version of the *querelle des femmes* that had been a topic of cultural controversy since the Middle Ages.⁶⁴ There were many ways in which the *querelle des femmes* intersected with the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, evident from the interventions by these two figureheads: Boileau criticized female intellectual activity, notably in his *Satire X* (1694),⁶⁵ to which Perrault replied with the *Apologie des femmes* (1694).⁶⁶ At stake in both quarrels were questions of who could produce ‘culture’ and what the necessary qualifications or education for this might be. Was it the domain of the learned ‘savants’ equipped with a classical education and intending to impart this? Could it be produced by those who wrote for leisure, concerned with the pleasure of reading and writing? If knowledge of the classics no longer determined who was writing and who was reading, wider access to culture was facilitated. Many women, for example, did not have access to learning Latin or Greek but were now central to cultural production, located in the urban salons. Dominant topics of these creative spaces, such as love, relationships, the art of conversation, style and taste were inflected and examined in writing that was often both the product of, and a mediation on, social interaction.

⁶³ Joan Dejean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 51-77. And see ‘Chapter 5: The Origin of Novels: Gender, Class and the Writing of French Literary History’, in Dejean, *Tender Geographies*, pp. 159-199.

⁶⁴ The ‘querelle des femmes’ had been formulated in French discourse at least since Christine de Pizan’s *La Cité des dames* (1404-5). See Ian Maclean, *Woman triumphant: feminism in French literature, 1610-1652* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 25-83.

⁶⁵ Nicolas Boileau, *Dialogues ou Satire X* (Paris: D. Thierry, 1694).

⁶⁶ Charles Perrault, *Apologie des femmes* (Paris: J.-B. Coignard, 1694).

These changes led to precisely the kinds of shifts that we noted previously in relation to Ovid: he went from the mythographer whose work was conveyed in large deluxe, expensive folio editions, heavy with commentary, to translations in verse, without annotation that were printed in octavo or duodecimo-sized books that were cheaper, lighter and more portable. It also had repercussions for the style of translation produced. ‘Mondain’ translations tended to be governed by the particularities, strengths and weaknesses of the ‘target language’: that is, French. In this respect, these translations no longer privileged the ‘source’ language in their methods, but sought to function as stylish pieces of French verse, intended for this new readership. These changing cultural circles might also explain why there was more interest in his love poetry, as it better suited their aesthetic concerns and did not require extensive knowledge of classical myth and geography.

This thesis seeks both to identify and to explore the paradox that this particular interest in Ovid’s work and in the figure of Ovid not only occurred at a moment when the place and authority of the classics were being fiercely debated and re-evaluated, but that many of the incarnations of Ovid emerging in the last decades of the century were a product of the very culture that was moving away from classical models. In this respect, I am building on recent criticism and perspectives on the *querelle* which have sought, in different ways, to trouble the perceived dichotomy between ancient and modern. Larry Norman’s *The Shock of the Ancient* (2011) offers a revised view of the *querelle*.⁶⁷ He makes the case that the partisans of the ancients were less conservative than they have been represented to be, and although that is not the case I am making here, this argument is based, in part, on a subtle analysis of ‘the surprising interpenetration of temporal

⁶⁷ Larry H. Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: literature and history in early modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

categories’,⁶⁸ whereby both the partisans of the ancients and the moderns ‘are aware not only of the distance separating themselves from the ancients but also of the distance that could separate ancients from ancients and, in surprising consequence, bring some ancients closer to the moderns’.⁶⁹ The second is Claudine Nédélec’s and Nathalie Grande’s edited book, *La galanterie des anciens* (2012),⁷⁰ which, though not devoted to the *querelle* as such, is concerned with ancient-modern hybridity in the culture of late seventeenth-century France: it provides an analysis of the phenomenon of ‘l’antiquité galante’, that is, the assimilation of the ancient world into *galant* culture, and is particularly interested in its polemical potential.⁷¹ Recent critical attention has thus looked at the place and role of ancient culture within modern aesthetic movements, in which *galanterie* was a particularly prominent category.

a) *Galanterie*

At the heart of *mondain* culture was a concern with decorum, *politesse* and refined behaviour, which came to be epistomised by the substantive ‘galanterie’ and the adjective ‘galant’. These terms define social qualities that build upon and replace the model of *honnêteté*,⁷² that celebrate the art of conversation and the respectful treatment of women, and are an expression of ‘la vie mondaine’.⁷³ ‘Galanterie’ thus epitomizes qualities of the most fashionable and cultured elite.⁷⁴ Alain Viala has offered the most comprehensive contributions to understanding the richness and depth of this ‘catégorie culturelle’, notably

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 25.

⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 16.

⁷⁰ *La galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Nathalie Grande and Claudine Nédélec (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012).

⁷¹ See also Denis, pp. 289-304 and Alain Viala, *La France galante* (Paris: Presses Universitaires Françaises, 2008), pp. 59-65.

⁷² See ‘Chapter 4: A Sign of Quality: Bouhours and the Polite Circle’, in Richard Scholar, *The Je-Ne-Sais-Quoi in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 182-223.

⁷³ ‘La nuance principale est que la galanterie suppose la vie mondaine alors que l’honnêteté ne l’exige pas’. Viala, *La France galante*, p. 113.

⁷⁴ ‘The new galanterie, the positive and fashionable galanterie, took form as an outgrowth of the expanding social model of honnêteté.’ Alain Viala, ‘Les Signes Galants: A historical reevaluation of galanterie’, *Yale French Studies*, 92 (1997), 11-29, p. 22. See also, Jean-Pierre Dens, *L’Honnête Homme et la critique du goût: Esthétique et société au XVII^e siècle* (Lexington: French Forum Publishers, 1981).

in his recent book *La France Galante* (2008).⁷⁵ He shows that *galanterie* was also an aesthetic mode associated with generic hybridity and innovation. Novels were written that included verse within the prose narratives, and shorter narrative forms, such as the *nouvelle*, became fashionable, heralding a change from the lengthy baroque novels of the middle of the century. But *galant* culture spread beyond the limits of the narrative genre to incorporate other innovative or hybrid genres, of which the *comédie-ballet* and opera are key examples. They were performed at ‘fêtes galantes’, cultural festivities organised at court, and beyond, such as the *Les plaisirs de l’île enchantée* at Versailles in May 1664.⁷⁶ Although many *nouvelles* or ballets might take their subject matter from ancient sources – and it is striking how many operas were written on Ovidian themes – sources were rarely identified and the prevailing concern was to cater for the tastes of the contemporary public. In this respect, *galanterie* espoused and championed many of the concerns of the *Modernes* as it formulated new styles and genres. Viala argues: ‘Leur posture fondamentale est celle de Modernes qui recherchent du neuf’.⁷⁷

Most of the criticism on the reception of Ovid in this period stresses his dominant place in *galant* culture. As discussed, Chatelain shows that over the century Ovid was increasingly assimilated into the *galant* aesthetic: in particular, she explores the writing of Bussy-Rabutin, Benserade and La Fontaine, and considers his influence on the *Lettres Portugaises* (1669) and Racine’s tragedies. This is confirmed by other critics, such as Loubère, and Denis, who both suggest that Ovid’s love poetry was so influential and present in *galant* culture that Ovid was a ‘porte-parole’,⁷⁸ and an ‘autorité’ for *galanterie*.⁷⁹ Wes Williams suggests that Corneille’s *Andromède* (1650), based on a story

⁷⁵ Viala, *La France galante*.

⁷⁶ Nicolas Fouquet, the King’s finance minister, organised a sumptuous fête at his home, Vaux-le-Vicomte, in August 1661. Molière’s *comédie-ballet*, *Les Fâcheux*, was first performed at this fête.

⁷⁷ Viala, *La France galante*, p. 60.

⁷⁸ ‘Ovide est le porte-parole tout trouvé’. Loubère, p.42.

⁷⁹ ‘Ovide, autorité incontestée de la galanterie’, Denis, *Le Parnasse galant*, p. 388.

from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, casts Persée in a *galant* role by emphasizing the importance of conversation in his seduction of Andromède.⁸⁰ In her study on the reception of Sappho through the ages, Dejean suggests that the seventeenth-century versions of the Sappho letter from Ovid's *Heroides*⁸¹ were written in such a style to render Ovid 'a master of the codes of *galanterie*'.⁸²

This thesis will argue that not only did Ovid's characters, such as 'Sappho' or 'Persée', become 'galant', but so did Ovid himself. He was turned into a 'galant' figure in many of the instances of his characterisation, not only in the theatre and novels, but also in the *Vies* attached to certain translations of his work. This characterization has not been treated in detail by critics; and while her analysis ranges widely, in relation to the portrayal of Ovid,⁸³ Chatelain relies heavily on the definition of 'galant' proposed by J.M. Pelous in *Amour précieux, amour galant: 1654-1675* (1980), in which *l'amour galant* is predominantly seen as seductive amorous sentiment.⁸⁴ This has since been revised by critics such as Viala and Denis, and building on their analyses, I will show that Ovid's characterisation exposes some of the complex and rich aspects of this phenomenon of *galanterie*.⁸⁵ The characterization of 'Ovide' as *galant* was another way of interpreting his poetry, by transforming the persona of the narrative voice that Ovid adopts in his verse into the *galant* figure of 'Ovide'. Turning Ovid, and not simply his mythological creations, into a *galant* figure provided all these writers with an example of the *galant* poet, with which to formulate and explore their own practice. In this thesis I will examine this sense of identification, emphasizing and investigating the paradox that it was an ancient poet who

⁸⁰ Williams, p.120.

⁸¹ The authenticity of Ovid's authorship of the Sappho letter has been the subject of some debate, see R. J. Tarrant, 'The authenticity of the letter of Sappho to Phaon (Heroides XV)', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 85 (1981), 133-153.

⁸² Joan Dejean argues that the translations of Ovid's *Heroides* 'promote this vision of Ovid as a master of the codes of *galanterie* and *politesse*'. Joan Dejean, *Fictions of Sappho: 1546-1939* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 130.

⁸³ Chatelain, pp. 287-300.

⁸⁴ J.M. Pelous, *Amour précieux, amour galant, 1654-1675* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1980), pp. 195-224.

⁸⁵ Viala, *La France galante*; and Denis, *Le Parnasse galant*.

became the ‘porte-parole’ for a *moderne* movement. I will trace how ‘Ovide’ is characterized in translations produced across the century, and argue that he is identified with movements self-consciously concerned with moving away from established traditions, of which *galanterie* is a striking and complex example.

3. Vitae, Dictionnaires, Histoire galante: developments in life-writing

The changing attitudes towards the ancient past were also evident from the different approaches to writing history in operation in this period. Some were derived from antiquity; some were emerging genres. In his recent study, *L’homme et l’œuvre*, Diaz identifies three main types of life-writing that emerged as influential from antiquity: the lives of philosophers by Diogenes Laertius; lives of emperors or military leaders, such as that by Suetonius; and exemplary lives of *hommes illustres*, by Cornélius Nepos, Plutarch and Saint Jerome. He states:

Trois modèles se constituent: *l’éloge* [...]; les *vies exemplaires* à la Plutarque où le récit de vie est soutenu par un discours moral; et enfin *la forme suétonienne* qui implique acuité du regard historique et fidélité cruelle à l’envers des apparences, au réel et à ses détails.⁸⁶

Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch and Suetonius proved the most influential models in the Renaissance and throughout the seventeenth century.

Diogenes Laertius was formative in establishing the relationship between an author’s life and his work (whether written or ephemeral). In 1505, a Latin version of Diogenes Laertius’ *Vitae et Sententiae Philosophorum* (*Lives and Opinions of the Eminent Philosophers*) was printed in Paris,⁸⁷ and, frequently printed throughout the sixteenth century, it was first translated into French in 1601 by Fougerolles,⁸⁸ and then for a second

⁸⁶ Diaz, p. 9.

⁸⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae et Sententiae Philosophorum* (Paris: Petit, 1505).

⁸⁸ François Fougerolles, *Le Diogène français tiré du grec ou Diogène Laërtien touchant les vies traduites et paraphrasées sur le grec par M. François de Fougerolles* (Lyon: J.-A. Huguetan, 1601)

time in 1668 by Gilles Boileau.⁸⁹ In her study of the lives of philosophers, *Raconter, vivre, penser: histoires de philosophes 1650-1766*, Ribard argues that in this period, partly due to the interest in Diogenes Laertius' text, lives were understood as the source of the work or doctrine; the ethos, character and morals of the author were described in such a way so as to frame, classify and introduce the text. She suggests that this is clear from the practice of attaching a *Vita* or *Vie* to an edition of the poet's work. Biography can be understood as a form of criticism, as a means of reading, interpreting and classifying a text.

Diogenes Laertius' text also inspired a new interest in the lives and opinions of contemporary intellectual figures,⁹⁰ which can be seen in the developments of *ana*, compilations of anecdotes and *sententiae* of modern cultural figures.⁹¹ An interesting feature of these 'Lives' and 'ana' was the focus on anecdotes or choice illustrative stories which came to epitomise a particular figure; these stories then became part of how that figure's life was narrated in subsequent accounts, creating a layered tradition of recognizable anecdotes that defined and distinguished different individuals.⁹²

The format and approaches of Plutarch's *Bíoi Paráλληλοι* (*Parallel Lives*) was also extremely influential on life writing of this period. It was translated from Greek into French by Jacques Amyot as *Vies des Hommes Illustres grecs et romains* in the mid sixteenth century, and saw many re-editions throughout the seventeenth century.⁹³ This text compared powerful political and military men from the Greek and Roman world.⁹⁴ Plutarch's comparative method of a 'parallel life' was taken up in various ways, and in particular in the context of the *querelle* and the ever-pressing concern to compare modern

⁸⁹ *Diogène Laërce, De la vie des philosophes, traduction nouvelle par monsieur GB**** (Paris: J. Guignard, 1668).

⁹⁰ See, for example, Gilberte Périer, *La Vie de Monsieur Pascal* [1684] ed. by Alain Couprie (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1994); Adrien Baillet, *Vie de M. Descartes* [1691] (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1946).

⁹¹ For example, *Scaligeriana sive excerpta ex ore Josephi Scaligeri*, ed. by Isaac Voss (Geneva: Columesies, 1666); *Huetiana ou pensées diverses de M. Huet*, ed. by Pierre Olivet (Paris: Etienne, 1722).

⁹² On the anecdote and its relation to historiography, see Joel Fineman, 'The History of the Anecdote: Fiction and Fiction', in *New Historicism*, ed. by Aran Veesser (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 49-79; Lionel Gossman, 'Anecdote and History', *History and Theory*, 42 (2003), 143-168.

⁹³ Jacques Amyot, *Vies des Hommes Illustres grecs et romains* (Paris: Vascosan 1559).

⁹⁴ Influenced by Medieval hagiography, the lives depicted in Plutarch's *Hommes illustres* are celebrated for their exemplary nature, a feature which greatly shaped life-writing in the early modern period. See Ribard, p. 107.

with ancient. Charles Perrault compares the lives of men of his century in *Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France pendant ce siècle: avec leurs portraits au naturel* in 1697;⁹⁵ there were *recueils* of letters or documents comparing ancient and modern,⁹⁶ of which Bouhours' *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1689) offers a lengthy comparison of Ovid with two exiles from Louis XIV's court: Nicolas Fouquet and Bussy-Rabutin. The parallel and comparative format was also present in the *dialogues des morts* which characterise, describe and compare ancient and modern writers, tracing their afterlives on Mount Parnassus.⁹⁷

The scrupulous mode of historiography adopted by Suetonius in his *De vitae Caesarum* (*The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*), combined with an interest in the lives of philosophers and poets, as well as the comparative format offered by Plutarch, all had a key influence on the encyclopaedic dictionaries that were emerging at the end of the century, coinciding with the first lexical dictionaries to be published in France.⁹⁸ Although this was not quite the 'dictionary-mania' of the Enlightenment, it was the dawn of an interest in biographical dictionaries which sought to catalogue the lives and works of both ancient and modern authors and historical figures.⁹⁹ Here too an interest in key stories and illustrative anecdotes was present. This is clear in particular from Louis Moréri's *Le grand dictionnaire ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* (first ed. 1674)¹⁰⁰ and

⁹⁵ Charles Perrault, *Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France pendant ce siècle: avec leurs portraits au naturel*, 2 vols. (Paris: A. Dezallier, 1697).

⁹⁶ For example, François de Grenaille, *Nouveau recueil de lettres des dames tant anciennes que modernes* (Paris: T. Quinet, 1642).

⁹⁷ For example, Gabriel Guéret, *Le Parnasse Réformé* (Paris: T. Jolly, 1669) and Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, *Dialogue des morts* (Paris, 1683). This genre was inspired by the second century Greek author, Lucian, whose 'Dialogues of the dead' were translated from Greek to Latin by Erasmus, published in Paris in 1506.

⁹⁸ That of Pierre Richelet, *Dictionnaire français*, 2 t. in 1 vol. (Genève: J.-H. Widerhold 1680); Antoine Furetière *Dictionnaire universel*, 3 vols. (La Haye et Rotterdam: A. et R. Leers, 1690) and *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 2 t. in 1 vol. (Paris: J.-B. Coignard, 1694).

⁹⁹ Freidrich Melchior Grimm remarked in August 1758: 'La fureur des dictionnaires est devenue si grande parmi nous qu'on vient d'imprimer un Dictionnaire des dictionnaires', *Correspondence littéraire, philosophique and critique par Grimm, Diderot, Raynal, Meister etc.*, 16 vols. (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1878), IV, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ Moréri, Louis, *Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane*, 2 vols. (Lyon: J. Girin and B. Rivière, 1674).

Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (first ed. 1697).¹⁰¹ Bayle adopted an especially scrutinising and comprehensive historical mode, announcing that his project offered 'le plus gros recueil qu'il me sera possible des fautes qui se rencontrent dans les Dictionnaires', intending to expose and correct the mistakes of previous dictionary-writers.¹⁰²

I will explore the key anecdotes or stories associated with Ovid, and examine how this tradition was modulated across various versions of his life. Exploring the slant of how Ovid's story was told in this period will reveal concerns and trends of contemporary writing; my interest also lies in what the constructions of Ovid reveal about the perceived relationship between the poet and his work. I will pay particular attention to the historiographical tradition of Ovid's life, tracing the *Vitae*, *Vies* and entries on 'Ovide' in the biographical dictionaries, taking Bayle's thorough entry in his *Dictionnaire* as my principal focus. By examining how Ovid's life was recounted across different modes of historical writing, I will expose some of the developments and tensions in historiography present in this period.

These tensions were provoked by a new genre for writing about the past, the *nouvelle historique* or *histoire galante*, that was emerging in the second half of the century. *Galant* histories of antiquity were accounts about ancient men and women – often female-authored – which freely mixed history and fiction and usually characterised these 'ancient' figures in contemporary terms. The nature, problems and stakes of this phenomenon have recently been formulated in the edited collection, *La galanterie des anciens* (2012), mentioned above. Pierre d'Ortigue de Vaumorière's *Histoire de la galanterie des anciens* (1671),¹⁰³ from which this collection takes its title, is an exemplary text of this genre as

¹⁰¹ Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique par Mr. Pierre Bayle, revue, corrigée et augmentée, cinquième édition*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam; Leyde; La Haye; Utrecht, 1740).

¹⁰² Pierre Bayle, *Projet et fragments d'un dictionnaire critique* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1692), p.2.

¹⁰³ Pierre Ortigue de Vaumorière, *Histoire de la galanterie des anciens*, 2 vols. (Paris: Monnier, 1671).

here Vaumorière both recounts, and fabricates, stories about the private lives and passions of figures in the court of the Emperor Trajan. Development of this new genre, intended for a different reading public, entailed a self-consciousness about interpretation and genre definition; often this was worked into the fabric of the narrative, as the activities of reading and interpreting were depicted, prefiguring or provoking the reactions of the extradiegetic reader.

These *histoires galantes* were the product of a wider shift in historiography, whereby history books were no longer, or not only, the domain of erudite scholarship, but were also intended for the broader readership of this burgeoning sociable literary culture.¹⁰⁴ The popularity and accessibility of Jacques Amyot's translation of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* was key to what Marie-Thérèse Hipp describes as the 'culte des héros antiques'.¹⁰⁵ The stance taken by historian François de Mézeray in his three-volume *Histoire de France depuis Faramond jusqu'à maintenant* (1643, 1646 and 1651) also demonstrates this shift.¹⁰⁶ In the preface, he explains that he wants his work to be read by a wide audience, and his inclusion of 'la vie des reines' was surely intended to appeal to female readers.¹⁰⁷ Mézeray's *Histoire* also had an ideological angle, as it was intended to serve the image of the monarchy; indeed, Mézeray was named official 'historiographe de France' in 1657.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ It was the *galant* and *mondain* publisher Claude Barbin who published the translation of Heroditus, *Histoires d'Hérodote*, in 1677. He also published the new edition of Mézeray's *Histoire* in 1685. See Nathalie Grande, 'La métamorphose galante de l'histoire antique: modalités et enjeux d'une poétique', in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédelec, pp. 229-244.

¹⁰⁵ Marie-Thérèse Hipp, *Mythe et réalités. Enquête sur le roman et les mémoires 1660-1700* (Paris: Klincksieck 1976). Quoted in Edwige Keller-Rahbé, 'Je crois déjà les entendre dire que je viole le respect dû à la sacrée antiquité': Madame de Villegieu et la galanterie des anciens ou le savoir-faire d'une mondaine', in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédelec, pp. 161-176, p. 162.

¹⁰⁶ François de Mézeray, *Histoire de France depuis Faramond jusqu'à maintenant*, 3 vols. (Paris: M. and P. Guillemot, 1643; 1646 and 1651). See Christian Zonza, 'L'Histoire de France de Mézeray: des plaisirs du texte aux nécessités de l'histoire', *Dix-septième siècle*, 246 (2010), 97-118.

¹⁰⁷ He stresses that he has tried to accommodate his reader: 'ayant évité la longueur des paroles et des répétitions ennuyeuses'. He identifies the importance of appealing to women: 'après les médailles viennent les reines avec un sommaire de leurs vies, aux quelles aucun auteur n'avait encore touché, comme si les dames n'étaient pas capables de faire des actions héroïques'. Mézeray, *Préface*, np.

¹⁰⁸ He fell out of favour with Colbert about ten years later possibly for criticisms of the French fiscal system, contained in his *Abrégé chronologique ou extraits de l'histoire de France*, 3 vols. (Paris: L. Billaine, 1667-68).

Chantal Grell has shown how, though this figure of official historian remained an ambiguous role, it was particularly under Louis XIV that it was concretised.¹⁰⁹

However, at the same time as ‘official histories’ such as this, there was also a proliferation of ‘secret histories’. While these were not usually about Louis XIV himself, nevertheless, like the *histoire galante*, they went ‘behind the scenes’ of famous – and often royal or imperial – men and women in history to recount their emotional and private lives, thus presenting an image at odds with sanctioned representations of power. The translation in 1669 of the recently-rediscovered ‘Secret History’ by Prokopius, sixth-century Byzantine historian, heralded a proliferation of these *histoires secrètes*, tales which claimed to reveal hitherto unknown secrets of royal or imperial courts.¹¹⁰ Prokopius’ text was also formative in developing new attitudes to historiography; based on readings of this text, theorists of history-writing, such as César Vichard de Saint Réal and Antoine Varillas argue for the importance of understanding not just the events themselves, but the causes, motivations and machinations behind them.¹¹¹ How the *histoire secrète* and *histoire galante* intersect will be explored in this thesis.

One of the outcomes of this proliferation of *histoires galantes* of the ancient world was a burgeoning interest in *galant* biographies of classical authors. Unlike the ‘Lives and Work’ model offered by Diogenes Laertius, which was adopted in the biographical dictionaries, and unlike the historically erudite *Vitae* and *Vies*, the ‘vie galante’ was less concerned with historical accuracy and, crucially, not written solely to introduce the author’s work. Mlle de Scudéry’s imagined story about Sappho, ‘Histoire de Sappho’,

¹⁰⁹ Chantal Grell, ‘Les historiographes en France, XV-XVIII^es siècles’, in *Les Historiographes en Europe de la fin du Moyen Âge à la Révolution*, ed. by Chantal Grell (Paris: Presses de l’Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006), pp. 127-156.

¹¹⁰ *Histoire secrète de Procope de Césarée, traduite par L. de M* (Paris: G. de Luyne, 1669). This publication occurred nearly fifty years after its discovery in the Vatican Library in 1623, and subsequent publication in Latin and Greek in Lyons as *Anekdotia* (Lyon: Nicolò Alamanni, 1623).

¹¹¹ Antoine Varillas, *Les Anecdotes de Florence ou l’histoire Secrète de la maison de Medicis* (La Haye: A. Leers, 1685); César Vichard de Saint-Réal, *De l’Usage de l’histoire* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1671).

included in her long novel *Artamène ou le grand Cyrus* (1649-53), is an early example.¹¹² The love story of the poetess Corinna and poet Pindare is recounted in Vaumorière's *Histoire de la galanterie des anciens* (1671). Later, Catullus and Tibullus received this treatment in Jean de la Chapelle's *Les amours de Catulle* (1680)¹¹³ and *Les amours de Tibulle* (1712),¹¹⁴ and this extended into the Regency with the various incarnations of 'Anacréon galant'.¹¹⁵ But it was Ovid who received the most interest, and the success of his portrayals may have influenced Chapelle's characterisation of other Roman poets. This is evident from his place in the operas by Gilbert and Fuselier and the *histoires galantes* of Madame de Villedieu, Louis de Mailly, and Anne de la Roche-Guilhen, which turn his story into a secret history of Augustus' 'court'. Indeed, even the *Vies* attached to the *mondain* translations of his love poetry by Nicolas de Villennes and Etienne de Martignac were written in the style of the 'vie galante', full of anachronisms and evocations of contemporary France instead of a historical account of Rome.

In this thesis I will argue that there were elements particular to how Ovid was constructed that account for such interest in this figure; I will emphasise the complexity of his inclusion into the *galant* aesthetic to explore the very complexities of this phenomenon. My thesis will explore how the characterisation of 'Ovide' and the format this takes (erudite, *galant*) inflects interpretations of his poetry, considering the interrelated, but nuanced, questions of what this reveals about Ovid in the period – and, in turn of what representations of Ovid reveal about the period.

¹¹² Mlle de Scudéry, 'Histoire de Sapho', *Artamène ou le grand Cyrus*, 10 vols. (Paris: A. Courbé, 1649-53), X. ed. by C. Bourqui (Paris: Flammarion, 2005), pp. 444-488. Scudéry also reworked the Ovidian *Heroides* XV, 'Sappho Phaoni'. In Scudéry's version, 'Sappho' addresses her female friend Erinne, see: *Les Femmes Illustres ou les harangues héroïques* (Paris: A. de Sommaville, 1642).

¹¹³ Jean de la Chapelle, *Les amours de Catulle par le Sr. D. L. C.*, 4 vols. (Paris: C. Barbin, 1680-81).

¹¹⁴ Jean de la Chapelle, *Les amours de Tibulle par M. de la Chapelle*, 3 vols. (Paris: F. Delaulne, 1712-13).

¹¹⁵ See Nicholas Dion, 'L'histoire galante d'un poète galant: *Les Amours de Tibulle* de Jean de la Chapelle' in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nèdelec, pp. 69-82; and Stéphanie Loubère, 'Figures et figuration d'Anacréon galant', in *Ibid.* pp. 83-98.

4. Corpus and approaches

This study will consider the portrayal of the figure of Ovid in a period during which his poetry had an intense and changing presence. The question of Ovid's influence and his implicit presence in this period's writing, be it stylistic (wit, self-consciousness) or thematic (metamorphosis), would require a different project entirely. I will be tracing explicit references to the figure of Ovid, and placing these in the context of the place of his work in print culture. I am interested in how Ovid's life was used across a series of genres and my corpus is meant to reflect the broadening of this category of 'life-writing' occurring at this time. Therefore, in addition to looking at the Latin *Vitae* and French *Vies* which introduce editions or translations of his poetry, I will consider how his life was told in historical novels and in the dictionaries – that of Pierre Bayle in particular.

However, my intention here is not simply to provide an account of all the versions of Ovid's life-story on offer in this period, but to probe into how this figure is used. To this end, my corpus is broader than just narrative accounts of his life – whether historical, pseudo-historical, theatrical or in the genre of *Vita* or *Vie*. I trace instances where Ovid is characterized in other prefatory material attached to translations – such as laudatory poems and *avertissements* – and in the *dialogues des morts* in which he features. Although I do refer to the two extant plays by Gilbert and Fuselier, I will not offer sustained analysis of his role in the theatrical genre, partly because my principal focus is on written and not performed genres, and partly because the loss of the other theatrical work by Racine would leave this chapter somewhat unsatisfying. Although I attempt to offer as many examples as possible of 'lectures critiques' which pertain to the construction of the figure Ovid, I do not claim to be comprehensive in this. My method is to pursue sustained close reading of texts in which Ovid plays a significant role, and not to survey every mention or criticism of him. For this reason I focus in particular on the role Ovid plays in Bouhours' parallel study, the

Pensées ingénieuses, and in the correspondence between Bouhours and Bussy-Rabutin that surrounded its publication. Such focus allows for more attention to be paid to the writing styles and practices of individual authors. This in turn enables another key feature in the uses of Ovid to emerge: as a figure for the poet, he was used by writers to reflect upon their own writing practice, on its uses, intentions, and styles, and on the communities for which it was intended.

Any study of a classical figure in the post-classical world will open up questions of method and perspective. There are some slight differences in methodological approach between the disciplines of classics and of modern languages. ‘Reception studies’ in classics tends to zoom in on the different facets of a phenomenon revealed at particular historical moments in order to build a wider picture of the ongoing reception of that phenomenon.¹¹⁶ In a study devoted to the reception of Ovid, *Ovid Renewed: Ovidian Influences on Literature and Art from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century* (1988), the editor, Charles Martindale argues that different times bring to light different aspects of the poet’s work.¹¹⁷ However, in privileging what different responses reveal about *Ovid*,¹¹⁸ this approach risks overlooking what these responses might reveal about the concerns and priorities of the period in which Ovid is ‘received’. In contrast, Marie-Claire Chatelain’s reading of Ovid’s presence in the second half of the seventeenth century is utterly grounded in the cultural movements and concerns of the period. She is interested in what Ovid’s use at this point in time will reveal about these concerns. By embedding the constructions of Ovid so clearly in their linguistic and cultural context, this approach offers more nuanced readings, and will therefore be my guiding method. However, Chatelain’s study suffers

¹¹⁶ Charles Martindale has offered some extremely probing and interesting reflections upon this subject. See Charles Martindale, *Classics and the uses of reception* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).

¹¹⁷ Charles Martindale, *Ovid Renewed: Ovidian Influences on Literature and Art from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹¹⁸ He argues: ‘certainly the tradition can often teach us to understand Ovid better’. Ibid. p. 2.

from its slightly hermetic and insular approach, the result of which is that Ovid is not placed in a tradition at all.

The method of ‘reception history’ offered by Terence Cave, interested in the ‘afterlives’ of cultural objects, perhaps helps to form a bridge between these two approaches.¹¹⁹ In the term ‘afterlife’ he moves away from the semantic problems associated with the word ‘reception’ which presupposes that there is a fixed object to be received, and that it is that object which remains the principal focus of critical attention. Instead, ‘afterlives’ implies an interest in the new context of the phenomenon, indicating that its avatars are not secondary to the original, nor serve the original, but are cultural objects in their own right. At the same time, however, he acknowledges that they have come ‘after’ something else and so offers a broadness of understanding and perspective that identifies that there are many contexts for, and many lives of, the particular phenomenon in question.

Instead of treating the ‘afterlives’ of the characters or styles of Ovid’s poetry, which has been done in great detail, my thesis looks at the construction and uses of the figure Ovid. Ovid, not Sappho or Perseus, not wit or metamorphosis, is the Ovidian trope I want to trace. For Ovid is an Ovidian trope. He was so keenly aware of his own reception, so driven by his sense of posterity that he began to construct an image of himself in his exile works. Intertextuality and playful self-consciousness have long been perceived by critics as central elements of Ovid’s style: Ovid frequently recasts previous works by incorporating them into subsequent texts; he often reworks episodes from one text into another.¹²⁰ Ovid also recast his entire poetic career in the poems he wrote from exile in which he hoped to ensure his own place in literary history. Through intertextual reference to his other works

¹¹⁹ See Terence Cave, *Mignon’s afterlives: crossing cultures from Goethe to the twenty-first century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and *Pre-histories and afterlives: studies in critical method for Terence Cave*, ed. by Anna Holland and Richard Scholar (London: Legenda, 2009).

¹²⁰ See Richard Tarrant, ‘Ovid and ancient literary history’, in *Cambridge Companion*, ed. by Hardie, pp. 13-33; and Stephen Hinds, *Allusion and intertext: dynamics of appropriation in Roman poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

he shapes an image of himself, likening his fate to that of Actaeon and Odysseus, placing himself alongside these mythological figures.¹²¹

In this thesis I will explore how Ovid's story, his own myth, was developed and used in writing of the 'grand siècle'. In exploring Ovid's story, I will place his own textual constructions of himself at the heart of my study, arguing that subsequent versions of Ovid's life are 'biographèmes' informed, as Barthes implies his own construction of this very term, by what Ovid himself has written. And yet I will show that in the traditions of writing about Ovid's life there was often a conflation of the historical Ovid and the version he has constructed of himself. Analysis of the figure of Ovid is bound up with the afterlives of his exile poetry, and the *Tristia* in particular, but is also separate from them; I will trace how the Ovid story, like that of Actaeon or Odysseus, gained cultural currency outside and beyond its classical telling. My thesis will consider how his story was reworked and retold to trace the trends and concerns in writing of this period of French history. I will argue that the seventeenth-century 'Ovide' was itself a construct: a product of publishers, translators and editors; a metaphor or device by which translators examined their own practice; a fictional character; a character type; a literary trope. I will explore these new 'Ovides' and their uses in the chapters that follow, negotiating between the infinite and annihilating possibilities this plurality might entail, and the centralizing gravitational pull of the ingredients of the Ovid story, the recurrent 'biographèmes' of Ovid.

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¹²¹ 'Pro duce Neritio docti mala nostra poetae/scribite: Neritio nam mala plura tuli.' 'Learned poets, write of my evils instead of the Neritian hero's [Odysseus] for I have borne more ills than the Neritian'. *Tristia*, I. V, 57-58. He also compares himself to Actaeon, bewailing his unfair punishment, *Tristia* II, 105-106. I explore this in greater detail in the first chapter.

The thesis begins with an enquiry into the historical figure of Ovid. It traces the historiographical tradition of his life, which dates back to Ovid's own account of himself in his exile poetry. I look at *Vitae* and *Vies* written in both Latin and French, from late antiquity, the medieval period and Renaissance as well as the seventeenth century. My focal point will be the article 'Ovide' from Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (first ed. 1697). Although the *Dictionnaire* is one of the later objects in my corpus it makes for a useful starting point because the thoroughness and erudition of Bayle's approach means that he includes the tradition of *Vitae* and *Vies* of Ovid in his historiographical survey. However, Bayle's extremely complex and erudite article is not simply used in the service of filling in history; rather, through close reading of his rhetoric and argument, I show that he identifies the fictional construct at the heart of Ovid's account of his exile, and demonstrates that any notion of the historical Ovid is essentially bound up with what Ovid writes about himself. Bayle's argument is based on close reading of Ovid's exile poetry but also shaped and informed by knowledge of all of Ovid's works.

In my second chapter, taking my cue from the important relationship established by Bayle between representations of the figure Ovid and readings of his works, I offer an overview of Ovid's presence in print culture from the Renaissance to the period of Louis XIV's reign, surveying the Latin editions of his poetry, his presence on the curriculum, school editions, *galant* translations and his wider presence in *mondain* culture. Using the theories of book historians, I argue that any notion of 'Ovidius' or 'Ovide' resided in the hands of his editors, translators and publishers. I trace the changes in how he was published, and the wider trends this reveals, to complement the existing critical consensus that there was something particular, concentrated and unprecedented about the interest shown in Ovid's love poetry in the last decades of the century; in so doing, I examine the nature of his assimilation into *galant* culture.

I explore the question of identification between Ovid and cultural movements, such as *galanterie*, in my third chapter, where I look at the translations of Ovid's poetry produced throughout the century. I am particularly interested in how translators 'characterised' 'Ovide' in the prefatory material, arguing that he was used as a means of describing and defining their own craft and role. By considering his use in a series of translations spanning the century, I show that there were some common traits across the representations and uses of 'Ovide': he was recurrently constructed as a figure embodying innovation and change, and thus lent himself to movements concerned with departure from established traditions.

In my fourth chapter I consider the fictional versions of 'Ovide' in the *histoires galantes* by Villedieu, Mailly and La Roche-Guilhen, looking in particular at those of Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen. I show that Ovide was characterised as a 'galant' poet, and demonstrate that elements of Ovid's story made him easily transportable to *mondain* sociable literary culture. There was also something sombre and politicised in these women's accounts of Ovid's exile, which have been read as references to the contemporary political-literary climate, with, in Villedieu's case, Ovide standing for Fouquet, Louis XIV's disgraced finance minister. Both Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen exploit the political connotations of Ovid's position as an exiled poet to explore the corruptions and passions at all levels of the court; I argue that this political gesture can also be found in their very deliberate mixing of history and fiction which questions the processes behind official historiography.

I explore the question of alignment between Ovid and contemporary figures of disgrace further in my fifth and final chapter. Here I treat the comparisons made by Dominique Bouhours in his *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1689) between Ovid and two exiles of Louis XIV: Fouquet and Bussy-Rabutin. I focus in

particular on the comparison between Bussy and Ovid. Bouhours typified 'Ovide' as a 'malheureux', a lamenting exile, in order to portray Bussy favourably. Bussy himself also made use of this 'parallèle' in his self-fashioning *Mémoires* and *Correspondance*. I identify differences between the two French writers' uses of Ovid, showing how he can be used both for ends that serve and praise and King, and for ends that are more ambiguous.

My thesis thus brings together texts which might not normally be looked at in the same study, however they are all concerned with the place of the ancient past, and the question of how write about it, in a culture riven by self-conscious movements towards the 'moderne'. This study, therefore, offers something to both scholars of French and those interested in classical reception. Instead of tracing the construction of Ovid with the sole intention of contributing to the recent interest in the reception of this figure, I am also interested in what the construction might reveal about the cultural movements, *querelles* and concerns of a particular historical moment, as the specificity of my corpus and relatively condensed time period will attest. In some respects, then, I am taking an anti-disciplinary approach, if disciplinarity is conceived of as territorial and exclusive, and intend this work to be useful and interesting for classicists and French scholars alike.

CHAPTER ONE

The historical problem: Bayle's article 'Ovide' in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697)

More is known about Ovid's life than many other classical poets. This is largely because he tells us so much about it in his own poetry, notably in the *Tristia*. In Book IV, Poem 10, his poem addressed to posterity – 'accipe posteritas'/ 'hear this, posterity' (2) – Ovid sketches his own biography. Ovid provides what can be described as a full picture, although we do not have any means of judging how full this is, since there is no other contemporary testimony with which to fill in any further details.¹ We know he was born in Sulmona, a town East of Rome on March 23rd, 43 BC.² He gives details about his family – he was from the Equestrian class and had an older brother who died aged twenty; and his education – the brothers learnt oratory, and the elder was more skilled than Ovid. To his father's chagrin Ovid shunned taking office on his brother's death, as he was much better suited to poetry. He tells us about the poetry he wrote – the *Metamorphoses*, the *Fasti*, the *Ars Amatoria*, the *Amores* and the *Heroides*; his three wives (divorced, died, survived); and the daughter who gave him a short-lived grandson. His exile to Tomis, a Roman province on the Black Sea, at the age of 50 (in 8 AD) is documented by many of the poems in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where he bewails his fate and describes his sorry situation among the Getic people. Unsurprisingly, details of his death are less clear, but it has been dated to 17/18 AD, and he is thought to have died in exile.³ Although the information offered by Ovid might

¹ Ovid is mentioned briefly by his contemporary, Seneca the Elder, in *Declamations: Controversiae*, trans. by Michael Winterbottom (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, 1974), 2.28 and 9.5.

² 'Sulmo mihi patria est/Sulmo is my native town' (3). His birthday is described as the final day of the Quinquatrus festival, known to be March 23rd in the year when 'cum cecidit fato consul uterque pari/when both consuls fell by a similar fate' – 43 BC when the consuls Aulus Hirtius and Gaius Verbius Pansa Caetromanus were both killed in battle.

³ In his chronicle written in 380AD, Saint Jerome dates Ovid's death to 17 AD in Tomis. The question of the location of Ovid's tomb, and its possible epigraph, has aroused the interest and curiosity of subsequent writers and engravers; accounts in the Medieval and Humanist Lives of Ovid offer a range of possibilities, including the Black Sea and ancient city of Savaria or Sabaria (modern-day Szombathely in Hungary). For more detail, see J. B. Trapp, 'Ovid's tomb: the growth of a legend from Eusebius to Laurence Sterne, Chateaubriand and George Richmond', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 36 (1973), 35-76.

look like facts, the details Ovid selects and presents all construct a particular, and particularly favourable, image of himself, serving his poetic reputation: he stresses that his urge for poetry was so strong he had to give up the law, while the death of his grandson means that his poems are his only mark on posterity.

On the point of why he was exiled, however, Ovid is far more reticent, saying that it was for ‘carmen et error’: a poem and a mistake. He goes on to provide a lengthy defence of his love poem, the *Ars Amatoria*, which suggests that this is what he means by the ‘carmen’; but he offers only elusive comments as to what he might mean by the ‘error’, saying it was something he saw by mistake, that it was more horrific than death, and that he cannot say what it was. Since there are no contemporary sources which bear witness to Ovid’s exile – no account of a trial, no official documents remain – the only information available comes from what Ovid himself elliptically offers. The possible causes of Ovid’s exile have therefore been a subject of speculation and interest for writers and historians from antiquity to the present day.⁴

Despite the apparent autobiographical detail offered here, the narrator of the *Tristia* likens himself to figures from myth throughout the work, and scholars have identified connections between the content of the *Tristia* and Ovid’s other epistolary poetry, the *Heroides*, where Ovid assumes the voices of women from antiquity, suggesting that in his exile works, just as in these love letters, Ovid adopts a persona.⁵ Indeed, the lack of historical information and the literary nature of the exile poetry has led some scholars to suggest that the exile itself is a poetic conceit, an entirely fabricated scenario.⁶ This theory has been refuted, and it is not a case I am interested in making, but this interpretation

⁴ Studies in the twentieth century have explored the mystery of his exile: W. Alexander, ‘The Culpa of Ovid’, *The Classical Journal*, 7 (1958), 319-325; F. Norwood, ‘The Riddle of Ovid’s ‘Relegatio’’, *Classical Philology*, 3 (1963), 150-163; John C. Thibault, *The Mystery of Ovid’s Exile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964).

⁵ For connections between the *Tristia* and the *Heroides*, see Stephen Hinds, ‘First among Women: Ovid, *Tristia* 1.6 and the Traditions of “Exemplary” Catalogue’, in *amor: roma. Love and Latin Literature*, Cambridge Philological Society, 22, ed. by S. Morton Braund and R. Mayer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999), pp. 123-42; and Ingleheart, *Commentary*, pp. 21-24.

⁶ A. D. Fitton Brown, ‘The unreality of Ovid’s Tomitan exile’, *Liverpool Classical Monthly*, 10 (1985), 18-22.

emphasises the literary nature of Ovid's exile poetry, pointing to possible problems of its appropriation as historical fact.⁷

In this chapter I will consider how Ovid's life is narrated in Pierre Bayle's encyclopedic dictionary, the *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (first ed. 1697) in which he set out to identify and correct the errors committed by previous scholars.⁸ Because of this intention and the erudition and thoroughness with which it was executed, Bayle's *Dictionnaire* provides an excellent starting point for understanding the historiographical tradition of Ovid's life in the early modern period. I will explore how Pierre Bayle deals with the scholarship on Ovid's life from antiquity to his own time. Unlike previous scholars who have tried to build up historical information to provide a coherent and full picture, Bayle exposes the lack of historical information about Ovid's life and identifies the problems that stem from the fact that the principal source consists of Ovid's own poetry. Bayle chooses, I argue, to read Ovid's words as suspiciously as he expects us to read his own.

1. The Lives of Ovid: Bayle's 'sources'

Bayle's article questions and corrects versions of Ovid's life written between Late Antiquity and his own time of writing. It is thus emblematic of the intention Bayle sets out in his *préface* to the first edition of the *Dictionnaire*. He explains that he initially set out to correct the historical and biographical dictionary by Louis Moréri, the *Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* (first ed. 1674),⁹ as well as

⁷ Further articles and refutations ensued, such as A. W. J. Holleman, 'Ovid's exile', *Liverpool Classical Monthly*, 10 (1985), 48; and H. Hofmann, 'The unreality of Ovid's Tomitan exile once again', *Liverpool Classical Monthly*, 12 (1987), 23. For further discussion of these debates, see Jo-Marie Claassen, *Displaced persons: The literature of exile from Cicero to Boethius* (London: Duckworth, 1999), pp. 29-35.

⁸ 'Je me suis mis en tête de compiler le plus gros recueil qu'il me sera possible des fautes qui se rencontrent dans les Dictionnaires', *Projet et fragments d'un dictionnaire critique* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1692), p.2.

⁹ Louis Moréri, *Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* (Lyon: J. Girin and B. Rivière, 1674).

the works of other contemporary dictionary-writers, but he soon found that their errors had roots in ancient sources and a more systemic and comprehensive correction was necessary:

Ma principale vue avait été de marquer les fautes de Mr. Moréri et celles de tous les autres Dictionnaires qui sont semblables au sien. En cherchant les preuves nécessaires à montrer ces fautes et à les rectifier, j'avais trouvé que plusieurs auteurs anciens et modernes ont bronché aux mêmes lieux. (*Préface*, p. 2)

The principal sources Bayle quotes and evaluates in his article are the poems Ovid wrote from exile, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. He quotes two historians of late antiquity, Suetonius and Sidonius Apollinaris; the *Vitae Ovidii* by the sixteenth-century Humanist scholars, Alde Manuce and Ercole Ciofano; the *Vie d'Ovide* by Michel de Marolles; and Louis de Moréri's article 'Ovide' in his *Grand dictionnaire historique*.¹⁰ Before turning to Bayle's treatment of these sources, I want to account for these sources themselves. This will provide an opportunity to sketch out the history of biographies of Ovid and to make it clear where Bayle's particularities and innovations lie.

The root of the problem scholars faced in trying to account for Ovid's life was historical; the central element of his life-story was a mystery as the causes for his exile were – as they still are – unknown. Ovid tells us that in 8 AD, Emperor Augustus exiled him to Tomis on the Black Sea. Historians – Tacitus, Dio Cassius and Suetonius – explain that in 8 AD, that same year, Augustus also exiled his own granddaughter, Julia Minor (or Julia the Younger). Ten years earlier, in 2BC, Julia the Elder, Augustus' daughter, had also been exiled by the Emperor. From exile, Ovid wrote his two final collections of poems: the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, as well as the invective poem, the *Ibis*. These two collections, as the title of the second collection indicates, were epistles, sent back to Rome to engage the sympathy of Ovid's wife, friends and, particularly, the Emperor, in his attempt to prompt retraction of his exile sentence. In this poetry, and particularly in Book Two of the

¹⁰ Bayle also briefly mentions Philippe Briet's account of Ovid's life in his *Acute dicta omnium veterum poetarum latinorum opus editum ad usum... Ducis Guisii, cui praefixum Philippi Brietti, de omnibus isdem poetis syntagma* (Paris, F. Muget, 1664).

Tristia, he alludes to the reasons why he was exiled, but gives no clear explanation. Subsequent speculation as to the cause of his exile is thus largely based on what Ovid himself has to say. Ovid suggests that the cause was not a fault he committed intentionally, and nor was it something he did. Instead he implies that it was something he saw by mistake, and the act of seeing was criminalised because of the nature of what he saw (he does not tell us what this was). He compares himself to Actaeon who was punished for unwittingly seeing Diana naked.¹¹

Cur aliquid vidi? Cur noxia lumina feci?
 cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi?
 Inscius Actaeon vidit sine veste Dianam
 praeda fuit canibus non minus ille suis. (*Tristia*. 2. 103-6)
 Why did I see anything? Why did I make my eyes guilty? Why was I so thoughtless
 as to harbour the knowledge of a fault? Actaeon saw Diana naked unwittingly; and
 yet he still became the prey of his own hounds.

He later refers to two reasons for his exile, ‘carmen et error/ a poem and a mistake’¹² (*Tristia* 2.207-8) – where the poem is the *Ars Amatoria*¹³, composed ten years before his exile, which he goes on to defend, and the ‘mistake’ remains a mystery. The reason he does not say what the *error* was, he explains, is his fear of offending Augustus:

Perdiderint cum me duo crimina, carmen et error
 alterius facti culpa silenda mihi
 nam non sum tanti, renovem ut tua vulnera, Caesar
 quem nimio plus est indoluisse semel. (*Tristia* 2. 207-210)
 Although two crimes, a poem and a mistake, caused my ruin, I must remain silent
 about the latter as I am not worthy enough to reopen your wounds, Caesar; it is
 enough that you should have been grieved once.

¹¹ It was only later that Actaeon came to be associated with curiosity; he was first described as curious in second-century Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass*, whereas Ovid’s Actaeon was punished for seeing something by mistake. See Kenny’s list of male allegorical figures of curiosity, in Neil Kenny, *The Uses of Curiosity in Early Modern France and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 317.

¹² Betty Rose Nagle has suggested that ‘carmen et error’ could be an example of a ‘hendiadys’ (‘the error consisting of the poem’) in *Ovid’s Fasti: Roman Holidays* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), p. 3. Ingleheart has refuted this claim because of the repetition of references to *two* offences and the fact that the comparison with Actaeon would make no sense if the sole error was the *Ars Amatoria*. Ingleheart, *A Commentary*, p. 203-4.

¹³ The *Ars Amatoria* was a mock didactic poem written in c. 2AD, teaching men and women laws of attraction, somewhat at odds with the strict moral codes of the Augustan regime and in particular the *Lex Julia de adulteriis coecendis* and the *Lex Julia de martiandis ordinibus* passed in 18 BC.

This statement has caught the imagination of scholars from late Antiquity to the present day. Ovid never does explain the *error*, but in telling us why he cannot explain it – that it would offend Augustus again – he manages to suggest that perhaps the *error* was something Augustus would not want people to know because it might involve and compromise him. Because of the regrets Ovid expresses about what he saw, perhaps what he saw was Augustus doing something wrong. The implications of this comment have given rise to all manner of conspiracy theories speculating about Augustus' transgression.

Two key sources from late Antiquity have shaped and fed such theories. The earliest belongs to Suetonius, the Roman historian of the First Century AD, and can be found in *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* (121 AD). Suetonius' account is mentioned by Bayle, as it provides a key source for all the *Vitae Ovidii* and *Vies d'Ovide* surveyed in his article. In Chapter XXIII of the *Lives* Suetonius claims that Caligula thought he was the grandson of the Emperor Augustus, and that his mother was born from an incestuous relationship between Augustus and his daughter, Julia.

He was unwilling to be thought of or called the grandson of Agrippa because of the obscurity of his birth; and he was offended if anyone, either in prose or verse, ranked him amongst the Caesars. He said that his mother was the fruit of an incestuous commerce, maintained by Augustus with his daughter Julia.¹⁴

This is slightly odd as a source for why *Ovid* was exiled since there is no mention of Ovid here at all! And yet, this source gave rise to what became one of the most frequently cited explanations for Ovid's exile: that he caught Augustus in an act of incest. As we will see, Caligula's implication was combined with Ovid's claim that he saw something that may have involved Augustus to reach the not-quite-logical conclusion that Ovid must have witnessed incest.

¹⁴ Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, trans. by Robert Graves (London: Penguin, 1957), p. 164.

The second main source from Late Antiquity also assumes that sexual scandal lies at the heart of Ovid's disgrace, though this time the transgression is Ovid's. Sidonius Apollinaris, priest and poet, writing in 450 AD, suggests that the poet's disgrace was caused by an affair with Julia, Augustus' daughter. He claims that the woman Ovid refers to in his love poetry as 'Corinna' is in fact Julia, the Emperor's daughter. Their affair was discovered and Ovid banished.

Et te carmina per libidinosa
notum, Naso tener, tomosque missum
quondam caesareae nimis puellae
ficto nomine subditum corinnae.¹⁵

And gentle Naso, sent to Tomis and known for your libidinous poems, which you addressed too often to Caesar's daughter under the false name of Corinna.

Apollinaris thus interprets the 'carmen' of 'carmen et error' as referring to 'libidinous poems' in which Ovid wrote about his relationship with the Emperor's daughter and described her with a pseudonym, 'Corinna'. This assumption may well have derived from Ovid himself (*Tristia* IV. 10. 60-61):

moverat ingenium totam cantata per urbem
nomine non vero dicta Corinna mihi

My genius was stirred by she who was sung throughout the whole city, whom I called Corinna, though this was not her real name.

However, like that of Suetonius, this source has certain peculiarities. Corinna is not the addressee of the *Ars Amatoria* – the licentious poem Ovid accounts for as the 'carmen' – but rather of a different poetry collection: the more salubrious *Amores*. And yet, in many versions of Ovid's life, 'carmen' is thought to refer to a licentious love poem (identified as the *Ars Amatoria*), which offended the Emperor because the female protagonist, Corinna (who is the protagonist of the *Amores*)¹⁶ was thought to be pseudonym for Augustus'

¹⁵ Sidonius Apollinaris, Carmen 23. 159-60, *Poems and Letters*, trans. by W. B. Anderson, 2 vols. (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1939), I, pp. 294-5.

¹⁶ 'Corinna' is mentioned briefly in *Ars Amatoria* 3. 583, but no poem in this collection is addressed to her.

daughter, Julia.¹⁷ Interference from Apollinaris' explanation might account for this conflation.

Speculation as to reasons for Ovid's exile abounded in the medieval period. Introductions to Ovid's works contained an additional introduction, or *accessus*, which outlined the moral aims of the work and described details of the poet's life.¹⁸ In these *accessi*, Ovid's exile was attributed to the *Ars Amatoria*; to witnessing Augustus in an act of incest; to witnessing Augustus in a sexual act with a young boy; to witnessing Augustus doing something secret; to the anger of Empress Livia, whose advances Ovid refused; to his affair with Livia; to his use of 'Corinna' as a pseudonym for Livia; and to his use of 'Corinna' as a pseudonym for Augustus' daughter, Julia.¹⁹ Whilst many of these manuscripts may have influenced later accounts, there were two in particular that were frequently printed in seventeenth-century editions of Ovid's poetry: the *Codex Farnesianus* and the *Codex Pomponius Laetus* from the late medieval period.²⁰ Like Apollinaris, these suggest that Ovid was exiled for licentious love poetry in which he used 'Corinna' as a pseudonym for Julia. His offence was both the affair the poems revealed and his act of writing them. This, together with the possibility that Ovid witnessed Augustus committing incest, became the two most frequently cited explanations for Ovid's exile in seventeenth-century writing.

Scholars in the sixteenth century began to bring together these diverse sources in an attempt to offer a balanced, impartial account of Ovid's life. *Vitae* written in the Humanist tradition were more comprehensive than those included in the *accessi*, which tended to focus

¹⁷ There is consistent confusion in Renaissance and seventeenth-century texts between Julia the Elder, Augustus' daughter and Julia the Younger, his granddaughter - a confusion which Bayle corrects. The former was exiled in 2BC for adultery and treason and the latter was also exiled in 8AD (the same year as Ovid), also for adultery.

¹⁸ For further details, see Fausto Ghisalberti, 'Mediaeval Biographies of Ovid,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 9 (1946), 10-59.

¹⁹ For a comprehensive list of the different manuscripts, see Thibault, pp. 24-27.

²⁰ Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS Codex Festi Farnesianus; Rome, Vatican Library, MS Codex Pomponius Laetus.

only on the genesis of the particular poem it introduced.²¹ The Humanist *Vitae Ovidii* were written in Latin, and often attached to erudite Latin editions of Ovid's poetry that included commentaries, glossaries and explanations. There were three sixteenth-century *Vitae Ovidii* which had an important influence on the seventeenth-century conceptions of Ovid: the *Vitae* by Alde Manuce²², Ercolis Ciofano²³ and Lilio Giralaldi.²⁴

Alde Manuce's version of Ovid's life, which Fausto Ghisalberti calls 'the first true humanist life of Ovid', is a key source for Bayle who was sympathetic to the scholarly and impartial approach, though he would not hold back from criticising Manuce when he thought it necessary.²⁵ In 1502, in Venice, Alde Manuce (or to use his Latin name, Aldus Manutius) compiled a scholarly edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and included a *Vita Ovidii* in verse.²⁶ As was typical of all accounts of Ovid's life – because they are all based largely on Ovid's own words – he gives details of Ovid's birth, childhood, his education, his father's desire for him to become a lawyer, his exile, death and the poetry he wrote. Crucially for Bayle, Manuce suggests that Ovid's exile was caused by his affair with Julia and the poems he wrote describing her under a pseudonym. Manuce refutes the explanation that he saw Augustus in an act of incest because, he argues, Ovid would not have mentioned something so offensive to Augustus in a poem in which he was trying to placate him. This

²¹ Ghisalberti has identified the transition in the Lives of Ovid from Medieval *accessi* to the Humanist *vitae*, but offers quite a patronising view of the medieval tradition, explaining that the former were 'full of superstitions and inventions', whereas the latter were more careful, scholarly, prudent and impartial. Ghisalberti, p. 21.

²² Aldus Manutius (1449-1515) was a Venetian printer and scholar, and founder of the Aldine press in Venice.

²³ Ercole Ciofane, (1545-1591) was a scholar from Sulmo, Ovid's native town, who published a lengthy commentary that included a *Vita Ovidii* of Ovid's complete works in 1578.

²⁴ Lilio Giralaldi (1479-1552) was an Italian Humanist scholar. His *Historiae poetarum tam Graecorum quam Latinorum dialogi decem* (Basel: 1545) includes an account of Ovid's life. This was extremely popular in seventeenth-century Latin editions of Ovid's poetry. It was the only sixteenth-century version to be included in the Latin editions of Ovid's poetry – namely the Frankfurt version published in 1601, another compiled by Daniel Heinsius in 1629, and a third by Nicolaas Heinsius in 1652.

²⁵ Ghisalberti, p. 26.

²⁶ Aldus Manutius, *Quae in hoc volumine continentur: Ad Marinum Lanudum epistola... Orthographia dictionum graecarum per ordinem literarum; Vita Ovidii ex ipsius operibus; Index fabularum et caeterorum... Ovidii Metamorphoseon libri quindecim* (Venice: A. Manutius, 1502).

question of what Ovid might or might not have dared to mention and the possibilities that can be extrapolated from it is where Bayle's interest lies.

The *vitae* by Lilio Giraldi and Ercole Ciofano had a formative influence on the first French *Vie d'Ovide*, written by Michel de Marolles and published in 1660 to accompany his prose translation of Ovid's *Ibis* poem.²⁷ In Marolles' description of Ovid's exile and its possible causes he synthesises the accounts by Giraldi and Ciofano. Giraldi cites Apollinaris to suggest Ovid's exile was caused by 'the libidinous poems' in which he addressed Julia 'under the false name of Corinna'; and Ciofano cites Suetonius, suggesting Ovid caught Augustus in an incestuous act. Marolles uses both Giraldi's and Ciofano's accounts, and suggests that Ovid was exiled both for the poem and the relationship it was thought to reveal, and for the mistake of catching Augustus in an act of incest.²⁸

Louis Moréri, the chief target of Bayle's corrections, also included a short account of Ovid's life in his *Grand dictionnaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* (1674). This is based on accounts by Ovid, Suetonius, Apollinaris, and Marolles. Moréri's brief biographical entry on Ovid follows the typical trajectory of those cited above, but he is dismissive of the question of Ovid's exile, surveying the different accounts offered without scrutinizing their reliability:

On dit que ce [son exil] fut pour avoir fait l'amour à Julie, fille d'Auguste, qu'il aimait sous le nom de Corinne. D'autres disent qu'il s'adressait à Livie son épouse; et que ce fut pour elle qu'il composa son Art d'Aimer. Quoi qu'il en soit de la cause de ce bannissement, qui dura plus de sept ans, Ovide y mourut le 1 janvier [...]. p. 801.

Although there were two relatively recent translations of Ovid's *Tristia*, *Les Regrets*

²⁷ Michel de Marolles, 'La Vie d'Ovide', in *Le Livre d'Ovide contre Ibis traduit par Michel de Marolles* (Paris: L. Billaine, 1660).

²⁸ 'Entendant par ses vers, ses Livres de l'Art d'Aimer, où il avait touché quelque chose qui avait déplu à l'Empereur, en parlant de sa fille sous le nom de Corinne; et par son erreur, qu'il n'explique pas distinctement, quand il surprit Auguste prenant un peu trop de privauté avec sa fille Julie. [...] Et de fait, Suétone a bien remarqué dans la vie de Caius, qu'on tenait que sa mère Agrippine était née de l'inceste d'Auguste avec sa fille Julie'. Marolles, 'La Vie d'Ovide', np.

d'Ovide of 1625 by Jean Binard,²⁹ and Michel de Marolles' *Les Tristes d'Ovide* (1661), Bayle does not refer to either of these, and instead uses Ovid's original text.³⁰ This was no doubt because both translators took it upon themselves to clarify the tantalizing elusiveness of Ovid's discussion of his exile, offering interpretive translations influenced by the biographies surveyed here. In the *Avertissement au lecteur*, Binard recommends reading his translation in order to find out why Ovid was exiled. He suggests it was because Ovid witnessed certain shameful acts of Augustus who then used the *Ars Amatoria* as a pretext for getting rid of the now-unwanted poet:

Si tu désires savoir la disgrâce qui oblige ce poète à faire de tels regrets, je te la dirai. Ayant été honoré des plus belles charges presque de l'état, à l'aide de sa noblesse et de son mérite; et s'étant acquis par la beauté de son esprit les bonnes grâces de la fille de l'empereur, il se voit déchu de sa félicité et banni de Rome pour s'être rencontré par hasard à quelques honteuses actions d'Auguste; comme sans le dire il le donne à penser en plusieurs endroits de ces regrets pitoyables, où il tache pourtant de déguiser cette faute sous le prétexte de ses livres de l'art d'aimer, qui servirent pour autoriser son bannissement au Pont dans le pays sauvage de la Scythie. (*Avertissement au lecteur*, np)

Binard acknowledges a combination of reticence and revelation in Ovid's writing – 'sans le dire à personne, il le donne à penser' – and also takes it upon himself to interpret what he thinks Ovid is implying, as he translates Ovid's elusive line, 'carmen et error' in such a way that it *explains* this 'error':

Pour venir au sujet qui m'a perdu et ruiné, recherchant tous les défauts où je me suis laissé aller, je ne trouve que deux crimes, savoir mes vers licencieux et une rencontre par hasard, dont il faut passer une de ces fautes sous le silence. (p. 136-137)

This 'rencontre par hasard' must pick up on 'pour s'être rencontré par hasard à quelques honteuses actions d'Auguste'. Where Ovid was silent, Binard makes him speak, makes him disclose that he was exiled for seeing Augustus in a shameful act.

²⁹ Jean Binard, *Les Regrets d'Ovide, traduits en prose française par J. Binard* (Paris: H. Sara, 1625).

³⁰ Michel de Marolles, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Tristium libri V cum interpretatione gallica et notis. Les Tristes d'Ovide, de la traduction de M.D.M.A.D.V [Michel de Marolles, abbé de Villeloin] avec des remarques* (Paris: L. Billaine, 1661).

Marolles' translation is no less interpretative. There are two different versions – one produced in 1661 and one in 1678.³¹ The translations are a little different. In the 1661 prose edition, he writes:

Deux choses ayant causé ma ruine, un poème de galanterie et une erreur, dont je passerai le dernier sous silence; car César, je ne suis pas si hardi que de renouveler vos playes, n'ayant que trop de regret d'avoir été si malheureux que je l'ai été de vous fâcher une seule fois; et pour l'autre, où l'on m'accuse du crime honteux d'avoir donné des préceptes de licence pour favoriser les infâmes adultères, je vois bien que les âmes célestes sont quelquefois capables de se laisser tromper [...] (p. 48)

Marolles does not explain the 'erreur', but he does describe the carmen as 'un poème de galanterie', perceived as a 'crime honteux', a poem full of 'préceptes de licence'. In describing a licentious poem as a 'galanterie', Marolles emphasises a link between *galanterie* and *licence* that was by no means uncommon, and that I will explore further in subsequent chapters. In the brief preface to the 1678 version Marolles identifies Ovid's reticence on the subject of his exile: 'les redites d'Ovide sont fréquentes pour marquer les causes de son bannissement dans la Province de Pont, dont il ne s'explique pourtant jamais bien clairement, ce qu'il fait exprès' (*Preface*, np). Like Binard, Marolles suggests that Ovid is deliberately unclear on the subject of his exile. Nevertheless, his translation goes some way to offering an explanation (though this differs slightly from the ones offered in his *Vie d'Ovide*):

Deux choses ont été cause de ma ruine
une galanterie, une erreur enfantine
n'ayant rien à marquer concernant cette erreur;
car César, oserais-je animer votre aigreur?
m'étant si mal trouvé déjà de mon audace,
par qui je fus privé de votre bonne grâce.
malheureux que je suis de vous avoir fâché
pour une seule fois que je fus débauché
et pour l'autre où je vois que souvent on m'amuse
d'un crime qui fait honte à la pudique muse

³¹ Michel de Marolles, *Ovide. Toutes les pièces qui nous restent de ce poète, lesquelles il composa pendant son exil, contenues dans les deux grands ouvrages que nous avons de lui sur ce sujet sous deux titres différents de Tristes et de Pont* [...] (Paris: J. Langlois, 1678).

pour avoir débité des préceptes d'amour
qui fut de l'adultère un passe-temps d'un jour. (p. 53)

In this later version 'un poème de galanterie' has become simply 'une galanterie'; 'une erreur' becomes 'une erreur enfantine' and the 'audace' is expanded upon quite considerably. The lines in italics are those which Marolles has added in translation: 'je fus débauché' seems to provide an explanation for 'erreur enfantine'. So now Marolles does clarify this 'erreur': it was something inappropriate (and sexual) in Ovid's own conduct, and perhaps, given the assertions Marolles makes in his *Vie d'Ovide*, his affair with Julie. Both these translations of Ovid's exile poetry reveal the interference of versions of Ovid's life subsequent to his own writing, and both translators feel the need to offer their own explanations for Ovid's exile, demonstrating that they have read these poems as autobiographical artefacts, useful for biographical details, rather than as playful, literary conceits.

*

Although Bayle's *Dictionnaire* is frequently understood as a biographical dictionary, or a sort of *recueil de vies*, this chapter will argue that Bayle goes further than these other *Vitae* and *Vies* of Ovid, which he seeks to correct.³² Bayle's article 'Ovide' peels back the layers of apocryphal stories, intertextual interference, and hearsay to expose that the centrepiece for all this speculation lies in Ovid's own words. Using the original Latin, Bayle explores their complexity, identifying the dangers of taking them at face value. However, Bayle's article is itself by no means simple: therefore before addressing Bayle's treatment of these sources, it is necessary to consider the nature of his *Dictionnaire*, the genesis of this

³² As Ribard argues: 'il est très frappant que le Dictionnaire de Bayle ait été ainsi compris essentiellement comme un recueil de Vies de savants'. Ribard, p. 288.

particular article and many of the problems identified in reading Bayle. I will argue that one of the ways we can read Bayle is to be found in how he reads Ovid.

2. Reading Bayle and the genesis of the article ‘Ovide’

Reading Bayle’s *Dictionnaire* is a challenging and involved process. Most of the discussion takes place in the footnotes or *remarques*, which have a complicated relationship to statements in the main text, and these in turn refer to side notes, and include cross-references to different articles. This entails a degree of fragmentation that is both visual and rhetorical. In addition to the labyrinthine layout and its effect on argument, Bayle’s sentence structure and syntax can be similarly dense and intricate, ensuring that his meaning is rarely apparent without slow and careful reading.

One of most striking and provocative aspects of the entry on Ovid is its structure.³³ In the definitive edition of 1740 the main text of the article, which is thirteen pages long, opens with a brief summary of Ovid’s life: his family and marriages, his passion for poetry, his poetic style and his exile.³⁴ This is expanded in *remarques* A to E. The middle section is a lengthy treatment of chaos and the creation of the universe, initiated by a commentary on the opening of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Most of the discussion takes place in the footnotes (F to I) and within this the discussion is divided between chaos in the universe and chaos within man in his combat between reason and passion. The article then moves back to a discussion of Ovid’s life and, principally, his exile. Reasons for this are then treated in greater depth here in *remarques* K-S. Ovid’s life frames the article, which is full of complex

³³ As David Wootton states: ‘Bayle frequently thwarts expectations by inserting discussions of topics within articles where you would not expect them [...] Nor can one predict what one will find in an article’. David Wootton, ‘Pierre Bayle, Libertine?’, in *Studies in Seventeenth-Century European Philosophy*, ed. by M.A Stewart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 197-226, p. 203-4.

³⁴ All references will be to the following comprehensive edition: *Dictionnaire historique et critique par Mr. Pierre Bayle, revue, corrigée et augmentée, cinquième édition*, 4 vols. (Amsterdam; Leyde; La Haye; Utrecht, 1740). The article *Ovide* is in Vol III, pp. 554-567.

syntax, cross-reference, contradiction and twists of argument. The analysis that follows in this chapter is concerned with the parts of the article that directly treat Ovid's life.

However, Bayle's article, 'Ovide', was not always in this state; indeed, its layered structure might be explained by its staggered composition. The 1740 version is the eighth separate edition of Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, although on the title page it claims to be the fifth.³⁵ It follows the composition, content and order established by the 1720 edition – the third official edition of the *Dictionnaire* published by Michel Bohm in Rotterdam, and the first authorized posthumous version.³⁶ The 1720 edition contains the final changes Bayle made to his *Dictionnaire* before his death in 1706. In the *first* edition, published in 1697 by R. Leers in Rotterdam, the 'Ovide' article is only 3 pages long and ends with *remarque* D (which from 1702 onwards is E) – that is, is composed solely of a brief description of Ovid's life with no reference to his work or lengthy discussion of his exile. Six years later, in 1702, Bayle produced an augmented second edition of the *Dictionnaire*, published by R. Leers in Rotterdam in which he not only added new articles but also revised some of the existing ones. He made some changes to the article 'Ovide', lengthening it considerably by adding the long section on chaos (*remarques* F to I) and inserting a new footnote at the beginning of the article in which he describes Ovid's poetry as obscene. This second edition also includes important new paratextual material in which Bayle responds to criticisms made against that of 1697: the *Avertissement sur la seconde édition*, and the *Eclaircissements*, which are included in an appendix. One of the principal criticisms Bayle refutes is the accusation of *obscenité* and I will consider the relationship between the new *remarque* A and the *Eclaircissement* in the next section. In the posthumous edition of 1720, the article was modified once again: Bayle had added a substantial eight pages to the end of the article (*remarques* K-S), treating the complexities of Ovid's exile and his life in Tomis.

³⁵ The pagination is the same as the fourth edition, published in 1730 in Amsterdam by P. Brunel.

³⁶ A pirate copy of his *Dictionnaire* was published in 1715 in Geneva by Fabri et Barrillot.

Ovid's life thus plays a key role in this article and seems to have endlessly perplexed Bayle's enquiring mind. Why did it require such revision and reformulation? Is there more to the description of Ovid's life than simply the correction of scholarly errors?

Given the structure of the article what is immediately striking is that the complex rhetorical manoeuvres and syntax are not reserved for the more potentially problematic discussion of chaos and creation, which might contain heterodox ideas, but are also present in the sections on Ovid's life and exile. This serves to make Bayle's argument and their implications difficult to follow. By analysing this section in detail, I will not only explore the effect of these techniques, but crucially, also consider why Bayle employs them.

The choices and strategies involved in reading Bayle have provoked a long and ongoing debate among scholars. Since these debates usually address the elements in Bayle's writing that could be considered heterodox or polemical, especially concerning faith, the stakes are high when it comes to interpreting his writing and intentions. Elisabeth Labrousse argues that Bayle was a sincere and devout Protestant. She thus accounts for the complexity of his texts as being part of his style and intellectual appreciation of argument for its own sake, rather than as a deliberate tool used to imply or suggest views that might be dangerous or heterodox.³⁷ In contrast, David Wootton, Lorenzo Bianchi and Gianluca Mori have read Bayle in the context of 'libertinage érudit', arguing that if we read his texts in this light, conscious of the writing strategies he employs, it is possible to find heterodox ideas in his texts.³⁸ Wootton and Bianchi have paid particular attention to the layout and style of the *Dictionnaire*, and notably, the extensive use of footnotes. Bianchi argues that

³⁷ Elisabeth Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle* (The Hague: Martin Nijhoff, 1964).

³⁸ 'Libertinage érudit' is a particular scholarly category, see Isabelle Moreau, 'Guérir du sot': *Les stratégies d'écriture des libertins à l'âge classique* (Paris: Champion, 2007); it has also been somewhat contested, see Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, 'Libertinage, irréligion, incroyance, athéisme dans l'Europe de la première modernité (XVI^e–XVII^e siècles): une approche critique des tendances actuelles de la recherche (1998–2002)', *Les Dossiers du GRIHL* (2007–02), <<http://dossiersgrihl.revues.org/279>>.

Bayle's use of the footnote allows for the digression, detail and critical process necessary to give space to complex and layered arguments:

La tradition libertine s'y décèle aussi dans la manière de s'exprimer sur un ton polémique et savant, capable de mélanger érudition et données historiques pour faire circuler des doctrines dangereuses ou hétérodoxes. De ce point de vue, la 'remarque' Baylienne est un véritable espace de liberté.³⁹

Wootton suggests that 'the obvious explanation for [the 'peculiar structural features' of the *Dictionnaire*] is to displace responsibility from the author', as dialogue, quotation, and use of sources enabled Bayle to deny personal responsibility for the text, so that 'each reader has to take responsibility for the version of the text they create [...]'.⁴⁰ Mori, by closely following the contradictions, cross-reference and sequence of Bayle's arguments with acute attention, goes so far as to claim that the views contained are distinctly atheist.⁴¹ For some critics, such as Richard H. Popkin, these methods of writing situate Bayle in a skeptical tradition;⁴² and Isabelle Moreau argues: 'le philosophe sceptique adopte une énonciation non résolutive, fondée sur la suspension du jugement et la pratique de la rétraction: l'écriture se présente dans le ressassement et la répétition parce qu'elle épouse les mouvements contradictoires de la pensée'.⁴³ For other critics, it is the opposite. Adam Sutcliffe suggests that 'even scepticism, insofar as its rejection of certainty might itself amount to an inverted dogmatism, is undermined by Bayle's relentless argument'.⁴⁴

The wealth and range of approaches to reading Bayle have made him a central and exemplary figure in debates about methodology in the study of the history of ideas. As Jean-Pierre Cavaillé suggests when discussing 'libertine' writing, 'la question de fait est

³⁹ Lorenzo Bianchi, 'Pierre Bayle et le libertinage érudit', in *Critique, savoir et érudition à la veille des lumières: le Dictionnaire historique et critique de Pierre Bayle*, ed. by H. Bost (Amsterdam: APA-Holland University Press, 1998), pp. 251-268, p. 253.

⁴⁰ Wootton, p. 203.

⁴¹ 'Tous les chemins de la réflexion philosophique de Bayle mènent à l'athéisme'. Gianluca Mori, *Bayle philosophe* (Paris: Champion, 1999), p. 189.

⁴² Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Savanarola to Bayle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁴³ Moreau, p. 304.

⁴⁴ Adam Sutcliffe, 'Spinoza, Bayle and the Enlightenment Politics of Philosophical Certainty', *History of European Ideas*, 34 (2008), 66-76, p. 71.

évidemment inséparable de la question de méthode'.⁴⁵ The readings which find heterodox implications in Bayle's texts tend to employ the Straussian approach of 'reading between the lines', arguing that the readers should pay particular attention to the (however infrequent) expressions of unorthodox ideas. This is the line Mori takes in order to support his atheist reading of Bayle.⁴⁶ However, Leo Strauss' approach has been criticised and revised dramatically by figures such as Quentin Skinner.⁴⁷ Skinner resists privileging the moments of unorthodoxy in a text. The contradictions expressed in a text might not be intentional, and assuming that they are affords the text a 'coherence' it might not merit; Skinner also asserts the importance of the socio-political context in which a text is written. The intricacies of this debate continue to be nuanced and explored, for example, in a more recent article Mori has somewhat synthesised the Strauss-Skinner conflict.⁴⁸ Whilst acknowledging the dangers in the Straussian approach, namely this 'myth of coherence', Mori argues that reading between the lines is an essential, though not infallible, methodological tool with which to approach a text which, he argues, is full of complex enigmas.⁴⁹

My reading has been most influenced by the methods of the French scholar, Jean-Pierre Cavaillé.⁵⁰ Cavaillé somewhat modifies Mori's synthesis. He reminds us of Skinner's argument that not all contradictions are intentional and suggests that Mori twists

⁴⁵ Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, 'Libertinage et dissimulation, quelques éléments de réflexion', in *Libertinage et Philosophie au XVII^e siècle 5: Les libertins et la masque: simulation et représentation*, ed. by Anthony Mckenna (St Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint Etienne, 2001), pp. 57-82, p. 64.

⁴⁶ 'Au lieu d'interpréter les passages les plus audacieux à la lumière des pages parfaitement orthodoxes dont il a rempli presque tous des ouvrages, il faudrait, plutôt, à notre avis, faire le contraire'. Mori, p. 32.

⁴⁷ Quentin Skinner, 'Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas', in *Visions of Politics, Vol. 1 Regarding Method* ed. by Quentin Skinner (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 57-89.

⁴⁸ Gianluca Mori, 'Persécution et art d'écrire: Strauss, Skinner and Pierre Bayle', in *Léo Strauss: art d'écrire, politique, philosophique*, ed. by L. Jaffro (Paris: Vrin, 2001), pp. 197-219.

⁴⁹ 'La lecture 'entre les lignes' des ouvrages de Bayle nous dit donc seulement qu'il a essayé, pour des raisons évidentes d'opportunité, de couvrir des positions philosophiques – la légitimité morale et spéculative de l'athéisme; la supériorité philosophique du système athée par rapport au système chrétien – à travers quelques artifices rhétoriques et surtout par la juxtaposition d'affirmations orthodoxes à des raisonnements qui n'admettaient que de conclusions opposées'. Ibid. p. 219.

⁵⁰ Cavaillé, p. 57-82.

the text to support the conclusion he hopes to find.⁵¹ Nevertheless, Cavaillé admits that the reader must define and declare his choices, ‘si nous voulons lire, il nous faut nécessairement prendre parti, et choisir les lecteurs que nous voulons être, à nos risques et périls’.⁵² This decision needs to be demanded, in some way, by the text itself, as Cavaillé argues:

Autrement dit, cette herméneutique devra tenir compte du fait que le texte dans lequel opère la dissimulation est travaillé par des ambiguïtés irréductibles, qui ne peuvent être tranchées que par *une décision de lecture, appelée, exigée par le texte même*, mais dont l’entière responsabilité incombe au lecteur. (my italics)⁵³

This will inform my approach to Bayle’s entry on Ovid in which I do not propose to read *between* the lines, as such, but to *read* the text in which the complexities of the rhetoric itself call for a close examination of the argument it contains.

Bayle focuses primarily on Ovid’s own methods of writing about why he was exiled – an event the reasons for which Ovid cannot fully disclose for fear of offending Augustus, and yet does not entirely suppress from his writing. As Cavaillé suggests, one of the ways in which a text might call itself to be read with a certain scrutiny is through ‘l’avertissement direct par l’auteur de son recours à des dispositifs prudents, ou des déclarations générales concernant la nécessité imposées aux écrivains de taire des choses et de parler à mi-voix, en utilisant des subterfuges’.⁵⁴ The style and content of the text can give the reader the means by which they can interpret it, notwithstanding the inevitable role that interpretation and fallible analysis will still play. In this respect, this chapter builds upon Mori’s argument for reading Bayle according to how he himself analysed texts: ‘il faudrait surtout interpréter Bayle en exploitant les instruments exégétiques qu’il utilisait lui-même, lire Bayle avec

⁵¹ ‘Pour ma part, j’insisterais plutôt sur la marge d’incertitude et d’indétermination irréductible, inhérente à l’adoption systématique de telles procédures argumentatives, qui me semble rendre discutable l’affirmation selon laquelle ‘tous les chemins de la réflexion philosophique de Bayle mènent à l’athéisme’’. [Mori, 1999, p189] Ibid. p. 69.

⁵² Ibid. p. 65.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 64.

⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 72.

Bayle'.⁵⁵ Bayle himself comments: 'il faut laisser deviner au lecteur la moitié de ce qu'on veut pour le moins, et il ne faut pas craindre qu'on ne nous comprenne pas; la malignité du lecteur va souvent plus loin que nous, il faut s'en remettre à elle, c'est le plus sûr'.⁵⁶ The readers' relationship to the text is circular: we become *lecteurs malins* because the text is demanding and complex, and as *lecteurs malins* we then take these complexities further, making our own demands of the text. What I hope to show in this chapter is that some of the reading methods Bayle applies to Ovid's playful and elusive exile poetry can be applied in turn to Bayle's own complex prose. This chapter will build on Cavaillé's and Mori's arguments to show that Bayle is a *malin* and demanding reader of Ovid, in turn shaping his own readers' approach to his work.

3. 'Plus il a gardé le silence, plus a-t-il fait naître l'envie de pénétrer le secret': Reading suspiciously

In the first edition of his article, Bayle treats the problem of Ovid's exile in two long footnotes: A and D (which, as discussed, from the second edition onwards are B and E, and will be referred to as such from now on). Bayle refutes the arguments offered by the two French writers, Marolles and Moréri, showing that they rely too heavily on inaccurate historical information. In the first footnote, he dismisses the reason offered by Marolles – that Ovid witnessed Augustus' incest with his daughter – as apocryphal and speculative, accusing Marolles of poor scholarship:

L'abbé de Marolles ayant raconté qu'Ovide surprit Auguste prenant un peu trop de privauté avec sa fille Julie, ajoute sur le témoignage de Suétone, qu'on tenait que la mère de Caligula était née de l'inceste de Julie avec Auguste. Mais il n'est pas vrai que Suétone dise cela. Il dit seulement que Caligula le publiait. (*remarque B*, p.554)

Bayle identifies the problem with Marolles' source: nowhere does Suetonius assert that

⁵⁵ Mori, p. 25.

⁵⁶ Pierre Bayle, *Harangue de Mr le duc de Luxembourg à ses juges, suivie de la censure de cette harangue*, in Pierre Bayle, *Œuvres Diverses*, ed. by Elisabeth Labrousse, 2 vols. (Hildesheim: Olms, 1982), I, pp. 79-170. Quoted in Moreau, p. 255.

Ovid witnessed incest, or that this incest itself even definitely occurred.

In the later footnote (E), Bayle refutes the reasons offered by Moréri, having signalled that this was his intention in the main text: ‘je renvoie plusieurs choses à l’endroit où je censure Mr. Moréri (E)’ (main text, p. 555). Here Bayle identifies all the errors present in Moréri’s account of Ovid’s life.⁵⁷ On the question of the causes of Ovid’s exile, Bayle criticises Moréri: ‘Il ne fallait pas rapporter, sans la censurer, l’opinion de ceux qui disent “que ce fut pour avoir fait l’amour à Julie fille d’Auguste qu’il adressait sous le nom de Corinne”’ (*remarque E*, p. 555). Bayle demonstrates that this opinion is based on Apollinaris, but argues, using Alde Manuce’s version of Ovid’s life, that this cannot be the case principally because there was a gap of thirty years between the composition of this verse and Ovid’s exile: ‘Ovide n’avait qu’environ vingt ans, lorsqu’il chanta ses amours pour la prétendue Corinne. Or il en avait cinquante lorsqu’Auguste l’exila’ (*remarque E*, p. 555).⁵⁸ He is scathing about the second reason offered by Moréri: ‘je ne connais point ceux qui ont dit “qu’il s’adressait à Livie, femme d’Auguste, et que ce fut pour elle qu’il composa son art d’aimer”. Ils méritaient d’être réfuté plus fortement que Sidonius Apollinaris’ (*remarque E*, p. 555).

Bayle does not simply call upon external historical reasons – the problems with dates – to support his refutation of Marolles’ and Moréri’s arguments, he also identifies Ovid’s role in generating this speculation. At the beginning of footnote B, Bayle comments:

Il [Ovide] reconnaît en plusieurs endroits de ses ouvrages que les deux sources de son malheur furent qu’il avait composé des livres sur l’art d’aimer et qu’il avait vu quelque chose. Il n’explique point ce que c’était mais il fait entendre que ses livres contribuèrent moins que cela à sa disgrâce. [...]

Bayle quotes the instances in *Tristia* II mentioned above in which Ovid compares himself

⁵⁷ He is also critical of Moréri’s suggestion that Ovid’s tomb can be found in ‘Sabarie’. For more on this story, see J.B.Trapp, ‘Ovid’s Tomb’. Bayle also corrects the details of a further story about Ovid, one in which the Queen of Hungary, Isabella Jagiellon, acquired Ovid’s pen in 1540.

⁵⁸ It was a space of thirty years between composition of the *Amores*, published in c. 16 BC and Ovid’s exile. Bayle corrects the incorrect conflation of the ‘Corinna’ scandal with the *Ars Amatoria* scandal.

to Actaeon and offers 'carmen et error' as reasons for his exile:

Cur aliquid vidi? Cur noxia lumina feci?
cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi?
Inscius Actaeon vidit sine veste Dianam
praeda fuit canibus non minus ille suis. (*Tristia*. 2. 103-6)

[Bayle does not translate the Latin: Why did I see anything? Why did I make my eyes guilty? Why was I so thoughtless as to harbour the knowledge of a fault? Actaeon saw Diana naked unwittingly; and yet he still became the prey of his own hounds.]

And:

Perdiderint cum me duo crimina, carmen et error
alterius facti culpa silenda mihi
nam non sum tanti, renovem ut tua vulnera, Caesar
quem nimio plus est indoluisse semel.' (*Tristia* 2. 207-210)

[Although two crimes, a poem and a mistake, caused my ruin, I must remain silent about the latter as I am not worthy enough to reopen your wounds, Caesar; it is enough that you should have been grieved once.]

Bayle states:

Il répète en divers lieux la même plainte, d'avoir vu sans y penser le crime d'autrui et il déclare qu'il ne lui est point permis de révéler ce mystère. On a taché de le deviner; plus il a gardé le silence, plus a-t-il fait naître l'envie de pénétrer le secret. (*remarque* B, p. 554)

Bayle suggests that this mystery making might be deliberate on Ovid's part and that the historical conundrum, treated with such earnest sincerity by the likes of Marolles and Moréri, is a tantalising puzzle set up by Ovid. I do not mean to suggest that Bayle questions the reality of Ovid's exile, rather that he quickly identifies that we are not dealing primarily or solely with questions of historical fact, but also with literary ones: with the problems of narrative sincerity and authorial posture, and with the careful and interpretative responsibility of the reader these demand. Bayle highlights what happens when one reads without guile and takes as literal what might be poetic playfulness. He frames the first footnotes with a comment about the effect of Ovid's elusiveness : 'On a taché de le deviner; plus il a gardé le silence, plus a-t-il fait naître l'envie de pénétrer le secret' and a dismissive

remark about examples of such ‘guesswork’: ‘Il y a lieu de douter de toutes ces conjectures’. By identifying the effect of Ovid’s evocation of mystery, Bayle is suggesting that this effect might be deliberate on Ovid’s part: and so by failing to note this, all the writers and historians Bayle surveys have fallen into the trap Ovid has set them.

Bayle warns his reader to approach Ovid’s poetry with care, curiosity, and even suspicion. This is my term, but one that I think is particularly pertinent here. Critics working on the *Tristia* have argued that Ovid intentionally arouses suspicion in his readers by drawing attention to exactly what he cannot or will not say. Stephen Hinds and Jennifer Ingleheart⁵⁹ emphasise that this poem ‘foregrounds the issue of interpretation, highlighting the centrality of the role of the reader in reception’⁶⁰ in discussing how Ovid’s ‘advertised silences’⁶¹ ‘both inherently and programmatically sharpen an invitation to read *everything* in the exile poetry “ultra-suspiciously”’.⁶² This, I will show, is how Bayle reads Ovid. But ‘suspicion’ is also a term associated with early modern thinkers, notably in Michael Moriarty’s study, *Early Modern French Thought: The Age of Suspicion* (2003) in which he examines the suspicion with which Descartes, Pascal and Malebranche, in particular, view everyday experience.⁶³ A suspicious or doubting mindset is strongly associated with skepticism. I use my analysis of how Bayle’s reads Ovid – noting his careful attention to suggestion, the caveats of possible meaning, the hypotheses he extrapolates – to argue that Bayle expects the same attention from his readers. I show that Bayle uses the skeptical methods as identified by Moreau – suspension of judgment, retraction, hypotheses – and

⁵⁹ Ingleheart, ‘What the poet saw’; Stephen Hinds, ‘Ovid Among the Conspiracy Theorists’ in *Classical Constructions: Papers in Memory of Don Fowler, Classicist and Epicurean*, ed. by S. J. Heyworth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 194-222.

⁶⁰ Ingleheart, *Commentary*, p.1.

⁶¹ Hinds, ‘Ovid among the conspiracy theorists’, p. 213.

⁶² Ibid, p. 214 quoting S. Casali ‘*Quaerenti plura legendum*: On the Necessity of “Reading More” in Ovid’s Exile Poetry’ ‘Ovid and Exile I’, *Ramus*, 26 (1997), p. 80-112, p. 83.

⁶³ Michael Moriarty, *Early Modern French Thought: The Age of Suspicion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

explore how both methods and content affirm Bayle's position within a skeptical tradition.⁶⁴

In the first revisions Bayle made to the *Dictionnaire* in 1702, he adds a footnote early on (a new footnote A) emphasizing that we should be cautious with regard to what Ovid says. Bayle inserts this new *remarque* to gloss the point in the main text where he discusses Ovid's love poetry:

Il fut adonné furieusement au plaisir vénérien (A) et ce fut presque son seul vice. Il ne se contenta pas d'aimer et de faire des conquêtes de galanterie, il apprit aussi au public l'Art d'aimer [...] qui n'a pour but que le déshonneur des familles et celui des pauvres maris principalement. (main text, p. 554)

In the footnote, he expands upon this point in the main text and describes Ovid as an obscene poet. He quotes two passages in which, as Bayle paraphrases, '[Ovide] souhaite de mourir en goûtant actuellement cette volupté', and of the second, 'que peut-on dire, que peut-on concevoir de plus propre à exprimer les fureurs d'un tempérament lascif jusqu'aux derniers excès?' He then states that 'les écrits d'amour de ce poète sont les plus obscènes qui nous restent de l'antiquité' (*remarque A*, p. 554).

By associating Ovid with obscenity Bayle is in part responding to a long tradition of readings which go back to what Ovid himself states in the *Tristia*: that his exile was partly caused by a 'carmen' deemed lascivious or obscene. Roman scholars had made similar comments: Seneca the Elder described the *Metamorphoses* as 'licentiam carminum', a licentious poem,⁶⁵ and recorded the comment by orator Aemilius Scaurus that Ovid did not know when enough was enough ('Ovidius nescit quod bene cessit relinquere');⁶⁶ and Quintilian used the term 'lascivia' (wantonness) to describe Ovid's work.⁶⁷ Bayle thus identifies another key 'biographème': Ovid as the sensuous lover and love-poet. But Bayle has a particular explanation for why Ovid, specifically, should be so obscene, which is

⁶⁴ Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Savanarola to Bayle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁶⁵ Seneca, *Declamations: Controversiae*, trans. by Michael Winterbottom, 2.2.12.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 9.5.17.

⁶⁷ Quintilian, *Institutiones Oratoriae*, ed. Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 10.1.88

closely related to Bayle's definition of obscenity. He not only describes the corrupting effect of the content of Ovid's poetry, but also warns against the deceptively elegant nature of its style. Ovid's poetry is more obscene than that of Catullus, Horace and Martial, because his obscenity is disguised:

Ce n'est pas qu'on y trouve les expression sales qui se voient dans Catulle, dans Horace, dans Martial, ni les infamies du péché contre nature dont ces trois poètes ont parlé fort librement, mais la délicatesse et le choix des termes dont Ovide s'est piqué rendent ses ouvrages plus dangereux, puis qu'au reste ils représentent d'une façon intelligible et très élégante toutes les friponneries et toutes les impuretés les plus lascives de l'amour. (*remarque A*, p. 554)

The suggestion here is that Ovid has made the salacious content appealing and therefore dangerous by using delicate and elegant language.

This new *remarque A* takes on further meaning when considered in the context of the *Eclaircissement sur les obscénités* that Bayle added to this second edition of the *Dictionnaire*,⁶⁸ in which he warns against the dangers of obscenities. Bayle wrote this in defence against the charge that his own *Dictionnaire* was obscene and used it to attack 'les censeurs des obscénités' (p. 647), claiming that if they were to form a senate, this would be composed of 'non seulement des personnes vénérables par l'austérité de leur vie et par leur caractère sacré, mais aussi des gens d'épée et des galants de profession, et en un mot beaucoup de sujets dont la vie voluptueuse cause du scandale' (p. 647).⁶⁹ Bayle implies that the censor does not himself have the impeccable morals that he demands of the work he censors. He maintains that enveloping obscenities in charming language is more dangerous and worthy of criticism than simply reporting or quoting the obscenities of

⁶⁸ Bayle, 'Eclaircissements sur les obscénités', in *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1740 edition), IV, pp. 647-664.

⁶⁹ The first edition of Bayle's *Dictionnaire* was censored in France under the authority of Louis XIV, and at the hands of the Abbé Renaudot who wrote the *Jugement du public, en particulière de M. Renaudot, sur le Dictionnaire critique de M. Bayle*. However, copies of the second edition were circulated in France. In the Dutch Republic, Renaudot's *Jugement* was also published in 1697 possibly thanks to the interventions of Bayle's rival Pierre Jurieu. The Walloon Church of Rotterdam then condemned certain passages of the *Dictionnaire*. See "'L'affaire Bayle": la bataille entre Pierre Bayle et Pierre Jurieu devant le consistoire de l'Eglise wallonne de Rotterdam, ed. by Antony McKenna and Hubert Bost (Saint Etienne: Institut Claude Longeon, 2006); and Hubert Bost, 'Pierre Bayle and Censorship' in *The Uses of Censorship in the Enlightenment*, ed. by Mogens Lærke (Leiden: Brill, 2009), pp. 41-60.

others – the approach he has taken. Danger lies in deceiving the morals of one's reader with charming language:

Mais des compliments flatteurs et tendres, ou parsemés tout au plus de paroles ambigües et de quelques libertés délicatement exprimées, ne les [les femmes] cabreraient pas, elles y prêteraient l'oreille et ainsi se glisserait le poison. (p. 655)

Bayle categorises different sorts of obscenity, the first category is as follows:

Que l'auteur donne en vilains termes la description de ces débauches, qu'il s'en applaudit, qu'il s'en félicite, qu'il exhorte ses lecteurs à se plonger dans l'impureté, qu'il leur recommande cela comme le plus sûr moyen de bien jouir de la vie et qu'il prétend qu'il faut se moquer du qu'en dira-t-on et traiter de contes de vieille les maximes des gens vertueux. (p. 647)

In the early stages of his argument, Bayle classes Ovid among the authors in this first category,⁷⁰ comparing him with two others,⁷¹ and concluding: 'les auteurs de ces deux derniers ouvrages méritent d'être envoyés avec Ovide dans la première classe des auteurs obscènes' (p. 647). The new footnote Bayle adds to the Ovid article therefore complements and reinforces the argument he makes in his *Eclaircissement*. Bayle is warning that Ovid needs to be approached with caution, questions, and suspicion because the 'infamies du péché' are made more appealing, and therefore dangerous, by the language in which they are penned. From the very opening, then, Bayle is alerting his reader to the possible dangers of reading without a critical eye.

In *remarque A*, not only does Bayle alert us to Ovid's power with words in his love poetry, but he also asks us to be cautious with regard to the sincerity of Ovid's exile poetry, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae Ex Ponto*. Bayle quotes Ovid's claim in the *Tristia* that the *Ars Amatoria* was not based on personal experience and argues that perhaps we should pay heed to this: 'il est vrai qu'en faisant son Apologie dans le lieu de son exil, il protesta qu'il

⁷⁰ There is also an implied comparison between Ovid and Bussy-Rabutin in this text which I will explore further in my final chapter.

⁷¹ He compares two authors of semi-pornographic works to Ovid. They are Pietro Aretino (1492-1556) who wrote *Ragionamenti*, a satire of neo-Platonic dialogues set in a brothel; and Aloisia Sigea, supposed to have written *Satyra sotadica de arcanis Amoris et Veneris* (1660), since attributed to Nicolas Chorier.

n'avait point fait les actions qu'il avait décrites et que l'esprit avait eu beaucoup plus de part que le cœur à ses narrations' (*remarque A*, p. 554). The opposition between 'esprit' and 'cœur' in Ovid's work, with an emphasis on the former, recurred throughout the seventeenth century, as this thesis will explore. Indeed this criticism has its roots in Ovid's own complaint: 'ingenio perii qui miser ispe meo?' – 'am I ruined and wretched through my own wit?' (*Tristia*, 2.2). This was echoed in comments by the first-century Roman grammarian Quintilian.⁷² Quintilian argues that one of Ovid's faults was his over-zealous *ingenium*: he was 'nimium amator ingenii sui/too much in love with his own wit'.⁷³ And indeed, this *ingenium* was considered a quintessentially Ovidian trait: similar accusations are made of Ovid in late seventeenth-century writing. In Furètière's *Dictionnaire universel*, *Ovide* is included as an example of one with more *esprit* than *sentiment*: 'sentiment (s.f): [...] Ovide était trop ingénieux dans la douleur, il fait voir de l'esprit, quand vous n'attendez que du sentiment'.⁷⁴

Bayle, however, is more interested in what Ovid says about his *esprit*, than in attributing this quality to him. He paraphrases what Ovid says, 'il protesta qu'il n'avait point fait les actions qu'il avait décrites et que l'esprit avait eu beaucoup plus de part que le cœur à ses narrations' (*remarque A*, p. 554), and then suggests that perhaps readers ought to accept that the persona of the *Amores* is fictional: 'il faudrait dire que ce qu'il y narre de soi-même soit une fiction d'esprit' as 'il est sûr que bien des poètes ont raconté comme leurs bonnes fortunes en ce genre-là, ce qui n'était que des fictions de leur esprit'. (*remarque A*, p. 554). However, Bayle then suggests, 'mais nous ne saurions déterminer si Ovide est dans le cas. Nous sommes trop éloignés du siècle où il a vécu'. Bayle goes on to further question the problem of Ovid's sincerity in the *Tristia*, invoking doubt that is both historiographic (can we know the past?) and literary (can we know the an author's

⁷² Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (c.35-c.100) was a Roman rhetorician.

⁷³ Quintilian, *Institutiones Oratoriae*, trans. by Michael Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 10.1.88.

⁷⁴ Antoine Furètière, *Dictionnaire universel*, II, p. 836.

intentions?). He questions Ovid's motives, asking whether we can actually believe anything Ovid says regarding his exile given that 'nous ne pouvons pas douter qu'après coup, certains gens ne se vantent d'innocence qui sont pourtant criminels'. In a marginal footnote, Bayle expands upon this: 'c'est-à-dire quand ils voient qu'on se sert contre eux du témoignage de leurs propres poésies' (*remarque A*, p. 554).

So, Bayle first encourages his readers to approach Ovid's love poetry with caution because the style serves to disguise the obscenities contained within it; he then evokes Ovid's *esprit*, but not to embark upon a discussion of Ovid's wit, as the initial opposition of *esprit* and *cœur* might promise, but instead to question the sincerity of Ovid's own claim that his love poems were simply 'fictions d'esprit'. This claim was made in the exile poetry, which was one of the main sources for details of Ovid's life. The reader is alerted to the difficulties of reading Ovid and of reaching concrete conclusions from these readings; Bayle is also affirming the necessity of being aware of such difficulties.⁷⁵

And yet, having just alerted us to all that we might not be able to trust in Ovid, Bayle immediately goes on to explicitly use Ovid's own words as his main source for information about his life: 'il reconnaît en plusieurs endroits de ses ouvrages que les deux sources de son malheur furent qu'il avait composé des Livres sur l'art d'aimer et qu'il avait vu quelque chose' (*remarque B*, p. 554). Indeed, he even criticises the *Vies* composed by Moréri and Marolles, suggesting that they should be using Ovid himself as the primary source: 'il fallait citer Ovide même' (*remarque E*, p. 555). Bayle also refutes the reasons offered by Marolles and Moréri by referring to Ovid's own words. He contests Moréri's argument that it was Ovid's love poetry by also stating that Ovid offers two reasons: 'Ovide ne cesse de répéter que son exil vient de deux causes' (*remarque E*, p. 555); and refutes the incest argument proposed by Marolles by arguing that Ovid would not have written such a

⁷⁵ Bayle's scrutiny here supports Mori's approach of 'reading Bayle with Bayle'. Mori suggests, 'on a du moins le droit, sinon le devoir critique, de soupçonner qu'il se sert dans ces occasions de quelque 'ménagement' comme Bayle le soupçonne lui-même lorsqu'il analyse des textes semblables d'autres auteurs'. Mori, p. 20.

thing in poems which were trying to appease the Emperor: ‘Ovide n’ayant oublié aucune sorte de soumission et de flatteries dans les vers qu’il composait durant son exil [...] il ne faut pas croire qu’il ait affecté d’y mettre ce qui était le plus propre à entretenir le chagrin de cet Empereur’ (*remarque B*, p. 554). Having just doubted and scrutinised the reliability of Ovid’s own argument about his life, is it not paradoxical to cite him as the most accurate source? Bayle identifies that this source should not be confused with historical fact, and yet, as I will show, he still engages with the possible meanings that can be squeezed from it through his interpretative gesture, suggesting that they are of interest even if they are interpretation and not fact. Bayle turns his attention away from historical certainty and moves into the realm of hypothesis. Why? What does he use this hypothesis to suggest?

4. Prudence or licence: What might Ovid have seen?

In the final version of the *Dictionnaire*, published in 1720, Bayle adds a further eight pages to the article on Ovid, *remarques K-S*, dealing with Ovid’s exile. This includes an extremely detailed extension of the possible reasons for it, in *remarque K*, which will be my main focus here; though Bayle also describes Ovid’s experience in Tomis, his remorse, his view of the Getic people and his loneliness, quoting from Ovid’s *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in the footnotes. The interest and sympathy Bayle shows in the main text towards Ovid’s experience in exile, its harshness and difficulty, tempers some of the moral objections contained in the accusations of obscenity and pleasure-seeking of the first part of the article. These additional eight pages thus balance the picture of Ovid and offer a more sympathetic account. *Remarque K* divides into two sections: in the first Bayle expands upon the reasons given in the first edition of his *Dictionnaire* (in *remarque B*) for why Ovid could not have caught Augustus in an act of incest with Julie the Elder and in the second he considers the reasons why Ovid could not have caught Augustus in this act with his grand-

daughter, Julia the Younger. The stakes are quite different in the two cases as the first can be dismissed with an ‘argument de chronologie’ (Julia the Elder was exiled 10 years before Ovid), whereas the second must be refuted with ‘conjectures’ as ‘l’argument de chronologie nous manque’ (*remarque K*, p. 563) because Julie the Younger and Ovid were exiled in the same year. But Bayle is not only interested in historical or chronological arguments; instead he enters into an extremely nuanced and close reading of what Ovid says and its possible implications.

Bayle does not simply dismiss the question of Julia the Elder by citing the dates, but instead engages in a long caveat about whether the crime to which Ovid refers (the revelation of which would offend the Emperor) could be as serious as Augustus’ incest. To re-cap: in B Bayle refutes the ‘conjectures’ of Marolles and Moréri and suggests that Ovid cannot have been exiled for seeing Augustus in an act of incest with his daughter because Ovid would not have referred to such a thing in poetry in which he was trying to appease the Emperor. In the final edition of the *Dictionnaire*, Bayle adds a sentence that refers the reader eight pages ahead, ‘mais j’avoue que cette raison n’est pas convaincante. Voyez ci-dessous la Remarque (K)’. (*remarque B*, p. 554). The argument in K is quite complex and so for clarity I will break it down into stages.

Remarque B:

-Ovid would not have mentioned something as horrific as incest.

Remarque K:

1. The convincing argument is one of chronology: Ovid was exiled twenty years later than Julie.

Bayle begins his argument in K by referring to what he said earlier in *remarque B*: ‘Je ne refusai point cela, [in B] comme je le fais aujourd’hui, [in K] par une raison convaincante,

qui est que notre poète fut disgracié lors qu'il y avait plusieurs années que Julie était hors de Rome et l'objet de l'indignation de son père.' (*remarque K*, p. 562).

2. Nevertheless Bayle will explore the less 'convincing' 'probabilité' that witnessing incest cannot be the cause of Ovid's exile because Ovid would not have referred to such a thing in poetry in which he trying to please the Emperor:

Au lieu d'alléguer cette raison démonstrative, j'opposai seulement à ces gens-là une probabilité, savoir qu'il n'y a nulle apparence que si la cause de l'exil d'Ovide était telle qu'ils se figurent, il eût tant de fois représenté que ses yeux étaient la source de son malheur. Rien n'aurait été plus propre à fomentier le chagrin d'Auguste. (*remarque K*, p. 562)

3. Ovid was prudent as he must have known referring to such a crime would have offended the Emperor: 'Voilà deux causes qu'il allègue de la ruine de sa fortune [...] il enveloppe la seconde sous le silence afin de ne pas renouveler la douleur d'Auguste. (*remarque K*, p. 562)

4. Ovid's prudence is not reliable as although he does not mention the crime, he does mention that he is not mentioning it and Ovid himself acknowledged that mentioning this event *would* offend Augustus:

On ne saurait nier que ce qu'Ovide avait vu ne fût une chose qui intéressait tellement Auguste, que c'était renouveler sa douleur, et rouvrir sa plaie, que de rappeler le souvenir de cet objet. Ovide lui-même l'avoue en adressant la parole à cet Empereur: 'Perdiderint cum me duo crimina, carmen et error/alterius facti culpa silenda mihi/nam non sum tanti, RENOVEM TUA VULNERA, Caesar/quem nimio plus est INDOLUISSE semel. [Bayle's capitalisation.] (*Tristia* 2. 207-210).⁷⁶ (*remarque K*, p. 562)

5. Ovid knew that simply mentioning the crime (by saying he was not going to say it) would offend Augustus, but was not prudent and made this reference anyway. Bayle revises

⁷⁶ 'Although two crimes, a poem and a mistake, caused my ruin, I must remain silent about the latter as I am not worthy enough to REOPEN YOUR WOUNDS, Caesar, it is enough that you should have been GRIEVED once.'

the argument he made in his article *B*, suggesting that Ovid's care not to offend Augustus is *not* in fact a reason to assume that it was *not* incest:

Il savait donc qu'on le [Auguste] chagrinait, et qu'on l'irritait en rappelant le souvenir de cet accident; et néanmoins, il le rappelait à tout propos dans ses poésies. Il n'avait donc pas la prudence que j'ai supposé qu'il aurait eue et par conséquent je me suis servi d'une raison qui prouve trop; car elle prouve qu'il a évité de ramener des idées chagrinantes et il est certain qu'il ne l'a pas évité. (*remarque K*, p. 562)

6. Bayle was relying on the argument of Ovid's prudence to refute the claim that Ovid saw Augustus committing incest in particular. Alde Manuce, in his *Vita Ovidii*, used the argument of Ovid's prudence to suggest that Ovid did not see Augustus doing anything. In this respect, if both Manuce and Bayle are wrong to call upon Ovid's *prudence*, the repercussions are more severe for Manuce's position, as he used this argument for a wider defence, than for that of Bayle. So far then, Bayle has used the point that we cannot necessarily rely on Ovid's caution against the argument he himself made in *B*, but has shown that his argument was less weak than that of Manuce. The logical conclusion to this point, which Bayle does not expose, is that if Ovid did not hold himself back from saying what he saw despite the gravity of the crime, he could still have seen Augustus in an act of incest!

7. Bayle suggests that in extreme circumstances, such as incest, Ovid would have had the prudence not to allude to this, and therefore Bayle can be right where Manuce is wrong.

Je pourrais avoir raison quoi qu'Alde Manuce eût tort: il y a telle action sale dont Ovide aurait pu oser renouveler le souvenir à Auguste, sans qu'on en puisse inférer qu'il aurait eu l'imprudence de lui rafraîchir l'idée de l'inceste affreux. (*remarque K*, p. 562)

Ovid might have seen Augustus doing something compromising but less 'sale' and 'infâme' than committing incest: perhaps he caught the Emperor with a Magistrate's wife, a conclusion that still paints Augustus in a less than favourable light.

Cette idée [‘l’inceste affreux’] était infiniment plus capable de chagriner et de déprimer, que celle d’une simple galanterie où l’on aurait été surpris avec la fille ou avec la femme d’un magistrat; et néanmoins cette surprise pouvait déplaire à Auguste et lui inspirer contre Ovide toute l’irritation qu’il fit paraître. (*remarque K*, p. 562)

8. In a typical Baylean move, he then overrides the whole discussion of this hypothesis by returning to the strongest argument that he made at the beginning of the footnote – that the timing was wrong for Ovid to have seen Augustus committing incest with his *daughter*: ‘il faut néanmoins convenir que la conjecture de l’inceste est nécessairement fautive par rapport à Julie la fille, exilée long temps avant qu’Ovide eût déplu à l’Empereur’ (*remarque K*, p. 562).

Despite over-riding this discussion, his comment, ‘il n’avait donc pas la prudence que j’ai supposé qu’il aurait eue et par conséquent je me suis servi d’une raison qui prouve trop; car elle prouve qu’il a évité de ramener des idées chagrinentes et il est certain qu’il ne l’a pas évité’ suggests that Bayle is reading these lines of Ovid from *Tristia* 2. 207-10 as an example of *praeteritio*: saying something while saying you are not going to say it. Indeed, his point that Ovid might not have been *prudent* given his acknowledgement in *Tristia* 2. 207-210 relies on reading these lines in this way. Ovid is saying here, ‘I am not going to mention that awful thing I saw which somehow involved you Augustus and was awful enough to exile me to stop me saying anything, because I don’t want to offend you’. Bayle is acutely attuned to the balance between disclosure and reticence in Ovid’s work. Not only is he attuned, but he is also interested. Of all the reasons offered for exile, Bayle chooses to dwell on the question of what Ovid might have seen, a question that allows for careful scrutiny of Ovid’s rhetoric. Given such complexity and the fact that Bayle frames his discussion by dismissing its convincing nature, there is a deliberate echo of what Bayle accuses Ovid of doing in what he himself is doing, between the strategies Bayle is writing about and those he is using. And just as Bayle puts intense interpretive pressure on Ovid’s

words and attends carefully to their possible meanings, knowing them to be hypotheses and not historical facts, so should Bayle's readers pay attention to the caveats and details in his writing, taking on, in turn, the responsibility of exploring their possible implications.

In the next section in which Bayle addresses the case surrounding Julia the *Younger*, exiled the same year as Ovid, he admits that he cannot use the argument of chronology to refute the claims that Ovid saw Augustus committing incest. But rather than exploring the question of Ovid's prudence *here*, where the discussion we have just analysed might have been better placed, Bayle instead uses this opportunity to imagine the political and strategic reasons behind Augustus' decision to exile Ovid. Essentially, these reasons back up his argument that Ovid cannot have witnessed incest; but Bayle chooses to explore the questions of reputation, power and punishment at the heart of Ovid's story.

Whereas Bayle focused in great detail on Ovid's rhetoric in the first part of the footnote, analysed in the previous section, here he offers a wider context for Ovid's caution:

Nous devons juger que ce qu'il vit n'était pas de la dernière infamie [...] Ovide avait trop d'esprit et trop de raison pour ne pas comprendre qu'à l'égard d'un tel secret, ceux qui ont le malheur de le connaître, ne sauraient mieux se conduire qu'en tâchant de persuader qu'ils ont perdu absolument le souvenir. Les expressions les plus générales et les plus vagues paraissent toujours un peu trop significatives au monarque intéressé à l'affaire et lui peuvent faire craindre qu'après avoir indiqué en gros si fréquemment qu'on est malheureux pour avoir vu certaines choses qu'on n'oserait dire, on ne lâche enfin le mot. Une semblable crainte peut faire prendre le parti d'ôter la vie à ceux qui savent le secret. Il ne faut pas être fort pénétrant pour donner dans ces réflexions et pour s'en faire une leçon de silence. Mais si le secret qu'on a vu est une chose qui pourrait devenir publique sans ternir la réputation du monarque, si c'est une des choses qu'il voulait cacher ou par humeur ou par quelque raison d'état, et non pas à cause qu'elles sont infâmes, on ne garde pas les mêmes mesures et l'on ne fait pas difficulté de se plaindre en général qu'on est malheureux pour avoir vu ce qu'on n'ose dire. On fait que le prince est bien assuré qu'au pis-aller sa gloire n'a rien à craindre de l'indiscrétion des gens. (*remarque K*, p. 563)

In this shift in pronoun to 'on' Bayle is now no longer writing in terms of Ovid and Augustus specifically, but in terms of a 'monarque' or 'prince' and of a generic writer

whose knowledge, ideas or work might offend the figure of authority. Monarchs are suspicious too and jealous guards of their reputations: if this secret were something as infamous as incest, the witness would never risk mentioning it. Bayle emphasizes the court politics involved in Ovid's story, the vigilance of the monarch, the precarity of those in his circle and the need for discretion when reputations are at stake. However playful he might dare to be, Ovid would have known the ultimate power and authority lies with his Emperor, and he would not endanger his life.

In a similar vein, Bayle concludes that if Ovid had caught Augustus in an act of incest, Augustus would have had him killed: 'Je tire ma quatrième raison de ce qu'Auguste ne fit point tuer Ovide promptement et secrètement, ce qui lui aurait été fort aisé. Eût-il pu vivre en repos s'il eût su que sur un secret aussi horrible que celui-là il était à la merci d'un poète galant et dameret?' (*remarque K*, p. 562). As a *galant* poet, it is implied, Ovid was less capable of discretion. Bayle suggests that Augustus might have recalled Ovid had the Emperor's death not prevented this; Ovid therefore cannot have seen something too incriminating as he would have been immediately killed. And yet, Bayle does not let Augustus off. Bayle suggests that the reason Augustus did not recall Ovid was his desire to *appear* morally strict:

On se croira peut-être plus fort si l'on m'objecte que puis qu'Auguste ne se laissa point fléchir par tant de supplications flatteuses et pathétiques qu'Ovide lui fit présenter, il fallait que sa colère fût fondée sur la honte d'avoir été attrapé dans quelque action très vilaine. Je réponds, 1, qu'on prétend qu'enfin il s'était laissé adoucir, et que si sa mort ne fût survenue il eût rappelé Ovide: 2, qu'ayant alléguée pour une raison du bannissement les vers scandaleux de ce poète, il trouvait son compte à ne le point rappeler. Il se faisait par là un mérite auprès du Sénat et de toutes les personnes graves et zélées pour la correction des mœurs. (*remarque K*, p. 562)

Bayle exonerates Augustus of incest to instead accuse him of superficiality and pride. Augustus would have recalled Ovid had he not wanted to maintain his reputation as a rigid ruler before a moral senate.

But this is not all Augustus was protecting. The question of what Ovid saw remains to be answered. In the following paragraph, at the end of *remarque* K, Bayle does more than simply dismiss other explanations. He admits that it is difficult to satisfy those who seek a reason for the Emperor's anger, but then offers a series of possibilities:

Mais il ne serait pas difficile d'imaginer les incidents qui, sans contenir la surprise dans l'inceste, ni même dans quelque scène de simple galanterie, pourraient lui donner une violente colère contre le témoin non attendu. Supposez qu'ayant découvert une intrigue chagrinante dans la famille il ait choisi un réduit pour y gémir et pour y pleurer en secret, ou pour questionner sa petite fille, pour la gronder, pour la menacer, pour la battre même si le cas y échoit. Supposez qu'une confidente y ait été amenée et qu'il ait voulu la contraindre par des menaces ou par des coups à dire la vérité. Supposez qu'un affranchi ou qu'un esclave était aux mêmes termes ou même que l'Empereur ait voulu le faire torturer clandestinement, vous aurez là trois ou quatre cas où Ovide n'aurait pu surprendre cet Empereur sans l'irriter au dernier point. (*remarque* K, p. 562)

So what Bayle suggests that Ovid could have seen, but kept secret, was Augustus himself trying to keep something secret! Ovid might have seen Augustus telling someone off for seeing something he did not want them to see; perhaps he saw Augustus warning his witness not to disclose the secret. What all this argument, discussion, citation and detail has lead up to is another mystery: maybe all Ovid saw was Augustus trying to keep something hidden.

To summarise: in *remarque* K, Bayle refutes the claim that Ovid saw Augustus in an act of incest, building on arguments he made in *remarques* B and E in which he showed the historically unreliable and apocryphal nature of the sources used to make this claim – namely those of Suetonius and Sidonius Apollinaris. Bayle also warns readers to read Ovid cautiously, and not take what he says to be fact, but then having asserted this disclaimer, explores the possible meanings one *could* extrapolate. By testing the possible different readings of Ovid's elusive lines from the *Tristia*, Bayle gives time and attention to the hypothesis that Ovid still saw Augustus doing something immoral. This was not so immoral that a) Ovid could not mention it in the *Tristia* and b) that Augustus would never forgive

him. Instead, Augustus could not forgive him because he needed to show himself to be a morally correct Emperor, resolute in his decision to punish his immoral poet. Effectively, then, Bayle suggests that Augustus used Ovid's corrupt morals as an excuse to make sure his own corrupt morals remained hidden. Alongside pride and superficiality, Bayle adds hypocrisy to Augustus' crimes. This hypocrisy is heightened by the fact that Augustus' reputation as a morally vigilant leader was enhanced by his decision to exile Ovid on the grounds that Ovid was corrupt: the poem was a strategic pretext.

A shift occurs in Bayle's attitude to Ovid throughout the final version of the article. In the first part of the article, it seems as if Bayle is quite critical of Ovid. In the amendments of the 1720 edition, Bayle gives considerable attention to the particularities of Ovid's life in exile, and praises Ovid, identifying the respect of the Getic people: 'ils l'aimèrent et l'honorèrent singulièrement et firent des décrets publics pour lui témoigner leur estime.' (main text, p. 565). Bayle describes how Ovid went through a sort of process of moral correction in his exile:

Il se vante d'une chose qui prouverait qu'il renonça aux galanteries dans son exil; car il prétend qu'aucune personne, de quelque sexe ou de quelque âge qu'elle fût, ne pouvait se plaindre de lui: c'est une marque qu'il ne s'amusait point à faire l'amour. [...] Cette partie de sa conduite était d'autant plus louable qu'il était bien mal aisé de la tenir à un homme de sa complexion et qui s'était fait une habitude fort longue de vivre autrement. (main text, p. 566)

The subtle undermining of Augustus' authority coincides with an increasingly favourable picture of Ovid. This occurs, in turn, as the argument and development of the article point the reader towards an interest in Ovid as a writer whose knowledge might offend this figure of authority.

Even if, as Bayle warns early on, Ovid's words are the 'fictions d'esprit' of an embittered exile, Bayle uses the story to open a discussion about, in the first instance, power, publication and punishment. Is Bayle keen to show that the decision makers, the

censors, are perhaps as fallible as their victims? He does not exonerate Ovid of obscenity in this additional *remarque*, but he shifts the focus onto the corruption of the one in power, onto the banisher. Having deemed Ovid's poetry to be obscene, Bayle does not, then, position himself alongside Augustus. Instead, Augustus becomes more like those censors Bayle attacks, refutes, satirises and questions in his *Eclaircissements sur les obscénités*: Augustus' behaviour is not above the immoralities for which he claimed to banish Ovid.

Secondly, Bayle uses Ovid's story to explore questions about historiography. Why would Bayle lead his reader through this labyrinthine process of argument, the complexity of which seems to promise that close and attentive reading will provide an answer to the reason for Ovid's exile, only to demonstrate that this answer is elusive and intangible? Secrecy remains at the heart of Bayle's answer: it is still not clear what Ovid saw, and therefore, why Ovid was exiled. Bayle makes the mystery at the heart of Ovid's story, and the spurious scholarship it has given rise to, emblematic of his broader skepticism about the possibility of knowing the past. He exploits the literary nature of the chief source for Ovid's life as a way of showing that the relationship between what happened and with what is said to have happened is always fraught; writing demands careful, suspicious and attentive reading. The historian Sutcliffe argues that 'the *Dictionnaire* is the opposite of what it appears to be: it is an anti-dictionary, designed not as a compendium of knowledge, but as an exploration of the impossibility of any such final and absolute repository of intellectual authority'.⁷⁷ As the reader is directed *away* from certain conclusions, he is also directed *towards* the process and rhetoric of the discussion; Bayle's ideas lie not in resolute conclusions, of which there are few, and not in the historical facts presented in the main text, but rather in the discursive and interpretive details themselves.

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⁷⁷ Sutcliffe, p. 70.

Bayle drives to the heart of the problems which accrue around the figure Ovid by highlighting how what has been treated by medieval, Humanist and *ancien régime* scholars as historical fact is actually based on Ovid's self-portrait in his exile poetry. Bayle identifies that this is a literary object, not to be confused with or presented as objectively accurate history. By questioning all sources outside Ovid's poetry, and identifying that they all stem from Ovid's own words, readers are forced to understand that Ovid the historical figure cannot be separated from the poetic construction of himself, and that this therefore needs to be treated with care, scrutiny and suspicion. This process demonstrates Bayle's wider concern with the unreliable nature of all historiography. However, it also exemplifies why Ovid's story has appeal: the mystery that lies (or was placed) at its heart lets subsequent readers and writers fill in the gaps. It gives licence to their imagination, requiring it to roam free from the control of history. Bayle spots this, and in the details of his discussion, uses the necessary conjecture and hypothesis that any story about Ovid contains to explore questions relating to all authoritarian figures; as well as, in the approach he takes to writing an account of Ovid's life, questions about historiography.

Finally, Bayle also identifies certain *biographèmes* that relate to Ovid, all of which stem from Ovid's construction of himself, and which will be exploited for different ends by other writers analysed in this thesis: Ovid the 'galant' love poet, the writer with 'esprit', the lamenting exile, the embittered exile, the figure whose story has a central mystery. Bayle demonstrates that it was primarily the love poetry and the exile poetry – that is, Ovid's poetry in which the persona can be most easily confused with the poet himself (young man in love; older man in exile) – which informed how the figure was seen. In this respect, he shows that whilst much of the actual 'biography' of Ovid comes from what Ovid wrote in *Tristia* IV. 10, and *Tristia* II in particular, conceptions of Ovid are nevertheless bound up with a far more general understanding of the nature and place of his work. And since this

article also includes a lengthy commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Ovid's other works – and not just the *Tristia* and love poetry – were key to shaping how this figure is seen. The cultural presence of these poems must therefore be understood in order to proceed with our exploration of the figure of Ovid, and its uses, in this period.

CHAPTER TWO

Ovid in print culture: constructions of ‘Ovidius’ and ‘Ovide’

Any conception of Ovid was shaped by perceptions of his poetry. This was not limited to poems thought to be autobiographical and used to fill in precise details of the poet’s life – as in the case of the *Tristia* – but it extended to his whole *œuvre*; the author and his work were closely associated. The relationship between an author’s life and his work was well established in the discourse and mentality of this period. The author’s personality and the circumstance of his writing were often part of the reader’s experience of a text, evident from the practice of attaching a *Vita* or *Vie* to editions or translations of an author’s work. The tradition of associating ‘lives’ with ‘works’ was influenced by the methods adopted by Diogenes Laertius in his *Lives and Works of the Eminent Philosophers*, translated for the first time at the beginning of the century,¹ and then again in 1668.² As Ribard has demonstrated in her study on the Lives of philosophers in early modern France, biographies could often constitute a critical or classificatory function and the life of a philosopher became a critical means of analysing and interpreting his work.³ This association also shaped the way the author was seen, as readings of the work informed and modulated the ‘Life’. We registered the presence and explored the nature of some of these *Vitae* and *Vies* in the previous chapter, and will continue to do so both in this chapter and the next.

However, at the same time as exploring how connections between author and work are established, we need to attend to the nature of that ‘work’. From the dawn of the printing era, the means by which a classical author’s body of work was perceived depended entirely on

¹ *Le Diogène français tiré du grec ou Diogène Laërtien touchant les vies, doctrines et notables propos des plus illustres philosophes compris en dix livres, traduit et paraphrasé sur le grec par M. François de Fougerolles* (Lyon: J.-A. Huguetan, 1601).

² *Diogène Laërce, De la vie des philosophes, traduction nouvelle par monsieur GB**** (Paris: J. Guignard, 1668).

³ Ribard, p. 55.

which texts were selected for printing, and on the format in which they were printed. The form the work might take was not only shaped by whether it was printed in Latin or translated into French, but also whether the text was paraphrased (in either language), annotated, or explained; whether it was illustrated and ornate, or printed in plain text; whether it was heavy, large and expensive, intended only for collectors and bibliophiles, or whether it was light, portable, and accessible to a wider reading public.

Book historians and theorists, notably Roger Chartier and Don Mckenzie, have established the importance of the book ‘as an expressive form’,⁴ as ‘lire est toujours lire quelque chose’.⁵ Mckenzie argues that the form of the book determines how it is interpreted: ‘new readers of course make new texts and [...] their new meanings are a function of their new forms’.⁶ Chartier identifies this bond between form and comprehension:

On doit rappeler qu’il n’est pas de texte hors le support qui le donne à lire (ou à entendre), partant qu’il n’est pas de compréhension d’un écrit, quel qu’il soit, qui ne dépende pour une part des formes dans lesquelles il atteint son lecteur.⁷

Since the form and matter of the book are so important, the role of printers and editors is paramount in bringing the book into being. Mckenzie argues:

History simply confirms, as a bibliographical fact, that quite new versions of a work which is not altogether dead, will be created, whether they are generated by its author, by its successive editors, by generations of readers, or by new writers [...] editors make as well as mend.⁸

For a work by an author long dead, like Ovid, who wrote in quite different conditions and contexts to the period in which versions of his work were being printed, the role of the editor, translator and printer was fundamental to how the work was received; the figures with authority and determining intent were therefore often the printers, translators and publishers, and not the work’s original author.

⁴ D. F. Mckenzie, *Bibliography and sociology of texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 9.

⁵ Roger Chartier, *L’ordre des livres: lecteurs, auteurs, bibliothèques en Europe entre XIVe et XVIIIe siècle* (Aix-en-Provence: Alinea, 1992).

⁶ Mckenzie, p. 27.

⁷ Chartier, p. 21.

⁸ Mckenzie, p. 37-39.

Building on the arguments of these book historians, in this chapter I will suggest that editors and translators played a key role in determining the form in which Ovid's work was printed – a form that both expressed the interpretations of the particular editor or translator (and the wider cultural concerns of their own time) and determined how the work was received. And yet, because Ovid's name was still bound inextricably to the work, any subsequent version of it also determined how Ovid, or in these cases 'Ovide', was perceived. Ovid's name was often placed with the title of the work as a whole – 'Ovide moralisé', 'Publii Ovidii Nasonis Opera', 'Ovide bouffon' or 'Les Regrets d'Ovide' – a feature that at once identifies Ovid's role as creator and subsumes this role into the fabric of the work itself, turning 'Ovide' into something more akin to a fictional narrator than a real life author. This effect was compounded in many cases by the name of the person responsible for this version also being placed in the title and given an authorial role: *Les Regrets d'Ovide traduits par J. Binard* or *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoseon [...] auctore J. Juvencio*.⁹ This results in permutations of the figure 'Ovide' as editors, translators and publishers change. Ovid of the Middle Ages was a Christian fabulist; in the Renaissance he was a learned mythographer with an interest in changing forms and lamenting women; from the mid-sixteenth century he was a figure of exile and displacement and by the end of the seventeenth century, he was – also – a 'galant' love poet, a veritable guru on matters of sentiment and sensuality. These different representations were largely due to significant changes in which of Ovid's poems were printed and in the format they took: both of which were determined, crucially, by who was expected to read them.

Different circles – circles now composed of women, *mondain* society, interested in literature as a sociable practice – dominated the cultural production of the latter part of the seventeenth century, shaped the modes of literary production, and determined the tastes that prevailed. As Marie-Claire Chatelain argues in *Ovide savant, Ovide galant*, this readership

⁹ For a discussion of title pages, see Chartier, p. 54.

and their practices assimilated Ovid to a *galant* aesthetic, where previously his work had largely been confined to learned cultural circles with knowledge of ancient myth, geography and philosophy, as well as Latin. The main change was a new interest in his love poetry, which also gave rise to different understandings and uses of the figure of Ovid.

In this chapter, I will explore the history of how Ovid was printed and read from the Renaissance to this ‘galant’ period identified by Chatelain. Many of the translations I mention will also be studied in the next chapter, in which I focus on the use of the figure ‘Ovide’ in the prefatory material. In this current chapter, however, I am less concerned with the nuanced detail of what happens beyond the title pages and instead I will survey the nature (Latin or French; parallel text; commentary or no commentary; size) and print history of editions and translations of Ovid’s poetry from the Renaissance to the late seventeenth century.¹⁰ Where the previous chapter was a sustained close reading of one text, this chapter will offer a much more wide-ranging survey of the editions, translations, and adaptations of Ovid’s poetry in this period, with the aim of emphasising the changes in reception identified by Chatelain; it will thus build upon and complement her analysis. However, unlike Chatelain, I want to emphasise how such reading practices work to construct an image of Ovid. We are not dealing here with the historical Ovid, or with his fictional construct of himself, as explored in the previous chapter, but rather with an imaginary projection, an ‘Ovide’ shaped by particular traditions of reading, interpretation and printing.¹¹

¹⁰ I provide an account of all the re-editions and sizes of seventeenth-century editions and translations of Ovid’s work in my bibliography.

¹¹ Some of these ideas have been influenced by Michael Bristol’s discussion of the institution of Shakespeare, in ‘Shakespeare: The Myth’, in *A Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by David Scott Kastan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 489-502.

1. Renaissance traditions

a) *Ovide moralisé*

The poem most frequently associated with Ovid in Renaissance culture was the *Metamorphoses*, a compendium of myths unified by their each featuring metamorphosis. These separate tales are woven together in a narrative structure that traces the loose chronology of the world from its creation to the Augustan empire. The *Metamorphoses* is fifteen books long and written in hexameter; its scope and poetics place it in the epic genre. However, the humour, bathos, and repeated portrayals of the loves of the gods render the register at odds with the *gravitas* expected of an epic. It hardly resembles Virgil's *Aeneid*, the great Augustan epic published roughly twenty-seven years earlier, whose main character, the 'pius Aeneas' embodies the values of duty and honour dear to Augustan Rome.¹² Scenes from the *Metamorphoses* which 'rewrite' elements of the *Aeneid* are usually played down self-consciously or treated bathetically. And although the subject matter of the *Metamorphoses* is unified through the common trope of changing forms, in itself self-consciously unstable, the narrative does not follow the teleological and linear structure of Virgil's epic, but instead adopts a more cyclical structure. Classicists argue that this hybridity of form and register is deliberate on Ovid's part, and see him as a playful and highly self-conscious writer, with the *Metamorphoses* as a sort of mock-epic.¹³

The identification of Ovid with artifice and self-conscious humour was also present in the Renaissance. In *Shakespeare and Ovid* (1993), Jonathan Bate argues that Ovidian wit and rhetoric had as much influence on Shakespeare as the content of his stories.¹⁴ However, the sort of Ovid that Shakespeare had inherited was dependent on the edition of

¹² Exact dates are not known, but the *Aeneid* is dated to 19 BC and the *Metamorphoses* 8 AD.

¹³ For further discussion of the complexities of Ovid's epic, see Brookes Otis, *Ovid as an epic poet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). There has been lengthy discussion of whether Ovid has a pro- or anti-Augustan stance, for a revised view, see Alessandro Barchiesi, *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

¹⁴ Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 48-82.

the *Metamorphoses* he was reading. Studies have shown that Shakespeare had access to what is known as the Latin ‘Aldine’ edition of Ovid as well as Arthur Golding’s 1567 translation of the *Metamorphoses*.¹⁵ The Aldine edition was a non-annotated octavo-sized Latin version of Ovid’s complete works printed by Aldus Manutius, the Italian Humanist scholar we encountered in the previous chapter, and founder of the Aldine Press in Venice, known for smaller book sizes and for introducing a new type-face.¹⁶ In France, the ‘Aldine’ *Metamorphoses*, as part of the complete works, was first available in Lyons – the more cutting-edge of the two publishing cities – in 1503 and then available in Paris from 1529.¹⁷ It contains some scholarly paratext, such as an appendix, an index of the fables and, as discussed in the previous chapter, it also includes a life of Ovid. However, this material did not interfere with the Latin text which was preserved as accurately as possible, free from annotation or explanation. This Aldine edition was essential not only in preserving the accuracy of the Latin text, but also in conveying the poetic style and voice of the classical poet, so allowing readers like Shakespeare to appreciate the formal features of the poems, and not just the contents.

Nevertheless, there was great demand in Renaissance France for scholarly annotated editions of the *Metamorphoses*, partly because of the prominent place the *Metamorphoses* occupied on the school curriculum. Ann Moss has provided a comprehensive study of the Latin editions of Ovid’s poetry published before 1600, *Ovid in Renaissance France* (1982),¹⁸ rich in arguments about commentary-writing and the nature and development of

¹⁵ ‘The Aldine Ovid includes a life of the poet and an index of tales, as well as a good text; even if this [the 1502 Aldine once thought to belong to Shakespeare, now held in the Bodleian] is not Shakespeare’s, he must have owned a similar edition. It is significant for the nature of Ovid’s influence on Shakespeare that sixteenth-century editions tended to eschew the more elaborately allegorical form of interpretation’. Bate, p. 28.

¹⁶ See Martin Davies, *Aldus Manutius: Printer and Publisher of Renaissance Venice* (London: British Library, 1995).

¹⁷ The original Aldine *Metamorphoses* was printed in Venice in 1502. The two 1503 Lyon editions were forgeries of the Aldine edition; based on these, Parisian publisher Simon de Colines published a version of the *Metamorphoses* in 1529 as part of his complete works of Ovid. This had been reprinted twenty-eight times by 1588. This fashion for non-annotated editions of the *Metamorphoses* took off. In Lyons, Sebastian Gryphius printed thirteen similar editions, though they included a small amount of notes and summaries, between 1534 and 1559.

¹⁸ A. Moss, *Ovid in Renaissance France: a survey of the Latin editions of Ovid and commentaries printed in France before 1600* (London: Warburg Institute, 1982).

allegory, an account of which I do not have space to give in detail here; but my survey is thoroughly indebted to her bibliographic work. These annotated editions had their roots in the Medieval ‘moralized Ovid’, such as the French *Ovide moralisé* (c. 1328) and Pierre Besuire’s Latin *Ovidius Moralizatus* (c.1340).¹⁹ The ‘Ovidian’ humour and style recovered in the Aldine edition was greatly played down in these editions: the allegorising and Christian commentary was foregrounded, the fables were only summarised in brief, and none of their stylistic features were retained. In 1484 Colard Mansion used both these French and Latin works in his French prose version of the *Metamorphoses*,²⁰ reprinted as *La Bible des Poètes* in 1493.²¹ Bersuire’s Latin *Ovidius Moralizatus* was also re-edited and printed in Paris by the printer Badius in 1509: this edition was reprinted throughout the early sixteenth century.²² And, as Badius explains in the preface, the purpose of this poem was to instruct and provide moral Christian teaching.

However, despite the vogue for commentaries that reduced the fables to summaries, attempts were still made to reproduce Ovid’s text. The humanist scholar Raphael Regius was keen that students read Ovid’s words and not be encumbered by too much commentary, but he did have education in mind;²³ the result was an edition of the *Metamorphoses*, first printed in Paris in 1496, which treated the text as more than just a compendium of fable, but as an ‘encyclopedia of all ancient knowledge,’²⁴ including geography, music, rhetoric, astrology and natural philosophy.²⁵

¹⁹ For further detail, see C. Boer, *Ovide Moralisé en Prose* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1954); J. Engels, *Etudes sur l’Ovide Moralisé* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1945); Marylène Possamai-Perez, ‘La réécriture de la métamorphose dans l’Ovide moralisé’, *Lectures d’Ovide*, ed. by E. Bury, pp. 149-163; *L’Ovide moralisé, essai d’interprétation* (Paris: H. Champion, 2006).

²⁰ *Cy Commence Ovide de Salmonem son livre intitulé Métamorphose... Traduit et Compilé par Colard Mansion* (Bruges, C. Mansion, 1484).

²¹ *La Bible des Poètes* (Paris: A. Vêrard, 1493).

²² *Metamorphosis ovidiana moraliter [...]* (Paris: Badius, 1509). Reprinted in 1511, 1515, 1521.

²³ Raphael Regius, *Ovidius Metamorphoseos cum commento familiari* (Caen: P. Reginald, 1496).

²⁴ Moss, p.29

²⁵ Regius’ edition was printed by Badius in 1501, and in 1510 with a new title, *Metamorphoseon libri moralizati* (Lyons: E. Gueynard, 1510); this version included illustrations and a detailed commentary by Petrus Lavinius. Regius’ text and commentary in particular were used in education, championed by Pierre Regnaud Maxime, principal of the College du Bois in Caen, and Regius’ initial publisher.

Interest in Ovid's form and poetry continued into the first half of the sixteenth century when the first French translations of the *Metamorphoses* were published in Paris. These translations attempted to recapture the expression of Ovid's original Latin. Clément Marot and François Habert²⁶ produced close translations of Ovid's original, paying attention to stylistic features. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, in 1601, another verse translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by Raimond and Charles Massac was published.²⁷ These translations did not entirely abandon the trend of commentary writing, however, as moralizing allegorical interpretations of the myth were inserted alongside or after each story, or in the introduction; furthermore, these translations heavily cut Ovid's verse, excising anything deemed offensive. Condensed versions of the myths, in the form similar to the earlier commentaries, were still in demand, and a series of summaries of the fables from the *Metamorphoses* were printed in the vernacular, *Le Grand Olympe des Histoires Poétiques du prince de poésie Ovide Naso en sa Métamorphose* (1532),²⁸ and reprinted several times in both Lyons and Paris. And nor did the existence of translations replace annotated Latin editions of the *Metamorphoses*; there was a resurgence of interest in annotated editions towards the end of the sixteenth century – these tended to play down the more historical and philosophical readings to focus on the moral importance of these stories.²⁹ The importance of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in visual culture was also being established in this period, and a separate edition of illustrations was published as *La*

²⁶ Clément Marot, *Le premier livre de la Métamorphose d'Ovide, traduit de Latin en français* (Paris: E. Roffet, 1534); *Le second livre de la Métamorphose d'Ovide*, in *Les Œuvres de Clément Marot*, (Lyons: E. Dolet, 1543); François Habert, *Six Livres de la Métamorphose d'Ovide, traduits selon la phrase Latine en rime française* (Paris: M. Fezandat, 1549); *Les Trois premiers livres de la Métamorphose d'Ovide, traduits en vers français; le premier et second par C. L. Marot, le tiers par B. Aneau* (Lyons: G. Rouille, 1556); and François Habert, *Les quinze livres de la Métamorphose d'Ovide interprétés en rime française, selon la phrase latine* (Paris: M. Fezandat et E. Groulleau, 1557).

²⁷ In 1603, Raimond and Charles Massac published their verse translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: *Métamorphoses d'Ovide mises en vers français par Raimond et Charles de Massac, père et fils* (Paris: A. l'Angelier, 1603).

²⁸ *Le Grand Olympe des Histoires Poétiques du prince de poésie Ovide Naso en sa Métamorphose* (Lyons: D. de Harsy, 1532).

²⁹ Moss argues that the questions of assimilating Pagan myth to Christian culture and learning, though 'age-old problems' were being reviewed and invigorated by the Reformation and the Counter-reformation, cristallised by the Council of Trent in 1559-1563. This generated new commentaries on Ovid, such as Johannes Sprengius' *Metamorphoses Ovidii argumentis quidem soluta oratione, enarrationibus autem et alegoriis elegiaco versu accuratissime expositae* (Paris: Marnef and Cavallet, 1570; 1583) and Georgus Sabinus' *Fabularum Ovidii Interpretatio* (Paris: Marnef and Cavallet, 1575). Moss, p. 44.

Métamorphose d'Ovide figurée (Lyons, 1557).³⁰ The success of this edition both confirmed and furthered the place of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in visual print culture.

b) Sentiment and lament

The *Heroides*, fictional letters from mythological women to their departed lovers, were also extremely popular in the Renaissance. Paul White's recent study *Renaissance Postscripts: Responding to Ovid's 'Heroides' in Sixteenth-Century France* (2009)³¹ has explored the rich reception of this text in commentaries, translations and imitations. The mythological angle of this text was treated with 'encyclopaedic erudition'³² in the commentaries of the early sixteenth century, such as that printed by Jodocus Badius Ascenius, prolific printer of the early sixteenth century.³³ The *Heroides* were valued as examples of epistolary rhetoric, promoted and extolled by Erasmus, and for this reason had an entrenched place in the school system. The commentaries were particularly focused on the rhetorical aspects of the letters. Although some unresolved unease was registered with regard to the possibly subversive content of letters by Phaedra or Medea, for example,³⁴ the prevailing approach turned these letters into moral exempla; the frequently reprinted annotated edition by Guido Morillon included a commentary that emphasized the patience, fidelity and devotion of the women.³⁵ This moral reading was also evident in the first French translation, produced in 1498 by Saint-Gelais,³⁶ and in the two by François Habert: *Les Epîtres héroïdes, très salutaires pour*

³⁰ *La Métamorphose d'Ovide figurée* (Lyons: J. de Tournes 1557). Many of the images here, thought to be by Bernard Salomon, were used in the subsequent Marnef and Cavallet editions mentioned above.

³¹ Paul White, *Renaissance Postscripts. Responding to Ovid's 'Heroides' in Sixteenth-Century France* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009).

³² Moss, p. 8.

³³ The 1500 edition printed by Badius used commentaries by two fifteenth-century Italian Humanists, Antonius Volscus and Ubertinus Clericus Crescentinas. This edition was then printed 15 times between 1500 and 1536. The edition of 1518 printed by Badius also included Ovid's minor work, the *Ibis* poem and another scholarly *Vita Ovidii*, taken from Petrus Crinitus' *De poetis latinis*, which was also published – separately – by Badius in Paris in 1508.

³⁴ In 1509 Nole Bédier had banned the *Heroides* from the curriculum of the College de Montaigu. Lefèvre d'Étapes also agreed that there was no place for *Heroides* in Christian education. See Moss, p. 9.

³⁵ Guido Morillon's translation of the *Heroides* was first printed in Paris by D. Roce in 1507; it was reprinted in Lyon in 1533 with additional notes by Joannes Baptista Egnatius, and according to Ann Moss, this edition, reprinted in both Paris and Lyon for the next fifty years, 'drives earlier commentaries from the market'. Moss, p. 12.

³⁶ Octavian de Saint-Gelais, *Les Epîtres d'Ovide* (Paris: A. Verard, 1498).

*servir d'exemple à toute âme fidèle*³⁷ and *Les Epîtres héroïdes, pour servir d'exemple Chrétien*.³⁸

In comparison, annotated editions produced during the Renaissance paid little attention to Ovid's *Fasti*, his poem that treats the myth and lore of Roman festivals, or to his love poetry, the *Amores* and the *Ars Amatoria*. The commentaries on the *Fasti* by Italian Humanist scholars Paulo Marso and Antonio Constantio were printed in Paris in the early sixteenth century;³⁹ this was considered influential and included a scholarly *Vita Ovidii*.⁴⁰ However, this text did not feature regularly on the school syllabus and there were very few examples of imitation. Ovid's love poetry, the *Amores* and the *Ars Amatoria*, likewise received little scholarly attention, as it was not deemed suitable enough to be included on the school curriculum.⁴¹ Some editions with commentaries were printed in the early sixteenth century,⁴² but little other critical interest was shown in these texts specifically.⁴³ However, the Aldine complete works of Ovid were available. This had been published in Lyons in 1503, and in Paris by Simon de Colines in 1529 and had been reprinted twenty eight times by 1588. Due to this access, extracts from the more salubrious *Amores* were included in commonplace books or anthologies, and there were also a few translations in the sixteenth century.⁴⁴

³⁷ François Habert's *Les Epîtres héroïdes, très salutaires pour servir d'exemple à toute âme fidèle* (Paris: M. Fezandet, 1550).

³⁸ Habert, *Les Epîtres héroïdes, pour servir d'exemple Chrétien* (Paris: M. Fezandet, 1560).

³⁹ P. Ovidii Nasonis *Fastorum* [...] (Paris: D. Roce, 1500; 1510). These had been compiled by Bartholomeus Merula in Venice in 1496.

⁴⁰ There was some further demand for editions of the *Fasti* at the beginning of sixteenth century: another annotated edition by Fausto Andrelini was printed seven times between 1501 and 1528.

⁴¹ The *Ars Amatoria* is considered an influential text on the 'fin amor' of early medieval courtly love poetry. See Keith Nickolaus, *Marriage fiction in Old French Secular Narrative: a Critical Review* (London: Routledge, 2002).

⁴² An edition of the *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* by Bartholomeus Merula was published in Lyons in 1495, and reprinted regularly until 1631; and one of the *Remedia Amoris* by Aegidius Delphus was printed in Paris, and reprinted seven times between 1493 and 1506.

⁴³ A further commentary was published by Antonius Gryphus in Lyons in 1571 and reprinted twice (1581 and 1588), though this also included the *Heroides* and spurious works.

⁴⁴ See Moss, p. 80.

The *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* fared little better than Ovid's love poetry or his *Fasti* in annotated editions despite their place on the school syllabus.⁴⁵ apart from Bartholomeus Merula's commentary on the *Tristia*, printed three times between 1512 and 1520, few other separate editions were printed.⁴⁶ However, the Aldine complete works was available, and thanks to this, Ovid's exile poetry was read and admired. The experience of exile recounted here chimed with the concerns of a period increasingly open to travel and its narration.⁴⁷ Scholars such as Hugo Tucker in *Homo Viator: exile, displacement and writing in Renaissance Europe* (2002),⁴⁸ argue that Ovid was an archetypal figure for the exiled poet in this period, as is clear from his influence on Clément Marot's *Epîtres* written from Venice; and most particularly, on Joachim Du Bellay, whose poem, *Les Regrets* (or *Tristia* as Du Bellay called it in Latin) operates in playful parallel with Ovid's verse, reversing its exile narrative: where Ovid sent letters to Rome, Du Bellay sent letters from Rome. The focus is on exile as a subject of lament, loneliness and distance from one's *patrie*; Marot's and Du Bellay's poems thus partly served as patriotic extolations of their own country's virtues.

A more embittered and recriminating reading of Ovid's exile poetry – of the sort hinted at by Bayle – had been supplied by two poems written much earlier by Humanist scholars. The first is Jules Scaliger's poem, 'Loquitur ipse Ovidius ad Augustam' in which, breaking through the reticence of the *Tristia* and, supplying words where Ovid remained elliptical, he imagines Ovid virulently attacking Augustus. Scaliger's 'Ovidius' argues that Augustus' own house is full of depravity and shame: *exsul abi;/impia flagitis squalent*

⁴⁵ Moss shows that at the Collège de Guyenne the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* were the first books to be studied in any depth. Moss, p. 20.

⁴⁶ Merula's *Tristia* was printed in Paris by J. Frellon in 1512, by B. Aubry in 1520, and by A. Bonnemère in the same year. An augmented edition including notes by Vitus Amerbach and Jacobus Micellus was printed in Paris by M. David in 1533.

⁴⁷ For more on sixteenth-century travel narratives, see Frank Lestringant, *L'atelier du cosmographe: ou l'image du monde à la Renaissance* (Paris: A. Michel, 1991) and Wes Williams, *Pilgrimage and Narrative in the French Renaissance: 'the undiscovered country'* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998).

⁴⁸ George Hugo Tucker, *Homo Viator: exile, displacement and writing in Renaissance Europe* (Geneva: Droz, 2002), pp. 245-268. See also Joachim Du Bellay, *Les Regrets et autres œuvres poétiques de Joachim Du Bellay*, ed. by G. H. Tucker (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), pp. 32-38.

penetralia diris/Go into exile yourself; your house is tainted with foul crime. The second poem, by Ange Politien – *Elegie de Exilio et more Ovidii* – mourns the solitude and sadness of Ovid’s death alone in Tomis, conferring him the epigraph: ‘*qui iacet hic, teneri doctor amoris erat/ Here lies the teacher of tender love*’, and accuses Augustus of great cruelty. These poems would prove popular in the seventeenth-century editions of Ovid’s work – an interest that might belie a more complex and political attitude towards exile, seeing it as the punitive result of confrontation between state and individual.

This survey of Ovid’s place in print culture prior to the seventeenth century demonstrates the sheer variety of traditions which claim Ovid as an influence – a variety that stems from the range of Ovid’s writing, which spans the genres of epic and elegy, and the themes of myth, sentiment and exile. This variety made Ovid a poet for all seasons: an exile for those interested in exile; a mythographer for the mythologists; a master of rhetoric for the rhetoricians to the extent that it becomes almost reductive – Ovid was everywhere, in every form. However, some distinct conclusions can be drawn from this survey. Moralised versions of Ovid’s poetry were the most frequently reprinted and worked on in this period and it was generally mythological subjects – from the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides* – that drew the most attention. The fact that his exile poetry was interpreted according to the cultural and literary trends of the time exemplifies how such trends almost entirely informed and dictated how ‘Ovide’ was constructed. His love poetry, which was less replete with mythology and which more readily resisted Christian, allegorical or moral readings, was largely neglected – a fact which would have almost completely reversed by the turn of the next century.

2. Traditions: Ovid in seventeenth-century France

a) Renouard and Du Ryer: seventeenth-century *Metamorphoses* with commentaries

The moralizing tradition did, however, continue in translations of the *Metamorphoses* produced after 1600. While Chatelain is right to argue that Ovid's place was not limited to erudite culture as the century went on, erudite traditions did persist and were concurrent with the new readings; a co-existence that the implicitly temporal dichotomy suggested between 'savant' and 'galant' in her study rather obfuscates.

A number of erudite, annotated Latin editions of Ovid's complete works were published in the Dutch Republic and circulated in France throughout the seventeenth century. Among the most reprinted were the editions by Dutch editor Daniel Heinsius, first printed in 1629 in Leyde,⁴⁹ and by his son Nicolaas Heinsius, first printed in 1652 in Amsterdam.⁵⁰ These complete works were not as heavily annotated as the editions we have studied so far, nor were they as annotated as many of the editions used for education purposes, which I will explore in the next section. For example, while Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was printed with a summary, an 'argumentum', introducing each fable, this served a paraphrasing, rather than allegorising interpretive function; and selections from Ovid's *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria*, though heavily expurgated, were also included. The paratextual material places these editions in a culture of erudition. The beginning of Tome III – the volume containing Ovid's exile poetry– is taken up with reprints of a series of Latin *Vitae Ovidii* (from the medieval codex Farnesianus; that of Lilio Giraldi, Manuce and the two poems by Scaliger and Politien), demonstrating how Ovid's exile poems were

⁴⁹ Daniel Heinsius, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis opera* (Leyde: Elzevier, 1629).

⁵⁰ Nicolaas Heinsius, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis operum editio nova* (Amsterdam: Elzevier, 1652).

perceived to be autobiographical, and revealing how life and work were closely connected in the minds of these editors.⁵¹

There were two successful prose translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* which also contained commentaries in this moralising tradition. Nicolas Renouard's translation, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide traduites en prose française...avec XV discours contenant l'explication morale et historique* (1606),⁵² was reprinted twenty eight times between 1606 and 1658, in folio and octavo sized editions. Each fable was preceded by an illustration and a short summary, laying out 'le sujet de la fable' and the historical and moral interpretation of each myth was included in an appendix. In the *préface* to the *Discours*, Renouard explains that beneath the surface of the fable lie important moral truths:

Vous savez que ce n'est pas à l'écorce de l'invention fabuleuse qu'il se faut arrêter et que si l'on pénètre plus avant, on trouve le tronc de quelque étrange et véritable événement, ou un effet de la nature ou quelque beau précepte moral [...]. *Discours* I, p. 6.⁵³

No life of Ovid is included in the paratextual material, and nor are the poems by Scaliger and Politien: instead *élégies* in French by the poets Jean Delingendes and Pierre Motin replace these Humanist poems. And unlike the poems by Scaliger and Politien which deal solely with Ovid, these French verses praise and extol the Renouard's translation – a phenomenon I will discuss in the next chapter.

In 1655, Pierre du Ryer also published a scholarly prose translation of the *Metamorphoses*. There were two separate editions, the first was a prose translation with explanations, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide traduites en français par Pierre du Ryer*, printed in quarto initially, and then all editions after 1676 were duodecimo sized; it was

⁵¹ In the 1652, 1661 and 1662 editions, Daniel Heinsius inserts the *Vita Ovidii* by Lilio Giraldi at the beginning of Tome III which contains these exile poems.

⁵² Nicolas Renouard, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide traduites en français...avec XV discours contenant l'explication morale et historique des fables* (Paris: M. Guillemot, 1606).

⁵³ Quoted from the edition published by Vve. A. Angelier in 1618.

printed thirteen times between 1655 and 1718.⁵⁴ The second version was an illustrated folio edition, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide divisées en XV livres, avec de nouvelles explications historiques, enrichies de figures et nouvellement traduites par Pierre du Ryer*, printed five times between 1660 and 1728.⁵⁵ Both versions use a parallel text with the Latin verse in one column and the French prose translation in another. The fable is introduced in French by a summary, the 'argumentum', and each fable is followed by an 'explication'. As Du Ryer argues in the preface to both these versions, these fables are not intended for 'plaisir' but have a morally didactic purpose:

Il ne faut pas s'imaginer qu'on ait inventé la fable seulement pour le plaisir. C'est un chemin rempli de roses que les anciens ont trouvé pour nous conduire agréablement à la connaissance de la vertu [...] Ainsi on peut dire que la fable est la dépositaire de la philosophie; que si c'est un corps fantastique, il a au moins une âme raisonnable; et que c'est un beau mensonge, qui ne cache la vérité que pour la faire paraître plus pompeuse et plus triomphante.⁵⁶ (*Au lecteur*, np)

Other prefatory material signals Du Ryer's allegiance to the erudite tradition: the illustrated edition contains a short version of a Medieval Latin *Vita Ovidii* from the Pomponius Laetus codex. Furthermore, the frontispiece to Du Ryer's translation (fig. 1) shows a conventional image of a bust of the poet's head wreathed in laurels, in a classical setting, surrounded by figures representing the arts (painting, music, sculpture).

⁵⁴ Pierre du Ryer, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide traduites en français par Pierre du Ryer* (Paris: A. de Sommaville, 1655).

⁵⁵ *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide divisées en XV livres, avec de nouvelles explications historiques, enrichies de figures et nouvellement traduites par Pierre du Ryer* (Paris: A. de Sommaville 1660).

⁵⁶ Du Ryer uses typical metaphors (corps, âme) to articulate his process of translating fables. I will explore metaphors for translation further in the next chapter.



Fig. 1. Frontispiece, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide traduites en français divisées en XV livres [...] enrichies de figures, et nouvellement traduites par Pierre du Ryer de l'Académie Française.* (Amsterdam: P. & J. Blaeu, Janssons à Waesberge, Boom Goethals, 1702). Image: Worcester College Library, Oxford.

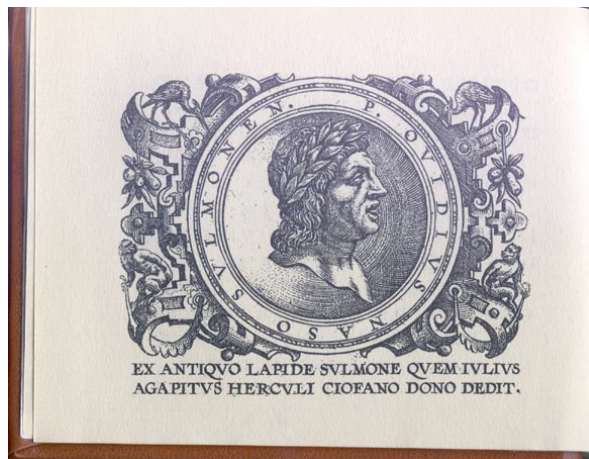


Fig. 2. *P. Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses* (Antwerp, 1591)
Image: The Warburg Institute Library, London



Fig. 3. Frontispiece, Renouard (ed.1616)
Image: The Queen's College Library, Oxford

Du Ryer's portrait was probably based on an image of Ovid that had been in circulation since the late sixteenth century. This derived from a stone sculpture of a head found at Sulmona, Ovid's birth place, and thought to be of the Roman poet. It was owned by Ercole Ciofano, whose *Vita Ovidii* I mentioned in the previous chapter.⁵⁷ This was the model for the engraved figure in the Antwerp edition of the *Metamorphoses* (fig. 2) and may have also influenced the image in Renouard's edition (fig. 3).⁵⁸ Since no authoritative image of Ovid existed from antiquity, illustrators also relied on his *cognomen*, Naso (nose), to guide their depictions, and this is evident, I suggest, in these renditions.⁵⁹ The similarity of these portraits suggests that they belong to a similar culture of erudition.⁶⁰

Both Renouard and Du Ryer show admiration for the learning of the ancient Roman poet: and especially, in Du Ryer's case, the message and content of the poem are as important as its style, if not more so. Ovid's place in erudite culture extended beyond the end of the seventeenth century: historicising readings such as the ones contained in Renouard's, and particularly Du Ryer's, versions of Ovid's poem, continued into the eighteenth century. The principal translation of the *Metamorphoses* in the eighteenth century was that of Abbé Banier,⁶¹ an important theorist on mythology: in keeping with the euhemerist arguments he conducted elsewhere about the role of mythology,⁶² Banier's

⁵⁷ This stone head is instead thought to be from a fifteenth-century statue of a member of a prominent family. For more detail, and for a thorough survey of early portraits of Ovid, see J.B. Trapp, 'Portraits of Ovid in the Middle Ages and Renaissance', in *Die Rezeption Der 'Metamorphosen' Des Ovid in Der Neuzeit: Der Antike Mythos in Text Und Bild: Internationales Symposium Der Werner Reimers-Stiftung, Bad Homburg V.D.H.* (April 1991), 252-277, p. 268.

⁵⁸ Factotum woodcuts of Ovid – a bust portrait with laurels – influenced by this image of the stone head were common from the end of the sixteenth century. See Trapp, 'Portraits of Ovid', p. 268.

⁵⁹ In twelfth-century manuscript editions of Ovid, his name Ovidius was etymologised as 'ovum dividens', whereby the four parts of an egg represented the four elements; images showed Ovid holding this egg. See Trapp, 'Portraits of Ovid', p. 259.

⁶⁰ For more on the importance of portraits for associating author and work, and for revealing the interventions of the editor see Chartier, p. 60. Both Renouard and Du Ryer provided illustrated editions of the *Metamorphoses*, which, as we have seen from the previous section, were gaining an important place in visual culture. Renouard's illustrations had considerable influence on the book of mythological engravings, *Tableaux des temples des Muses, représentant les vertus et les vices sur les plus illustres fables de l'antiquité* by Michel de Marolles (Paris: A de Sommaville and N. Langlois, 1655). See Chatelain, pp. 239-261.

⁶¹ Antoine Banier, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide en latin, traduites en français avec des remarques et des explications historiques* (Amsterdam: Wetstein-Smith, 1732).

⁶² In 1711, he published *Explication Historique des Fables où l'on découvre leur origine et leur conformité avec l'histoire ancienne*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Le Breton, 1711) and in 1738, *La Mythologie et les Fables Expliquées par l'Histoire*, 3 vols. (Paris: Briasson, 1738.)

translation included a lengthy commentary that made a predominantly historical reading of the myths.⁶³

However, despite the success of Renouard's and Du Ryer's translations, things were beginning to change and diversify by the middle of the seventeenth century. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was not only intended for the learned and wealthy cultured circles reading these folio and octavo editions. In the 1650s and 1660s, there was a proliferation of burlesque 'travestissements' of stories from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,⁶⁴ and of his *Ars Amatoria*.⁶⁵ These will be studied in more detail in the next chapter – suffice to say that editions such as these offer Ovid to an entirely different readership, and up-turn the seriousness and erudition of the editions of Du Ryer and Renouard, making 'Ovide' a figure of pleasure and humour.

b) 'Ovidius Ovidio melior': Ovid on the curriculum

Ovid's place in learned culture was also demonstrated by his prominence on the Jesuit curriculum. Chatelain has provided an extremely informative account of Ovid's place in schools, arguing that Ovid was 'un des principaux auteurs étudiés [qui] fait le fondement de l'apprentissage des humanités'.⁶⁶ In the *ratio studiorum* of the Jesuits, Ovid's poetry was used in almost every class. In the 6th class, extracts of his poetry were studied in collections of verses, *flosculi et poetis decerpti*. In the 5th, he began to be studied in more detail; extracts from the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* were studied in the 4th; an expurgated

⁶³ On Banier, see Burton Feldman and Robert D. Richardson, *The Rise of Modern Mythology, 1680-1860* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), pp. 86-92.

⁶⁴ Charles Dassoucy, *L'Ovide en belle humeur* (Paris: C. de Sercy, 1650); *Ravissement de Proserpine: poème burlesque* (Paris: P. David and E. Pepingué, 1653); *L'Ovide en belle humeur augmenté du Ravissement de Proserpine et du Jugement de Paris* (Paris: E. Loyson, 1659); Louis Richer, *L'Ovide Bouffon, ou les Métamorphoses travesties en vers burlesques*, 3 t. in 1 vol. (Paris: T. du Bray, 1649-52).

⁶⁵ *L'Hérato-technie, ou l'Art d'aimer d'Ovide, en vers burlesques, par le sieur D. L. B. M.* (Paris: D. Pelé, 1650). A further burlesque version of *l'art d'aimer* was published about ten years later, in 1662, by DuFour de la Crespelière, *L'art d'aimer d'Ovide avec les remèdes de l'amour nouvellement traduits en vers burlesques* (Paris: E. Loyson, 1662).

⁶⁶ Joseph Jouvençy, *Christianis litterarum magistris de ratione discendi et docendi* (Paris: 1691).

version of the *Metamorphoses* was read in its entirety in the 3rd, along with extracts from the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*; and in the *classe d'humanité*, the *Fasti* was also studied. This presence made Ovid the second most studied Latin author after Cicero; a five-act play about Ovid's life and exile 'Ovidius exulans' was even performed at the College de Navarre in 1641.⁶⁷

The texts were studied partly as a way of learning and consolidating the Latin language, and the order in which these texts were introduced to the syllabus reflected the relative ease or difficulty of the Latin. Ovid's poetry was made such use of in schools because of its accessibility; extracts from his poetry were therefore also included in the collections of *sententiae*, used in education.⁶⁸ It figures prominently in C. Lancelot's *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre facilement et en peu de temps la langue latine*.⁶⁹ The school editions were tailored accordingly – often vocabulary would be changed or synonyms used in correspondence with the level of language expected of the students. The *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* provided knowledge of the myths and learning of ancient culture, and the *Metamorphoses* had significant influence on mythology manuals intended for school use.⁷⁰

The predominance of the *Metamorphoses*, *Heroides* and *Fasti* on the school syllabus inherited the traditional image of Ovid as primarily mythographical, and demonstrates that these poems were selected largely for their learning and mythology. However, Chatelain argues that towards the end of the century the institution did register the growing interest in Ovid's love poetry occurring in the print market and wider cultural tastes. For example, le Père Briet included many sentences from the *Ars Amatoria* in his

⁶⁷ *Ovidius exulans. Dabitur in aula Regiae Navarrae die veneris calend. Mart. hora post meridiem 4.* The performance date of 1641 is not certain: see Chatelain, p. 82

⁶⁸ Nicolas Mercier, *Sententiae puriores ex Ovidiio, Tibullo, Propertio, Martiale et Ausonio selectae cum notis N. Mercerii* (Paris: C. Thibout, 1655).

⁶⁹ C. Lancelot, *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre facilement et en peu de temps la langue latine* (Paris: A. Vittré, 1644).

⁷⁰ Such as Claude Le Ragois' *Instruction sur l'histoire de la France de sur la romaine par demandes et par réponses, avec une Explication des Métamorphoses d'Ovide* (Paris: A. Pralard, 1684).

recueil de sentences.⁷¹ This also had a flip side, as more conservative voices warned against the teaching of Ovid and suggested it should be limited to moral readings of the *Metamorphoses*.⁷² Another way in which changes in literary and cultural circles were inflected in pedagogical practice was the increasing emphasis on style and aesthetic judgement. Chatelain argues that Ovid played a key role in the practice of imitation, both stylistic and content based, and that there was a subtle shift in how Ovid – and other classical poets – were taught in a move from purely rhetorical pedagogical practice to one that emphasised style and aesthetic judgement, in keeping with the interests of the *mondain* circles.

Despite these interactions with the world beyond the institution, there were editions of Ovid's poetry printed specifically for school use. These include Daniel Crespin's *Ad Usum Delphini* edition of Ovid's complete works in Latin, first published in 1686;⁷³ Joseph de Jouvency's Latin edition of the *Metamorphoses*, published in 1705;⁷⁴ and, in French, Bellegarde's 1701 *Métamorphoses d'Ovide*.⁷⁵ Jouvency, as a Jesuit, was not only responsible for subsequent school editions, but he also played an extremely important role in revising the school syllabus: in 1691 he wrote the *Christianis litterarum magistris de ratione discendi et docendi*. Although the *Ad Usum Delphini* collection had originally been established for the education of the Dauphin, the first edition being published in 1674 when

⁷¹ See, Père Biet's *Acute dicta omnium veterum poetarum latinorum opus editum ad usum...* (Paris: F. Muget, 1664) and Pierre Egasse Du Boulay, *Gemmae poetarum pars prima ex Ovidio, Catullo, Propertio et Tibullo* (Paris: C Thiboust, 1662).

⁷² Claude Fleury questioned the moral edification of the *Metamorphoses* in his *Traité du choix et de la méthode des études* (Paris: P. Aubouin, 1686). Lamy wanted to remove Ovid from the syllabus altogether, see Chatelain, p. 67.

⁷³ Daniel Crespin, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis opéra [...] in tres tomos divisa, interpretatione et notis illustravit Daniel Crespinus [...] ad usum Delphini*, 3 vols. (Lyon: J. Anisson, J. Posuel and C. Rigaud, 1686).

⁷⁴ Joseph Jouvency, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoseon libri XV expurgati et explanati [...] auctore J. Juvencio* (Rouen: R. Lallemant, 1705). There were other Latin editions, such as the reprint of the edition by J. Micyllus (1503-1558) and M. Radar (1561-1634): *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoses omni obscoenitate expurgatae, cum selectis Micylli et Raderi notis* (Paris: Vve. C. Thiboust, 1687). This was less allegorical, but took to expurgating any story that might require too much moral justification.

⁷⁵ Jean-Baptiste de Bellegarde, *Les Métamorphoses d'Ovide, avec des explications* (Paris: P. Emery, 1701).

he was 13, it was also intended for a wider student readership.⁷⁶ As Catherine Volpilhac-Auger argues, that readership might also have been students in the Jesuits schools,⁷⁷ as ‘si l’on y ajoute que le tiers des ‘dauphins’ appartient à la société de Jésus, on peut se demander si avec eux ne se manifeste pas de façon particulièrement claire l’intention d’orienter la collection vers une pratique pédagogique déjà en usage dans les classes.’⁷⁸

The *Ad Usum Delphini* collection was conceived by the Duc de Montausier, the governor of Louis, *le Grand Dauphin*. Its direction lay in the hands of Pierre-Daniel Huet, an important Jesuit intellectual. Between 1673 and 1691, thirty-seven different editions of works by Greek and Latin authors were produced. There were a number of different editors working on these texts, many of whom were prominent figures and many, including Huet and Montausier, were Jesuits. However, as Volpilhac-Auger demonstrates, Daniel Crespin, the editor of Ovid’s complete works in 1686 was unknown and a Protestant. Nevertheless, the *Ad Usum* ‘house style’ was such that whatever the editors’ background, the editions were standardised: ‘en imposant une certaine mode de travail aux collaborateurs’.⁷⁹ That ‘mode de travail’ was heavily influenced by Jesuit teaching practices. Bernard Colombat has argued that the Jesuit practice of ‘interpretatio’ taught in schools actually meant to rewrite the text, in Latin, but more clearly. He argues that these practices are present in the *Ad Usum Delphini* editions: ‘l’*interpretatio* dans les éditions *Ad Usum Delphini* s’inscrit donc dans une tradition interprétative forte et dûment codifiée chez ces spécialistes de la pédagogie [...]’⁸⁰ This reformulation included the practice of expurgation. As Volpilhac-Auger has also suggested, ‘si les éditions *Ad usum Delphini* sont connues, c’est bien

⁷⁶ The *préface* to the edition of Sallust produced in 1674 by Daniel Crespin says ‘non modo serenissimi delphini, sed publica etiam studia iuvare possent’. See Catherine Volpilhac-Auger, ‘La Collection ad usum Delphini: entre érudition et pédagogie’ in *Histoire de l’éducation, Les Humanités Classiques*, 74 (1997), 203-214, p. 205.

⁷⁷ See the section, ‘Une entreprise Jésuite?’, in *La Collection Ad Usum Delphini: l’antiquité au miroir du grand siècle*, ed. by Catherine Volpilhac-Auger (Grenoble: Université Stendhal, 2000), pp. 98-101.

⁷⁸ Catherine Volpilhac-Auger, ‘La Collection ad usum delphini: entre érudition et pédagogie’, p. 207.

⁷⁹ Ibid. p 110.

⁸⁰ See Bernard Colombat, ‘L’*interpretatio*: intentions affichées et pratiques effectives’, in *La Collection Ad Usum Delphini: l’antiquité au miroir du grand siècle*, ed. by Catherine Volpilhac-Auger, pp. 173-185, p. 178.

souvent uniquement par référence à la pratique des coupes'. She goes on to explain that it was Ovid's poetry that was particularly affected by this 'pratique': 'l'auteur le plus menacé est Ovide'.⁸¹

Even a cursory glance at *Ad Usum Delphini* edition of Ovid's complete works demonstrates that these traditions are everywhere apparent. The edition signals its place in erudite culture by printing two of the Medieval Latin *vitae* on its opening pages (the Pomponius Laetus codex and the Farnensianus codex) as well as the Latin poems by Scaliger and Politian. Each fable or poem is introduced with a summary or 'argumentum', followed by the (expurgated and tweaked) Latin text, heavy with footnotes; underneath this – on the same page – we find the 'interpretatio' in two columns, below which come the footnotes or *notae*. The commentary and notes offer a moralising and historical reading of the myths. The portrait of Ovid included in the prefatory material to this edition (fig. 4) is based on a different image to that which might have informed the portraits in Dy Ryer's and Renouard's editions. A medal from the Rondinini family collection was thought to depict the image of Ovid because of Greek lettering around the rim (since proved fraudulent). This was first printed in Nicolaas Heinsius' 1658 Latin edition of the *Metamorphoses* and, according to J. B. Trapp, was influential for nearly a century, as is evident from the portrait attached to a later edition of Jouvençy's *Metamorphoses* (fig. 5).⁸²

⁸¹ Volpilhac-Augier, 'La Collection ad usum delphini: entre érudition et pédagogie', p. 211.

⁸² J. B. Trapp, 'Portraits of Ovid', p. 272. The coin has since been understood to show the head of Vedius Pollo, a Knight in the cavalry under Augustus.



Fig. 4. Daniel Crespin, *Ad Usun Delphini* (1689)

Image: Bibliothèque Nationale de France



Fig. 5. Joseph Juvencius, *Metamorphoses* (Milan, 1754)

Image: Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library

Expurgation was also present in the other school editions: the translation by Bellegarde in 1701 and Jouvençy's Latin edition in 1705. In the *Avertissement*, Bellegarde describes his intended readers:

On a enrichi cette nouvelle traduction en prose de très belles figures et qui sont bien désignées; elles peuvent être d'un grand secours aux enfants qui étudient dans les collèges, pour leur faire mieux comprendre le sujet de la fable, et pour l'imprimer plus fortement dans leur mémoire. (*Avertissement*, np)

Bellegarde also uses the *Abrégé de la Vie d'Ovide*, attached to his translation, to make the case for its moral purpose. He paints a favourable picture of Ovid – 'Ovide a toujours été regardé par les savants comme l'un des plus célèbres poètes Latins' (np). In the *Epître* he explains that Ovid intended to produce morally edifying work:

Ovide nourri dans une cour délicate où les belles lettres étaient en estime sous le règne d'Auguste entreprit de faire connaître le ridicule des vices sous des peintures ingénieuses, pour corriger les faibles des hommes. C'est dans ce dessein qu'il se mit à écrire ses fables, pour reformer les mœurs des Romains. (*Epître*, np)

In the *Avertissement*, he affirms: 'Les fables ne sont pas des inventions stériles pour amuser seulement la curiosité des lecteurs. Les anciens s'en font servi utilement pour instruire les hommes, et pour les corriger des vices' (np). Following the tradition sketched out here, he

assimilates Ovid's writing into Christian discourse: 'La narration d'Ovide a beaucoup de conformité avec ce que Moïse nous apprend dans la Genèse, touchant les vices des premiers hommes, que Dieu fit périr dans un déluge universel' (np). Bellegarde does acknowledge, however, that some Latin expressions would be 'trop libre' if translated faithfully into French: 'On a eu grand soin dans cette nouvelle traduction d'adoucir de certaines expressions qui auraient peut-être paru un peu trop libres en notre langue, si l'on eût suivi mot pour mot l'original' (*Avertissement*, np).

Jouvençy takes a more critical stance: Ovid was flagrantly immoral and needs correcting; only once the *Metamorphoses* has been delivered in Jouvençy's heavily expurgated version will its moral lessons become clear. Jouvençy's edition follows a similar layout to that of Crespin: each fable is preceded by an 'argumentum' and followed by notes in two columns which offer both linguistic glossaries and moralised readings. Jouvençy has created an 'Ovidius Ovidio melior' – an 'Ovid better than Ovid' – as he explains in the *Dedication* (np). He makes this position clear in the *Vita Ovidii* that introduces his edition:

cum in scribendo non se contineret pudoris finibus, ab augusto, licentiam hanc non ferente, pulsus in exilium est Tomos/Because in writing he did not show enough modesty, intolerant of this licence, Augustus exiled him to Tomis.⁸³

The interventions at the hands of the editor (Jouvençy) and translator (Bellegarde) are made evident not only in the preface in which they address their reader, but also in how they characterize Ovid. Both use this to stress the moral nature of their interpretation. Jouvençy takes a more aggressive stance, highlighting his own role all the more prominently and showing the changes he has made; Bellegarde is more passive and subtle, indicating changes, but also assimilating them into his description of Ovid, as if many of

⁸³ 'P. Ovidii Nasonis Vita', in Joseph Jouvençy, *Publii Ovidii Nasonis Metamorphoseon*, np.

them were intended by the Roman poet. I will explore these sorts of uses of the figure of Ovid in the next chapter.

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This survey demonstrates that Ovid continued to have an important presence in the culture of erudition and learning in the seventeenth century. Latin editions of his work were reprinted and new ones continued to be produced – often for use in education. Renouard, Du Ryer and, later, Banier all demonstrate that the *Metamorphoses* remained a foundational text in any study of mythology. This must be remembered as we turn now to consider Ovid's place in *galant* culture. His continued role in learned culture makes his assimilation into a movement with quite different concerns all the more striking and interesting. His presence in *galant* culture marks a sudden and concentrated change in contrast to the fairly consistently paced, though nuanced, moralizing and learned traditions of reading Ovid that had been in place for centuries.

3. Transitions

a) Tensions: Michel de Marolles

One of the ways that a shift in taste and trend can be measured is to consider the reactions of – and reactions to – a figure slightly outside this movement: for this purpose, we turn now to Michel de Marolles. Marolles was a prolific translator of this period, translating a staggering range of Roman authors from Latin into French. He wanted to produce the first translated 'complete works' of Ovid in French. His prose translations of the *Fasti*, *Heroides*, *Tristia*, *Epistulae ex Ponto*, *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria*, *Remedia Amoris* and the *Ibis* were published between 1660 and 1661 in Paris by P. Lamy and L. Billaine. However, he did not quite achieve this 'complete set' of Ovid's works as he did not translate the *Metamorphoses* at this stage. He provided editions that were heavy with commentary and

interpretation and prided himself on producing a translation that was ‘fidèle’, distinguishing his approach from the translations of Ovid’s verse produced earlier in the century, which I will discuss in the next section.⁸⁴ He made valuable contributions, translating poems that were little known in French, such as the *Fasti*, the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, as well as Ovid’s minor works, such as the *Ibis* poem.⁸⁵ Marolles was also the first to provide a *Vie d’Ovide* in French, which he attached to his translation of the *Ibis*. In this *Vie*, as explored in the previous chapter, in keeping with his scholarly approach towards translation, Marolles drew on historical sources and took the accounts of the two Humanists, Ercole Ciofano and Lilio Giraldi as his guides.

However, his translations were criticised for being somewhat out of step with prevailing tastes.⁸⁶ His translations of Ovid were in prose, when his contemporaries were translating in verse; they used parallel French and Latin texts, with the first title page in Latin; they were annotated and erudite, recalling the erudite scholarship of Renouard and Du Ryer and the *savant* tradition to which they belong, when Ovid’s works were being assimilated to a different *galant* tradition. It would seem that Marolles capitulated to prevalent tastes in 1677 when he produced a translation of the *Metamorphoses* that was quarto sized and in verse.⁸⁷ Because of its later publication and different format, Chatelain suggests it cannot be seen as part of the earlier ‘set’ and Marolles failed in his endeavour to

⁸⁴ He expressed some reservations about the translations of Ovid produced earlier in the century, notably the ‘belles infidèles’ version of the *Epîtres d’Ovide* by Du Perron, Delingendes, De la Brosse and Hédelin (1615), which I discuss further in the next chapter: ‘mais au moins, puis je dire que j’ai essayé de rendre assez fidèlement le sens d’Ovide dans ses Héroïdes, que quelques uns des ces Messieurs semblent avoir un peu négligé pour n’avoir été que trop indulgents à leurs propres pensées, selon le goût et l’élégance plus diffuse que polie, qui était en usage de leur temps.’ ‘Remarques sur les épîtres Héroïdes’, *Les Epîtres Héroïdes d’Ovide de la traduction de M. de Marolles* (Paris: P. Lamy, 1661), p. 209. In the ‘Lettre de M. Ogier à M. de Villeloin pour servir de préface à cette traduction des épîtres d’Ovide’, Ogier describes Marolles’ translations as ‘belles’ and ‘fidèles’, np. See also Roger Zuber, *Les Belles Infidèles et la formation du goût classique* (Paris: A. Colin, 1968), p. 32.

⁸⁵ ‘La plupart de ces livres n’ayant jamais été traduits auparavant, on est fort obligé à un auteur qui a pris la peine de les mettre en notre langue’. Charles Sorel, *Bibliothèque française*, (Paris: Compagnie des libraires du Palais, 1664), pp. 227.

⁸⁶ Guy Patin wrote ‘ses traductions ne lui font pas honneur’; Jean Chapelain was less kind – ‘il traduit, et mal’. Quoted in Chatelain, p. 40.

⁸⁷ Michel de Marolles, *Les métamorphoses d’Ovide comprises en quatre vers pour chaque fable des quinze livres de cet ouvrage ou plutôt pour leur servir d’argument* (Paris: Langlois, 1677).

produce a complete works of Ovid in French.⁸⁸ The following year he published a miscellany of translations and treatises, which included a new verse translation of Ovid's exile poetry.⁸⁹ And yet, despite these accommodations and attempts to keep up with trends, Marolles was unhappy with the state of translation. One of the treatises in this miscellany was a *discours* in which he criticised the translation of Horace by Etienne de Martignac, who, as we will see, in 1697 went on to be the first to produce a translated complete works of Ovid's poetry – which would have added fuel to Marolles' existing irritation had he lived to witness its publication.

Marolles' main criticisms of Martignac sketch some of the principal characteristics of the *mondain* culture with which Marolles was uncomfortable, though it must be noted that these accusations were also motivated by personal rivalry. He opens:

Quand on veut traduire quelque ouvrage des anciens, lequel a déjà été traduit, et surtout du vivant de celui qui l'a fait, outre que cela ne se peut entreprendre sans beaucoup d'incivilité, il semble, et il est vrai, que si l'on ne travaille plus heureusement, on a fait une chose inutile et téméraire. (p. 453)

One of Marolles' main objections – he mentions it three times in the first two paragraphs – is that Martignac has made these changes to appeal to his non-savant readers, in particular, to appeal to women:

Et certes, quand il n'est question que de changer des paroles, sans y trouver quelque chose de nouveau dans le sens, et que ces paroles changées n'ont rien de plus juste n'y de plus énergique que les premières, il n'est rien de si facile à faire, n'y de si fade en même temps. [...] Mais voyons par quelques exemples de quelle sorte cet auteur s'en acquies, pour aller bien plus loin que nous n'avons été, et pour donner désormais de la joie aux dames qui ne sont pas savantes, de la lecture de l'un des plus excellents et des plus agréables poètes de l'antiquité [...] (p. 454-455)

His complaints against Martignac's translation go further than the linguistic intricacies of word choice and order, but focus on why these decisions have been made; they attack the reasons for such 'compromise'. Marolles is referring to the actual and intended readership

⁸⁸ See Chatelain, pp. 42-44.

⁸⁹ Michel de Marolles, 'Discours sur une traduction ne prose d'un ancien poète', in *Ovide. Toutes les pièces [...]*, p. 453-64.

of this work, and to the literary culture in which Martignac was writing, in which women played a significant role, in which readers were not necessarily ‘savant’ and in which translators took certain liberties, privileging the tastes of the receiving culture over adherence to the perceived sanctity and erudition of the ancient world.

b) *Galant* presences

In the last forty years of the seventeenth century, there was a surge of interest in Ovid’s poetry of sentiment – both the more discreet *Amores* and the more scandalous *Ars Amatoria* – that assimilated it into the *galant* aesthetic. The cultural phenomenon of *galanterie* that was emerging at this time explored new means of interaction between the sexes, with an interest in conversation, manners and poetry. This new form of *galanterie* epitomised a worldly cultured elite, and moved away from the old meaning of the word, which had emphasised seduction and less convivial confrontations between the sexes, as indeed, the position of the adjective makes evident, Viala says: ‘le galant homme est un homme très poli, l’homme galant un polisson’.⁹⁰ The elegiac Roman poets – Ovid, Tibullus and Propertius – were preferred by members of these cultural circles; the considerable attention paid to Ovid’s love poetry suggests that it was seen to represent aspects of the *galant* aesthetic. Ovid’s love poems turned communication with women into a literary form, thus proving assimilable into this social and aesthetic mode. For the first time, considerable attention was paid to Ovid’s love poetry, evident from the translations of the *Amores*, by Thomas Corneille, Nicolas Villennes and Jean Barrin,⁹¹ and the *Ars Amatoria* by Michel de Marolles, Le Président Nicole and Louis Ferrier de la Martinière.⁹² Corneille’s ‘élégies’

⁹⁰ Alain Viala, ‘D’une politique des formes: la galanterie’, *Dix-septième siècle*, 183 (1994), 143-151, p.143.

⁹¹ Thomas Corneille, *Pièces choisies d’Ovide traduites en vers français* (Paris, G. de Luynes, 1670); Nicolas Villennes, *Les Élégies choisies des amours d’Ovide* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1668); Etienne de Martignac, *Les Œuvres d’Ovide divisées en neuf tomes, traduction nouvelle* (Lyon, H. Mollin, 1697); Jean Barrin, *Les Épîtres et toutes les élégies amoureuses d’Ovide* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1676).

⁹² Michel de Marolles, *L’art d’aimer d’Ovide de la traduction de Michel de Marolles* (Paris: Pierre Lamy, 1660); Le Président Nicole, *L’Art d’aimer d’Ovide traduit en vers français* (Paris: Sercy, 1668); Louis Ferrier de la Martinière, *Préceptes Galants: poème* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1678); an anonymous *L’Art d’aimer d’Ovide, ou la meilleure manière*

combined extracts from the *Amores* and the *Heroides*, demonstrating that these love letters, which had previously been appreciated for their moral and rhetorical features, were now incorporated into an aesthetic of sentiment. With the exception of that of Marolles – which should perhaps come as no surprise – these translations were in verse and contained no lengthy or erudite commentary. These books were all duodecimo sized, with the exception of once again Marolles whose *Art d'aimer* was octavo, and the majority of these translations were first published by Claude Barbin, one of the most prolific publishers of 'galant' works in this period.⁹³ Ovid's poetry was now not only part of a culture of learning and scholarship, but also being brought into circles for whom poetry reading was a practise of leisure.

Recent criticism has established the importance of Ovid's poetry in the *mondain* and *galant* social culture of the late seventeenth century: Chatelain's study traces the transition of Ovid's reception from its place in the 'savant' culture to its role in the increasingly 'galant' literary environment; Génétiot considers the role of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in *mondain* culture;⁹⁴ Denis demonstrates the influence of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* on *galant* conceptions of love;⁹⁵ and Loubère argues for the important role played by this poem in these evolving tastes and practices.⁹⁶ Dejean has also argued for Ovid's assimilation into *galant* culture in her study on the figure of Sappho,⁹⁷ which includes analysis of the reception of Ovid's *Heroides*. These studies are principally focused on tracing the evolution of Ovid's poetry and its prominent role in *galant* culture. Building on some of their arguments, I will sketch out the presence of Ovid's poetry in the 'cultural category' of

d'aimer d'Ovide (Cologne: B. d'Égmond, 1696), which was reprinted two years later as *Ovide amoureux, ou l'Ecole des amants* (La Haye: Gaillard, 1698).

⁹³ See Gervais E. Reed, *Claude Barbin: libraire de Paris sous le règne de Louis XIV* (Geneva: Droz, 1974).

⁹⁴ Génétiot, 'Ovide au XVIIe siècle: les métamorphoses et la fable antique', pp. 52-56.

⁹⁵ Denis, p. 289-304.

⁹⁶ Loubère, 'Chapitre 2: 'Fortunes et influences de l'Ars amatoria au dix-septième siècle', pp. 39-68.

⁹⁷ Dejean, *Fictions of Sappho*, pp.78-96.

galanterie as this provides an essential foundation for my exploration of the *galant* characterization of the figure of Ovid treated in the following two chapters.

Interest in Ovid's sentimental and elegiac poetry can be dated to much earlier in the century. A cluster of translations – those from which Marolles distinguished himself, as described above – of Ovid's elegiac verse were produced from 1615-1625, including the collective translation by Du Perron, De la Brosse, Delingendes and Hedelin of Ovid's *Epîtres* in 1615,⁹⁸ and Bachet de Mézeriac's *Epîtres* in 1626,⁹⁹ which was the version that prompted Dejean to emphasise Ovid's prominence in 'galant' culture.¹⁰⁰ The *Heroides* were translated according to their elegiac and sentimental qualities, and interest in these qualities spread to other contemporary translations of Ovid's love poetry and his letters from exile, as is clear from Bellefleur's translation of *Les Amours d'Ovide* in 1621;¹⁰¹ Renouard's *L'art d'aimer* in 1625;¹⁰² and Binard's *Les Regrets d'Ovide* in 1625.¹⁰³ Ovid was seen as an elegiac poet. The influence of Ovid's letters of sentiment can be traced in their use in letter-writing manuals, in which extracts were quoted as models; this is most apparent, however, in the genre of love-letter correspondences which flourished in the second half of the seventeenth century – a genre associated with women, if not female-authored.

However, it was primarily Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* which inspired a wealth of rewritings in the latter part of the century, all exploring, to use Elena Russo's definition, the 'confluence between a new art of love and the practice of worldliness, the search for an

⁹⁸ *Les Epîtres d'Ovide, traduites en prose française par les srs Du Perron, De la Brosse, De Lingendes et Hédelin* (Paris: 1615).

⁹⁹ Claude de Bachet, Sieur de Mézeriac, *Les Epîtres d'Ovide traduites en vers français. Avec Des Commentaires fort curieux. Par Claude Gaspard Bachet, S. de Méziriac* (J. Tainturier: Bourg-en-Bresse, 1626).

¹⁰⁰ Dejean, *Fictions of Sappho*, p. 130.

¹⁰¹ L.-J. Bellefleur, *Les Amours d'Ovide, avec les réceptes aux dames pour l'embellissement de leur visage et les Epîtres de Sapho à Phaon et de Canacé à son frère Macarée, traduits en prose française...* (Paris: J. Petit-Pas, 1621).

¹⁰² Nicolas Renouard, *L'art d'aimer fidèlement traduit par le sieur Nasse divisé en trois livres avec les remèdes contre l'amour* (Lyon: J. Lautret, 1625).

¹⁰³ Jean Binard, *Les Regrets d'Ovide, traduits en prose française* (Paris: H. Sara, 1625).

innovative *modus vivendi* between the sexes and a redefinition of the passions in the social space' crucial to *galanterie*.¹⁰⁴ Denis has argued that Ovid had a privileged influence:

Le modèle ovidien – moins celui des *Métamorphoses* que de *l'Art d'aimer* et des *Remèdes à l'amour* – s'impose à partir des années 1650, et durablement jusque vers 1685, comme l'archi-texte fondateur suscitant versions et adaptations de toute nature, en vers comme en prose.¹⁰⁵

She has examined how the *Art d'aimer* and the *Remèdes contre l'amour* were imitated and reformulated in a wide range of genres from the middle of the century until the 1690s and influenced emblem books and almanachs.¹⁰⁶ These poems – the *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia amoris* – had never been so present or embraced so enthusiastically.

And yet, the more refined aspects of the *galant* aesthetic, which cultivated the polite and respectful treatment of women, building on the ethos of *honnêteté*, were somewhat at odds with the flagrant sensuality and licence exhibited by Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, the poem long associated with illicit love and obscenity, as attested by Bayle's comments analysed in the first chapter, and indeed, by the stories surrounding Ovid's exile. Many of the *galant* translations of Ovid's love poetry, which we will explore in the next chapter, signalled their distance from this *licence*, explaining that they had to refine certain qualities of Ovid's verse. Sometimes, however, the more erotic aspects of Ovid's writing were emphasised, or even celebrated. And yet, this very tension – between a refined *galanterie* and a licentious *galanterie* – was central to the cultural phenomenon. Viala argues that 'la galanterie licencieuse [...] n'est pas tant un contre-modèle qu'une autre facette du phénomène'.¹⁰⁷ As we will see, conceptions of 'Ovide' alternate between these two sorts of *galanterie*; his translations are expurgated and refined, or their rhetoric of pleasure maximised fully; and

¹⁰⁴ Elena Russo, 'Stéphanie Loubère, L'Art d'aimer au siècle des Lumières', *H-France Review*, 10 (2010), 258-261, p. 259.

¹⁰⁵ Denis, *Le Parnasse galant*, p. 289.

¹⁰⁶ See *Ibid.* pp. 290-304.

¹⁰⁷ Viala, 'Chapitre 7: Les deux galanteries', *La France galante*, pp. 203-205, p. 204.

sometimes it is this very duality that is examined and exploited, as ‘Ovide’ offers the opportunity to negotiate between the two aspects of the phenomenon.

Building on these critics’ observations, I will add the *galant* figure of ‘Ovide’ to the list of *galant* versions and reworkings of Ovid’s poetry. I will argue in subsequent chapters that the persona used in Ovid’s love poetry allows ‘Ovide’ to be constructed as a *galant* figure in the prefatory material attached to translations of his poetry, in the novels and plays about him, and indeed in these translations themselves where Ovid is himself ventriloquised into a *galant* narrator. Other elegiac poets, such as Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius were also favoured by those interested in the *galant* and modern aesthetic. However, in the following chapters I will explore why Ovid’s persona in particular should appeal to this cultural movement.

c) *Mythologie galante*

It was not just Ovid’s love poetry that played a key role in *galanterie*. Génétiot has demonstrated that the *Metamorphoses* also provided material for the *galant* salon poems written on the theme of metamorphosis. This ‘trend’ was established by the poet Vincent Voiture,¹⁰⁸ in the salon of Madame de Rambouillet, and taken up by Claude de Malleville, Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant, and Charles Cotin.¹⁰⁹ Later, in the 1670s, there were two versions of the *Metamorphoses* which presented the text in a *galant* fashion. Between 1669 and 1672 Thomas Corneille published translations of the first six books of the *Metamorphoses*; the serial nature of their publication also made them more easily assimilated into *mondain* cultural circles.¹¹⁰ These were dedicated to the Dauphin; and the dedicatory *Epître* in the 1669 edition described Ovid as ‘le plus galant de tous les poètes’

¹⁰⁸ Vincent Voiture, ‘Métamorphose de Lucine en rose’, ‘Métamorphose de Julie en diamant’, ‘Métamorphose de Léonide en perle’, in *Œuvres* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1650), p. 268-70.

¹⁰⁹ Their poems were brought together in a collected edition by Charles Regnault: *Les Métamorphoses françaises recueillies par M. Regnault* (Paris: A. de Sommerville, 1641).

¹¹⁰ *Les Métamorphoses d’Ovide mises en vers français par Thomas Corneille* (Bks I-II Paris: C. Barbin, 1669; Bks III-IV, C. Barbin, 1670; Bks V-VI: G. de Luyne, 1672).

(*Epître au Dauphin*, np).¹¹¹ Corneille explains that the fables contain a moral lesson – ‘sous ces heureux déguisements, les plus hautes leçons se trouvent renfermées’ – and he reiterates this in the *preface* addressed ‘au lecteur’:

En effet quelles grandes utilités ne tire-t-on pas de la connaissance de la fable qui nous donne de si belles instructions de morale en nous apprenant à nous gouverner dans l’une et dans l’autre fortune, en détournant notre esprit des passions déréglées par les exemples qu’elle nous propose des malheurs arrivés à ceux qui s’y sont abandonnés. (*Préface*, np)

Corneille also suggests that he has changed Ovid’s verse to make his meaning clearer: ‘J’ai ajouté de temps en temps un vers ou deux qui expliquent ce qui a besoin de commentaire dans l’original’ (*Préface*, np) as ‘Ovide écrivit dans un temps où ces matières étaient si généralement connues qu’il lui suffisait d’en dire un mot pour le faire entendre’ (*Préface*, np). And yet, Corneille does not burden this version with commentary or explanation; instead, his glossing takes place within the verse itself, and, more importantly, he emphasises that this explanation makes his text accessible to a wider *mondain* reading public. When discussing the illustrations, he writes: ‘cet ornement aura peut-être quelque agrément pour les Dames, en faveur de qui principalement cette traduction a été formée’ (*Préface*, np). These intended readers place this translation within a *galant* and *mondain* aesthetic in which female readers played a central role, distinguishing his version of the *Metamorphoses* from those of Du Ryer, Renouard and even Marolles.

A few years later, Isaac de Benserade, better known for the *livrets* he wrote for court ballets,¹¹² produced a version of the *Metamorphoses* written in ‘rondeaux’: *Les Métamorphoses d’Ovide en rondeaux* (1676).¹¹³ This was also dedicated to the Dauphin and similarly claims to have an educative purpose:

¹¹¹ The court embraced the *galant* aesthetic. See Viala, *La France galante*, p. 85

¹¹² See Georgia J. Cowart, *The Triumph of Pleasure: Louis XIV and the Politics of Spectacle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 115. See also *Benserade: Ballets pour Louis XIV*, ed. by Marie-Claude Canova-Green, 2 vols. (Toulouse: Société de littératures classiques, 1997).

¹¹³ Isaac de Benserade, *Les Métamorphoses d’Ovide en rondeaux* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1676).

En attendant que loin des voluptés
Il puisse un jour par des coups mémorables
Exécuter de grandes vérités
Qu'il se promene ici parmi les fables (*Rondeau redoublé au roi*, np).

In the 'Rondeau redoublé pour la conclusion de l'ouvrage', Benserade says that as well as educating the Dauphin, he also wanted to entertain him: 'et je voulais amuser ce Dauphin'. Chatelain has convincingly shown that this *galant* poem constitutes a new rendition of mythology as 'une mythologie galante'.¹¹⁴ And indeed, this version, like that of Corneille, is devoid of annotation, interpretation and explanation, except those which are embedded in the *rondeau*; Benserade also added stories which do not come from Ovid, and suppressed others according to his preference. Playful *badinage* runs through Benserade's poem where both the 'Privilège du roi' and the 'errata' are also written in *rondeaux*. The short moral offered at the end of each fable recalls Aesop, and is a far cry from the lengthy explanations of Renouard and Du Ryer; instead it offers an elliptical moralisation – one that Chatelain defines as *galant*, 'une forme galante de l'ancienne moralisation ovidienne'.¹¹⁵

Chatelain and Génétiot both argue that La Fontaine was the most self-conscious inheritor of the Ovidian style and mythology. Tracing Ovid's influence on La Fontaine and others would require another project entirely – suffice to say that this influence is evident in various forms: including the themes of the poems *Adonis* and *Le songe de Vaux*; the *libertinage* of the *Contes*; and the direct use of myths from the *Metamorphoses* in the *Fables*, such as in 'Philémon and Baucis' and the 'Filles de Minée'.¹¹⁶ The episodic nature of the *Metamorphoses* also meant it could be divided into separate stories, easily detached from the main narrative; and as is evident from Ovid's influence on La Fontaine's *Contes*, individual myths could be singled out and retold. The number of theatrical adaptations of

¹¹⁴ Chatelain, 'La mythologie galante de Benserade', pp. 365-405.

¹¹⁵ Chatelain, p. 400.

¹¹⁶ Jean de La Fontaine, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Jean-Pierre Collinet and Pierre Clarac, 2 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 2004-2007).

Ovid's mythological subjects is striking: myths from the *Metamorphoses* were used in ballet and opera – genres which were also closely entwined with *galanterie*, and they proved popular at court and in Parisian theatres.¹¹⁷

Ovid's place in *galant* culture was far-reaching and complex: it can be traced in love-letter correspondences; it lay in the translations and versions of his love poetry; it can be seen in the assimilation of his mythology into a *galant* mode through the genres of poetry, opera-ballet, and fable. In the following chapters I will show that it can also be perceived in the very construction of the figure 'Ovide' as a *galant* poet.

**

This chapter has demonstrated the role of editors and translators in determining which of Ovid's poems were read, and how. I have argued that this shaped conceptions of the poet, as Ovid was so closely bound to the various different editions – through his name in the title, portraits included on the frontispiece, and the presence of *Vitae* or *Vies* in the prefatory material. 'Ovidius' and 'Ovide' were not stable entities but products of editors and publishers; of theologians, rhetoricians and scholars; of poets, artists and translators. Their role took precedence, while the Roman poet was pushed into the position of narrator, telling the story according to the intentions, tastes and desires of the immediate authority. Even when the text was printed in Latin – which might suggest less room for change than a translation – it was expurgated, modified and laden with interpretive commentary that intervened directly in the experience of reading. In translation, Ovid's words were mediated through a different language: this ranged from 'faithful' prose renditions to the loose

¹¹⁷ Such as: Gabriel Gilbert's *Amours de Diane et d'Endimion, tragédie* (Paris: G. de Luyne, 1657), first performed: Hôtel de Bourgogne, 1657; Pierre Corneille's *Andromède* (Paris: C. de Sercy, 1651), first performed: Petit-Bourbon, January, 1650; Claude Boyer's *Amours de Jupiter et de Semele* (Paris: G. de Luynes, 1666), first performed: Théâtre du Marais, January, 1666; and Jean-Baptiste Molière's *Amphitryon* (Paris: J. Ribou, 1668), first performed: Théâtre du Palais-Royal, January, 1668.

versions of the burlesque ‘travestissements’. After all this intervention and mediation, ‘Ovidius’ / ‘Ovide’ was necessarily a various, hybrid creature.

And yet, the changes and developments in how this Roman poet was read and comprehended were not arbitrary or hermetic: instead these readings usually reveal the trends and mentality of the period, and so Ovid was rendered Christian and moral, or learned and historical according to the context. I would like to focus on the occasions when Ovid was seen to be the model or origin of a particular movement. We have seen two examples in this chapter: Renaissance scholars suggest that Ovid was conceived of as the ‘archetypal’ exile poet, and critics working on the late seventeenth century suggest that his love poetry was an ‘archi-texte fondateur’ of aspects of the *galant* movement. In the next chapter, I want to explore further these questions of identification by looking at the translations of Ovid’s poetry produced throughout the century, considering how translators constructed Ovid in the discourses and prefatory material attached to their work. I will explore what an ancient Roman poet might be doing, in the case of *galanterie* in particular, as an archetype for a movement self-consciously concerned with turning away from ancient models.

CHAPTER THREE

Ovid in translation: the uses of ‘Ovide’ in translators’ prefaces

In the previous chapter, we explored how any notion of ‘Ovidius’ or ‘Ovide’ that comes from a printed edition of Ovid’s work – whether from the use of his name on the title, the presence of a *Vita* or *Vie* in the prefatory material, or images used on the frontispiece – is inflected by the editor, translator or printer. We encounter an additional way in which ‘Ovide’ is modulated by later writers when we turn to translators’ prefaces. The figure of ‘Ovide’ often crept into the discourse of the translator in which the translator described his own craft and discussed his own translation. The author might be used metonymically as a figure for his work: *Ovid is dressed in French clothes; Ovid is speaking the French tongue* or fleshed out as an individual with intent and character: *If Ovid had been alive now, he would have written in this style*. In both cases ‘Ovid’ is not used to criticise or analyse *his* work – its ideas, style, importance – but rather the figure ‘Ovid’ is being used by the translator to explore his own aesthetic affiliations, delineate his own role, and describe the very process of translation.

In the chapter, ‘Translating an author’, in his study, *The Poetry of Translation* (2011), Matthew Reynolds treats precisely this phenomenon at it occurs in early modern English translations of the classics by seventeenth-century writers, such as John Denham and John Dryden.¹ He argues that the ‘author’ conceived of in this way is another metaphor for the act of translation itself. He quotes Denham’s preface to his translation of Book II of the *Aeneid*, *The Destruction of Troy* (1656) in which Denham hopes ‘to do Virgil less

¹ Matthew Reynolds, ‘Chapter 14: ‘Translating an author’, in *The Poetry of Translation: from Chaucer and Petrarch to Homer and Logue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 121-126.

injury than others have done'.² The translator remains polite, not wanting to harm his ancient poet. Denham then claims to allow Virgil to speak 'not only as a man of this Nation, but as a man of this age' (*Preface*, np), so that having given the 'author' a plausible shape and character, he can also make assumptions about his writing processes and style. As Reynolds notes, this offers the translator a certain licence, because what he claims to be the intentions of the classical author are tempered by his own aesthetic stance. The authority of the author-figure is exploited to justify the intentions and style of his translator. The result, therefore, could be somewhat Narcissus-like, as each translator might fashion the classical poet in his own image – a criticism made by eighteenth-century translator, William Cowper, in the preface to his translation of *The Iliad and Odyssey of Homer* (1791):

It is commonly received that a translator should imagine to himself the style which his author would probably have used, had the language into which he is rendered been his own. A direction which wants nothing but practicability to recommend it. For suppose six persons, equally qualified to translate the same Ancient into their own language with this rule to guide them. In the event it would be found that each had fallen on a manner different from that of all the rest and by probable inference it would follow that none had fallen on the right.³

A possible outcome, as Cowper shows disparagingly, could be lots of different versions all claiming to be written in the style the author would have used 'had the language into which he is rendered been his own'.

Reynolds' analysis is part of a wider study on the language used to discuss translation, so it is primarily concerned with how this author-figure works metaphorically to describe the craft of translation. In this chapter, I will consider metaphorical uses of Ovid both for what they might tell us about conceptions of translation, and for the tensions they reveal in evolving literary styles and tastes. I will look at the translations of the 1620s, the

² John Denham, *The Destruction of Troy, an essay upon the second book of Virgil's Aeneid, written in the year 1636* (London: Humphrey Moseley, 1656). *Preface*, np.

³ William Cowper, *The Iliad and Odyssey of Homer* (London: J. Johnson, 1791), *Preface*, np. Quoted in Reynolds, p. 122.

commentary-laden *Metamorphoses*, the *burlesque* translations of the middle of the century and the *galant* translations of the last few decades of the century.

While my main focus will be the metaphorical use of the author as sketched out by Reynolds, I will argue that in some particular cases – and their particularity will be important – the whole text of the *Vies d'Ovide* attached to certain translations can function in a similar way. The *Vies* do not provide metaphors for the process of translation; nevertheless, by characterizing 'Ovide' as a contemporary poet, many of them narrativise the image contained in such statements as *If Ovid were alive now, he would write like this* and *Ovid is dressed in French clothes*. The style and aesthetics that characterize 'Ovide' in these *Vies* actually set up the claims and intentions of the translator, and so these narratives serve a similar function to Reynolds' metaphorical author. Such identification also affords the translator the status of a poet, and a canonical one at that. In these *Vies* Ovid is an avatar of the translator-poet; the *Vie* functions not as a way of introducing Ovid's work, but the translator's.⁴

This tug between classical poet and translator was not simply semantic, and not only interesting for what it might reveal about the language of translation. The tension between ancient and modern poet expressed here was founded in very particular cultural sensitivities, especially in the later stages of the century, when the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* was most fraught. The question of whether the translator-poet was an avatar of Ovid, or 'Ovide' was an avatar of the translator-poet put at stake the much-debated and extremely topical question of the relative superiority of ancient or modern culture: which should dominate? As we saw in the previous chapter, Ovid occupied a prominent place in many of the genres considered to be 'moderne', such as the 'galant' styles of writing. In this chapter I will show that he occupied a similarly prominent place in other movements

⁴ Macdonald argues that 'Vies' were often written to serve the career of the biographer. Macdonald, pp. 9-21.

concerned with deviation from the dominance of Latin and from the authority of the classics. Despite the fracturing possibilities identified by Cowper (that we will get as many different Ovids as there are translators) there remain some common features in how ‘Ovide’ was conceived and used by all these translators. These constructions of ‘Ovide’ have surprising implications as they partially destabilize the very dichotomy between ancient and modern that these translators’ discourses are also simultaneously working to establish.

1. Rescuing Ovide, rescuing translation

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, translation had a somewhat uncertain status, although the early and mid-sixteenth century had seen important developments in the formulation of its practice and role. In 1539, Robert Etienne was the first to coin the French term, ‘traduire’, and in the following year Etienne Dolet published his manual, *La manière de bien traduire d’une langue en autre* (1540).⁵ Dolet developed Etienne’s stance, coining the terms ‘traduction’ and ‘traducteur’, and developed five tenants for producing good translations. However, Du Bellay’s influential treatise, *La défense et illustration de la langue française*, went some way to undermining these advances.⁶ Although not a direct attack,⁷ Du Bellay was nevertheless disparaging about translation,⁸ and argued that the development of the French language was not furthered by imitation of classical models that translation privileged.⁹ Du Bellay’s treatise had a powerful impact as negative associations

⁵ Etienne Dolet, *La Manière de bien traduire d’une langue en autre* (Paris: E. Dolet, 1540)

⁶ Joachim Du Bellay, *La défense et illustration de la langue française* [Paris: A. Angelier, 1549] (Paris: E. Sansot, 1905).

⁷ Michel Ballard in particular argues against its reception as a text wholly and primarily attacking translation. See Michel Ballard, *De Ciceron à Benjamin: traducteurs, traductions, réflexions* (Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille, 1992), p. 119.

⁸ ‘Je ne croirai jamais qu’on puisse bien apprendre tout cela des traducteurs, parce qu’il est impossible de le rendre avec la même grâce dont l’auteur en a usé; d’autant que chaque langue a je ne sais quoi propre seulement à elles dont si vous efforcez exprimer le naïf dans une autre langue, observant la loi de traduire, qui est n’espacer point hors des limites de l’auteur, votre diction sera contrainte, froide et de mauvaise grâce’. Du Bellay, p. 73-74.

⁹ ‘Toutefois ce tant louable labeur de traduire ne me semble moyen unique et suffisant pour élever notre vulgaire à l’égal et parangon des autres plus fameuses langues’. Ibid, p.71.

or comments about translation – its impossibility, its reductive nature – persisted in the works published towards the end of the century.¹⁰

In the early decades of the seventeenth century this began to change: Roger Zuber suggests that a shift began to occur between 1615-1626 centered, in part, around translations of Ovid. This ten-year period saw the publication of a cluster of translations of Ovid's elegiac poetry (*Tristes, Epîtres, Amours, l'Art d'aimer*), including the collective translation of Ovid's *Epîtres* by Du Perron, De la Brosse, Delingendes and Hedelin in 1615, Bellefleur's translation of the *Amours d'Ovide* in 1621; Renouard's *l'Art d'aimer* in 1625; Binard's *Les Regrets d'Ovide* in 1625; and Mézeriac's *Epîtres* in 1626.¹¹ These translators sought a new sort of practice that would demonstrate the creative and literary qualities of translation by privileging the capacities of the French language, techniques, which, as we have seen, were later somewhat criticized by Marolles.¹² Although translations of this sort came to be known as the *belles infidèles*, this was a criticism made by historian and grammarian Gilles Ménage of Pierre d'Ablancourt – an influential translator – and 'infidelity' was not a trait the translators paraded.¹³ Indeed, Mézeriac wrote an important treatise, *De la traduction* in 1635,¹⁴ in which he explains that translation should please the audience and so adhere to contemporary taste, but that an excellent translation should nonetheless be faithful to the sense of the original. Since this particular group emerged with a common interest in Ovid, in this section I will examine how they use this ancient poet to explore and promote their arguments about translation.

¹⁰ See Zuber, *Les Belles Infidèles*, p. 22.

¹¹ Conrart was the patron of this group; it overlapped with a circle of pastoral poets known as the 'illustres bergers'. For more on this see Zuber, p. 57 and Nicolas Schapira, *Un professionnel de lettres au XVIIe siècle: Valentin Conrart, une histoire sociale* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2003).

¹² Zuber describes terms this disagreement as 'l'affaire d'Ovide'. Zuber, p. 32.

¹³ When Ablancourt published his translation of Lucian in 1654, Gilles Ménage is said to have observed: 'Lorsque la version de Lucien de M. d'Ablancourt parut, bien des gens se plainquirent de ce qu'elle n'était pas fidèle. Pour moi je l'appelai la belle infidèle, qui était le nom que j'avais donné étant jeune à une de mes maitresses'. *Menagiana ou les bons mots et remarques critiques, historiques, morales et d'éruditions de M. Ménage, recueillies par ses amis*, 3rd edition, 4 vols. (Paris: F. Delaulne, 1715), II, p. 186.

¹⁴ *De la Traduction*, par Claude Gaspard Bachet, Sieur de Méziriac printed in *Menagiana ou les bons mots et remarques critiques, historiques, morales et d'éruditions de M. Ménage*, II, pp. 410-460.

In the *préface* to the 1615 translation of Ovid's *Epîtres*, Du Perron describes this translation as 'une nouvelle sorte d'imitation' and sets out what he understands this to mean: it has been adapted to suit contemporary tastes and show off the capacities of the French language:

Non pas que je me sois rien permis au désavantage d'Ovide; car je m'assure qu'on ne trouvera point de changement en ses épîtres, si ce n'est que j'ai accommodé à l'usage du temps et de la cour beaucoup de façons qui étaient, peut-être, de la bienséance et de la galantise de son siècle; mais qui aujourd'hui (comme tout se change) ne seraient pas trouvées de bonne grâce en venant d'un esprit si poli, et qui a la réputation d'avoir été si bon courtisan. [...] (*Préface*, np)

Du Perron argues that certain aspects of the poem are no longer suitable and for the sake of Ovid's reputation as 'un si bon courtisan', he has made a few 'accommodations'. However, the terms 'bon courtisan' and 'esprit si poli' which described 'Ovide' here function as descriptions of Du Perron's translation; and, therefore, by extension, of himself. But 'Ovide' is not simply Du Perron in disguise. Du Perron's interjection 'comme tout se change' written a few lines down from the word 'Ovide' might put the reader in mind of Ovid's poem about changing forms, the *Metamorphoses*. Whether consciously or not Du Perron reveals an associative sequence between the word 'Ovide' and the word 'changer', suggesting a sense of identification between his practice of translation and Ovid's poem about change; this suggests that however much 'Ovide' is depicted here in service of Du Perron's own aims, something he understands as Ovidian is governing his very practice. This association will be repeated, as we will see in the next section.

The translators also offer more explicit reasons for why Ovid's poetry should appeal. In the *préface* attached to his translation of Ovid's *Epîtres*, Mézeriac demonstrates his attention to the French language and style, 'j'apprendrais la peine de limer mes vers et de les réduire à la perfection qu'on requiert aujourd'hui en notre poésie'. He then justifies his reasons for translating Ovid:

Je crois qu'il n'y a personne qui révoque en doute, qu'Ovide ne soit le plus gentil et le plus ingénieux de tous les poètes grecs and latins, dont nous avons quelque connaissance; et je m'assure aussi que tous les bons esprits m'avoueront, qu'entre tous les ouvrages de ce grand poète, le livre de ses épîtres est celui le plus rempli de belles conceptions, le mieux limé, et le plus poli. Mais ce qui le rend plus recommandable, c'est qu'Ovide l'a fait sans exemple et a été le premier inventeur de cette sorte de poème. (*Préface au lecteur*, p. 73)¹⁵

He praises Ovid for his 'gentil' and 'ingénieux' style – we noted the association between Ovide and 'ingénieux' in the first chapter – suggesting that this is best exemplified in the *Heroides*. He then argues that the main reason Ovid should be translated is that he was the first to produce work in this genre, as 'le premier inventeur de cette sorte de poème'. Mézeriac argues that Ovid's text needs translating because it was the first of its kind. Here too we find a sense of identification between the translator who is trying out a new style and the (similarly) innovative ancient author. And where Ovid's verse is 'le mieux limé', Mézeriac is sure to 'limer' his own. Mézeriac, concerned with his own ingenuity and inventiveness, finds a kindred spirit in Ovid as a poet who was willing to test the boundaries of generic terrain.

It is not only generic boundaries that Ovid was considered to test and breach: the metaphors used in the prefatory material attached to Binard's 1625 translation of the *Tristia* demonstrate how Ovid's position as a chastised exile was recast in aesthetic terms. He was seen as being exiled out of one culture and welcomed into another, on the dividing line between old and new, between tradition and innovation. In his dedicatory letter to Louis XIII in *Les Regrets d'Ovide* (1625), Binard casts Ovid as a victim to be offered sanctuary in the court of the French King.

Il se promet que votre majesté ne dédaignera de jeter les yeux sur lui, bien qu'il ne paraisse qu'avec la robe dont son deuil la revêtu, et l'amené pour la dernière fois en France, il n'a point voulu que je l'aie déguisé d'un autre habit que celui avec lequel je l'ai trouvé en son exil. Il m'a permis seulement de lui faire parler français, afin de

¹⁵ Quoted from 'Les Epîtres d'Ovide traduites en vers français des commentaires fort curieux par Claude Gaspard Bachet, S. de Mézeriac', in *Commentaires sur les Epîtres d'Ovide par Messire Gaspard Bachet* (Paris: H. du Sauzet, 1715), pp. 69-457.

montrer que le plus violent de tous ses regrets, est de n'avoir plutôt changé la rigueur du climat où il était relégué au doux air de votre cour, pour vous témoigner, sire, la passion qu'il a d'honorer votre majesté. (*Au Roi*, np)

Binard also contrasts Augustus' cruelty with Louis XIII's protection:

Il s'accuse à ses pieds de flatterie, ayant attribué injustement tant de vaines louanges à son impitoyable Auguste; et la connaissance qu'il a de votre clémence, comme du plus précieux ornement de votre diadème, lui fait avouer que ce personnage qu'il se figurait comme un Dieu en la pensée, était autant indigne de ce beau nom, comme vous en méritez le titre en effet, accompagné de cette glorieuse et adorable qualité de Juste qui contient avec éminence toutes les autres vertus dont vous vous rendez admirable. (*Au Roi*, np)

The translator is depicted as rescuing Ovid from Augustus' tyranny and transporting him to France. Translator becomes a hero, France becomes a haven, and translation into the French language is cast as a refuge.

The implications of these metaphors can be explored in more depth if read alongside some of the descriptions of exile in Ovid's *Tristia*. Firstly, Ovid pictures his home in Rome as a sanctuary. He sends the first book back from Tomis to his own home to find refuge amongst its 'brothers' on his bookshelf:

cum tamen in nostrum fueris penetrale receptus
contigerisque tuam, scrinia curva, domum
aspicies illic positos ex ordine fratres
But when you find refuge in my sanctuary, reaching your own home, the round
book-cases, you will behold there brothers arranged in order. (*Tristia*, I,1,105-108)

When Binard makes France the haven for Ovid's poems he thus reverses the image of the *Tristia*: France replaces Rome. Secondly, the motif of linguistic isolation pervades Ovid's exile poetry, particularly in Book Five of the *Tristia*. In *Tristia* V.10 Ovid laments his difficulties in being surrounded by a people whose language he does not speak: people laugh when he tries to communicate with them and he thinks they are talking malevolently about him in words he cannot understand.

Et rident stolidi verba Latina Getae

meque palam de me tuto mala saepe loquuntur
fortisan obiciunt exiliumque mihi

The Getae laugh stupidly at Latin words, and in my presence they often talk maliciously about me in perfect security, perhaps reproaching me with my exile.
(*Tristia* V. 10, 38-40)

As the outsider, then, rendered stupid by his lack of comprehension, Ovid is stripped of his own culture, so that he feels himself to be the barbarian: ‘barbarus hic ego sum, qui non intellegor ulli’/ ‘Here I am the barbarian because I am understood by nobody’ (*Tristia*, V. 10, 37). By making him speak the language of the country into which he is being welcomed, Ovid is saved from his isolated state of ‘barbarity’ and the new language, French, is registered as the ‘civilised’ tongue which Ovid now speaks.

The laudatory poems attached to Renouard’s translation of the *Metamorphoses* – which was first printed in 1606 and demonstrates similar concerns about the French language and translation – contains more explicit echoes of these motifs from the *Tristia*.¹⁶ Jean Delingendes writes an ‘Élégie pour Ovide’ in which the opening lines lament Ovid’s unjust exile:

Ovide, c’est à tort que tu veux mettre Auguste
Au rang des immortels
Ton exil nous apprend qu’il était trop injuste
Pour avoir des autels

Aussi t’ayant banni sans cause légitime [...]

Emphasising that ‘Ovide’ is an innocent and defenceless victim works to legitimise the translation by exonerating Ovid of any misconduct or fault. The criticism of Augustus gathers momentum:

Et vraiment il fallait que ce fût un barbare
De raison dépourvu
Pour priver son pays de l’esprit le plus rare
Que Rome ait jamais vu.

¹⁶ Nicolas Renouard, *Les Métamorphoses d’Ovide traduites en prose française*.

Auguste is now the one to be described as ‘barbare’ for being so uncultured as to banish a poet with such a ‘rare esprit’ from his city. And even the Getic people – the original ‘barbarians’ in this story – are now sympathetic, seeing the ‘nymphes’ that have followed Ovide from Rome:

Eux qui n’ont rien d’humain que la forme de l’homme
Les voyant en ces lieux
Croyaient avec raison qu’on eut banni de Rome
Les hommes et les Dieux

Ce fut lors que leur âme autrefois impassible
Et sans nulle amitié
Apprit en leur école à devenir sensible
Aux traits de la pitié

As the country that has had the sense to welcome Ovid, France becomes the epitome of culture – contrasted all the more strongly with ungrateful Rome:

Mais Rome en te chassant s’est tant montrée ingrate [...]

Fais donc ce qu’il ordonne et puis que c’est la France
Qu’il t’a voulu choisir
Permits que la raison t’ôte la souvenance
De ton premier désir

Et de fait qu’aujourd’hui la France est embellie
De tant de doux esprits
Que selon ton mérite elle rend l’Italie
Digne de ton mépris

‘Italie’ here refers to Ancient Rome, but is also, I think, intended to evoke contemporary Italy and stoke the fires of a cultural rivalry between the two countries which had long been active during the Renaissance.¹⁷ French culture and language are superior to those of Italy, both past and present.

¹⁷ See Marc Fumaroli, ‘Les Abeilles et les araignées’ in *La Querelle des anciens et des modernes XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles*, ed. by Anne-Marie Lecoq (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), pp. 7-218.

The use of the word ‘barbare’ also had a more recent intertext. The second chapter of Du Bellay’s *Defence et illustration de la langue française*, is entitled, ‘que la langue française ne doit être nommée barbare’: these poets are alluding both to Ovid’s own assertions in his *Tristia* and, perhaps, to the comments made by Du Bellay. Like Du Bellay, they are arguing that the French language is not ‘barbare’ (indeed, it is the opposite), but unlike Du Bellay, they are showing that it is particularly as a translation of Latin that the French language transcends this trait: the reference thus serves pointedly to defend both French and the practice of translation.

Similar motifs run through the second poem in the prefatory material by Pierre Motin, entitled *A Monsieur Renouard sur la traduction des Métamorphoses d’Ovide*:

Doux et subtil Ovide, âme la plus polie
Qui jamais apparut dans l’ingrate Italie
Ovide malheureux
Te voilà, pour l’amour, loin du bel air de Rome
Banni par un Tyran, qui son âge consomme
De sa fille amoureuse

Aux champs déserts ou l’Istre étend son froid rivage
Ne parle plus Ovide, en Sarmate sauvage
Puis que si doctement
L’éloquent Renouard, cher souci de Mercure
De ta métamorphose en ses fables obscure
Se fait le truchement

Instead of saying that Ovid no longer has to speak Latin, Motin emphasises the sheer scope of Renouard’s rescue by suggesting that Ovid no longer has to speak as a savage ‘Sarmate’, no longer has to speak as a ‘barbarian’. After the expression ‘ne parle plus’ readers might logically expect an allusion to Ovid as a Roman who wrote and spoke Latin. Replacing ‘Romain’ with ‘Sarmate’ thus also works to imply the ‘barbarity’ of the Roman tongue, further emphasising Renouard’s skill in translating it into ‘civilised’ French.

The images used here describe the process of translation into French as a civilising, refining gesture, of saving Ovid from the barbaric nature of his fate in Tomis. These images work intertextually with the language Ovid himself uses to describe his experience of isolation. By appropriating Ovid's images, the creativity of these poets lies not only in their rendering into French the Latin words of Ovid's poetry, but also in working his images into the language they use to talk about their craft. At stake is an argument about the role of translation: casting translation as an act of rescue promotes, defends and advocates the practice itself, in turn rescuing translation. The exile at the heart of Ovid's personal history is exploited metaphorically to serve both the art of translation in general and to defend the particular translations these *préfaces* introduce. However, this is more than rhetorical flourish: the identification of Ovid as being physically outside Rome and transportable to France reveals a deeper sense of Ovid as on the fringes not only of his own empire, but also his own time. In the following sections, I will explore how this tradition of locating Ovid on a liminal point between antiquity and modernity is reworked in interesting and surprising ways by translators concerned primarily – and polemically – with contemporary taste and aesthetics, with the *Moderne* over the *Ancien*.

2. Metamorphosing the Metamorphoses: *Ovide burlesque*

In the third volume of *Les Parallèles des anciens et des modernes: en ce qui regard la poésie* (1692),¹⁸ Charles Perrault identifies three types of writing that he considers unique to contemporary culture: 'les opéra, les poésies galantes et le burlesque. Il faut convenir que ces genres de poésie sont nouveau et n'ont point été connus de toute l'Antiquité' (p. 280-281). These 'genres de poésie' epitomise the best of modern cultural production: 'souffrez

¹⁸ Charles Perrault, *Parallèles des anciens et des modernes, en ce qui regard la poésie, tome troisième* (Paris: J. B. Coignard, 1692).

donc que nous en faisons honneur aux modernes et qu'il passe pour constant qu'on leur doit les Opéra, les poésies galantes et le burlesque' (p. 303). Perrault's *Parallèles* was a polemical intervention written at the height of one of the central cultural debates of this period, the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, the first volume of which was composed in 1688 in response to the backlash his provocative poem, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*, had unleashed a year earlier.¹⁹ This *querelle* was, broadly, a controversy over the place and authority of the classics in contemporary culture, and the *Modernes*, of which Perrault was a key figure, tended to question the authority of classical models and favour the cultural progress of the present culture; whereas the partisans of the *Anciens*, such as Boileau, tended to champion the learning and culture of the ancient world. However, the battle-lines were often less clear-cut than the dichotomy in the title might suggest:²⁰ some key contributors to the *querelle*, such as Bouhours, resisted taking a clear stance, and often the views of even the most extreme *querelleurs* were nuanced and complex.²¹ Furthermore, what was meant by 'ancient' and by 'modern' was at times less defined than the temporal categories might suggest: for example a distinction could be made between Augustan Rome, which was perceived as more modern and civilized, and the barbarous pre-historical Homeric era.

Building on some of the recent criticism of the *querelle*, which has been interested in troubling the perceived dichotomy between ancient and modern, such as the study by Norman and the edited collection by Grande and Nédélec, I will examine the porous nature of these temporal categories and locate a more precise distinction between Ovid and

¹⁹ Following Perrault's poem, *anciens* reacted: Hilaire-Bernard de Longepierre published his *Discours sur les anciens* (Paris: P. Aubouin, 1687) which he dedicated to Perrault, and Jean de La Fontaine, his *A M. l'évêque de Soissons* (Paris: A. Pralard, 1687).

²⁰ The opposition named in the title of the *querelle* is endogenous: Gabriel Guéret had published a text entitled *La Guerre des auteurs anciens et modernes* (Paris: T. Jolly, 1671) and François Callières, *Histoire poétique de la guerre des anciens et des modernes* (Paris: P. Aubouin, 1688).

²¹ See my final chapter for a discussion of Bouhours.

different Augustan poets, such as Virgil.²² I will explore this interweaving of past and present by considering the place of this ancient poet within the two ‘genres de poésie [...] qui n’ont point été connus de toute l’antiquité’: ‘le burlesque’ and ‘la poésie galante’.

Although the vogue for *belles infidèles* translations began to wane in the middle of the century, tensions persisted and translation remained a forum for debates about style and taste, occupying a central place in the ongoing *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*.²³ The middle of the century was marked by a proliferation of satirical or parodic rewritings of canonical texts from the ancient and modern worlds, ‘travestied’ into a verse style defined as ‘burlesque’. *Burlesque* versions of ancient works, pioneered by Scarron’s *Virgile travesti* (1648-53) and Furetière’s *L’Enéide travesti* (1649),²⁴ are characterized by anachronisms, bathos and the extensive use of *argot*, resulting in a humour that exploits the ridiculous.²⁵ There were two versions of the *Metamorphoses*: *L’Ovide Bouffon, ou les Métamorphoses travesties en vers burlesques*, by Louis Richer (1649-50), and Charles Dassoucy’s *L’Ovide en belle humeur* (1650) which I will treat here; and two of the *Ars Amatoria*, the *L’Hérato-technie, ou l’Art d’aimer d’Ovide* (1650) and Du Four de la Crespelière’s *L’art d’aimer d’Ovide avec les remèdes de l’amour nouvellement traduits en vers burlesques* (1662), which I will treat in the last section of the chapter.

Burlesque versions of ancient poems function as parodies that mock or undermine the original work that they ‘travesty’. As Claudine Nédélec argues in her study, *Les Etats et Empires du Burlesque* (2004), many *burlesque* works are ‘des travestissements à fonction dévalorisante [...] des textes canoniques’.²⁶ Nédélec argues that this genre played a crucial

²² *La galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédélec; and Larry Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient*.

²³ See Zuber, ‘Chapter 5: Disparition du genre (après 1653)’, pp. 130-161.

²⁴ Scarron *Le virgile travesti* (Paris: T. Quinet, 1648-1653). There were two other burlesque versions of the Aeneid: the anonymous *L’enfer burlesque ou le sixième de l’énéide travestie et Dédie à mlle de Chevreuse* (Anvers: B. Moret, 1649) and Antoine Furetière, *L’Enéide travesti: livre quatrième contenant les amours d’Enée et de Didon* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1649).

²⁵ See Claudine Nédélec, ‘Argot et burlesque au XVIIe siècle’, in *Poétiques du burlesque, Actes de Colloque International du Centre de Recherches sur les littératures modernes et contemporaines de l’Université Blaise Pascal*, ed. by D. Bertrand (Paris: H. Champion, 1998), pp. 345-357.

²⁶ Claudine Nédélec, *Les Etats et Empires du Burlesque* (Paris: H. Champion, 2004), p. 267.

role in the *querelle* as *burlesque* writers identified a hierarchy between ancient and new – one that was, in part, established by the educational canon – and then subverted it by undermining the superiority of the ancient model.²⁷ The burlesque *travestissements* identified the ridiculousness of the ancients, and in so doing, also charged the champions of those ancients with being ridiculous. In this respect, they can be said to intervene in the *querelle* by polemically undermining or questioning authority: both that of the ancients and of those who want to replace the ancients.²⁸ One of the ways the *burlesque* undermined ancient models was through self-conscious anachronism. This was not simply humorous, but also signalled the distance between ancients and moderns and identified the superiority of the latter: only the moderns knew how to master this style of writing. Indeed, as we have seen, the *burlesque* was claimed as an invention of the *Modernes* and considered as quintessentially contemporary by Perrault.

And yet, as Nédélec expertly explores, the relative qualities of ancient and modern within the *burlesque* genre are complex. One of the chief attacks against the ancients and their partisans that the *burlesque* launches is the charge of being *burlesque*, of being ridiculous: Perrault says of the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon in Homer's *Iliad*, 'n'est-ce pas du burlesque de la première espèce?'²⁹ There is a contradiction here: the *burlesque* is both a masterful modern style and a tool for revealing the very *burlesque* nature of the object it satirises. In other words, how can Homer be both *burlesque* and the *burlesque* be a modern invention, deployed to highlight the shortcomings of the ancients? Nédélec offers a solution for this contradiction by identifying two types of *burlesque*: whereas the *Modernes* use the *burlesque* genre with careful intelligence, the ancients are unintentionally *burlesque*:

²⁷ Ibid, p. 338.

²⁸ 'La parodie burlesque contient potentiellement aussi une vocation polémique, destinée à empêcher que ce succès n'en fasse une œuvre de référence; donc un modèle autorisé. Et les burlesques n'ont guère de respect soit pour les 'autorités' soit pour ceux qui veulent s'ériger en autorités nouvelles à la place des anciens'. Ibid, p. 339.

²⁹ Perrault, *Parallèles*, III, p. 301.

Tandis que les Anciens sont involontairement burlesques, par leur ignorance, par l'archaïsme de leur civilisation, par la grossièreté de leurs mœurs, les Modernes le sont 'par gentillesse d'esprit et de propos délibéré'.³⁰

I will argue that there might be one exception to this statement that ancient poets are 'involontairement burlesques': Ovid. As my analysis will suggest, when it comes to Ovid, there is a slightly different hierarchy than that which governs the knowingly ridiculous *Moderne* and the clumsily ridiculous *Ancien*, and this can be seen in the prefaces to the *burlesque* translations of his poetry. I first want to consider Charles Dassoucy's *Ovide en belle humeur*, and to start by looking at the frontispiece (fig. 6) attached to this poem.



Fig. 6 Frontispiece, C. Dassoucy, *L'Ovide en belle humeur* (Paris: Pépingué, 1653) 2nd éd.
Gravure: François Chauveau. Image: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

³⁰ Nédelec, *Les Etats et Empires du Burlesque*, p. 325.

The frontispiece attached to Dassoucy's *Ovide en belle humeur* is quite different to the frontispieces of Du Ryer and Renouard's editions analysed in the previous chapter – unsurprisingly so as it comes from an entirely different tradition. However, it still serves a similar function as a means of negotiating and asserting some of the concerns of the translation. Gone are references to antiquity (Apollo's lyre, the female figure, the classical columns) and instead we are presented with two men in a contemporary setting and dress. This engraving, and the illustrations that accompany each story of metamorphosis throughout Dassoucy's version, is by François Chauveau, one of the most highly skilled and prolific engravers of this period, illustrator of works by Corneille, Racine, and La Fontaine, of Scudéry's famous *Carte de Tendre*, and one of four engravers to illustrate Benserade's *Métamorphoses en rondeau* (1676) – his shrewd use of illustration should, then, not be underestimated.³¹ The seated figure is Ovid: the laurels on his head identify him as the classical poet. And standing is Dassoucy, showing Ovid his faithful portrait or image in the mirror. Chauveau thus implies that Dassoucy's translation of Ovid's poetry is similarly faithful. However, the seated figure, and the faithful mirror (or portrait) show that Ovid is modern – he is dressed in contemporary dress. Being faithful to Ovid then requires translating him according to modern aesthetics. The head of the seated figure also closely recalls the busts of the portraits we looked at in the previous chapter, attached to the erudite translations by Du Ryer and Renouard. And yet in Chauveau's engraving, the seated figure's head is looking in the opposite direction to those busts and Dassoucy's portrait, which faces the same direction as those of other translators, has replaced them. Chauveau shows that Dassoucy's faithful and modern translation is the righted interpretation of Ovid.

Similar arguments can be seen in the prefatory material attached to Dassoucy's work. In the laudatory poem by Pierre Corneille, *A Monsieur Dassoucy sur son Ovide en belle*

³¹ See Laurence Grove, *Emblematics and seventeenth-century French Literature: Descartes, Tristan, La Fontaine and Perrault* (Charlottesville: Rookwood Press, 2000).

humeur,³² Corneille suggests that Dassoucy has ‘disfigured’ Ovid for the sake of humour.

In the first stanza, Corneille considers what Ovid would make of this:

Que doit penser Ovide, et que nous peut-il dire,
Quand tu prends tant de peine à le défigurer,
Que ce qu’il écrivit pour se faire admirer,
Grâces à Dassoucy, sert à nous faire rire. (np)

The use of the two names in the first and last stanza distinguishes the two voices of original and translator. ‘Nous’ quite prominently recalls a contemporary reading public: Dassoucy is writing for them, and has disfigured Ovid to be ‘admired’ by them. In the next stanza, the importance of the contemporary aesthetic becomes clearer.

Il y trouve la gloire où son travail aspire;
Tu ne prends tant de soins, que pour mieux l’honorer;
De tant d’attraits nouveaux tu le viens de parer,
Que moins il se ressemble et plus chacun l’admire.

It is once this ‘Ovide’ has been adorned with ‘attraits nouveaux’ that ‘moins il se ressemble et plus chacun l’admire’. So has Ovid simply been changed, modernized, *travesti*? And yet, I think the final verses of Corneille’s poem offer a different direction of interpretation: they suggest that the source for this treatment lies in Ovid’s poem itself.

Corneille writes:

Sa plume osa beaucoup; et plantes, animaux,
Fleuves, hommes, rochers, éléments et métaux,
Par elle ont vue changer leurs êtres et leurs causes,

La tienne plus hardie a plus encore osé,
Puis que le grand auteur de ces Métamorphoses
Lui-même enfin par elle est métamorphosé.

³² The laudatory poem is signed ‘Corneille’ and assumed to refer to Pierre Corneille. See Claudine Nédélec, unpublished paper, “Prendre tant de peine à défigurer”: les métamorphoses burlesques’ given at *Metamorphosis: French Graduate Conference*, Oxford (27 Jan, 2012). She suggests Pierre Corneille might have been expressing his gratitude for Dassoucy’s musical contributions in his *Andromède*. I am grateful to conversations with Claudine Nédélec for this part of my argument.

Corneille is not simply suggesting that Ovid's voice has been suppressed and re-adorned, but also that there was something already transgressive in Ovid's poem, and in his writing of it – 'sa plume osa beaucoup'. Ovid's poem has already dared, is already 'hardie' and provocative – and this is at the heart of what the *burlesque* version is responding to: 'Puis que le grand auteur de ces métamorphoses/Lui-même enfin par elle est métamorphosé'. Metamorphosis does not serve a moral function, as we saw in Du Ryer's version, where he explained that the role of metamorphosis in Ovid's poem was to expose vice and provide moral instruction: 'mais ces changements fabuleux sont des instructions véritables qui font voir la difformité du vice et qui enseignent à l'éviter en même temps qu'elles les font haïr' (*Préface*, np). Instead, in Corneille's poem, metamorphosis is something that has disturbed and disrupted, that itself represents newness and change. Paradoxically, and just as Chauveau's engraving expressed, Corneille suggests that having 'disfigured' Ovid, Dassoucy is acting in the spirit of Ovid's own writing; Corneille identifies Dassoucy with Ovid.

This dynamic can be seen all the more clearly in the way Louis Richer constructs Ovide in the *préface* to his *burlesque* version of the *Metamorphoses*, published a year earlier: *L'Ovide Bouffon, ou les Métamorphoses travesties en vers burlesques* (1649). In Louis Richer's dedicatory letter, he suggests that instead of having betrayed Ovid's style by rendering him in *burlesque* verse, he has been faithful to the spirit of Ovid's translation. He suggests that the erudite mythologists have gone too far in their interpretations and lost the humorous spirit at the heart of Ovid's work.

Pour le regard d'Ovide, je ne crois pas lui faire tort de traiter en burlesque un sujet qui n'a rien de sérieux que dans l'esprit de nos mythologistes qui mettent toute leur étude à chercher un sens moral dans les pensées les plus chimériques de cet auteur et je tiens qu'il aurait employé ce même style pour débiter ses agréables rêveries, si le burlesque eut eu le même crédit à Rome de son temps, qu'il a maintenant à Paris. On ne doit donc pas m'accuser de l'avoir déguisé, puis qu'en métamorphosant les métamorphoses, je n'ai fait simplement que lui retourner son habit tout usé [...] (*Épître au Duc de Saint Aignan*, np.)

Richer suggests that Ovid would have written in the *burlesque* style if this had been as fashionable in Rome as it now is in Paris. The location identified here is specifically ‘Paris’; whereas the translations of earlier in the century stressed the linguistic identity of French and the national identity of France, Richer refines that identity to one that is Parisian. He suggests that *burlesque* humour is the most faithful style in which to render Ovid’s verse, and that the overly serious scholars are mistaken in their interpretations. He claims that he has not actually changed Ovid, but by ‘metamorphosing the metamorphoses’, has instead remained faithful to the spirit and intentions of Ovid’s verse. The implication is that he has not, indeed, *could* not change Ovid in a way that was unfaithful, because Ovid himself represents change. Once again, the translator identifies with Ovid and metamorphosis is a metaphor for translation. This image may have been in Du Perron’s mind when, as we saw above, he placed ‘Ovide’ so close to the verb ‘changer’; it was also present in Motin’s comment about Renouard’s poem we saw above:

L’éloquent Renouard, cher souci de Mercure
De ta métamorphose en ses fables obscure
Se fait le truchement

Translation is not something done to Ovid, but something that he already represents.

Translators, therefore, identify with ‘Ovide’ in particular. A distinct difference can be located between the language used in relation to Ovid and the language used in the prefatory material attached to the *burlesque* translations of Virgil’s *Aeneid*. In the prefatory material to Scarron’s *Virgile travesty* (1648) Tristan l’Hermite imagines Virgil’s anger if he were to see this poem:

Mon cher Scarron, Virgile enrage;
Et tout le monde est étonné
De voir son plus superbe ouvrage

En burlesque ainsi retourné.³³

In contrast, Corneille, as we have seen, suggests that Ovid would have approved of Dassoucy's rendition: 'Que doit penser Ovide, et que nous peut-il dire [...] il y trouve la gloire où son travail aspire'. In the laudatory poem introducing the anonymous *L'enfer burlesque ou le sixième de l'énéide travestie et dédiée à Mlle de Chevreuse* (1649), the poet describes Virgile as having been disguised:

Virgile, si je vous déguise,
Ce n'est pas que je vous méprise [...]³⁴

Where Richer claims that he did not disguise Ovid ('On ne doit donc pas m'accuser de l'avoir déguisé'), the anonymous poet commenting on *L'Enfer burlesque* suggests that this is precisely what Virgil has undergone: 'je vous déguise'. Likewise, in the dedicatory letter to his *Enéide travesti* (1649), Furetière emphasises that he has made changes to Virgil's original by using the satirical humour typical of the *burlesque*: 'J'ai suivi assez scrupuleusement mon auteur, hormis en quelques digressions que j'ai faites lors que l'humeur satyrique m'en a dit [...]'.³⁵ Furetière makes it clear that he has had to change Virgil to render him *burlesque*, unlike Ovid whom Richer claims would have written in the *burlesque* style had it been fashionable in Rome.

On no occasion in the *burlesque* editions of Virgil's poetry are there any suggestions that this is what Virgil would have wanted, that this is how he would have written if he were a contemporary or that his poetry itself has inspired the changes made by his translator. Throughout the prefatory material attached to Virgil's poems, the verb 'métamorphoser' is used to describe the craft of the *burlesque* translator, and, as I have argued, this is a term that strongly recalls Ovid. Critics argue that Ovid's *Metamorphoses*

³³ 'A Monsieur l'abbé Scarron sur son Virgile en vers burlesques, Epigramme par Tristan l'Hermite', in Scarron *Le virgile travesti*, np.

³⁴ Anon., 'A Monsieur Virgile sur son Enéide travestie et dédiée à Mlle de Chevreuse', in Anon., *L'enfer burlesque ou le sixième de l'énéide travestie et Dédié à mlle de Chevreuse*, np.

³⁵ 'A Madame ***', in Furetière, *L'Enéide travesti: livre quatrième contenant les amours d'Enée et de Didon*, np.

itself contained elements of parody as it subverts and plays with the traditional epic genre, exemplified by Virgil's *Aeneid*.³⁶ The *burlesque* poet's identification with Ovid is based on Ovid's own sense of parody and subversion and on his own attitude to tradition: Ovid does not represent change simply because he wrote a poem about changing forms, but because in doing so, he was changing generic and aesthetic traditions.³⁷ He was not an *ancien* to be derided for his ridiculousness by these poets, but one to be identified with for already having satirized the established cultural traditions.

Ovid's empathy is explicitly contrasted with Virgil's distaste for *burlesque* writing in Guéret's *Le Parnasse Réformé* (1669), a fantastical description of ancient and modern poets assembled together on Mount Parnassus, convoked by Apollo to review and reform 'tout le Parnasse'. Together, they discuss and define taste, style and literary practice. The first dialogues occur between ancient figures as they evaluate the translations of their work; in this discussion 'Virgile' and 'Ovide' consider the *burlesque* versions of their poetry. Guéret champions the *burlesque* as a modern genre using Ovid as a key advocate for this position; the ancient poet, *Ovid*, is Guéret's spokesperson. There can be no doubt that using ancient figures to criticize fellow ancient poets is a rhetorical device deployed by the *Modernes* in the later stages of the *querelle* – Fontenelle uses Socrates to criticise the ancients in the *Dialogue des morts*.³⁸ However, Guéret's 'Ovide' does more than criticize ancient writers and culture, is used as more than simply a historical witness well placed to betray his own time; instead, he is used to praise and extol modern tastes. If 'Virgile' represents ancient

³⁶ See Richard F. Thomas, 'Ovid's Reception of Virgil', in *A Companion to Ovid*, ed. by Peter E. Knox, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 294-307; and Peter E. Knox, *Ovid's Metamorphoses and the traditions of Augustan poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1986).

³⁷ Ovid has often been seen as synonymous with metamorphosis and this as a metaphor for translation and interpretation, see Sarah Annes Brown, *The Metamorphosis of Ovid: from Chaucer to Ted Hughes* (London: Duckworth, 1999); Duncan F. Kennedy, 'Recent receptions of Ovid' in *Cambridge Companion*, ed. by Hardie, pp. 320-335 and Charles Tomlinson, *Metamorphoses: Poetry and translation* (London: Carcanet, 2003). I show that in the case of the *burlesque* this identification goes deeper to the very *burlesque* nature of Ovid's parody of literature of his own culture.

³⁸ See Norman, p. 24.

values, 'Ovide' represents modern ones. Although he dislikes the *burlesque* translations of his own works, Guéret's Ovide asserts that Scarron's *Virgile travesti* is a masterpiece:

Oui, bien loin de fulminer des imprécations contre celui qui vous a travesti, vous avez des actions de grâces à lui rendre. Il a donné à votre *Enéide* dans le genre burlesque, le même rang qu'elle tient dans le sublime: c'est par son moyen que vous passez entre les mains du beau sexe qui se plait à venir rire chez vous; et style pour style, il a des grâces folâtres et goguenardes qui valent bien vos beautés graves et sérieuses. (p. 23-24)

In praising Scarron's book, 'Ovide' makes a case for female readership, and argues for the lightness of the *burlesque* style. These are serious claims, crucial to the aesthetic of the *Modernes*, and yet, they are placed in the mouth of Ovide.³⁹ Like Corneille and Richer, Guéret suggests that Ovid has an affinity with the *Moderne* stance because similar concerns can be found in his own poetry. Guéret's Ovide explains his personal preference for the *burlesque* genre (when it is done well, in the case of Scarron) as he is a fan of 'raillerie' and the 'plaisir' that poetry evokes. Having criticised the *burlesque* versions of his own work, he states:

Ne croyez pas néanmoins que je haïsse ce genre d'écrire; je sais qu'il a son mérite particulier et après tout je ne suis pas ennemi de la raillerie. Qu'on rie tant que l'on voudra; qu'on fasse le plaisir à la bonne heure, rien ne me plait davantage qu'une naïveté ingénieuse, mais je ne puis souffrir des bouffonneries fades et insipides [...] (p. 25)

The implication is that Ovid is no enemy to 'raillerie' and 'une naïveté ingénieuse' because such traits can also be found in his own work. Ovid's voice does not have to be subverted and forced to speak a *moderne* tongue; instead, this is a language that befits him, or at least, befits him more than it does Virgil. Rather than the ancient poet being used as a rhetorical device to criticise his own time for the benefit of the *Modernes*, this is an example of an ancient poet being used to *promote* contemporary writing styles. 'Ovide' occupies an unusual place: he is situated outside antiquity, exiled physically and temporally.

³⁹ Of this passage Nédélec writes: 'Se rendre agréable aux dames, éviter le sérieux et la gravité: les arguments sont loin de la plaisanterie [...]'. Nédélec, *Les Etats et Empires du Burlesque*, p. 320.

In her depiction of a utopian female-only *Parnasse*, Marie-Jeanne l'Héritier, niece of Charles Perrault and salonière, also singled Ovid out from other ancient poets, in her tribute to fellow salon writer, Madame Deshoulières, *Le Parnasse Reconnaissant ou le Triomphe de Madame Deshoulières* (1694).⁴⁰ In this text, the figure of 'Ovide' is at the intersection between two querelles: the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* and the related, but also distinct, *querelle des femmes*. L'Héritier describes Deshoulières' journey to an all-female *Parnasse*, and ancient and modern female writers are announced in a catalogue, with the ancients (such as Sappho) entering through one arch and the moderns (such as Scudéry and Villedieu) entering through another. Deshoulières is welcomed and joins this parade. Apollo then makes a speech praising female writers, and in particular Mlle de Scudéry. It is Ovide who is chosen by Apollo to guide Deshoulières:

Ovide parut. Ovide, comme vous savez ne fut point mis comme les autres hommes dans les Enfers; il était trop favori d'Apollon pendant sa vie pour en être séparé après sa mort [...] Ce fameux Romain qui fut toujours l'adorateur du beau sexe, fit entendre à Pluton qu'il venait de la part de ce roi du Parnasse, pour demander l'illustre Madame Deshoulières [...]. (p. 410)

As they pass through the *enfers*, they see a satirist being punished – none other than Nicolas Boileau, partisans of the *anciens* and detractor of women's writing.⁴¹ Apollo later announces:

Eh! Déeses, nous dit Apollon, qu'avez-vous? Ne vous inquiétez point des injures outrées dont vous accable ce nouveau Juvénal [Boileau] [...] je lui avais donné [...] une juste punition [...] je me suis fait un plaisir de le laisser tomber dans des obscurités embarrassantes [...]. (p. 420)

Boileau has been punished by being condemned to obscurity, forgotten by posterity. This text is a call to arms for women's equality: 'l'héroïne qui vient de prendre place parmi les muses n'est pas la seule qui mérite son sexe du moins en égalité avec celui des hommes'.

⁴⁰ Quotations taken from *Œuvres mêlées* (Paris: J. Guignard, 1696), pp. 404-424.

⁴¹ Nicolas Boileau, *Dialogues ou Satire X* (Paris: D. Thierry, 1694).

(p. 421) By using Ovid as guide, and sparing him the *enfes*, l'Héritier is suggesting that he is sympathetic the cause of both the *Modernes* and of women.⁴²

Not all *Modernes* were in favour of Ovid, Jean Desmarets de Saint Sorlin includes a very critical section on Ovid, in which he argues that contemporary poets far exceed Ovid's talents;⁴³ and some *Anciens*, such as Hilaire-Bernard de Longepierre, were quick to champion Ovid,⁴⁴ however, more often than not, *Modernes* expressed a certain empathy with Ovid. Even Perrault, a usually unforgiving critic of ancient culture, registers some ambivalence towards Ovid. In his poem, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* (1687), he suggests that Ovid (and Virgil) are better valued now than they were in ancient times:

Virgile, j'y consens mérite des autels,
Ovide est digne encore des honneurs immortels:
Mais ces rares auteurs qu'aujourd'hui l'on adore,
Etaient-ils adorés quand ils vivaient encore?
[...]
Tant on est amoureux des auteurs anciens.
Et malgré la douceur de sa veine divine,
Ovide était connu de sa seule Corinne.⁴⁵

Perrault paraphrases Martial's epigram to criticise how contemporary authors inflate the importance of the ancients, and yet this does not serve to denigrate the ancient poets, Ovid and Virgil, worthy of their immortal status.⁴⁶ Perrault further distinguished Ovid from other ancient poets in his *Parallèles des anciens et des modernes* (1688-97). This text is, as Nédélec describes, 'une véritable machine de guerre contre les anciens,' written at the

⁴² M.-J. L'Héritier went on to publish a translation of Ovid's *Heroides* in 1732, *Les épîtres héroïques d'Ovide* (Paris: Brunet fils, 1732).

⁴³ He includes a section entitled: 'Pour savoir si Ovide a eu l'esprit si brillant, que nul poète français ne puisse en approcher', in which he states, 'nous avons mêmes des héroïnes qui font en prose et en vers des lettres bien plus spirituelles et plus délicates que celles d'Ovide', in Jean Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin, *La Comparaison de la langue et de la poésie française avec la grecque et la latine* (Paris: L. Billaine, 1670), pp. 57-63, p. 57.

⁴⁴ Longepierre, *Discours sur les anciens*, pp. 136-139.

⁴⁵ Martial, *Epigrams*, Book V. 10: 'esse quid hoc dicam vivis quod fama negatur/Et sua quod rarus tempora lector amat? (1-2) [...] Norat Nasonem sola Corinna suum' (10): 'How can I explain why glory is refused to the living and so few readers like the work of their contemporaries; [...] Ovid was known only to his Corinna'.

⁴⁶ Longepierre reacted to this: 'je ne sais où Martial a pris des choses si hors d'apparence. [...] Quelle apparence que Corinne seule connût dans Rome cet heureux génie, et cette facilité admirable d'Ovide?' *Discours sur les anciens*, p. 136.

height of the *querelle*.⁴⁷ And yet, despite one of the characters, l'Abbé, being thought of as the most reliable and consistent mouthpiece for Perrault,⁴⁸ there is nevertheless a form of identification between the pro-*moderne* l'Abbé and the ancient poet Ovid. In Part III of the *Parallèles* the l'Abbé and le Président discuss Homer, Virgile and Horace; the Abbé is critical of them all. After this lengthy discussion, Le Président asks l'Abbé for his opinion of the elegiac poets – Ovide, Catulle, Propertius and Tibulle – to which the Abbé replies:

L'Abbé: Ces poètes-là sont excellents et surtout Ovide que j'aime de tout mon cœur. Je dis de lui et de Virgile ce qu'en disait un grand personnage que nous avons connu tous* "Virgile?" Disait-il, "C'est un divin poète. Ovide? C'est mon poète". (p.188)

A footnote attributes this quotation to Dante: 'Virgilius? Divinus poeta. Ovidius? Meus poeta' (p.188). Ever conscious of the polemical stance of his text, Perrault is sure to assert the superiority of the moderns: 'cependant, je trouve qu'ils se ressentent tous de leur antiquité, et qu'ils n'ont point parlé de l'amour qui est presque l'unique objet de leurs ouvrages avec cette délicatesse qu'on trouve dans les Modernes', arguing that they lack 'une certaine galanterie qui n'était point encore en usage chez les anciens' (p.189). However, the concession to Ovid is clear: 'surtout Ovide que j'aime de tout mon cœur'. Perrault's stance towards the ancients is usually one of critical judgement, and while some criticism is noted here, the Abbé (or Perrault) also acknowledges a sense of affinity: 'c'est mon poète'.

3. Ovide Galant

Perrault's list of 'poésies différentes de celles des anciens dans leur substance' (p. 280) not only mentions 'le burlesque', but it also includes 'les poésies galantes'. For Perrault,

⁴⁷ Nédélec, *Les Etats et Empires du Burlesque*, p. 322.

⁴⁸ Perrault claims in his *Préface* to Volume II: 'je crois être obligé d'avertir que je ne me rends responsable que des choses que dit l'Abbé, et non point de tout ce que dit le chevalier dans ce dialogue'. Perrault, *Parallèles*, II, np. See Norman, p. 238.

galanterie is a distinctly *Moderne* phenomenon, as it encapsulates the refined codes of behaviour, manners and taste and, in particular, the respectful and courteous treatment of women, demonstrated by contemporary elite cultural circles. On several occasions, Perrault suggests that the uncouth ancients are incapable of being *galant*.⁴⁹ Critics such as Viala and Norman emphasise the social and political aspects of this cultural category, arguing that it built upon the social model of *honnêteté* to epitomize qualities of the most fashionable and cultured elite. Aesthetically, *galanterie* espoused and championed many of the concerns of the *Modernes* as it sought to formulate new styles and genres. In this respect, it became an important frontline in the *querelle*. Norman argues that *galanterie*:

becomes the central battlefield in the brewing quarrel as the growing influence of *galanterie* is challenged by ancient apologists such as Racine and Boileau. And by the end of the quarrel, there is no doubt that it has come to represent, in terms of both literary and social practices, an essential cleavage between ancient and modern.⁵⁰

Although the ancients might have been uncouth strangers to the refined manners of *galanterie*, mythology and ancient history nevertheless provided sources for *histoires galantes* and *galant* theatre, in a phenomenon that has been referred to by critics as *l'antiquité galante*.⁵¹ As shown in the previous chapter, and as several critics have noted, the prominence of Ovid's poetry in this culture is striking.

However, I want to stress that Ovid was himself characterized as a figure for the 'galant' poet and use the complexities of this characterization to explore why he appealed to *galant* culture. As we have already seen, his poetry might have appealed as it helped formulate aspects of the *galant* discourse on love; I would also like to suggest that details of Ovid's life led to him becoming emblematic, in certain cases, for this movement. Just as

⁴⁹ Perrault: 'nous avons déjà remarqué en passant le manque de politesse des grecs et des romains dans les manières peu galantes dont ils traitent l'amour', II, p. 282; and 'cette galanterie dont nous parlons était inconnue à tous les auteurs anciens', III, p. 289. See Norman, 'Gallanty, or The Hatchet and the Lyre', pp.120-126.

⁵⁰ Norman, p. 120.

⁵¹ Denis, 'Les Arts d'Aimer', *Le Parnasse Galant*, pp. 289-304; Viala, *La France galante*, pp. 59-65.

galanterie was more than simply the depiction of amorous sentiment, so too did the uses of Ovid within this ‘cultural category’ transcend any one role.⁵² The presence of readers in his story (the addressees of his exile epistles; the mysterious ‘Corinna’) rendered him easily transportable to a literary climate that emphasised sociable literary practices. Ovid’s assimilation into a refined ‘galant’ culture was not without complexities, however, as he was thought to have been banished from Rome because of poetry that might have offended the ‘pudeur’ of young (female) readers, and because it might have been about his illicit relationship with a member of Augustus’ family. And yet, as we will now explore, in some cases, the precise details of how his work was received were sidelined and ‘Ovide’ was turned into a courteous *galant* poet writing within a sociable literary climate more akin to that of the late seventeenth century than to Augustan Rome; he thus became a way of defining and, at times, defending aspects of the contemporary writing climate. In others, these details were emphasised to explore a more sensual *art de plaire*, and even, a more licentious form of *galanterie*.

a) The ‘vie galante’

As we have established, there was a surge of interest in Ovid’s love poetry in the last third of the century, and I wish to place the interest in the figure of ‘Ovide’ in this context. The translations of the *Amores* by Nicolas Villennes (1668),⁵³ Thomas Corneille (1670),⁵⁴ and of the complete works by Etienne de Martignac (1697)⁵⁵ signal their adherence to the code of refined *galant* tastes and manners. One of the ways of doing so was to make their works accessible to female readers. Corneille explains that he has included some commentary for

⁵² I am building on Viala’s revision of J.M. Pelous’ argument; see Viala, *La France galante*, p. 158.

⁵³ *Les Elégies choisies des amours d’Ovide, par M. le Marquis de Villennes* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1668).

⁵⁴ This was a mixture of extracts from the *Heroides* and *Amores*: *Pièces choisies d’Ovide traduites en vers français par T. Corneille* (Paris, G. de Luynes, 1670).

⁵⁵ *Les Œuvres d’Ovide divisées en neuf tomes, traduction nouvelle par Monsieur de Martignac*, 9 vols. (Lyon: H. Mollin, 1697).

their benefit: ‘J’ai ajouté quelques remarques à la fin de chaque épître afin que les dames, qui ignoreront peut-être quelque une des fables qu’il touche en passant, en puissent avoir une parfaite intelligence’ (*Au lecteur*, np.). Likewise, Martignac’s translations were also intended for a female readership: the first volume of his translation of the complete works of Ovid, which contains the *Heroides*, is dedicated to Paule-Marguerite Françoise de Gondi, Duchesse de Retz. In the *épître dédicatoire*, Martignac presents Ovid in a manner appropriate for his female reader: ‘Ovide fut autrefois leur introducteur à la cour d’Auguste où régnait la politesse et l’érudition et moi, Madame, je vous les présente pour leur faire respirer chez vous un air de vertu plus pur que celui de l’ancienne Rome’ (*Epître*, np).

All these translators account for small changes they have made to render their versions stylistically effective in French. Corneille writes, ‘pour le style, je me suis quelquefois servi de quatrains, tant pour diversifier, que parce que je me suis imaginé que cette sorte de cadence aurait son agrément et en effet il semble qu’elle répond mieux au repos qui se trouve dans chaque distique latin’ (*Au lecteur*, np.). Villennes makes a similar case, ‘aussi doit-il suffire au traducteur de rendre bien les pensées mais s’il les sait enrichir, sans se détourner du sens, et se servir autant qu’il se peut, des paroles de son auteur, j’estime qu’on doit être content de son soin et ne désapprouver pas son travail’ (*Préface*, np). Behind this decision, as Villennes explains, is a concern with adhering to contemporary *goût*, ‘j’ai plutôt consulté le goût de notre nation et le mien, que la matière dont je traite’ (*Préface*, np).

What is striking, however, is the extent to which the character of Ovide was used to describe and define ‘le goût de notre nation’. This is most evident in the *Vies* included in the prefatory material to Villennes’ and Martignac’s translations. Both translators use their characterisation of Ovid as a way of defining and defending the modern literary culture to which their translations belong. Neither Villennes nor Martignac wrote *Vies* in the

historical tradition of *Vitae Ovidii*, which was continued by Michel de Marolles in the *Vie d'Ovide* that he attached to his translation of the *Ibis* poem. As I showed in the first chapter, Marolles used historical sources to account for Ovid's life, deliberately situating his *Vie* in an erudite tradition, which in turn set the tone for his translation. In contrast, the licence Villennes and Martignac show towards the expectation of the genre of the *Vie* itself prefigures some of the freedoms they have taken with the translation. There was a generic question at stake as, in choosing to move away from the historical sort of *Vitae* and *Vie*, these translators defined new generic terrain: in giving Ovid a 'vie' that is 'galante', they also fleshed out the genre of the 'vie galante'. And such generic innovation also prefigures the innovative stance adopted towards translation: in both content and form the 'vie galante' introduces the aesthetics of the translator.

Villennes' account of Ovid's life is told within the *préface*, but the opening sentence might echo the *Vitae* and *Vies* examined so far, 'Ovide était natif de Sulmone, qu'il quitta pour vivre à Rome dans la cour et sous l'empire d'Auguste' (*Préface*, np).⁵⁶ Villennes soon moves away from these models in the description that follows. Nothing of Ovid's practice as a lawyer, his quarrels with his father, his own family, or his death are mentioned. Villennes is only interested in Ovid as a poet – and more specifically, in how his poetry came about, was read, interpreted and circulated. Villennes uses his characterisation of Ovid to describe this contemporary aesthetic: 'car à sa beauté naturelle, il ajouta tout ce qui s'acquiert à la cour de politesse' and became 'le composé d'un courtisan parfait et un honnête homme achevé. [...] En ayant été l'interprète fidèle, j'eusse pu faire passer jusqu'à nous la plus fine galanterie d'une cour, à qui la nôtre ne doit rien en grandeur, et qu'elle égale justement en politesse' (*Préface*, np). Villennes casts Ovid in contemporary terms,

⁵⁶ In the second edition, it is written in a separate 'Vie d'Ovide': 'La Vie d'Ovide', *Les Elégies choisies des amours d'Ovide*, par M. le Marquis de Villennes (Paris: C. Osmont, 1672), np. The same text is used in both editions.

describing him according to the contemporary aesthetic of ‘politesse’, ‘galanterie’ and ‘l’honnêteté’. If Villennes’ ‘Ovide’ is an *honnête homme*, of the *cour de politesse*, then this is what he hopes for his translation. There is a slippage here: Villennes is describing not Ovid, but *his translation* of Ovid. The court is now that of Louis XIV, not of Augustus, and the kind of poetry Ovid writes that of 1668 and not the First Century BC. Villennes signals the nature of the ensuing translation through Ovid’s characterisation. Villennes suggests that Ovid’s writing and personality are those of the seventeenth-century French man: whereas Richer assimilated Ovid to the contemporary by saying that Ovid was already like this, Villennes offers no such justification. Instead, as if there was no distance at all, he simply describes Ovid as contemporary.

Villennes places Ovid’s poetry writing in a literary context. He imagines the scenarios in which Ovid came to write his love poetry:

Ces rares qualités lui donnèrent le commerce ordinaire, que les personnes de cette trempe ont toujours avec les dames [...]. Entre celles qui méritèrent ses assiduités et ses soins, est cette aimable Corinne pour laquelle la meilleure partie de ces élégies est composée; et que nous devons ici considérer, comme presque unique sujet de ses plaisirs et de ses disgrâces. Sa discrétion à parler d’elle, sous un nom supposé, n’a pas empêché qu’on n’ait connu que c’était la belle Julie, fille d’Auguste, dont les charmes avaient assujetti (sans exception) les plus grands hommes de son siècle jusque-là même qu’il en couta des soupirs à son propre père, si l’on en croit Suétone en la vie de Caligule, lequel, ‘*Praedicabat autem matrem suam ex incesto, quod augustus cum Iulia filia admisisset, procreatam*’. Et comme le libre accès qu’Ovide avait chez cette aimable princesse lui donnait plus de moyen d’avoir connaissance de sa conduite; il se trouve des écrivains qui jugent qu’il en vit un peu trop, et que ses yeux furent le principal crime qui lui causa son long et fâcheux exil, ainsi que lui-même dit en ce vers, ‘*Cur aliquid vidi? Cur conscia lumina feci?* Pourquoi mon mal a-t-il sa cause/de ce que j’ai vu quelque chose?/Et pourquoi mes yeux aujourd’hui/me font-ils ces méchants offices/qu’innocents du crime d’autrui/ on les en fait être complices’. Peut-être encore que la trop grande privauté qu’il eut avec cette belle dame le fit chasser de la cour, puisqu’Auguste donna tous ses soins à retrancher à sa fille les libertés où son inclination naturelle la poussait avec trop d’emportement. (*Préface*, np)

In keeping with other *Vitae* and *Vies*, Villennes reads Corinna, the woman of Ovid’s poetry, as a pseudonym for Julie, Augustus’ daughter. Villennes even describes moments in the poem which might reveal the identity of this ‘Corinne’. This affair and his poetry about it is

used, as in many of the *Vitae* analysed so far, as one possible reason for Ovid's exile. But Villennes plays down Ovid's debauchery by shifting the emphasis onto Julie's transgression. As in other *Vitae*, Villennes also offers other reasons, suggesting that Ovid's offence may have lain in what he saw Augustus doing. Where Villennes differs from previous accounts is in his description of the scenarios in which this poetry might have been written. He places 'Ovide' in a sociable literary culture in which he is surrounded by female admirers, and one in particular – for whom these poems are written. Furthermore, instead of simply stating that Ovid might have seen Augustus in a shameful act, Villennes imagines a context in which this might be possible: 'comme le libre accès qu'Ovide avait chez cette aimable princesse, lui donnait plus de moyen d'avoir connaissance de sa conduite' (*Préface*, np). This is the first time Ovide was explicitly placed in the position of a court favourite, precariously close to power. In the novel published a few years later, *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste*, which we will explore in the next chapter, Madame de Villedieu offered a similar picture, depicting Ovide as a court poet, as a disgraced *favori*.

Martignac likewise shows little interest in presenting his *Vie d'Ovide*, included in the first volume of his translations, in the scholarly fashion. Although he follows the typical pattern of accounting for Ovid's background, his struggle between poetry and law, (the father-son conflict), his exile and death and a survey of his work, Martignac's concern is to bring Ovid to life as a character. He attempts to access Ovide's thoughts and motivations not only as a way of assessing (or ascribing) his intentions, as Villennes had done, but as a means of developing Ovide's character. Martignac imagines the motives and thoughts behind events or decisions. For example when accounting for Ovid's brief stint studying law, he writes, 'Ovide touché d'un pareil discours qui tendait à son avancement, s'appliqua avec rapidité à l'étude de jurisprudence' (np). He turns the figures in Ovid's story into characters, giving his father dialogue: 'imitez, lui disait-il, votre frère aîné qui

suit le barreau [...] croyez-moi, laissez le métier de poète aux gens oisifs' (np). In this respect, Martignac takes further the narrativising trend of Villennes' *Vie*, making it more akin to a *histoire galante* than a historical biography.⁵⁷ Martignac allows himself to *imagine* what Ovid might have thought, and this, I suggest, is because Martignac has also allowed himself a certain amount of freedom in his interpretation and translation of Ovid's poetry.

Where Villennes described Ovid as 'l'honnête homme' and a courtisan of a *galant* and *poli* court, Martignac goes further to explicitly endow Ovid's *poetry* with the trends and tastes of the French poet's own aesthetic context: 'son style est aisé et naturel. Toutes les métamorphoses sont liées d'une manière ingénieuse [...]' (np). Unlike Villennes he registers more discomfort with Ovid's love poetry – 'Ovide avait employé les premières années de sa jeunesse à des poésies galantes [...] et j'avoue que son amour y paraît trop decouvert' (np). And yet, the works Ovid wrote in adulthood are worthy of praise, as they are in keeping with the demands of *politesse*: 'Penelope et Laodamie [Héroïdes] y sont remarquables par leur chasteté' (np). In a manner similar to Villennes, Martignac seeks to place Ovid in a context: Ovid is located amongst 'le grand monde'.

Son père vint à mourir, ce qui le fit revenir à son génie poétique. Ensuite, il fréquenta le grand monde, et comme il avait fort bonne mine et beaucoup d'esprit, il fut agréablement reçu des dames. (np)

Martignac identifies Ovid's appeal among women, locating him in mixed circles recalling those of French *mondain* salons. He suggests that Ovid's writing comes directly from these social interactions and encounters and his treatment of Ovid's exile is almost a footnote to this sociability:

On dit même que Julie fille d'Auguste ne le traita pas cruellement, et l'on rapporte qu'il publia ses faveurs sous le nom de Corinne; quelques-uns ont attribué son exil au commerce d'amour qu'il avait avec cette princesse. Cependant Auguste ne prit

⁵⁷ I explore Madame de Villedieu's novel and the genre of the 'vie galante' further in the next chapter.

pas pour prétexte de son bannissement que d'avoir corrompu la jeunesse par son poème de l'art d'aimer. D'autres disent que sa disgrâce vint d'avoir surpris l'empereur avec la jeune Julie sa petite fille dans une posture indigne d'un père (np).

The exile becomes less important as a historical conundrum and more as a way of emphasizing Ovid's popularity and social prowess – even Julie was enthralled by him. The 'Ovide' of both these *Vies* is transformed into a figure for the refined *galant* poet or writer, who appealed 'agréablement' to women; such characterization champions the social contexts in which *galant* writing is produced and celebrates its intended readers.

b) Ovid's love poetry: problems and potential

As Martignac's fleeting criticism shows, assimilating Ovid into *galant* culture had its complications: the *Ars Amatoria* had long been seen as indiscreet and immoral. For all that 'Ovide' was honed into a figure representing the refined literary climate of a courteous elite, the transgressive spirit identified by the *burlesque* translators of the *Metamorphoses* was emphasized in turn in the *burlesque* versions of his *Ars Amatoria*. Ovid's pleasure-seeking was celebrated by some these translators, identifying with a more debauched spirit of seduction. The two *burlesque* versions of the *Ars Amatoria*: *L'Hérato-technie ou l'Art d'aimer d'Ovide, en vers burlesques* (1650)⁵⁸ and *L'art d'aimer d'Ovide avec les remèdes de l'amour nouvellement traduits en vers burlesques* (1662) by DuFour de la Crespelière, in keeping with the *burlesque* tradition explored earlier, relish the pleasure this poetry arouses.⁵⁹ In the preface, 'Aux lecteurs curieux', attached to *L'Hérato-technie* (1650), the translator states his intention to make love an object of humour and to emphasise 'plaisir' at all costs. He also argues that in doing so, he has followed the spirit of Ovid's original:

⁵⁸ The title gives initials, *L'Hérato-technie, ou l'Art d'aimer d'Ovide, en vers burlesques, par le sieur D. L. B. M.*, but we do not know the identity of the author. See Loubère, p. 45.

⁵⁹ Bibliographic catalogues attribute this text to DuFour for this reason I will use it here. Loubère endorses it, but Chatelain is less certain, citing textual differences between this and another edition attributed to DuFour: *Les Remèdes contre l'amour. Travestis des vers Latins d'Ovide, en vers burlesques et divisés en dix chapitres par le sieur du Four C., médecin* (Paris: O. de Varennes, 1666).

‘j’oserai dire que je vais plus loin que mon guide sans le quitter. La matière et la forme des vers que je vous présente m’ont semblé fort propres pour la fin de la poésie, qui est de ne donner que du plaisir’ (*Aux lecteurs curieux*, np). Ovid’s *l’art d’aimer* epitomizes what the translator considers to be the ‘fin de la poésie’ – namely ‘plaisir’ which, as he explains in the opening of the preface, is the intention of his own burlesque translation: ‘Je suis certain que plusieurs trouveront beaucoup de choses à reprendre dans mon ouvrage, mais pourvu que je les fasse rire leur saoul, quand ce serait même en se moquant de moi, je serai content et satisfait’ (*Au lecteur*, np).

The preface to Dufour’s burlesque *Art d’aimer* likewise derides the moralizing practice of previous prefaces:

Ne crois pas toutefois que je m’amuse à te parler du sujet que je traite, que je loue mes vers et que je tache à te persuader qu’on ne pouvait mieux prendre la pensée de l’auteur, n’y choisir un sujet plus galant, n’y qui te fut plus utile, puis qu’il apprendra les moyens de régler une passion que l’on a cru jusqu’à présent forcer la raison à suivre ses caprices. Ce n’est point ce qui fait écrire, et je me soucie si peu de ce que tu diras de mes vers, et de la gloire qui pourrait suivre un travail de la nature et du mien, que je n’y ai pas seulement voulu mettre mon nom. (*Au lecteur*, np)

Dufour self-consciously mocks other translators’ claims to have followed ‘la pensée de l’auteur’ when they offer, or claim to offer, a moral translation that will teach readers to regulate their passions. Instead, typical of the *burlesque*, he renounces authority (‘je me soucie si peu de ce que tu diras de mes vers’), seemingly disinterested in offering any sort of refined version of Ovid’s verse. These two *burlesque* versions of the *Ars Amatoria* take quite a different approach to that of the *honnête* and *galant* translations of Villennes and Martignac.

Loubère, in her study on the reception of the *Ars Amatoria* from the late seventeenth century to the end of the eighteenth century, suggests that these two *burlesque* translations, and that of Dufour in particular, are reacting against the world of *l’amour tendre*, which

Loubère defines as the platonic love extolled by Mlle de Scudéry and her salon in the *Carte de Tendre*, and used Ovid to formulate a *galant* vision of love: ‘Ovide lui sert [...] pour promouvoir une vision galante de l’amour’.⁶⁰ But these translations are not possessed of the same refined codes of *galanterie*, or the respectful courtesy suitable for communicating with women.⁶¹ Instead, as Elena Russo identifies in her review of Loubère’s study, Loubère’s definition of *galanterie* is based on the now-outdated argument put forward by J. M. Pelous of a ‘schisme galant’ occurring between the idealized *préciosité* of Scudéry and the sensual, ‘amour galant’.⁶² Instead, as Russo suggests, these translations are a ‘reactionary backlash’ against the refined and new form of *galanterie* that was gaining currency in the salons and circles of the cultural elite.⁶³ The versions of Ovid offered by these *burlesque* translators instead channel a spirit of seduction more in line with the older meaning of the word *galant*.

The sensual nature of the *Ars Amatoria* was condemned by other translators, however, and deemed unsuitable by those seeking to render Ovid ‘modeste’ and ‘honnête’. In the prefaces to the translations of the *Ars Amatoria* by Marolles (1660)⁶⁴ and le Président Nicole (1668)⁶⁵, they explain that in order to achieve refined *politesse*, some of Ovid’s ‘libertés’ have had to be suppressed. Marolles writes: ‘l’auteur de cette traduction a eu grand soin d’en modérer l’expression et de n’y laisser rien qui put choquer l’honnêteté, ce qu’il faut toujours observer dans les choses les plus galantes et les plus enjouées’ (p.195). Marolles expresses an anxiety about being considered ‘galant’, and so instead has offered a lengthy commentary at the end of his translation, offering allegorical and moral explanations of the poems: ‘ce qui n’est que pure galanterie à ne le regarder que

⁶⁰ Loubère, p. 41.

⁶¹ The 1650 edition is preceded by a short poem, hardly representative of *politesse*. It opens, ‘Afin de déboucher ton cul’ [...], *L’Hérato-technie*, np.

⁶² J.-M. Pelous, *Amour précieux, amour galant*, pp. 195-224.

⁶³ Russo, *H-France Review*, p. 259.

⁶⁴ Michel de Marolles, *Les livres d’Ovide de l’Art d’aimer et des Remèdes de l’amour [...] le tout rendu fort honnête* (Paris: P. Lamy, 1660).

⁶⁵ Le Président de Nicole, *L’Art d’aimer d’Ovide traduit en vers français* (Paris: Ch. Sercy, 1668).

superficiellement pourrait devenir très solide et très sérieux si l'on en voulait tirer un sens allégorique' (*Observations*, p. 287).⁶⁶ Marolles wants his translation to be read as erudite, for the 'la connaissance de la langue et de l'histoire [et] pour beaucoup de nobles sentiments' (p. 196).

In the *préface* to his translation of the first book of the *Ars Amatoria*, which Loubère describes as 'moraliste',⁶⁷ Nicole explains his moralising approach:

Je t'en donne un essai à mon ordinaire, purgé de toutes les libertés qui pouvaient choquer la plus circonspecte pudeur et par l'expression et par l'équivoque, je te puis promettre que si tu prends quelque plaisir à le lire, le deux livres qui restent ne me couteront au plus que quatre milles vers et je me sens assez fort pour les entreprendre et t'en donner la satisfaction entière avec toute la circonspection que demande l'honnêteté et ta modestie. (*Préface*, np)

Both Marolles and Nicole claim that they have changed Ovid to make him *honnête* or *modeste*, and keen to distance themselves from the licentious Ovid, emphasise their interventions to signal their own *honnêteté* or *modestie*.

Ovid has a different 'galant' incarnation in two later translations. Jean Barrin's *Les Epîtres et toutes les élégies amoureuses d'Ovide* (1676)⁶⁸ was the most successful translation of Ovid's love poetry in this period, reprinted sixteen times between 1676 and 1739, four of which were in 1676 itself (twice in Paris and twice in Rouen). Like Villennes and Martignac, Barrin translates extracts from the *Heroides* and *Amores*; nevertheless, 'Ovide' is constructed rather differently here. Barrin's 'Ovide' is the sensual and inconstant author of the *Ars Amatoria*. In the *préface* to the *Epîtres*, he writes:

Il a l'air si galant, et le tour si fin qu'il a fallu l'une des meilleures plumes de nôtre siècle pour l'habiller à la française, et je reconnais si bien Ovide au caractère de ses amours que j'aurais peine à croire qu'il put avoir lui-même de plus beaux sentiments. Ovide n'avait qu'un défaut qui lui serait un procès avec le beau sexe, s'il ne le récompensait d'ailleurs. Il ne se piquait pas de grande fidélité, mais aussi l'enchaînement du cœur eut cause l'esclavage de l'esprit et s'il eut aimé plus constamment, la perfidie des héros et les plaintes des héroïnes amoureuses fussent

⁶⁶ See also Loubère, p. 65.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 50.

⁶⁸ Jean Barrin, *Les Epîtres et toutes les élégies amoureuses d'Ovide* (Paris, C. Barbin, 1676).

peut-être demeurées ensevelies dans le silence. [...] Je ne crois pas devoir m'engager dans la protection d'un homme qui se défendait assez bien lui-même contre les attaques du beau sexe, qui cédait à toutes les femmes en général, sans céder à pas une et dont l'inconstance valait le plus bel exemple que nous ayons de sa fidélité. Peu de personnes savent aimer aussi adroitement qu'il savait changer; et je crois que sans ses charitables instructions, nous serions encore assez fous pour languir toute notre vie auprès une femme qui ne serait cruelle qu'en nous voyant sensibles et qui ne se défendrait de prendre de l'amour que parce qu'elle en aurait trop donné. Ce sont choses dont je ne puis décider, il faut que là-dessus chacun parle à sa conscience, c'est assez que la mienne ne me reproche rien; et comme je ne veux pas faire ici un art d'aimer, je dois peu m'étendre sur ces sortes de matières. Pour revenir à mon livre, il est certain que les lettres d'Ovide sont toutes belles [...] L'amour n'étant plus qu'un enfant dans ce siècle, il aime à rire, et c'est ce qui le fait trouver plus beau dans son enjouement que dans sa délicatesse. J'en laisse la décision aux lecteurs [...] (*Préface*, np)

'Ovide' is described here as *inconstant*. He is a *homme galant* (not a *galant homme*) whose own behaviour makes him an authority on describing the 'plaints' of abandoned women, a figure of ever changing affections; he also has refined aesthetic abilities, 'le tour si fin' and 'l'air galant'. While Barrin identifies Ovid's 'peu fidèle' nature, and highlights that some of possible problems with Ovid's 'teachings', which he dismisses as he does not propose to translate to the *Art d'aimer*, Barrin does not condemn Ovid's inconstancy. Instead he admires Ovid's spirit, transposed here into 'enjouement' – a quality he ascribes to his own translation. In the preface attached to the *Elégies amoureuses*, Barrin suggests that Ovid has united 'pudeur' and 'galanterie'; 'jugement' and 'plaisir': 'il a bien humanisé la vertu et rendu les sens si spirituels que le jugement s'est trouvé d'accord avec le plaisir et la pudeur avec la galanterie' (*Préface*, np). Barrin dismisses the problem of Ovid's 'libertés': 'il a de certaines libertés qui piquent l'esprit sans choquer la bienséance, qui ne font connaître les passions que pour les régler sur le bon sens' (*Préface*, np). Barrin's 'Ovide' combines 'le plaisir' with 'la pudeur': emphasis on this combination and on 'plaisir' distinguishes Barrin

from Villennes and Martignac who stressed the *politesse* of their *galant* translations, and instead nods to the erotic charge of these poems.⁶⁹

A further incarnation of ‘Ovide galant’ can be found in a version of Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria* produced two years later. As Denis has shown, there were many imitations and rewritings of the *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* in this period; I will take one example here. In 1678 Ferrier de la Martinière composed a work entitled, *Préceptes Galants: poème*, which included a version of Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria*.⁷⁰ In the prologue addressed to ‘Amour’, Ferrier claims:

Les vices Romains, appuyés par l’usage
Autorisaient l’excès de ton libertinage.
Nos différentes mœurs demandent d’autres lois
Je veux te rendre honnête et galant à la fois. (p. 8)

He registers a subtle distinction between ‘honnête’ and ‘galant’, and suggests that his translation will fulfill both these criteria. He distances himself from the Roman ‘licence’, suggesting that ‘différentes mœurs’ demand a different approach. His version of Ovid’s poem, which starts seamlessly after this prologue, goes further than those of Villennes or Martignac in transposing the ancient Roman verse to contemporary France: Ferrier does not explicitly quote his source, or present this work as a translation; he suppresses many references to mythological figures and Roman gods, which remain present in the works of Villennes and Martignac, and where Ovid mentioned the amphitheatre or Roman collonades as places to meet women, Ferrier offers the French court. He goes on to describe the ‘plaisirs’ of fêtes at court, evoking a veritable ‘fête d’amour’:

Quand Louis comme las d’abattre des murailles
Vient des travaux de Mars respirer à Versailles

⁶⁹ This erotic charge was then expanded in 1756 when an edition entitled *Les Œuvres Galantes et amoureuses d’Ovide contenant, l’art d’aimer, le remède d’amour, les épîtres et les élégies amoureuses, traduction nouvelle en vers français* was published and attributed to Jean Barrin with the place of publication given as, ‘A Cythère, aux dépens du loisir’. The *Epîtres* and *Elégies amoureuses* included here are the same text as those in the Paris and Rouen editions, but this new version also included an unexpurgated licentious version of Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria*, which is the translation of Joseph Cueur de Cogolin. (See Loubère, p. 224).

⁷⁰ Louis Ferrier de la Martinière, *Préceptes Galants: poème* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1678).

Par quelque grande fête il dissipe l'ennui
 [...]
 On y voit de partout courir toutes les belles
 Une foule d'amours accompagne leurs pas
 [...]
 Les plaisirs parmi nous fixeront leur séjour
 Tout le monde de fleurs couronnera sa tête
 Et tous les jours sous toi seront des jours de fête. (p. 13-15)

Ferrier de la Martinière's assimilation of Ovid into the *galant* aesthetic is one that almost utterly eclipses the ancient poet, as he rewrites Ovid's verse into an entirely new poem. He used a similar technique three years later in his *Les moyens de se guérir de l'amour. Conversations galantes*, a short novel which interweaves verse translations of Ovid's *Remedia Amoris* within conversations about love.⁷¹ While Ovid is explicitly referenced here, the translations are included to serve the 'conversation galante' and not the other way around. This an example of how Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* were useful texts in discussions about different modes of behaviour between the sexes; and of how inherent to the very 'galant' aesthetic is this practice of innovation, as in this case, the ancient Roman poet's verse is transposed into a hybrid verse-prose dialogue that addresses contemporary mores.⁷²

While the 'galant' translations of Ovid by Barrin and Ferrier remain within refined codes, and in this are unlike the *burlesque* versions of earlier in the century, they neither provide the severe moralizing interventions of Marolles and Nicole, nor do they flag up *politesse* as Villennes and Martignac have done; instead, Barrin emphasises pleasure and sensuality, and Ferrier, by reworking Ovid's verse and incorporating it into his poems, offers a definition of *galanterie* that foregrounds a new generic practice. A 'galant Ovide' is therefore itself a complex facet of this complex phenomenon.

⁷¹ *Les moyens de se guérir de l'amour. Conversations galantes* (Paris : T. Quinet, 1681).

⁷² This complexity is attested by a further translation of Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*: the anonymous *L'Art d'aimer d'Ovide, ou la meilleur manière d'aimer d'Ovide* (Cologne: B. d'Egmond, 1696), which was reprinted two years later as *Ovide amoureux, ou l'Ecole des amants* (La Haye: Gaillard, 1698). Chatelain has attributed it to Ferrier de la Martinière; Loubère thinks it is anonymous and, describes it as flagrantly licentious: 'il repousse à sa façon maladroite mais obstinée les limites de la décence et de la pornographie'. Loubère, p. 74.

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In this chapter, I have surveyed the many different ‘Ovides’ used by translators to describe their own craft; ‘Ovide’s’ journey into French was used by translators early in the century to extol the French language and the practice of translation – at a time when both these things needed defending. He was used metonymically to describe both the process of translation and the translation itself: *Ovid speaks French*. In later versions, more tension was registered in questions such as: *what would Ovid make of this poem?* And in statements like: *Ovid’s licence has been banished by the French language*. And yet, in some cases, this tension was dissolved through a process of identification between translator and Ovid: *Ovid would have written in the burlesque style had it been popular in Rome; Ovid is a galant poet*. Ovid, unlike other classical poets and although he is a classical poet, was paradoxically rendered emblematic of movements concerned with the promotion of French over Latin – whether in the translations from early in the century or the more self-consciously *Moderne* cultural movements of the *burlesque* and *galanterie*. There was, therefore, something particular about the tradition of constructions of the figure Ovide that unifies the many different avatars we see here. He was seen as being on a threshold, banished from the culture and traditions of his own writing climate: physical exile was recast in aesthetic terms and the ‘ingénieux’ Ovid became, in a way, too modern for his own culture. The exile at the heart of his personal story, which, as we have seen from the first chapter, dominated any tale of Ovid’s life and came to characterize him, was exploited metaphorically by translators, turning Ovid into a figure for innovation and newness, for the movement away from established traditions. Seen in the context of the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, Ovid occupied a singular position as an ‘ancient’ poet who was not quite *ancien*.

We have also begun to stray into new generic territory: the *Vies* by Villennes and Martignac are similar to the *histoire galante* in their wilful disregard for historical accuracy and their unashamed anachronisms (placing antiquity in a *galant* setting), and this might belie their wider attitude towards the ‘sanctity’ of ancient culture. The appeal of Ovid’s story to the imagination made him a perfect figure for such renditions, not least because most of the details have slipped through the controlling hands of history. Thus Villennes and Martignac set him in a contemporary writing climate as a way of talking about their own translations. In the next chapter, we will explore how Ovid’s story was told in novels and show that ‘Ovide’ was depicted as a figure for a *galant* poet to explore some of the aesthetic practices of the *histoire galante*. The focus of these novels on ‘la cour d’Auguste’ also allows for more sombre and politicized explorations of exile and the role of the poet at court.

CHAPTER FOUR

Ovide's *Histoire*: Fictional representations of Ovid's story by Madame de Villedieu and Anne de la Roche-Guilhen

The full details of Ovid's story are left to the imagination. Many of the accounts of his life that we have explored so far surveyed alternative reasons for why he was exiled: some accounts favoured one, some remained neutral, some relished the multitude of possibilities, but most treated the causes of his exile as a question, a lacuna. At the same time as this period of intense translation, there were three versions of his life which told one version of the story, and claimed it to be the only one. In 1672, Claude Barbin published the first two volumes of Madame de Villedieu's *Ovide ou les Exilés de la Cour d'Auguste*. Volumes 3 and 4 were then published in 1673, and 5 and 6 in 1678 as *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste*.¹ This novel was an enormous success.² About twenty years later, Ovid's story was revisited in two other *histoires galantes*: Louis de Mailly's *La Rome Galante ou Histoire secrète sous les règnes de Jules César et d'Auguste* (1695): the second half reprints the 'Histoire d'Ovide' from Villedieu's novel almost to the letter and is not sufficiently different to merit exploration here, though its existence is worth noting.³ In 1697, Anne de la Roche-Guilhen, a Huguenot exile living in London, was the anonymous author of *Histoire des favorites*,

¹ For details about this staggered publication and tensions between Villedieu and Barbin, see Edwige Keller-Rahbé, 'Mme de Villedieu, "la poule aux oeufs d'or" de Claude Barbin?', in *Les Arrière-boutiques de la littérature: auteurs et imprimeurs-libraires aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, ed. by Edwige Keller-Rahbé (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2010), pp. 87-111, p. 96.

² It was greatly praised when it was first published. See *Le Mercure Galant* [1672-1674] (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1982), [p. 306-307], p. 89 in Slatkine edition. Mlle de Scudéry wrote 'voyez ce petit roman; rien n'est plus joli' in the Letter to Bussy, 14 Avril 1672, in *Correspondance de Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy, avec sa famille et ses amis (1666-93)*, *Nouvelle édition revue sur les manuscrits et augmentée d'un très grand nombre de lettres inédites*, par Ludovic Lalanne, 6 vols. (Paris: Charpentier, 1858), II, p. 93.

³ *La Rome Galante ou Histoire secrète sous les règnes de Jules César et d'Auguste* (Paris: J. Guignard, 1695). Louis de Mailly (1657-1724) was Louis XIV's godson. The section on Auguste takes Ovid's first person *histoire* included in volume I of Villedieu's story and tells it as a third person narrative, describing events as they unfold in Rome. For the most part, this novel relates verbatim that of Villedieu, so I will not analyse it in detail here.

published in Amsterdam 1697.⁴ This was a collection of *nouvelles* of which the sixth, ‘Histoire de Livie’ is a close, though innovative, reworking of Villedieu’s novel.

These novels can all be classed as, and all contributed to, the emerging genre of the *histoire galante* – fictional tales about men and women from history. Often these stories were interested in the passions and personal intrigues that lay behind the events known to history – an angle that necessarily required at least some fictional embellishment. The narrative gesture of ‘going behind the scenes’ often entailed a penchant for intrigues that were hidden not only from the selective eye of history, but also from other members of the world of the story. Accordingly, the court world – a world of secrecy, gossip and vigilance – were often their favoured subjects.

One of the dangers, however, of fabricating stories about real figures is that fact and fiction become confused, and the *histoire galante* was heavily criticised for not distinguishing between the two. Bayle castigated Madame de Villedieu for pioneering this genre:

Il est fâcheux que Mademoiselle des Jardins ait ouvert la porte à une licence dont on abuse tous les jours de plus en plus: c’est celle de prêter ses inventions et ses intrigues galantes aux plus grands hommes des derniers siècles et de les mêler avec des faits qui ont quelque fondement dans l’histoire. Ce mélange de la vérité et de la fable se répand dans une infinité de livres nouveaux.⁵

The unacknowledged mixing of history and fiction served, libellously in Bayle’s eyes, to discredit ‘grands hommes’ by conceiving of their private intrigues – *grands hommes* who otherwise demanded respect for their public feats. When such processes were applied to figures from antiquity, it is little wonder that stories of this sort were perceived as an instrument of the *Modernes*, a means of desacralizing ancient figures. Boileau derided

⁴ Paul Marret’s edition published in Amsterdam in 1697 was attributed to to Mlle D***. Her name was not included until the fourth edition Paul Marret published in 1703. The edition I am using here is: ‘Live sous l’Empereur Auguste’, *Histoire des favorites*, ed. by Els Höhner (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l’Université de Saint-Étienne, 2005), pp. 293-335.

⁵ *Remarque A*, ‘Jardins (Marie-Catherine des)’, in *Dictionnaire*, II, p. 833.

contemporary authors who choose to ‘peindre Caton galant et Brutus dameret’ in his *Art poétique* (chant III, line 118).

Ovid’s case, however, was a little different. He was seen as a love poet; he was *meant* to have passionate intrigues. A *histoire galante* about Ovid was not thought to require the subjection of this figure to the same scrutiny of his private life as would a *histoire* of Cato or Brutus. The very persona he constructed in his love poetry was predicated on the playful mixing of private and public; and readers of his poetry (Augustus, the mysterious woman behind the name ‘Corinna’) were part of his story. Not only was Ovid a love poet, a role which necessitated interaction between public and private personae, but he had already made himself a fictional character, and already written himself into a sort of secret history *avant la lettre*. In his tantalizing hints as to what the ‘error’ causing his exile might have been, he set up the ultimate story of conspiracy and secrecy. So although Ovid is the subject and protagonist of the *histoires galantes* by Villedieu, Mailly and La Roche-Guilhen, he is not one of the ancient figures discredited by fictional stories of private intrigue. Instead, I will show that there was a sense of identification between these French authors and their character ‘Ovide’, as he becomes a facilitator for their own concerns – be they aesthetic, gendered or political.

However, that does not strip these ‘Ovide’ stories of their polemical function. On the contrary, Ovid’s position as a poet exiled for possible intrigue at court provided the perfect opportunity to criticise the machinations of the court world and expose the tyranny of Augustus’ power. As the titles of the three novels indicate, Livie, Auguste, and César are the ancients who will receive scrutiny (removal of Ovide’s name from the title of the final edition of Villedieu’s novel might indicate that he has a slightly different role to play than these figureheads). And yet, the blatant anachronisms that characterise these novels, not to mention the evocation of the *Moderne* aesthetic of *galanterie* in the descriptions of Ovid as

a ‘galant’ poet, make them very suggestive of the contemporary court world. And, indeed, Villedieu’s novel in particular has been interpreted by critics as a *roman à clé* about members of Louis XIV’s circle. These novels are about the machinations of power, both ancient and modern.

Ovid’s case is more particular still, however. Not only do these novelists respond to the silence at the heart of Ovid’s story by imagining and fabricating what might have happened, but the silence itself is crucial to how they depict the sway of power. Ovid could not tell us why he was exiled because he did not want to offend the Emperor (again): fear of the Emperor restricted the story from being told. The known versions of events are the ones sanctioned by those in power. In this respect, the silence at the heart of Ovid’s story was not only a missing piece in the puzzle that needed resolving through the imaginative interpretations of these novelists; instead, the fact it was missing meant that Ovid’s story could be used to negotiate questions of the relationship between historiography and power – questions which are central, I argue, to Villedieu’s and La Roche-Guilhen’s works.

1. Defining ‘histoire’: a brief sketch of the *histoire galante*

Given that my reading of both Villedieu’s and La Roche-Guilhen’s novels is based on their self-conscious use of genre and on the interplay between history and fiction, a detailed account of the genre of the *histoire galante* is necessary here. A recent special issue of ‘Littératures classiques’, *La galanterie des anciens* (June 2012), edited by Nédélec and Grande, constitutes an important development in studies of the confrontation between ancient and modern worlds so topical in the late seventeenth century. It focuses on the process of ‘galantisation’ of ancient Greece and Rome. This phenomenon not only applied to the translation of Latin and Greek poetry according to the ‘galant’ aesthetic, explored in the previous chapter, but also to the narration of the lives of ancient figures told in ‘histoires galantes’. This study devotes considerable attention to the versions of the *histoire galante* that take the ancient world as their

subject matter and identifies the writers and literary communities interested in this practice. It confirms the importance of Villedieu's place in *galant* culture,⁶ and sheds new light on that of La Roche-Guilhen. As the quotation from Bayle suggests, Villedieu's contribution to this genre was considerable; indeed he holds her responsible for pioneering the *histoire galante*. His accusation was not unfounded: some of her early works of theatre⁷ and early *nouvelles*⁸ suggest an interest in using figures and stories from Greece or Rome and over two-thirds of the novels she later published with Barbin were tales about figures from antiquity.⁹ Articles by Grande and Keller-Rahbé in this collected edition also pay particular attention to *Les Exilés*,¹⁰ which has otherwise received little scholarship.¹¹ Isabel Trivisani-Moreau's article identifies the importance of Anne de la Roche-Guilhen's contribution to the phenomenon of 'la galanterie des anciens',¹² which has been considerably under-researched and undervalued, despite the frequency with which Greece and Rome are the subject of her novels.¹³ Indeed, her *œuvre* in general has received little attention: of the existing book-length studies dedicated to her one is primarily biographical,¹⁴ and the other is limited in scope and depth.¹⁵

⁶ Villedieu's place is sketched out by, among others, Viala, in *La France Galante*, p. 263-265.

⁷ *Manlius Torquatus*, first performed: April 1662, Hôtel de Bourgogne; *Nitétis*, first performed: April 1663, Hôtel de Bourgogne.

⁸ *Carmen*, *histoire grecque* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1667).

⁹ *Anaxandre* (1668); *Annales Galantes de Grèce* (1670); *Les amours des grands hommes* (1671); *Les Exilés de la cour d'Auguste* (1672-78); *Le portrait des faiblesses humaines* (1685).

¹⁰ Grande, 'La métamorphose galante de l'histoire antique: modalités et enjeux d'une poétique', in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédelec, pp. 229-244. Edwige Keller-Rahbé, 'Je crois déjà les entendre dire que je viole le respect dû à la sacrée antiquité': Madame de Villedieu et la galanterie des anciens ou le savoir-faire d'une mondaine', in *Ibid.*, pp.161-176.

¹¹ Gérard Letexier, 'Les Exilés de la Cour d'Auguste: Mme de Villedieu entre tradition et modernité', *Littératures Classiques*, 6 (2007), 71-87; Micheline Cuénin, *Roman et société sous Louis XIV: Madame de Villedieu (Marie-Catherine Desjardins)* (Paris: H. Champion, 1979); Juliette Cherbuliez, 'De la cour d'Auguste à la cour de Louis XIV: réécriture de l'exil ovidien chez Madame de Villedieu', in *Madame de Villedieu romancière: nouvelles perspectives de recherche* (Lyons: Presses Universitaires, 2004), ed. by Keller-Rahbé, pp. 219-238; Cherbuliez, *The Place of Exile: Leisure Literature and the Limits of Absolutism* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2005), pp. 108-146; Marie-Gabrielle Lallemand, 'Les Exilés: forme et signification', *Madame de Villedieu ou les audaces du roman* (Paris: H. Champion, 2007), ed. by Keller-Rahbé and Grande, pp. 57-70.

¹² Isabel Trivisani-Moreau, 'Après modernité: la représentation de la galanterie des anciens dans l'œuvre d'Anne de la Roche-Guilhen', in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédelec, pp. 177-191.

¹³ *Arioviste, histoire romaine* (Paris: C. Barbin, 1674-75); *Intrigues Amoureuses des Quelques Anciens Grecs* (La Haye: Henry van Bulderen, 1690); *Amours de Néron*, (La Haye: Abraham Troyel, 1695).

¹⁴ Alexandre Calame, *Anne de la Roche-Guilhen: Romancière huguenote 1644-1707* (Paris: Droz, 1972).

¹⁵ Moses Hardin, *Modern Techniques in a Seventeenth-Century Writer: Anne de la Roche-Guilhen* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 1997).

This important collection of essays not only sheds new light on works or authors previously overlooked, but it also formulates some of the stakes, problems and intentions of rendering the ancients ‘galant’. What, firstly, does this mean; what can be understood by the phenomenon of a ‘histoire galante de l’antiquité’? It was a great commercial success, exploited by prolific publishers of ‘galant’ works, such as Claude Barbin. Many used the word ‘galant’ in their title, perhaps to ensure sales, exemplified by Vaumorière’s *Histoire de la galanterie des anciens* (1671), from which the issue of ‘Littératures classiques’ takes its title. However, the definition goes deeper than this since there were texts of this genre without ‘galant’ in the title, such as the two to be analysed in this chapter. *Galant* histories of antiquity were descriptions of the ancient past, but the characters they portrayed were more akin to contemporary men and women, with their customs, habits, concerns – as we saw in the previous chapter in the stories by Martignac and Villennes. More was at stake here than the depiction of ancient culture for its exotic quality, re-appropriating and recasting the ancient world according to contemporary tastes and practice affirmed the superiority of the latter.

There was a further provocation. *Galant* versions of ancient history tended to focus on the passions and private lives of well-known ancient figures. This in itself might be seen as polemical: presenting figures from the ancient world as ‘normal’ men with passions, weaknesses and contradictory motivations serves, as Grande argues, to ‘desacralize’ antiquity.¹⁶ However, in a further gesture of disregard towards the sanctity of ancient culture, these accounts were usually hypothetical, fictional embellishments containing only a few token markers of historical accuracy. The new genre of the *histoire galante* had little interest in remaining faithful to ancient sources but instead freely mixed history and fiction. This very generic hybridity was part of the *galant* aesthetic, as we have already seen Viala

¹⁶ See Grande, ‘La métamorphose galante de l’histoire antique’, in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédelec, pp. 229-244.

argue: ‘à noter d’emblée que, souvent, les écrits galants ne revendiquent pas de sources, ou guère. [...] Leur posture fondamentale est celle de Modernes qui recherchent du neuf’.¹⁷ In this respect, *l’antiquité galante* had a polemical thrust and can be understood as not only a product and example of *Moderne* culture and tastes, but also an intentional intervention in the *querelle*.

However, the *histoire galante* of antiquity did more than desacralize the ancients by presenting well-known figures in private, perhaps compromising, situations: more often than not – and this was what so irked the scrupulous Bayle – the authors of the *histoire galante* claimed that what they were revealing was true, that they were ‘véritables histoires’. They thus shared many traits of the *histoire secrète* which also mixed fiction and history under the guise of revealing the truth. Both genres tease out and play with the possible meanings of ‘histoire’. In Furetière’s *Dictionnaire Universel*, there are several entries under ‘histoire’; salient here are these two consecutive definitions:

Histoire, à l’égard des actions, se dit de cette narration véritable, suivie, et enchainée de plusieurs événements mémorables soit par rapport à une seule personne, à une nation, ou à plusieurs; soit qu’elle renferme ce qui s’est passé pendant un grand ou un petit nombre d’années. [...] (p. 495)

This accounts for the factual, *véritable* narration of events – what the *histoire galante* is evoking in claims of accuracy. The next entry reads: ‘Histoire, se dit aussi des romans, des narrations fabuleuse, mais vraisemblables, feintes par un auteur, ou déguisées’ (p. 495). To a modern reader, this runs counter to the previous definition, describing the world of fiction: *vraisemblable*, but not *véritable*. The use of the term ‘histoire’ in ‘histoire galante’ playfully asserts its position between history and fiction, problematising their relationship. This chapter will explore the considerable generic overlap between secret histories and the *histoire galante*, and will suggest that the deliberate mixing of history and fiction acted not only to widen readership and complicate the representation of powerful historical figures,

¹⁷ Viala, *La France galante*, p. 60.

but also to reflect upon the nature and constraints of the received representation of such figures – namely, to reflect upon the very writing of history.

The *histoire galante* not only sought generic novelty by engaging with historical writing in an innovative fashion, but it was also reacting against more recent traditions of imaginative fictional narratives. As Dejean has demonstrated in *Tender Geographies: women and the origin of the novel in France*,¹⁸ Madame de Villedieu and Anne de la Roche-Guilhen belonged to a new generation of female writers, with slightly different concerns to the previous one dominated by Mlle de Scudéry and her salon. Grande has argued that some of these writers adopted self-conscious ‘stratégies’ to assert their own place in literary circles, and Villedieu,¹⁹ whose works were published under this name and not anonymously, was particularly aware of establishing her own domain.²⁰

Mlle de Scudéry had pioneered early forms of the *galant* novel in the extremely long works of the 1650s, such as *Clélie*. Scudéry’s literary and social practice was characterized by a playful attitude to names: many of her novels refer to real figures of her circles using pseudonyms, of which her own was Sapho. Although these multi-volume tomes had proved popular in the middle of the century, their endless conversations, promenades, interpolated narratives, examinations of idealized romances and picaresque encounters were beginning to seem outdated. In its place, the shorter *nouvelle* or *histoire galante*, physically portable and thus more suitable for the mobility and sociability of *mondain* culture, began to flourish. Even Scudéry began to reduce the length of her novels as she turned to ‘nouvelles’ in the 1660s: *Celinte: nouvelle première* (1667) and *La Promenade de Versailles* (1669).

¹⁸ Dejean, *Tender Geographies*, pp.127-159.

¹⁹ A privilège was given for the publication of volumes 1 and 2 in 1672 : ‘accordé à la Dame de Villedieu pour un livre intitulé *Ovide ou les Exilés de la Cour d’Auguste*’. See Cuénin, p. 203.

²⁰ See Grande, ‘Chapter 11: Signer et Publier’, in *Stratégies de romancières*, pp. 281-301.

Scudéry had also written a short account of Ovid's life in the 'Songe d'Hésiode' in her multi-volume novel, *Clélie*.²¹ In this story, Hésiode has a dream in which he visits Mount Helicon and, guided by the muse Calliope, is shown great authors from ancient Greece and Rome, Renaissance Italy, and France. Denis suggests that much of the biographical information included in Scudéry's account comes from Lilio Giraldi's *Historiae Poetarum*, which we encountered in the first chapter and which I showed had a formative influence on Marolles' *Vie d'Ovide*.²² Denis argues that this was a source for Scudéry's text, though we do not know whether she could read this Latin text herself, or was helped by friends.²³ Calliope's description of Ovide is similar to the erudite *Vitae* we explored in the first chapter:

Mais il est temps de montrer le fameux Ovide, chevalier romain, ne vois-tu pas aussi auprès de lui une personne bien faite, c'est sa femme, qui se nommera Perilla, à qui il apprendra à faire des vers. Il naîtra à Sulmo capitale des Péligniens en Italie, auprès des Marse, il sera d'abord destiné au barreau par son père, et y réussira bien; mais ayant tout sa vie eu une grande inclination pour la poésie, il quittera cette occupation et se donnera tout entier à l'autre. Il sera ami particulier des plus considérables de Rome, et de fort agréable conversation. Il sera marié trois fois [...] Il sera exilé par Auguste, pour avoir fait l'amour à la princesse Julia sa fille, dont la conduite aura beaucoup de dérèglement, quelques-uns croiront que ce sera pour avoir été amoureux de Livia même, femme de cet empereur, et la cause de cet exil sera si cachée, qu'on en dira plusieurs choses bizarres, et peu vraisemblables. [...] (p. 225)

Like the majority of *Vitae* and *Vies* we have looked at, Scudéry identifies the causes of Ovid's exile as unknown, 'la cause sera si cachée', though she suggests it might have been for his affair with Julia or Livia, since he frequented the circles of important figures. Scudéry's brief sketch of Ovid's life also reveals a slight difference to Giraldi's account. Where he suggested that Ovid had a corrupting influence on young readers, particularly women, Scudéry depicts Ovide teaching his wife how to write poetry. We saw a later version of this portrayal of Ovide as sympathetic to women in l'Héritier's 1694 depiction of

²¹ Mlle de Scudéry, *Clélie* (Paris: A. Courbé. 1654-1660), Partie IV, Livre II. Quoted here from Delphine Denis 'De l'air galant' et autres conversations (1653-1684) (Paris: H. Champion, 1998), pp. 181-244.

²² See Denis, 'De l'air galant', p.191.

²³ 'Ou bien Madeleine de Scudéry, contrairement à ses biographes et à ses propres allégations, lit le latin assez bien pour être capable de se repérer dans le gros volume de Giraldi [...] Ou bien elle se fait aider par ses amis'. *Ibid.* p.191.

an all-female Parnassus in which Ovide is the guide. The identification between ‘Ovide’ and women is present in Scudéry’s text.²⁴

We cannot be certain whether Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen had access to Giraldi’s biography of ancient poets, nor can we know if they read the two translations of the *Tristia* available (that of Binard from 1625 and, more plausibly, that of Marolles printed in 1661); however, it is highly likely that they would both have been familiar with Scudéry’s depiction. La Roche-Guilhen, writing twenty years later than Villedieu, would also have benefitted from Villedieu’s account, as well as many of the versions of Ovid’s life we have examined that were written after Villedieu’s novel. Els Höhner argues for the influence of Villedieu’s text on La Roche-Guilhen’s *nouvelle*.²⁵ In this chapter, I will use this chain of intertext to explore how Villedieu, as well as La Roche-Guilhen, self-consciously use their versions of Ovid’s story to assert their own place in literary culture. I will argue that Villedieu in particular depicts Ovid as a *galant* poet as a self-conscious way of negotiating some of the aesthetic and political dimensions of the *histoire galante*. Although these works were written in a different genre to the translations we saw in the previous chapter, I will argue that there is some cross fertilization and interplay between the ‘Ovide’ of the *galant* translations and his characterization in these novels. However, by considering some of the political aims of the *histoire galante*, I also want to stress that Ovide, the ‘malheureux’ and embittered exile that we encountered in chapter one, is also present in these novels.

²⁴ Horace, however, is represented as ‘sans difficulté le plus galant de tous les poètes latins’ (p. 223); though Scudéry is not critical of Ovid here, she comments that his works were ‘si plein d’amour, si passionné, si plein d’esprit’ (p. 225) and so perhaps too sexual to be truly ‘galant’. See also Viala, *La France galante*, p. 64.

²⁵ ‘A l’évidence, encore, elle a lu [...] les trois ouvrages de Mme de Villedieu [*Les Annales Galantes*, 1670; *le Portrait des faiblesses humaines*, 1685; *Les Exilés de la Cour d’Auguste*, 1673] qui mettaient en scène les personnages que l’on retrouve dans l’*Histoire des Favorites*.’ Els Höhner, Introduction, *Anne de la Roche-Guilhen, Histoire des favorites* (Saint-Etienne, Publications de l’Université de Saint-Etienne, 2005), p. 37.

2. A woman's 'Ovide'?

Villedieu's novel was written in the early 1670s, when the *histoire galante* was a budding genre; she was thus self-consciously concerned with working out its aesthetics, and staking her own claim to them.²⁶ Before considering this in detail, a brief summary of the novel is necessary. The first two volumes of *Les Exilés* are set on Thalassie, an imaginary island to which the exiles from Auguste's court have been sent. They gradually meet, and new exiles arrive. Important figures include Junie and Roseline, two female friends, and Ovide, Hortensius and Tisenius, all previous members of Auguste's court. They begin to tell each other their stories and explain why they have ended up on Thalassie. Volumes three and four feature Auguste, Horace and Virgile and narrate what was happening in Rome while the exiles are on the island. The final two volumes move between both places and more exiles arrive on Thalassie.

Villedieu signals her adherence to the *galant* aesthetic in the novels' opening sequence. The imaginary island setting immediately identifies the disregard for historical fact typical of the genre of *l'histoire galante*: this island does not exist, and even if it did, Ovid was exiled to Tomis. This setting also serves the *galant* aesthetic in which islands idylls are prominent, and recalls the often-mentioned isle of Cythera, the birth-place of Venus, suggesting an atmosphere of female-orientated pleasure.²⁷ In the *fêtes galantes* of Louis XIV's court (and elsewhere) islands held a particular charm – the first fête he held in 1664 was entitled 'Les plaisirs de l'île enchantée'. Exploiting the perfect setting offered by the Isle of Thalassie, Villedieu includes a 'fête galante' in the first book of *Les Exiles*. This establishes the aesthetic of the day as the backdrop for this historical novel.

The contemporary feel is also established through the characterisation of 'Ovide' as 'galant'. This reveals a more self-conscious understanding of the place and role of *galant*

²⁶ See Grande, 'De l'amatrice à la professionnelle: Madame de Villedieu', in *Stratégies de romancières*, pp. 265-268.

²⁷ Louis Fuselier's opéra-ballet, *Les Amours d'Ovide* (1713), ends with the journey of Ovide and Julie to Cythera.

culture in late seventeenth-century France. As we explored in the previous chapter, Ovid's characterisation as 'galant' had its complexities because of the erotic and sensual nature of his love poetry and the rumours about his life connected to this. Indeed, both Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen portray Ovide as an 'inconstant' philanderer, a lover who is 'peu fidèle'; both describe him as 'galant'. In Villedieu's novel, Junie asserts: 'Ovide est un inconstant de profession, que les charmes de Venus même n'arrêtaient pas' (I, p. 36). These dangerous charms are described as 'galants': 'il a je ne sais quoi de galant et de spirituel dans la physionomie qui m'a charmée à son abord' (I, p. 35). Roseline later confronts Ovid:

“Comment voulez-vous?” interrompit Roseline, “que cette défiance soit si aisée à dissiper en faveur d'un amant comme Ovide ? Votre vie n'est qu'un tissu d'histoires galantes, votre cœur s'est promené depuis la pourpe jusqu'à la houlette. De quel préservatif faudrait-il user pour ne pas être au nombre des Sulpicie, Virginie, Terentia et même Julie?” (II, p. 91)

Indeed, the novel recounts Ovid's changing affections for a series of women (Julie, Sulpicie, Terentia, Junie...). The term 'galant' in both these contexts takes on the connotations of 'la libertinage galant'.²⁸ In characterising Ovide in this way, Villedieu was likely to have been influenced by Gilbert's play, *Les Amours d'Ovide*, in which Ovide's inconstancy is exaggerated almost to the point of caricature,²⁹ as well as by the *roman baroque*.³⁰ Like Villedieu, La Roche-Guilhen describes 'Ovide' explicitly as 'galant': 'Ovide célèbre par son esprit et né pour la galanterie la plus tendre' (p. 294) and 'le galant Ovide' (p. 295), and yet the 'galant' Ovide is a sensual and inconstant character, not a refined *galant homme*. With the same impassioned conviction, 'Ovide' falls in love with Julie, Livie and then Livie's freedwoman, Eurilame. He is deceitful as he maintains a pretence of affection for Livie even though he is at the same time confessing his love for

²⁸ Keller-Rahbé, 'Madame de Villedieu et la galanterie des anciens ou le savoir-faire d'une mondaine', in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nèdelec, p. 171.

²⁹ Gilbert, *Les Amours d'Ovide*. Gilbert stages a competition between Hyacinthe who represents constancy in love and Ovide who represents inconstancy. In the speech he makes in his defence, Ovide says 'lorsque j'agis ici/j'agis en galant homme', p.10.

³⁰ See Grande, 'Les cœurs blessés: l'inconstance masculine', in *Stratégies de romancières*, pp. 89-93.

Eurilame. La Roche-Guilhen's Ovide explains, 'et sentant ma veine échauffée, je commençai un ouvrage bien opposé à l'Art d'Aimer, sous le titre de Remèdes d'Amour' (p. 306). In this case, the characterisation of Ovide as fickle allows for exploration of the complexities and tensions of love. Critics suggest that the contradictions in sentiment between the art of loving and the cures for when it fails, epitomised by Ovid's two poems, provide a tighter emotional intensity, befitting, in La Roche-Guilhen's case, the brevity of the *nouvelle*.³¹

These novels, and in particular that of Villedieu, register an ambivalence towards, or even criticism of, the 'galant' deceitful inconstancy Ovide espouses. Both novels give 'Ovide' the opportunity to speak but instead of using this ventriloquism to express identification with Ovide, as we saw in the previous chapter, the views Ovide is made to adopt are received with scrutiny and criticism by other characters in the novels, and in particular by female characters. The feminine – or even possibly feminist – angle of the works of both Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen should not be overlooked.³² Villedieu, in particular, is quick to show female reactions to the sort of character Ovide represents. These reactions are usually mediated through responses to 'Ovide's' verse. The inclusion of incidental verse within a work of prose was central to *galant* aesthetic, generating a work of generic and formal hybridity.³³ By appropriating his voice, by giving him words of her own imaginings, Villedieu manipulates her portrayal of Ovide and of his sort of *galanterie*.

Throughout the novel, sections and snippets of 'Ovide's' poetry are read, circulated, and discovered in *cassettes* or writing tables, and the reactions that are privileged are those of women. The novel opens as Ovide overhears Junie and Roseline discuss his poetry. Junie

³¹ Viala suggests the contradictions in sentiment between *l'Art d'aimer* and *Remèdes de l'amour* had a formative influence on the *nouvelle galante*. Viala, *La France galante*, p. 265-266.

³² Keller-Rahbé argues 'la composante féminine, voire féministe est en effet au cœur de l'entreprise de réécriture galante des anciens par Mme de Villedieu'. 'Madame de Villedieu et la galanterie des anciens', in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédelec, p. 169.

³³ See also 'Chapitre 2: L'hybridation générique: un art galant', in Nathalie Grande, *Le rire galant: usages du comique dans les fictions narratives de la seconde moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: H. Champion, 2011), pp.47-80.

has had an emotional reaction; she is titillated and curious to meet the man who has written this poetry:

Quand je lis les endroits passionnés de ses élégies, ou les divers caractères de l'amour sont si naïvement dépeints, je sens une émotion de plaisir qui me fait désirer ardemment de voir l'homme admirable à qui je la dois; je m'intéresse dans ce qui le touche [...]. (I, p. 5)

Roseline is more sceptical. When Junie and Roseline find a *cassette* containing some of Ovide's poems, Roseline mockingly reads lines aloud:

“Voici une bonne lettre,” dit Roseline en éclatant de rire [...]
“aspirez-vous à l'avantage
De me faire aimer constamment?
Ha! Vous êtes femme Corinne,
Et bien une femme divine,
Vous laisserez mon Cœur dans son égarement.
Cela s'appelle,” ajouta Roseline [...]“qu'Ovide nous charge de ses crimes, et que non content de trahir notre sexe il le rend coupable de toutes ses trahisons”. (I, p. 73-74)

Roseline criticises Ovide's portrayal of Corinne, shrewdly observing that he tries to blame Corinne for his own inconstancy. Similarly, in another episode, when Horace and Ovide both compete for Tullia's heart, Ovide's poetry fails to suitably move her and she prefers Horace. Later in the novel, another character, Arimante, explains how he tried to use expressions from Ovide's *Art d'Aimer* to woo Julie, but to no avail. Some of the female readers Villedieu describes are critical and independently minded, resisting the role of the female reader he constructs; unlike Junie, they are not seduced by his words.

Villedieu is laying claim to the role of women as arbiters of taste and culture, a perspective crucial to the evolving aesthetic of *galanterie* and the importance placed on social interaction with women. There can be no doubt of the important role women played in *mondain*, *galant* circles, as critics such as Joan Dejean have argued,³⁴ salon culture

³⁴ Dejean, *Tender geographies*.

placed women in positions of authority over cultural and aesthetic matters.³⁵ Villedieu is also suggesting that the faithless *galanterie* of Ovide is not necessarily the preferred treatment of, or idea of, women. She offers an anti-hero as protagonist of her novel, not to champion the inconstancy he represents, but rather to question its value. Indeed, in the final volume, published six years after the first volume, in the ‘seconde apologie’, Ovide finally explains himself to Junie, and the reward for this interaction based on respectful dialogue is her heart. In the previous chapter we saw how L’Heritier conceived of Ovid as an apologist for women and ‘l’adrateur du beau sexe’ (p. 410), writing twenty years earlier, Villedieu is more sceptical, playfully depicting readers who resist the inconstant *galanterie* of ‘Ovide’, in favour of more respectful treatment.

3. Reading with *la fausse clé*

Other kinds of reading practices are explored in this novel. Ovid’s assimilation into *galanterie* was not restricted to matters of amorous sentiment, but like the phenomenon itself, was broader and more complex. In the previous chapter, I suggested that the role of readers in Ovid’s story (Augustus, Julia, other contemporaries) was part of his appeal to this sociable literary culture. In this chapter, I will extend this by showing how the communities of readers suggested by Ovid’s use of the pseudonym ‘Corinna’ – which, in the popular imagination was thought to refer to Julia – are reworked to explore seventeenth-century reading practices.

The poem Villedieu’s Ovide writes, *La Déesse des cœurs*, is like Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria* in using the pseudonym, ‘Corinne’, to refer to his lover, Julie. Villedieu thus engages with the Corinna scandal at the heart of Ovid’s story, exploiting the fact that he may have been exiled for referring to a member of Augustus’ court under a pseudonym. She offers a satirical portrait of the curiosity, speculation and confusion engendered in her

³⁵ See Ian Maclean, *Woman Triumphant: feminism in French literature 1610-1652* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

fictional readers by their desires to identify 'Corinne'. Reading practices which seek to decipher names in fiction cause mayhem in her novel, as she evokes a small inquisitive and gossip-ridden community in which poet, audience and muse are bound together.

Even away from Rome, on the island of Thalassie, this culture of vigilance and speculation is evident. When fellow exile Hortensius meets Ovide, he asks him to explain why he was exiled. Based on his interpretation of Corinne as Terentia, Hortensius has assumed that Terentia was Ovide's lover. Ovide then tells his story, the interpolated *Histoire d'Ovide* in which he gives the reasons for his exile. Unlike other Lives of Ovid, Villedieu puts her interpretation of the reasons for his exile in Ovide's mouth, ensuring a semblance of authority and definitiveness. He explains that *La Déesse des Cœurs* was about Julie:

J'avais fait en ce temps-là un ouvrage intitulé *La Déesse des Cœurs*, où feignant que l'amour trouvant Vénus trop occupée à charmer les mortels, s'était avisé de lui donner un aide et sous le nom de la Déesse au Cœurs, avait créé la Princesse Julie la compagne de Vénus sur terre. La Princesse, par une imprudence dont je n'ai jamais pu la corriger, avait donné cette pièce à Terentia. Le nom de Julie était déguisé sous celui de Corinne, mais le portrait de Corinne ressemblait si parfaitement à la fille d'Auguste, que Terentia n'eut aucune peine à la reconnaître. (I, p. 18-19)

The tale takes us back to Rome. Ovide suggests that there was a need for secrecy as Julie was not supposed to show this poem to anyone else. The risk that she might, or that it might fall into the wrong hands, was such that he still thought it necessary to disguise her name under a pseudonym. Or perhaps, circulation was exactly what he hoped for and so it was necessary to keep her identity secret. In any case, the protection was not sufficient: Terentia quickly grasped the identity of Corinne. Twice she tried to warn Ovide: 'Tachez à rendre Julie plus avare de vos ouvrages, votre amour y parle intelligiblement et son langage pourrait être entendu de quelque personne moins discrète que je ne le suis' (I, p. 20). The second time, Terentia's warning itself had to be in coded language as Agrippa and Crassus were present. Ovide deciphers this: 'que par ma déesse, que par le trouble de Jupiter, elle

entendait me parler de Julie et m'avertir que César s'offensait des soins assidus que je rendais à cette Princesse' (I, p. 22). Here, different names ('déesse', 'Jupiter') are being used to exclude Agrippa and Crassus. But more confusion follows: Crassus, who is in love with Terentia, misinterprets both the warning – 'Mais Crassus qui nous écoutait attentivement, ne donnait pas cette explication aux paroles de Terentia' (I, p. 22) – and the poem, he confronts Ovide: 'mais ce que je soutiens, c'est que Sulpicie n'est pas la Déesse d'Ovide; vous savez trop bien faire vos applications pour donner ce nom de déesse à la femme de Tisenius [...] Vos véritables adorations sont pour Terentia' (I, p. 25). Crassus' jealous passion for Terentia has coloured his judgement. When he sees Terentia leaving Ovide's apartments, where she has been trying to warn the poet once again, Crassus challenges Ovide to a duel; Julie witnesses this and in her alarm gives the secret away. Her lover, Marcel, thus discovers the love between Julie and Ovide; he tells Auguste and Ovide is banished.

Paradoxically, Terentia's insistence in trying to warn Ovide to be more discreet indirectly caused the secret of his love affair with Julie to be revealed. The poem was both too explicit for one reader (Terentia) and not clear enough to another (Crassus). This chaotic ordeal was the outcome of readers' misguided attempts to decipher the poem. There are other instances of readers who attempt to uncover Corinne's identity: Tisenius, finding fragments of Ovide's poetry, thinks Corinne refers to his own wife Sulpicie; and Lentulus also believes Corinne refers to Terentia, for whom he too had feelings. Villedieu demonstrates that every reader reads according to their own interest; and that since obsessive jealousy colours these readings they will always find what they are looking for.

Is Villedieu deflecting her own readers from interpreting characters in her novel as pseudonyms for real people? Critics argue that reading practices described in novels of this period can be understood as guides or clues for how the author intended the novel itself to

be read.³⁶ Kenny's reading of Scudéry's 1661 nouvelle, *Célinte, Nouvelle Première*, is an excellent example of this. In the prologue, a group of friends meet and one tells a story in which the figures are all disguised under pseudonyms, 'c'est une aventure qui a plusieurs événements véritables qu'on a écrite sous des noms supposés' (p. 57). The group then playfully try to decipher who the story is really about: 'this model of reading turns the text into a kind of riddle'.³⁷ Yet, as Kenny shows, this is complicated further since we are told that the names of the characters in the *prologue* are also pseudonyms. Kenny argues:

The identity-tease relates not just to the protagonists within the *Célinte* story, but also to the interlocutors in the Prologue – who are explicitly presented as real people hidden under pseudonyms – and also to the unnamed author herself, into whose identity the 'libraire' tells the readers not 'to inquire too curiously'.³⁸

In this respect, the anonymous author is implying that her readers will mirror the curiosity the prologue characters show towards the embedded *récit*, both in their approach towards the characters of the prologue, and even towards the author herself.

Could this not also work in the opposite direction? The shambolic confusions that Villedieu describes when characters attempt to decipher pseudonyms question the validity of applying this reading method to Villedieu's novel. This is not a case of cautioning against curiosity, but instead Villedieu highlights the difference between interpretation and fact, and emphasises the dangers of confusing the two.³⁹ And yet, critics do insist on reading *Les Exilés* as a *roman à clé*. Micheline Cuénin, Gérard Letexier and Juliette

³⁶ See Richard H. Moe, 'Silent Victory: Narrative, Appropriation, and Autonomy in *La Princesse de Clèves*', *Modern Language Notes*, 104 (1989), 845-860; and Grande, 'Faut-il parler ? Faut-il se taire ? Silence et roman dans *La Princesse de Clèves* et *Les Désordres de l'amour*', *Dix-septième siècle*, 207 (2000), 185-198.

³⁷ Neil Kenny, *The uses of curiosity in Early Modern France and Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 371. See also Madeleine de Scudéry, *Célinte, nouvelle Première*, ed. by Alain Niderst (Paris: A. G. Nizet 1979), p. 18.

³⁸ Kenny, p. 371.

³⁹ Though curiosity had long been considered a sin, this was beginning to change in the seventeenth century and I do not think Villedieu is condemning it as a vice. The dictionaries make a distinction between 'good' and 'bad' curiosity. 'Il y a une bonne et une mauvaise curiosité' (Furetière, *Dictionnaire universel*, p. 589), as does Richelet: 'il y a une curiosité blamable et une curiosité louable' (Richelet, *Dictionnaire français*, p. 457). For more, see Barbara Benedict: *Curiosity: A Cultural history of early modern inquiry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

Cherbuliez⁴⁰ have all suggested that this novel is a *roman à clé* with Auguste as Louis XIV and Ovide as Fouquet, his finance minister and patron of the arts, who was arrested in 1661.⁴¹ His trial, which lasted until 1664, culminating in his imprisonment in 1665, was the seventeenth-century equivalent of a media scandal, and the nobility were gripped (if they were not implicated), as the letters of Madame de Sévigné suggest.⁴² Fouquet, it must be said, organised a sumptuous fete at his abode in Vaux-le-Vicomte in August of 1661. It is entirely possible that the *fête galante* at the opening of Villedieu's novel is a reference to this very *fête*, the extravagance of which might have been the catalyst for Louis XIV's decision that Fouquet's power needed to be tempered.

Critics strengthen their case for this reading not by considering the comments on pseudonyms within the actual story, but by referring to the play Villedieu wrote about ten years earlier in 1665, *Le Favori*, which is also considered to be about Fouquet.⁴³ These critics go further than simply associating Ovide with Fouquet: Letexier suggests that Terentia is Madame de Montespan (Louis XIV's mistress). However, even if we accept that we are to read Ovid as a pseudonym for a real-life figure, surely he could equally refer to Bussy-Rabutin? Like Ovid, but unlike Fouquet, his downfall was caused by a literary work, a *roman à clé*, the *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules*, which offended the King when published with a *clé* that identified the characters.⁴⁴ In evoking a world in which manuscripts, particularly love letters, are seized upon, tampered with and read without the author's permission, Villedieu might also be referring to her own experience and the recent

⁴⁰ Cuénin, pp. 201-210; Letexier, pp. 71-87; Cherbuliez, *The Place of Exile*, pp. 127-132.

⁴¹ See Daniel Dessert, *Fouquet* (Paris: Fayard, 1987).

⁴² *Correspondance de Mme de Sévigné*, ed. by Roger Duchêne, 3 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), I, pp. 48-82.

⁴³ 'Le Favori' by Villedieu was put on by Molière's troupe at the Théâtre du Palais Royal on the 24th April, 1665, 5 months after Fouquet's trial and it was performed before the court at Versailles in June. Chloe Hogg suggests that this play made allusions to Fouquet's trial. Chloe Hogg, 'Staging Fouquet: Historical and Theatrical contexts of Villedieu's *Le Favori*', in *A Labor of Love: Critical Reflections on the Writings of Marie-Catherine Desjardins (Mme de Villedieu)* ed. by Roxanne Lalande (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000), pp. 43-63.

⁴⁴ *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules, par Bussy-Rabutin, A l'hôpital des fous, chez l'auteur* (1666). In the chapters of his *Mémoires* recounting the events of 1662-1665, he describes how his novel was tampered with and changed, leading to his disgrace. *Mémoires de Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy, Nouvelle édition revue sur un manuscrit de famille par Ludovic Lalanne*, 2 vols. (Paris: Charpentier, 1857) II, p. 241-242.

scandal surrounding the *Lettres et billets galants* of 1668.⁴⁵ In 1667, Villedieu claims, her lover, Antoine de Villedieu, sold love-letters she had written to him to the publisher Claude Barbin.⁴⁶ In 1668, without her consent, Claude Barbin published these as *Lettres et Billets Galants*, with her name, Marie-Catherine Desjardins, on the *Privilège du Roi*. After vehement complaints from Desjardins he retracted her name and had them published anonymously.⁴⁷

However, these readings fail to consider Villedieu's treatment of pseudonyms within the novel. It is not sufficient, therefore, to consider *Les Exilés* as 'a riddle' that can be deciphered once the names of the characters are decoded. By considering Villedieu's treatment of the problems in deciphering 'Corinne', it is clear that she is exploring this very tradition of reading, identifying its problems and flaws. If her novel is about Fouquet – or Bussy-Rabutin for that matter – it serves as a satirical depiction of the climate of gossip, scandal and speculation in which such figures came to be disgraced. And speculative *à clé* readings – readings *sans clé* – which serve to accuse and incriminate certain authors, are part of that climate. Mixing interpretation with fact results in readings that are accusatory: Villedieu is making the case for literary interpretation that is open-ended, rather than narrowing and deciphering.

By offering a portrait of the *roman à clé* and some of its problems, Villedieu is also hinting at the need to move away from this kind of reading and writing practice. Her *histoire galante* is concerned with generic newness in reaction not only to ancient models, but also to more recent modern ones. Marie-Jeanne Lallemand has argued that it offers a

⁴⁵ The complex struggles for authority between Claude Barbin and Villedieu went on beyond this affair. See Keller-Rahbé, 'Mme de Villedieu, "la poule aux oeufs d'or" de Claude Barbin?', in *Les Arrière-boutiques de la littérature : auteurs et imprimeurs-libraires aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, ed. by Edwige Keller-Rahbé, pp. 87-111.

⁴⁶ Critics argue that mishandled love letters and confession in women's novels allow female authors to articulate the conditions of publication in which they might experience a loss of control or violation of privacy. For a discussion of this phenomenon in relation to Madame de Lafayette, see Joan Dejean, 'Lafayette's Ellipses: The Privileges of Anonymity', *Publications of the Modern Languages Association*, 99 (1984), 884-902.

⁴⁷ She wrote to Barbin, 'Mais, Monsieur, ces lettres là ne sont premises qu'à mon cœur', Desjardins à Barbin, Amsterdam, le 25 Mai; quoted in Cuénin, *Roman et société sous Louis XIV*, Annexe, p. 92.

parody of the *roman baroque* and the *roman à clé* through the use of an inconstant hero, more akin to the Hylas-type of the *roman baroque*; through its length (six short volumes), the exaggerated use of lost manuscripts and interpolated narratives, which, instead of giving the novel structure, instead render it chaotic.⁴⁸ Indeed, when discovered manuscripts promise to act as ordering catalysts in the plot, they often in fact increase the chaos of the novel's structure, preventing dénouement, leaving things unravelled and unfinished. However, 'parody' is too strong a term for the subtlety of generic tensions in this novel: Villedieu is self-consciously carving out a new generic and stylistic terrain, an island of her own, whilst simultaneously asserting her debt to her predecessors. As Kenny's example demonstrates, Scudéry, whose own pseudonym was 'Sapho', was the great pioneer of the *roman à clé*. In *Les Exilés*, Villedieu depicts tradesmen coming from Sappho's island, Lesbos, to sell their goods on Thalassie: 'il y avait deux ou trois habitants de Lesbos qui venaient tous les ans dans cette saison vendre les marchandises aux exilés de Thalassie.' (I, p. 9) Likewise, gardeners and builders leave Lesbos, Sappho's island, to work on Thalassie:

Il [Hortensius] proposa d'aller faire un tour dans un assez beau jardin qu'il avait fait faire depuis peu. Thalassie n'était pas si peuplée que plusieurs autres îles dont la mer Egée est toute couverte; mais elle n'était pas entièrement dénuée de commodités nécessaires à la vie. Le voisinage de Lesbos lui fournissait des ouvriers expérimentés en tous sortes d'ouvrages. Hortensius les avait employés à charmer la longueur de son exil. (I, p. 70).

'Ouvriers' experienced in all sorts of 'ouvrages' leave Lesbos and come to Thalassie to make the gardens more charming. Being near Lesbos means that the *jardins* on Thalassie are well cultivated. Villedieu (or Marie-Catherine Desjardins) refers to Scudéry's pseudonym in order to acknowledge the literary and cultural debt she owes her, but also suggests that it is time to move on from the tastes and concerns of Scudéry's generation.

⁴⁸ Marie-Jeanne Lallemand, 'Les Exilés: forme et signification', in *Madame de Villedieu, ou les audaces du roman*, ed. by Keller-Rahbé and Grande (Paris: H. Champion, 2007), pp. 57-70.

The 'ouvrages' are now being produced on Thalassie; and Thalassie, not Lesbos, is now the most charming island in the Aegean sea.

4. 'Il ne pouvait se dire innocent, puisque César l'avait jugé coupable': self-conscious secrecy

So far this chapter has treated the aesthetic and cultural concerns explored in these novels, in particular the earlier one of Villedieu, taking the characterisation of 'Ovide' as my starting point. The figure of 'Ovide' is used to negotiate and explore elements of a *moderne* aesthetic, and I have shown that this is partly due to elements of his story which render him so highly congenial to a sociable literary climate. I now want to consider the political dimension of Villedieu's and La Roche-Guilhen's novels. Both depict the passions and private lives of figures of Augustus' court, and thereby present illustrious figures of antiquity in less than flattering terms. Furthermore, the passions of the Emperor are described on a par with those of his courtiers. This has worrying implications if, the exact allusion to Fouquet notwithstanding, the world depicted is reminiscent of the contemporary political and literary climate; and becomes still more intriguing considering that it is the *exiled* courtiers' stories that are privileged, and that the voices silenced by the authority figure are the ones being recovered. Concern with secrecy and disclosure which these exiles' narratives reveal is another means by which Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen engage self-consciously with the question of historiography, such that, I argue, this in itself becomes a political gesture.

Ideas about disclosure, loyalty and secrecy were formulated in many of the theoretical discussions of the role of the courtier so important in this period;⁴⁹ and these in turn influenced fictional writing set in courts, where the focus was often on revelation, secrecy, suspicion and distrust, the opposition between *être* et *paraître* – the most famous

⁴⁹ For example, Nicolas Faret, *L'Honnête homme ou l'art de plaire à la cour* (Paris: A. Courbé, 1630) and Jacques Callières, *La Fortune des gens de qualité et des gentilshommes particuliers, enseignant l'art de vivre à la cour suivant les maximes de la politique et de la morale* (Paris: L. Chamhoudry, 1658).

example of this being Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678). These theoretical discussions tended to advocate dissimulation (hiding one's true self) and silence as being the safest way to 'live well' at court. Just as Ovid was deployed as a *galant* poet to explore the aesthetic aims of these novelists, I argue that he is also deployed as an embittered exile to establish their political ones.

The vigilance and fear of the court world is evoked in both women's novels through the pervasive atmosphere of secrecy. Readers are constantly reminded that words can be treacherous, revealing actions or desires that might offend the Emperor's public image or personal passions. La Roche-Guilhen's 'Histoire de Livie' takes place in 'la cour d'Auguste'. From the opening description of Livie, we are introduced to the court world of dissimulation, secrecy and deceit: 'cette fameuse impératrice, au milieu d'une pompe qui autorisait ses actions, se donnait de secrètes licences que la plus pénétrante intelligence ne pouvait démeler' (p. 294). Secrets are exchanged as means of securing or testing loyalties; in the first dialogue between Agrippa and Ovide, the former reveals his love for Julie in order to get Ovide to account for his own affections 'vous trouverez votre sureté dans la déclaration que je vous fais de mon amour pour la princesse Julie [...] après cela, Ovide, considérez si vous risquerez quelque chose en me parlant sans déguisement' (p. 298). Revealing a secret is cast in terms of a confession, of revealing a compromising truth; and speech itself becomes transgressive.

In Villedieu's novel, even once away from court and on the island, the courtiers do not shed their fear and distrust of each other. This is clear from the complex sentence near the beginning of the novel in which Ovide is evaluating who he can trust:

On s'informa d'Ovide des raisons qui l'amenaient. Il réserva cette confidence pour ses amis particuliers, et se contenta de dire aux autres qu'il obéissait aux ordres de l'Empereur. Il ajouta que sa conscience ne lui reprochait rien, mais qu'il ne pouvait se dire innocent, puisque César l'avait jugé coupable. Cette modération ne fut pas imitée par ceux qui en furent les témoins, on qualifia les ordres de l'empereur du titre

d'injustice; et suivant la maxime de la plus grande partie des exilés qui ne s'aperçoivent pas qu'en murmurant contre leur disgrâce, ils fournissent de matière aux maux qu'ils voudraient voir cesser; nos disgraciés donnèrent à leur langue la liberté qu'on refusait au reste de leur personne. (I, p. 9-10)

Ovid would only explain the reasons for his exile to his 'amis particuliers'. To the 'autres' he simply says that he followed Auguste's order, which suggests that the reason he gives his close friends might somehow contradict this order. It is ambiguous to whom 'il ajouta' is addressed, but sequentially it seems likely that this is 'les autres' – the ones to whom he will not divulge the reasons for his exile. He then adds that he cannot call himself innocent, although he has nothing on his conscience because Auguste found him guilty. The juxtaposition of his clean conscience and Auguste's accusations, clarified by the opposites 'innocence' and 'coupable', makes it clear that he would call himself innocent if it were not for Auguste's ruling, implying that he disagrees with his sentence. This statement is described as an example of 'modération', but in failing to imitate this 'modération', the 'témoins' call César's orders unjust. The interdiegetic 'témoins' ('les autres'), then complain freely – with 'liberté' – about their own exile. This, however, is described as futile, because it will only make them miserable and do nothing to engage their return. The term 'modération' is an ironic comment by the narrator, pointing to the fact that Ovide was trying to make his suggestion enigmatic, even though its meaning was nevertheless clear to those listening. This might be a direct nod to Ovid's elliptical statement in the *Tristia* 2. 207-10:

Perdiderint cum me duo crimina, carmen et error/alterius facti culpa silenda mihi/nam non sum tanti, renovem ut tua vulnera, Caesar/quem nimio plus est indoluisse semel. (*Tristia* 2. 207-210) Although two crimes, a poem and a mistake, caused my ruin, I must remain silent about the latter as I am not worthy enough to reopen your wounds, Caesar; it is enough that you should have been grieved once.

Or it might simply be an example of how Ovid is known for having been elusive as to the causes of his exile, as Scudéry's description in the 'Songe d'Hésiode' attests.

Ovide then tells his story to Hortensius, his ‘ami particulier’, and one he ‘trusts’. Hortensius thinks that Ovide was exiled for his affair with Terentia, the Emperor’s mistress and Mécène’s wife. He knows that Crassus saw Ovide leaving Terentia’s apartments and wants this explained:

Avouez la vérité mon cher Ovide, ajouta-il en souriant, Auguste vous aurait pardonné l’attentat sur le cœur de Julie si vous aviez borné à cette entreprise les effets de votre mérite; l’Empereur doit être accoutumé aux galanteries de sa fille et sa cour deviendrait déserte, si le bonheur de plaire à Julie passait pour un crime d’état. Mais vous avez attaqué ce Prince par un endroit plus sensible et Terentia s’est trouvée comprise dans l’influence de votre Etoile. (I, p. 11)

Ovide replies:

“Je suis attaché au brave Mécène par des obligations trop étroites pour faire des desseins criminels sur le cœur de son épouse”. “Hé! L’Empereur”, interrompt Hortensius, “n’est-il attaché par aucune chaîne à cet illustre favori? Que ne doit-il point au zèle et à la prudence de ce grand homme? [...] Voyons-nous qu’Auguste se fasse un scrupule de ravir à Mécène les inclinations de sa femme?” “Je ne me crois pas obligé à défendre la réputation de César, reprit Ovide, le dépit est naturel dans le cœur d’un exilé et je laisse assez de choses attachantes à Rome pour conserver quelque ressentiment contre les ordres qui m’en chassent”. (I, p. 12)

And yet, in his reply Ovide still maintains his guard. ‘Je ne me crois pas obligé de défendre la réputation de César’ is another elliptical phrase. Ovide says he wasn’t having an affair with Mécène’s wife; Hortensius replies, well, the Emperor certainly was!; Ovid answers: I’m not obliged to say he wasn’t. This echoes the phrase ‘il ne pouvait se dire innocent, puisque César l’avait jugé coupable’ that he conveys to the ‘autres’ – those he does *not* trust. Although here he is talking to Hortensius, his ‘ami particulier’, Ovide will still not disclose his true feelings. He is still protecting himself, telling Hortensius the version of the story that shows him in his best light. Although he asks Hortensius to keep this a secret – ‘puisque vous savez cet incident, repartit Ovide, il faut vous en confier le secret. Vous êtes sage et vous m’aimez, usez de ma confidence comme doit en user un honnête homme qui est dans mes intérêts’ (p. 11) – Ovide’s ellipsis makes it clear that it is not the affair with Julie he needs to be cautious about. After all, Auguste knows about this, Ovide has been

exiled and he is on the island. Instead, in addressing both Hortensius and the unspecified *témoins*, Ovide is careful about how he talks about the Emperor, careful not to be explicit about the ‘dépôt’ he feels. The vigilant and suspicious world of the court has been transplanted to the island. Although Villedieu emphasises the ongoing distrust of the ‘court of exiles’, this deliberate ambiguity on Ovide’s part also suggests an element of collusion between Ovide and the other exiles. He is also saying: ‘we all know Augustus is wrong but we cannot say this explicitly’. In this respect, saying that there is something you cannot say, identifying that there is a secret, is itself an act of disclosure, of the acknowledgement of the existence of something hidden.⁵⁰ Villedieu’s exploration of secrecy through her portrayal of Ovide also interrogates how those without power can talk obliquely about those with power.

a) The court poet

Villedieu makes it clear that Ovide has such privileged access to the royal family because he is a favoured poet:

J’ai toujours eu de libres entrées dans la maison impériale. Nous vivons dans un siècle où les sciences sont dans une grande considération. Mécène qui disposait du cœur et des finances de l’empereur, aime les gens de lettres; il est lui-même bon philosophe. (‘Seconde apologie d’Ovide’, VI, p. 465)

And the arts were considered so important that men in military and political positions also sought to cultivate their minds in their moments of leisure: ‘Agrippa tout grand capitaine qu’il était, donnait à l’étude les moments de loisir que la guerre lui laissait.’ (VI, p. 465-6). And yet, this does not make Ovide immune: he is aware that this position of favour does not legitimise his relationship with the Emperor’s daughter: ‘J’ai porté ma témérité jusques à des entreprises qui véritablement sont criminelles dans un simple Chevalier, quand elles ont pour objet la fille de son Empereur, mais qui seraient innocentes si Julie n’était que la

⁵⁰ Barthes articulates this phenomenon: ‘il faut que cacher se voie: sachez que je suis en train de vous cacher quelque chose, tel est le paradoxe actif que je dois résoudre: il faut en même temps que ça se sache et que ça ne sache pas: que l’on sache que je ne veux pas le montrer’. Barthes, *Discours d’un amoureux* (Paris: Seuil, 1977), pp. 52-53.

filles d'un Chevalier romain' (I, p. 10). Indeed, his exile demonstrates this precariousness. Poets might be important and their work favoured, but, like all courtiers, their fate remains in the hands of their ruler. The hubris, or *témérité*, of assuming otherwise comes at a serious price.

Villedieu not only explores these dynamics in her portrayal of Ovide's story, but she also addresses them directly in a conversation between the poet Virgile as he visits his disgraced poet friend Cornelius. Virgile is cynical about the poet's role in relation to power; he thinks the poet is always subservient to 'les grands', would not dare write a word against them, and entirely relies on their favour or patronage. Because of this, Virgile is not worried about his association with the disgraced Cornelius:

- Je ne suis pas assez considérable dans l'empire, repartit Virgile, pour voir mes démarches observées. La politique dont vous parlez ne convient qu'aux gens qui par leur naissance ou par leurs charges doivent des exemples au peuple. Et ce qui dans un homme de marque serait une prudence nécessaire, passerait pour une vanité ridicule dans un homme de ma sorte.

- Votre modestie vous aveugle reprit Cornelius, et vous êtes sans doute plus important dans l'esprit de l'empereur que dans le vôtre. Un poète fameux est souvent aussi nécessaire à la gloire des héros que leur propre vertu et telle personne admire la vaillance d'Achille qui peut être ignorerait qu'il eut été si Homère n'avait daigné le dire.

- C'est par ces flatteries, interrompit Virgile, qu'on trouble la raison de la plus nombreuse partie des auteurs. Ils imaginent faire le destin des plus grands hommes et murmurent contre l'oubli de leur mérite, comme contre une injustice punissable. Mais à juger des choses sainement à quoi sommes-nous propres? Et que nous doivent les souverains? Il n'y a point de poète assez téméraire pour reprendre les vices de son prince vivant et régnant et les louanges qu'il lui donne sont suspectes de mensonge. Le mépris ou l'approbation des grands, anéantit ou relève nos ouvrages; et nous chantons en vain leurs hauts faits, si les mémoires publics nous démentent. [...] Je voudrais qu'un honnête homme se rendît justice le premier; qu'il reçut comme un bienfait ce qui véritablement en est un, et que sans lui donner le caractère d'une reconnaissance, il se persuadât qu'un prince n'est plus redevable qu'aux Dieux, du moment qu'ils l'ont placé au-dessus des autres hommes (III, p. 221-222).

Virgile agrees that the poet is in fact 'souvent aussi nécessaire à la gloire des héros que leur propre vertu', but argues that individual poets are interchangeable and not valued for

themselves, ‘à quoi sommes-nous propres? et que nous doivent les souverains?’ Assuming they are irreplaceable is dangerously hubristic, ‘c’est par ces flatteries [...] qu’on trouble la raison de la plus nombreuse partie des auteurs’. Court poets must understand that they can never be indispensable to a King, who is only answerable to higher powers: ‘il se persuadât qu’un prince n’est plus redevable qu’aux Dieux, du moment qu’ils l’ont placé au dessus des autres hommes’. Cornelius’ reaction and situation in exile seems to verify Virgile’s claims: the former’s mistake was just this sort of hubris:

L’éclat de mon rang m’a si fort ébloui que je n’ai plus vu par quel chemin j’y étais monté. Sans considérer que je n’étais pas l’ouvrier de ma puissance, je l’ai trouvée si grande que je l’ai cru indépendante [...] J’ai estimé mes services si importants que j’ai cru m’être acquis par eux ce qui n’était qu’un effet de la libéralité de César. (III, p. 229)

In amongst the light-hearted *galant* setting and the literary playfulness of *Les Exilés* lie serious political questions. It must not be forgotten that the narrative is propelled by a medley of voices that have been silenced and banished by the Emperor. Although the island is buzzing with their talk, their words never get back to Rome. It all seems poignantly futile, simply serving to extend their misfortunes; and Ovide, at least, is condemned from the opening lines to die in exile: ‘le fameux Ovide, suspect à l’honneur et à l’amour de César, allait expier dans l’île de Thessalie’. (p. 2) Indeed the very fact that this community keeps growing, and there are more people who want to tell their stories, extending the novel itself, is emblematic of the power wielded by the Emperor. The more exiles there are, the more severe he is becoming – and, it must be noted, the less isolated the ‘exiles’ become. Villedieu’s story seems to confirm Virgile’s cynicism: the court poet can never escape the subservience of this position.

La Roche-Guilhen's *nouvelle* explores the questions of power and favouritism by characterizing Ovide as a *favori*.⁵¹ Her interest lies in the intricacies of certain power dynamics, rather than Ovide's role as a poet. Indeed, the whole collection of stories, *Histoire des Favorites*, explores the fate of female courtesans, the mistresses of rulers, identifying corruption at the centre of power. Like the court poet, the *favorite* has no independent stability; her position is entirely dependent on the whims of the ruler. Ovide's story occurs within the 'Histoire de Livie sous Auguste', the first tale of the second half of the collection. Ovide is not only Auguste's favourite, but also that of Livie: 'le crédit qu'Ovide s'était acquis à Rome relevait encore la noblesse de sa naissance, il était souhaité partout, l'impératrice l'aimait violemment, l'empereur le distinguait par une préférence ouverte' (p. 312). He jeopardises his favour with the Emperor by consorting with his wife; he exclaims to himself: 'Ah qu'il y aurait de plaisir, sans compter la gloire, à toucher une âme comme celle de Livie! [...] O dieux, quelle audace! Quelle folie! Non non Ovide ton cœur de se doit perdre que parmi ses esclaves' (p. 300); 'Aime donc, Ovide, aime l'impératrice des romains et immortalise ton audace par cette passion téméraire!' (p. 304). And – ever the inconstant – Ovide jeopardises his favour with Livie by falling for her freedwoman, Eurilame, who is very aware, however, of the precariousness of *her* situation, and begs Ovide to leave her alone, if only for her own sake:

Pour vous imposer un silence perpétuel, souvenez-vous que je suis sous la protection de Livie et que les bontés qu'elle a pour vous ne vous autorisent pas à manquer de retenue auprès de moi [...]. Vous êtes si accoutumé à parler de l'amour [...] qu'il est impossible de vous assujettir à un autre langage [...] mais Ovide, au nom des dieux et de la véritable estime que j'ai pour votre mérite, n'aggravez pas les chagrins de ma triste condition par des chansons que vous devez toutes à Livie. (p. 310)

⁵¹ See Laurence Brockliss, *The world of the favourite* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) and, for a discussion of the female favourite, Garance Auboyneau, 'Mises en scène de la favorite dans la littérature du 'Grand siècle' (1661-1715)' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2012).

As Eurilame's protest makes clear, the language of love that Ovide knows best is dangerous when it might offend the emotions of those in power: his Art of Loving is not conducive to the Art of Living at court.

And yet, it is not only Ovide who displays inconstant passions, fickle affections, and is shown as acting in accordance with these fluctuating emotions. Both Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen depict courts in which all the members, regardless of their rank, are motivated by passions and jealousies. As La Roche-Guilhen comments, not without a hint of irony, 'ainsi Rome était pleine de soupirants' (p. 315). Spurned and vengeful, Livie lies to Auguste, telling him that Ovide is with his mistress, Terentia: 'Auguste, frappé par l'endroit sensible en la personne de Terentia et devenu jaloux à mourir par les soins de Livie, condamna Ovide à l'exil' (p. 334). A jealous Livie appeals to the jealousy of the Emperor. The closing pages of the novel read, 'Ovide demeura dans son exil, et Livie vécut trop pour le bonheur de Rome, puisque les artifices et la faiblesse d'Auguste firent passer l'empire dans les mains de Tibère' (p. 335) – and herald a decline instigated by Augustus' weakness. And in *Les Exilés*, not only does Villedieu characterize Auguste as petty and jealous – he exiles Crassus on the false belief that he was in love with Terentia, Augustus' mistress: 'Terentia me trahit?' (III, p. 168) – but the exiles also describe this pettiness in their muted complaints about him:

Voyez en un exemple en la personne d'Auguste. Fut-il jamais un plus grand et un plus heureux prince? Son règne est doux et glorieux, il a conquis l'empire, assujetti diverses nations et fait fermer le temple de Janus. Quel autre prince sur la terre a su mieux que lui rassembler les qualités héroïques et populaires? Quel autre a jamais écouté avec plus de douceur les requêtes de ses sujets et les a répondu avec plus d'équité? Voyez comme cette équité l'abandonne en la personne de Livie et comme ce vainqueur si ferme contre les charmes de Cléopâtre se laisse surprendre par ceux de ses sujettes et sans respect pour aucunes lois mettre sur le trône impérial la femme de Tibère Néron encore vivant et voir naître dans la couche impériale l'enfant dont elle était enceinte d'un autre. (V, p. 386)

These female authors exploit the *libertin* nature of Ovid's *galanterie* to allow for exploration of the wider sexual scandals of the Roman court. But where Ovid is a love poet,

and so expected to behave in this way, both Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen show that even the highest-ranking members of the court share these petty jealousies and rivalries, exposing the corruption at the heart of the system.

b) Secrets and historiography

Although they paint a fairly bleak picture of the necessary subservience of the poet, Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen are hardly condoning this situation. Within the novels, poets are silenced, their complaints futile, their writing often seen as both evidence of a crime and a crime in itself, with the poet-power relationship inescapably one-sided. And yet, what are the novels themselves doing? Although the cacophony of interpolated *témoignages* in Villedieu's novel proves futile – no character is able to bring about pardon – in telling these stories Villedieu is suggesting that alternative versions and voices exist. Both novels, by virtue of the stories they tell, demonstrate that the official and authoritative version of events is not the only one.

La Roche-Guilhen signals the complex relationship between history and fiction at play in her work. In keeping with the practice of the genre of the secret history, La Roche-Guilhen claims that her account is authentic:

Le titre général de ces nouvelles donnera peut-être quelque curiosité à ceux qui aiment à pénétrer les intrigues des rois; mais je dois les avertir de bonne foi qu'ils ne trouveront point ici de ces secrets modernes, qui sous un air de vérité offensent la majesté des souverains. [...] On verra dans six histoires succinctes des événements qui n'ont rien du merveilleux des romans, parce qu'elles tiennent toutes de la vérité; les faits y sont incontestables, et on n'y pourra blâmer que la faiblesse de l'expression. Puisqu'il n'y a rien de fabuleux, il serait inutile de vouloir justifier l'imagination. (*Première Partie: Préface*, p. 41-42)

Grande has offered some reasons for why authors should lay claim to historical accuracy in texts which everyone knows are not based on historical research.⁵² These claims are a means of legitimizing the otherwise sidelined genre of the *nouvelle* by approximating it to

⁵² Grande, 'La métamorphose galante de l'histoire antique: modalités et enjeux d'une poétique' in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nédélec, pp. 229-244.

the prestigious genre of history writing; they allow for a certain psychological *vraisemblance*; but mainly these claims to historical truth create a sense of scandal and intrigue, and gossip always sells. Claims to authenticity and exclusivity entertain, titillate, and help attract readers.⁵³ They also allow for engagement with historiography itself.

La Roche-Guilhen has consciously revised Villedieu's version of Ovid's story, of which she must have been aware: *Les Exilés* was such a success, and published by La Roche-Guilhen's own publisher, Claude Barbin, while she was still in Paris. And yet, La Roche-Guilhen chooses to reverse the reason given by Villedieu for Ovide's exile. Villedieu's Ovide corrects Hortensius for assuming that his affair was with the Emperor's mistress, Terentia, by telling him it was actually with the Emperor's daughter, Julie; La Roche-Guilhen's Ovide has an affair with the Emperor's wife, Livie, and not his daughter. Although it is not an exact reversal, through the references to rumour, the narrator in La Roche-Guilhen's version self-consciously draws attention to this story's status as a correction: 'Le vulgaire attribua son exil à une secrète intelligence avec Julie, et peu de personnes pénétrèrent le mystère de son commerce avec l'impératrice' (p. 335). In the *préface* to Ovide's story, La Roche-Guilhen appeals to 'ceux qui connaissent l'antiquité' as they 'savent qu'Ovide était le plus agréable et le plus voluptueux des romains' (p. 289). But those who know Ovid's story – and this is not limited to those who know Latin – will know that at its heart lies an irrecoverable mystery. Other traits signal the fictionalisation present in her account, such as the subplot of the story about Arismène. The claims in La Roche-Guilhen's *préface* nod to this fictionalisation through its very denial.

⁵³ Ferret makes this point in relation to the genre of 'vies privées' that flourished in the eighteenth century. Olivier Ferret, 'Inventing private lives: the representation of private lives in French *Vies privées*', in *Representing private lives of the Enlightenment*, ed. by Andrew Kahn (Oxford: SVEC, 2010), pp. 53-75, p. 60.

Unlike La Roche-Guilhen, Villedieu makes no claims of authenticity.⁵⁴ Rather her tale is flagrantly fictional. The novel is set on Thalassie, an imaginary island. The second character we meet after Ovide is Junie, and not the Julie of history: this is a tongue-in-cheek reminder that we are in the world of Villedieu's imagining, that this is her version of history.⁵⁵ The critic Arthur Flannigan has argued that the mixture of history and fiction in Villedieu's work to be a function of a feminine psychology, resulting in a less linear and teleological narrative; it thus represents the 'feminisation of history'.⁵⁶ However, in line with more recent critics, I argue that combining history and fiction is a deliberate rhetorical device that complements the self-conscious concern to depict the relationships between disclosure and power demonstrated thus far by *Les Exilés*.⁵⁷ Both novelists flag up the fictionalisation in their accounts. Instead of actually uncovering what happened, Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen demonstrate the possibility of another version of events. Rather than relegating these tales to the world of fantasy and gossip, this deliberate fictionalisation pinpoints two concerns of the secret history genre: to destabilise official historical narratives by suggesting that they too are embellished, and to question the very possibility of any objective version. Their implication is that 'history' or rather 'official history' is itself only a version of events.

In her analysis of the 'Secret History' in England in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Rebecca Bullard makes a similar argument. She suggests that the use of fiction is an intentional and self-conscious rhetorical device:

⁵⁴ Villedieu's novel was translated into English as a 'secret history': *The Secret History of the Court of Augustus* (London: 1729). For more on Villedieu's translations into English, see Donna Kuizenga, 'Madame de Villedieu englished: les traductions en anglais des ouvrages de Villedieu au XVIIe siècle', in *Madame de Villedieu, romancière, Nouvelles perspectives de recherche*, ed. by Keller-Rahbé, pp.145-160.

⁵⁵ The names of other figures in *Les Exilés* are also complex. Some have names that are meant to portray the historical figures that existed, but their stories are not necessarily accurate and their acquaintance not necessarily possible. In other cases, there is no historical counterpart.

⁵⁶ Arthur Flannigan, 'Mme de Villedieu's *Les Désordres de l'Amour*: the feminization of history', *Esprit Créateur*, 23 (1983), 94-106.

⁵⁷ See for example, Faith Beasley, 'Villedieu's Metamorphosis of judicious history: *Les Désordres de l'amour*', *Actes de Wake Forest*, (Paris-Seattle-Tübingen, *Papers in Seventeenth-Century French Literature*, 'Biblio 17', 1987), pp. 397-398.

They suggest that all historical narrative, including secret history itself, might be revised or reinterpreted should further information come to light and that any version of events might be built on fictional rather than factual foundations. Its self-reflexive character makes secret history one of the early modern period's most complex forms of polemical writing. Secret histories differ from most other contemporary accounts of conspiracy and political intrigue because of the highly self-conscious approach that they adopt towards the discourse of disclosure. [...] Many secret historians did not intend their claims to disclose secret intelligence to be taken as literally true, but, rather that they regarded such gestures as a rhetorical device.⁵⁸

As secret histories (or as texts in which historical secrets about those in power are said to be revealed) La Roche-Guilhen's and Villedieu's texts provide a critical insight into the workings of courts and the centre of power. It does not matter if the secrets told are not the actual secrets because flagging up the existence of secrecy is itself an act of disclosure, as the subtleties of Ovide's communication with the other exiles in Villedieu's novel shows. The stories in *Les Exilés* explore the relationship between secrecy and disclosure in modes of communication, and focus on the dangers of confusing interpretation with truth. This danger is also a comment that both these novels are making about historiography. Historians, like poets and *favoris* are beholden to the authority of the figure in power, as Villedieu's Ovide himself comments:

Hé, par votre foi, poursuit Ovide d'un ton ironique, pensez-vous que cette vertu, cette bravoure et cette magnificence fussent telles en effet qu'elles nous ont été rapportées par les historiens? Ceux qui écrivaient les actions de ces héros étaient leurs compatriotes. (p. 82)

As an embittered exile, full of 'dépit', Ovide provides the voice of cynicism and ironic dissent; he is the one who sees through the mechanisms of power to the bleak reality that lies beyond.

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This chapter has traced how 'Ovide' became almost synonymous with the word 'galant' even when characterised in a form independent of his poetry, and has sought to identify the

⁵⁸ Rebecca Bullard, *The Politics of Disclosure, 1674-1725: Secret History Narratives* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009), p. 11.

interplay between translations of his poetry and these novels. Over the course of the twenty years between the publication of Villedieu's and La Roche-Guilhen's novels 'Ovide' has become a 'galant' type, allowing writers to explore different facets of this cultural category. I have also shown how details of his life – the role of readers in his story, the mixing of public and private in his love poetry, his apparent use of a pseudonym – explain why Ovid appealed to this sociable literary culture.

In both novels, empathy with 'Ovide' was established by the other 'type' he encapsulates: the exile. In telling this story both writers self-consciously perform a fictional act, and subvert the principal 'biographème' associated with this figure – that the reasons for his exile are a mystery. This allows them to tell a tale that is flagrantly fictional, although – and this occurs with varying degrees – it also contains some semblance of history. Through this combination, both novels emphasise the fact that we do not know the reasons for his exile. This silence is presented as being due to the power structures that dictate what he can and cannot say; it stems from Ovid's fear of the Emperor. Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen both criticise and redress this restriction, showing how all history requires a narrative, and all narrative is slanted, interpretive, selective and usually dictated by those in power. These *histoires galantes*, therefore, engage with Ovid's *Tristia* or with the view of Ovid as an embittered exile, as much as they do with the 'galant' figure of his love poetry. Like Bayle, they build upon the complicated channels of communication between Ovid and Augustus established by his elliptical statements in the *Tristia* and its entry into 'the Ovid myth'. Ovid, the letter-writing exile, trying to forge contact with the city he has left behind, and in particular, with his Emperor, will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Parallel: comparative uses of the figure ‘Ovide’ by Bouhours and Bussy-Rabutin

The *personae* of the lover and the exile that Ovid constructs in his poetry were converted in this period into the ‘galant’ poet and the embittered or lamenting exile. However, these ‘types’ should not be seen as simplifying or reductive; on the contrary, as this chapter will show, there was considerable flexibility and complexity in both these definitions. As we have already explored, Ovid was characterised as embodying either or both sorts of *galanterie* – the refined and the licentious. His position as an exile contains its own complexities, which lie particularly in how his discussion of its causes was restricted by his fear of offending Augustus. Ovid’s experience of exile was therefore understood as being tightly bound up with his communication of it in the letters he sent back to Rome; the epistolary nature of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* were formative in shaping attitudes to his exile.

In the previous chapter, we explored the possibility that Ovid might be a pseudonym for contemporary disgraced figures of Louis XIV’s court, such as Nicolas Fouquet or possibly Bussy-Rabutin; and although I argued that exact parallels might be restrictive, Villedieu was nevertheless engaging with the contemporary political and literary climate. Both of these comparisons (Ovid-Fouquet; Ovid-Bussy) are articulated explicitly in a text published at the height of the *querelle*: le Père Bouhours’ *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1689).¹ Bouhours selects a particular angle in his portrayal of Ovid, characterising his ‘Ovide’ not as the lover of the versions by Villedieu and La Roche-Guilhen; nor as the rhetorically playful and elusive exile of Bayle’s and Villedieu’s versions; nor as the stylistically innovative poet of the translators’ prefaces. Instead,

¹ Dominique Bouhours, *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1689).

Bouhours casts Ovid as a lamenting exile, writing epistles in which he is desperate to appease his Emperor and to elicit forgiveness. Using the ‘parallel’ format inherited from Plutarch, Bouhours compares ancient and modern in order to paint a favourable and sympathetic portrait of the two French exiles; he focuses in particular on Bussy-Rabutin, who receives lengthier and more thorough treatment than Fouquet, and compares Bussy’s letters to Louis XIV with Ovid’s letters to Augustus.

The complexities of the different facets of ‘Ovide’s’ characterisation are not lost here. On the contrary, this chapter will argue that the very plurality of what ‘Ovide’ might signify is revealed by Bouhours’ project. The correspondence between Bussy and Bouhours means that we can access Bussy’s reactions to this comparison and observe how his conception of it differs from that of Bouhours. By exploring the stylistic traits of their letters of lament, Bouhours shows how much more obedient, sincere and loyal a subject Bussy is to Louis XIV than Ovid was to Augustus. Bussy, of course, was naturally invested in a comparison that would show him in such a flattering light; nevertheless, his concern with his own image eclipses some of the attentiveness to the King that Bouhours suggests is characteristic of Bussy. Ever artful and playful, Bussy also draws on the comparison with Ovid for ends that are more self-serving and ambiguous, and that might not purely be in the service of the King.

The similarities in Ovid’s and Bussy’s stories are obvious: both offended their ruler by something they wrote, both were exiled (though in very different conditions) and both wrote letters from exile to their rulers in the hope that their sentences would be retracted. Marie-Claire Chatelain has recently published an article in the *La galanterie des anciens* (2012) in which she explores some of the angles of this comparison between Bussy and Ovid, as it is mediated by Bouhours’ book.² Her argument centres particularly on Bussy’s

² Marie-Claire Chatelain, ‘Bussy-Rabutin et la figure galante d’Ovide: modèle, parallèle, identification personnelle’, in *La Galanterie des anciens*, ed. by Grande and Nèdelec, pp.17-33.

galanterie; she considers Ovid's influence on Bussy's literary work, and the nature of Bussy's translations of Ovid. In this final chapter, my focus is different. I am interested in a further point of similarity between Bussy and Ovid: their concern with posterity and the self-fashioning nature of both their exile writing. For although both men wrote letters to their rulers, both included these letters in documents which would have a public readership. They had an eye to how they would be seen by readers other than Augustus and Louis XIV, both contemporary and in the future. Ovid's addresses to Augustus were included in the *Tristia*, a collection of poems which as a whole had a public addressee. Bussy's case was similar: his letters to the King were incorporated into Bouhours' *Pensées ingénieuses*, and they were also included in his own *Mémoires* – both of which were public and not private. And even the letters to the King that Bussy sent Bouhours for use in his book were selected by Bussy and put together in a pamphlet, the 'recueil des lettres au roi', with short paragraphs explaining each one: they too were placed in a narrative context with an addressee other than Louis XIV. As well as considering the role Ovid's letters play in Bouhours' project, in this chapter I will also consider what happens when the arch self-fashioner of *mondain* culture meets the arch self-fashioner of ancient Rome.

1. The *Libertin* and the Priest: Bussy-Rabutin and le Père Bouhours

In order to understand the relationship between Bussy and Bouhours and to clarify Bussy's own position, some details of Bussy's life are needed. Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy was the only surviving son of the nobleman, Léonor de Rabutin, Lieutenant General of Nivernais, and cousin of Madame de Sévigné. Educated at the Jesuit Collège, he joined the army in 1636. Over the next twenty years, he participated in military campaigns, acquiring the position, 'charge', of *maitre de camp général de la cavalerie légère* in 1655. He was elected to the Académie Française in March 1665. One month later, in April 1665, he fell

into disgrace, offending the King with a satirical portrait of the love lives of those at court, told using pseudonyms. The offending satire had been circulated gradually between 1662 and 1664 in manuscript form. It was published in 1665 in Liège as *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules*,³ and then with the same title in Paris in 1666.⁴ These editions included a key for the pseudonyms. Both manuscript and publication were attributed to Bussy. In the *Mémoires* Bussy composed while in exile, he explains that the offending manuscript was not his original version, but one that had been tampered with and changed by his acquaintance, Madame de Baume.⁵ As the scandal began to grow out of his control, Bussy gave what he claimed to be the original manuscript to the King as Bussy wanted the King to read it to prove that his original text was not offensive – but to no avail.⁶ He was imprisoned in the Bastille in 1665 at the age of 47.⁷ Thirteen months later, after extensive petitions to the King both from himself and from his wife and friends, he was given permission to leave prison temporarily on account of his ill health. Although this was intended to be provisional, in August 1666, the King mitigated his punishment, sending Bussy to live on his estate, ‘Bussy-le-Grand’, in Burgundy, exiled from the court and from Paris.⁸ There he remained until his recall in 1682; he remained out of favour, however, until his death in 1693.

While in exile, he composed his *Mémoires*, dedicated to his children and, in all likelihood, intended for posthumous publication. They cover his life from birth until his

³ *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules* (Liège: 1665).

⁴ *Histoire Amoureuse des Gaules, par Bussy-Rabutin, A l'hôpital des fous, chez l'auteur* (1666).

⁵ In his *Mémoires*, Bussy explains that he wrote this story in 1660, having been exiled to his estates for the first time in 1659 for spending the Easter weekend in activities ‘contre le respect qu’on doit à Dieu et au Roi’ (p. 92) – though he claims that this assertion was the false accusation of his enemies. He describes the escalation of the manuscript scandal in the chapters recounting events of 1662-1665. *Mémoires de Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy, Nouvelle édition revue sur un manuscrit de famille par Ludovic Lalanne*, 2 Vols. (Paris: Charpentier, 1857), II, p. 241-242.

⁶ For more on his time in prison, see Christophe Blanquie ‘Bussy-Rabutin, le locataire de la Bastille’, *French Studies Bulletin*, 30, (2009), 64-67.

⁷ This was not his first time in the Bastille. He had been sent to the Bastille in January 1641 for five months by Richelieu for neglecting his military duties. As J. Duchêne explains, ‘tout à sa poursuite galante, il a abandonné son régiment et décidé de s’installer quinze jours à Busset sur un coup de cœur, sans songer à ses hommes.’ J. Duchêne, *Bussy-Rabutin* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), p. 34.

⁸ He was exiled to Chateau de Bussy in the Bourgogne, also known as Bussy-le-Grand.

exile in 1666. In addition to his *Mémoires*, Bussy was a profligate letter-writer, and this correspondence was also probably intended for publication. Critics argue that the correspondence was not necessarily intended to be published separately from the *Mémoires*, but instead should have been incorporated within this text, as a sequel to his life-writing.⁹ Bussy corresponded most consistently with Mlle de Scudéry; with his cousin, Mme de Sévigné; two Jesuit priests, le Père Rapin and le Père Bouhours; as well as with the King. As was customary, he kept a careful record of his correspondence.¹⁰ His daughter, Mme de Coligny and friend, le Père Bouhours, were thus in a position to edit his correspondence and have it published after his death.¹¹ Mme de Coligny and Bouhours also edited his *Mémoires*,¹² and had them published along with two discourses Bussy had written during his exile, *Discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants, sur le bon usage des adversités et les divers événements de sa vie*,¹³ and *Discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants sur le bon usage des prospérités* of which only the last part, *Histoire en abrégé de Louis le Grand quatorzième du nom* was published in Paris in 1699.¹⁴ In the case of the *correspondance, mémoires* and *discours*, Bouhours took the liberty of modifying Bussy's work, cutting out anything he thought unfavourable to Bussy.

At stake in this fashioning and self-fashioning project was a process of legitimation: Bussy (and his later editors) wanted to erase the stain of his exile to re-establish himself as a dignified and refined *honnête homme*. Viala identifies the paradox that Bussy was elected

⁹ Bussy Rabutin, *Discours à sa famille, édition critique avec présentation et notes* I. *Les Illustres Malheureux*, ed. by D-H Vincent; II, *Le Bon Usage des Prospérités, suivi des lettres au roi*, ed. by D-H Vincent and C. Blanquie (Précy-sous-Thill: Armançon, 2000), pp. 15-20.

¹⁰ The nineteenth-century historian, Ludovic Lalanne, who produced the most comprehensive and authoritative 6 volume edition of Bussy's correspondence explains in his *Notice*, 'Bussy avait recueilli avec soin toute son correspondance et transcrit de sa main presque jour par jour ses propres lettres et celles qu'il recevait'. *Correspondance de Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy, avec sa famille et ses amis (1666-93)*, Nouvelle édition revue sur les manuscrits et augmentée d'un très grand nombre de lettres inédites, par Ludovic Lalanne, 6 vols. (Paris: Charpentier, 1858), *Notice*, I, p.10.

¹¹ This was published as *Les Lettres de Messire Roger Bussy de Rabutin, comte de Bussy, Lieutenant Général des Armées du Roi et Maître de Camp Général de la Cavalerie Française et Etrangère*, 4 vols. (Paris: F. et P. Delaulne, 1697).

¹² *Les mémoires de Messire Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy*, 3 t. in 2 vols. (Paris: J. Anisson, 1696).

¹³ *Discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants, sur le bon usage des adversités et les divers événements de sa vie* (Paris: J. Anisson, 1694) – the second edition of 1697 bore the title, *L'usage des adversités ou l'Histoire des plus illustres favoris, contenant un discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants sur les divers événements de sa vie* (Paris: J. Anisson, 1697).

¹⁴ *Histoire en abrégé de Louis le Grand* (Paris: F. and P. Delaulne, 1699).

to the Académie Française the same year as he was imprisoned, and writes ‘de sorte qu’en quelques mois, le même homme a été honoré et puni selon qu’il a pratiqué l’une ou l’autre forme de galanterie. La belle galanterie apporte les plus hauts signes de légitimité, et à l’opposé, la galanterie licencieuse coûte la prison et l’exil’.¹⁵ One of the symptoms of defining ideal, refined conduct was that it imposed a sort of ‘régulation des mœurs,’¹⁶ exposing (and condemning) in turn what was considered to stray outside these ‘règles’. Viala explains that Bussy was exiled not simply because his work offended the King, but because this work represented an ideological indiscretion, an act of not adhering to the expected codes.¹⁷ So when Bussy states at the opening of his *Mémoires*, ‘lorsque j’entrai dans le monde, ma première et ma plus forte inclination fut de devenir honnête homme et de parvenir aux grands honneurs de la guerre,’¹⁸ it could be seen as an attempt to reconstruct his reputation and image and to redefine himself as a *honnête homme*. Like Ovid, then, Bussy was also all too aware of his reputation, and keen to construct his own version of himself.

Bussy is therefore concerned in his *Mémoires* and letters both to write in the refined style expected of *honnêteté* and also to portray the behaviour and manners of this quality: to unite the appropriate ethics with aesthetics. *L’honnête homme* is one with discerning *goût*, refined taste in both manners and his aesthetics. Richard Scholar argues that ‘moving away from a Ciceronian model of *urbanitas*, seventeenth-century writers tend to replace the Ciceronian ethical idea of worthy citizenship with the aesthetic ideal of worldly culture’.¹⁹ He explains that the quintessence of *honnêteté* is *le bel esprit* and demonstrates the central role Bouhours played in the formulation of his concept. Bouhours’ 1671 text, *Entretiens*

¹⁵ Viala, *La France galante*, p. 207-208.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 208.

¹⁷ ‘A noter que Bussy n’était pas ‘banni’ de France à proprement parler, mais interdit de séjour dans un périmètre de vingt lieues autour de Paris; signe qu’il s’agissait bien d’une condamnation politique et non de droit commun, donc d’une affaire d’idéologie’. *Ibid.* p. 208.

¹⁸ *Mémoires de Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy*, ed. by Lalanne, I, p. 3.

¹⁹ Scholar, *The Je-Ne-Sais-Quoi in Early Modern Europe*, p. 204.

d'Ariste et d'Eugène contains a conversation on 'le bel esprit'. This was a topic which he continued to pursue in his 1687 text, *La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit* (1687) and indeed the *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1687).²⁰ Scholar shows how for a writer *esprit* is 'a synthesis of learning and worldly experience', cultivated, importantly, by the social and cultural interaction with the polite circle.²¹ And so who better to vouch for Bussy's *honnêteté* and *mondainité* than the very arbiter of taste and style, Dominique Bouhours? Bussy's declaration at the opening of his *Mémoires* announces his respect for the codes and expectations of polite society: an allegiance of both his mores and of his aesthetics.

However, that is not to say that the image we have of Bussy thanks to Bouhours' editing is exactly the image he left of himself. In 2000, motivated by the discovery of one of Bussy's handwritten manuscripts,²² two scholars, Christophe Blanquie and Daniel-Henri Vincent, produced a critical edition of some of Bussy's exile work: *Discours à sa famille, édition critique avec présentation et notes* I. *Les Illustres Malheureux*, II. *Le Bon Usage des Prospérités, suivi des lettres au roi*.²³ They sought to present these texts in their original forms, uncovering the Bussy behind Bouhours' posthumous editing.²⁴ Vincent and Blanquie suggest that Bouhours' editorial practice was chiefly influenced by his desire to counter the libertine reputation Bussy had acquired. Indeed, in the *Avertissement* to the 1694 edition of the *Discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants, sur le bon usage des adversités et les divers événements de sa vie*, Bouhours explains:

²⁰ Dominique Bouhours, *La Manière de bien penser dans des ouvrages de l'esprit* (Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1687).

²¹ Scholar, p. 210.

²² They found the original handwritten manuscript called *Discours du comte de Bussy Rabutin à sa famille* with the original text of what Bouhours had published as *Discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants, sur le bon usage des adversités et les divers événements de sa vie*. This encouraged Vincent and Blanquie to publish the full text of *Le Bon Usage des Prospérités*. They were also the first to provide a critical edition of the *recueil des lettres au roi*.

²³ *Bussy-Rabutin, Discours à sa famille*, ed by D-H. Vincent and C. Blanquie.

²⁴ This is not the first expression of frustration at the inaccuracy of Bouhours' editions of Bussy's work. Ludovic Lalanne states: 'cependant, quoique les premiers éditeurs paraissent avoir eu entre les mains les manuscrits complets de Bussy, ils n'osèrent donner au public qu'un texte tronqué et défiguré; de plus des lettres fort importantes, mais dont le contenu était de nature à éveiller bien des susceptibilités, furent entièrement omises.' *Correspondance de Roger de Rabutin*, ed. by Lalanne, I, p. 8-9.

Ce n'est point pour faire connaître feu Monsieur le Comte de Bussy, qu'on met au jour ce petit ouvrage; il est déjà assez connu par sa naissance, par ses emplois, et par ses malheurs. C'est plutôt pour apprendre au public l'usage qu'il a fait de ses adversités et le bonheur qu'il a eu d'y trouver Dieu. Tout le monde sait que c'était le plus bel esprit du royaume et que personne n'a jamais pensé plus finement ni écrit avec plus de délicatesse que lui: mais tout le monde ne sait pas que sa disgrâce le tourna du côté de Dieu et le mit dans le chemin de la piété. (*Avertissement*, np)

Vincent and Blanquie make the case that these original manuscripts reveal a different Bussy to the one Bouhours presents: 'c'est l'image du libertin devenu dévot qu'il faut revoir'.²⁵

Access to Bussy's original manuscripts thus also exposes Bouhours' editorial process.

In their critical edition Vincent and Blanquie also include the 'recueil des lettres au roi', the selection of letters to the King Bussy sent to Bouhours when he first heard of the project; and this is the selection that was to be compared to Ovid's epistles. In this chapter, I want to consider the story of this *recueil* and Bouhours' publication of extracts from it in the *Pensées ingénieuses*. What is particular about this project, unlike the others identified by Vincent and Blanquie, is that it took place during Bussy's lifetime. We not only have access to Bouhours' revisions and aims because we can compare Bussy's *recueil* to Bouhours' *Pensées ingénieuses*, but we can also follow Bussy's reactions to both the proposal and its execution. The two men correspond in some detail about this project. Crucially, for my examination, we can explore Bussy's reactions to the comparison with Ovid. I will build on Vincent's and Blanquie's argument that Bouhours wanted to present Bussy in a morally favourable light and consider how he uses Ovid to do this. I will also examine whether Bussy uses Ovid to the same ends, and explore whether differences between how Bussy and Bouhours approach Ovid might reveal subtle wider differences in their visions of this project.

²⁵ Bussy-Rabutin, *Discours à sa famille*, ed. by Blanquie and Vincent, p. 29.

2. Bouhours' project: the ideal 'cœur'

a) Bouhours' proposal

In November 1688, Bouhours made his offer to Bussy. Bouhours proposed to publish the letters Bussy had been writing to the King during his exile by quoting them in his new book, the *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes*. He wrote:

Au reste, Monsieur, je vous dirai que depuis quelque temps je m'amuse à ramasser quelques *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes*, que je n'ai point mises en œuvre dans mon dernier livre [*La Manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit*, 1687] et que je ne veux pas perdre. Je crois même qu'elles ne déplairont pas avec de petites réflexions que j'y fais de temps en temps. Il faut que je vous communique ce qui m'est venu à l'esprit sur votre sujet. J'ai traduit et tourné à ma manière ce qu'Ovide écrivit de plus spirituel dans son exil pour fléchir Auguste: comme j'oppose d'ordinaire les modernes aux anciens, il m'a semblé que ce serait justement le lieu où je pourrais citer les beaux endroits des lettres que vous avez écrites au roi depuis votre disgrâce. Cela ferait un bon effet pour ce petit ouvrage; il faudrait choisir les endroits tendres qui marquent la disposition de votre cœur au regard du roi et de la grande idée que vous avez de sa majesté. C'est une proposition que je vous fais sans autre vue que d'apprendre au public ce qu'il sait déjà, que personne n'a plus d'esprit que vous. [30 Novembre 1688, A Paris].²⁶

He explains that his main intention is to quote Bussy alongside Ovid in order to celebrate Bussy's *esprit*. Bouhours makes it clear that he has selected the best extracts from Ovid's writing, implying that it would be favourable to Bussy to be compared to this author. Bouhours suggests that making this comparison is the most effective way of foregrounding this quality: 'ce ferait bon effet pour ce petit ouvrage'. He seems to flatter Bussy into agreeing to the project.

Despite his claim that the only reason he makes this proposal is to expose Bussy's *esprit*, exactly what he means by *esprit* seems to hint at another motivation or aim (as indeed might the presence of the protestation itself): one that is moral. He implies that there is a *contrast* between how Ovid wrote 'pour fléchir Auguste', and tenderness and the 'disposition de [...] cœur' that Bussy has towards his King. Bouhours thus suggests he

²⁶ Bussy-Rabutin, *Correspondance avec Bouhours* ed. by C. Rouben (Paris, Nizet, 1986), p. 93-94.

might be comparing their different moral or personal qualities, and that these differences are manifest in their writing. Bouhours is offering to show the public that Bussy is a good and loyal subject of his King, and an accomplished letter-writer.

Bouhours was not the only one to compare Bussy with Ovid. Further explicit comparisons between Bussy and Ovid took place after the publication of Bouhours' book, with later readers suggesting that Bussy and Ovid were similar: both exiled for irreverent writing, both having begged for their return in lengthy correspondence. Although the existence of these comparisons suggests that Bouhours may not have quite succeeded in his project of making Bussy the 'converted libertine', they also clarify why Bouhours might have chosen to shape the comparison in the way he does. As I mentioned in the first chapter, Bayle implies a comparison between Ovid and Bussy in the 'Eclaircissements sur les obscénités'.²⁷ For Bayle, both writers are examples of the most dangerous kind of obscenity, that which is hidden under pleasant and beguiling language. Furthermore, Bayle also offers a comparison between Ovid and Bussy in his 'Dissertation sur des libelles diffamatoires'.²⁸ He reports the opinion of those who believed that Bussy should have accepted the consequences of his satires. They suggest that having behaved like Ovid once in getting himself disgraced for displeasing his monarch, he should not behave like him again in complaining about it at length:

Il ne suffit pas, disent-ils, d'être courageux un jour de Bataille, il faut avoir aussi de la fermeté dans la perte de ses biens. Ils voudraient que Mr. de Rabutin eût pris pour modèle ces braves de l'ancienne Rome, qui n'opposaient que le mépris et l'indifférence à un arrêt de bannissement; et ils trouvent bien étrange qu'ayant été disgracié comme Ovide pour quelques Traités d'Amour, il ait voulu imiter aussi la conduite de ce Poète dans sa disgrâce. (*remarque E*, p. 586)

In this case, Bussy is identified with the licentious side of Ovid's *galanterie* – precisely the analogy Bouhours would want to avoid at all costs. The comparison between Ovid and

²⁷ Bayle, 'Eclaircissements sur les obscénités', in *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1740 edition), IV, pp. 647-664.

²⁸ Bayle, 'Dissertation sur des libelles diffamatoires', *Ibid*, IV, pp. 578-592. For more on Bussy-Rabutin and Petronius, see Elizabeth Woodrough, 'A defence and illustration of the 'Histoire amoureuse des Gaules'', *Papers on French Seventeenth-century Literature*, 28 (1988), 15-32.

Bussy was also used to criticise Bussy by La Bizardière in his *Caractères des auteurs anciens et modernes* (1704).²⁹ This is another *dialogue des morts* in which ancient and modern authors speak their case. In this section, Bussy complains about ill treatment, convinced that if Ovid were present he would defend him:

Bussy-Rabutin se présenta le premier. Il se croyait aussi habile écrivain que bon courtisan. Il n'avait pas mieux réussi au Parnasse qu'à la cour. Par une sottise vanité Rabutin se plaignit qu'on le laissait debout pendant que d'autres qui ne le valaient pas étaient fort à leur aise. Il ajouta que si Ovide était présent, ce Chevalier romain ne permettrait pas qu'il demeurât longtemps dans cette posture [...] Mercure, qui faisait la fonction de Chancelier, prit la parole. "On vous a flatté mal à propos", dit ce Dieu, "quand on vous a comparé à Ovide, vous n'avez rien de commun l'un avec l'autre, que les disgrâces qui vous sont arrivées par votre mauvaise conduite". (p. 168-169)

The narrator is disparaging of Bussy's pretensions to be both a good courtier and a good writer – 'Il se croyait aussi habile écrivain que bon courtisan' – and suggests that Bussy does not deserve to be compared to the great poet Ovid except in his disgrace. For his project to work, Bouhours needs to anticipate criticism such as this: he needs to show that Bussy both surpasses Ovid in the writerly talent of his letters to the King and is different from Ovid in the nature and intentions of that writing.

b) Bouhours' *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes* (1689)

Bouhours' decision to incorporate letters in his exploration of *ingenium* and *esprit* can be situated in an evolving tradition of using letters as ways of exploring and defining *goût* in seventeenth-century writing. Critics and historians argue that interest in letters as examples of style developed in the early part of the seventeenth century. Fumaroli has traced how the seventeenth century saw a movement towards a new epistolary rhetoric, concerned with *génie* and *goût*.³⁰ Critics have also argued for a shift over the course of the century in attitudes towards letters, whereby their function as vehicles of language and style became

²⁹ Michel David de La Bizardière, *Caractères des auteurs anciens et modernes avec les jugements de leurs ouvrages* (Paris: G. Dupuis, 1704).

³⁰ Marc Fumaroli, 'Genèse de l'épistolographie classique: rhétorique humaniste de la lettre, de Pétraque à Juste Lipse', *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France*, *La Lettre au XVII siècle*, 6 (1978), 886-905.

more important than their role as historical documents. For instance, Marie-Madeleine Fragonard tracks how letters moved from being presented and read primarily as part of a personality cult surrounding their author, to later being used as examples of style and language. She quotes the trend towards multi-authored *recueils des lettres* as an example of this shift: ‘la priorité donnée au style (cicéronien ou mondain) détache les lettres de leur ‘contenu’ comme de la personnalité de leur auteur aux yeux du public’.³¹

Defining *goût* and exploring how such definitions should be made were both central concerns of the ongoing *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*.³² In proposing a text with *anciens* and *modernes* in the title in November 1688 Bouhours might seem to be engaging with a particularly intense phase in the ongoing *querelle*. Ten months earlier, in January 1687, Charles Perrault had read his ‘moderne manifesto’, *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* to the Académie Française.³³ Critics locate this incident as the catalyst for a particular phase of the *querelle*, which Fumaroli describes as an ‘offensive moderne’.³⁴ This was by no means the beginning (or the end) of the *querelle*, but a time of heated debate. And yet, despite the title, the moment of publication and his interest in contentious concepts such as taste, Bouhours does not make his position in the *querelle* explicit. He does not assert his allegiance. Perhaps the title was above all a commercial decision. Critics are somewhat undecided as to his stance: Fumaroli suggests he is an *ancien*,³⁵ Viala that he is ‘hésitant [...] mais catégories utilisées très ‘modernes’.³⁶ I do not seek to resolve this problem; my interest in this chapter is directed at *how* Bouhours formulates his ideas about *esprit* and the

³¹ Marie-Madeleine Fragonard, ‘S’illustrer en publiant ses lettres (XVIe-XVIIe siècles)’, *Revue d’Histoire littéraire de la France*, 112 (2012), 793-812, p. 811.

³² For a consummate study on taste in this period, see Michael Moriarty, *Taste and Ideology in Seventeenth-century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

³³ This was published immediately as *Le siècle de Louis le grand* (Paris: J.-B. Coignard, 1687).

³⁴ Marc Fumaroli, ‘Les Abeilles et les araignées’ in *La Querelle des anciens et des modernes*, ed. by Lecoq, p. 178.

³⁵ Fumaroli: ‘un autre auteur qu’on peut ranger parmi les anciens du règne de Louis XIV, le jésuite Dominique Bouhours’, in *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁶ Viala, ‘Les Palmarès de la Querelle’, in *D’un siècle à l’autre*, ed. by L. Godard and R. Duchêne, pp. 171-179, p. 179. Hippolyte Rigault describes him as ‘un moderne timoré qui ne veut pas se compromettre’, in *Histoire de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* (Paris: Hachette, 1856), p. 121.

ideal combination of aesthetics and ethics encapsulated in his version of Bussy.³⁷

In the *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes*, Bouhours makes a striking decision not to name any of the modern, living authors. In the *Avertissement* he writes:

Je ne nomme point les auteurs vivants [...] Je ne nomme pas pourtant tous les Modernes qui sont morts, quelquefois pour ne les pas confondre avec les vivants qui portent le même nom qu'eux, quelquefois pour d'autres raisons. Mais comme les lecteurs sont bien aises de connaître ceux dont il est fait mention dans un livre; j'ai mis à la fin les noms, non seulement des auteurs que je cite, mais aussi des personnes dont les auteurs parlent ou dont je parle moi-même sans les nommer à la réserve de deux ou trois dont les noms me sont inconnus. (*Avertissement*, np.)

As he provides an index with their names and the pages in which they are cited, his restraint cannot be intended to keep his authors anonymous. He is reticent as to his reasons, but his suppression of the authors' names lends weight to Fragonard's argument for the increasing interest in letters for their stylistic quality over their authorship or biographical function. It might also suggest a wilful disinterest in the individual partisans of *querelle*. What Bouhours does use, however, are distinguishing epithets. Bussy, for example, is referred to as *l'homme de qualité* and *l'homme du monde*. Replacement of Bussy's name with an epithet serves to identify that Bouhours' chief interest lies in defining attributes of *l'homme de qualité* and *l'homme du monde*. These are qualities we are meant to associate with Bussy alone as they are the sole epithets used for Bouhours' 'Bussy': he is not, therefore, lost in his unnamed state; rather he is defined.

Bouhours does name the ancient authors, however, and Ovid is the most frequently referred to 'ancient' in the *Pensées ingénieuses*. Bouhours devotes considerable attention to him,³⁸ but what is striking is that he *only* refers to Ovid as a disgraced poet, as a 'malheureux' – every reference relates to his position as an exile or his attempts to regain favour. It is a very particular picture of Ovid that Bouhours paints. He hardly quotes from

³⁷ As a Jesuit, Bouhours perhaps had different criteria and his own *querelles*, such as that with Barbier d'Aucour, see Simon-Augustin Iraillh, *Querelles Littéraires ou Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des révolutions de la république des lettres*, 4 vols. (Paris: Durand, 1761), I, p. 314.

³⁸ In his index, there are 38 entries for 'Ovide'. 'Tacite' is the other frequently quoted ancient with 33 entries.

the *Metamorphoses*,³⁹ never from the *Amores*, *Ars Amatoria*, unsurprisingly for a Jesuit priest, but only refers to the exile poetry: the *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Bouhours does quote the *Fasti*, but only when Ovid praises Augustus: ‘Entre les louanges qu’Ovide donne à Auguste, celle-ci est une des plus solides et des plus flatteuses [...]’ (p.440) Bouhours constructs an image of Ovid as disgraced poet, who used poetry to express his grief and tried to regain favour through his writing.

B. Bray and C. Rouben have both argued that the comparison made by Bouhours between Bussy and Ovid works in Bussy’s favour simply because the very act of aligning him with Ovid, the great classical poet, is complimentary. C. Rouben writes, ‘voilà donc Bussy, aux yeux de tout le monde, en compagnie d’Ovide et d’autres illustres voisins’.⁴⁰ Bray does identify a nuance between what he calls Ovid’s ‘plainte’ and Bussy’s ‘protestation’, but this is Bray’s own judgement, not that of either Bussy or Bouhours. Bray does not consider what the effect of Bouhours’ comparison might be, except to state ‘la comparaison entre les deux exilés est classique’.⁴¹ These analyses are too simplistic and passive. Bussy is promoted not through a wholly positive or neutral portrayal of Ovid, but through one in which it is Ovid’s *faults* that are contrasted with Bussy’s strengths. What is important in Bouhours’ analysis is that despite the similarities of their situation, Bussy and Ovid are *not* the same. Bussy expresses his desire to serve the King with remorse and respect, whereas Ovid, Bouhours implies, is slightly more calculated in his flattery:

On peut opposer à Ovide même l’illustre malheureux [index: Bussy Rabutin] dont j’ai déjà parlé plusieurs fois, et qui pourrait dire comme Ovide que son esprit a été un peu la cause de son malheur. ‘ingenio perii qui miser ipse meo’. L’un et l’autre ont mis tout en œuvre, et se sont servis de leur esprit admirablement pour fléchir leur Prince. [...] Mais en quoi l’homme de qualité dont je parle l’emporte beaucoup sur Ovide, c’est qu’au lieu de demander, comme celui-ci, à être rappelé précisément ou à changer d’exil pour mettre sa vie en sûreté, il ne demande qu’à servir son

³⁹ He quotes from the *Metamorphoses* once at p. 294, but only to consider how Ovid represents ‘malheur’.

⁴⁰ C. Rouben, *Bussy-Rabutin Epistolier* (Paris: Nizet, 1974), p. 56.

⁴¹ Bernard Bray, ‘La Protestation de l’exilé: les lettres de Bussy-Rabutin à Louis XIV’, in *Expériences limites de l’épistolaire: lettres d’exil, d’enfermement, de folie*, ed. by André Magnan (Paris, Champion, 1993), pp. 133-143, p. 139.

prince dans les armées et à mourir pour lui; et il le fait non seulement avec tout l'esprit et toute l'éloquence possible, mais aussi de tout son cœur et de la meilleure foi du monde. (p. 163-164)

Bouhours does acknowledge that Bussy and Ovid might once have been similar. For both of them, their ill-used or wrongly interpreted *esprit* contributed to their disgrace. As we know, one of the reasons given for Ovid's exile in the *Vies* and biographies at the time, based loosely on what Ovid himself says in his exile poetry, was that he wrote love poems in which Corinna was a pseudonym for the Emperor's granddaughter Julie. Writing in this way about one so close to Augustus deeply offended the Emperor. And as we have seen, in many of the late seventeenth-century representations of Ovid's life, such as those studied in the previous chapter, he was primarily cast as a court writer whose manuscripts get circulated – a figure that resembles Bussy. With this in mind, Bouhours' desire to distinguish the exiled Bussy from the exiled Ovid could be understood as his way of articulating that Bussy, whether or not his bad reputation was well deserved, has changed. Bouhours distances Bussy from a possible version of his former self. And the fact that Bussy has changed, or rather, has converted, is central to Bouhours' presentation. Indeed, he argues, 'L'homme de qualité qui a eu la destinée d'Ovide se console d'une autre manière et plus solidement à mon gré, bien qu'on ne le puisse faire avec plus d'esprit. Dieu, dit-il, en me donnant la force de soutenir mes malheurs [...]' (p. 328-330). Therefore, Bouhours shows that Bussy and Ovid no longer inhabit the same stylistic and moral territory.

Bouhours is very particular about how this moral distinction can be seen in Bussy's *writing*, in how he praises the King. On almost every occasion that Bouhours cites Bussy beyond this comparative context, Bouhours admires how Bussy *writes* about the King. For example:

L'homme du monde qui pense le plus finement et qui sait le mieux louer est celui qui écrit les Mémoires que j'ai déjà cités et que je citerai encore plus d'une fois; il excelle en tours délicats, nobles, agréables et naturels, surtout quand il parle de notre Auguste Monarque. Le zèle, la tendresse, l'estime et l'admiration qu'il a pour

son Prince lui élève et lui égaye en quelque façon l'esprit, et quelque talent qu'il ait à traiter ingénieusement toutes sortes de matières, il brille dans celle-là plus que dans nulle autre. (p. 97-98)⁴²

Bouhours continues to emphasise Bussy's *cœur* and seriousness over Ovid's poetical flourish. Having quoted Bussy, he writes:

Toutes ces pensées sont exquises. A mon gré celles d'Ovide ne les valent pas, quelques ingénieuses qu'elles soient, et si on examine de près les unes et les autres, on trouvera qu'il y a bien de la différence entre un poète qui s'égaye, qui cherche à briller, qui songe à avoir de l'esprit, et un homme de qualité qui ayant tout l'esprit que l'on peut avoir, parle de l'abondance du cœur. (p. 172)

Bouhours reiterates this point later in his *Pensées ingénieuses*: 'L'homme de qualité, qui dans notre siècle ressemble à Ovide du côté de l'esprit et de la mauvaise fortune n'a pas manqué non plus que lui, de se réjouir avec son Prince dans des occasions de prospérités et de victoires; mais il l'a fait plus sérieusement et d'une manière un peu moins poétique' (p.183).

In the *Pensées ingénieuses des anciens et des modernes*, 'Ovide' is used by Bouhours to extol Bussy's writerly skill, showing that it surpasses that of Ovid. Bouhours also contrasts the two, stressing Bussy's sincerity where Ovid was too 'poétique'. Ovid is mobilised solely for his exile writing and since this is interpreted as autobiographical, Bouhours can use it to explore the relationship between personal qualities and written expression: the way Ovid wrote was a product of his character and situation. Bouhours draws out this duality primarily to explore a similar duality in Bussy's character and writing. He does so to contrast the two, to promote and define attributes of an exemplary contemporary man of letters: Bussy-Rabutin.

⁴² When Bouhours was conscious of this or not, 'Auguste Monarque' could so easily be inverted, offering further parallels between Bussy and Ovid.

3. Bussy's reply: *L'illustre malheureux* or the Aestheticisation of Exile

This was not the first time Bussy had encountered Ovid. While in exile, he translated some of Ovid's poetry, the *Heroides* and the *Remedia Amoris*. He explains, 'pour moi qui estime infiniment Martial, Ovide, Catulle, Tibulle et Properce, je les redresse, quand je les traduis, aux endroits où je les trouve faux'.⁴³ The first translation, *Traduction d'une élégie d'Ovide* [Amores, 2.14] is included in his *Mémoires*,⁴⁴ the second two are incorporated into his letters to Madame de Sévigné: *Les Remèdes contre l'amour*, entitled 'imitation d'Ovide'⁴⁵ and *Lettre de Paris et La Réponse d'Hélène*.⁴⁶ He both adopted Ovid's voice in the translations he produced of some of Ovid's poetry, and modified the style according to his own preference. Furthermore, prior to his exile, Bussy had imitated Ovid's *art d'aimer* in his *Maximes d'amour*, which, like his *Carte de Braquerie*, offered parodic portrayals of love. He is also thought to be the author of *Almanach d'amour, pour l'An de Grace 1659. Par le Grande Ovide Cypriot*.⁴⁷ Bussy thus conceived of himself as a new Ovid, possibly an 'Ovide Cypriot', identifying with, and surpassing, this Roman poet.

And yet the 'Ovide Cypriot' might well have been keen to distance himself from the negative and licentious aspects of Ovid's story, given how similar their situations were to become. Therefore, two weeks after Bouhours made the initial proposal of comparing the two exiles to magnify Bussy's *esprit*, Bussy replied as follows:

La pensée qui vous est venue d'opposer les modernes aux anciens et de prendre cette occasion pour parler de moi sur les beaux endroits des lettres que j'ai écrites au Roi me ravit, mon R.P; cela me sera honorable et ne saurait faire qu'un bon effet. Je vous renverrais premièrement le recueil de toutes ces lettres si le paquet n'était trop gros pour la poste, mais je le vais envoyer à Dijon à ma fille de Bussy, qui le donnera bien cacheté à un de ses amis, de vos Pères, lequel vous le fera tenir. Je ne feins pas de vous dire que vous y trouverez des choses qui vous plairont. Ma fille de

⁴³ *Correspondance de Roger de Rabutin*, ed. by Lalanne, V, p. 597. Quoted in Agnès Pal, 'Imitation et traduction d'Ovide par Roger de Rabutin, Comte de Bussy', *Revue d'Etudes Françaises*, 8 (2003), 85-100, p.1.

⁴⁴ *Mémoires de Roger de Rabutin*, ed. by Lalanne, II, p. 206-208.

⁴⁵ Bussy to Sévigné, 7 Sep, 1668, *Correspondance de Roger de Rabutin*, ed. by Lalanne, I, p. 131.

⁴⁶ Bussy to Sévigné, 1 Mai 1672, *Ibid*, II, p.101-103.

⁴⁷ Both of which were compiled in *Recueil de pièces en prose les plus agréables de ce temps*, 5 vols. (Paris: C. de Sercy, 1658), II, p.263-306.

Coligny a été si fort touchée de votre dessein qu'elle s'est mise aussitôt à chercher dans mes Mémoires tout ce que j'ai dit du roi, dont elle vous envoie présentement un échantillon, en vous promettant le reste avec le recueil de mes lettres au roi. Elle dit que ces endroits du Roi qui sont des réflexions semées dans mes Mémoires feront bien mieux sa cour que ce que j'écris à sa majesté et que c'est un avantage que j'aurai sur Ovide, qui n'a dit du bien de son maître que pour être rappelé.⁴⁸

Initially, he echoes Bouhours' plan, agreeing that 'cela me sera honorable et ne saurait faire qu'un bon effet'. He promises to send on a selection of letters, 'un recueil de toutes ces lettres', which he is sure will be to Bouhours' liking. However, Bussy also suggests that Bouhours use more than just his letters. He explains that his daughter, Mme de Coligny, keen on Bouhours' *dessein*, has advised both Bussy and Bouhours to include extracts from Bussy's *Mémoires* in which he talks about the King, 'ce que j'ai dit *du* roi' as these extracts from his *Mémoires* will 'faire mieux sa cour que ce que [il a] écrit à sa majesté' (my emphasis). He explains that he has an advantage over Ovid who only flattered Augustus to be recalled, and this advantage somehow lies in the fact that Bussy includes 'réflexions' about the King in his *Mémoires*, and not only in his letters. Bussy makes explicit what was implicit in Bouhours' proposal: that somehow these letters, incorporated in Bouhours' book, will help him regain royal favour.

In his critical edition of the Bouhours-Bussy correspondence, C. Rouben has put a footnote at the point where this extract ends stating that this is 'un témoignage sur l'aveuglement de Bussy concernant ses rapports avec le roi: il ne voit aucune servilité, aucune flatterie dans ce qu'il écrit à celui-ci'.⁴⁹ Rouben suggests that Bussy does not think his letters ('ce qu'il écrit à celui-ci') are full of flattery and servility, though Rouben judges otherwise, and is therefore suggesting that this distinction from Ovid's writing is an example of Bussy's lack of self-awareness, of his 'aveuglement'. However, is it not the opposite? What Bussy is saying here is that the advantage he has over Ovid lies in his

⁴⁸ A Chaseu, 12 Décembre, 1688. Quoted from *Bussy-Rabutin, Correspondance avec Bouhours* ed. by Rouben, p. 95.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.* p. 95.

Mémoires and not, in fact, in his letters, so he may have been all too aware of their servility and flattery. He seems confident that what he has said *about* the King, and not *to* the King, in his *Mémoires* will secure this advantage over Ovid.

a) Bussy's *Mémoires* and the *Recueil des lettres au roi*

Bussy's *Mémoires* are actually full of letters, including letters that Bussy sent to the King. So why does he suggest using the *Mémoires* if they too are full of letters? Why not just use the letters? The *Mémoires* are told in the first person, but Bussy includes letters throughout the narrative: both letters he has received and letters he has written, including some he wrote to the King and many he writes about the King to his friends and wife. This precludes the need to paraphrase what others have said. Incorporating letters he has written himself might serve a similar function, but there is also something demonstrative about showing his reader the letter itself, rather than summarising it in the narrative. In his *Mémoires*, Bussy also includes letters between two parties in which he is the subject, for example, he incorporates a 'copie d'une lettre envoyée par ma femme au duc de Saint-Aignan, le 26 août, 1665'.⁵⁰ In some ways, the *Mémoires* are similar to those books which collect letters purely to foreground their style and literary skill. And indeed, Bussy actually sent the King extracts from his *Mémoires*, which include correspondence between himself and Madame de Sévigné with this exact intention of showing off their epistolary 'esprit'.⁵¹ However, incorporating letters into a narrative serves to change emphatically their addressee. They are no longer letters to the King, but examples of letters to the King accessible to the readers of Bussy's *Mémoires*.

The *recueil* of letters Bussy sends to Bouhours are also subject to Bussy's controlling hand; like the letters included in the *Mémoires* they demonstrate what Bussy

⁵⁰ *Mémoires de Roger de Rabutin*, ed. by Lalanne, p. 235-7.

⁵¹ Bussy writes to Mme de Sévigné on 28 Decembre 1680: 'Celui donc que je lui [le Roi] vais envoyer à ce jour l'an prochain est depuis 1673 jusqu'à la fin de 1675, qui sont trois ans de votre vie où vous m'avez le plus et le mieux écrit. Comme il a bien de l'esprit, il sera charmé de vos lettres'. [...] *Correspondance de Mme de Sévigné*, ed. by Duchêne, III, pp. 56-60.

says ‘du roi’, rather than ‘au roi’: it would seem as if Bussy heeded his daughters advice when compiling this *recueil*. The format of the *recueil* is similar to that of the letters incorporated in Bussy’s *Mémoires*. Thanks to Vincent and Blanquie’s critical edition, we now have access to this *recueil*. Cross-referencing it to the near comprehensive nineteenth-century edition of Bussy’s correspondence produced by Ludovic Lalanne, we can see that Bussy has selected 45 letters from the 57 in Lalanne’s edition.⁵² Bussy presents this *recueil* as a coherent narrative. As Blanquie identifies, it is noteworthy that this collection begins and ends with a ‘remerciement’. Bussy tells the story of his exile. He begins with the first letter he writes thanking the King for allowing him to leave the Bastille (7 Août, 1666), includes the *billet* from the King exiling him to his estate (10 Août 1666) and accounts for his recall in 1682. He introduces each letter with a short paragraph writing about himself in the third person and explaining the context, for example, ‘au commencement de l’année 1676 Bussy offrit par cette lettre au Roi ses très humbles services pour la campagne’.⁵³ Bussy has selected letters which present him as a dutiful soldier. The majority of the letters he includes in his *recueil* consist of his offers to serve the King in battle.⁵⁴ They also include letters which offer his thanks to the King,⁵⁵ and a considerable number of letters asking for permission to visit (or prolong his visit) to Paris to deal with his affairs.⁵⁶ Many of the letters he has chosen *not* to include refer to instances in which he asks the King to help his family.⁵⁷ He also *excludes* some (though not all) of the letters in which he is asking for the King’s pity.⁵⁸ In the act of selection, Bussy is shaping a particular version of his life.

⁵² The editorial history is quite complicated: some of these 45 letters are actually not in the Lalanne edition (and therefore were not in the manuscripts he was using - Manuscript Brottier and the unpublished *Suite des Mémoires*), making Vincent and Blanquie’s contribution of the *recueil* all the more valuable.

⁵³ *Bussy-Rabutin, Discours à sa famille*, ed. by Blanquie and Vincent, p. 277.

⁵⁴ These include the letters dated 15 Août 1666; 27 Avril 1667; 4 Février 1668; 6 Avril 1668; 18 Janvier 1669; 13 Mars 1671; 9 Septembre 1671; 18 Décembre 1671; 15 Décembre 1673; 4 Avril 1674; 9 Juin 1674; 22 Mars 1675; 20 Novembre 1675; 24 mars 1676; 15 Octobre 1683; and 25 Septembre 1688.

⁵⁵ The letters dated 7 Août, 1666; 10 Juillet 1673; 15 Octobre 1676; 12 Décembre, 1677; 11 Février 1680; and 14 Août 1682.

⁵⁶ The letters dated 10 Juillet 1673; 24 Octobre 1673; 24 Avril 1674; 10 Août 1676; and 22 Septembre 1679.

⁵⁷ The letters dated 9 Juin 1676; 10 Août 1676; 30 Mars 1677; 7 Septembre 1678; and 27 Février, 1680.

⁵⁸ The letters dated, 21 Décembre, 1680; 5 Juin 1681; and 1 Août 1676.

Using the letters from the *Recueil* and from the *Memoires* offers Bussy the optimum self-fashioning opportunity: it ensures that Bussy can shape and construct the image of himself he would like to present. He has rendered the letters documents that support the particular narrative of his exile he wants to expose, in which he is a dutiful military subject, stalwart and uncomplaining of his punishment. In this format, he is confident that the *recueil* and extracts from his *Mémoires* will ‘faire mieux sa cour au roi’.

There are two distinct definitions of ‘faire la cour’ which need to be explored further to grasp the implications of Bussy’s claim.⁵⁹ The phrase refers both to the precise duty of the courtier to attend to the King, and metaphorically, to the compliments and attention one pays a woman as part of courtship. According to Furetière’s *Dictionnaire Universel* (1690):

Cour se dit aussi à l’égard des grands seigneurs ou supérieurs à qui on rend des visites fréquentes, des respects, des assiduités. Les officiers d’armée vont faire leur cour à leur général. [...] Cour, se dit aussi des caresses, des cajoleries qu’on fait aux dames pour s’en faire aimer, pour les épouser, ou pour en obtenir quelques présents. (I, p. 546)

The *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* (1694) explains: ‘Il signifie encore: les respects et les assiduités qu’on rend à quelqu’un. Faire la Cour aux grands. Il y a longtemps qu’il fait la Cour à cette Dame. Il fait la Cour à ses Juges’ (p. 276). Fulfilling these ‘duties’ and rendering frequent visits to the King, however, is precisely what Bussy was not been able to do as an exile, banished from Paris and the court. Although he was given permission to return to Paris for his business affairs, Bussy could not *faire la cour au roi* as a courtier. Instead, does Bussy intend his letters to substitute his presence, so that he can ‘court’ the King from a distance? If this were the case, why do his letters need to be contextualised in the *Mémoires* or the *Pensées ingénieuses* in order to achieve this? One answer might be that this contextualisation makes his homage to the King two-fold: both the direct compliments

⁵⁹ I am grateful to comments by Alain Viala and Wes Williams at the Early Modern French Seminar graduate session (26/04/12) for this part of the argument.

and the fact that skilful writing is being mobilised in the King's name act as praise. For the latter to be most effective, the readership needs to be public.⁶⁰

Whilst this does serve a panegyric function, the shift from action to words in the King's service also changes the nature of Bussy's role. Because he cannot be a courtier and 'faire la cour' in this sense, he will mobilise his talent as a writer in the King's service: he is transformed from courtier to epistolary courtier. And yet, courting the King by writing to him, even though 'courting' is what he has been forbidden from doing, transgresses the King's command. This writerly role also serves to divert the attention from the King onto Bussy himself, as he emphasises his talent as a writer. Some of the choices Bussy has made in the presentation of the *recueil* demonstrate his literary aims. One of the main differences between his letters sent directly to the King and this *recueil* is that he has suppressed any reference to a *placet* – a formal petition or appeal on behalf of a subject to his King. He either excludes those which were *placets* (7 Février 1685, 13 Mars, 1686) or he changes their presentation. In the letter 21 Décembre, 1679 he has changed the opening from the formulation used in a *placet*, 'Plaise à Votre Majesté, to 'Je supplie très humblement' and in his *recueil* he describes his message of the 30 Septembre, 1683 as a *lettre*, whereas in the letter collected in the Lalanne edition, he had described it as a *placet*. *Placet* reaffirms the King-courtier relationship; *lettre*, however, suggests epistolary skill and style. As Blanquie argues: 'sans constituer le support de l'écriture, cette dimension, toujours sous-jacente, finit par définir un écrivain car ce n'est plus en soldat ni même en courtisan que Bussy espère dissiper la royale défiance mais en écrivant dans un style adapté à sa condition'.⁶¹ This *recueil* also includes a letter in verse addressed to the King – a *rondeau*. The fact that it is written in verse foregrounds its literary nature, though it might contain the same tone as a

⁶⁰ Blanquie has argued that Bussy's inauguration speech to the Académie Française functions not as a speech to the assembled crowd, but as a letter to the King, all the more powerful because of its wider audience: 'le compliment n'est pas d'un discours, mais d'une lettre et elle ne s'adresse pas à ses auditeurs, mais au roi'. Christophe Blanquie, 'Les Lettres de Bussy à l'académie', *Dix-septième Siècle*, 186 (1995), 155-157, p. 155.

⁶¹ Bussy-Rabutin, *Discours à sa famille*, ed. by Blanquie and Vincent, p. 246.

placet. Blanquie argues that this strengthens the literary quality of this *recueil*: ‘cet étonnant placet en vers rattache les *Lettres au Roi* à une littérature mondaine, où écrire constitue une pratique sociale’.⁶² Bussy asserts his place in the literary circles by writing according to the tastes demanded by such circles. As C. Rouben suggests, this is self-interested. Bussy fashions himself as a writer to preserve his dignity in disgrace, ‘il a perdu la dignité de soldat; elle est remplacée à present par celle d’un chroniqueur’.⁶³

Bussy is all too aware of how servile and self-interested his letters to the King might seem if they are not presented in the correct format and context. He selects instances in which he praises the King while cutting out expressions of his desire to be forgiven, and so presents himself as a consistently devoted subject – not one, like ‘Ovide’, who only uses praise for self-interested flattery. And yet, Bussy is also as concerned with his own image as with pleasing the King: he selects letters for this collection which can display his literary skill and promote Bussy the *writer* over Bussy the soldier or the courtier; after all, a simple soldier or courtier might only write letters directly to the King. Is there anything else at stake in this self-conscious aestheticisation of his exile experience?

b) Reading over the King’s shoulder

By signalling and developing his literary qualities, Bussy aestheticises his experience of exile. Indeed, this process occurs throughout his exile writing – particularly in the *Discours du comte de Bussy-Rabutin à ses enfants, sur le bon usage des adversités et les divers événements de sa vie* (1694), in which Bussy casts himself alongside a series of *illustres malheureux*, providing a short portrait about each one before describing himself.⁶⁴ The act of aestheticisation places Bussy in the literary tradition established by Ovid’s exile poetry. Elizabeth Goldsmith has suggested that:

⁶² Ibid, p. 281.

⁶³ Rouben, *Bussy épistolier*, p. 26.

⁶⁴ The other *illustres malheureux* are Job, Tobie, Daniel, David, Boèce, Belisaire, St. Louis, Enguerrand de Marigny, le Roi Jean, Bureau de la Rivière, Le Maréchal de Gye, Philippes de Comines, Samblançay, Le Duc de Bellegarde, Le Maréchal de Bassompierre, La Chastre and he includes a portrait of himself among them.

In his letters to the King, Bussy, who was fond of imagining himself in the company of heroic precursors, may well have had Ovid in mind as a literary model. Although he does not refer to the letters to Augustus, Bussy busied himself during his exile with some very free translation from the *Heroides* and *Remedia Amoris*.⁶⁵

This assessment is based on Bussy's letters to the King that are collected in the Lalanne edition, as Goldsmith published her book in 1988 and could not benefit from Vincent and Blanquie's critical edition of the *recueil des lettres au roi*. Nevertheless, she makes no reference to Bouhours' book, or the Bussy-Bouhours correspondence on the subject. Indeed, apart from this statement, she does not examine any of the complexities of this analogy, which need exploring further. Firstly, as shown in Bussy's translations of some of Ovid's poetry, he explicitly states that he has improved on the original, correcting anything 'faux'. Bussy's reaction to Bouhours' book once he has read the finished product reveals a similar superiority over Ovid; he sees himself as having improved on Ovid's writing. Once Bussy has read Bouhours' book, he writes to him expressing delight at how this comparative format has worked in his favour. Unlike his *Mémoires* in which there was no comparative approach, the format of Bouhours' book is particularly flattering. On 22 October, 1689, Bussy writes to Bouhours:

Je l'ai trouvé beau et il m'a donné un plaisir extrême [...] Ce que vous citez de moi m'a paru plus beau que dans les endroits où vous l'avez pris, et quand j'en ai voulu chercher la cause, il m'a semblé que ceux auprès desquels vous m'avez mis n'étaient pas toujours si naturels n'y si serrés que moi, et qu'Ovide tout joli qu'il est, ne croyait jamais en avoir assez dit, qu'ainsi mes voisins me donnaient du relief, et que dans mes Mémoires, je n'étais comparé qu'à moi-même.⁶⁶

This comment, 'qu'Ovide tout joli qu'il est, ne croyait jamais en avoir assez dit' serves to promote Bussy's own ability to refine his writing, his adherence to the correct rules of decorum and taste, just as Bouhours intended.

⁶⁵ Elizabeth Goldsmith, 'History, Social Identity, and Talk: The Writings of Bussy-Rabutin', in *Exclusive Conversations: the art of interaction in seventeenth-century France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), pp. 77-107, p. 107.

⁶⁶ Bussy-Rabutin, *Correspondance avec Bouhours*, ed. by Rouben, p. 106.

And yet, self-consciously using Ovid as a model also belies a certain ‘posture littéraire’. As Christian Jouhaud argues:

Si *l'histoire amoureuse des Gaules* avait Pétrone pour patron, ces écrits [the lettres au roi] doivent beaucoup au modèle d'Ovide, ce qui trahit une certaine posture littéraire: une écriture supposée spontanément adressée à des proches et qui semble largement autobiographique puise une part de son inspiration dans des modèles antiques.⁶⁷

Using Ovid as a literary model also effects the depiction of the King in his exile works. Perhaps Bussy is not only, or not principally, substituting literary entertainment for his ‘devoirs’ to the King. Perhaps this is not really about Louis XIV, at all. What the argument so far has supposed, and indeed, what Bussy prompts in his desire to ‘faire sa cour au roi’, is that the King is actually going to read Bouhours’ book. However, one of the chief functions of changing the addressee from King to the reader of the *Mémoires* or the *Pensées ingénieuses* is that the King portrayed in these texts becomes an intradiegetic reader. Bussy constructs an *image* of a studious King reading letter after letter from his exiled courtier, when in fact, the King was not likely personally to have read any of his letters at all, and even less likely to have read Bouhours’ book – as Bussy would have known. Bussy hints at this in his repeated references to the King’s lack of response throughout his *recueil*.⁶⁸ In both the *Mémoires* and the *recueil des lettres au roi*, the King becomes an intradiegetic reader – one that is part of the story rather than the external addressee of the text itself. The ‘King’ becomes a literary figure, a character incorporated into Bussy’s aestheticisation of exile.⁶⁹

Once Bussy has read Bouhours’ book, he imagines the King’s reaction. On November 12, 1689, he writes to Bouhours:

⁶⁷ Christian Jouhaud, ‘Compte rendu for Bussy Rabutin, *Discours à sa famille*, ed. by Vincent and Blanquie’, *Annales HSS*, 4-5 (2001), 1056-7.

⁶⁸ For example he writes, ‘huit mois après, Bussy, n’ayant aucune réponse du Roi, écrivit cette lettre à sa Majesté’. Bussy Rabutin, *Discours à sa famille*, ed. by Vincent and Blanquie, p. 291.

⁶⁹ Critics argue that this also applied to Ovid’s ‘Augustus’. For a discussion of a similar effect produced by the mixing of public and private addressees in Ovid’s *Tristia*, see Hinds ‘Ovid among the conspiracy theorists’ in *Classical Constructions*, ed. by S. J Heyworth, pp. 194-222.

Je vous redirai encore que je n'ai jamais trouvé un livre si fort à mon gré que celui que vous venez de m'envoyer [...] Votre livre est présentement dans les mains de Mme de Maintenon. Je vous rends mille grâces, mon R.P, non seulement de vos intentions, mais encore de l'effet que ce livre doit faire infailliblement. Le moyen que le Roi, qui a de l'esprit, voie qu'après l'avoir longtemps et bien servi je dise si noblement de si belles vérités de lui et qu'il n'en soit pas touché, il n'y a point d'apparence; en nous lisant, il se souviendra de ma dernière lettre, qui est une espèce de ratification de ce que vous lui apprenez que j'ai dit de lui.⁷⁰

Bussy wilyly acknowledges Bouhours' intervention in his attempts to communicate with 'le Roi': he juxtaposes 'en nous lisant' with 'ce qui vous lui apprenez que j'ai dit de lui'. He is also signalling the inevitable shift entailed by the fact that Bussy's letters to the King are now 'open letters'. Here he describes the monarch reading Bouhours' version of what Bussy wrote, as if this book were itself another sort of letter to Louis XIV. However, acknowledging Bouhours' role as mediator necessarily demonstrates that they are no longer simply letters to Louis XIV. This complicates, therefore, Bussy's picture of the monarch and of Mme de Maintenon pouring over Bouhours' book in private. Bussy deliberately juxtaposes the public readership Bouhours' book necessarily entails with an intensely private image of the King reading it. Describing him thus in a letter written after the book has been published places the King in the same position as an intradiegetic reader of a novel's epilogue. In suggesting how the 'lead reader' will (or should) react – his *esprit* will distinguish the 'belles vérités' in what Bussy says – Bussy is signalling how his letters should be read by the extradiegetic readers. Readers with 'esprit' will recognise Bussy's refined qualities, his – to avoid the ambiguity – *bel esprit*.

It is in his picture of the King that Bussy differs from Bouhours. In order to depict a King who might read his letters, Bussy has had to create a fantasy King, and even then this fantasy 'King' is ominously silent, as both Bussy's deluge of letters and his explicit comments on the lack of response affirm. We have met this picture of the unresponsive King before. In the parts of his *Mémoires* where he recounts the scandal of the *Histoire*

⁷⁰ Bussy-Rabutin, *Correspondance avec Bouhours*, ed. by Rouben, p.109.

amoureuse des Gaules, Bussy stresses that he gave a copy of this manuscript to the King to read to prove it was not the offensive satire which he had condemned it as being; but he did not react because he did not read either ‘version’ of the satire. Although this might be a fantasy King in both cases, the depiction will put the readers of Bussy’s *Mémoires* and *recueil des lettres au roi* in mind of the real King as the recipient of the letters, and of the manuscript, thereby reminding the reader that Louis XIV did not have anyone write back to the letters, and did not modify his judgement of the manuscript. By incorporating his sentence of exile into his narrativised version of his life, Bussy allows readers of this narrative to interpret Louis XIV’s punishment for themselves. Bussy thus appropriates the sentence of exile, and this itself is a subordinate act, undermining the King’s authority. This appropriation opens up the possibility that Louis XIV was too stringent in his punishment, or unfair as he did not himself even read the ‘offending’ manuscript. ‘Ovide’, as this thesis has shown, was constructed as a figure who subtly questioned Augustus’ authority in his elliptical communication with the Emperor; in modelling himself on Ovid, Bussy has achieved a similar effect. In the battle for Bussy’s self-image, only the version by Bussy leaves the door open for criticism of the King. And yet Bussy’s version demonstrates that Bouhours’ enterprise was risky, as the figure with whom he chooses to identify Bussy – Ovid – allows for the possible emphasis of the severity or mis-guidedness of the ruler. Bouhours is very careful to avoid this by offering a somewhat critical picture of Ovid; Bussy, on the other hand, in his self-conscious posture as Ovid, explores this possibility.

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In this chapter, I have used Bouhours’ and Bussy’s different constructions of ‘Ovide’ to identify small differences in their approach to the comparative letter project. In themselves, these differences do not matter: Bussy was happy with Bouhours’ book. And yet, the

identification of certain frictions gives us a clearer sense of Bouhours' editorial process, a process which can also be applied to his posthumous publication of Bussy's work. This complements the framework suggested by Vincent and Blanquie. Bouhours cements the figure of Ovid, dispelling any ambiguity he might represent by constructing him solely as an exiled poet whose situation and writing were marked by his failure to suitably impress Augustus. And worse still, Ovid never overcame the 'esprit' which in its ill-use and abundance got him into trouble. Bouhours paints a picture of Ovid that subtly emphasises this figure's faults and limitations. By identifying these faults, Bouhours can define, by contrast, the contemporary aesthetic, encapsulated in the *homme de qualité*, Bussy-Rabutin. However, I think that registering a nuance in their attitudes does more than simply reveal Bouhours' editorial process. Bussy's response to this comparison somewhat troubles this clarified version of 'Ovide' Bouhours has constructed. Bussy simultaneously wants to legitimise his status as a man of letters by advocating comparison between himself and the Roman poet, while also seeking to show that he is better than him: Bouhours' project is ideal for both these aims. However, Bussy, like Ovid, is more interested in his own persona and in fashioning the exact image of exile he would like to present. One of the implications of this is to transform Louis XIV from recipient and focus of his panegyric, to a figure at the service of Bussy's self-fashioning. And this, as I have shown, sets up the possibility for critical readings of the King's role in the story of Bussy's exile – an outcome that was not part of Bouhours' project.

In this final chapter, we have seen that 'Ovide' is used explicitly as a comparative device. The identification between seventeenth-century writers and Ovid that we have explored throughout the thesis is made explicit in Bussy's case and serves a purpose that is both legitimizing (he is compared to such a great and well known poet) and self-advancing

(he is better than this poet). Crucial here, as elsewhere, is a self-conscious sense of legacy, a concern with posterity and the opinion of future readers and generations.

CONCLUSION

In a letter written in 1694 to Hortense Mancini, the Duchesse de Mazarin and salon host in London, the Abbé Chaulieu describes their mutual friend, the poet, intellectual and exile in London – Saint Evremond – in the following terms:

De cet homme si fameux
De qui le goût seul décide
Du bon et du merveilleux
Et qui, plus galant qu'Ovide
Est, comme lui, malheureux [...] ¹

The Abbé Chaulieu describes him as more 'galant' than Ovid and just as 'malheureux'; Ovid functions here as a figure of both contrast ('plus que') and identification ('comme lui'). In the collective imagination of late seventeenth-century France, Ovid, the love poet, became synonymous with 'galanterie'; and, Ovid, the exile, typified 'malheur'. Understanding a comparison of this sort – for it is striking that the Abbé does not simply describe Saint Evremond as 'galant' and 'malheureux' but chooses to do so with reference to Ovid – requires a thorough understanding of what 'Ovide' might have meant in this period. Based on findings in my thesis, I suggest that Chaulieu's reference to Ovid actually complicates his use of the both the terms 'galant' and 'malheureux'. The sort of *galanterie* Ovid represented was ambiguous, as he was often thought of as too sensual to epitomise the most refined aspects of this phenomenon and his 'ingenium' or 'esprit' was sometimes thought to be too abundant, jarring with the *bel esprit* of contemporary fashion; as a 'malheureux' he was also varied, more often embittered than pliant and lamenting. 'Ovide' was seen as being on a threshold, and is used to explore or hint at the boundaries and limitations of conformity – be it sexual, political, or aesthetic.

¹ Saint Evremond, *Œuvres mêlées* (Amsterdam: P. Mortier, 1706), p. 300.

This thesis has shown that there was a variety of different methods for characterising ‘Ovide’: he spoke his own Latin tongue and an annotated, expurgated version of it; he spoke French, sometimes words that were once his own and sometimes words entirely new. He was the object of scholarly historical research and the fictional protagonist of the ‘vie galante’; he was constructed as an author-figure by editors and translators, and used as a ‘parallèle’ in explicit contrast or identification with contemporary figures. By setting out these different methods, this study has placed the constructions of Ovid in the context of changes in life-writing and attitudes towards historiography; and in the context of the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, with its related debates about women, taste and cultural production.

I have suggested that there were some recurring elements in the construction of this figure. In many instances, Ovid, though an ancient poet, was used to explore, define and defend aspects of the distinctly contemporary, *Moderne*, sociable literary culture. His association with *galanterie* and the *burlesque* strikes a surprising note if this movement is placed in the context of the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, as ‘Ovide’ becomes an ancient who is not quite *ancien*. Many of the versions of Ovid’s life also have subversive implications, exploring a parallel between Louis XIV and Augustus that is far less favourable than the usual rhetoric of equal or superior grandeur.

By emphasising the process of identification between Ovid and certain writers of the period studied, I have also highlighted a further aspect of his characterisation, and one that is also evident from Chaulieu’s rhyme quoted above. Writers or poets used identification with Ovid as a way of legitimising their literary status; Ovid’s lasting hold over posterity made him a figure of example and envy for any writer. This thesis has shown how Ovid was perceived as having an acute sense of his own posterity, as an arch self-fashioner, a writer of his own history, and a successful one at that. In comparing Saint

Evremond to Ovid, Chaulieu offers the exiled Frenchman the ultimate accolade: however ‘galant’ or ‘malheureux’ he may be, like Ovid, he will also be remembered.

Modernity and posterity, however, made for surprisingly complex and contradictory bedfellows in one particular later description of this figure – a description that also confirms the influence of these seventeenth-century lives of Ovid. The ‘libération des mœurs’ established by the Regent Philippe d’Orléans and later by King Louis XV, as Michel Delon argues in his study, *Le savoir-vivre libertin* (2000), resulted in rather different court politics to those of Louis XIV.² A pleasure-seeking Ovid may well not have been exiled under these rulers as he might have been under Louis XIV. And indeed, Stéphanie Loubère has argued that the burgeoning interest in Ovid’s *l’Art d’aimer* manifest under Louis XIV became fully fledged in the eighteenth-century; she argues that it was adopted into the systematising representations of love espoused by certain eighteenth-century ‘libertin’ poets.³

However, this ‘libération’ was not to everyone’s liking, as it was perceived by some to represent a wider decline of morals; and the *libertin* spirit became a fiercely debated issue, bound up with the *querelle* surrounding ‘luxury’ that marked the eighteenth century.⁴ One great detractor of ‘modern’ luxury was Jean-Jacques Rousseau,⁵ admirer of Plutarch and partisan of the ancients.⁶ In his *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* (1750), his first

² Michel Delon argues: ‘La mort du vieux roi en 1715 est l’événement qui accélère la transformation des mots et des idées. Après une fin de règne caractérisée par l’austérité et la répression de tout écart par rapport à la norme intellectuelle et religieuse, la Régence inaugure une brusque libération des mœurs [...] À l’exemple du duc d’Orléans qui ne cache son impiété ni ses débauches, le libertinage se fait visible’. Michel Delon, *Le savoir-vivre libertin* (Paris: Hachette, 2000), p. 30.

³ Loubère, p. 1-6.

⁴ This was inaugurated by Mandeville’s *The Fable of the Bees* (1714), translated into French in 1740; he identified the paradox that the private vice of luxury and excess had public virtue. See Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, ‘The Rise and Fall of Luxury Debates’, in *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable goods*, ed. by Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 7-28; and Sarah Maza, ‘Luxury, Morality, and Social Change: Why There Was No Middle-Class Consciousness in Prerevolutionary France’, *The Journal of Modern History*, 69 (1997), 199-229.

⁵ For an analysis of Rousseau’s role in these debates, see Edward Hundert, ‘Mandeville, Rousseau and the Political Economy of Fantasy’ in *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable goods*, ed. by Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, pp. 28-41.

⁶ Jacques Berchtold shows that Rousseau idealises certain instances in ancient culture, ‘les exemples positives – notamment la Sparte de Lycurgue, l’exception socratique à Athènes ou la Rome de Fabricius – frappent par leur ancienneté’. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* (1750), ed. by Jacques Berchtold (Paris: Livre

main response to the *querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, Rousseau states that sciences and arts had not refined men's morals, but rather had brought about a process of moral corruption.⁷ Although he offers favourable examples of the golden age of ancient culture, notably Sparta, and appropriates much ancient thought and learning in his own work,⁸ he also uses the fall of Rome in his rhetoric of warning against the decline and degeneration of the modern world. Not surprisingly, given the traditions of associating Ovid with the *Moderne*, Rousseau blames Ovid for moral turpitude and the rise of luxury. He declares that Ovid, along with Catullus and Martial, was responsible for the decline of the great Golden Age of Latin poetry, 'Mais après les Ovide, les Catulle, les Martial, et cette foule d'auteurs obscènes, dont les noms seuls alarment la pudeur, Rome, jadis le temple de la vertu, devient le théâtre du crime' (p. 35). Rousseau was not alone in such judgements: Catherine Volpilhac-Augier has shown that there were a number of eighteenth-century writers making similar claims about Ovid.⁹ Rousseau then praises the Scythians, amongst whom Ovid was exiled. They are included in his survey of 'des mœurs du petit nombre des peuples qui, préservés de cette contagion des vaines connaissances, ont par leurs vertus fait leur propre bonheur et l'exemple des autres nations [...] Tels furent les Scythes, dont on nous a laissé de si magnifiques éloges' (p. 37).¹⁰ By accusing Ovid of heralding 'moderne' vices of luxury and corruption, Rousseau confirms his own position as an *Ancien* – a position that leaves the ancient poet, Ovid, on the side of the *Modernes*.

de Poche, 2004), p. 10. And Fumaroli also affirms Rousseau's position as an *Ancien*. Of the *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, Fumaroli writes, 'ni Boileau, ni même Du Bos n'auraient osé écrire, en faveurs des anciens, comme Rousseau l'a fait dans son essai sur l'origine des langues'. Fumaroli, 'Les abeilles et les araignées', p. 214. Norman has nuanced these views, arguing that Rousseau's veneration of ancient literature is more limited than has been suggested. Norman, p. 223-226.

⁷ See Patrick Riley, 'Rousseau, Fénelon and the Quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns', in *The Cambridge Companion to Rousseau*, ed. by Patrick Riley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 58-78, p.88.

⁸ See also *Rousseau et les Anciens/Rousseau and the Ancients*, ed. by Philip Stewart and Ruth Grant (Montreal: North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 2001).

⁹ These include Jean-Baptiste Souchay, Louis-Mayeul Chaudon, Jean-François de La Harpe, and Nicolas Gérody; often Ovid was accused of inspiring imitations which manifested a decline in standards. See C. Volpilhac-Augier, 'Ovide au XVIIIe siècle: l'initiateur du mauvais goût', in *Lectures d'Ovide*, ed. by Bury, pp. 513-525.

¹⁰ This perspective has roots in ancient works, as Horace praises the Scythians in *Ode*, 3.24. Tacitus makes similar arguments, comparing the virtues of the 'barbaric' Germans with the degeneracy of the Empire in his *Germania*.

However, even Rousseau could not resist the image of Ovid as the misunderstood exiled poet, whose words have reached readers across the centuries. The epigraph to the *Discours* complicates the image of a *moderne* Ovid, vice-ridden and corrupt, that Rousseau implies within the *Discours*. The epigraph reads, ‘barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor illis’, and is attributed to Ovid, and is a modified version of Ovid’s statement in *Tristia* V.10.¹¹ Jacques Berchtold suggests it demonstrates ‘une identification’ between Rousseau and the Roman poet.¹² By using this epigraph, Rousseau suggests that he, like Ovid, will be misunderstood by his readers and rendered ‘barbare’ by their judgements. This is a thinly veiled criticism of the Parisian intellectual elite, who, it is implied, are the actual ‘barbarians’, as Berchtold argues: ‘le Genevois laisse entendre que son âme de ‘Romain’ rugueux se trouve, quant à sa relation à la ‘vertu’, dépaycée dans un environnement de lettrés parisiens immoraux, assimilables à des barbares’.¹³ In identifying with Ovid against this *moderne* Parisian elite, Rousseau offers a contrasting description of Ovid to that found within the *Discours*: in the epigraph Ovid represents a virtuous ‘ancient’, a figure akin to how Rousseau sees himself. Rousseau’s identification with Ovid contains a self-fashioning gesture that goes beyond his desire to separate himself from what he perceives to be degenerate contemporary society. Like Ovid, Rousseau wants to ensure that he will be remembered; Rousseau also, this epigraph suggests, implies that he wants to be remembered as being like Ovid, or at least, like the version of Ovid identified by this quotation from the *Tristia*.

Rousseau’s contradictory visions of the figure of Ovid, occurring here within the same text, provide a striking example of the complexity and richness of the afterlives of Ovid, which we have previously seen in works ranging from translations to dictionary

¹¹ ‘Barbarus hic ego sum, qui non intellegor ulli’/ ‘Here I am the barbarian because I am understood by nobody’ (*Tristia*, V. 10, 37).

¹² ‘Une ambivalence s’attache à la figure d’Ovide, auteur de *l’Art d’aimer*, mais objet d’une identification (fidélité à l’épigramme du *Discours*)’, Berchtold, p. 35. For comment on this ambivalence, see also a review of Loubère’s study by Natania Meeker, ‘Eighteenth-Century Arts of Love’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 35 (2011), 104-109.

¹³ Berchtold, p. 21.

entries, and from authors as diverse as Dassoucy and Bayle, in a period marked by self-conscious confrontations between ancient and modern. Rousseau's comments also strengthen our picture of how the Ovid of the *Ars Amatoria* and the *Tristia* – the poet of love and of exile (and so, in some contexts, of the court) – comes to dominate over the poet of the *Metamorphoses*, the former paramount figure in the Renaissance. And finally, Rousseau's creatively tangled engagement with Ovid shows us again how the ancient poet's protean multiplicity, the sheer number of avatars or types he makes available – from courtier to lover, from exile to mythographer – allows him to act as a trace element through any literary period, whereby the definitions that each culture extracts from Ovid tell us as much about the culture in question as they do about the poet they construct as their subject.

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