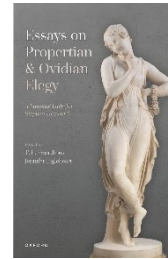




T. E. Franklino and Jennifer Ingleheart eds. (2024).
*Essays on Propertian and Ovidian Elegy: a limping lady
for Stephen Heyworth.*

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This is a clever book, and not just superficially so. The contributions are superbly written and there are clever touches throughout—for example, the number of contributors was chosen to reflect the eleven feet of the elegiac couplet. However, the book's greatest strength rests in the quality of the scholarship assembled and the care with which the individual pieces have been arranged by the editors, with the result that the volume is far more than the sum of its parts. It is thereby free of the many weaknesses traditionally associated with the genre of the *Festschrift*. The book was originally intended by the editors as a sixty-fifth birthday present for Professor Stephen Heyworth (who, in the spirit of full disclosure, taught me when I was an undergraduate several years ago), but publication was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A brief introduction from the editors summarises the volume and offers thematic throughlines, while suggesting a mission beyond that of celebrating its honorand. Tristan Franklino and Jennifer Ingleheart want the volume “to enhance our overall understanding of the elegiac genre” (p.3), an ambitious (if somewhat loosely defined) goal. The volume opens with two chapters dealing with technical aspects of Propertian poetics. In the first, Daniel Jolowicz assesses the use of the possessive pronoun in elegy, claiming “that Latin elegy is the first genre of ancient literature to develop the role of the possessive pronoun used predicatively of a beloved” (p.9). Jolowicz provides a full reckoning of ancient literature before the Roman elegists, before assessing the function of possessive pronouns within Propertius' poetry; he concludes by connecting the thematics of possession to the land confiscations of the early Augustan period. This is followed by Donncha O'Rourke's catalogue of the *hysteron proteron* in the same poet, “in order of roughly descending perceptibility” (p.36). Beginning with clear-cut cases of “inverted clausal coordination” (p.35) and culminating with broader narrative patterns, O'Rourke concludes that “in evaluating the ‘preposterous Propertius’, literary and textual criticism are co-dependent and mutually informing” (p.60) and encourages us to consider examples of inverted temporality in Latin literature more broadly.

These opening chapters are followed by a series of close readings of, in turn, an individual poem, a pair of poems, and a stretch of the *Fasti*. Matthew Robinson assesses Propertius 3.10, revealing a complex web of themes in the poet's celebration of his *puella*'s birthday. Next, Ingleheart reads *Amores* 1.4 and 1.5 together, suggesting that there is a narrative connection between the two. Her piece both offers a compelling reading of the former poem and sheds new light on the latter, rather better studied poem. Rebecca Armstrong inaugurates the volume's move away from erotic elegy with her analysis of Ovid's sequence on the *Sementivae* in *Fasti* 4. Like Robinson's piece, this chapter proceeds by unearthing complexities throughout the sequence through close-reading, ultimately concluding that Ovid's account “offers reflections on forms of time uncontainable by the calendar” (p.122) as well as on religion and culture more generally.

The next two chapters continue the central section on the *Fasti*. Krešimir Vuković discusses episodes in the *Fasti* which revolve around the Tiber, following on from Armstrong's exploration of fluidity and



rigidity in the calendar to contend that rivers and characters associated with rivers are potent loci for the exploration of fluid identities. Bobby Xinyue examines Ovid's tendency to explore the most significant military defeats in Roman history throughout the *Fasti*. He concludes that Ovid is interesting in exploring dynamics of humiliation and revenge as both relevant to the development of Rome and indeed for comprehending the Augustan regime. Understanding this, it is also possible to see the *Fasti* as a reflection by the poet on his own status as a victim of Augustus' obsession with revenge. Concluding the chapters on the *Fasti*, Gail Trimble explores allusions to Horace's *Odes* 4 at the end of the poem. She argues that the impact of these allusions is not simply closural; rather, the fact that both poets continued to write suggests that Ovid is creating a deeper parallelism between his career and that of his near-contemporary.

Chapters 9 and 10 turn to Ovid's exilic poetry, adopting similar methodologies to explore different themes in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Franklino's examines a stretch of poems in the third book of the *Tristia*, exploring the themes of Ovid's relationships to others and the idea of temporal stasis, which recurs through the exilic poetry. In particular, he pays attention to intertexts with the *Fasti* "to argue that Ovid seems to have made a concerted effort to continue work on his calendrical poem while he was writing *Tristia* 3" (p.209). Bruce Gibson picks up on Trimble's interest in closure, as well as the approach taken by Ingleheart and Franklino's in considering poems in sequence, to examine themes within Ovid's *Epistulae ex Ponto*. He concludes that the final poems of the collection may signal some form of closure but also allude to or suggest "new poetic paths" (p.230) in order to move beyond the repetition of exile. The final chapter, from Helen M. Dixon, offers the first analysis of a sixty-line elegiac poem from the Renaissance poet Pompeo Pazzaglia, providing both a critical apparatus as well as historical and literary analysis. Although beyond the volume's nominal scope, the inclusion of this piece (as the editors note in their Introduction) points to the rich postclassical afterlife of the genre of elegy.

Franklino's and Ingleheart achieve their stated mission – I, for once, felt my understanding of the elegiac genre enhanced. The essays are carefully arranged, generating a profound sense of coherence in the volume; this is assisted by cross-referencing between the various pieces. At the same time, this carefully achieved coherence does not result in homogeneity. Instead, the volume contains a range of perspectives and methodologies. While close-reading is the common thread between the pieces, each contributor takes a subtly different approach to the material at hand. While difficult to fault the volume for anything, it is worth noting that the subject matter of the volume is imbalanced, with three essays on Propertius against eight on Ovid, four of which are on the *Fasti*. While this might be explained by the prominence of the *Fasti* in Heyworth's recent research, he has written widely across his long and influential career and I was slightly disappointed to see Propertius play second fiddle (or lyre?) to his elegiac successor.

In sum, *A Limping Lady* offers both a wide range of novel perspectives on Ovid and Propertius and an exemplar of how to compose a *Festschrift*. The chapters are independently robust contributions on the texts under discussion in each, while the volume as a whole attests to the continued vitality of close-reading as a methodology within Classics, to say nothing of the profound influence that Heyworth has had on the study of Latin elegy today.