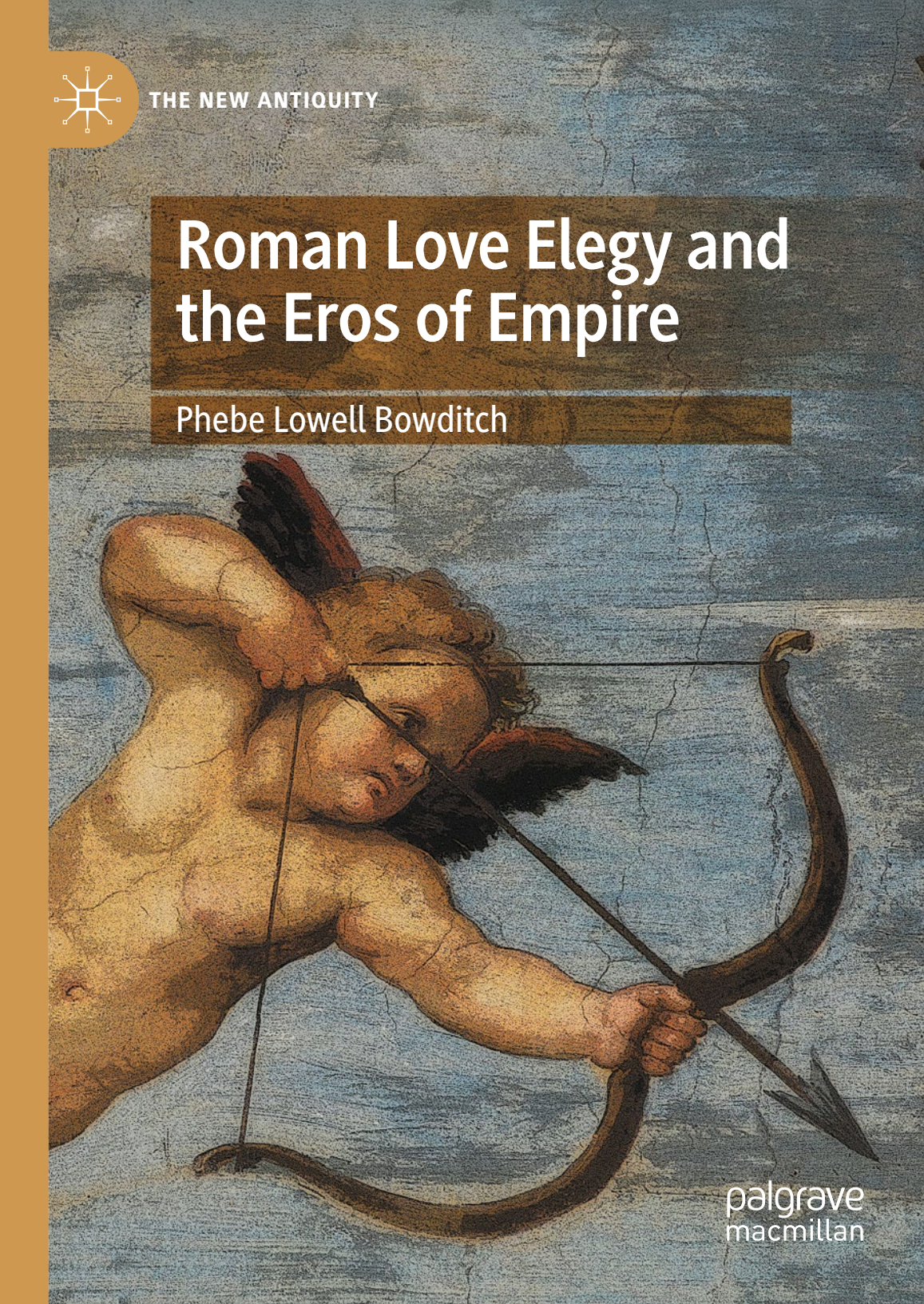
THE NEW ANTIQUITY
Roman Love Elegy and the Eros of Empire
Phebe Lowell Bowditch
palgrave
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The New Antiquity

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For Elizabeth

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Note on Texts and Translation

Unless otherwise noted, all citations of Propertius are from Barber's 1960 Oxford Classical Text; citations of Tibullus are from Maltby 2002; for Ovid, I use E. J. Kenney's [1961] 1994 Oxford Classical Text, reprinted in 1995, with corrections. Citations from the text follow the convention of using the consonantal "u." All references to classical authors follow the abbreviations in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

Commentaries are listed by the modern author's name in the Works Cited sections at the end of each chapter.

All translations of poetry are my own—I have tried to strike a balance between grace and accuracy. At times I paraphrase or cite the Latin text as evidence for a statement that is not an exact translation but rather a conclusion drawn from the implications of the Latin. For translations of prose authors, I generally use those of the Loeb editions, unless otherwise noted. All such translations are included under the translators' names in the Works Cited sections.

All citations of secondary literature appear in the Works Cited sections under the author's name. All emphases in quoted material in the text are those of the original author unless otherwise noted.

The following reference works appear abbreviated as follows in the Notes:

BMCRE	British Museum Catalogue of Coins of the Roman Empire
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
OLD	Oxford Latin Dictionary
RIC	Roman Imperial Coins

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CHAPTER 1

Reading Elegy Against the Grain

Introduction

Twice in the first three books of his elegies, before taking the turn to an aetiological, more public, and arguably more 'Augustan'-themed verse in Book Four, Propertius, or more properly his first-person speaker, the *amator*, identifies with Marc Antony as a man entirely governed by his mistress—as a historical figure exemplifying the elegiac trope and convention of *servitium amoris* ("the slavery of love").[1] Such identifications provide one of many angles to approaching elegy as an Orientalizing and imperial genre, the broad subject of this book, and they come early in—and contribute to—an entire discursive history surrounding the colorful, larger-than-life *triumvir*.[2] Plutarch's *Life of Antony* presents us with a portrait of a sensualist: a romantic, tragic figure whose choices doomed his political career but elevated him to the mythological stature of a grand hedonist who jettisoned his Roman civic role and identity, his *Romanitas*, for the sake of a woman—a captivating, powerful one, the ruler of Egypt—but a woman all the same. And, as twenty-first century readers, we look back at Antony through the prism of Western literary history, with Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* looming large in our cultural imaginations, presenting the world as it was then known, the soon-to-be empire of the Mediterranean basin and beyond, as falling to one of two men who embodied diametrically opposed values, a pragmatic rationalism as against a voluptuous embrace of pleasure. Plutarch himself was working with a

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variety of sources, many of which drew from the 'propaganda wars' waged between Octavian and Antony during the tumultuous years of the second triumvirate. Cicero's *Philippics*, too, had made their mark, painting a man whose dissolution began early, as soon as Antony had assumed the *toga virilis*, which was at once "turned into a prostitute's frock," until he took up with Caius Scribonius Curio to whom, in the orator's invective, he was as "firmly wedded" as if given "a married woman's dress" (Cic. *Phil.* II.44–45, trans. Everitt 2001). Ciceronian irony here is at its finest, with the slur on Antony's masculinity only compounded by the comparison to a *matrona*, a concept which, if the context were not oratorical slander of a man, would be a badge of respectability.

Such gendered tropes themselves have a long history in both Greek and Roman literature and political oratory, providing a greater discursive context for the inversion of roles in Roman love elegy, the feminized or effeminate poet-lover in thrall to his masculine mistress—his *domina*, the linguistically feminine form of *dominus*, the master of slaves.[3] But the feminized-*amator* 'type' here has a mixed pedigree, insofar as it develops not only out of the discursive context of genres, that of oratorical invective as well as iambic and lyric poetry—Catullus's alternately 'hard' and 'soft' first-person *persona* and the poetic traditions that preceded him[4]—but also out of the chaotic erosion of political structures in the late republic, their fragility and dissolution, and the increasing loss of political agency experienced by the Roman male.[5] Here, too, the discursive impact of the stories the Romans told themselves can be felt, with the historical narratives of Sallust, Livy, and others, ascribing the origins of the breakdown of the state to contact with foreign peoples, their pernicious habits, and the plundered goods that entered Rome after successful conquests in the East.[6] The Roman citizen-soldier indeed had all such contacts in abundance, but the effects of the *narratives* of decline and corruption, with the Macedonian wars and the campaigns in Asia referenced as the most baleful influences, should not be underestimated in their contribution to the trope of elegiac dissipation.[7]

These discursive contexts and precedents arguably draw from a still deeper substrate of Orientalizing discourse, one that begins to take shape on the Athenian stage in the aftermath of the Graeco-Persian wars.[8] The history of scholarship on Western constructions of the East is well known, so I offer only a brief synopsis of the main lineaments of its origins.[9] Following in the footsteps of Edward Said's influential *Orientalism*, Edith Hall's *Inventing the Barbarian* analyzed Greek tragedy for its

development of a "'discourse of barbarism,' the system of signifiers denoting the ethnically, psychologically, and politically 'other.'"[10] But it was Said who first identified Graeco-Roman literature as seminal in the development of 'Orientalist discourse,' the representational matrix by which Western texts conceptualize Asia, and the East more generally, by the negative, 'weaker' term of a series of binary oppositions. As against Western rationality, strength, virtue, and the power to articulate, Orientalist discourses consistently sketched the Asiatic East and its inhabitants as irrational, weak, depraved, and mysterious in their mute inarticulation. While Said wrote that "demarcation between the Orient and West…seems bold by the time of the *Iliad*," he focused on Aeschylus's *Persians* and Euripides's *Bacchae* as his exemplary classical texts for Orientalizing representations of the East. These plays feature two "essential motifs of European imaginative geography": first, the idea of representation, wherein the West speaks for the inarticulate defeated; and second, the idea of Eastern excess, danger, and mystery—as a threat to the rational West.[11] Here we see the classical foundations for discourses that, over the centuries, came to buttress the intellectual and academic fields of study comprising 'Orientalism,' an eclectic array of subdisciplines, ranging from the study of Semitic languages to Sinology to Islam, that provided the discursive rationale and knowledge production for Western imperial domination. Said's initial discussion of the origins of Orientalist discourse does not foreground the concept of gender, but as any reader of the *Persians* or *Bacchae* recognizes—and as Said himself delineates later in *Orientalism*—the 'feminine' is squarely in the camp of the East.[12] The feminized *amator*, just as his analogue Marc Antony, is both prey to—and arguably the product of—the corrupting and emasculating Eastern influences that, in the Orientalist discourse of 'barbarism,' initially emanate from Asia and, subsequently, from Greece and Hellenized Egypt.[13]

Roman Love Elegy and Colonial Discourse

The following chapters of this book explore Roman love elegy from an Orientalist and postcolonial perspective, one that frames the readings at times more explicitly than others. Over the last twenty years there have been occasional discussions of Orientalizing motifs in individual elegies, with particular attention paid to the treatment of Cleopatra in Propertius 3.11,[14] but overall scant analysis of the specifically elegiac construction of various manifestations of Roman imperial power and the way the genre

supports the "idea of empire" for its metropolitan audience.[15] Said uses this phrase in *Culture and Imperialism*, the book following *Orientalism*, where he examines how "colonial discourses," often dependent on Orientalizing motifs, implicate literature in "the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences," helping to sustain the great European colonial empires of the nineteenth century.[16] Classical texts were no stranger to this imperialist enterprise and one need only consider the reverence of the British elite for Vergil's *Aeneid* at the height of the British empire, with Jupiter's vision of *imperium sine fine*, to understand Roman literature's role in shaping "imperial attitudes."[17] The *Aeneid* became a text that prepared British civil servants for colonial administration abroad, even as its central place in the curricula of elite schools in England contributed to fashioning its citizenry into imperial subjects. While the European empires of the modern industrial era differed in key respects from the vast territorial expanse considered the Roman empire, in each case literature produced in 'the metropolitan centre' served to inculcate an imperial sensibility in its readership and audience. Several major Latin texts, as Nancy Shumate has shown, in fact provided a kind of template for colonial discourses and Orientalizing rhetoric in the era of modern imperialism. Her analysis of specific works of Horace, Juvenal, and Tacitus traces "the lines of continuity between Roman and later European articulations of these discourses," with a focus on overt or dominant rhetorical systems, rather than subtexts, and a view toward how they enabled the empires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[18] As the work of Shumate (2006, 2012), Rutledge (2000), Webster and Cooper (1996), and others demonstrate, despite the potential charge of anachronism, postcolonial analyses in the vein of Said's work have been fruitfully applied to select Roman imperial texts and to the colonial discourses they engage—but rarely have they provided a lens for Roman love elegy.[19]

Before any further discussion or definition of elegy in relation to colonial discourse, let us consider the issue of anachronism and review the terms colonialism, imperialism, and empire in the context of postcolonial approaches to the disciplines of classical antiquity. 'Colonialism' commonly refers to and suggests the colonialist period of European history, beginning with the discovery of the new world in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and continuing into the twentieth. However, the term's etymological roots, deriving from the Latin *colonia* and referring to the settling of Roman citizens in a conquered area in order to secure it, point to its relevance to ancient Rome. As a "system of rule of one people

over another, in which sovereignty is operated over the colonized at a distance, often through the installation of settlements of colonists in the related process of *colonization*," colonialism describes the mode of many of Rome's relationships to other peoples, for all that the system evolved over the course of the republic into the empire.[20] As Mattingly remarks, it was not until the late republic and Julius Caesar's dictatorship that successful colonies were established overseas, ushering in a new era marked by changes to the command of armies and exploitation of foreign lands.[21]

"*Empire*," as he further defines, "is the geopolitical manifestation of relationships of control imposed by a state on the sovereignty of others," whereas "*Imperialism* refers to both the process and attitudes by which an empire is established and maintained."[22] This latter definition echoes, with one clear difference, the earlier one of Edward Said, that "'imperialism' means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory."[23] The absence of reference, in Mattingly, to one single urban centre as the source of power points to his view that, for the Roman empire at least, its development was an "ad hoc amalgam of metrocentric, pericentric, and systemic impulses," and that one must talk of "Roman imperialisms" and "recognize that the empire's shape-shifting nature was outside the control of any one person or body of people."[24] This variation in understanding of Roman imperialism reflects the evolution in classical studies, and in archaeology in particular, that postcolonial approaches have brought to the discipline.

The term "postcolonialism" has a complicated semantics, referring initially to the period of time following—hence the "post-"—the official decolonization of the territories comprising the colonial empires of the modern nation-states of Europe. In addition to this temporal meaning, however, is one that suggests the cultural aspects of colonialism, as coming 'after' the political and economic aspects, so that the "post-" also refers to the cultural responses of the newly decolonized territories.[25] As a theoretical enterprise, then, postcolonialism has undergone various phases, succinctly summed up by Gardner as, initially, those responses—the nativist critiques of the experience of colonization, emphasizing resistance—followed by studies of the rhetorical strategies of representation of the colonized in colonial literature (referred to as "colonial discourse analysis"), and subsequently by a focus on the hybrid nature of colonial identities, this third phase a reaction to the binary oppositions seen to dominate earlier approaches.[26]

Objections to such a methodology for the Graeco-Roman classics themselves stem from the basic reference in the "post-" of postcolonialism—namely, that it initially applied to the aftermath of the colonial empires of modern Europe. Moreover, the empires of modern nation-states, it has been argued, arose at the beginning of market capitalism, when the concept of imperialism was characterized by the conscious intent to exploit natural resources of subordinate colonies and territories, a feature of systematic domination and exploitation that did not, in this view, characterize Roman imperialism.[27] However, not all scholars downplay any systemically exploitative aspect of Rome's relation to her provinces and colonies, and for those interested in the dynamics of imperial domination and the cross-cultural comparisons of empire, similar in their "rule over vast areas and huge populations by comparatively small numbers of imperial servants," postcolonial approaches have made an impact on the study of classical antiquity.[28] Notably, postcolonialism has provided the methodological tools and lens for archaeologists and historians to challenge and discard the "simplistic culture-change model" of Romanization.[29] This has meant not only examining ancient sources as themselves exhibiting colonialist rhetoric, but also interrogating the work of early twentieth–century scholars of antiquity as entwined with the attitudes of modern European imperialism of the same era. 'Decolonizing' the imperial texts of ancient Rome has gone hand-in-hand with decolonizing the Romanization narratives of earlier scholarship based on those sources. However, if the effects of such postcolonial analysis of the texts and artefacts of Roman imperialism have led to greater recognition of 'subaltern' voices, a highlighting of the colonized that has ultimately evolved into an emphasis on hybrid identities and the connected networks linking the various peoples and parts of the empire, there remain certain methodological pitfalls here too: as Hingley points out, such accounts of the Roman empire tend both to minimize its more "unpalatable" aspects and "to integrate more fully into the way we wish the contemporary world to be," demonstrating how "the ruins of empire are re-appropriated within the politics of the present."[30] Implicit in this critique is the idea that earlier phases of postcolonial theory, the "colonial discourse analysis" practiced by critics such as Shumate, or Webster and Cooper, do not elide but rather address head-on the ways in which Roman texts sought to justify imperial dominance over the conquered.[31]

At first blush, the rhetoric of Roman love elegy would seem a far cry from the constructions of 'nationhood,' imperial subjectivity, and binary

identity-formation—reliant on self-other polarities—that we see in the Roman Odes, Juvenalian satire, or Tacitus. At some level, this arises from the long-standing view, until fairly recently, of elegy as "counter-cultural," with its speakers rejecting the norms of the elite Roman male while their mistresses wield all the power.[32] However, in a now classic essay, Duncan Kennedy points out that although elegy "represents itself, and is often represented as, 'oppositional'…a dynamic view of language [can] defamiliarize…the notion of genre and the generic mode of reading…" and reveal how they contribute "to the ideological construction of 'Augustus' and the ideological misrecognition of elegy's role in this process."[33] As an example of a dynamic view of elegiac language, Kennedy focuses on the word *pax* and the way the elegists present its meaning as appropriated into their own vision—by which he means, presumably, anti-militarist, anti-state, and, as scholars of a previous generation described it, anti-Augustan. Running beneath or alongside an elegiac semantics of *pax*, however, are other associations and the idea that *pax* contributed to the elevation of the *princeps*. As a consequence, the word *pax* in elegy also activates, as a signified—if connotative rather than denotative—referent, the Augustan *Pax*, along with the civil wars that preceded it and the state apparatus that sustained it. Similarly, if we consider the term *imperium*, the elegists generally cast the word in relation to the private power that their mistresses wield over them, but such wholesale appropriation of concepts from the public realm—what Conte called elegy's "transvaluation of values"—falters beneath the weight of the grander geopolitical meanings that the word also connotes in an Augustan context.[34]

In his analytic survey of the language of empire from the end of the third through the first century BCE, Richardson notes that *imperium* only begins to be used in a geographical, territorial sense during the Augustan principate.[35] Augustus himself, in Richardson's analysis, uses *imperium* only once in this way, in the *Res Gestae*, when he refers to closing the gates of Janus when "victories had secured peace by land and sea throughout the whole *imperium* of the Roman people."[36] Of the Roman poets and other prose writers of the Augustan period, Ovid alone uses *imperium* to refer not only to power, authority, or command, its typical range of meanings during the mid to late republic, but also to geographical space (*Ep. Ex Pont.* 2.2.61–70; 3.3.59–62; *Trist.* 2.165–66; 2.199–204; 2.221–36; 5.2.47–52). Even Jupiter's pronouncement in *Aeneid* One—that Rome will possess *imperium sine fine* (1.279)—signifies, in Richardson's view, power without bounds, rather than territory. Nonetheless, as Ovid's and

Augustus's usages demonstrate, the semantic sands were shifting, with the geographic sense of *imperium* emerging as the principate evolved. As a result, when the elegiac mistresses wield their own *imperium* over their lovers, this connotes more than an imaginary inversion of power in a fictitious world of free-born men yielding to courtesans of lower sociopolitical status.[37] In part a symbol of conquered territory, as discussed further below, the elegiac mistress exerts her private authority against the greater political backdrop of Roman imperial conquest—and in so doing, she necessarily evokes the real-world hierarchy of Rome's relation to her provinces. In keeping with such connotative polyvalence, this book aims to examine the language, imagery, motifs, and conventions of Roman love elegy dynamically, as rhetoric comprising colonial discourse, engaging a process that defamiliarizes the genre and reveals its implication in fashioning its contemporary audience into imperial subjects and sustaining Augustan imperial power.[38]

As a period of transition between the Roman republic and the empire, the Augustan principate (31 BCE–14 CE) witnessed and brought about profound changes on multiple levels—from legislation concerning adultery, marriage, and the family, to the structure of patronage in relation to the emperor, to the physical transformation of the city of Rome itself. As Augustus expanded and stabilized imperial geographic boundaries following the end of the Italian civil wars, the population of Rome increasingly experienced the city as a complex metropolitan centre that dominated, and profited from the holdings of, a vast empire. Evolving almost simultaneously with the Augustan principate, the genre of Roman love elegy captures these momentous changes, even as they are filtered through the private subjective experiences of the first-person narrator, the 'poet-lover,' and other highly stylized rhetorical conventions. It is precisely this public, imperial dimension as refracted through and domesticated by the personal elegiac voice that lends the genre its unique appeal as both a product of, and commentary on, the profoundly transformative moment of the Augustan regime. Although presented from the elegiac lover's perspective, this imperial dimension may also be read 'against the grain' or dynamically, to use Kennedy's term: that is, not in sympathy or alignment with the *amator*'s rejection of it—the "counter-cultural" view—but as comprising a form of colonial discourse.

'Colonial discourse' here describes the rhetorical systems that reflect, fashion, and instill the attitudes and self-perceptions of the Roman metropolitan elite—those who regarded themselves to be at the centre of the

empire (even if geographically displaced to administer the provinces) and who depended, for their sense of identity, on simultaneously recognizing as familiar and distinguishing themselves from an 'Other' over whom Rome held sway.[39] I will return to this definition in the chapters that follow, but it is important here to note the range of texts that scholars have identified as engaging colonial discourse. The Marxist critic Peter Hulme, for example, defines it as "…an ensemble of linguistically-based practices unified by their common deployment in the management of colonial relationships…an ensemble that could combine the most…bureaucratic of official documents…with the most non-functional and unprepossessing of romantic novels…."[40] While Roman love elegy would not be categorized as "unprepossessing," the genre initially strikes a reader as decidedly and self-avowedly private, with some exceptions, of course, and to read it as abetting imperialism goes against the grain.[41] Moreover, that the act of *defamiliarizing* Roman elegy would reveal the genre as discursively implicated in a process that appropriates and represents the 'Other' as familiar (even as it emphasizes difference) may seem ironic, particularly given elegy's own Eastern provenance and self-definition in contrast to Western hegemonic epic and all it represents.[42] As O'Rourke points out, "To the extent that it constructs itself in opposition to epic,…elegy might be said to distance itself from an Occidental agenda and to associate itself with an Oriental alternative." O'Rourke's interpretation of the Vergilian intertext in Propertius's Book Four deconstructs this polarity, to some degree, but it does so through an "elegiac and oriental reading of the *Aeneid*."[43] We may also deconstruct in the other direction, with an 'epic' or 'Occidental' reading of elegy. Moreover, elegy's self-representation should be viewed—setting aside the female speakers of Propertius Book Four—as a product of the poet-lover's posture of disaffection. It is the *amator*'s first-person narration, after all, and, as such, in keeping with narrators' notorious unreliability, it often belies the genre's actual imbrication with imperial and colonial interests.

Indeed, despite elegy's reputed origins in Phrygia, and its Greek and then Alexandrian forms, its subsequently unique Roman flourishing during the Augustan era marks a genre that itself undergoes a form of cultural, even imperialist appropriation. The series of oppositions mobilized by elegy's speakers—between love and war, poetry and politics, elegy and epic, the centre at Rome and the imperial periphery—reveals not only the second term in these pairings as necessary for rhetorically defining the genre, but also that it depends, as does its celebration of amorous *otium*

("leisure"), on the *Pax Augusta* and Rome's Mediterranean empire as, in Marxist terminology, the conditions of its production.[44] After the period of relentless conquest and importation of plunder—slaves, wealth, art, and, last but not least, literary styles and conventions—that marked the mid to late republic, the Augustan principate brought a stability that led not only to increased trade and traffic across the lands and territories under Roman control but also to the creation of new or transfigured literary forms.[45] Elegy—originally a foreign, exotic, even 'Oriental' form—at one level constitutes an 'Other' that Roman authors, during the Augustan principate, appropriate and transform to reflect the concerns and interests of Roman imperial dominance. To read elegy against the usual grain, to see it as dependent on and complicit with imperial power, to reject the view of it as "counter-cultural," to *defamiliarize* it, does not mean ignoring the posture of the elegiac lover's own rejection of the norms of his culture. Nor does it mean simply that the *amator* provides a negative *exemplum* for the Romans, although such a reading is possible and such didactic strategies were common enough in the literature, as Ovid himself exploits satirically in the *Ars Amatoria*. Rather, the readings of the following chapters involve a nuanced focus on the rhetorical imagery of that rejected public world—imperial space mapped in cartographic terms, triumphal display, luxury goods, and foreign lands and provinces—as demonstrating the Orientalizing tropes of a dominant colonial discourse, as they intersect with elegiac conventions and the elegiac mistress in particular, and the ambivalence that results from such intersections.[46]

Although ambivalence characterizes many aspects of Roman love elegy, in postcolonial studies the concept derives, as Chapter 2 will discuss further, from Said's view of an Orientalized 'Other' as an object of both fear and fascination, anxiety and seductive mystery. As a means of controlling the threat from the unknown, a "threat to some established view of things," a "category emerges…that allows one to see new things, things seen for the first time, as versions of a previously known thing."[47] Hence, that which is novel and strange is perceived through the lens of the familiar, creating an ambivalence—what the critic Homi Bhabha, elaborating on Said's insight and referring to the work of Frantz Fanon, ascribes to the concept of the stereotype as mediating between the recognition and disavowal of cultural difference.[48] The stereotype functions similarly to a fetish in psychoanalytic terms: both serve initially to repudiate difference—cultural, ethnic, racial on the one hand, sexual on the other—and then to normalize the disturbance posed by such heterogeneity or lack. In

developing this idea, postcolonial theorists refer primarily to nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe's discursive representations of territories and their inhabitants, held in colonized relationships: stereotypes such as the "essential duplicity of the Asiatic or the bestial sexual license of the African" reassure since they are 'knowable' and 'the same' as a familiar category, even as they justify and underscore the need for colonial dominance.[49] The concept of such ambivalent representation of the 'Other' as an object of both fetishized fascination and phobic fear also holds true for the literature of antiquity. We see, for example, a similar functioning of the stereotype in the propagandistic representations of Cleopatra in Augustan poetry—the power-hungry and licentious female cuts a familiar figure in Graeco-Roman literature, easy to ascribe to a type that stretches back through Catullus's Lesbia and Sallust's Sempronia all the way to Aeschylus's Clytemnestra.

Discursive ambivalence also characterizes representations of foreign 'Others' when they exhibit the 'virtues' of the colonizing agents. For example, as Shumate points out, the attribution of late republican ideals and traditional values to the opposing British chieftain, Calgacus, as he faces off against the Roman general in Tacitus's *Agricola*, or the passage on the Romanizing natives (*Agr.* 21), constitutes a "subtext" that "splits the surface of the dominant" text.[50] Although the dominant text overall displays the Britons as barbarians to be civilized, their Romanizing subverts that narrative—displaying an ambivalent vacillation between their extreme 'otherness' that requires the civilizing mission and their proleptic assimilation that makes it moot. Stephen Rutledge's discussion of the *Agricola* also examines Tacitean narrative through the lens of colonialist, Orientalizing tropes, among which the concept of "appropriation" simultaneously serves to establish cultural solidarity between the Romans and the Britons and yet also shows Roman superiority and the necessity for imperial presence. Here, too, we have "the attempt to efface while simultaneously maintaining differences,"[51] again creating an ambivalence that suggests the concept of "colonial mimicry," defined by Bhabha as "the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*…Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power."[52] The colonized "mimic" their colonizers, appropriated into their culture and its self-representations, even as differences assert an 'otherness' that, despite its 'familiarity,' requires dominance.[53]

For the Romans, however, the appropriation may also signify an openness to difference, when the cultures of those they conquer in fact do become assimilated into the fabric of Roman identity. In the following study, the concepts of ambivalence and the appropriation of the 'Other' arise as a way of understanding not only the discursive polarities and conventions that define and characterize love elegy, but even more specifically, the elegiac representations of Egypt and then of Greece and the Hellenized East in general. Egypt, of course, with its foreign religious practices, its animal worship, and its indigenous population, separate from any Greek administrative or Roman military class, lends itself more straightforwardly to an Orientalizing discourse wherein its colonized status invites the tropes of the imperial power justifying its presence. But here too, as Chapter 2's discussion of Tibullus 1.7 explores, ambivalence marks the poem's attitude toward this Roman province, a new territorial acquisition in the aftermath of the battle of Actium, and yet a region admired for the antiquity of its own culture and achievements. Roman attitudes toward Egypt parallel, in many ways, those found in Greek literature, where, as Phiroze Vasunia writes, "negotiating between admiration and appropriation resulted in the creation of a country that was both promoted, on account of Egypt's accomplishment, and tamed, to render a suitable format for Hellenic self-presentation."[54] One need only swap out "Hellenic" for "Graeco-Roman" and the statement still holds true for Tibullus 1.7, with Egyptian 'otherness' domesticated and appropriated into familiar terms. Indeed, in light of the bitter divisions of the recent Roman civil wars, the newly established *Pax Augusta*, and the desire, at least officially, to extend clemency toward those who had sided with Marc Antony, the poem displays a strong assimilationist strain. Thus, the representation of Osiris vacillates between a feminized 'Other,' distinct from the imperialist West, and a Bacchus-Dionysiac figure appropriated into the signifying matrix of Graeco-Roman religion as well as Roman love elegy.

While the Graeco-Roman literary and religious tradition aligns with the discursively constructed 'West' in Tibullus 1.7, with Egypt as its Orientalized 'East,' the signposts frequently shift in elegy—and in ancient literature overall—and Chapters 3 through 6 all explore different facets of elegy's representation of Rome's ambivalent, rivalrous, imitative, and, ultimately, imperialist relationship with the cultures both of Greece and of the Hellenized East in general. It is beyond the scope of this introduction to chart the wide range and evolution of scholarship on this relationship, except first to note the degree to which the concept of ambivalence almost

uniformly attends discussions of it, and second, to flag a few of the scholars whose ideas have been important to my readings of elegy. In an influential article of the 1970s, Pollit presented such ambivalence as a stark contrast, distinguishing between the "Catonian attitude" that decried the corrupting influence of the influx of Greek statuary and the "Connoisseur's attitude" adopted by the Roman elite wishing to demonstrate their Greek cultural *fides*.[55] Writing a few decades later of Roman national identity during the republic, Gruen viewed the relations between Rome as the newly emerging dominant power in the Mediterranean and Greece in less binary terms, focusing rather on the former's cultural aspirations: "The effort to define a place in the larger cultural world of the Mediterranean took on special significance in an era when Roman power and authority expanded in the East. Rome strained both to participate in that cultural world and to exhibit its own primacy within it. Not surprisingly, that effort engendered some baffling complexities. Ambiguity and ambivalence appear as the principal characteristics of Rome's attitude toward Hellas."[56]

Not all scholars have embraced the idea of ambivalence. Gruen himself, although remarking that it characterizes Roman attitudes, notably refuted any "dichotomy of philhellenism and animosity toward the Greeks," drawing attention to elite Romans' savvy and strategic use of the Greek language and culture for political ends and to underscore their own dominance through appropriation.[57] More recently, scholarship has focused on the mobility of cultural influences, "interactive models of intercultural exchange," as Feeney describes, that challenge the simple vision of "Greek culture flow[ing] downhill" to Rome, introducing a superior civilization to one more primitive.[58] Wallace-Hadrill's view of "arterial circulation" for the absorption of Greek culture that Romans transformed and then "pumped" back out to the provinces is one such example of the more complex models for understanding the intertwined phenomena of "Hellenization" and "Romanization."[59] The essays in Loar, Macdonald, and Padilla Peralta (2018) similarly argue for circulation from periphery to centre and back as more accurately capturing the movement of culture around the Mediterranean basin, with such circulation as the foundation of Roman imperial identity.

And yet the concept of ambivalence remains, not least on account of the various statements in Roman texts that characterize Greeks and Hellenized peoples in negative terms.[60] The work of Antony Spawforth, for example, seizes on the characterization of Asiatic Greeks in distinction from an Athenian classicism, to argue for two visions of Hellenism

embraced and manipulated by the Augustan elite.[61] Drawing from Pliny, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Cicero, and others, Spawforth analyzes Roman attitudes toward the Greeks as Orientalizing distinctions made between those associated with the Golden Age of fifth—and fourth—century Athens and those further east who later Hellenized as a consequence of Alexander's conquests, ushering in the Hellenistic era with its baroque aesthetic.[62] Writing of "imperial Hellenism," Tim Whitmarsh also identifies Greece as appearing to the Romans in Said's Orientalist terms, as exhibiting an "exoticism" that "was deeply ambivalent: seductive otherness can simultaneously attract and repel." All such responses to Hellenism in Roman texts are "ultimately imperialist," he contends, marked by contradiction, ambivalence, and partial incoherence.[63] These tensions result from the "ideological burdens" of the discourse of Roman Hellenism, a discourse that reflects the typical nature of colonial language aiming to distinguish clearly between conqueror and conquered, even as such differences become hard to maintain. For Roman Hellenism that distinction becomes even more ambiguous, given that Rome's military superiority was at odds with the perception of Greece's cultural dominance. All these interpretive models recognize both the complexity of Roman texts as a feature of colonial discourse and the concomitant fact of ambivalence, whether strategically manipulated for political purposes or determined by successive shifts in aesthetic styles.

As a genre, I would argue, Roman love elegy certainly constitutes an imperialist response to Hellenism, with the ambiguity of the poet-lover's position displaying variously an identification with, and conquest of, the conquered 'Other.' In the metaphor of *servitium amoris*, the poet-lover as the feminized slave of his Hellenistic mistress suggests his rhetorical assumption of aspects of her identity as a foreign courtesan: by becoming a *servus* he takes on, within the elegiac fiction of inverted gender relations, not only the subservient feminized position, but also what would have been the likely historical status of such women first entering Rome as imported slaves.[64] And as Chapter 4 explores, the opposite holds true for the elegiac mistress: although of lower social status than the *amator*, she appropriates the social and political power of the elite Roman male. As a *domina* she etymologically shares the identity of the Roman head-of-household, the *dominus* and master of slaves, even as her rapacity for foreign goods and metaphorical triumph align her with Roman imperial interests.[65] But while such ambivalence characteristically marks colonial discourse, leading to stereotypes as a way of domesticating the threat of

the foreign, Rome's responses to Greek culture often go further, displaying an incoherence that arises from Roman Hellenism as a dangerous inversion of the "natural hierarchy of imperialism"[66]—the anxiety that, as Horace famously put it, "conquered Greece took its conqueror captive" (*Epist.* 2.1.156). From this perspective—of a conquering Rome as colonized by the arts of Greece—Roman philhellenism constitutes its own form of mimicry, if not necessarily the colonial mimicry that can characterize the behavior or discursive representation of the colonized in their cultural responses to political and military dominance.

Indeed, one of the underlying premises that runs throughout this book is that, in keeping with the elegiac mistress as a variable metaphor, as an amalgam drawing from both literary antecedents and historical events, from the Greek courtesan of Hellenistic comedy as well as from actual slaves that poured into Rome as military spoils, and as often symbolizing the Callimachean poetics of the Alexandrian East, she stands first and foremost as a figure for Roman Hellenism or philhellenism.[67] Certainly the Greek names of Delia, Nemesis, Cynthia, and Corinna, as well as Catullus's Lesbia, the precursor of the elegiac mistress, all have associations with Greek culture, deities, or both. Delia and Cynthia are the feminine forms of the cult names for Apollo, the god of poetry, at the specific site of Mt. Cynthos on the Greek island of Delos, and are associated thus with both him and his sister, Artemis-Diana.[68] Both Delia and Lesbia recall the practice of naming Greek courtesans in Hellenistic comedy after the island of their origins, even as Lesbia recalls the Greek poetic tradition of Lesbos and its most famous practitioner, Sappho.[69] Corinna, in turn, alludes to a Greek poetess and may well be a pun on the Greek word for maiden, *kore*.[70] The name of Nemesis may be the least culturally freighted with specifically literary associations, although she appears frequently as the Greek goddess of vengeance in the *Palatine Anthology*, with three epigrams recounting the story behind her cult statue at Rhamnous.[71] That particular statue did not become spoil and remained there, but the Roman interest in the goddess's cult, attested as early as Varro and Catullus, suggests that Nemesis too, as Tibullus's mistress, embodies the culture of "conquered Greece." Indeed, sculptures, and religious statuary in particular, constituted one of the most visible testaments to Rome's conquest of Greece, as the plunder on display during triumphal processions made eminently clear.[72]

While all of these elegiac (and Catullan lyric) names for the *domina* refer to religious or poetic figures, four of five of those references also

point to particular places, to a geographic locale, suggesting, again, Roman conquest of territory and the spoils such victory implies.[73] When these mistresses, with their cultural associations, exercise their own private *imperium* over their poet-lovers, they symbolize Roman philhellenism writ large—they represent "conquered Greece" seducing their captors, turning the tables on their Roman conquerors and taking them captive. Indeed, Propertius's famous *incipit* to the *Monobiblos*, *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis* ("Cynthia first captured wretched me with her eyes"), resonates not only with Horace's dictum in the letter to Augustus cited above (*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit*), regardless of the probable later dating of the latter, but also with Livy's reconstruction—or perhaps invention—of Cato's speech concerning the repeal of the Oppian Law: "…the greater the empire grows and already we have crossed into Greece and Asia, places filled with all the allurements of vice, and we are handling the treasures of kings—the more I fear that these things will capture [*ceperint*] us rather than we them" (Liv. 34.4.3, trans. Sage). [74] Cicero too expresses a similar anxiety that the Roman elite male may suffer metaphoric enslavement to the visual arts, material luxuries, and even architecture of Greece. In a telling passage of the *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, he inveighs against the enslaved status of those who "take excessive delight in statues and pictures and chased silver and Corinthian works of art and magnificent buildings" (*sunt quos signa quos tabulae quos caelatum argentum quos Corinthia opera quos aedificia magnifica nimio opere delectant* [36]). Moreover, he singles out the gaze as the instrument of enslavement: "when I see you gazing and marveling and uttering cries of admiration, I judge you to be the slave of every foolishness. 'Then are not those kinds of things delightful?' Granted that they are, for we also have trained eyes; but I beg of you, do let the charm that those things are deemed to possess make them serve not as fetters for men but as amusements for children."[75] When coupled with the concept of the gaze, these chains endured by free men, entranced by the charm of such cultural objects, indeed suggest an erotics of enslaved looking—analogous to Propertius's ocular fascination with Cynthia and all she represents.[76]

It is, however, the passage that immediately precedes this one that not only resonates emphatically with the genre of love elegy, but also, given the sequence of thought in Cicero's text, underscores the potential of *servitium amoris* as a trope, in turn, for the dangers posed by Roman philhellenism. Affirming a man's slavish status when governed by his mistress, Cicero queries: "Or can I think a man free who is under the command of

a woman, who receives laws from her, and such rules and orders and prohibitions as she thinks fit, who when she commands can deny her nothing and dares refuse her nothing? she asks—he must give; she calls—he must come; she throws him out—he must go; she threatens—he must tremble. For my part I hold that such a fellow deserves to be called not only a slave but a very vile slave, even though he were born in a family of the greatest splendour" (36).[77] Cicero here provides a veritable blueprint for the condition of the elegiac poet-lover figured in the verse of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid writing over two decades after the orator's exposition of Stoic paradoxes.[78] Love's slavery has long been recognized as a dominant trope for the elegists, of course, but the remarkable similarity of Cicero's description here to examples in their verse deserves mention,[79] because the orator, in the very next breath, or passage, condemns the man enslaved to the material arts, luxuries, and culture of Greece. The contiguity of such passages further reinforces that the elegiac mistress, with her Greek name, with its cultural, religious, and territorial associations, metonymically symbolizes Hellenic and Hellenistic culture more broadly, and the power she wields over the *amator*, his condition of *servitium amoris*, underscores the dangers of philhellenism—creating fetters for, and foolish slaves of, free men.

It is in relation to this trope that we can further understand, then, the ambivalence of love elegy and its rhetoric as a form of colonial discourse. Indeed, given Rome's desire to stake its own claims as preeminent in the greater world of Mediterranean culture, the vector of cultural imperialism may go the other way. In her nuanced discussion of the layered implications of cultural rivalry in Catullus's translation of Sappho (Catull. 51), Elizabeth Young writes, "When we read Catullus and Lesbia as synecdoches for Rome and Greece, respectively, it becomes clear that Catullus's deft co-option of Sappho's voice is an imperialist—or more specifically, an Orientalist—move…." Arguing that Catullus's translation "silences the East by effacing Sappho as subject and transforming her poem into a lament about the dangers of hellenisation," Young explores a dimension of his love poetry that may also be said to tap into and reflect on the elegiac relationship between the poet-lover and his *domina* a generation later.[80] Although not direct translation from a source text, love elegy nonetheless carries the cultural capital of the Alexandrian genre and its Eastern antecedents into Rome, transforming and 'co-opting' it in the process. As a result, Roman love elegy exhibits and stages Graeco-Roman cultural rivalry, along with the anxiety and ambivalence that accompanied