

David Jones

**Enjoinder
and Argument
in Ovid's
*Remedia Amoris***

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DAVID JONES

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IN OVID'S *REMEDIA AMORIS*

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INTRODUCTION

*Ad mea, decepti iuvenes, praecepta venite,
quos suus ex omni parte fefellit amor.
discite sanari per quem didicistis amare;
una manus vobis vulnus opemque feret.
terra salutare herbas eademque nocentes 45
nutrit, et urticae proxima saepe rosa est;
vulnus in Herculeo quae quondam fecerat hoste,
vulneris auxilium Pelias hasta tulit.*

Remedia Amoris 41-48

In this passage from the exordium of the *Remedia Amoris* Ovid, who had previously taught the *iuvenes* how to win their love in the *Ars Amatoria*, enjoins those whom love has played false to come to him for further *erotodidaxis*. He offers an argument for compliance to the enjoiners *venite* and *discite* which consists of a guarantee for a successful cure for love at the hand of the one responsible for the affliction - *una manus vobis vulnus opemque feret*. The guarantee is followed by exempla from nature and myth which act as proof of its legitimacy - *terra salutare herbas eademque nocentes/nutrit, et urticae proxima saepe rosa est, /vulnus in Herculeo quae quondam fecerat hoste, /vulneris auxilium Pelias hasta tulit*. An enjoiner and supporting argument for compliance, such as employed here in the exordium to convince the lovelorn to partake of his services, is the main rhetorical device through which Ovid purports to dispense cures for the *dolor immedicabilis*.¹ The *tractatio* (lines 79-814), which contains the poet's salutary regimen, is a nearly unbroken series of enjoiners and supporting arguments (enjoiner and supporting argument - E+A) and it is with this persuasive tactic that Ovid operates on the motifs of amatory elegy.

To state that a didactic piece, such as the *Remedia Amoris*, is constructed out of authoritative advice and attendant arguments for the efficacy of that advice borders on the tautological. Out of what else was most ancient didactic composed? It is the aim of this work to demonstrate the precise nature of the rhetoric of Ovidian elegiac *didaxis* as displayed in the E+As of the *Remedia Amoris*. My hope is that this investigation, while it may not radically alter one's interpretation of the *Remedia Amoris*, will provide insight into the structure and style of Ovid's didactic poetry which may increase one's appreciation and enjoyment of the piece.

The E+A tactic is a salient feature of the 'natural' rhetoric displayed in the earliest didactic situations/texts of the Greco-Roman tradition. In Book 1 of the *Iliad* the attempt of Hephaistos to dissuade Hera from contesting with Zeus for the sake of mortals takes the form of an E+A.

¹ On the *vana magisteria* in the case of love see Verducci (2) p. 35.