

Poet and *Princeps Femina*: Livia in Ovid's *Fasti* I
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No longer seen just as a source from which to draw information on traditional Roman history or the religious calendar, the *Fasti* of Ovid now enjoys serious attention as a literary work. Because the poem is concerned with many of the issues important in the Augustan regime generally (religious observances, civic building projects, mythology and ancient customs), and because of the unique circumstances of its composition (written before Ovid fell out of favor with the *princeps*, and then revised in exile), it provides a unique witness to Ovid's interaction with Augustan ideology. The *Fasti* itself presents the advent of two features new to Augustan ideology: the appearances of Livia as a literary character and the *domus Augusta* as a political unit—both of which are most clearly evident in the revised first book. It is my belief that these innovations are intended to reflect certain realities of the imperial regime (including Livia's evident power) and also to reshape the image of the Augustan dynasty in a way that is both appealing to those Ovid might 'win over' and that accommodates a poet like himself.

Building on the work of Geraldine Herbert-Brown and others, this paper presents a new reading of the two Carmentis passages in *Fasti* Book I with attention to Ovid's use of this figure from Rome's legendary past as a means of appealing to Livia. The Carmentis of the *Fasti* is a much more powerful and important figure than her counterpart in the *Aeneid*, and with her prophecy of Livia's deification, the poet provides a key to interpreting this variation. Through Carmentis' prophecy of Rome's future, her relationship with (and consolation of) Evander, and her connection with the remembrance of a historical uprising of Roman women, the poet not only recognizes and legitimizes a powerful female role at the head of the imperial dynasty, but also provides the blueprint for a possible (and to him, desirable) relationship between himself and the *princeps femina*.