

Fabre-Serris, J. (2022) “Literary models and social challenges: Marital love according to Ovid in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*”, in *Married Life in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, C.-E. Centlivres Challet (eds), Routledge, 2022, 76-89.

In the *Tristia* and in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the wife of Ovid is a relatively frequent addressee of his poems. This is a very unusual situation for an elegiac poet who until then had only celebrated his *puella* and illicit love affairs. It is also unusual because Ovid’s relationship with his wife has been affected by his exile: he expects that she protects his property and helps him to get his return to Italy. My paper first examines how Ovid reused some of the situations in which elegiac poets stage themselves with their *puella* by adapting to marital relationships the behaviours and feelings associated with these situations. Which selections and which changes has he made? What may we conclude about the feelings between the two spouses? In a second part I will seek to clarify what is really at the root of their relationship. Ovid praises his wife for having all the virtues of a good wife and he expects that she shows them in her behavior towards him. More precisely he uses the notion of *fama*, his wife’s and his own, for trying to get the more effective assistance he considers to be his due. I will end on the final attempt that Ovid makes in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, where he tries to change the too static model of the ‘good wife’, by suggesting to his wife that she should adopt a more active behavior, of which Livia is all at once the target, the guarantor, and the implicit example.