Rivers and the Redefinition of Time in Ovid's Poetry

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Abstract

This thesis explores how experiences with rivers colour the perception of time and memory in Ovid's works. Explorations of attitudes towards the environment are becoming more popular, particularly with contemporary concerns about environmental damage, as we re-evaluate our perception of ourselves and the environment. However, as part of this re-evaluation, the perception of time as a significant factor within experience of the natural environment is rarely considered. Through their use as a metaphor for time, rivers are the ideal focus point for considering how Ovid's experiences with the natural environment affect the depiction of time and continuity across his extant corpus.

This thesis draws together studies of the ancient environment, literary analysis, and spatial studies to enable a holistic analysis of rivers in Ovid's poetry, showing how river behaviour affects the depiction of poetic continuity, in connection with natural (deep) time. As Ovid's poetry plays most explicitly with the strong metaphorical tradition of the river of time developed in poetry, this thesis especially explores how the perception of time and the environment is used to help navigate concerns about poetic memory, the poetic canon, and the poet's place both within and without the environment of Rome.

Through analysis of both natural and unnatural river behaviour in Ovid's works, this thesis argues that the poet aligns his works with the continuity of natural time, represented by the river. Key aspects of this continuity are movement and transformation, in contrast to continuity which stays static. This thesis argues that Ovid's particular form of continuity, tied to disruptive river behaviour, interacts with temporal manipulation in Augustan political narratives – particularly responding to and mirroring Augustan narratives of continuity.

Analysing across Ovid's corpus, this thesis also argues that the natural environment is not only subject to but also directly affects the perception of time, evident in particular when immobile rivers in Ovid's exile poetry highlight an initial loss of time, and threatened continuity. The threatened continuity of the natural environment is caused by external, overwhelming forces, demonstrating that in Ovid's works, continuity in the natural environment was not always guaranteed – a point resonant for our current environmental crisis.

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Introduction

'Come meet me by the river, see how time it flows'

Birch Tree (2015), Foals[1]

A seemingly innocuous chorus line from the song *Birch Tree*, by the British Indie-Rock band Foals, encapsulates the multitude of ideas in the image of a river. The flow of the river is likened to the constant motion of the flow of time, where the movement of the waters becomes a visual representation of that flow. Yet in this image of movement and change, the river also represents a fixed presence, consistent throughout the changing friendship of the subjects of the song. Within that image of continuous presence, the flow of the river and time associated with it shows loss through time, as the river flows beyond the lives of those meeting by it. In meeting by the river, it also becomes a place of connection, even in the representation of temporal distance. This song is merely one example of the impact of rivers on the cultural psyche, where rivers often represent the idea of motion, passing time, loss and life.[2]

This is not limited to popular music of the present, but an enduring image which was also popular in antiquity. Famously, Heraclitus' philosophy of flux is characterised by the river, where the ever-changing waters mean that you can never 'step in the same river twice'.[3] This image is adopted by Ovid's Pythagoras, and once again connected with the image of time: 'time itself flows in continuous motion, not unlike a river' (*ipsa quoque adsiduo labuntur tempora motu, non secus ac flumen*).[4] In both of these images, the idea of change through motion is apparent as a process of time. This is not purely understood as a metaphor either, but is reflected in the physical behaviour of rivers. The best example of this from antiquity is the Maeander river, which was

[1] Yannis Philippakis. (2015). *Birch Tree*. London: Transgressive Records.
[2] Some more recent cultural endeavours revolving around ideas of time, loss, and life represented by rivers: Alice Oswald's (2002) T.S. Eliot Prize winning *Dart* follows the course of the river Dart, and is comprised of the 'voices' of the river; Disney's *Frozen II* (2019) revolves around a frozen river containing memories of the past which must be unfrozen, causing a flood which could wipe out the city of Arendelle.
[3] Translated by Seneca in *Epistulae*, 6.58.23.
[4] Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. 15.179-80. Discussed further in chapter 1.

famous for its frequently changing watercourse;[5] the gradual silting of Miletus bay by the river also gives a physical representation of the passage of geological time, through the behaviour of the river.[6]

Alongside this connection with change through time, rivers also had an important role in life and death. Life revolves around access to water, and so often rivers are at the centre of communities, even from their very beginnings.[7] Linked with this, rivers often represent a source of life: in ancient Egypt, the Nile was considered the source of life and fertility.[8] Rivers also play a role in death in many cultures; often, passing from life to death is conceptualised as crossing a river, symbolising a process of transition.[9] In Greco-Roman mythology, paying the ferryman and crossing the Styx marked the passage from life to death, and the impossibility of return. Another underworld river, the Lethe, also characterises a sense of ending, as drinking the waters causes a loss of memory.[10] However, it is through this process of washing away the memories of a previous life that rivers facilitate future rebirth, and renewal in a new form.[11] Within this, rivers represent both life and death, as part of a larger continuous natural cycle.

This process of rebirth and renewal is also apparent in the process of river flooding, where, alongside potential destruction, the flood plains are renewed by the silt carried by the river.[12] The clearest representation of this is the river Nile, whose regular and predictable flooding cycles led to the fertile and dependable agricultural land of the Nile delta.[13] Flooding as a key aspect of river behaviour is also seen in wider images of rebirth, in apocalyptic flood narratives. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the

[5] The winding course of the Maeander gives its name to the verb 'to meander', while Strabo (12.8.19) notes the frequently changing path also led to actions being taken against the river for the loss of land. See Campbell (2012: 109) for further discussion.
[6] Between the Hellenistic and Late Antique periods the shoreline moved between 10 and 17 kilometres due to the progressive silting of Miletus bay: Aksu et all (1987).
[7] Rome itself is a notable example of this, alongside other major cities. Interestingly, in post-industrial times settlements are largely moving away from rivers; see Fang and Jawitz (2019).
[8] This is connected to worship of Isis, and the annual inundation of the Nile.
[9] Eck (1996: 145) discusses the Ganges as a crossing point between life and death; crossing the Sanzu river in Japanese Buddhism also marks a passage from life to death, as well as the underworld river of Gjöll in Norse mythology.
[10] In Greco-Roman mythology, there are five underworld rivers: the Styx, Lethe, Phlegethon, Acheron, and Cocytus.
[11] Virgil, *Aeneid*. 6. 705-715 shows the role of the Lethe in the cycle of rebirth.
[12] Smith and Ward, 1998: 35-6.
[13] Campbell (2012: 28-9) briefly discusses the importance of the Nile for its floods, but also in communication and transport as the main waterway of Egypt.

story of the great flood begins at the banks of the Euphrates, and ends with Utnapishtim and his wife becoming gods at the 'Mouth of the Rivers'.[14] In the Great Flood of Gun-Yu, the hero Gun-Yu is able to control flood waters in ancient China with help provided by the god of the yellow river, amongst others.[15] The consistency of this image across the globe marks the role of water in both destruction and renewal, signifying both endings and beginnings. This adds to the complexity of the temporal connotations of rivers, as the river encapsulates beginnings and endings in its journey through the landscape, yet its continuous motion and flow as part of a larger hydrological cycle provides a sense of renewal beyond that one singular journey.

These narratives of environmental destruction, with water as a force for destructive renewal, have resonances in our current environmental crisis. Where rivers have been associated with continuity through their consistent motion and role in the hydrological cycle, the continuity of the natural environment is now under threat.[16] Echoing the destructive threat within ancient flood narratives, so too is the world threatened by the destructive environmental effects of climate change; increased river flooding is just one destructive effect of a changing environment.[17] Most discussion has focused on the future: the threat posed to humanity, and ways to change or mitigate that future. Alongside this is a rise in creative works dealing with the outward effects of the Anthropocene. Yet within these different conversations there has been little consideration of the changed notion of the human perception of time within the environment.[18]

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[14] *Epic of Gilgamesh*, tablet XI.

[15] See also the flood episode in the Book of Genesis, and the Qur'an, which details a return to a creation state via flood, and the survival of humanity through the building of a large boat. This has parallels with the great flood narrative in Hindu mythology, where Vaivasvata is warned of a flood by Lord Vishnu in the form of Matsya, and builds a boat in order to ensure the survival of Manu and his family.

[16] See Brown and Quine (1999) for a range of analyses of the effects of environmental change on river processes.

[17] Arnell and Gosling (2016) shows the increased frequency of large, destructive river floods as the climate changes.

[18] Interestingly, there have been some recent experiments which suggest that images of the natural environment lengthen perception of time, potentially leading to less impulsive decisions (Berry et al, 2015). van der Wal (2013) suggests that looking at images of the natural environment, in contrast to built environments, reduces future discounting in humans. This study hypothesizes that natural imagery conjures thoughts of a abundance and security, while the built environment is 'inherently novel on an evolutionary time scale' and conveys social competition for resources (2). Whilst both these studies indicate the influence of the natural environment on human perception of time, there is

Chakrabarty highlights the need for a changed form of thinking about time in the current crisis, arguing that previously, the geological time of the environment has been considered to be separate to Anthropocene time, where the actions of humanity which cause the Anthropocene have led to the perception of time from within a purely 'historical' frame – anthropocentric time.[19] Chakrabarty argues that with the advent of the Anthropocene, historical time becomes geological time, as humanity becomes a force capable of changing the earth on a large scale, essentially becoming a geological layer in itself.[20] Through this, geological time of the natural environment and 'historical' time of humanity are pushed together, with humanity able to affect geological time in an unprecedented way.

However, Baucom is reluctant to accept Chakrabarty's suggestion wholly, arguing that it neglects previous critiques which have always involved interactions between the human and non-human.[21] Rather than disregarding Chakrabarty's Anthropocene time completely, Baucom argues for expansion of the ontological plurality of the human, recognizing incidences in the natural environment such as heatwaves and melting ice as 'post-natural' actors.[22] By expanding to include 'post-natural' actors in affecting geological time, Baucom incorporates the changed processes of the natural environment as actors in the formation of Anthropocene time, building from the more anthropocentric approach of Chakrabarty. Yet even within this nuanced dissent, both argue for a more realised understanding of the place of the natural environment, particularly in its role as an actor in our current age.[23]

The realignment of nature and time in a period of great change has resonances in the first century BCE, where the rearranging of the calendar by Julius Caesar once again realigned natural, seasonal time, with the political and religious events of the

still an indication of separate senses of 'historical' and 'natural' time in the contrast between the unstable built environment and 'secure' natural environment.

[19] Chakrabarty, 2018: 18. Alongside Chakrabarty, Morrison (2018) also argues for more consideration of human impacts on the landscape as associated with time, however she argues that the Anthropocene needs to be 'provincialized', moving from a Eurocentric approach which takes the industrial revolution as its starting point, and broadened out to consider more generally large scale human interventions in the environment such as large scale agriculture.

[20] Chakrabarty, 2018: 25.

[21] Baucom, 2014: 139, responding to Chakrabarty's earlier (2009) theory of Anthropocene time.

[22] Baucom, 2014: 139.

[23] See discussion of 'agency' on pp 31-32.

Roman calendar.[24] Macrobius suggests that before this, the weather was so out of synchronisation with the seasons that cold weather would appear in summer months and warm in winter.[25] In 44BCE Julius Caesar revised the calendar, adopting a solar calendar with 365 ¼ days.[26] This rearranging of the calendar, whilst realigning with natural cycles and attempting to put a stop to substantial intercalation, highlights the changeability of historical time, in contrast to the longevity of natural time. Rüpke notes that, with this change, astronomical events could be described on the basis of civil dates for the first time, mirroring the process of incorporating geological and historical time together as discussed by Chakrabarty. [27]

The reframing of time in this period is further built upon by Augustus, and extended into his manifestation within the cyclic repetition of the calendar. Feeney discusses the appearance of Augustus' name at the beginning of every year, under the consuls' names on the Fasti Capitolini.[28] Through the cyclic repetition of the calendar, Augustus is therefore placed at the start and end of each year, a continuous, unchanging presence across the years. With the renaming of *sextilis* after Augustus, cyclic seasonal time within the calendar also bore the mark of the imperial leader.[29]

This concern with time all feeds into the larger political change of the period, which can be understood as a 'historical rupture'. Biesinger uses this term to describe events which disrupt previous lines of historical continuity, as a complete departure from the previous status quo.[30] Where ancient historiography often revolved around the *exempla* of great men, deviation from their choices could be seen as an 'exemplary rupture', in which new lines of continuity were formed.[31] This focus on

[24] Creation of the original Roman calendar was commonly attributed to Romulus (Ovid, *Fasti.*1.27-36), with further additions by Numa; see Rüpke (2011: 23-4) for a brief discussion of this attribution in Late Republican and Early Imperial sources.
[25] Macrobius, *Saturnalia.* 1.12.39.
[26] Hannah (2005: 113): Julius Caesar was helped significantly by Egyptian astronomers.
[27] Rüpke, 2011: 112.
[28] Feeney (2007: 180): 23-12BCE Augustus' name appears after the consuls, from 1-7CE Augustus' name appears before.
[29] Feeney (2007: 185) thoroughly discusses Augustus' insertion into cyclic time as well, but does not draw this out into a connection with natural (deep) time. The element of longevity and renewal through the seasonal repetition of the calendar also aligns with the narratives of tradition and renewal in the art and literature of the Augustan period: Horace, *Carmen Saeculare* 66-8 specifically asks Apollo to preserve or prolong Rome's current power for another cycle, reiterating this blurred sense of culmination and renewal.
[30] Biesinger, 2019: 82.
[31] Biesinger, 2019: 84.

forms of continuity, both old and new, in the Augustan redefinition of time appears as a symptom of this rupture.[32]

It is within this context of 'rupture' that Ovid produces his works, concerned with time and power over time. It is striking that four of his works begin with some variant of *tempus*, whilst the *Fasti* itself is Ovid's own commentary on the calendar.[33] Writing in this time period, the redefinition of both historical and cyclic time in the Augustan political narrative brings ideas of temporal manipulation and continuity to the forefront. For the poet, these are mirrored in terms of literary continuity. Alongside the political context, Ovid as a writer stands within the immediate tradition of the *Aeneid*, presented as the epitome of Latin literature almost immediately after being produced, as well as playing a part in a community of high-profile poets operating in the elegiac metre.[34]

There was a tradition in Classical scholarship, now outdated, in which Ovid was presented as the last of the so-called 'golden age' of Latin, or as the beginning of the 'silver age'.[35] Whilst these categories are usually unhelpful, the idea of Ovid as between states characterises his relationship with poetic time, in his own form of 'rupture'. In characterising his poetry as dealing with new forms, Ovid is aligned with a moment of poetic change, from which new lines of poetic continuity are drawn.[36] This scheme takes on additional significance in Ovid's exile poetry, where the mirrored temporal positions of the emperor and the poet, both at a point of culmination and ending, is embedded in the poetics. In the unfamiliar environment of exile, the secure alignment of time and nature is threatened, reframing the sense of temporal control presented in Rome, leading to the slow, endlessly enduring sense of time presented in the exilic environment of the *Ibis, Tristia,* and *Epistulae ex*

[32] Rüpke (2011: 124) discusses increased antiquarian commentaries on the calendar (Varro, Cincius) mirroring the increased calendar activity through Augustus' rule, showing the prevalence of temporal topics in literary culture at this time.
[33] *Metamorphoses* 1.4; *Ibis* 1: *Fasti* 1.1; *Tristia* 1.1.4. Rüpke (2011).
[34] Tarrant (1997) discusses the impact of Virgil's works on contemporary poets, as well as the almost immediate entry of the *Aeneid* into the poetic canon.
[35] Ovid's death in 18CE often marks the end of the Augustan period of the so-called golden age of Latin.
[36] *Metamorphoses* 1.1. begins with the invocation to sing of bodies changed to new forms, particularly highlighting change (*mutatas* 1, *mutatis* 2), and time (*ad mea perpetuuum deducite tempora carmen* 4).

Ponto.[37] Throughout all his extant works, this relationship with time appears as a theme of continuity through change.

In presenting this theme of continuity through change, then, the poet utilises rivers as both a literary motif, and as an image of the ultimate continuity, natural (deep) time. The river is also an important image for dealing with aspects of temporal theory, as it can show time as a linear progression, and cycles of time, while the seemingly endless motion of the river can also speak to concepts of deep time. Deep time focuses on associating time with geological strata, where layers of the earth show the depth of its history. Within this, nature and the earth are associated with a much larger timeframe than that of human time.[38] Whilst the endless continuity of deep time may not be appropriate in the current era of climate disaster, the idea of nature as unbounded, and in continuous movement outside of anthropocentric concerns about time is a helpful idea for the depiction of time through rivers in Ovid's poetry.[39] In this, the constant motion of the hydrology cycle, and the repetition and renewal within it, feeds into the idea of continuous natural time through everlasting recurrence.[40]

The concept of time as a cycle is expanded upon by Gould, in dialogue with the idea of deep time. Gould summarises what he terms the crucial 'dichotomy' at the heart of 'the deepest and oldest themes in Western thought about the central subject of time', where time is perceived as linear, or circular. In the linear view, termed 'time's arrow', history is a sequence of irreversible and unrepeatable events which present history as story moving in a specific direction – which can be linked to narratives of destiny building to a certain point or person.[41] In the alternate cyclic view, termed

[37] Claassen, 2008: 18-21.
[38] Deep time was first posited by James Hutton in 1788, who argued that 'the course of nature cannot be limited by time, which must process in continual succession' (125). Hutton's theories are regarded to have laid the foundations for modern geology – see Rossetter (2018) for a detailed analysis of the impact of Hutton's theories.
[39] See Wood (2019) for a detailed consideration of the challenges the current climate crisis poses to the idea of deep time.
[40] Everlasting recurrence was a key component of ancient Stoic conceptualisations of time, where the world is fated to be destroyed by fire, and remade in exactly the same form, as a single finite timeline which is repeated. This idea of the ending of historical time in part of a larger cycle of destruction and renewal, I would argue, feeds into the continuity of natural time in contrast to the limited nature of anthropocentric historical time. See Long (2006) for further discussion of Stoic circular time. The Stoic idea of world-ending fire and flood occurs in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 1 and 2, which are discussed in chapter 4.
[41] Gould, 1987: 10.

'time's cycle', time has no linear, progressive direction and events are indistinct – everything is unchanging as part of a broader cycle.[42]

These broader cycles can be shown through the river image in the apparent endless motion of the river waters, and their part in the overall renewing cycle of the earth; floods renew the soil, repetitive behaviour such as freezing or drying forms markers of seasonal time, and the water itself is constantly renewed through the hydrology cycle. These natural cycles can also reflect notions of historical time in the Augustan period; this is particularly apparent in the framing of a return to the 'Golden Age' through literary and political endeavours.[43]

Because of the multiplicities of the river image, it is an apt metaphor for dealing with issues of blurred linear and cyclic temporalities. That the river is able to encapsulate both images is particularly appropriate for the political temporal frame of Ovid's works, where ideas of cyclic time and narratives of destiny were aligning to become dominant cultural narratives justifying Augustan power. In this way, the image of the river is the perfect image for allowing Ovid to contend with his own redefinition of time, and poetic continuity.

Within this thesis I consider the representation of river behaviour in the vast majority of Ovid's extant corpus, tracing their development across the *Amores, Heroides, Ars Amatoria, Remedia Amoris, Metamorphoses, Fasti, Tristia,* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[44] Largely, my close readings in each chapter follow a broadly chronological order, which allows for comparisons across Ovid's poetic career, as well as changing political circumstances.[45]

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[42] Gould, 1987: 11.

[43] The return of the Ludi Saeculares in 17BCE shows the linking of Augustus with both a return to the old through cycles, but also new beginnings with the beginning of a new cycle. *Res Gestae* 20 all about rebuilding and restoring previous building works (*Duo et octoginta templa deum in urbe consul sextum ex decreto senatus refeci). Res Gestae* 8.12-15 also shows this nicely – Augustus both restored old traditions and set new examples *(Legibus novis latis complura exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro usu revocavi et ipse multárum rérum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi)* – old and new, on the point of change.

[44] *Medicamina Faciei Femineae* is not considered within the scope of this thesis as there are no references to rivers within it.

[45] Chapter 1 is an exception to this rule, as it is split into four thematic approaches. Obviously, ordering Ovid's texts in order of composition is complicated by the process of editing indicated in the preface of the *Amores,* and potential post-exile revisions. Broadly, the amatory poetry is Ovid's earlier work, and Ovid's exile marks a turning point for the later poetry, the *Metamorphoses, Fasti,* and exilic environment poetry. For some of the difficulty of ordering by composition date of Ovid's works see Rand (1907).

The *Amores* are Ovid's career defining first work of amatory elegies, published circa 16 BCE, and later edited. In three books, the poet charts the successes and failures of the *amator* pursuing his *puella*, Corinna; alongside this, the poet contends with ideas of poetic identity, generic hierarchy, and subversion of masculine norms.[46] This subversion of masculine norms in the *Amores* also occurs in the *Heroides*, a collection of epistolary poems from the perspective of Greek and Roman mythological heroines.[47] This collection shows strong engagement with the literary tradition, and in the form of letters, 'writing back' to that tradition.

Playfully building on the popularity of the *Amores* and the *Heroides, Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris* continue the amatory theme but in the Hellenistic didactic format, teaching male and female readers 'the art of love', before the *Remedia* tells of how to fall out of love, which has been caused by the previous work.[48] In this way, the *Remedia* is consciously writing back to the *Ars Amatoria,* which has important ramifications for the representation of time through river behaviour across the two works.[49]

Throughout these earlier collections, concerns about generic hierarchy and poetic identity form dominant themes, and as such, interact with the representation of river behaviour in these collections. Building from the Callimachean motif of the torrent as epic poetry, in Ovid's earlier works, aspects of river behaviour reflect different ideas of poetry, and show Ovid's own unique poetic identity within that.[50]

Ovid's later works interact more with the political and the personal, reflecting circumstances of exile even in collections not explicitly set in the exilic environment.[51] The first of these is the *Metamorphoses*, an epic poem spanning fifteen books, which follows the theme of transformation. Published circa 8 CE (and possibly edited in exile), the poem begins with the primordial chaos and the creation of the world, and ends with the apotheosis of Julius Caesar. As such, this work

[46] For a discussion of poetic identity, genre, and masculinity in the *Amores*, see Greene (1998).
[47] Although the exact date of the *Heroides* is uncertain, they are widely regarded to be amongst Ovid's earlier works. See Knox (2002: 118-120) for a clear overview of scholarship attempting to date the *Heroides*.
[48] See Conte (1989) for the relationship between the *Amores, Ars,* and *Remedia*.
[49] See Kennedy (2000: 168-171) for further discussion of Ovidian mimesis particularly conferring authority on previous Ovidian texts. This cyclicality is particularly tied to seasonal river cycles, and is discussed in chapter 2.
[50] These particular interactions are covered in chapters 2 and 3.
[51] Ovid was supposedly exiled to Tomis by Augustus in 8CE.

covers a large time frame, yet for the most part, rarely follows a straightforwardly linear path.[52] This non-linearity is particularly reflected in river behaviour in the *Metamorphoses*, as examples of cyclic natural time and poetic continuity. Engaging with the highly politicised genre of epic, as well as potential post-exile revisions means that the depiction of river behaviour in the *Metamorphoses* reflects aspects of an insecure environment which is not as apparent in the earlier works – yet this insecurity is often mitigated by a connection with continuous natural time, and the power of the poetry.

Alongside the blurred linear and cyclic temporal framing of the *Metamorphoses* sits the *Fasti*, Ovid's calendar poem, written in elegiac couplets and detailing the aetiologies of Roman festivals in the first six months of the calendar. Taking the form of yearly recurrence, the poem clearly engages with cyclic temporality, as well as the political and religious status of the festivals described. Through these overt connections to time and power within the very form of the calendar poem, there are fewer references to river behaviour as connected with time in this work. However, when representations of river behaviour do occur, they are overtly linked to cyclicality, potential vulnerability in the present, and hope for the future.[53]

The *Ibis*, *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* comprise the last of Ovid's works, and are explicitly written from the frame of exile. The *Ibis* is a curse poem mirroring the lost Callimachean *Ibis*; Ovid's is written in elegiac couplets, and details a range of torments and punishments aimed at the pseudonym 'Ibis'. Often, these torments mirror the position of the poet in exile, and the framing of the poem seems to indicate the longevity of suffering beyond exile and even death.[54]

The epistolary *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* more strongly engage with the contrasting exilic environment and vulnerable political position of the poet, which is most overtly shown in the frequent depictions of the frozen river Hister, and unpredictable torrents separated from a larger water cycle. As both collections take

[52] Non-linearity of *Metamorphoses*: see Wheeler (2000) for discussion of cyclic repetition in the narrative structure; also Solodow (1988: 30) for the lack of 'temporal progression' in the *Metamorphoses*. Alternatively, see Cole (2008) for an argument for linear progression in the *Metamorphoses* – I argue for a combination of linear and cyclic within the poem.
[53] Discussed in the second section of chapter 2.
[54] See Hinds (1999: 65 -67) for a discussion of the Ibis as a corruption of Ovidian time in Tomis. Unending sufferings: *Ibis*, 127-208.

the form of letters written back to an audience in Rome, both the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* also engage with ideas of temporal distance, as communication is stilted, and the writer must wait for a response.[55] In these collections, the changing environment reflects this sense of sluggish time, where the frozen river shows both static and changing poetic time in the vulnerability of exile.[56]

Following river representation across the majority of Ovid's works, rather than focussing on a single collection allows for an exploration of changing depictions of time based on the security of the natural environment. This comparative approach also retains focus on the rivers' interactions with the environment, rather than an isolated approach specific to one work.

Previous Research

Previous research on ancient rivers and the natural environment has not taken particular account of the interaction between time and the environment. Instead, it falls into two broad categories: studies of the ancient environment and landscape, and studies on rivers themselves. Studies of the ancient environment focus more on natural processes, and particular environmental problems ancient societies may have experienced, while studies of the ancient landscape consider spaces of the ancient world: although there is some fluidity in the definition of landscape across the field, scholarship in this group mostly deals with a space which has been framed or ordered in some way.[57] This has a more interpretative focus, and often discusses the interaction of humanity and the natural environment.

Previous scholarship on time in Ovid's works and the Augustan period more broadly is numerous; works on time and the manipulation of time in the Augustan period such as the recent edited collection *Augustus and the Destruction of History: The Politics of the Past in Early Imperial Rome* (2019), and Feeney's *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History (*2007) provide a historical approach to the temporal context of Ovid's works, yet rarely consider the natural environment

[55] Claassen (2008: 27) recognizes Ovid's exile time as literally 'behind' Rome through epistolary exchanges.
[56] Discussed further in chapters 3 and 5.
[57] Discussed in further detail below.

within that context.[58] Alongside these, Newland's *Playing with Time: Ovid and the Fasti* (1995), Pasco-Pranger's *Founding the Year: Ovid's "Fasti" and the Poetics of the Roman Calendar* (2006), and Gardner's *Gendering Time in Augustan Love Elegy* (2013) focus on time in poetic works, and as most relevant to this thesis will be discussed below.

Finally, scholarship which considers ancient rivers has consisted of both surveys across bodies of water, such as the edited collection *Fluvial Landscapes in the Roman World* (2017) and Campbell's *Rivers and the Power of Ancient Rome* (2012), in addition to works which focus on an individual river, such as Merrill's *Roman Geographies of the Nile* (2017). Previous scholarship on ancient rivers tends to take a historical approach, which integrates elements of physical river behaviour and cultural considerations of rivers.

Most relevant for this thesis is the literary strand of ancient river studies, with Segal's *Landscape in Ovid's Metamorphoses* (1969) and Jones' *Reading Rivers in Roman Culture* (2005) presenting the bulk of the scholarship, alongside various articles dealing with specific episodes or literary works.[59] This dearth of scholarship is despite the prominent literary connection between rivers and poetry in the ancient world, and generally focuses on metapoetic interpretations, which could be further extended with a renewed focus on the agency and role of the natural environment within those metapoetic meanings. Across all of these sections of scholarship, the issue of time and the environment is not considered in depth.

1. Ancient Environment

With current concerns about environmental change, and a renewed focus on the importance of the natural environment, studies of the ancient environment have had a resurgence over the last decade, exhibiting a multitude of differing approaches. At the turn of the millennium, Horden and Purcell's ground-breaking *The Corrupting Sea* (2000) cogently argued for the connectivity of the ancient Mediterranean, where

[58] Other important works on time in ancient Rome include: Beard (1987), Hannah (2005), but due to their broad focus are not considered in-depth here. I have not discussed Rüpke (2011) in-depth here as, like Feeney (2007) it covers a large time frame, yet Feeney aims to 'investigate the mesh between the time of the imperial city and the natural world' (2007: 6), and is thus more relevant to the focus of this thesis. See also Flower (2017: 360-369, 383-384) for a brief consideration of the *lares Augusti* in connection with Augustan temporal patterns.
[59] *Amores* 3.6 has often been subject to discussion: Shea (2019), Suter (1989).

survival depended on the networks between individual micro-regions. Their focus on individual aspects of regions, connected into a wider framework across the Mediterranean, allows for detailed analysis of the natural environment, without compromising the importance of interactive networks in meaning. More recently, and most relevant for the climate-crisis context of this thesis is Hughes' *Environmental Problems of the Greeks and Romans* (2014).[60]

Hughes' *Environmental Problems of the Greeks and Romans* (2014) attempts to blend scientific and historical approaches, surveying problems ancient Greeks and Romans may have faced in their environments, both natural and anthropogenic. It discusses a wide variety of aspects of the natural environment, and how, particularly, ancient Greek and Roman societies contributed to environmental degradation through deforestation, wildlife depletion, mining pollution, war, cities, and carefully cultivated gardens and parks. This work usefully highlights ancient attitudes to a modern problem, however its broad nature makes it difficult for the author to make a sustained analysis on any one aspect of the environment.

Ultimately, Hughes argues for ancient societies causing environmental degradation, which factored into their so-called 'decline'.[61] Unfortunately, the sustained focus on the model of decline of ancient societies in the Mediterranean risks simplifying a complex set of interactions between the environment and humanity. This simplification presents interaction with the natural environment as a one-way process, in which humans are the dominant force, with very little consideration for dynamic exchange between the two. A narrative of anthropocentric decline inevitably decentres the natural environment itself from the discussion, reducing its agency, and instead placing humanity as the dominant driving force within the ancient natural environment.

2. Ancient Landscape

The wealth of study on the ancient landscape arose within the subset of the 'spatial turn' in Classics. This includes works such as Leach's *The Rhetoric of Space* (1988), Larmour and Spencer's edited *The Sites of Rome* (2007), and Spencer's *Roman*

[60] There has also been a range of individual articles considering interactions in the natural environment, largely from an archaeological perspective: Ackerman et al (2017).
[61] Hughes, 2014: 6.

Landscape: Culture and Identity (2010). Within this subsection, landscape is broadly understood as organised space, as opposed to the broader analysis of the environment in general in the previous section.[62] This leads to scholarship focusing on spatiality and visual ordering within the representation of 'landscapes' in ancient sources.

Leach's *The Rhetoric of Space: Literary and Artistic Representations of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome* (1988) marks a change in approach to literary-spatial studies, working with reception theory to consider how the spectator plays a part in the construction of a landscape within a text.[63] In the first section, she covers different types of 'spatial organisation' in the landscapes of Virgil, Caesar, and Catullus. She considers how mapping as a form of spatial control highlights Roman power, and is reflected distinctively in 'diagrammatic topography' of Caesar's commentaries and Attis' journey in Catullus 63. This approach is fruitful for considering the interaction of power over the environment and spatial ordering; that aspect of expected order is an important part of the representation of the more chaotic natural environment in Ovid's works. Leach's second section discusses landscape painting, and the representation of public and private space. Overall, Leach's approach is useful for literary spatial readings, particularly at the beginning of this kind of spatial study, yet elements of interaction between the environment and the audience are lacking.

Edited by Larmour and Spencer, *The Sites of Rome: Time, Space, and Memory* (2007) broadly builds from this reception theory approach, focusing on the city of Rome. The aim of the collection is to focus on Rome as a site of layered time, where 'sights' such as the Tiber, Fora, and the Colosseum can be read within texts to 'receive' the city.[64] Of most relevance to this thesis is Banta's 'The Gates of Janus: Bakhtin and Plutarch's Roman *meta-chronotope'.*

Banta draws together landscape and time through Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope. In this, Banta argues that through Plutarch's *Lives* of Romulus and

[62] 'Landscape' itself is a contentious term, and almost every scholar tends to interpret the definition in their own particular way. Broadly, it is a space which can be thought of as 'framed' or ordered in some way. For an overview of 'landscape', see Wylie (2007).
[63] Leach (1969).
[64] Larmour and Spencer, 2007: 6-7.

Numa, Rome is presented first as an ordered landscape, which is then rewritten by Numa overall presenting Rome as a chronotope which shows the continuous process of reinvention at play in Rome. As part of this, Banta briefly considers the role of the Tiber as representing a wild, untamed aspect of the natural environment in the representation of Archaic Rome, which is then calmed by the presence of Numa.[65] This draws a connection between the river and the potential for chronotopic motif, however Banta does not develop this temporal connection further – instead, the river is presented as something to be calmed or controlled. Through this presentation, Banta argues that in Plutarch, the wild landscape is the chronotopic space which then becomes 'civilised' by Romulus. Banta's use of Bakhtin's chronotope to highlight reinvention is certainly convincingly argued, yet does present a limited view of the natural environment, particularly lacking connections between landscape elements.[66]

Spencer's *Roman Landscape: Culture and Identity* (2010) moves from the focus on the city of Rome to Roman landscapes, focusing on the interactions between natural and artificial space. *Roman Landscape* sets out the theoretical background to landscape studies, before then applying those theoretical frameworks to case studies of villa landscapes and landscape paintings. In her discussion of narratology as a way of reading time and motion in the landscape, Spencer refers to the course of a river as an example of how space gains meaning 'as a network of time, place, and stories'.[67] In this, she discusses how rivers are also defined in some part by recognised and expected behaviour – as a flowing body of water, it is termed a river, rivers flow in a specific direction, allowing the reader to conceptualise and map the landscape. Although more of an illustrative example in Spencer's work, this image of the river as emblematic of time and motion in a landscape is extremely important for the consideration of Ovid's poetic time through rivers, even though Ovid's works are not Spencer's own focus.

[65] Banta, 2007: 250, 257.
[66] This thesis uses an ecological reworking of Bakhtin's chronotope, in order to more fully consider the agency of the natural environment – see below.
[67] Spencer, 2010: 48.

3. Ancient Time

Newlands' *Playing with Time: Ovid and the Fasti* (1995) is the first to undertake an extended discussion of time in Ovid' work, focusing on the *Fasti*. She argues that the *Fasti* 'offers a major exploration of Roman identity in a period of transition and adjustment in the Roman world', in which the calendar represents an image of 'Romanness'.[68] This work takes the notion of the calendar as a foundation for Roman identity, which draws out the centrality of Roman time in cultural thought. Despite this centrality however, it does not often engage with the subject of time itself, rather focusing on the *Fasti* as concerned with Roman religion, history, and monuments. Taking the theme of time as implicit in the calendar form means this work sometimes obscures themes of direct temporal manipulation within Ovid's work.

Aside from the fifth chapter, which argues for Ovidian reinvention of the past, Newlands focuses on the genre, the figure of the narrator, and political dissatisfaction in the Augustan regime. Whilst acknowledging the role of time in Augustan narratives of power, Newlands sidesteps direct comparison between Ovidian uses of time and Augustan ideology, instead arguing for the *Fasti* as a 'plurality of voices on Roman identity' in a period of change and trauma.[69] There is also very little incorporation of the natural environment in the consideration of Roman identity, other than the importance of the stars. Therefore, although this work of scholarship is an excellent exploration of the Ovidian voice in the *Fasti*, its temporal conclusions are not expansively drawn out.

Continuing focus on the genre of the *Fasti*, Pasco-Pranger's *Founding the Year: Ovid's "Fasti" and the Poetics of the Roman Calendar* (2006) uses Gian Biago Conte's theory of generic and cultural models to show how Ovid's *Fasti* uses the epigraphic Roman *fasti* as a model, exploiting its ideological potential to claim poetic power. This work considers some of the interactions between time and power in the *Fasti*, particularly in 'The Politics of Tempora', where Pasco-Pranger argues for the importance of the future and stability in Rome towards the end of Augustus' life. In this persuasive chapter, Pasco-Pranger broadly argues that the *Fasti* is concerned with the future, particularly ideas of sucession and the potential future of Rome.

[68] Newlands, 1995: 9-11.
[69] Newlands, 1995: 23-6.

Further chapters focus more on the genre of the Fasti and its potential models, arguing that Ovid emphasizes the constructed nature of the calendar. This conclusion is important for considering the artificial nature of Ovidian time, particularly in the poems written and edited from exile; however the argument could be made even more persuasive with further consideration of the exile poetry, and the sense of threatened future shown in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

With a broader focus than Ovid's works, Gardner's *Gendering Time in Augustan Love Elegy* (2013) is firmly focused on time, elegiac time specifically. Within this focus, Gardner argues that elegy constructs differing experiences of time for the *amator* and the *puella*, where the *puella* offers the *amator* an opportunity for delay; yet the *amator* must always capitulate to the 'linear demands of his life course' exposing the process of aging for both the *amator* and the *puella*.[70] Through this exploration, she argues that 'the love story that elegy unfolds relies on properties of repetition and transcendence over linear time, frequently associated with the *puella*'.[71] Gardner's work thoroughly explores 'cycles' of elegy, covering Virgil, Horace, Propertius, and Ovid, marking how the elegiac lover 'confronts, explores, and challenges his own temporality as an elite male subject in the early Roman principate'.[72]

Gardner does not focus on Ovid's work in-depth; however, she characterises the *Amores* as at a crossroads, where Ovid stands between the delaying strategies characteristic of elegy, and the Augustan milieu of innovation.[73] Gardner's work thus provides a useful starting point for the consideration of time in Ovid's poetry, and particularly in the context of Ovid's writing. In terms of the natural environment, Gardner frequently refers to the feminised natural environment, where women are associated with the cycles of life and death in nature, and men are associated with linear time and production which outlasts a generation.[74] Whilst I am not arguing against the association between women and nature in both ancient and contemporary culture, I would query the suggestion of decay in the cyclic process of life and death; rather, that this cycle shows longevity – at least in Ovid's wider works.

[70] Gardner, 2013: 10.
[71] Gardner, 2013: 11.
[72] Gardner, 2013: 34.
[73] Gardner, 2013: 116.
[74] Gardner 2013: 27.

The association between the feminine and nature is also complicated by rivers specifically, which are more often associated with masculine forces.[75] In this way, the temporal connotations of the natural environment, and rivers specifically, could be drawn out further within Gardner's study.

There is a large amount of scholarship on time and narrative in the *Metamorphoses*, of which only some will be able to be covered in this brief section. Most relevant to the metapoetic focus of this thesis is Wheeler's *Narrative Dynamics in Ovid's Metamorphoses (*2000). In this work, Wheeler argues that frequent repetition of narrative motifs in the *Metamorphoses* is a characteristic of Ovid's epic continuing itself, as a *carmen perpetuum*.[76] In this argument, Wheeler specifically conceptualises the story world as a body of water, in which rivers form part of a ring composition through flowing back into the sea.[77] Although Wheeler does not make the connection to cycles of natural time, his work is an important influence for considering the role of repetition as part of narrative continuity in the *Metamorphoses*, which I draw out further across Ovid's corpus.

Similarly, Cole's *Ovidius Mythistoricus: Legendary Time In The Metamorphoses* (2008) argues for the importance of chronology in the narrative architecture of the *Metamorphoses*; yet rather than focusing on cycles of repetition, presents the *Metamorphoses* as a sequential 'mythistory' leading to Ovid's present. In direct contrast to Wheeler, Cole argues explicitly for this as a linear temporal narrative, which, whilst not always even in its approach, covers a mythical and historical events in a broadly sequential way. [78] My thesis seeks to bridge these two conflicting views of linear and cyclic chronology in the *Metamorphoses*, with the river as reflective of the blurred linear and cyclic chronology within the poem.

4. Ancient Rivers

Previous academic literature whose primary concern is Roman rivers can be roughly separated into two approaches: the geographical, and the literary. In the first

[75] As discussed in chapter 1, river-gods in ancient religion were most commonly presented as masculine. See Campbell (2012: 137) for further discussion.
[76] Wheeler, 2000: 9, 151.
[77] Wheeler, 2000: 5, 19.
[78] Cole, 2008: 10.

category, scholarship ranges from focusing on a single river, to edited collections which consider a cross section of rivers in ancient society.

Fluvial Landscapes in the Roman World (2017), a collection of papers edited by Franconi, tackles rivers in the ancient environment, with different authors employing a range of archaeological and literary sources to cover a wide geographical range of rivers, including the Rhone, Rhine, and Orontes. This builds on Hughes' work by considering rivers outside mainland Greece and Italy, and succeeds in its aim to consider how rivers influenced and were influenced by Roman society.[79] Yet, due to its nature as a collection arising from conference papers, *Fluvial Landscapes in the Roman World* suffers from an element of fragmentation, as the individual rivers and environments are not connected to a wider frame throughout the work.

In contrast to *Fluvial Landscape*'s in-depth analysis of individual rivers, Campbell's *Rivers and the Power of Ancient Rome* (2012) aims to provide a comprehensive discussion of rivers and their role in ancient Rome, covering a wide temporal, geographical, and social frame. This monumental work focuses more on the physical role of rivers within Rome's power, with explorations of the hydrological cycle, river mapping, rivers in the law, rivers in military matters, and the exploitation of rivers. These sections consider both the larger, named rivers, but also offer some consideration of smaller rivers and the role these may have had within local communities. In addition to this discussion of the physical role of rivers, Campbell includes a section on the role of rivers in literature and art, as well as a final section on rivers as symbols of Roman control.

Throughout this work, Campbell argues for the centrality of rivers to ancient communities, and particularly pushes the duality of rivers as both boundaries and connecting forces.[80] This idea of duality within centrality is key to recognising the multiplicity of nature, beyond its meaning to suit humanity's purposes, and it provides an important contextual background for the study of any individual poet within this. Although *Rivers and the Power of Ancient Rome* covers a broad time period, its focus lies after the death of Augustus, and on empire in particular – this means that the role of rivers in the principate is not considered in depth.

[79] Hughes (2012).
[80] Campbell, 2012: xiii-xiv.

In contrast to these broad surveys are a couple of more specific works: both Aldrete's *Floods of the Tiber in Ancient Rome* (2006), and Merrills' *Roman Geographies of the Nile* (2017) focus on one river, using a range of literary and archaeological sources to explore the place of the Tiber and the Nile in Roman life over a broad time frame. This tighter focus allows both authors to explore Roman uses and attitudes towards specific rivers, but does not allow for their analysis to be situated and compared with other Roman rivers.

Aldrete's work centres on the flooding of the Tiber in ancient Rome, considering how the floods were perceived and dealt with by the people of Rome. This is a useful work as it explicitly deals with the physicality of the Tiber in its environment, and how the river and the people of Rome co-existed. This discussion takes place in the context of expected attempts to control the behaviour of the river in order to reduce further occurrences of destructive Tiber floods, yet Aldrete's discussion reveals that, despite having resources and technology to reduce flooding in Rome, they chose not to.[81]

Aldrete argues this shows acceptance of river behaviour within the environment, where dependence on the river within the city led to acceptance of the Tiber's floods, and an unwillingness to adapt its flow, but rather for themselves to adapt to the river.[82] This tolerance in the face of dependence marks a disjuncture from the Anthropocene, where attempts to adapt and control nature to suit our purposes have made nature no longer dependable.[83] Aldrete's work therefore provides a useful starting point for considering how the destructive nature of the Tiber's floods was broadly perceived, where this idea of dependence in the face of destruction is an exceptionally important concept for thinking about time in Ovid's poetry, particularly where exile threatens the dependability of the environment.

While Aldrete's work is necessarily limited by its focus on the Tiber, the uniqueness of the Tiber in Roman thought does not provide a representative example for understanding individual rivers more widely in Roman thought, particularly those outside Italian territories. Merrills' *Roman Geographies of the Nile* (2017) instead

[81] Aldrete, 2006: 238-9.
[82] Aldrete, 2006: 9.
[83] Mann, 2006: 134. Discussed further below, and chapter 4.

focuses on representations of the Nile, moving away from the physical geography approach. In this, Merrills discusses the representation of the Nile in maps and public displays, in triumphs and domestic wall paintings, in metaphysical writings, geographical literature, and finally poetry. Within this approach, Merrills considers the interaction between the spatial and temporal in representations of the river Nile through the lens of the Praeneste Nile mosaic, and the possibility of multi-directional readings.[84]

Throughout discussion of the representation of the Nile, Merrills argues for co-option of the river by Roman writers, again drawing out that sense of power in the represented landscape brought out by Leach. This forms the broader purpose of Merrills' work, which attempts to move away from a purely prosaic approach to ancient geographies, by exploring textual, visual, and archaeological sources to reflect geographical understanding, around the focal point of the Nile.[85] This represents the current multi-faceted approach to the ancient evidence, although the river itself becomes an object separate from its environment in this representational approach across a broad time period.

5. Literary Approaches

Within literary approaches there are two key works for the study of rivers in Ovid's works: Segal's *Landscape in Ovid's Metamorphoses* (1969), and Jones' *Reading Rivers in Roman Culture* (2005).[86]

In *Landscape in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Segal argues that the natural world in the *Metamorphoses* subverts the peaceful pastoral image of the natural environment, and instead presents a more disordered and ambiguous sense of nature. Through this, 'nature ceases to exist as an independent entity which brings to the human world an image of some larger, though not necessarily benevolent order.'[87] Whilst this movement away from a sense of 'natural order' to one of an ambiguous and subversive nature is an important step, sometimes the close focus on individual

[84] Merrills, 2017: 50-63. Jones (2005: 101-104) also discusses this mosaic with reference to a spatial and temporal frame.
[85] Merrills, 2017: 5-7.
[86] See Cheshire (2008) for discussion of the differing poetic styles as rivers in Callimachus *Hymn 2*; Fowler (2002) for discussion of poetic inspiration as a kind of 'flow' in Latin poetry; Lateiner (1978) for Callimachean river metaphors in Ovid's *Amores*.
[87] Segal, 1969: 88.

landscape elements decontextualises them from their interactions with a wider environmental network. This decontextualization leads to the conclusion of an ambiguous nature appearing disconnected from any wider meaning, and reduces the role of natural actors in creating meaning. This being said, Segal's work provides a useful starting point for considering nature in Ovid's *Metamorphoses.*

Moving from the broad sense of nature in Segal's work, Jones' *Reading Rivers in Roman Literature and Culture* (2005) takes a metapoetic approach. In this, she focuses on 'rivers as a literary phenomenon', where the primary focus is Virgil's work in consideration with rivers in other authors, including Ovid.[88] This is a necessary constraint within the work itself as an extension of Jones' doctoral thesis, and allows thorough coverage of the river image in Virgil's corpus, with some contextualisation from other authors.[89] Within this work, Jones initially covers the cultural meaning of rivers in Greece and Rome, before moving on to a study of rivers in a literary environment. This has a predominantly metapoetic focus, discussing rivers as poetic speech, rivers as narrative boundaries, river catalogues, and rivers as emblematic of narrative structure.

Throughout, Jones argues that in Virgil's works, rivers are 'a form of authorial comment on progress or structure of a narrative';[90] this argument is particularly interested in the motion and directionality of the river, which Jones suggests is analogous to the text. With regard to the focus on Virgil's works, Jones argues for a twofold understanding of both author and landscape, where Virgil's works show rivers as a literary device, whilst examining rivers facilitates further understanding of the trajectory of his works. *Reading Rivers in Roman Literature and Culture* provides a thorough exploration of the metapoetic connotations of rivers in Virgil's works, with some consideration of other authors alongside this. However, focusing purely on rivers as a 'literary phenomenon' presents a strong anthropocentric view which neglects other aspects of river behaviour which affect their directionality and flow.

Whilst Jones briefly covers elements of temporality within the river, these sections are short and mostly focus on narrative temporality. The first discussion of

[88] Jones, 2005: xiii.
[89] Jones, 2005: preface.
[90] Jones, 2005: xiii.

temporality and rivers within her work focuses on directionality and irreversibility, citing some examples from Ovid as evidence for this understanding.[91] As discussed above, this linear aspect of time represented by river flow is one key part of how rivers can represent time, however, this does not take into account the role of rivers within the wider environment and how that might contribute to a sense of cyclic time.

By far the most thorough coverage of rivers and time in her work occurs in a discussion of Aeneas' arrival at the mouth of the Tiber in *Aeneid* 8, and his travel upstream. Jones argues that while Aeneas and his men travel upstream, facilitated by the Tiber calming his current, the narrative of Aeneas and Turnus' conflict is stalled, in contrast with the Trojan's progression across the landscape.[92] This journey upstream is then compared to other literary journeys upstream, all of which, Jones argues, show travel from the present to the past, mirroring the reversed travel on the river. From this journey from present to past, she argues that Aeneas is able to stand outside the passage of time.[93] Jones' discussion of this aspect of narrative temporality clearly shows a pattern across epic poetry, with particular attention given to the *Aeneid*, yet does not engage with the temporality suggested by Ovid's rivers, which I would argue does not fit the same pattern.

My thesis builds from this starting point, where Virgil's use of rivers is an important precedent for Ovid's own use of rivers. Yet where Jones focuses on the 'literary phenomenon' of rivers, my work incorporates aspects of the physical behaviour of rivers as part of the wider environment, interacting with their role as literary features. Taking into account river interactions in the wider environment then complicates any notion of straightforward linear time in Ovid's works, and instead shows time's ability to be manipulated, and manipulate others, just as rivers are simultaneously controllable and uncontrollable in the Roman imagination.

Seeking to understand this aspect of engagement with the riverine environment can help us to gain a more holistic appreciation of how representations of poetic time were grounded in interactions with the natural environment. Considering how rivers interact with the text and the environment reduces the anthropocentric frame of the

[91] Jones, 2005: 20.
[92] Jones, 2005: 96-101.
[93] Jones, 2005: 100.

literary river, broadening it to show the agency of the natural environment within the creation of poetic time and narrative.

Research Questions

With all this in mind, one important challenge for this research and future research is recognising the agency of the natural environment in scholarly study, and particularly how ancient writers may have interacted with and within that environment. In order to do this, this thesis is guided by the following broad question: how does the natural environment help to conceptualise time? Within this, I focus on one aspect of the natural environment, rivers, for their importance as a metaphor for time, and in their significance to both ancient and modern society. This focus on rivers then leads to more specific questions: How does the agency of rivers interact with the idea of time? How do particular qualities of river behaviour facilitate understanding of temporality?

Where previous scholarship on ancient literary rivers has primarily focused on Virgil, this thesis explores these questions in relation to Ovid's extant corpus. Through this, the following questions can be considered: How does river behaviour interact with the Ovidian conceptualisation of time? What assumptions does this make about the natural environment? Does this conceptualisation of time change across the corpus? Analysing rivers across the whole of Ovid's extant works presents an opportunity to mark changing interactions with the environment, particularly in the changed environment of exile. This allows for consideration of how the conceptualisation of time can change as the environment changes.

In order to maintain focus on the natural environment, and rivers within that environment, this thesis is arranged into five chapters, four of which focus around specific aspects of river behaviour and movement. The first chapter focuses on the question: What are the key aspects of Ovidian river behaviour? This lays the foundation for the remaining four chapters, which are separated into natural aspects of river behaviour, and unnatural.

The first two chapters, focusing on natural, seasonal behaviour of rivers, are guided by two key research questions: How does the spatial behaviour of rivers affect Ovidian poetic time? How is this poetic time influenced by the overall context of

environment (seasonality)? These questions feed back to the larger research question of river behaviours affecting temporality.

Building from this strong natural focus, the final two chapters then focus on aspects of unnatural river behaviour, drawing on the culturally constructed representations of rivers reversing, and the Greco-Roman conceptualisation of the rivers of the Underworld. These chapters focus on the questions: How do culturally constructed environment aspects affect poetic time? How does the crossover between real and mythologised rivers affect poetic time and the environment? How does this affect the agency of environment, and what does that agency say about the environment and poetic time?[94]

These questions also necessarily interact with the political and social changes of Ovid's time, as well as his own literary context. As such, this thesis also covers how river behaviour in Ovid's works reflects on previous examples of rivers in poetry, and how his ncoecessarily politicised position in exile interacts with previous literary depictions of the natural environment of Tomis and Augustan Rome. Through these poetic and political connections, this thesis questions the interactions between 'Augustan time' and 'Ovidian time', where they align or compete, and the effect of these competing timelines on the idea of poetic continuity in Ovid's poetry.

Methodology

My thesis combines spatial theory, and literary approaches to temporality, with a firm grounding in an ecological perspective. This approach includes a blend of complementary theoretical frameworks: post-phenomenology, the feminine sublime, and the ecological reworking of Bakhtin's chronotope. These frameworks focus on the agency of the natural environment, considering the role of interactions in creating meaning. This is then combined with a literary approach, based in reception theory, considering how behaviour of rivers in the environment can affect how Ovid's poetry is interpreted.

Post-phenomenology arose as a response to phenomenology, taking issue with the anthropocentric nature of enquiry which seeks to describe experience from the

[94] Agency as used throughout this thesis is discussed in detail on pp 31-32.

position of an 'undifferentiated' subject.[95] In a summary of post-phenomenological theory in 2016, Ash and Simpson outline three key advances offered by post-phenomenology: first, a de-emphasis on intentionality and the human subject body; next, greater respect for the autonomy of objects; and finally, an openness to taking issue with the undifferentiated body subject. Rather than having a subject go to a landscape and simply describe it, post-phenomenology explores how experiences with the landscape give characteristics to the subject.[96] This de-emphasis on a subject going specifically to experience a landscape gives more respect to the landscape itself, and its autonomy.

Using post-phenomenological methodology in studies of the environment thus allows more focus on natural objects, without straying into the territory of environmental determinism, and allows the opportunity for consideration of human subjects' experience 'with' the environment, rather than experiences 'of' it. This approach is particularly appropriate for the study of rivers, where rivers, and water more generally, actively change the landscape.[97] Reading texts within this understanding of agency then changes the relationship between the reader and the environment, where the agency of rivers can reflect both power and vulnerability.

When discussing notions of agency in the environment, it is important to note that this agency is not simply assigning a human consciousness or voice to an aspect of the environment, but rather respecting the processes and power of elements of the natural environment beyond their interactions with humanity.[98] Strang discusses the 'subversive agency' of water in the acts of flooding and drought;[99] as examples of river behaviour which are part of a river's natural process, yet directly interact with elements of human agency and attempts to control water, close analysis of river flooding and drought are a useful focus for considering aspects of natural agency. Moving further beyond these 'subversive' interactions with human agency, Edgeworth argues that river waters pushing a boat are a palpable show of agency,

[95] Post-phenomenology takes its name from Idhe's *Postphenomenology* (1993), yet has been developed significantly in terms of landscape studies by Rose (2006), Wylie (2006, 2007).
[96] Ash and Simpson (2016).
[97] Strang, 2014: 142.
[98] Taking this notion of agency, this thesis does not particularly on the anthropomorphised forms of river deities, except where relevant to river water processes (Rhine and Rhone, chapter 1; Achelous, chapter 2).
[99] Strang, 2014: 143.

where a river's natural force particularly emphasises the power of water beyond just resistance to human agency.[100] In this way, the flow and movement of the river waters are in a way connected to its intrinsic agency, as part of acting out its processes within the natural environment.[101] Viewing the river's agency in this way also forms part of a post-phenomenological approach, recognising non-human actors' interactions – focusing on river processes as interactions, with agency, decentres some of the anthropocentric experience of the environment.

Mann's reworked theory of the feminine sublime then comes into play, where the interplay between the power and vulnerability of nature in the Anthropocene leads to a sense of 'terrifying and exhilarating dependence on the earth';[102] in this, the human subject is characterised by vulnerability through their dependence on the earth, particularly as the earth becomes less dependable. Although deeply situated in the current era of the Anthropocene, this theory has important ramifications for considering the changing environment of Ovid's poetry. This process of power and weakness, tangled with the subject's vulnerability provides a framework for understanding the representation of rivers in Ovid's exile poetry, where their changed behaviour shows a new sense of vulnerability in the changed and threatening environment of exile.

This is then used in conjunction with an ecological reworking of Bakhtin's chronotope. Bakhtin defined the literary chronotope as 'space time', referring to the inseparability of time and space in the literary imagination. He argued that the chronotope was intrinsically linked to genre, as it is the narrative needs of the genre which create the chronotope. Bakhtin gives the example of 'adventure time', in the ancient Greek romance novel. In this, the entire novel lies outside of biographical time, that is, events happening in the novel have no interaction with everyday time, and instead events happen only to guarantee the continuation of the 'romance novel' in its expected form. The chronotope here is about a space which allows the narrative time of the particular literary genre to unfold. The chronotope as a motif of genre is significant here, as it assumes a static conception of genre; in comparison,

[100] Edgeworth, 2014: 158-159.
[101] When these natural processes are undermined, so to is the river's agency – an issue which is discussed in more detail in chapter 4.
[102] Mann, 2006: 147.

Ovid's boundary-pushing manipulation of generic tropes leads to a more fluid idea of genre, which is reflected in the chronotopes of his works.

Pushing for an approach which recognizes the fundamental presence of the natural environment in the conceptualisation of time, Müller suggests Bakhtin's chronotopes focus too much on 'time', and that the lack of focus on space pushes an anthropocentric world view, while space itself 'does not require a refined (human) consciousness to manifest itself, nor does it need to be made visible to become perceptible'.[103] Müller argues that this emphasis on anthropocentric episodes of time inadvertently undermines 'natural' time, and its cyclicality, in favour of pushing an anthropocentric linear sense of time.

Finally, he suggests that Bakhtin's suggestion of the chronotope does not take into account how the literary texts themselves 'preserve and revise chronotopes of the past', and how other cultural factors might contribute to the creation of a chronotope. With these three criticisms in mind, Müller advocates for an ecocritical approach to Bakhtin's chronotope, one which emphasises space, nature, and cyclicality. This approach is particularly useful for thinking about how natural chronotopes put 'natural' and 'historical' time together, which is an important aspect of Ovid's poetic temporality emphasised in this thesis.[104]

I apply this combined approach to river imagery in all of Ovid's extant works, both in order to cut across genres, and to compare the temporality of the Roman and exilic environments. By taking this wide-ranging approach within Ovid's works, the focus is more firmly grounded in river behaviour than specific generic or textual issues. By analysing across Ovid's poetic corpus, comparisons can be made between river behaviour in different environments, in order to show how the environment itself can influence meaning.

Beginning this research, I searched for the keywords '*amnis*', '*flumina*', '*rivus*', '*torrens*', as well as river names, across key Augustan poets (Virgil, Horace, Propertius, and Ovid).[105] From these initial findings, there were 212 references to

[103] Müller, 2016: 601.
[104] Natural and historical time discussed further in chapter 1, 'The River as Time'.
[105] Definitional challenges around 'river': Varro defines a *flumen* as something which flows uninterruptedly (*continue*), in contrast to *stillicidium* as rain-water which falls in drops (*de Lingua Latina* 5.27). Although uninterruptedly would seem to rule out torrents and intermittent rivers, in

rivers in Virgil's works, 70 in Horace's, 74 in Propertius', and 408 in the Ovidian corpus. At almost double the number of river references in the Ovidian corpus, it was clear that rivers were an important aspect of Ovid's poetic environment. From these results, I then focused on Ovid's works, categorising each occurrence into categories: 'rivers identifying location', 'river properties', 'river similes', 'rivers as lovers', 'rivers as barriers', and 'river reversal'.[106] I decided to focus on the categories which showed more consideration of aspects of river behaviour, in order to follow a post-phenomenological approach which focuses on interactions of the environment, and limit the risk of 'mapping' rivers in a way which centres anthropocentric experiences of the environment. As such, this thesis largely does not consider the geographical scope of rivers in Ovid's works – although it is interesting to note that this geographical scope does appear to be large and varying.[107]

When focussing on occurrences of river properties and roles within the environment, characteristics of continuity and motion were common, and when those aspects were

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Augustan poetry *torrens* and *flumen* are frequently used together to mark seasonal river behaviour (e.g. *Amores* 3.6. See also *Aeneid* 10.362-3 marking a torrent as breaking banks, which would seem to indicate a disruption to a river course rather than a completely separate body of water). Similarly *amnis* is defined by Varro as a 'river which goes round something' (*de Lingua Latina* 5.28); again, this is quite a broad definition, and this element of circularity is not often reflected in its use in Augustan poets. What specifically makes a river is also contested in contemporary English; common consensus has the rather broad definition 'a body of water which flows'; see chapter 1 for further discussion of the physical qualities of a river. Campbell (2012: 34) also discusses the ambiguity of river words in both Greek and Latin.

[106] 192 river references, nearly all named, used to identify location with little extra detail. River properties includes references to the qualities of specific river waters (e.g. temperature, pollution, smell). River similes are largely used to compare a subject to the overwhelming flow and power of a torrent (e.g. *Amores* 1.7.43). Rivers as lovers includes anthropomorphised river gods acting as lovers (e.g. *Metamorphoses* 5.487ff, describing the river Alpheus and Arethusa). Rivers as barriers includes where waterflow is conceptualised as a barrier in some way – most notably in the exile poetry (e.g. *Tristia* 2.200-4 describes the Hister barely holding back invading peoples). River reversal notes water flow reversal either as an example of an *adynata,* or an external effect. Not all river references fit neatly into one category either, and as such some entries span more than one category. With this focus on the keyword categories, I also read Ovid's works overall to situate each occurrence within its context.

[107] Named river references are dominated by 61 references to Underworld rivers, then 53 references to Italian rivers, 53 to Greek rivers, and 35 to Scythian rivers. The dominance of Underworld rivers is greatly influenced by the presence of the Styx in the exile poetry, and its collocation with the Hister. The *Metamorphoses* contains a large amount of the named references to Greek rivers, while Italian rivers dominate in the *Fasti*. Following these larger groupings, there are also references to Egyptian and Indian rivers, as well as rivers from Northern Europe, showing a wide geographical range of rivers in Ovid's works. This thesis will not attempt to analyse distinct river traditions by geographical area – whilst the rivers I discuss may be based in wide ranging geographical regions, they are still from a Roman perspective, making it difficult to separate distinct river traditions. See Campbell (2012: 22-30) for a survey of the geographical range of what might class as a 'Roman river', and the particular methodological difficulties in isolating specific river traditions (37).

undermined, it was often remarked upon.[108] These findings led to the division of the first chapter into aspects of Ovidian river behaviour focussing on continuity and transformation as a form of motion, alongside the wider connections with rivers and time. As both continuity and motion are primarily shown in river behaviour through movement and spatial patterning, I decided to focus on the spatiality of rivers in particular connection to time; this primarily led to close analysis of waterflow directionality, both in the form of the river and in the wider hydrological cycle.[109]

From the keyword search approach, I identified some strengths and weaknesses – firstly, using keywords as well as river names meant that more general river behaviour could be observed, alongside the exemplary characteristics of mythological/named rivers. However, using a keyword search which focused on specific river terminology led to the exclusion of other parts of a rivers flow, such as springs and fountains, as well as shores and river banks. Within my analysis I have incorporated these aspects where they occur within close range of a river reference, in lieu of initial inclusion in the keyword search. The keyword search led to a large number of results, which I narrowed down by removing river references simply referring to a location, as detailed above. From the remaining results I then compared examples of 'normal' river behaviour with references which initially appeared out of the ordinary, in order to get more of a sense of perspective on the environment in Ovid's works.

I have organised the thesis' structure around river behaviours in order to maintain this environmental focus. Hence, the first chapter introduces four key aspects of expected Ovidian river behaviour, then the remaining chapters revolve around specific river behaviours. These remaining chapters are divided into two sections, Redefining Seasonality, and The Natural Unnatural. The first section covers Ovidian uses of natural, seasonal behaviour of rivers, while the second deals with river behaviour beyond what would be experienced in the lived environment. This ensures

[108] Horace, *Epistles* 1.2.41-3 describes life as a river, continuously flowing; Virgil, *Georgics.* 1.479-80 shows rivers not flowing as unnatural. See chapter 3 for discussion of drought and lack of movement in Ovid's works.
[109] This emphasis on spatiality and cyclicality is an important aspect of Müller's ecological chronotope, discussed above.

that the focus remains on river behaviour itself, yet incorporates both the physical and metaphorical.

Chapters and Overall Structure

Chapter 1: What is an Ovidian river?

This initial chapter discusses the four key aspects of Ovidian rivers: rivers as poetry, rivers as time, rivers as continuous, and rivers as transformers. Rivers as poetry details the idea of poetic flow, first discussing the river as poetry metaphor in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, and a comparative example of the poetic spring from Propertius 3.1. Within this context, *Amores* 1.15, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.5, 4.2, and *Fasti* 1.23-24 are used to highlight how rivers can represent individual poetic works as well as representing the wider literary canon through the continuous movement of water flow and cycle. This connection to previous literary works is then framed by the idea of time more broadly through the second section of this chapter, the river as time. In this, I discuss how deep time can be connected to the river image, and how natural and historical time are combined in Ovid's use of the river image in *Amores* 1.8 and *Metamorphoses* 15. This section focuses on ideas of directionality within the movement of the river, and how that directionality affects conceptions of time in Ovid's works.

Time envisaged as a river draws out the idea of continuity, which is discussed in the third section of this chapter. In this, I focus on the river images in *Remedia Amoris* 253-8, *Ibis* 134-40 to show how this image of continuity is not guaranteed in Ovid's works, drawing out a connection with the threatened environment shaped by the Anthropocene. This new aspect, vulnerability, is then brought out through the idea of transformation, and rivers as both agents and subjects of transformation in Daphne and Midas' transformation in *Metamorphoses* 1.544-552, 11.136-145, and the polluted Anigrus in 15.281-4 (with comparison drawn to the rivers in triumph imagery of the *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*). Through this, the act of transformation is tied to continuity, but also shown to be a two-way process opening up areas of potential vulnerability. Movement, in itself but also as a feature of poetic continuity, runs throughout these four aspects. This notion of continuity through movement then becomes a baseline to interrogate Ovid's poetic time in the rest of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Redefining Seasonality: Floods and Forceful Flow

Floods and Forceful Flow analyses the depiction of river flooding in Ovid's poetry, focusing on three key elements: 'Breaking the Boundaries', 'Cyclic Disruption', and 'Forceful Flow'. This chapter focuses on disruptive movement as part of a larger cycle of renewal, where river flooding disrupts the immediate present of the narrative, but invests in the future. The first section discusses the spatial disruption of flooding as a motif for blurring temporal and generic boundaries, in order to facilitate renewal through transformation in *Amores* 3.6 and *Metamorphoses* 8-9. The second section discusses this aspect of renewal with respect to flooding as part of a larger seasonal cycle within the environment, and considers the continuity guaranteed through that larger cycle even in the immediate threat to the present. This is shown through discussion of flooding and torrent similes in *Ars Amatoria* 2, *Remedia Amoris*, and *Fasti* 2.

The third section then focuses on torrent imagery in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, in the absence of flooding. The torrent images in these works present a more linear, aggressive flow than was evident in the outward and expansive motion of flooding in previous works. I argue that this reflects a forced transition shifting from a poetic alignment with the cycles of the natural environment to threats to the poet's continuity that are caused by the environment. In this way, continuity through renewal shown through river behaviour is undermined by a change in circumstances and power, which highlights the potential vulnerability of the continuity of the environment, and the poet.

Chapter 3: Redefining Seasonality: Dust and Ice

Dust and Ice continues the idea of environmental cycles from the previous chapter, but looks towards the less frequently experienced and unusual aspects of seasonal behaviour. Small rivers can dry up in hot weather, but usually seasonally return, while rivers such as the Danube and Rhine can freeze in winter. These aspects of seasonality are experienced less often by Ovid, and so they are viewed with some degree of strangeness. Both of these behaviours stop the flow of the river, and as such present an initial image of static time, rather than the continued motion of time. My focus in this chapter is how the poet's engagement with this aspect of rivers' seasonality deals with threats to continuity, through conflicting ideas of stagnancy

and transformation. This first section of this chapter discusses intermittent rivers in *Amores* 3.6, *Ibis* 107-112, and Pythagoras' river catalogue in *Metamorphoses* 15. The second section discusses the impression of static time through frozen rivers in *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the initial sense of static time is undermined through the redefinition of seasonal behaviour, in order to create competing senses of time: the poet's, and the emperor's.

Chapter 4: The Natural Unnatural: Rivers and the Extraordinary

Rivers and the Extraordinary builds on the threat to continuity and motion in Redefining Seasonality, and expands my discussion into unnatural river behaviour that signifies the end of the world. In this, it is behaviour which is not necessarily a real lived experience, but rather revolves around the unnatural mysteries of river behaviour, such as rivers reversing, and catastrophic events such as world-consuming floods or droughts. This apocalyptic behaviour directly represents a threat to overall continuity, creating a space to consider potential renewal, or vulnerability in the future. This chapter also considers the agents who facilitate that process of renewal, and in contrast to the independent agency of the rivers in chapters 2 and 3, here, extraordinary river behaviour is shown to be controlled by outside forces. This lack of agency reflects upon the temporal control of the poet, shown particularly in the flood in Book 1 of the *Metamorphoses,* and Phaethon's fall in Book 2, which is then contrasted with a lack of control in the river-reversing *adynata* of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Chapter 5: The Natural Unnatural: Rivers and the End

Rivers and the End picks up on the questioned continuity discussed in chapter 4, and explores rivers as transitional points in both the environment and in Roman conceptualisation of life-courses and time. As such, this chapter focuses on rivers as metaphorical transporters, and the rivers of the underworld. This chapter is built on close analysis of the transformations of Orpheus and Canens in the *Metamorphoses*, and the representation of the Hister as the Styx in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. It explores how the opposing aspects of continuity and death are interconnected through the representation of rivers in Augustan poetry, and how this representation ties into concerns about the longevity of Rome, and the poet himself.

Overall, this thesis argues that rivers in Ovid's poetry are intrinsically connected to the idea of time, in response to the natural environment and the changing political situation of the time of production. As part of this, Ovid aligns his own sense of temporality and continuity with that of rivers within the natural environment; this positionality shifts focus in the exile poetry, where the rivers within the exilic environment are unfamiliar, and as such show a distorted and disconnected sense of temporality. In this way, rivers affect conceptualisations of time, particularly in a potentially 'disruptive' sense of Ovidian time, responding to Augustan narratives of power through temporal manipulation.

Chapter 1. What is an Ovidian river?

The introduction has explored the various facets of rivers in broad culture. Now, this first chapter introduces the Ovidian river, and draws out the four key aspects emerging from them; aspects which, I argue, inform the presentation of poetic time in Ovid's works. The four key aspects flowing through Ovid's rivers are poetry, time, continuity, and transformation, and taken together, they represent a defining framework for Ovid's metapoetic identity. Like a river, these categories are not firmly bounded, but rather overlap with each other across shifting contexts. As my introduction makes clear, rivers are full of complexities and dualities, and they can simultaneously represent ideas of change and continuity in their linear and cyclic natures. These complexities provide a mirror for the conflicted temporality of poetic narratives in the Augustan period, where teleological approaches present a linear view of time, alongside a narrative of a return to the past, and renewal of its qualities. In this way, rivers are a central image for exploring conflicting claims to temporal control, navigated through the creation of poetry.

Whilst definitions of what exactly constitutes a river can vary, the key idea of a river is a body of water which flows downhill from a higher elevation.[110] Rivers have one or several sources, and flow in a course, often into another body of water such as a sea or lake. Within this, rivers are usually comprised of freshwater, and can flow above or below ground. Not all rivers flow continuously, especially in areas with highly variable rainfall. From this definition, both torrents and intermittent rivers will be discussed in this thesis as part of the river image.[111]

Within the Roman world, most rivers also had a religious presence, where each river or stream also had a river-god component. These gods were transformational figures, and could be represented in a variety of forms; most commonly in the forms of bearded men or bulls.[112] This anthropomorphised divine sense of rivers is then in

[110] OED (2008) 'a large natural flow of water travelling along a channel to the sea, a lake, or another river'. Brierley and Fryirs (2012: 14-17) discuss the difficulty of defining singularly a 'river', as rivers vary across regions and climates, and change in interactions within their environments.
[111] Brierley and Fryirs (2012: 14) mark both perennial and ephemeral systems within their categorisation of a river. Chapter 2 deals with floods and torrents, chapter 3 deals with intermittent rivers alongside frozen rivers.
[112] The statue of the Tiber with Romulus and Remus, originally displayed on the Campus Martius and now in the Louvre shows the anthropomorphised form of the Tiber. This is represented by a reclining, bearded man, holding a cornucopia in one hand. This image is also repeated in the mosaic of the river-god Euphrates, made in the 1st-2nd century CE and now housed in the Gaziantep Museum of

conjunction with the role of the waters themselves in various religious rites and ceremonies.[113] Often, river waters were used to cleanse; this is particularly shown in the yearly purification in the Vestalia, where filth was swept from the temple into the Tiber.[114] Through this religious connection, the flow of river waters held significance beyond their physical flow.

In Ovid's works, these aspects of the physical and divine within the river image also coincide with the poetic and temporal, drawn out through allusion to Callimachus and the poetic form. In the multiplicity of the river image in Ovid's works, the categories of poetry, time, continuity, and transformation are most relevant for the interrogation of the relationship of time and power through the environment in Ovid's poetry. Therefore, this chapter consists of four sections, briefly introducing each aspect, which will be considered in more detail throughout each of the remaining chapters.

The first section, 'The River as Poetry', emphasises where individual poetic works are manifest as a river, and the river as representative of a wider poetic flow. Through this, I investigate how the poetic river's nature revolves around three questions of poetic flow: where does the flow come from? What is the quality of the water? And how does it flow? This section closes with exemplary case-studies discussing the role of rivers in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, and Propertius 3.1 in comparison with Ovid's *Amores* 1.15, then the image of rivers as poetic flow in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.5 and 4.2, and finally in *Fasti* 1.23-24. From this, movement arises as a key aspect of the poetic river, and one that runs throughout the chapter.

Section two explores the image of 'The River as Time', where the flow of the river is used to represent the flow of time. The river functions in two ways within this conceptualisation of time, as both a representation of the linear view of time, and as an image for the cyclic, much larger time frame of deep time. Ovid's use of rivers reflects both senses of time, and often puts them in opposition in order to highlight conflicting claims to temporal control. This section explores how overlapping ideas of cyclic and linear time are represented by river behaviour through similes in *Amores*

Archaeology. In Ovid's work, the river-god Achelous appears in various forms as a snake, bull, and man in *Metamorphoses* 8-9, discussed in chapter 2. The river-god Achelous fighting Herakles in various forms is also a popular motif of 6th-5th century BCE Attic pottery.

[113] See Jones (2005:19-27) for discussion of the importance of rivers in Greco-Roman religion.

[114] Ovid, *Fasti* 6.711-714.

1.8, and *Metamorphoses* 15.179-185. Through this, Ovid's poetic temporality is characterised by claiming aspects of both senses of time, in order to facilitate continuation beyond death.

This leads into the third section of this chapter, 'Rivers as Continuous Motion'. Here, I build on the idea of continuity inherent in the image of the poetic and temporal river by showing how Ovid undermines the idea and possibility of straightforward continuity. This reflects rivers in the lived environment, where continuity is not a guaranteed quality of river behaviour, and highlights the role of continued poetic production within the continuation of Ovid's poetic temporality. As part of this, the idea of continuity is undermined: in *Remedia Amoris* 253-258 the poetic work itself denies unchanging continuity, whilst the idea of unchanging, almost unmoving continuity, is shown to have negative consequences in *Ibis* 135-140. Put together, this section shows the importance of change and movement in facilitating continuity for the poet, in comparison to stagnancy, or unchanging continuity.

Through this interrogation of continuity, change is shown to be essential to the progression of poetic time in Ovid's works, an idea which is detailed in the fourth and final section of this chapter, 'Rivers and Transformation'. This section takes the image of the river as an agent of transformation, and explores the role of that transformation in the continuation and control of Ovid's poetic time. However, this process of transformation is not unidirectional, and is shown to be reversible. Through this, rivers themselves are also manifestly vulnerable to transformation, with both positive and negative results. This section explores the role of rivers as both transformer and transformed in *Metamorphoses* 1.544-552, 11.136-145, and 15.281-4, before briefly discussing this two-way process in the representation of the captive Rhine in the imagined triumphs of *Tristia* 4.2 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.4. Throughout, the idea of transformation and change is inherently linked to the continuation of Ovid's poetic time, all encapsulated in the image of the river.

Through these four sections, the idea of movement is drawn out as a key aspect of river behaviour, which is integral to the definition of Ovid's poetic temporality. So, the following chapters focus on specific aspects of that movement beyond an expected linear flow, with the second chapter focusing on the explosive spatiality of river flooding, the third on the initially unmoving flow of seasonal freezing and drying up,

the fourth on the dramatic excess, reduction, and reversal of flow in extraordinary river representations, before the fifth and final chapter discusses the movement of the rivers as a transition from life to death, and claims to continuity beyond that. Through this focus on movement throughout, the continued flow of time is drawn out, and its manipulation for poetic purposes shown.

The River as Poetry

Bodies of water, specifically springs and rivers, are often used as signifiers for poetic flow in the ancient world, with the image of the source of inspiration as a fresh spring.[115] In this, drinking from the spring is part of a process, which allows inspiration and subject material to pass from the relevant god, the Muses, and through to the poet. This configures the poet as a vessel for the inspired material to pass through into the world. This process of poetic creation, tied to the initial beginning at a spring, mirrors river behaviour. A river begins at source, most often a spring, and the water is transported as part of a river, through the landscape until it reaches the sea. In this way, although the river itself is made of water, the water is also the object being transferred, while the river is that process of movement within a channel. This key idea of the river being a transitional point, facilitating movement, is essential for the linking of the poet, and poetic flow, with the flow of a river.

Highlighting the idea of poetic creation as a type of 'flow', Fowler astutely notes the problems this can cause for the poet, who must ask 'the tricky question of where that energy comes from, within or without, and whether the poet is to be identified as the powerful source of that energy or as borne along helplessly by it'.[116] Even within Fowler's suggestion is the key concept of flow and movement, particularly in the idea of the poet being dragged by that poetic energy – linked with the image of being dragged along by a river.[117] The question of where a flow comes from is dealt with by

[115] Hesiod, *Theogony* 1-28 describes drawing inspiration from the Muses who dance about their spring on Mount Helicon, through the Alexandrian tradition this becomes imbibing poetic waters: Asclepiades, *Palatine Anthology* 9.64.5-8. In the Alexandrian tradition, water then represents different types of poetry: Callimachus *Hymn 2* characterises different types of poetry as alternate water flows (discussed below), Longinus' criticisms mirror flow and flood language (*On the Sublime* 33.4-5). Alternate springs as alternate forms of poetry is then adopted by Roman poets: Lucretius 1.412-13, Propertius 3.1 (discussed below) and Ovid's *Amores* 1.15 (discussed below). See also Jones (2005: 56-64) for discussion of water flow and poetic flow in Virgil's works.

[116] Fowler, 2002: 150.

[117] There are of course other poetic images for wrestling with a flow, such as the ship or chariot of poetry; however, swimming with or against the current is a repeated image in Ovid's poetry: *Ars Amatoria* 2.181-2, *Remedia Amoris* 121-2, *Tristia* 4.5 and being dragged along by a flooding river is

both Ovid and some of his contemporaries, all using the idea of the 'spring' of poetic inspiration. I start with Propertius and Callimachus as examples of this image, before then moving on to Ovid's own statement of poetics through river behaviour in *Amores* 1.15.

The impact of Callimachus, and Alexandrian aesthetics in general, has been well recorded in Ovid's works, while the poet often alludes to his roughly contemporary Propertius' works within his own.[118] In the first poem of his third book of elegies, Propertius' narrator declares himself to be an heir to Callimachus, seeking to follow (literally) in his footsteps by drinking the same water:

> *Callimachi Manes et Coi sacra Philitae,*
>
> *in vestrum, quaeso, me sinite ire nemus.*
>
> *primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos*
>
> *Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros.*
>
> *dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro* *5*
>
> *quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?*
>
> Shade of Callimachus and rites of Coan Philitas, suffer me, I pray, to come into your grove. I am the first to enter, priest from an unsullied spring, bringing Italy's mystic emblems in dances of Greece. Say, in what grotto did ye together spin the delicate thread of your song? With what foot enter? What water drink? (Prop. 3.1.1-6)[119]

There are three key elements to poetic flow identified here: firstly, that poetic flow is inherently linked to the poetry and poets which precede it (*primus ego* 3). In this, the connection with Callimachus and Philitas as shades which the poet calls (1)

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also alluded to in *Metamorphoses* 8.556-7. Also discussed further in chapter 5, particularly tied to the poet in exile falling victim to the 'flow'.

[118] Callimachus and Ovid: most literature deals with individual poems and their engagement with Callimachus, see Lateiner (1978) for *Amores* 2.19, Little (1971) for *Amores* 1.13, Armstrong (2004) for *Amores* 1.15, Van Tress (2004) for the *Metamorphoses*. Propertius and Ovid: Gross (1996) and O'Neill (1999) discuss direct overlaps between Propertius 4.5 and Ovid's *Amores* 1.8, which is an overt example of this engagement; see Hinds (2006: 25-8) for more general interactions between Propertius and Ovid.

[119] Trans. Goold (1990).

immediately places this poem in a dialogue with those poets, and puts Propertius into a timeline of poetry. Second, here it is clear that poetry can be thought of as water, but more specifically, water to be consumed (6). Nested inside this idea is that of difference – that there are different types of water, which might lead to different types of poetry. As the narrator appears to want to follow Callimachus and Philitas, it is important that they also drink the same water of inspiration (*quamve bibistis aquam* 6).[120] The water of inspiration is not universal or monolithic here, and it also shows how the poet is engaging with Fowler's question of where the flow comes from – writing about receiving inspiration from a spring as your statement of poetics is as much about fitting your poetry into an established poetic timeline, as well as 'starting' your own.[121] In this way, the movement of water in a river from a spring can embody individual poetic flow, but it can also embody a broader poetic flow which represents the poetic canon into which the poet must fit.

This is obviously particularly relevant for Callimachus as an element of that source, who most famously dealt with the idea of different types of poetry as different bodies of water. In this passage, the Alexandrian poet depicts Envy trying to tempt Apollo to favour large offerings from poets. Callimachus' Apollo refuses, and instead validates the 'pure' spring of smaller poetry:

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ᾽ οὔατα λάθριος εἶπεν
"οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ᾽ ὅσα πόντος ἀείδει."
τὸν Φθόνον ὠπόλλων ποδί τ᾽ ἤλασεν ὦδέ τ᾽ ἔειπεν·
"Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ
λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ᾽ ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἕλκει.
Δηοῖ δ᾽ οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι Μέλισσαι,

[120] This difference between springs, waters, and sources is also described in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, where the poet contrasts the spring of Pegasus, associated with epic poetry, with the waters of Philetas, associated with an Alexandrian style. See Weinlich (2010) for comparisons of the *recusatio* in Propertius and the *Amores*.

[121] Spencer (2019: 18) comments on Varro's use of *fons* and *rivus*, where Varro 'described a world that semantically is always contingent and in progress (*rivus*) and that responds to retroactive as well as expansive intellectual forces (*fons*)'. This association between the *rivus* as something flowing and changing, as well as the *fons* as a beginning that can also be retroactively influenced is important for the conceptualisation of a literary timeline as a kind of river flow in Ovid's poetry.

ἀλλ᾽ ἥτις καθαρή τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει

πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.”

Envy spoke secretly in the ear of Apollo: “I don’t admire the poet who doesn’t sing of things as great in number as the sea.” Apollo spurned Envy with his foot and spoke: “The stream of the Assyrian river is large, but it carries much filth of earth and much refuse on its waters. And not of every water do the Melissae carry to Deo, but of the trickling stream that springs from a holy fountain, pure and undefiled, the very crown of waters.” (Callim. *H*.2.105-112)[122]

Here, differing rivers are used to highlight different types of poetic water and flow, as well as the idea of purity coming from the spring, which is seen in Propertius. In this *Hymn to Apollo*, it is important to note that those different types of poetic water and flow take the shape of a river and a spring, where it is specifically the Euphrates which exemplifies the large, overwhelming flow of epic poetry. In contrast, it is a pure spring and trickling stream which embodies Callimachus’ preferred type of poetry.[123] This difference between genres and styles as represented by rivers, both in their sources and their sizes, is important for Ovid’s conception of the river as poetry.

Aligning with this contrast between spring and river flow, Spencer discusses how Varro describes words and their meanings through association with *fons* and *rivus*: *fons* words are words almost ‘sprung from pure imagination’ and so need to be given a large genealogy in order to survive in Latin; in contrast, *rivus* words are connected to word family trees, and so their genealogy is already clear.[124] Whilst this is a point about Varro’s explanations of words and their place in Latin language and identity, the image of the new *fons* as unsecured without a clear history, in contrast to the *rivus* which is more secure due to its clear connections with recognisable precedents is a helpful concept for Ovid’s presentation of poetic continuity. A poem comprised of

[122] Trans. Mair (1921), adapted.
[123] The image of the pure spring also occurs in Horace, *Odes* 3.13. See Brown (1982) for the development of the image of poetic inspiration from Callimachus to Lucretius. See Barchiesi (2011: 521-526) for the dramatization of poetic choices within Roman poetry, particularly associated with different types of water.
[124] Spencer, 2019: 67.

only the spring of *ingenium* will not last, while tying his own poetry to literary precedents incorporates it into a larger poetic river flow, enabling its continuity.

Ingleheart discusses Ovid's positioning of himself as a 'literary heir' across his works, marking the significance of literary succession in key discussions of literary history.[125] This sense of succession is combined with the implication of innovation and originality in Ovid's works in the image of the spring of inspiration. As Fowler argues, poetic self fashioning as a spring of inspiration must always contend with the weight of where that flow comes from – in this way, even 'points of departure' are still part of the overall flow of literary history, which I argue can be shown in the image of the spring and the river as components of a larger waterflow.[126]

From those two key 'source' images of the river as poetic flow, and contrast between spring and river flow, we can begin to explore Ovid's distinctive use of the river as a metaphor for poetry and poetic creation. *Amores* 1.15 deals with a sort of statement of poetics, beginning with the figure of Envy, detailing a long list of poets by allusion, before finally arriving at the poet-narrator drinking from the fountain. In this poem, the impact of Callimachus and Propertius are clear. The figure of devouring Envy (*Livor edax* 1), begins the poem, and accuses the poet of being lazy through writing poetry. The link to Envy as a force disparaging the poet echoes Callimachus, yet Apollo's defence of smaller works is now spoken by the poet-lover. This immediately draws attention to the figure of the poet as the defender of his own works, rather than his divine patron as might be expected in the Callimachean motif.

Armstrong argues this is the poet's presentation of poetic 'self-sufficiency', where Ovid is independent of Apollo, but not of Callimachus.[127] This duality between independence of the Muse, especially one who takes the form of Apollo, whilst still being dependent in some way on poetic predecessors, is important for the image of the river as poetry. Where the source of Callimachus' poetry is looked upon with divine favour, the poet justifies his choice through Callimachus, rather than this divine intervention. The side-lining of the role of Apollo allows the poet to attribute his

[125] Ingleheart, 2010.
[126] Fowler, 2002: 150. See also Sharrock (2002: 216): 'the pure fountain can only inspire because it has inspired poets before'.
[127] Armstrong, 2004: 532.

poetic inspiration to previous poets, rather than a sense of divine patronage.[128] This tension between divine inspiration, and 'new beginnings', and the weight of the poetic tradition, highlights the inherent contradictions in a poetic river, a body simultaneously beginning its flow at a unique source, and continuing in the broader and contextualising tradition of poetic flow.

This contextualisation within the tradition of poetic flow is explicitly linked to the continued flow of rivers in lines 9-10, where Homer is alluded to through the connection to the river Simois:

> *vivet Maeonides, Tenedos dum stabit et Ide,*
>
> *dum rapidas Simois in mare volvet aquas;* *10*
>
> Maeonia's son will live as long as Tenedos shall stand, and Ida, as long as Simois shall roll his waters rushing to the sea;[129] (*Am*. 1.15.9-10)

McKeown characterises this as the environment providing a sense of stability, specifically through the 'constant motion' of the Simois;[130] the focus on the constant motion of the Simois is key here, as it again draws to mind the expected quality of a river, and a poetic flow – that of continued movement. The continued movement of the river Simois therefore mirrors both the continuation of Homer's reputation and poetry, as well as the continued flow of the wider poetic canon.

The movement of the river forms a guarantee almost for the continued relevance of Homer's poetry, and it is implied that the 'normal' state of the river Simois in motion is one that will last for a long time beyond death. In this way, the continued movement of poetic flow becomes a key idea in both facilitating reputation, through the production of poetry, and as a transitional point, allowing the poet's reputation to live on beyond death. When a poet achieves notoriety through their works, they become part of the poetic river, where immortality is guaranteed through its

[128] Armstrong (2004) deals with the associations between Apollo and Augustus and what that means for *Amores* 1.15 in more detail.
[129] Trans. Showerman (1914).
[130] McKeown, 1989: 397.

continuous flow and cycle.[131] This continued movement is also important for the sequentiality in this poem, where the listing of each poet and their defining work builds to the inclusion of Ovid's narrator as the terminus of the poetic list. In this way, the poet is able to position himself within the wider poetic river, contributing to its flow with 'new' poetic water.

Living on through poetry and continued flow is brought out again at the end of the poem, in conjunction with the image of the poet drinking from the spring of inspiration. Here, the poet refers to drinking water as a source of inspiration aligned with his own particular style of poetry:

> *vilia miretur vulgus; mihi flavus Apollo* 35
>
> *pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua,*
>
> *sustineamque coma metuentem frigora myrtum,*
>
> *atque a sollicito multus amante legar!*
>
> *pascitur in vivis Livor; post fata quiescit,*
>
> *cum suus ex merito quemque tuetur honos.* 40
>
> *ergo etiam cum me supremus adederit ignis,*
>
> *vivam, parsque mei multa superstes erit.*
>
> Let what is cheap excite the marvel of the crowd; for me may golden Apollo minister full cups from the Castalian fount, and may I on my locks sustain the myrtle that fears the cold; and often be perused by anxious lovers! It is the living that Envy feeds upon; after doom it stirs no more, when each man's fame guards him as he deserves. I, too, when the final fires have eaten up my frame, shall still live on, and the great part of me survive my death.[132] (*Am*. 1.15.35-42)

Here, the poet is served (*ministret* 36) a cup full of water from the Castalian spring (*pocula Castalia plena aqua* 36); in contrast, Propertius' narrator could only seek to

[131] This sense of continuation and immortality in connection with natural cycles is discussed further in the second section of this chapter.
[132] Trans. Showerman (1914).

moisten his small lips (*parvaque iam magnis admoram fontibus ora* 3.3.5). Barsby comments on the 'impudence' of the poetic narrator here, presenting himself as being served by Apollo.[133] This 'impudence' continues to reframe the power of the poet and the Muse, and to recalibrate it. Although the poet is still presented as receiving the waters of inspiration, they are served up to him by his potential poetic patron. Through framing the poetic patron as serving the water to the poet, rather than drinking from a spring, the power dynamics are shifted . The poet will still function as a transitional point for poetry to flow through, but he indicates that he desires to do so at an equal, or perhaps even more powerful status than Apollo. This builds on the image set up in previous poets, particularly Propertius, in order to highlight the subtle differences in Ovid's own style of poetry.

The presentation of Ovid's own poetic style can also be seen in the image of the cup full (*plena* 36) of water, which may indicate a confidence in continued poetic flow in a refined form – the narrator is able to accept a cup full of poetic water, and appears to have none of Fowler's fear of being 'swept away' by its overwhelming force as if it came from a larger flow. This model presents the poet as comfortable with the source and size of flow of his poetry, with a recognition of where his poetry fits in the broader poetic canon, and engaging with his own sense of poetic identity at the spring of inspiration. Boyd suggests that this poem is unoriginal, and purely focussed on technique; yet the nuanced reiteration of the poetic image of the spring of inspiration, the justification of poetry within this poem, and the positioning of Ovid's poetry as the culmination of great poets serves to situate the *Amores*, and Ovid, as downstream whilst within a larger poetic flow.[134] The quantity of water in the full cup, with the chronologically ordered, ancient to contemporary, list of poets puts Ovid and the Amores within the literary river's flow, at the 'fullest' moment. Placing the *Amores* as downstream in the flow of a wider literary tradition confidently secures Ovid's poetic continuity, within the first book. As the final poem in the first book of the *Amores*, 1.15 summarises the character of poetic flow in Ovid's works: both the individual poet, and the wider poetic canon, are represented through the flow of the river.

[133] Barsby, 1973: 163.
[134] Boyd, 1997: 170.

The flow of poetry as the flow of a river is also shown in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.5, and 4.2, both of which deal with the reduced flow of the poet in exile. In contrast to the full cup of *Amores* 1.15, and the image of the poet as independent, here in 2.5 the poet presents himself relying heavily on the approval and encouragement of Salanus, the intended recipient of the poem. The poet refers to his poetry, or more specifically, his *ingenium*, as a flow of water:

> *ingenioque meo, vena quod paupere manat,*
>
> *plaudis, et e rivo flumina magna facis.*
>
> My talent, trickling now in so impoverished a stream, wins your applause and from a rivulet you make a mighty river.[135] (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.5.21-2).

Within this, the poet's poetic flow of *ingenium* is presented as a body of water moving in a channel.[136] Even with the supposed decline of the poet in exile, here the flow is still shown to be present and moving, albeit in a poorer fashion than before. Where the poet in *Amores* 1.15 was presented as in some way independent from a poetic patron, here, there is an element of dependence within his poetic flow. The continued movement of the poetic flow is not in question, but rather, its size relies on the support of Salanus.

The comparison between the *rivus* and the *flumina magna* (10) maintains the quality of continued flow, but emphasises the difference in size and power which is dependent on the audience's response.[137] Both *plaudis* and *facis* (22) as second person verbs show the input of the recipient in growing the poetic flow from the singular *rivus* to the *flumina magna*. *Flumina magna* in the plural also suggests a sense of quantity, and multiple outputs perhaps not suggested with *rivus*. The support of Salanus allows the river of poetic flow to grow and multiply, further expanding beyond the small channel of the *rivus*. These small channels, described as veins (*vena* 21), also suggest a sense of continuation beyond the poet's own

[135] Trans. Wheeler (1924).
[136] See *Fasti* 1.23-4 for another example of *ingenium* as the flow of a river, describing Germanicus' poetry.
[137] This idea of dependence is key to the exile poetry, and will be discussed in further detail in chapter 4.

impoverished veins of life, and instead expanding to continue on outside of his own bodily mortality.[138]

Audience response, or dependence, contributing to poetic flow, builds on the image presented in *Amores* 1.15 where continued flow is linked to finding a place within the broader poetic flow of the literary canon; here the poet emphasises the role of the recipient in the continued movement of his own poetic flow and reputation.[139] In this way, the flow of the river does not start from one source and remain individual, but rather builds and grows in conjunction with both poetic precedents and audience response. This idea of incorporating different materials to facilitate future continuation is especially important for the poetic identity of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the poet uses the unfamiliar environment as the channel for his new style of poetry.

The unusual or unfamiliar environment shaping the exile poetry itself is also found in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.2, where the poet once again compares his poetry to the flow of a river; yet, rather than the smaller, but continuous movement of the water in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.5, here the river struggles to flow:

> *scilicet ut limus venas excaecat inundans,*
>
> *laesaque suppresso fonte resistit aqua,*
>
> *pectora sic mea sunt limo vitiata malorum,*
>
> *et carmen vena pauperiore fluit.* 20
>
> Surely just as clogging silt jams channels and the outraged water halts
> in the choked fountain, so my mind has been injured by the silt of

[138] In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.2.20 the poet describes his poetry flowing in smaller vein (*et carmen vena pauperiore fluit)*; discussed below. Interestingly, there is a lot of interaction between rivers and veins in Ovid's poetry: Cyane's veins are filled with water (*Metamorphoses* 5.436), tears from nature mourning piper Marsyas' death fall to veins of earth, and from it springs a river (*Metamorphoses* 6.382-400), Byblis mourns and the nymphs give her a 'vein of tears' (*Byblis, et umectat lacrimarum gramina rivo. naidas his venam,// quae numquam arescere posset, //subposuisse ferunt. quid enim dare maius habebant? Metamorphoses* 9.656-8), Pactolus has veins of gold, discussed in the fourth section of this chapter (*Metamorphoses* 11.144); also veins of earth and rivers (*Metamorphoses* 14.788-9).

[139] Helzle (1988: 73-4) discusses Ovid's audience and addressees in the exile poetry, arguing that the *Tristia* are aimed towards a wider reading public, whilst named addressees in *Epistulae ex Ponto* mark a more urgent appeal to specific people – for a further discussion of the interactions between audience, addressee, and poet in exile see chapter 4.

misfortune, and my verse flows with a scantier vein.[140] (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.2.17-20)

The continued flow of water is hindered by mud, and the waters from the fountain held down, or suppressed (*suppresso* 18). This flow of water is then associated with poetry, while the mud is the misfortunes of the poet in exile (19-20), where weakened flow suggests a struggle to produce poetry. There are two separate parts to this image, the first of the channel hindered by mud, the second of the suppressed fountain. In the first, there is the implication of a weakened flow with obstacles, but not necessarily a completely blocked flow. In the second, the fountain is actively repressed, and the waters pushed down (*resistit* 18). Through both of these images, the water still flows, however it must travel through obstacles in its environment which block its course.

This obstruction is then linked to the poorer channel (*vena pauperiore* 20) of the poet's current poetry. Jones notes the Callimachean *topos* here, and suggests that *vena* could also refer to the poet's veins, signifying the idea of a loss of health in exile, and the unsuitability of the environment for poetry.[141] The unsuitability of the environment for poetry is an image frequently portrayed in Ovid's exile poetry, however, the river behaviour here also portrays a sense of change and adaptation. As the flow of water must adapt its course and flow within the muddy channel and the suppressed fountain, the vein of poetry still flows, even if it is smaller now. This clearly shows a sense of change in size, as shown in the previously discussed *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.5.

This change in size is adapting to the mud, marking the troubles of the poet in exile. The reference to *limus* here is interesting, as it connotes both polluted waters, and also the fertile mud of flood plains. Pliny refers to the toxic qualities of slime and mud in stagnant waters, marking the particular danger of mud at the source of the water, as the mud in this metaphor is implied to be suppressing the fountain.[142] Yet in contrast, in the *Metamorphoses*, mud appears tied to aspects of renewal, such as

[140] Trans. Wheeler (1924).
[141] Jones, 2005: 55.
[142] Pliny, *Natural History* 31.22.36. *Amores* 3.6.1 also refers to the muddy flow of the interrupting torrent, discussed further in chapters 2 and 3.

the Nile floods (1.423-4), or mud holding seeds for the future (*Semina limus habet virides generantia ranas* 15.375).[143]

Holding seeds for the future is made more apparent in the *Fasti*, where Romulus and Remus are grounded in the mud of the river Tiber, enabling them to be found.[144] Through the association of mud with renewal and rebirth in Ovid's works, there is a subtle suggestion of potential renewal here. Where the mud clogs the fountain, the continued, if somewhat suppressed, flow acknowledges the change in circumstances; the reference to mud shows renewal through adaptation as the poet continues to produce in the unfamiliar environment of exile.[145] In this way, the flow of the river reflects Ovid's poetic flow, adapted in an unfamiliar environment.

The smaller flow of the river of exile poetry recognises a necessary change in poetic style, while references to the 'unusual' behaviour of the Danube explore the connection between the unfamiliar environment and the new form of Ovid's poetry.[146] While the continued movement of the flow of the river reflects the continued

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[143] Mud as result of Nile floods also has a connection to renewal through the appearance of new animals when the river has receded:
Sic ubi deseruit madidos septemfluus agros
Nilus et antiquo sua flumina reddidit alveo
aetherioque recens exarsit sidere limus,
plurima cultores versis animalia glaebis
inveniunt,
So when the seven-mouthed Nile has receded from the drenched fields and has returned again to its former bed, and the fresh slime has been heated by the sun's rays, farmers as they turn over the lumps of earth find many animate things; (*Metamorphoses* 1.423-26), trans. Miller (1916).

[144] *alveus in limo silvis adpulsus opacis*
paulatim fluvio deficiente sedet. 410
arbor erat: remanent vestigia, quaeque vocatur
Rumina nunc ficus Romula ficus erat.
The ark drifted towards a shady wood, and, as the water gradually shoaled, it grounded on the mud. There was a tree (traces of it still remain), which is now called the Rumina fig-tree, but was once the Romulan fig-tree. (*Fasti,* 2.409-412), trans. Frazer (1931).
See also the muddy mouth of the river Tiber hindering Cybele's arrival at Rome for another example of mud as forcing a new direction (*Fasti*, 4.291-348): after drought the river is muddy, and the ship carrying Cybele cannot enter Rome. The wrongly accused Claudia Quinta is the only one able to retrieve the mother goddess after proving her innocence, which allows Cybele to be brought into Rome on the river Almo. Drought as a process of ending and moving in another direction is discussed in chapter 3.

[145] Adapting waterflow to muddy conditions is also shown in *Tristia* 4.1.7-10, as singing is a way for the oarsman to keep moving in the muddy river:
cantat et innitens limosae pronus harenae,
adverso tardam qui trahit amne ratem;
quique refert pariter lentos ad pectora remos,
in numerum pulsa bracchia iactat aqua. 10
Bent, leaning, he sings and drags a slow raft through oppositional river waters of mud and sands; he pulls the slow oars back to his chest in equal time, and strikes the water rhythmically with his arms.

[146] Discussed in chapter 3.

production of Ovid's poetry, the change in size and characteristics of the river highlights the constant transformation and change at the heart of Ovid's poetic style. The poetic river is not a static image of uniform flow, but rather one of continuous movement and change. Whilst the image of movement remains key to the image of the poetic river, this movement is not always a consistent, uninterrupted flow of uniform size. In this way, the image of the poetic river as representing individual poetic flow is adaptable to the current circumstances of Ovid's poetry.

This adaptation of the river image, particularly in the size of flow, is not just reserved for Ovid's own output; in the opening of the first book of the *Fasti*, the poet links the flow of a river to Germanicus' poetic endeavours:[147]

> *scimus et, ad nostras cum se tulit impetus artes,*
>
> *ingenii currant flumina quanta tui.*
>
> And when to poetry thy fancy turns, we know how broad the current of thy genius flows. (*F*. 1.23-4).

Within this image, the Callimachean ideal of size and quality reappears. The river of Germanicus' *ingenium* is said to flow in a great scale (*quanta* 24), while the poet lays claim to the domain of *artes*. Fowler highlights the contrast between *ars* and *ingenium* as conceptualised as some sort of flow; where the flow of *ingenium* as poetry on a grand scale can lead to a loss of control, while *ars* is more controlled, but is associated with the domestic and smaller scale poetry.[148] Fowler connects this to gender and genre, where being filled with inspiration is to be feminised and risk losing control. As such, within the process of creating poetry the poet must navigate the line between *ars* and *ingenium*, whilst not losing control.

Whilst seemingly complimenting Germanicus' poetry, and continuing the image of poetic flow as a river, the size of *ingenium* is tied to power at a risk of losing control. As Germanicus brings imperial power to his poetic flow, its size increases; in contrast, Ovid gains his poetic power from the craft itself. This contrast in poetic and imperial power is clearly framed in terms of river flow, yet the phrase 'our arts'

[147] See Peirano Garrison (2017: 20-21) for comparisons between Ovid and Germanicus' poetic fountains.
[148] Fowler (2002: 150-155).

(*Nostras… artes*, 23), places the poet in the position of ownership of *artes*, which is then linked to Germanicus' large river of *ingenium*. In this way, rather than the two styles in competition, as exemplified by different types of river in Callimachus, here Ovid combines the two senses of flow, claiming power over both, and linking his poetry to Germanicus'.

Fantham draws the connection between Germanicus' poetry here and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.8, using it to argue for a similar composition date for the proem of the *Fasti* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.8. Within this, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.8.77-8 describes Germanicus as a double threat, capable of both the art of ruling and learning (*sic tibi nec docti desunt nec principis artes)* highlighting this element of duality and combination shown in the *Fasti*, and reiterating Germanicus' imperial power.[149] Immediately following *artes* is *mixta*, used to describe the combination of the Muse and Jupiter in Germanicus' character. This use of *mixta*, although not to describe *artes* directly, emphasises the idea of blending – in 4.8 in relation to Germanicus, but through the link in the *Fasti* to Ovid's own arts, perhaps to the poet himself as well.[150] The combination also shown here reflects the idea of Ovid's poetic flow as a constantly moving and adapting force, which flows in between strict styles or genres. In this way, the Ovidian river of poetry is inherently tied to the idea of continued movement, but also of changing states. This combination shows the importance of blending and adapting, where the incorporation of different materials facilitates development and continuity.

To summarise, the image of the poetic river is comprised of three concerns: that of where the flow comes from, the clarity and liquidity of the river water, and the question of poetic flow. This image simultaneously contains both the wider poetic tradition, and the works of the individual poet. In Ovid's works, the difference in size and quality of flow reflects the style and image of the poet, while the continued movement of the river is facilitated through adaptation and change. The source of Ovid's poetic river is tied to the poet himself, as well as a respect for the wider literary canon, and perhaps more importantly post-exile, audience response. Through all this, the image of Ovid's poetic river is one concerned with how best to

[149] Fantham (2006).
[150] *Mixta*, and the idea of blending more generally is an important aspect of Ovid's poetic identity, and is discussed throughout the following chapters.

facilitate continued movement and production, which is aimed at continuation through poetic immortality.

The River as Time

As continued movement is a key idea in the river-as-poetry motif, it is also the key feature in the conceptualisation of the progression of time as the flow of a river. Time as a river is in no way an Ovidian innovation, but a well-known motif in antiquity, which revolves around the idea of constant flow and irretrievability.[151] The direct metaphor itself only appears twice in Ovid's works, but the image and concept of the river tied to ideas of time runs throughout.[152] As discussed in the introduction, time is clearly signalled as a prevalent concern in Ovid's poetry, with the beginnings of the *Metamorphoses*, *Fasti*, *Ibis*, and *Tristia* including a variant of the word time, *tempus*. It is also an important concern connected with the idea of poetic immortality, where the poet is able to live beyond their present times, and so overlaps with the poetic river in that way.

This brief section will thus explore how the alternate ideas of linear and cyclic time described in the introduction are shown through river images in *Amores* 1.8, and *Metamorphoses* 15.[153] The image of the river as poetry and the river as time are then more closely drawn together, before moving onto the third section – the question of river continuity.

In *Amores* 1.8, the river as time metaphor is used by the *lena*, Dipsas, to justify taking many lovers, and asking them for gifts.[154] This image uses the idea of linear time to emphasise the fleeting duration of beauty for the *puella*. Dipsas highlights the continued movement of time using a river simile, alongside a list of material goods which improve with use:

> *labitur occulte fallitque volubilis aetas,*

[151] Heraclitus, discussed in the introduction. Drawing from Heraclitus, in Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 4.43, time is described as a rushing torrent. Cf. Horace, *Epistle* 1.2.41-3. Rivers as time also occurs in visual imagery, see Jones (2005: 101-103) for discussion of the temporal qualities of the Palestrina Nile mosaic.
[152] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15.179-85, *Amores* 1.8.49-50.
[153] Greco-Roman cyclic time and Goold's Time's Arrow previously discussed in the introduction.
[154] Whilst there is a strong connection between this poem and Propertius 4.5, for the purposes of showing the river as time metaphor I will not be discussing this connection in great detail. See Morgan (1977: 59-68) for a thorough discussion of the connection between Propertius 4.5 and *Amores* 1.8, which argues for Propertius' 4.5 composition priority.

ut celer admissis labitur amnis aquis.[155] 50

> Time glides smoothly on and is past before we know, even as a swift stream glides imperceptibly on with its rapid current.[156] (*Am*. 1.8.49-50)

Labitur highlights the particular liquidity of the movement of time and water, with the idea of gliding, or slipping emphasising a difficulty in keeping hold of the material, also reflected in the repeated occurrence of 'l' in line 49. This liquidity echoes the idea of continued flow described in the previous section; here, the very materiality of time makes it difficult to stop. This is further emphasised through the comparison to the swift stream (*celer amnis* 50), with the loose waters of a rapid current (*admissis aquis* 50). Highlighting the speed of the river reiterates the slippery nature of time, tied to its continued progression beyond human control.

The loose waters also create a sense of a loss of control, or containment, which also echoes the uncontrollable nature of the passage of time.[157] This uncontrollable flow of water as the uncontrollable passage of time is also tied to the inevitable entropy faced by the abandoned home (52). Gardner reads this in comparison to Propertius 4.5, and suggests that where Acanthis highlights natural entropy and an end to youthful beauty through the image of the withering rose, Dispas largely 'stresses a world subject to human cultivation and thus assumes the role of the cultivator so often played by the poet-lover'.[158]

Gardner then argues that Dipsas is still associated with nature despite her best efforts, and is thus subject to entropy in a way in which the *amator* is not. Whilst I agree that Dipsas is subject to entropy, I would argue that this is not due to a connection with nature, but rather a lack of connection with nature, specifically, water. Within this world of human cultivation, the fast stream is outside of Dipsas' control. This inability to control time and water is also suggested in Dipsas' name,

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[155] Some textual issues here: Barsby's (1973) commentary has *annus equis*, but McKeown (1989: 228) disregards *annus equis* and follows *amnis aquis* from the P manuscript, with Goold (1965). I follow McKeown, since Barsby also discounts the later association between time and rivers in the *Metamorphoses*. In contrast, I suggest that this, and the other links between time and rivers discussed in this section lead to accepting *amnis aquis* in the place of *annus equis*.
[156] Trans. Showerman (1914).
[157] Uncontained waters also connect to another aspect of river behaviour, that of river flooding, which is discussed in more depth in chapter 2.
[158] Gardner, 2013: 214.

Thirst, where the implied lack of water suggests both 'drying up' and impotence.[159] Through her name, Dipsas is separated from the flow of water and control over time, although she recognises its circular nature (*volubilis* 49).

The spatiality of time as turning, rolling, or revolving suggests circular time, with continuity tied to the continuous cycle of the environment. This element of continuity through circularity is shown through the almost direct repetition of this line in the *Metamorphoses*:

> *Labitur occulte fallitque volatilis aetas,*
>
> *et nihil est annis velocius.* 520
>
> "Time glides by imperceptibly and cheats us in its flight, and nothing is swifter than the years.[160] (*Met.* 10.519-520)

Once again, time is described as gliding by unseen, yet here it is flying (*volatilis* 519) rather than circling. The almost direct duplication of this line draws attention to the process of repetition, yet the subtle difference emphasises the idea of circularity in *Amores* 1.8. The cyclic nature of poetry means that the characters may live on in different forms, as the similarities between Propertius 4.5 and *Amores* 1.8 show, with the poet in control of that cycle.[161] Through repetition and deception, Ovid's own poetic time is aligned with natural cycles beyond the individual – where Dipsas is subject to the end of her cycle in this poem. So, as Gardner argues, Dipsas is subject to entropy in a way the poet-lover is not, yet it is her disconnect with natural water cycles which shows this.

This circular view of time as connected to Ovidian time appears more overtly in the *Metamorphoses*, as part of Pythagoras' speech in book 15. Once again, the flow of a river is used as a metaphor for the progression of time:

> *cuncta fluunt, omnisque vagans formatur imago;*

[159] See chapter 3 for discussion of drought and impotence. Through the suggestion of alcoholism (*Am.*1.8.4) Dipsas is also presented with the female trope of a lack of control over her own impulses, which feeds into the lack of control over water here.
[160] Trans. Miller (1916).
[161] Cyclic nature of poetry referring to repeated images and tropes within genres, continued in cycles of authors.

ipsa quoque adsiduo labuntur tempora motu, 179

non secus ac flumen; neque enim consistere flumen

nec levis hora potest: sed ut unda inpellitur unda

urgeturque prior veniente urgetque priorem,

tempora sic fugiunt pariter pariterque sequuntur

et nova sunt semper; nam quod fuit ante relictum est, 184

fitque quod haud fuerat, momentaque cuncta novantur.

All things are in a state of flux, and everything is brought into being with a changing nature.Time itself flows on in constant motion, just like a river. For neither the river nor the swift hour can stop its course; but, as wave is pushed on by wave, and as each wave is both impelled by that behind and itself impels the wave in front, so time both flees and follows and is ever new. For that which once existed is no more, and that which was not has come to be; and so the whole round of motion is gone through again.[162] (*Met.* 15.178-185)

Here, time is again connected with the image of a river through the idea of continuous motion (*adsiduo motu* 179), and a constantly shifting form (*vagans imago* 178). This draws out two qualities important for a river and its connection to time – continuous movement and changing form – both of which are key aspects of Ovid's poetic river.

The constant shifting between forms in continuous motion also shows circular time, where events are indistinct, and continuous as part of a cycle. This is also shown in the repetition of *unda* (181) and *urgetur* (182), creating a sense of waves blurring to form the whole image of the constant flow of water. The uncontainable, or unstoppable nature of time and the flow of water is emphasised, with neither time nor the river able to stop (180-181), and a sense of forceful progression created through the description of each wave compelling (*inpellitur* 181) and being compelled to move (*urgetur* 182). The unstoppable, uncontrollable nature of time here links back

[162] Trans. Miller (1916).

to the sense of endless deep time, and also emphasises the lack of human control within it – the river flows, and will continue to flow beyond the continuity of humanity.

The forceful waves are linked to the idea of time equally impelling and being impelled (*fugiunt pariter pariterque sequuntur* 183), which rather than creating a straightforwardly linear sense of time, reflects an idea of cycles, moving between being pushed and pushing in a tenuous balance. The overlapping of the waves impelling and being impelled disrupts any sense of directionality in the river flow, again linked to the lack of directionality in circular time. As nature repeats itself in cycles through the seasons, and through continuous growth, death, and renewal, so does the literary timeline grow and renew through the addition of new poetry, and renewal of old through repetition and adaptation. In this way, the sense of circular time which comes from the depiction of time as a river colours the image of poetry as a river in Ovid's works, aligning the cosmic time of the earth with poetic temporality, suggesting a sense of longevity beyond that of anthropocentric time.

Yet even within this description of unstoppable, endlessly progressing time, there is also a sense of the manipulated, chaotic temporality of the *Metamorphoses* coming through. As all times come together, blurring what has and has not been (185), both history and the present are made new. This blurring of past and present here is manifest through constant change, but is also echoed in the process of repetition and adaptation in Ovid's poetry. This diffuses a straightforward linear narrative within the poem, exemplifying what Feeney has noted as the abstract temporality of the poem, which begins at creation, seemingly building to a teleological journey to Rome, before departing from this narrative until the return in book 15.[163]

Building from this sense of abstract temporality, Rosati argues that the *Metamorphoses* is characterised by a 'sense of fluctuating chronological indefiniteness', in opposition with the intrinsic teleological nature of epic;[164] in this way, the narrative temporality reflects the blurring of boundaries between linear and cyclic time. Where the linear flow of time posits irreversibility, the circular notion of

[163] The *Metamorphoses* begins with an indication of teleological scheme, 1.3-4, where the narrator describes spinning a continuous song from the origin of the world to his own times: see Feeney (1999) for the problem of time in the *Metamorphoses*. See Cole (2008: 17-39) for a discussion of non-authorial episodes inserted into the narrative in order to avoid telling concurrent events.
[164] Rosati, 2002: 278-281.

time gives more freedom to revise and renew. Through this, the constantly moving and changing nature of the river flow reflects the narrative structure of the poem itself, and as such, the poet can lay a claim to the sense of continuity beyond that of anthropocentric time.

The sense of renewal in the circular view of time presented here is shown through the idea of everything being made new (*novantur* 185). The constant process of renewal in the repetition of the waves both link to the concept of deep time as a layered entity, where here, adaptation and transformation are key to continuity. This sense of layering as a form of transformation is also shown in the figure of Pythagoras himself; Segal argues that Pythagoras is a layered image, highlighting the blending of subgenres of hexameter poetry within the *Metamorphoses*.[165] The literary image of layering has temporal connotations in the layering of the waves, as each wave rushes on to replace the one before it in a constantly moving but balanced cycle. Within this episode then, the poet can playfully highlight ideas central to his own form of poetic time and continuity – blending and adapting past and present.

Through the metaphor of the river as time, time as a renewing force is also linked to rivers as a renewing force – emphasising their role in sustaining life. Yet the association of that sense of renewal with the act of changing shape, and specifically *new* forms, explicitly recognises a sense of transition in the process of renewal. Beagon argues that Pythagoras' vision of change is in contrast to the restructuring of Rome under Augustus, where in the *Metamorphoses* the all-encompassing nature of flux becomes the new normal.[166] This sense of time progressing through renewal and change then perhaps directly engages with the temporal manipulation of Augustan narratives of renewal and returning to a 'golden age', alongside narratives of political destiny.[167] With the constant flow of time framed in cycles of renewal beyond anthropocentric concerns, the political narrative of time is placed in competition with the poetic. Renewal through change also more broadly

[165] Segal, 2001a: 65. This episode has been the subject of much scholarly attention: see Beagon (2009), Hardie (1995), Little (1970), Myers (1994: 133-159), Wheeler (2000: 114-117).
[166] Beagon, 2009: 289, cf. Curran (1972: 71-91) for the contrast between the image of Augustan stability and Ovidian fluidity in the *Metamorphoses*.
[167] See Wallace-Hadrill (1987), discussing Augustan restructuring of Roman time to reflect the Julian family within the context of Ovid's *Fasti*.

characterises Ovid's works and approach to poetic temporality, as his poetry demonstrates wider concerns with continuity through hybridity, particularly in the exile poetry.[168] In this way, the river of time, in conjunction with the idea of the poetic river, shows how Ovid aligns himself with the extended temporality of natural time, mirroring Augustan narratives of temporal control.

The duality of rivers as time, representing both a linear and cyclic sense of time, allows the positioning of Ovid's poetic temporality in between both senses, laying a claim to eternal continuity through the cycles of the environment, as well as placing his own works in a linear sense of temporal progression. This places Ovid's poetic temporality in competition with Augustan political narratives of time, which also embody aspects of linear and cyclic time to justify continuous imperial rule. Through this, the use of river behaviour to embody aspects of poetic temporality allows the poet to play with ideas of temporal control, tied to his creation of poetry, in order to try and attain a competing sense of immortality through poetic continuity.

Rivers as Continuous Motion

The recurrence of constant motion as a motif for both the river as poetry and the river as time is an important characteristic for expectations of river behaviour. Often, the constant motion, and thus the continuity of rivers is used as a guarantee for continued behaviour, renown, or power. Continued flow is also important in the theory of rhetoric, which Ovid was well versed in.[169] Quintilian likens the perfect rhetorical speech style to the continued flow of a river, unbroken by obstacles in its path:[170]

> *feratur ergo non semitis sed campis, non uti fontes angustis fistulis colliguntur sed ut beatissimi amnes totis vallibus fluunt, ac sibi viam, si quando non acceperit, faciat.*
>
> Let it therefore travel not by the narrow paths, but over the open plains, not like a scanty spring conveyed in narrow pipes, but like the mightiest

[168] Discussed in chapter 5.
[169] See Schiesaro (2002) for Ovid and rhetoric.
[170] A similar image also occurs in Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 9.47, see Jones (2005: 52) for further discussion in relation to poetic voice.

> rivers that fill whole valleys. If it does not find a way prepared for it, let it make one for itself.[171] (Quint. *Inst*. 5.14.31)

It is important to note that this is an ideal of river behaviour, a rich, continuous flow which mimics the behaviour of the flooding torrent. As Jones notes however, this kind of river behaviour in reality is seasonal, and therefore interrupted rather than continuous – yet Quintilian maintains the ideal of the continuous river within the image.[172] The dissonance between the idealised continuous image, and the more messy flow of real river behaviour is an important concept for the use of the river image in Ovid's poetry, as this disconnect between the idealised and the real is often drawn out to highlight different forms of poetic time.[173] This can be most obviously seen in *Amores* 3.6, but also runs through his works as a whole.[174]

This section focuses on the ideal of river continuity, with some examples of how that is disrupted, in order to show how the idealised image of guaranteed, continuous river flow is destabilised in verse and in the poet's reality. Undermining idealised guaranteed, continuous river flow then highlights how poetic continuity is not guaranteed, providing the justification for Ovid's own constantly renewing and changing sense of poetic time. This section will show the image of guaranteed river continuity in *Remedia Amoris* 253-258 and *Ibis* 135-40, and how it is subtly undermined. This pair are seemingly contradictory in terms of their outlook towards continuity, as the *Remedia Amoris* seeks the ending of a love affair while *Ibis* promises continued suffering for the recipient; however, through these seemingly contrasting ideas the underlying motif of continuity through river flow is drawn out.

In the didactic *Remedia Amoris*, the poet teaches the audience to recover from love, in counterpart to the message sent by his own previous poetry. As part of this, the narrator promises a return to normality through his tutelage:

> *Me duce non tumulo prodire iubebitur umbra,*

[171] Trans. Russell (2002).
[172] Jones, 2005: 53.
[173] Within this image there is also the contrast between the less contained force of nature, in comparison to constructed channels of the pipes – perhaps echoing a contrast between *ingenium* and *ars* discussed in the first section of this chapter.
[174] *Amores* 3.6 is discussed further in chapters 2 and 3.

Non anus infami carmine rumpet humum;

Non seges ex aliis alios transibit in agros, 255

Nec subito Phoebi pallidus orbis erit.

Ut solet, aequoreas ibit Tiberinus in undas:

Ut solet, in niveis Luna vehetur equis.

Under my guidance no spirit will be bidden issue from the tomb, no witch will cleave the ground with hideous spell; no crops will pass from field to field, nor Phoebus' orb grow suddenly pale. As of wont will Tiber flow to the sea's waters; as of wont will the Moon ride in her snow-white car.[175] (*Rem*. 253-258)

Here, the continued flow of the Tiber is used as a marker of usual behaviour (*ut solet* 257) tied to, amongst other things, the spirits of the dead remaining in the underworld (253), and the continued light of the sun (256). It is not just the ongoing flow of the Tiber that adds to this sense of normality, but the specific directionality of the river flowing towards the sea (*aequoreas ibit Tiberinus in undas* 257). Here, this directionality and clear terminus point to a sense of linear time, and also reflect the river as a commonly used *adynaton*, where the river flowing in a specific direction to the sea is used as a guarantee of continuity.[176]

This connection to the linearity of the river *adynaton* is also suggested in the figure of the witch who can break the earth with hideous spells (254); in Ovid's previous amatory works, the figure of the witch often appears as someone who has the power to reverse the flow of rivers.[177] Here, the poet is placing his poetic power in competition with the disordering figure of the witch, and guaranteeing a return to linear, continuous flow with the power of his song.

However, the contrast between the reversed flow of the rivers as caused by witches in *Amores* 1.8 and *Heroides* 6, and the ordered flow of the poet here draws a connection between the previous amatory works and the *Remedia Amoris*. In this,

[175] Trans. Mozley (1929).
[176] River *adynata* are discussed further in chapter 4.
[177] *Amores* 1.8.5-6, *Heroides* 6.87.

the witches and abnormal behaviour of the rivers are associated with the poets previous amatory works, particularly as the *Remedia* is presented as an antidote to Ovid's other eroto-didactic works. This connection highlights Ovid's previous poetry as the cause of the disorder in the *Remedia*, which the poet now seeks to return to order through the continuous, unidirectional flow of the Tiber. In returning to normality, and the continuous flow of the Tiber, the poet's own love poetry appears to end.

Hardie highlights this dichotomy at the centre of the *Remedia* in relation to the figure of Lethaeus Amor, where the intertextuality of the *Remedia* requires that the reader forget the *Ars* as part of the process of forgetting love.[178] The figure of Lethaeus Amor is also tied to river behaviour through the image of the river Lethe, the river of forgetfulness.[179] Here, rivers are key to highlighting the dichotomy at the heart of the *Remedia*, which teaches the reader to unlearn the previous *Ars*, yet relies on the *Ars* as its counterpart. In this way, the image of continuity initially presented in the continued flow of the river is complicated by its connection to poetic temporality.

This image of continuity is further complicated through the contrast of the linear image and the cyclic behaviour of the sun and the moon. The Tiber's linear continuity is positioned between images of day and night, the orb of Phoebus (*Nec subito Phoebi pallidus orbis erit* 256), and the journey of Luna (*in niveis Luna vehetur equis* 258).[180] The continued light of the sun, alongside the continued presence of the moon in the night sky, highlights the continuous cycle of day and night as part of the continued cyclic progression of time outside of human time. This once again encapsulates both ideas of the continued flow of time, where the continuous cycles of natural time work alongside the more linear progression of human time.[181] In this sense, the linear journey of the Tiber with its defined end point seems a little out of place alongside these broader continuous images.[182]

[178] Hardie, 2007: 168.
[179] Lethe discussed further in chapter 5.
[180] Tiber's linear continuity – flowing in one direction, source to sea, as opposed to river reversal, which is generally a sign of disorder and discussed further in chapter 4.
[181] See Feeney (2007: 169) for the overlapping of linear and cyclic time Roman political thought through the *Fasti Consulares* and *Fasti Anni*.
[182] Irby (2016a: 264) describes how rivers were broadly conceptualised in ancient thought as flowing into the sea, and being subsumed by it – emphasising this aspect of linearity then undermines the image of continuity in the cyclic nature of the other aspects of nature in the catalogue.

It is perhaps worth reconsidering the image of the *terminus*, then, the watery waves of the sea. By joining the sea, the river waters cease to form the river, and instead become part of the sea. While that process may signal an ending for that part of the river, transition between two states of water highlights the continuous process of the hydrological cycle, which facilitates the continuous flow of rivers in the first place.[183] With the contextualisation of this linear image alongside the cyclic images of day and night, the linear timeframe can be reworked into an image of further continuity, through the idea of transformation. As the water transforms between states in each stage of the water cycle, it forms part of a future 'flow', and in this way, facilitates continuity. This can then be applied to the poetic temporality of the *Remedia*, where the ending of love poetry can signal a potential continuity through transformation. This is reframed as a necessary ending in order to facilitate future continuity, as part of a larger cycle. Here, the idealised image of river continuity is not necessarily guaranteed, but can be achieved through transformation.

This aspect of continuity in river flow is also shown in the *Ibis*, where the poet's anger is tied to the the continued flow of the Danube, Ganges, and Tiber:

> *Leniat aut odium tempus et hora meum.*
>
> *Pugnabunt arcu dum Thraces, Iazyges hasta,* 135
>
> *Dum tepidus Ganges, frigidus Hister erit;*
>
> *Robora dum montes, dum mollia pabula campi,*
>
> *Dum Tiberis liquidas Tuscus habebit aquas,*
>
> *Tecum bella geram; nec mors mihi finiet iras,*
>
> *Saeva sed in manes manibus arma dabit.* 140
>
> or length of time appease my hate. While Thracians fight with the bow and Iazygians with the spear, while Ganges is warm and Danube cold, while oaks are on the mountains and lush pasture on the plains, while Tuscan Tiber holds running waters, I shall wage war with thee; nor

[183] Lucretius, *de Rerum Natura* 5.261-271 describes the water cycle and the place of rivers within it.

> shall death end my wrath, but furnish my ghost with fierce arms against yours.[184] (*Ib*.134-140)

The character of the rivers is part of what guarantees continuity: that the Ganges should remain warm (*tepidus* 136), and the Hister cold (*frigidus* 136).[185] This aspect of continuity is highlighted through the repetition of *dum* (135, 136, 137, 138), linking both the Roman and the foreign.

The continuity of the Ganges and the Hister is then connected to the continuity of the Tiber, which has no specific characteristic other than having flowing water (*liquidas habebit aquas* 138).[186] This shows the external rivers being defined by one characteristic, in contrast to the more archetypal image of the Tiber.[187] With the particular liquidity of the Tiber's waters, the sense of motion and progression of time is shown to reside in Italy, and perhaps even more specifically, within Rome. The focus on the Tuscan nature of the Tiber highlights the poet's absence from this environment, and his inability to see the current state of the river.[188] The continuity of the Hister's state, alongside the poet's in exile, is connected with the continuity of Rome – but emphasising the difference in the environment.

Highlighting the continuity of the Hister's cold temperature connotes a frozen environment, suggesting a sense of immobility even within that continuous environment. Where *Amores* 1.15 uses the continued flow of the Simois to suggest a

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[184] Trans. Mozley (1929).
[185] Rivers as characterised by one attribute appear too often to note here, but some more prominent examples - Cayster has swans: Homer, *Iliad*. 2.459-63, Propertius, 3.22.15-6, Virgil, *Aeneid*. 7.698-702, Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. 2.252; Maeander is twisting: Strabo. 12.8.15, Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. 2.246; Pactolus is gold: Virgil, *Aeneid* 10.141-2, Propertius. 1.6.31-4, Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. 11.85-8. See Irby (2016b) for an overview of environmental determinism in Roman thought, and how peoples in colder climates were characterised.
[186] Warner (1917) provides a brief overview of the many epithets of the Tiber – variously described by name, location, as a yellow colour. Of the description in the *Ibis* here, Warner comments on the unremarkable nature of *liquidas aquas* in comparison to other epithets of the Tiber, perhaps indicating continuous flow without interruption (53).
[187] There are of course elements of environmental determinism at work here, where cold climates produce hard people, hot climates produce 'soft' people, and the ancient ideal is somewhere in the middle temperate climate, usually associated with Greece or Rome depending on the writer; this is most clearly exemplified in Hippocrates, *de Aere Aquis et Locis.* This element of environmental determinism is often tied to river behaviour in Augustan poetry, particularly colder climates, where drinking from the Hebrus or Hister is associated with being brutish, Virgil, *Eclogues*. 10.64-5, Ovid, *Epistulae ex Ponto*. 3.4.91-2. See also Hughes (2014: 63) for a broad overview of the concept in the ancient world in specific reference to the environment.
[188] *Tristia* 5.1 compares the location of the poet to that of Rome, specifically idolising the man who can count the sands of the Tiber (31).

sense of progression, culminating in the poet's reworked image of Apollo, here, that progression is undermined by the lack of transition in the environment. Schuback argues that existence in exile is 'existence in the cut that separates and interrupts the continuity of before and after';[189] here, the initial sense of continuation is undermined by the lack of beginning and ending – the before and after. This sense of unending, unchanging anger contributes to the sense of the absence of time in the exile poetry, in conflict with the continuation of Ovid's poetry.[190]

The absence of time created by the unchanging continuation of the rivers is also introduced by the clear disregard of time and hour (*tempus et hora* 134), suggesting the disregard of the broader cyclic time of nature, and the specific marked human time of *hora*. The continued state of the rivers tied to the continuity of the narrator's anger highlights the conflicted temporality of exile, in a continuous but unending state, separate from the normal flow of time.

Through these examples, it is clear how continuity is a key aspect of expected river behaviour. A river's continuous, unidirectional flow from source to sea is also tied to ideas of expected spatial patterns, which when disrupted can threaten continuity. This linear spatial journey also forms part of a larger natural cycle, which suggests continuity through a connection to deep time. In contrast, when separated from this cycle, continuity through transformation is threatened, in the face of stagnancy.

Rivers and Transformation

As the idea of unchanging continuity is problematised by the representation of river behaviour, the importance of change is also exemplified through the frequent role of rivers as agents of transformation. In Ovid's works, rivers are frequently the sites of transformation, as well as taking active roles in the transformational process.[191] This mirrors their position in the wider environment, as their flow shapes land over time through sedimentation and erosion, physicalising the passage of time in the natural

[189] Schuback, 2020: 4.
[190] The absence of time in the exile poetry in relation to frozen rivers is discussed in chapter 3, and the loss of transition through river behaviour explored in chapter 5.
[191] Different examples of transformation include the literal changing form: Peneus changes Daphne (*Metamorphoses* 1.545), Proteus represents transformation (*Metamorphoses* 8.738), catalogue of rivers transforming people into stone, sounding drunk, turning hair gold etc (*Metamorphoses* 15.281-329). Rivers can also alter mental states: The river Gallus induces madness (*Fasti* 4.363). Rivers can also transform their lovers through 'mingling' with them: Alpheus and Arethusa (*Metamorphoses* 5.572), and the Tiber and Ilia (*Amores* 3.6.85-6).

environment beyond that of humanity.[192] In this way, the process of transformation is inherently linked to the concepts of continuity, and time; additionally, the transformation of different poetic genres represented through the growth or reduction of river waters highlights this aspect of transition within poetic temporality.

Hardie characterises the process of transformation as allowing Ovid to sidestep perpetuity through generational replacement, and instead institute metamorphosis as 'an event that leads out of the world of change into a surreal world of unchanging forms that one may identify with the world as created by the poet'.[193] Whilst I agree that the process of transformation allows an alternate kind of perpetuity, I would argue that my reading of rivers in Ovid shows that this is a continuous process rather than a discrete event which leads to unchanging forms. This is most apparent in aspects of river transformation which show a two-way process, with rivers also able to be transformed in return. The permeability of rivers as a marker of transition highlights mutual influences in the continuation of Ovid's poetry, where the output of work can affect the audience, so can the audience response affect the works, and the poet.

This section focuses on rivers as agents of transformation in the *Metamorphoses*, discussing Daphne, Midas, and the Anigrus' transformations, before briefly considering the transformed images of the river Rhine in the imagined triumphs of Ovid's exile poetry. In this, willing transformation can facilitate a positive form of continuity, while unwilling transformation leads to a static, unchanging temporality.

The river's transformational powers are shown in the first book of the *Metamorphoses*, through the transformation of Daphne into a tree.[194] As she flees from Apollo, she calls to her father, the river Peneus, specifically to transform her shape:[195]

[192] See Maeander, discussed in the introduction.
[193] Hardie, 1993: 94.
[194] There is a substantial body of scholarship on this episode, with a large portion discussing its metapoetic significance. See: Hardie (2002: 45-50), Farrell (1999: 131-4) for key discussion of Daphne as a poetic text. See Nicoll (1980) for discussion of elements of Callimachean *recusatio* in this episode. See Campbell (2018) for a useful overview of genre scholarship on this episode.
[195] Campbell (2012: 128-140) argues for both the general divinity of rivers and their waters, as well as their anthropomorphic representation as gods. The separation between river gods and their waters is discussed in chapter 2, 'Breaking the Boundaries'.

victa labore fugae spectans Peneidas undas[196]

"fer pater" inquit "opem si flumina numen habetis. 545

Qua nimium placui, mutando perde figuram!"

Vix prece finita torpor gravis occupat artus:

mollia cinguntur tenui praecordia libro,

in frondem crines, in ramos bracchia crescunt,

pes modo tam velox pigris radicibus haeret, 550

ora cacumen habet; remanet nitor unus in illa.

Now was her strength all gone, and, pale with fear and utterly overcome by the toil of her swift flight, seeing her father's waters near, she cried: "O father, help! if your waters hold divinity; change and destroy this beauty by which I pleased o'er well." Scarce had she thus prayed when a down-dragging numbness seized her limbs, and her soft sides were begirt with thin bark. Her hair was changed to leaves, her arms to branches. Her feet, but now so swift, grew fast in sluggish roots, and her head was now but a tree's top. Her gleaming beauty alone remained.[197] (*Met.* 1.544-52)

Daphne explicitly calls for the river water's power (*si flumina numen habetis,* 545), marking the role of the water itself in the process of transformation. This power is then explicitly linked to transformation through the use of both *mutando* and *perde* (546), where the gerundive *mutando* emphasises the ongoing notion of change, while *perde*, with its multitude of meanings surrounding removal, loss, destruction

[196] Textual issues make it unclear whether Daphne is praying to Tellus, Peneus, or both: Anderson's edition omits this line in favour of attributing Daphne's transformation to Tellus, as 'rivers in Ovid's poem do not possess the power to transform others' (1997: 199). However, Tarrant's (2004) critical edition omits Daphne's prayer to Tellus, in favour of this line as 544. Whilst both Tellus and Peneus could be appropriate targets of Daphne's prayer, I am inclined to use Tarrant's edition here as Peneus makes slightly more sense as her father. Peneus as the figure to both transform and then as the linking figure between this episode and the next might also suggest Peneus as the more appropriate recipient of Daphne's prayer, as the river facilitates a change in narrative direction as well as Daphne's transformation.

[197] Trans. Miller (1916).

and dissipation, can be understood as dissolve through the connection with water.[198] This shows the role of the river as an agent of destruction, and transition, through the process of changing form.

Through this process of change, Daphne is transformed into a tree, but her beauty specifically is said to remain (*remanet nitor unus in illa* 551). Although her form has been changed, the problem of her beauty remains unchanging. Although this episode can be interpreted as both Daphne escaping Apollo, and as being unable to escape even in transformation, this process of transformation facilitated by the river can serve to illustrate both issues of continuity. The unchanging nature of Daphne's beauty, and the continued threat from Apollo because of it, reiterates the idea of unchanging continuity as unfulfilling, particularly under threat from the continuous power of the gods.

In contrast, Daphne's changed form has allowed her to continue as part of the landscape. As both Hardie and Farrell note, the transformation of Daphne into a tree marks the process of being transformed into a poetic monument; this act of transformation has facilitated continuity through being immortalised in poetry – although Daphne is still vulnerable to male power, both Apollo, and the poet.[199] Through being immortalised in poetry, Daphne's continuation is tied to that of the poet's work, and so reflects that aspect of unguaranteed continuity characteristic of Ovid's poetic temporality as shown through rivers. The double interpretation of this episode, where the unchanging continuous aspect of Daphne's beauty undermines the potential freedom in continuity offered by transition, highlights the potential vulnerability in this process. The river image here highlights both the risk and gain in adapting in order to facilitate continuity, which also then reflects back on the key concept of Ovid's poetic time.

[198] This idea of dissolving could hint at the two-way process of transformation discussed later in this section, where through the process of dissolving Daphne, the river absorbs and is transformed in return.

[199] Farrell (1999: 131-4) describes how Daphne is essentially transformed into a book, and symbol of poetic inspiration, highlighting the metapoetic phrasing in the process. As part of his argument, Farrell also uses Daphne to highlight the complexities of interpretation, and the potential vulnerability of the text within that (135-6). This aspect of vulnerability will be discussed further with reference to the exile poetry later in this section, and in chapter 4. Hardie (2002: 45-50) develops this into a discussion of Daphne as a monument to the perpetual life of the text.

The potential gain and potential vulnerability are then shown in two episodes of river purification in the *Metamorphoses*: the first, where Midas removes his golden curse through washing in the river Pactolus, and the second, where the river Anigrus is tainted by centaur's blood. Both episodes highlight the process of river transformation through purification, and the dual aspect of this process, where the rivers themselves are equally vulnerable to change. In the first of these episodes, King Midas has wished for everything he touches to turn to gold, leaving him unable to eat or drink. After realising his mistake, Midas asks Bacchus for help, who tells him to wash himself in the river:

'ne' ve 'male optato maneas circumlitus auro,

vade' ait 'ad magnis vicinum Sardibus amnem

perque iugum nitens labentibus obvius undis

carpe viam, donec venias ad fluminis ortus,

spumigeroque tuum fonti, qua plurimus exit, 140

subde caput corpusque simul, simul elue crimen.'

rex iussae succedit aquae: vis aurea tinxit

flumen et humano de corpore cessit in amnem;

nunc quoque iam veteris percepto semine venae

arva rigent auro madidis pallentia glaebis. 145

And "That you may not remain encased in gold which you have so foolishly desired," he said, "go to the stream which flows by mighty Sardis town, take your way climbing the slope up the tumbling stream until you come to the river's source. There plunge your head and body beneath the foaming fountain where it comes leaping forth, and by that act wash your sin away." The king went to the stream as he was bid. The power of the golden touch imbued the water and passed from the man's body into the stream. And even to this day, receiving the seed of

> the original vein, the fields grow hard and yellow, their soil soaked with water of the golden touch.[200] (*Met*. 11.136-145)

Midas is told to go to the beginning of the river (*venias ad fluminis ortus* 139), specifically to its source (*spumigeroque fonti* 140). This draws attention to the idea of beginnings, and fresh starts, as indicated in the motif of the poetic spring discussed in the first section of this chapter. The importance of the fountain here also highlights the linear conception of the river, focusing on a clear visual marker of a beginning, in connection with renewal.[201]

The river water then acts as an agent of transformation through the process of purification, where *elue* (141) highlights the act of cleansing, or of washing away. This further emphasises the idea of linearity, where the transformational process is based around the idea of washing away – as the gold is removed from Midas, it will then be moved along the river, physically distanced from Midas. This further points to a sense of rebirth, or renewal for Midas, where the waters of the river act as the transition between states.[202] This highlights the idea of directionality within the process of transformation, and superficially indicates that to be one-way through the focus on the source of the river and the idea of washing away.

Yet this is undermined by other aspects of directionality in this episode. Midas' own journey to the source of the river, following the river along its banks (138-9), retraces the journey of the river in opposition to the direction of its flow. This, alongside the connection to renewal and source, draws out a temporal connection here. As Midas in his journey reverses the flow of the river, and returns to its beginning, he is able to restart his story, with a complete reversal of his state. In this way, the act of transformation also has a temporal connection, as the role of the river can signal the passing of time, but also the reversal of time within the narrative.[203]

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[200] Trans. Miller (1916).
[201] Springs are frequently associated with continuity and renewal: Cicero, *de Natura Deorum* 2.98, Lucretius, *de Rerum Natura* 5.561-72 describes ever renewing springs in connection with the renewing water cycle.
[202] See Jones (2005: 19-22) on the role of river water in marking transition between different stages of life. Rivers also appear as sites of apotheosis: the river Numicus washes away the mortal parts of Aeneas (*Metamorphoses 14*.596-608). The Styx most overtly functions as a marker between life and death, which is discussed further in chapter 5.
[203] River reversal as redefinition discussed further in chapter 4.

This journey to the source as connected to narrative time also highlights the role of this episode, which is used as an explanation for the Pactolus' renowned gold quality.[204] The reversed journey of Midas to the source, to then taint the river with his gold (*tinxit* 142), mirrors the role of the narrative, which begins with an untainted Pactolus, and paints it gold. In this way, the river is both transformer and transformed in the poetic temporality of the *Metamorphoses*.[205]

The duality of the river as both agent of transformation, and transformed entity, is further reiterated through the movement of the gold from the river to the fields. In Ovid's present, the river Pactolus was known for gold deposits, where this story forms an *aetion* for that phenomenon. As an *aetion*, this highlights both the blending of a retrospective explanation for present circumstances, as well as a linear frame of time in which events in the past definitively lead to present events. This is introduced by a specific connection to continuity through the temporal phrase *nunc quoque iam* (144). This refers to both the present of the current episode, which is the past to the audience, and to the present time as the current living moment for the audience of the *Metamorphoses*. This complicated notion of the 'present' once again foregrounds rivers within the larger environment as an image of deep time, where the continuous presence of the Pactolus through the past of the *Metamorphoses* to the 'present' time emphasises the disconnect between the continued presence of nature in the shortened time frame of humanity.

This sense of deep time being in play is further emphasised through the transformation of the fields by the river, as the water from the river irrigates the fields with gold (144-5). Within this, the water is characterised as the seed of the ancient vein (*nunc quoque iam veteris percepto semine venae* 144), emphasising the age of the water in comparison to the present moment. The transformation then of the fields with gold is part of the process of cyclic renewal, where water from the river facilitates growth, and wealth, in the wider landscape.[206] This again adds to the sense of renewal and rebirth indicated by the focus on the fountain of the river in

[204] The Pactolus in Lydia is consistently associated with gold and wealth due to the gold deposits from the river. Virgil, *Aeneid* 10.141-2 and Propertius 1.6.31-4 also reference the river depositing gold in the fields.
[205] See the pool in which Salmacis and Hermaphroditus are transformed, which is itself permanently transformed to change anyone who enters it (*Metamorphoses* 4.285-388). See Keith (1999: 217-220) for discussion of gender blurring in this episode.
[206] Wider aspect of river transformation as renewal discussed further in chapter 2.

Midas' transformation, and connects the image of Ovid's poetry to a much longer and more continuous timeframe than that of one purely tied to the continuity of Rome.[207]

These two-way transformations, where rivers themselves are changed are also shown in Pythagoras' catalogue of change, where Pythagoras tells of the river Anigrus, which is now undrinkable as it has been polluted:

> *ante bibebatur, nunc, quas contingere nolis,*
>
> *fundit Anigrus aquas, postquam, nisi vatibus omnis*
>
> *eripienda fides, illic lavere bimembres*
>
> *vulnera, clavigeri quae fecerat Herculis arcus.*
>
> The Anigrus was once wholesome to drink, but now it pours down waters which you would not wish to taste since there (unless all credence is to be denied to bards) the twi-formed centaurs bathed their wounds which the arrows of club-bearing Hercules had dealt.[208] (*Met*. 15.281-4)

Here, the river Anigrus is an agent of transformation, allowing the centaurs to wash their wounds, washing away their defeat at the hands of Hercules. Yet with this, the waters of the river themselves become transformed, and are now polluted.[209]

As Pythagoras here draws attention to the reliability of the poets (282) in this matter, the Anigrus is also described by both Strabo and Pausanias as sluggish, marshy, and with a strong smell. [210] In this, the Anigrus' sluggish nature is partly what causes its strong smell and polluted nature, as Fantham highlights, in order to not be

[207] This larger scale of continuity shown in this episode is continued further, as Midas is one of the few characters in the *Metamorphoses* to be transformed more than once, when he is given donkey's ears (*Metamorphoses* 11.172-193).
[208] Trans. Miller (1916).
[209] I am classing pollution as a form of transformation, as the river's state is altered into something new. In Roman religious thought, blood was a potent polluter, where being polluted was a state which could be changed through ritual processes, allowing a transition from one state to another (Lennon, 2012: 52-54). In this way, being cleansed and being polluted are acts of transformation. *Heroides* 9.139-142 also describes the river Achelous as polluted by mud, and Nessus polluting river water with his blood (*infecit sanguinis equinis aquas*).
[210] Segal (2001a: 79) discusses the metapoetic effect of Pythagoras disbelieving the poets. Strabo 8.3.19, Pausanias 5.5.8-10 describe the foul smell of the river Anigrus, and its sluggish flow, associated with centaurs washing off Hydra poison.

polluted by the materials they were supposed to be cleansing or removing, rivers needed to have a strong enough current to transfer the material to the sea.[211] Here, although the river water is able to cleanse and transform the centaurs, the river Anigrus itself is transformed through consequences of violence, and is unable to transform itself through the weakness of its own flow.[212] Lennon discusses how purification rituals were often about transferring impurity in order to re-stablish order;[213] here, the river itself has taken on the impurity, yet is permanently transformed beyond that. This emphasises the two-way process of transformation in rivers, where the waters themselves are vulnerable to impurity and disorder through a lack of motion and flow.[214]

This disorder is shown temporally through the connection between the past of the poem, the present of the poem, and the present of the audience in the opposition of *ante*, and *nunc* (281), emphasising the passage of time. The use of before and after highlights the change in state of the river, tying the process of change to the passage of time. This connection to time then draws out the image of rivers as continuous presences in the landscape, through the continued unchanging undrinkable state of the Anigrus from the present of the *Metamorphoses* to the present of its audience. The present of the audience is the future of the *Metamorphoses*, especially in book 15 as the narrative draws closer to Ovid's contemporary Rome. In this way, the initially changed and then unchanging state of the river draws a connection from past, to present, to future, which suggests a more linear sense of time than the role of the Pactolus.

The Anigrus is transformed through one event, rather than continuous natural processes over a long period of time. In contrast to the Pactolus, which was depicted as having an active role in the cyclic continuation of the wider landscape, the Anigrus here is separated from its wider role in the environment, and its polluted state defined as undrinkable (281-2). This emphasis on how the river interacts with

[211] Fantham's (2016: 66) example is the Tiber, which was regularly used in order to remove offensive material from the city. Although its current was not strong enough to take it to sea, the river itself was never seen as polluted.
[212] As the Anigrus' transformation is partly caused by Hercules' violence, this may also evoke a connection with the changed form of the river Achelous, and the stagnancy of that character (discussed in chapter 2). The Anigrus is also polluted by blood, with its connotations of impurity, rather than the gold pollution of the Pactolus.
[213] Lennon, 2014: 113.
[214] Lack of motion as vulnerability is discussed more in chapter 3.

humanity, through the act of drinking, rather than through its wider role in the whole environment, further draws out this focus on the more anthropocentric linear time. The river, as transformed through violence, is thus subjugated to a more violent power, and the aspect of continuity tied to its continued lack of use for the contemporary audience.

This continued polluted state as caused by the blood of the centaurs draws attention to the long-lasting impact of the permeability of the river, highlighting its potential vulnerability. This vulnerability to violence is taken further by the connection to Hercules, who has already been shown in book 8 to have transformed the river Achelous through violence.[215] Vulnerability in forced transformation is also shown in the exile poetry, through the representation of the bloodied rivers in triumphs. Here, the motif of being polluted with blood is pushed further, in two depictions of the Rhine in imaginary triumphs:

> *cornibus hic fractis viridi male tectus ab ulva*
>
> *decolor ipse suo sanguine Rhenus erat.*
>
> This thing with broken horns and sorry covering of green sedge was the Rhine himself, discoloured with his own blood.[216] (*Tr*. 4.2.41-2)

> *Squalidus inmissos fracta sub harundine crines*
>
> *Rhenus et infectas sanguine portet aquas.*
>
> Let squalid Rhenus mourn locks trailing beneath broken rushes and waters dyed with blood.[217] (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.4.107-8)

Here, the rivers have been forcibly transformed, with both depictions highlighting the idea of being polluted by blood (*decolor sanguine,* 42; *infectas sanguine aquas*, 108). Both depictions also show an aspect of brokenness, either through broken

[215] Hercules tears a horn off and it becomes a cornucopia: whilst an abundant harvest is positive renewal for the human use of the river, it is not so positive for Achelous. This is discussed further in chapter 2.
[216] Trans. Wheeler (1924).
[217] Trans. Wheeler (1924).

horns (*cornibus fractis* 41), or broken rushes (*fracta harundine* 107). This mirrors the forceful violent transformation of Achelous in the *Metamorphoses*, as well as continuing the image of the Anigrus' blood-polluted waters.

Campbell touches on this aspect of transformation in the depiction of rivers in triumphs, where he suggests that a defeated people are represented by its river, which became transformed through the triumph to represent an ally of Rome.[218] While this is more appropriate for a broader ideological purpose, I would argue that here, it is Ovid's poetry associated with the figure of the Rhine. As previously discussed, rivers are often used in Ovid's poetry to represent a poetic flow. Additionally, the narrator of the *Amores* playfully represents himself as a captive in Cupid's triumph, again mirroring the broken figure of the Rhine here.[219] Thus, the violent transformation here at the hands of Drusus reflects the violent transformation of the poet's exilic environment. The unwilling transformation here highlights continuation in changed state, but with a lack of control over that transformation, that continuation is polluted. In this way, the poet in exile is polluted by violence, and forced to continue in a changed state, rather than controlling that change himself as in the transformations of the *Metamorphoses*.

Yet within the image of transformation as a two-way process, this aspect of vulnerability goes both ways. As Pandey argues, the representation of the captives in *Tristia* 4.2 as compared to their previous states highlights the risk of role reversibility, where the process of transformation encourages the audience to focus on change and 'question the durability of the victor's glory'.[220] This aspect of duality and durability is shown through the duality of the representation of the Rhine in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.4, where he is simultaneously an anthropomorphised figure with hair (107), yet also carries water stained with blood (*infectas sanguine portet aquas* 108). Within this double image of the Rhine, there is a sense of the double temporality represented – the durability of the river waters, and the vulnerability of the human figure. This contrast between durability and vulnerability is an important aspect of Ovid's poetic temporality in the exile poetry, where the sense of temporal

[218] Campbell, 2012: 160
[219] *Amores* 1.2 depicts the narrator as captive in Cupid's triumph, with 29-30 detailing his figure as wounded and unresisting, as the Rhine is wounded here.
[220] Pandey, 2018: 235

control identified with the poet's earlier works is questioned through the representation of rivers.[221]

Here, although the river is currently transformed into a captive, the connection to water, and its continuous movement through the present sense of *portet* (108) draws out the place of the river in the broader timeframe of the earth. This duality recognises the lack of control in the present environment of exile, but subtly hints at future change and continuation. Through the double image of transformer and transformed, rivers as agents of transformation reflect control over poetic temporality, where the act of transformation shows change as a means for continuation, with consideration of both the positive and negative potential effects for the poet and his work.

Conclusion

An Ovidian river consists of four aspects: poetry, time, continuous motion, and transformation. These aspects all interact with elements of real river behaviour, their spatiality, role in the environment, and connection to the wider water cycle. Through these interactions, the poet is able to align the continuity of his poetry with the continuity of the natural environment, through an association between poetic time and river flow.

This association between poetic time and river flow incorporates the Callimachean tradition of styles of poetry reflected by differing water flows, marking a combination of *ars* and *ingenium* which both recognises previous literary works, as well as showing Ovid's process of adaptation as a form of renewal. Through the incorporation of both past and future, the poet is able to mark a place for himself within the literary timeline, and guarantee continuity as shown by a continuous literary river flow.

This continuous literary river flow is linked to both linear and cyclic notions of time, through the spatial and environmental interactions of rivers in the lived environment. An individual river's flow from source to sea can reflect an individualistic view of linear time, with a clear beginning and ending.[222] Yet conceptualising a river within

[221] Durability and vulnerability discussed in frozen rivers in chapter 3, rivers as two-way direction discussed in chapter 5.
[222] Time as experienced from birth to death, in as a single journey.

the larger environment draws out perpetuity through repeating cycles, which the poet is able to navigate through his poetic corpus.

The importance of cycles is strongly linked with the idea of continuous motion and flow, where the continued motion of waterflow within a river is used as an image of normality and stability. However, this continuity is not guaranteed, which is highlighted through images of unchanging river behaviour in the exile poetry.

The weakness of unchanging continuity is strongly linked with the transformational aspect of Ovidian rivers, in which river water often facilitates transformation, as well as rivers being able to be transformed themselves. This two-way process of transformation highlights both power and weakness in change, as transformations through violence can lead to vulnerability, as shown by the examples of the river Anigrus and Rhine.

These four key aspects flow throughout the following chapters, forming the basis of an ‘expected’ Ovidian river, which is then interrogated with respect to river behaviour in the lived environment to show how the poet navigates his own approach to time and immortality, associated with natural time.

Chapter 2. Redefining Seasonality: Floods and Forceful Flow

The four aspects of an Ovidian river: poetry, time, continuity, and transformation all interact in one of the most common descriptions of river behaviour in Augustan poetry, the description of torrents and floods. These interactions take place in the disrupted space of the excess of water caused by torrential and flooding behaviour, and they reflect an initial disorder in narrative time. Ward defines a flood as a body of water which rises to overflow land which is not normally submerged;[223] this definition encompasses both the overflow of torrents and perennial rivers, with the key idea focussed on the spread of water across land 'not normally submerged'. This indicates an element of disruption within the image of the flood, where displaced waters signify something 'out of the norm'.[224]

This is even more apparent in the action of flooding, where waters are uncontained in the course of a river or a torrent, and spread outwards, rather than following a unidirectional flow. This outwards movement is often incredibly destructive, as the force of the waters forces an outwards path. Time is significant because torrents and floods are seasonal aspects of river behaviour, where the additional water flow caused by snowmelt or excess rainfall produces temporary water-flows, torrents, and river-run outside traditional channels. This contrast between flooding as seasonal and as a temporally regular event is then contrasted with the spatial disruption of flood waters.

Yet as part of this destructive disruption, floods are necessary to the landscape, and facilitate future growth. This is most apparent in the image of the river Nile, where its regular flooding cycle was depended upon to provide fertile land for crop growth. However, the Nile is something of an outlier in the image of river flooding, as it has a fairly regular and predictable flooding cycle. In addition, its reliability led to clearly defined flood plain areas, which reduced the destruction of human interventions in the landscape. In contrast, the floods and torrents of the Italian environment are much less reliable. Floods and torrents within this environment are still broadly seasonally regular, but often more disruptive, and difficult to predict.[225] This element

[223] Ward (1978).
[224] Smith and Ward (1998: 19) also note that flooding is only perceived as disruptive from an anthropocentric point of view – it is otherwise a natural process of the environment.
[225] Coastal flooding did not occur as often as the seasonal flash floods of rivers, due to the virtual absence of tides in the Mediterranean (Hughes, 2014: 13). This is reflected in the Augustan texts,

of unpredictability and disruption adds tension to the river image, where the future renewal in the landscape facilitated by river flooding is often coloured by the immediate threat of destruction and disruption.[226]

Similarly, torrents are associated with seasonal flooding, and also cause spatial destruction in their forceful flow. In this, the flow of a torrent is also temporary, and dependent on seasonal change, causing its presence in the landscape to appear disruptive. This is also apparent in the excess force of a torrent's flow, where the aggressive power of the waterflow forces a course outside of expected channels. This can occur simultaneously as an aggressive linear path, descending from mountain snows, as well as dispersing water outwards in a flooding motion. The movement of a torrent then, is inherently spatially disruptive, even if its behaviour is expected within a seasonal cycle.

For this reason, torrents and floods are often used as similes for the overwhelming destruction of armies in battle.[227] River torrents and floods were clearly a frequently experienced part of the Italian landscape, as images occur in all the extant Augustan poets, with the exception of Propertius. Additionally, Aldrete notes that the regular flooding of the Tiber, with little action taken against it, suggests that these floods became 'a routine aspect of everyday life'.[228] This aspect of routine and familiarity, combined with the image of power and destruction, exemplifies the conflict at the heart of the temporality of river flooding, where the larger seasonal cycle clashes with immediate destruction and disruption. This connection to wider seasonal cycles again draws out the contrast between cyclic and linear views of time within the river image, where floods represent a disruption to linear flow on a micro scale, yet within seasonal cycles show overall continuity in the landscape.

In this image of conflict, Ovid's works negotiate with ideas of poetic time and continuity, where the focus on disruptive movement provides an alternate space to

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where river flooding occurs much more often than coastal flooding. Because of this, and the centrality of the river image to Ovid's poetic temporality, this chapter will not consider coastal flooding. Campbell (2012: 29) comments on the seasonal variation of Italian rivers, generally there is particularly high volume from melting snow in spring, and low flow in winter and summer.

[226] Flood as renewal: Columella, *Rustica.* 3.11.8 valleys and lands flooded as good for vineyards; Pliny, *Natural History.* 5.54 Nile as fertilising flood; Smith and Ward (1998: 35-6) on the benefits of flooding.

[227] River similes for military destruction: Virgil, *Aeneid*. 2.304-8, 494-9, 10.601-4, 12.521-6; Horace, *Odes*. 4.14.25-6; Ovid. *Fasti.* 2.219-24.

[228] Aldrete, 2007: 6.

contend with ideas of genre, continuation through poetry, and poetic vulnerability. Here, torrents and floods represent a temporary diversion from the linear flow of the river, where waters are unbounded. This provides a diversion, creating a space within that particular work to meander through new ideas, and 'renew' the overall work. Such irregularity might initially appear to disturb the flow of time, but through the role of flooding in landscape renewal, these moments of temporal disruption 'sow the seeds' for future growth and continuation in the landscape, emphasising the longer-term progressive dynamic. When the flood waters return, and the torrent settles, the temporary disruption is incorporated back, enriched, into the continuous flow of larger cycles of the environment.

As part of seasonal behaviour, this ebb and flow of challenge to and restoration of continuity are also significant. Torrents and floods mark the continuation of natural cyclic time, even in the initial sense of conclusion that comes with a flood's destructive impact.[229] Poetic use of the spatial disruption of torrents and floods therefore emphasises the process of failure and loss alongside renewal and transformation in facilitating continuity, where this renewal enriches the overall poetic river through that process of change. In this way, torrents and flooding rivers encapsulate disruption to linear time as well as the continued and expected movement through natural cycles of renewal on a cosmic scale.

This chapter traces the depiction of Ovid's poetic temporality through close analysis of the movement of torrents and flooding waterflows. I explore individual case-study examples and also, on a macro level, consider the role of the excess water in the wider landscape. The spatiality of the river waters in both torrents and floods, as a counterpoint to the questions of time and flow, is emphasised through the division of this chapter into three sections. The first, 'Breaking the Boundaries', explores the idea of disruptive excess in the torrent of *Amores* 3.6, and the river Achelous' flood in *Metamorphoses* 8-9. As the excess of water breaks the boundaries of river flow, this section explores how the use of excess water images reflects the breaking of genre boundaries, to highlight blurring boundaries as a form of renewing transformation.

The second section, 'Cyclic Disruption', takes the individual disruptive aspect of torrents and flooding, and builds this into a larger seasonal cycle. This seasonal

[229] Ending and renewal discussed in terms of apocalyptic renewal in chapter 4.

cycle is represented through the sustained simile of love as a river through *Ars.* 2.339-44 and *Remedia* 649-52, in consideration with the role of seasonal river behaviour in the Fabii episode in *Fasti 2*, and presents an overall picture of continuity. This connection to seasonality places Ovid's individual poetry within the wider poetic flow discussed in the first chapter, and its connection to natural cycles.

Within these images, the idea of vulnerability is drawn out, which then becomes the focus for the third section of this chapter, 'Forceful Flow'. This section deals with torrent imagery in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.2 and 2.3, where the outwards motion of river flooding is lost, and instead, seasonal river waters are presented as an overwhelming unidirectional force, unable to flood outwards. This unidirectional force and inability to flood then presents a disconnection from the larger seasonal cycle, in which the continuation and control of the poet is questioned. The lack of room for alternate movement also presents time in exile as an overwhelming force to be endured, separate from the poet.

Through these sections, floods and torrents are shown to break boundaries, and offer a space for renewal, which could facilitate future growth. This future growth is strongly tied to torrents and flooding as part of a larger seasonal cycle, the absence of which in the exile poetry leads to a threatened sense of continuity. The importance of seasonality in the continuity of the poet and his poetry is then brought to the surface, and continued further in chapter 3, where the less experienced aspects of seasonal behaviour, drought and freezing, are discussed.

Breaking the Boundaries

Torrents and floods cause significant disruption in two key examples from Ovid's poetry, *Amores* 3.6, and *Metamorphoses* 8.547-9.95. *Amores* 3.6 appears midway through the third and final book of the *Amores*, where a significant number of the poems deal with the failures of the *amator*'s love affair.[230] 3.6 is sandwiched between two poems which specifically deal with the *amator*'s impotence, framing the inconvenient torrent in 3.6 as part of this problem. The torrent then initially

[230] 3.1 *recusatio* with Elegy and Tragedy, hinting at transition to other genres, 3.5 *amator* has a dream of *puella* leaving, 3.7, inability to perform in bed, poet complaining, 3.11 *amator* calls for end of love, 3.12 *puella* is poetic deception, 3.15 end of *Amores*.

represents a disruptive delay to the narrative time of the elegiac affair, as it actively stops the journey of the *amator* to his *puella*:

> *quid mecum, furiose, tibi? quid mutua differs*
>
> *gaudia? quid coeptum, rustice, rumpis iter?*
>
> What have I with thee, mad stream? Why dost thou defer the joys I am to share? Why dost thou, Rustic, break off the journey I have begun?[231] (*Am*. 3.6.87-88)

Here, the excess waters of the torrent are explicitly said to separate the *amator* from delights (87), as well as breaking his journey (88). The double image encompassing both separation and breaking apart positions the torrent as a barrier to the progression of the love affair, where the specific reference to breaking the journey (*rumpis iter*) highlights spatial disruption akin to the breaking of banks in a river flooding image. The inability to cross the river also points to a lack of movement, or transition, even within the excess force of the flooding torrent. Where the *amator* would usually be able to cross the watercourse (5-6), the disruptive excess of the flooding torrent bars the way, forcing the *amator* to wait, or move in another direction and seek another route.

This movement in another direction is suggested by the use of *iter*, which refers to the journey of the *amator* here, but can also refer to the course of a river.[232] This duality of the broken journey reflects both disruption in the narrative of love, and in the continuous flow of the river: routes that are at cross purposes. This disruption to the journey and flow of the river mirrors the position of this poem as a pivot point within book 3 of the *Amores*, where 3.5 prophesies the *amator*'s future impotence, yet this is not fulfilled in the overall narrative until 3.7, due to 3.6's interruption.[233] In this way, the disruptive flow of the torrent in 3.6 mirrors the position of this poem

[231] Trans. Showerman (1914), adapted.
[232] *Iter* referring to the course of a river: Horace, *Ars*.67-8; Propertius. 4.2.7; Ovid, *Epistulae ex Ponto.* 4.6.46, 4.10.54.
[233] This could also be seen in contrast to the paired poems of book 2, 7 and 8, 13 and 14, where an image shown in the first poem is immediately flipped in the second; here, in book 3, the image of the impotent *amator* is delayed and prolonged throughout.

within the overall narrative of book 3, causing a delay to continued narrative, and further prolonging the *amator*'s inability to 'perform' love.

As the *amator* waits, he is forced to move in an alternate direction like a river in flood, where rather than try to cross the river, he tries to convince it to change its behaviour. This marks a departure from the amatory narrative, where the torrent has created a space characterised by excess in which the *amator* can attempt his rhetorical strategy. The *amator* tries to convince the seasonal torrent to change its behaviour, through comparison with mythical rivers who have succumbed to love. In this, the *amator* characterises rivers primarily by their ability to love and help those in love, and provides a catalogue of river *exempla* who changed their behaviour to sustain love affairs (25-44).[234]

> *Flumina deberent iuvenes in amore iuvare:*
>
> *Flumina senserunt ipsa, quid esset amor*
>
> Rivers ought to aid young men in love; what love is, rivers themselves have felt.[235] (*Am*. 3.6.23-4)

This sets up an expectation of river behaviour, which is not aligned with the 'real' environment, but rather uses a literary precedent to redefine what river behaviour should be within an amatory narrative. The overwhelming force of love for these literary rivers forces them to act against their nature, showing love as a force capable of changing behaviour, and nature itself. The seasonal torrent then, in acting outside these boundaries, appears to be out of place in this narrative, again emphasising the sense of spatial disruption in this image. The inability of love within this amatory narrative to change the flow of the river then suggests its failure, both through the disruptive excess of the river, and the disruption to the continuation of the *amator*'s journey.

This inability to change and facilitate love is explicitly shown through the *amator*'s repeated pleas:

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[234] Boyd (1997: 213) discusses the origin of these myths through Courtney (1988: 20-22), suggesting that the likely source for these *exempla* is Callimachus' prose work on rivers.
[235] Trans. Showerman (1914).

Siste parumper aquas

stay for a little time thy waters! (*Am*. 3.6.2)

Tu potius, ripis effuse capacibus amnis –

Sic aeternus eas – labere fine tuo!

Do thou choose rather, O stream poured wide beyond thy capacious banks—so mayst thou flow on for ever—to glide within thy bounds! (*Am*. 3.6.19-20)

The *amator* is explicitly asking the river (*amnis* 19), in the form of the seasonal torrent to change its behaviour in order to facilitate the course of love – either by holding back its waters, or returning to its channel. Yet the torrent is unable to deliver this change, highlighting the contrast between the literary power of love, and the 'real' environment. Just as the *amator* is unable to act or influence the river's behaviour through speech, so is the torrent, deflating the continuous love narrative and denying any agency from both the river and the *amator*. This inability to act or transform to facilitate the amatory narrative forces movement in a non-amatory direction, through the epic digression.

This generic diversion is signalled at the start of this poem, in the very character of the torrent's waters. In this, the torrent is described as muddy, and filled with reeds (*amnis harundinibus limosas obsite ripas* 1), echoing the description of Callimachus' muddy and reed filled river of epic poetry in the *Hymn to Apollo*.[236] As Shea argues, *harundinibus ripas* also echoes Virgil's declaration of epic in *Georgics* book 3.[237] This immediately situates this poem within the debate about the hierarchy of genres, in which the torrent itself takes on both epic and anti-epic qualities within the frame of an elegiac narrative. That torrent then causes the *amator* to digress into stories of river gods and their loves, blending amatory narrative with epic material.[238]

[236] See chapter 1 discussion of Callimachus in Ovid's use of the river as poetry.
[237] Shea, 2019: 319. Although Shea does not comment on this, there is also a further potential link between this torrent and the pastoral genre, through the addressing of the torrent as *rustice* in line 88.
[238] See chapter 3 for further discussion of the river *exempla* in *Amores.* 3.6, particularly defined by acting against expected river behaviour to facilitate amatory narratives.

This digression is then explicitly mirrored by the expanding waters of the flooding torrent (*dum loquor, increvit latis spatiosior undis* 85). The conflicting epic and anti-epic waters which spill out beyond their boundaries highlight the intrusion of the antagonistic waters into the elegiac landscape, mixing the types of poetic material. This sense of blurring the boundaries, and mingling genres, connoted through the river imagery, highlights the transformation of poetic material within this generic digression. As the epic material intrudes into the elegiac, the river *exempla* are reframed in terms of their amatory narratives, renewing both types of material. This draws out the sense of transformation necessary for continuation that is absent in the *amator*'s understanding of the stubborn torrent. Through this, the blurred excess delays the journey of the *amator*, pausing the amatory narrative and making time for Ovid's own renewed take on literary discourse, framed by the elegiac subject of love.

The blurring of generic boundaries leading to renewal, framed as a process of inconvenient disruptive flooding, is important for Ovid's own sense of poetic time. Within the *Amores*, Gardner argues, the frequent process of erotic deferral is often conflated with generic deferrals which hinder progression to patriotic poetry;[239] whilst Gardner focuses on *recusatio* strategies here, the conflation of erotic and generic deferral is an important aspect of this poem. Here, in *Amores* 3.6, the unexpected excess of the torrent blocking the journey of the *amator* forces an erotic deferral, or delay, yet within this delay, creates a space for elements of epic poetry to seep in. This blurring of the boundaries between genres, in the space of the flood waters, allows the poet to incorporate both materials without having to deviate entirely from elegiac poetry. The blending of both allows the poet to maintain control over his own poetic time, with no urgency to 'move on' to patriotic poetry.[240]

This blended material then enriches the overall narrative, as flood waters facilitate renewal in the landscape. That the antagonistic epic and anti-epic material occurs in the image of a flood also suggests a connection to this material in the future, where the flood waters lay the foundation for future growth. As this poem occurs midway through the third and final book of the *Amores*, in between two narratives of amatory impotence, there is perhaps the sense that the inevitable generic evolution may be in

[239] Gardner, 2013: 115.
[240] Le Doze (2019) discusses Augustan poets' motivation to innovate, particularly in terms of Latin epic, headed by Maecenas.

the near future, and with it, the necessary end of the amatory narrative.[241] In this way, the disruptive excess of the torrent, flowing outside its bounds, highlights the process of moving outside of love elegy as an alternate form of continuation.

This form of wider continuation even in the ending of the *Amores* is also reflected by the seasonal aspect of the torrent. Where the torrent interrupts and hints at a future end to the *Amores*, it also shows a larger sense of continuity through seasonal cycles of the environment. The excess waters of the torrent are explicitly shown to be seasonal, as they are said to be caused by snow melt (7-8). This seasonal connection is initially used to show the temporary nature of the unnamed torrent, in comparison to named perennial rivers. The torrent is then framed as a temporary interruption in the linear journey of the amatory narrative, or at least presented in this way by the *amator*. Yet the connection to larger cycles of poetic flow goes beyond the linear time of the *amator*, even in what he understands as a temporary torrent.

The short-lived nature of the seasonal torrent is further pushed by the *amator*, who criticises the torrent's lack of permanent source, and lack of name:

> *nomen habes nullum, rivis collecte caducis,*
>
> *nec tibi sunt fontes nec tibi certa domus!*
>
> but thou hast no name, thou art but gathered from failing rivulets, and hast neither fountain-source nor fixed abode! (*Am*. 3.6.91-2)

This plays into the humorous aspect of the *amator* telling a river how to behave appropriately, and also appears to negate the power of the conflicting epic and anti-epic intrusion, as it is framed as a temporary diversion. This suggests the space created by the outwards motion of the flooded torrent is a temporary intrusion in the amatory narrative – the ending of the *Amores* may be inevitable, but it is not immediate. The lack of a fixed source and home (92) also echoes the sense of spatial displacement in the outward motion of the flooding waters, where the torrent neither occupies a static or recognisable location. The torrent is unfixed alongside its temporary nature. Beyond its lack of fixed source, it also lacks a name, and therefore seemingly also cannot be secured within the literary tradition.

[241] Necessary endings are discussed further in chapter 3.

However, its seasonal and unfixed nature can portray a sense of movement and continuation in other ways, when drawn out beyond the immediacy of this poem. In this, the explicit seasonal nature of the torrent is cyclic, appearing and reappearing seasonally in different locations. This moves beyond a sense of a rigid linear course, as already exemplified by the disruption to the linear journey of the *amator,* and instead aligns with the larger, continuous seasonal cycle. The torrent is tied to the wider frame of seasonal natural time, and continuation within that – where the blending of conflicting poetic materials in the digression of the torrent becomes part of a larger cycle of continuation.

That the digression has also caused the dedication of a poem to this unnamed torrent also adds to this sense of a larger cycle of continuation, where the unnamed torrent enters the literary ranks of the named perennial rivers. This highlights the process of adding to a wider poetic flow, where the digression caused by the torrent, and the blended generic material within its excess waters form the poem itself. The commemoration of this torrent then raises its status to mirror that of the perennial rivers in the *exempla*. This is made apparent by the *amator*, who is 'ashamed to have spoken the great names [of these rivers] to the unworthy', (*iactasse indigne nomina tanta pudet* 102). The focus on names in conjunction with the stories of the rivers highlights the aspect of continuity through poetry, where the named rivers receive prestige through poetry, but also are ingrained in literary memory.

In this way, telling, and retelling the stories of the rivers in love reflects a wider cycle of literary continuity, into which this poem is now incorporated. Jones understates this, suggesting that the dedication of a poem to the torrent merely highlights that rivers and poetry go together;[242] I would go further, and suggest that the specific spatiality and seasonality of the flooding torrent provides space for alternate forms of poetic continuation. The disruptive excess of the torrent, which blends conflicting poetic material, blurs the boundaries between genres, and connects this work to a wider poetic river. Both the amatory narrative and the epic material are blurred together in the space of the flooding torrent, and through the seasonal connection, tied to a larger sense of continued time beyond that of the singular amatory narrative presented in the *Amores*. In this way, the torrent as an interruption to a linear journey

[242] Jones, 2005: 91.

creates space for this process of generic blending, which facilitates continuation through addition to an overall poetic flow.

This process of interruption and delay and overall continuation as part of control over larger frames of poetic time is continued further in the *Metamorphoses* 8. The river Achelous blocks Theseus' journey, and once again the excess waters of a torrent, tied to flooding, present an initial sense of disruptive delay. This occurs in book 8, where Theseus forms one of the common threads through the stories of Daedalus' labyrinth and the Calydonian boar, before finally arriving at the river Achelous. Within these stories Theseus does not play a large role, with most emphasis given to Minos, Daedalus, and Atalanta. It is during his journey back to Athens that Theseus happens upon the flooding river Achelous, who advises the hero to wait for the river to settle:

Interea Theseus sociati parte laboris
functus Erectheas Tritonidos ibat ad arces.
clausit iter fecitque moras Achelous eunti
imbre tumens: "succede meis," ait "inclite, tectis,
Cecropide, nec te committe rapacibus undis: 551
ferre trabes solidas obliquaque volvere magno
murmure saxa solent. vidi contermina ripae
cum gregibus stabula alta trahi; nec fortibus illic
profuit armentis nec equis velocibus esse. 555
multa quoque hic torrens nivibus de monte solutis
corpora turbineo iuvenalia vertice mersit.
tutior est requies, solito dum flumina currant
limite, dum tenues capiat suus alveus undas."

> Meanwhile Theseus, having done his part in the confederate task, was on his way back to Tritonia's city where Erechtheus ruled. But Acheloüs, swollen with rain, blocked his way and delayed his journey. "Enter my house, illustrious hero of Athens," said the river-god, "and do not entrust yourself to my greedy waters. The current is wont to sweep down solid trunks of trees and huge boulders in zigzag course with crash and roar. I have seen great stables that stood near by the bank swept away, cattle and all, and in that current neither strength availed the ox nor speed the horse. Many a strong man also has been overwhelmed in its whirling pools when swollen by melting snows from the mountain-sides. It is safer for you to rest until the waters shall run within their accustomed bounds, until its own bed shall hold the slender stream."[243] (*Met.* 8.547-59)

Once again, the flooding river is explicitly framed as a delay which disrupts a journey (*clausit iter fecitque moras Achelous eunti* 549), where Theseus is advised to wait for the torrent to pass, and the encounter forces the narrative to move in a different direction. This movement in an alternate direction echoes the spatiality of the waters, which are shown to be moving outside of their channel in order to displace the excess water (58-9). The combination of excess and alternate movement here signals a sense of expansion beyond the linear narrative of Theseus' return to Athens. As Jones highlights, this excess is not merely limited to the waters, but also mirrors the text, as Achelous' stories spill across into book 9.[244] This idea of excess again reminds the audience of the Callimachean torrent of epic, which is defined by its quantity, rather than quality.[245] These overlapping ideas of excess within the excess waters of the torrent present this narrative digression as a space of narrative fullness, where the digression forced by the delay of the torrent may lead to renewal in a changed form, as with the torrent of *Amores* 3.6.[246] The excess of material here causes a departure from both Theseus' linear journey, and a straightforwardly linear narrative time.

[243] Trans. Miller (1916).
[244] Jones, 2005: 68.
[245] Callimachus. *Hymn 2*.108-9.
[246] Connection suggested by *Amores.* 3.6.103, where Achelous is one of the great literary rivers compared to the temporary torrent.

The overlapping qualities of the excess waters and their connection to narrative disruption are further indicated by the spatial disruption in the excessive force of the waters, which are capable of dragging tree trunks and turning rocks (552-3), as well as pulling down stables near the banks (553-4). The pulling and turning of trees, rocks, and stables creates a sense of displacement, with the combination of *ferre*, *volvere*, and *trahi* (552, 554) suggesting switches in directionality, and chaotic forceful movement. This confused directionality further shows alternate forms of movement in the interruption to Theseus' journey, as well as linking back to the conflicting epic and anti epic waters of the torrent in *Amores* 3.6, presenting this as a space for blurring boundaries.

The spatial disruption here is a two-way process: as the waters of the river disrupt the immediate surroundings, so too is the river itself disrupted, characterised by whirling pools (557). In this way, the spatial disruption caused by the excess waters of the flooding river causes a change in direction for the delayed journey, as well as a change in the river's form. This indicates change, or transformation, as a key aspect of movement even in the initial image of delay. In this way, the excess outwards movement of the flooding river once again creates a space outside linear journeys, to explore alternate material, and subtly draw out the importance of non-linear temporality in the *Metamorphoses*.

The delay caused by the excess waters of the flooding river creates space for the rival narrators within this episode, as Achelous and Lelex tell stories while they wait for the flood to pass. In this space of delay, the poet highlights poetic construction, and differing levels of control within that. These stories do not linearly follow from the previous episodes within this book, and form part of a narrative digression within the space of the flood waters. This mirrors the process of delay and narrative digression facilitated by the torrent in *Amores* 3.6, yet where the narrative digression of *Amores* 3.6 allowed space for a narrative intrusion from a conflicting genre, here the flooded space allows the addition of narrative from two different narrators, drawing attention to the process of narration. Rosati suggests that narrators in the *Metamorphoses* function as surrogates for the author, where the awareness of constructing a story can reflect upon overall structure and meaning of the poem.[247] Here, the increased

[247] Rosati, 2002: 273.

focus on the process of narration draws attention to digression and alternate movement as an important part of the structure of the *Metamorphoses.* The stories told in this space then take on a significant meaning for the overall poem: Achelous tells stories of forced transformation, while Lelex tells the story of Philemon and Baucis, who ask to be transformed together.[248]

The alternate narrators present two opposing views on transformation, where although Achelous' stories of the power of transformation are supposed to impress the audience, there is a lack of power within the process of being forced to transform. This is shown in the story of Perimele's transformation, where Achelous himself is shown to lack the power of transformation. The river god describes how, after he took Perimele's virginity, she was thrown to her death by her father (592-4). Achelous describes how he calls to Neptune and asks for Perimele to be transformed into an island (595-604). Secci pinpoints this as a moment in which the river god's skills are not inherent;[249] Achelous himself cannot transform Perimele.

Achelous' lack of transformational power over other entities is then connected to his lack of narrative power, through the audience response to Achelous' story. Pirithous does not believe his story of the transformational powers of the gods (612-15), which undermines both Achelous' power as a river god, and as an internal narrator. Achelous' narrations also highlight a lack of control over transformation. Specifically, Mestra is given the ability to transform at will, but is forced to do so by her father Erysichthon, in order to be sold and resold (843-881). As narrator of these stories, detailing forced transformations, Achelous is further presented as lacking transformational power. In the context of Pirithous' disbelief, lacking this power also undermines his narrative power - Achelous is unable to move his audience through his stories, which fail in attempting to project power through transformation.

Achelous then ends with his own, forced transformation at the hands of Hercules. This leads into book 9, where Achelous is placed in competition with Hercules for marriage to Deinira. This competition begins with a battle of rhetorical skill, before

[248] Achelous' stories and forced transformation: Perimele changed into an island by Neptune to escape her father (576-611), Erysicthon is transformed into hunger as punishment (745-842), Erysichthon forces daughter to transform for profit (843-884). In contrast, Philemon and Baucis ask to be transformed together, and it comes as a form of death (611-724).
[249] Secci, 2009: 42.

descending into a match of physical strength. Whilst Achelous' rhetorical skill is impressive, his transformational powers are not enough to beat Hercules, who breaks one of Achelous' horns.[250] This further emphasises Achelous' lack of power, in the repeated failure of his rhetorical skills, as first Pirithous disbelieves him, and then his speech fails in comparison to Hercules' strength. His transformational powers are also shown to be lacking, as he is unable to transform Perimele himself, is limited in how many forms he can take (*Etiam mihi nempe novandi est corporis, o iuvenis, numero finita potestas* 882-3), and in his transformed shapes, fails to defeat Hercules (9.35-84). Through this, the river-god's power is systematically undermined, where even in the initially destructive and powerful act of flooding, there is still a lack of power, particularly in the anthropomorphised form of nature represented by the river-god.[251]

The river-god's lack of power is also shown in the separation between the Achelous' transformational power and the river's power in the introduction to the flooding torrent. The flood is able to drown men and cattle, regardless of their strength (554-7); yet within this, Achelous refers to the flood as something he sees (*vidi* 553), rather than himself actively controlling the flood and causing the destruction. Achelous also advises Theseus and his companions to wait until the river returns to normal flow, rather than attempting to control the flood (557-8). The loss of power in being able to cross or control the flooding river is also shown in the continuation of Hercules' story in book 9, where inability to cross the river leads to Hercules' own vulnerability through the introduction of Nessus and his poisoned shirt. Both Achelous and Hercules falling victim to the excess of the torrent suggests a disconnect from the natural environment, and as such, a loss of power as tied to the overall continuity of natural time. Through an extended presentation of alternate narrators and transformational powers, Achelous is presented as lacking power in his failed narrations, inability to control his own waters, and defeat at the hands of Hercules, all of which undermine the consistent movement and changing forms expected of river water, and its strong connection to the continuity of natural time.

[250] Secci, 2009: 39-40 discusses the rhetorical power of Achelous' speech, and the contrast with Hercules' physical power in more detail.
[251] This vulnerability in the anthropomorphised sense of natural time is more apparent in the exile poetry, where the image of river gods in triumphs undermines the poet's claim to power through natural time: see chapter 1 for further discussion.

Feeney highlights the tension between water as inherently mutable and resistant to shape, and its anthropomorphic deity – here that tension is shown in almost a separation between the two, where Achelous has no control over his own waters.[252] This lack of control builds on the lack of narrative power in the series of internal narrations, as well as hinting at that sense of vulnerability, where Achelous is potentially as vulnerable to the flood waters as Theseus and his men. This lack of both physical and narrative power separates the river-god from the wider sense of natural cyclic time represented by the flow of his waters. This vulnerability echoes the two-way process of river disruption in the act of flooding, and it suggests a potential loss of future in the anthropomorphised sense of natural time represented by the river god.

This loss of future is mostly shown through a lack of ability to transform and keep moving, while in the delayed space of the flood waters, Achelous is shown in an unchanging state, perhaps somewhat ironically for his status as a river-god. Even in the final story of transformation, it is Hercules who transforms Achelous through the breaking of his horn. As this occurred before the arrival of Theseus and his men, the river-god remains the same throughout his presence in the *Metamorphoses*, even as alternate narrations detail acts of transformation. Achelous' lack of power over transformation in Ovid's depiction shows a storytelling figure, unaligned with constantly renewing cycles of natural time – highlighting the potential loss of power in storytelling figures.

This stagnancy is made plain through a comparison of the changed form of Achelous' horn and the river-god's own lack of transition at the end of the episode. The introduction of Achelous' horn as a cornucopia highlights its changed form, and also appears to restart Theseus' linear narrative journey:

> *nec satis hoc fuerat: rigidum fera dextera cornu* 85
>
> *dum tenet, infregit, truncaque a fronte revellit.*
>
> *naides hoc, pomis et odoro flore repletum,*
>
> *sacrarunt; divesque meo Bona Copia cornu est."*

[252] Feeney, 1991: 232-4.

Dixerat: et nymphe ritu succincta Dianae,

una ministrarum, fusis utrimque capillis, 90

incessit totumque tulit praedivite cornu

autumnum et mensas, felicia poma, secundas.

lux subit; et primo feriente cacumina sole

discedunt iuvenes, neque enim dum flumina pacem

et placidos habeant lapsus totaeque resident 95

opperiuntur aquae. vultus Achelous agrestes

et lacerum cornu mediis caput abdidit undis.

Nor was this enough: holding my tough horn in his pitiless right hand, he broke it off and tore it from my forehead, mutilating me. This horn the naiads took, filled it with fruit and fragrant flowers, and hallowed it. And now the goddess of glad Abundance is enriched with my horn."

So spoke the river-god; and lo, a nymph girt like Diana, one of the attendants with locks flowing free, appeared and served them from her bounteous horn with all autumn's harvest, and delicious fruit for the second course. The dawn came on, and, as the first rays of the sun smote the mountain-tops, the youths took their departure; for they did not wait until the river should flow in peaceful current and all the flood-waters should subside. And Acheloüs hid his rustic features and his head, scarred from the wrenched-off horn, beneath his waves. (*Met*. 9.85-95)

The horn as a cornucopia is framed in terms of abundance and filled with an autumnal harvest (*autumnum* 92). This subtly reintroduces the seasonal connection which appeared at the beginning of this episode, in the seasonal nature of the torrent as caused by spring snowmelt. The horn as then filled with the produce of autumn draws out a sense of seasonal continuation through the year, where even in Theseus' delayed journey, natural time has still continued to progress. The idea of

autumn produce, tied to the continued ideas of 'fullness' and abundance (87-88), creates a sense of an enriching process. This enriching process mirrors both the role of river flooding in enriching and replenishing the landscape, as well as the narrative made richer through the addition of stories made possible in the excess space of the flooded river.

'Filling' out the narrative here as part of its continuation is also important considering the place of this episode in the wider literary tradition – this episode can also be seen as a continuation of Callimachus' *Hecale*, where Theseus must take shelter from a thunderstorm, and shares stories with an old woman.[253] As a cause of river flooding, the thunderstorm appears before the river flood in the timeline of the environment. This section could then be seen as a continuation, both of the literal environment of Callimachus' poem, and as a continuation of his literary precedent. The flood then provides a space for alternative narratives, which enrich the poetry, in order to then return 'full' to the overall poetic flow.[254] The autumn harvest as representing the fullness, and almost the culmination of growth highlights this point as the culmination of the narrative. In this, the narrative delay indicated by the disruption to Theseus' journey is shown to be false, as the progression of natural time indicates the continued progression of the narrative, enriched by the additional stories of transformation in the excess waters of the flooded river. Here, the cornucopia's changed form leads to the continued progression of the narrative in an enriched form. In contrast, Achelous returns to the middle of his waters (*mediis undis* 95), unable to move beyond them, as both Theseus and the narrative have (93-4).[255]

Without that transformation, Achelous is unable to move beyond this narrative point, while Theseus and his men continue onwards. The changed form of the cornucopia, firmly grounded in a sense of continuation through the seasonal connection, also reiterates this process as a means of continued progression. Leach argues that over the course of the poem, heroes become more capable against the powers of the gods and nature, while the artist becomes a helpless figure at odds with those

[253] Callimachus, *Hecale* 238.
[254] Literary precedents/poetic canon as river flow is described in chapter 1.
[255] Achelous firmly grounded in the middle of his waters, where others are shown to be able to cross, highlights his lack of continuation, and presents him as being almost 'stuck' in this moment and state. The image of being 'stuck' between states in the middle of a river becomes more important in the exile poetry, where the narrator presents himself as being 'stuck' between life and death. This is discussed further in chapter 5.

powers;[256] this is shown here through the contrast of Theseus and Achelous, where the hero is able to cross the flood and continue, yet Achelous, who should hold the power, is limited by his role as narrator, and surrogate artist.

The flood waters here then provide a space to consider the importance of transformation to the continuity of the narrative, but also hint at a sense of vulnerability within that process, especially for artist figures. That this theme of vulnerability takes place in the alternate space of the enriching flood waters presents this as an important departure from the overall narrative flow, which will be renewed in the future of the poem.[257] In this way, Ovid uses the river cycle to infer a pause, only to undermine it – where delays and digressions are a necessary part of the *Metamorphoses*' own non-linear narrative temporality, which enrich its narrative, and highlight important themes of vulnerability in transformation which may affect the continuity of the poem and the poet.

Cyclic Disruption

Vulnerability in excess becomes more problematic in the *Remedia Amoris* and *Fasti*, where the excess of the torrent more overtly leads to vulnerability and a threat to continuation, even within a larger seasonal cycle of renewal. This threat to continuation is important for considering the potential risks in presenting alternative narratives. Alongside this, potential disconnect with the wider seasonal cycle, and with it, poetic continuation through incorporation into the wider poetic flow also arises as an issue.

Vulnerability is explicitly tied to the disruptive excess of torrents in the *Remedia Amoris*, yet the threat of ending is still able to be mitigated through the association of seasonal cycles and the cyclic nature of love. River images occur frequently throughout the *Remedia*, where river behaviour is often used as a metaphor for the course of love.[258] In the *Remedia*, the temporary aspect of torrents is emphasised as part of the process of recovering from love:

[256] Leach, 1974: 107.
[257] Orpheus (*Metamorphoses* 10), Canens (*Metamorphoses* 14) discussed in chapter 5, as well as vulnerability of artist and forced transformation is a strong theme of exile poetry, as discussed in chapter 1.
[258] *Remedia*. 97 associates the growth of rivers over time with the growth of love; *Remedia*. 257 describes the normality of the river Tiber (discussed in chapter 1); *Remedia*. 445 uses rivers thinning out through multiple channels to justify taking more than one lover in order to reduce the power of

Sed meliore fide paulatim extinguitur ignis

Quam subito; lente desine, tutus eris. 650

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet altior ire:

Sed tamen haec brevis est, illa perennis aqua.

But with better surety is the fire gradually extinguished than on a sudden; leave off slowly, and you will be safe. A torrent is likely to flow deeper than an unbroken stream: but that is short-lived, this is continuous water.[259] (*Rem.* 649-52)

Here, a delay is encouraged through the safety of waiting for the torrent to subside. The threat is brought out through the connection to fire, where the narrator specifically associates the act of prolonging, or delaying, with being safe (650). In this, the *amator* is still vulnerable to the force of love as represented by the torrent, but can mitigate that threat through delay. This adds a slightly different temporal dimension to the image of the flooding river than the examples in the previous section; here the idea of a delay is essential to the safe process of letting go of love, and thus, essential to the text. Sharrock argues of Ovid's didactic poetry that the main narrative may be formed out of the 'digressions', while the instructional aspects of the text form a secondary narrative of a love affair.[260] As facilitating a digression, the delayed journey here becomes less of a threat and more an active part of the narrative. This then blurs the boundaries between continuation and ending, instructional narrative and digression, hinting at a more fluid process of poetic continuation within the eroto-didactic trilogy.

The delay and digression hypothetically caused by the flood and torrent then echoes this sense of a 'full', enriched narrative, which is emphasised through the spatiality of the torrent, and the lack of explicit flooding. The waters embody the excess of a torrent, yet do not appear to have flooded outside of their natural course. The use of

love; *Remedia*. 534 uses drinking from the middle of the stream as indulging in as many lovers as possible; *Remedia*. 617 describes how rivers can permeate even dry soil as an example of why the *amator* should create physical distance between them and their lover (discussed in chapter 3); *Remedia*. 649 compares torrents and perpetual rivers, describing the temporary nature of love (discussed in this chapter).

[259] Trans. Mozley (1929), adapted.

[260] Sharrock (2006).

altior (651) to describe the depth of the torrent indicates a temporary growth in the stage of the river, emphasising the excess and power within the image as representative of the love affair.

Yet the spatiality of the depth of the river suggests that it is still contained to a sort of channel, and has yet to have spread outwards in way which would represent a diversion or disruption to the narrative of the *Remedia*. Where the image of the flood provides a space for alternate movement within narrative, which then returns enriched, here there is not that same sense of creating an outwards space for alternate movement. Here, the torrent itself as higher suggests a sense of 'fullness' within the water itself, without having to create a diversion or space to explore that fullness. As a torrent, this sense of completeness is almost inevitable – as highlighted in 651-2, it is a temporary form of flow. The inherently temporary nature of the torrent, combined with the image of fullness and culmination in the waters suggests a sense of ending. This sense of ending fits with the place of the text itself at this point, where the *Remedia* appears as the final poem in Ovid's didactic set, and seeks to undo all the work of the previous *Ars*.[261]

Yet this is not a complete and final end to love overall, but rather to the individual love affair as part of a larger cyclic process of continuously falling in and out of love. The contrast of the perennial river and the temporary torrent (*brevis* 652) initially appears to highlight the inevitable ending of the love affair, yet the seasonal continuation of torrents reframes this as the continuation of love, in a cyclic process as with the seasons. The torrent is compared to the perpetual river, where *perpetuo* is between *flumine* and *torrens* (651), clearly modifying *flumine*, yet the close placement of the two forms of water draws out the connection between them. Whilst the torrent may be temporary, there is a clear connection between the continuous flow of the river, and the torrent as part of a continuous water cycle.

The combination of the two forms of rivers is made even more apparent when it is described as perennial water (*perennis aqua* 652): the brevity of the torrent is placed

[261] Kennedy (2000: 168) discusses the process of Ovidian mimesis in in the didactic poetry, where the 'effect' is becomes anterior to the 'cause'.

in the context of perennial water specifically, rather than the perpetual river.[262] The use of *aqua* here abstracts the idea of everlasting flow from the specificity of the *flumine perpetuo* outwards to the more general idea of the everlasting flow and movement of the water cycle. *Aqua* then draws the image of the temporary torrent into a larger cycle of renewal and continuation within the image of perennial waterflow. These contrasting states of water merged together shows continuity through overall poetic flow, aligned with Ovid's eroto-didactic poetic cycle.

This image of perennial waterflow also evokes the image of the wider literary canon as poetic flow, where the *Remedia*, as part of its trilogy, forms part of the repeating cycle of amatory poetry. This is made more apparent a little later in the *Remedia*, where the narrator explicitly warns the *amator* against reading other amatory poets, alongside his previous works, as they threaten to undo the work of the *Remedia*. In this, the poet lists Callimachus, Sappho, Anacreon, Tibullus, Gallus, and Propertius, before ending with an allusion to his own love poetry (757-66). This situates his own works within a larger literary timeline of amatory poetry and reiterates the idea of love as a cyclic process, where the continuous writing and reading of love poetry leads to its continuation.

Through this image, and the seasonal connection of the torrent of love in the *Remedia*, the image of the full torrent presents love as a cyclic process of renewal, where even in its ending, there is continuation. Holzberg discusses the lack of specific future in the *Remedia*, in contrast to other works which have indicated the next stage for the poet; [263] this lack of specific future does not mark the final ending of the poet, but rather aligns with this sense of cyclic renewal, where love poetry is a continuous process, with no clear ending. In this way, the threat to continuation hinted at in the potential danger of the torrent is mitigated through this connection to the wider seasonal cycle of renewal, where there will always be an *amator* in love, in the repeated cycle of love poetry. While the love affair is shown to end, the continuity of love poetry itself is not threatened, through the poetic river facilitating continuation for both the poet and his works.

[262] Perennis also evokes a connection with Ennius and the epic tradition (*Ennius ut noster cecinit, qui primus amoeno, detulit ex Helicone perenni fronde coronam,* Lucretius *de Rerum Natura* 1.117-8), see Miller (1983) for discussion of how the elegists interacted with Ennius.
[263] Holzberg, 2007: 49.

The mitigation of this threat to continuation through a poetic connection can then be contrasted with the threat to political continuation in *Fasti* 2, where torrents and river flooding are used to frame the defeat of the Fabii at the hands of the Veientes. This episode occurs halfway through the second book and is introduced with a reference to Tiber Island breaking the waters of the Tiber (*ubi discretas insula rumpit aquas* 194). The breaking waters frame this episode with the image of the spatial disruption, where the breaking of the waters reflects a temporary distortion of the waters of the river Tiber.

Yet this is not a large-scale disruption as a flood or torrent might be, but a momentary distortion within a continuous flow of water. The allusion to the river Tiber, rather than a direct reference by name, encourages the reader to make a link with the present recognisable behaviour of the river and its continuous presence in the landscape as a connection between the past of the *Fasti* and the present of Rome. This connection between the past and present, through the continuity of the river, is important for the competing aspects of continuous time within this episode. The breaking of the waters as a minor distortion in the overall linear flow of the river Tiber then frames this episode within that broader sense of continuity at the heart of Rome.

Framed by intermittent river disruption within overall continuity, the seasonal river behaviour in this episode stands out. The first of these is the river Cremera, described with a reference to its seasonality, and characterised as rapacious (*rapacem* 205). *Rapax* is often used of floods in poetry, and evokes a sense of grasping excess greed, suggesting potential danger as the river seeks to draw more into its waters.[264] Through this, the danger to the Fabii is heavily foreshadowed, both in the passage through the unlucky gate (201-4), and the setting of the camp on the river Cremera:

> *ut celeri passu Cremeram tetigere rapacem*
>
> *(turbidus hibernis ille fluebat aquis),*

[264] Lewis and Short (1881) ‘rapax’ as poetic flood; Achelous also refers to his flooding waters as *rapacibus* (*Metamorphoses* 8.551).

> When at quick pace they reached the rushing Cremera (it flowed turbid with winter rain)[265] (*F*. 2.205-6)

The emphasis on the Cremera's winter spate evokes the imagery of a fast, wild flow, which is then developed through *turbidus* (206), to represent a sense of disorder, and even thickness or fullness.[266] This, in connection with the seasonal aspect of the river's behaviour, evokes the potential for flooding, and suggests that the Cremera is near 'full', and ready to overflow, but has not quite flooded yet. This again adds to the sense of building the narrative up to a destructive peak here, where the narrative culminates at the point of the Fabii's defeat, which then occurs in the form of a flood. Harries also acknowledges the foreshadowing of danger here through the adjective *rapacem* (205), which he associates with flooding, yet does not build on this with reference to the wintry waters as the cause of the Cremera's violence.[267] The fullness of the river, and the association with winter, both point towards this as the pinnacle of the Fabii family, about to draw to an end. The Cremera as representing a point of culmination, with the potential to flood in the immediate future is also shown through the Cremera as the end destination of the Fabii's journey, suggests another point of finality.

Winter as the final season of the year is often associated with old age, and the end of life;[268] however, the connection to the river draws out a sense of continuity within that. The wintry waters which affect the flow of the river highlight the overall seasonal cycle, which reiterates the continuity of the landscape initially hinted at in the enduring image of the Tiber. The Tiber and Cremera as connections to the past and present of the *Fasti*, as well as the seasonal continuity through the motion from winter waters to spring floods contrasts with the suggestion of endings in the destructive behaviour of the river. This contrast colours this episode with the combination of cyclic endings and beginnings, mirroring the calendar form.

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[265] Trans. Frazer (1931).
[266] Lewis and Short (1881) 'turbidus' used of liquids.
[267] Harries, 1991: 154.
[268] Horace, *Odes.* 4.7 marks the seasonal cycle as a continuous cycle where mortality is inescapable, and winter represents death. In the exile poetry Ovid frequently refers to the wintery environment as a form of death, discussed further in chapter 3.

The turbid river behaviour builds to a flood in lines 219-24, where the Fabii's actions in being drawn into the Veientes' ambush is described as a flood:

> *ecce velut torrens undis pluvialibus auctus*
>
> *aut nive, quae Zephyro victa tepente fluit,* 220
>
> *per sata perque vias fertur nec, ut ante solebat,*
>
> *riparum clausas margine finit aquas:*
>
> *sic Fabii vallem latis discursibus implent,*
>
> *quodque vident, sternunt, nec metus alter inest.*
>
> Lo, as a torrent, swollen by rain or snow which the warm West Wind has melted, sweeps across the cornfields, across the roads, nor keeps its waters pent within the wonted limit of its banks, so the Fabii rushed here and there broadcast about the vale; all that they saw they felled; no other fear they knew. (*F.* 2.219-24)

The Fabii are here associated with the behaviour of a flood, as they spread out and cause destruction. This simile is particularly focused on the spatial disruption of both the flood and the Fabii, with an emphasis on the width (*latis* 223) of the men's spread across the fields mirroring the river which has specifically moved outside the enclosure of its banks (*riparum clausas margine finit aquas* 222), through the crops and roads (*per sata perque vias* 221). This marks the spatial disruption here as the flood waters move outside their boundaries, causing widespread destruction. The implied destruction of the crops and roads within the flooding image suggests a loss of agricultural potential, where the rogue spatial behaviour of the river disrupts the continuity of the ordered and controlled agricultural landscape. This disruption threatens the immediate future, where *sata* shows a threat to food produce, and the interruption to the roads *(vias)* suggests a potential loss of movement. This subtly suggests a threat to the future, caused by the spatially disruptive attack of the Fabii, where their pride in attacking widely without fear leads to their immediate vulnerability, and a threat to the continuation of their family.

Yet within that threat to the Fabii's continuation, there is a broader cycle of continuation through the seasonal connection. The river Cremera has been shown as a full winter torrent, on the cusp of flooding. This simile continues that image, through the release of the water outside the normal boundaries of the river (222). Also, it is the warm winds of Zephyrus which have melted the snow, causing the flood (*aut nive, quae Zephyro victa tepente fluit* 220). Here, the river flooding image is clearly placed within the season of spring, while the earlier image of the Cremera was associated with winter rains (*hibernis aquis* 206). The flooding simile describing the Fabii is the natural consequence of the previous static image of the river on the cusp of flooding. In this, the almost entire destruction of the family, and the widespread destruction of the landscape, is reframed within a larger, continuous seasonal cycle for the process of renewal and continuation even with that potential threat.

Cyclic continuity is also indicated in the description of the frequent victories of the Fabii against the Veientes as 'so again, so often they fall' (*sic iterum, sic saepe cadunt* 213). This 'telescopes' the events of the years previous to the Fabii's defeat into one line, which presents it as a static cycle of violence – the battles are continuously repeated, yet nothing changes.[269] Cyclic repetition can also be tied to cycles of poetry, through the allusions to the *Aeneid* within this flooding simile. Robinson highlights the connection to *Aeneid* 2.304-10 through *sternit* (*Aen*. 2.306) and *sternunt* (*F*. 2.224), as well as the river simile trespassing into the narrative in *Aeneid* 2.494-9. As Robinson notes, this allusion compares the Fabii with the Greeks, yet the ambush comes from the Veientes rather than the Fabii due to their pride.[270]

This link is furthered by the use of *fertur* (221) to describe the movement of the river through the crops. *Fertur* also occurs in the river flood simile in *Aeneid* 2.498, where Aeneas describes hearing the clamour of the Greek invasion as hearing the roar of a river bursting its banks and flooding through the fields. This suggests a further sense of cyclic continuation, where the image memorialised in the *Aeneid* is taken and reworked here within the *Fasti*. This once again blurs the boundaries between

[269] Harries (1991: 155) describes the telescoping of this event to one time and place, but does not really develop this.
[270] Robinson, 2011: 191.

genres within the flooding image, while the transition from one flood image to another, reformed and reused echoes the passing along of stories and motifs in a long literary tradition. In the context of this allusion, the repeated victories of the Fabii are bolstered by the Virgilian association with the Greeks, however, this is suddenly undercut, the cycle broken, and the situation changed.

In this episode, the potential risk to continuation is mitigated by this process of renewal indicated through the seasonal connection, and the wider connotations of flooding imagery. As already discussed, flooding has an important role in the overall renewal of the landscape, through depositing silt which rejuvenates the land. Whilst the destruction of the crops causes a threat to the immediate future, the wider role of flooding in the landscape suggests potential for future renewal. This process is suggested in the specific reference to the crops that the river moves through (*per sata perque vias fertur* 221), as it is the deposits left behind by river floods which make the land fertile enough to allow the growth of crops. In this way, what is left behind in the moment of destruction facilitates future continuation. This is echoed in the narrative of the Fabii, where the one child of the Fabii left behind becomes the continuation of the family, who later mitigates Hannibal's threat to Rome itself. This idea, in connection with agricultural imagery, is shown in the description of Fabius Maximus, the sole male survivor of the family, as the seed of the house (*Herculeae superessent semina gentis* 237). This draws out the agricultural metaphor in the river flood image, where the destruction caused by the flood, and the threat to continuation, results in 'sowing the seed' of the future.

This hope for Fabius Maximus in the future is then made explicit in the final lines of this section, where the poet draws attention to his name, and his most famous action of delaying (241-2). Ending on this note evokes the future threat to continuation faced by the Fabii, though in those circumstances, the continuation of Rome is threatened.[271] Fabius Maximus' delaying tactics represent this sense of continuation in a changed form, as his refusal to engage directly with the enemy marks a direct

[271] This, alongside the reference to the defeat at the river Allia in the *Remedia,* and the potential danger in the flooding of the Tiber when the twins Romulus and Remus are placed in it (*Fasti*. 2.389-90), hints at the vulnerability of Rome within its history, where there have been moments where its continuation has not been guaranteed. It is interesting to note that these occasions occur within the imagery of river flooding, which perhaps hints at Rome being equally susceptible to threats to its continuation, where it is not aligned with the larger sense of continuation through seasonal cycles that Ovid's poetry is.

contrast to the action of the Fabii which led to their almost complete destruction. Robinson notes this as a contrast between the elegiac Cunctator, and the 'epic' behaviour of his family;[272] here, we can again see a blurring between genres in the space of the flood, where here, there is movement from epic action to elegiac delay. This presents movement between genres as both a poetic and political pursuit, showing change through renewal, and blurring the boundaries between them as they frequently intrude and mingle with each other.

This movement and transformation characterises the continuation and future of Ovid's poetic time as facilitated and enriched by transformation and innovation, rather than repetitive cycles. In this way, the river flooding imagery used in this episode marks the process of renewal as a cyclic process which initially threatens continuation, through short term destruction. This short-term destruction is then reframed as a process of necessary transformation, in which the threat to continuation is worth the risk in order to 'sow the seeds' of the future. Through this, what is left behind becomes an important part of continuation through renewal, where each renewal transforms the old and lays the foundations for the future in a changed form. The particular cyclic nature of the *Fasti* as a poem around the calendar acutely lends itself to the idea of continuation and renewal, where the poet's own continuity is tied to both seasonal, yearly cycles, and the repetition of his own poetry through that larger poetic flow. In this way, the text itself becomes a seed for the future, left behind in order to mitigate the threat to continuation in destructive renewal. The importance of the text itself in facilitating continuation then becomes a potential 'life saver' in the environment of the exile poetry.

Forceful Flow

Where the previous sections have focused on room for movement within alternate space, where filling and flooding provide renewal and continuation through a seasonal connection, this section focuses on aggressive linear torrents, and a lack of flooding and seasonal connection in the exile poetry. The threat to continuation suggested by the flooding imagery of the *Remedia* and *Fasti* is made explicit in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the narrator becomes subject to the overwhelming flow of torrents, separated from their seasonal cycle. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.2 and 2.3,

[272] Robinson, 2011: 179.

rivers are categorised by their overwhelming qualities, such as the excess of the water building up to a flood, and the forceful flow of a torrent. These overwhelming qualities of river movement negate any sense of outwards spatial disruption, and instead reframe torrents as an aggressive linear force, which the narrator must endure.

This lack of alternate spatiality is also indicated in the lack of direct flooding imagery in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae*, where river similes are limited to the torrents and regular flow.[273] The lack of flooding imagery in connection with torrents separates the excess overwhelming flow of torrents from the seasonal cycle, suggesting an absence of cyclic time within these poems. This mirrors the poet's separation from Rome in exile, and the overall sense of frozen time presented in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae*.[274] This disconnect between the narrator and the cycles of the environment marks a threat to the poet's continuity, where the focus is on surviving in an unfamiliar and inopportunely static environment, rather than creating alternative space in a familiar genre.

Across *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.2 and 2.3, torrents are used as metaphors to describe an almost inescapable destructive force. In the first of these, the narrator compares his seeking aid from a hostile source to grasping at thorns in a watery environment:

> *Qui rapitur [praeceps torrenti fluminis unda]*
>
> *porrigit [ad] spinas duraque saxa manus,*
>
> One who is [swept away by a river in flood] stretches out his arms and grasps at thorns and hard rocks;[275] (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.2.33-4)

Due to the poor quality of the manuscript tradition here, it is unclear if the text refers to the waves of a torrent, or the waves of the sea. As this metaphor continues from an image of the poet's ship in the sea, Wheeler translates this as being dragged by the foaming waters of the sea. Alternatively, Housman amends this to suggest the waves of a torrent.[276] In the context of river and sea imagery in Ovid's wider corpus,

[273] This is taking flooding imagery as a direct reference to a river moving outside of its usual channel due to excess water, as Smith and Ward's definition in the introduction to this chapter.
[274] Discussion of frozen time in chapter 3.
[275] Trans. Wheeler (1924).
[276] Housman (1916: 143) 'if he finds thorns to clutch at, he must be drowning in a river'.

rapio is commonly used to refer to the dragging, tearing behaviour of rivers, particularly evocative of the river's current.[277] There is also a slippage between sea waters and river waters in both the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the imagery of a ship on tumultuous waters is often linked to the Styx, the underworld river.[278] In this context, and the subsequent similar torrent imagery in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3, I would be inclined to follow Housman's suggestion of *praeceps torrenti fluminis unda,* where the waves of a river torrent are the dragging force.

Taking this amendment, the dragging force of the torrent becomes a metaphor for the hard circumstances faced by the poet in exile, while the thorns and hard rocks (*spinas duraque saxa* 34) embody seeking aid from a potentially hostile source. Reaching out to thorns specifically also indicates seeking this aid from poetry, and a return to elegiac metre.[279] As the vehicle for seeking that aid, the poem itself, seeking help from Messalinus, reaches out to the thorns and becomes separate from the overwhelming force of the torrent. This separation presents the narrator and the poem as vulnerable to the overwhelming excess force of the torrent, in a change from the torrent and flooding motifs in the previous sections, suggesting a loss of alignment with the cycles of the environment. This therefore marks a transition where the force of the torrent no longer reflects poetry, and becomes an active force against it.

This transition reframes the torrent spatially, focusing on the overwhelming force of the torrent as a dragging force, which the narrator must endure. In previous examples, torrents have been connected with a seasonal cycle, either through an explicit seasonal connection to snowmelt and rain, or through a cycle of flooding. This seasonal cycle, particularly in connection with flooding, suggests a sense of wider continuation through the connection with natural time, which the poet's works have been aligned with. Here, the torrent appears to exist outside any reference to seasonal behaviour and is implicitly linked with the tumultuous waters of a stormy sea through the previous comparison to the poet and his works in exile (30). This separates the torrent from a larger seasonal cycle, as it instead appears as a sudden

[277] *rapit* for river behaviour in Ovid: *Ars Amatoria*. 2.177-82, *Epistulae ex Ponto*. 3.7.7-8.
[278] Slippage between sea and river waters through the image of the Styx is discussed further in chapter 5.
[279] There is a potential connection here to the thorny growth over the *lena*'s grave in Propertius 4.5.1. See Myers (1996: 7) for further discussion of the *lena* in elegiac poetry.

aggressive force, disconnected from any regular beginning and end as part of a cycle.

The lack of seasonality could also mimic the behaviour of torrents in the poet's environment of exile, where rainfall, not snowmelt, is the main source of water in stream flow.[280] In the previous *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.1, Jupiter is aligned with the cycles of nature, through rainfall which revitalises the fields:

> *Iuppiter utilibus quotiens iuvat imbribus agros,*
>
> *mixta tenax segeti crescere lappa solet.*
>
> *nos quoque frugiferum sentimus inutilis herba* 15
>
> *numen, et invita saepe iuvamur ope.*
>
> Whenever Jupiter floods the fields with helpful showers the tough burs are wont to grow mingled with the crops. I, too, useless weed though I am, feel the fructifying power, and am often benefited against his will. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.1.13-16)

In this, rain is the cause of the flow of water which revitalises the landscape, mirroring the environment of exile, in which rain is the cause of floods. Jupiter as the force behind revitalising water, linked with Augustus through a typological connection in the wider narrative economy of the exile poetry, shows the god-figure as in charge of future growth, rather than the poet's seasonal cycles of river behaviour in previous works. This separation from expected seasonal cycles presents both the environment, and the poet, as unaligned with that larger sense of cyclic natural time, and instead reframes it to be dependent upon the unpredictable whims of the imperial family. This disconnect threatens the continuity of the poet: where previous cycles of renewal through flooding have allowed transformation, and continuation in a changed form, here the aggressive force of the torrent, with no room for alternative movement, forces a focus on endurance, rather than renewal and innovation.

This aspect of enduring the overwhelming torrent as a threat to a sense of cyclic continuation is also shown through the aggressive linear motion of the waters here,

[280] Stanescu and Ungureanu (1997).

where the force of unidirectional flow leaves no space for alternative movements. The characterisation of the rushing waves of water which drag the narrator creates a sense of continued, repetitive forceful movement (*praeceps unda* 33), evocative of the repetitive waves of the river of time in the *Metamorphoses*.[281] Whilst that metaphor used waves as an image for constant movement and renewing transformation, here the waves are a constantly pushing force, which overwhelms the narrator.

The association of the linear torrent and the circumstances of the poet's exile in this metaphor connects this aggressive, linear, and anthropocentric sense of time, to imperial power in Rome. Elsewhere in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the poet has described altering their poetic course so as to not go against the flow, (*ergo mutetur scripti sententia nostri, ne totiens contra quam rapit amnis, eam* 3.7.7-8), further developing the image of the poet as in some way moving against a larger linear aggressive flow. Rather than the seasonal cyclic sense of natural time being aligned with the poet, and offering a claim to continuity within that, here the poet's continuity is threatened by the overwhelming force of the linear torrent.

The only potential reprieve from this aggressive linearity is the thorns and hard rocks, representing the potentially hostile reception of seeking aid and inspiration through poetry. Characterising the reception of poetry in this way emphasises the potential for pain in this survival, particularly indicated by the thorns (*spinas*). This evokes *Tristia* 5.12, where thorns are characteristic of an agriculturally unproductive land, which has not been renewed, which is then associated with the poet's inability to write:

> *fertilis, assiduo si non renovatur aratro,*
>
> *nil nisi cum spinis gramen habebit ager.*
>
> A fertile field, if it is not renewed by constant ploughing, will produce nothing but grass and thorns.[282] (*Tr.* 5.12.23-4)

In this image, the poet compares his unrefreshed mind to the field which can only produce thorns due to a lack of ploughing. This further disconnects the poet from the

[281] Discussed in chapter 1.
[282] Trans. Wheeler (1924).

renewing force, and instead places him as part of the uncultivated environment. The use of thorns in the torrent image develops the image from the *Tristia*, where the thorny environment was characteristic of an unrenewed landscape. Here, the poet's only hope of survival from the overwhelming flow is grasping those thorns. The lack of renewal exemplified by the thorny ground in the *Tristia* is brought through to this metaphor, where the extreme linearity of the torrent, separated from any seasonal cycle, does not offer renewal as torrents and floods have previously done in Ovid's works.[283]

This lack of renewal, and change, is also shown in the adjective used to describe the rocks, characteristic of the likely reception of Ovid's exile poetry. *Dura saxa* (34) emphasises the hardness of the rocks used as a lifeline, again associating seeking help through poetry with pain, but also drawing out the idea of hardness as a form of endurance.[284] *Dura* also has connotations of Ovid's past amatory elegy, where the *dura puella* is the hard girl who refuses the *amator*; here the patron/audience as the hard rocks also suggest they too might reject the narrator of this poem. This sense of rejection has a dual function though, in that it serves as the motivation for the writing of poetry. In this way, the audience reaction itself also provides the impetus to write, linking this further with the idea of survival and poetic continuation.

This endurance is reflective of the poet in exile, where continuity is threatened in the poet's post-transformed state in exile, and as such, survival rather than innovation is key. In this way, the hard rocks represent a way of enduring the overwhelming force of the linear torrent, which is aligned with the forces in the city which caused his exile. The poet is then stuck between two hard forces, yet the potential pain of the thorns at least provides some room for survival. This then clearly has a temporal dimension, where before continuity had been facilitated through renewal and a connection to natural time through the seasonal cycle of flooding, here endurance is a form of continuity through survival.

[283] This lack of renewal and change as tied to the image of thorns could also link back to the lack of change in Ovid returning to elegiac metre in his exile poetry, as associated with the thorny *lena* – see above.
[284] This is a key concept for chapter 3, where the *durus* of the frozen environment can be seen to reflect Ovid's poetry.

Aligning dominant forces in Rome with the force of a torrent as forces which must be endured but also motivate is continued in the next poem of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the poet compliments his friend on being able to avoid the torrent of vice within the city:

> *quo magis admiror, non, ut torrentibus undis,*
>
> *communis vitii te quoque labe trahi.*
>
> *diligitur nemo, nisi cui fortuna secunda est:*
>
> *quae, simul intonuit, proxima quaeque fugat.*
>
> *en ego, non paucis quondam munitus amicis,* 25
>
> *dum flavit velis aura secunda meis,*
>
> *ut fera nimboso tumuerunt aequora vento,*
>
> *in mediis lacera nave relinquor aquis;*
>
> So my admiration is the greater that you too are not carried away, as by a torrent, by the corruption of a common vice. There is love for none except him whom fortune favours; when once she thunders she puts all around to flight. Behold me! once supported by many friends—while a favouring breeze filled my sails now that the wild seas have been swelled by the stormy wind, I am abandoned on a shattered bark in the midst of the waters. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3.21-8)

Once again, the torrent is characterised as an overwhelming dragging (*trahi* 22) force, which must be endured. This emphasises its linearity, and the absence of alternative space within it. Yet even in the face of this overwhelming force, Maximus, the addressee of this poem, is able to endure the torrent, and resist it. Where the poet is able to withstand the force of the torrent through poetry in the previous poem, here, through association with Ovid's poetry, Maximus is apparently able to resist the force of the torrent. This again presents poetry as a form of resistance to a linear flow, in which poetry is an enduring force within this overwhelming flow. It is through the process of writing about the exilic environment that Ovid is able to withstand, while Maximus resists the torrent, continuing his friendship with the poet. This marks

the role of the recipient in Ovid's continued endurance, moving away from a connection with continuity through wider seasonal cycles, and instead focusing on survival in the present. This presents the poet as more dependent on others to facilitate his continuation, through reading his poetry, rather than the renewal and rewriting emphasised in Ovid's previous works.[285]

This lack of guaranteed renewal within the image of a floodless torrent is also reiterated through the lack of seasonal cycles, and continued slippage between rivers and sea, here between the waves of the torrent and spontaneous storms at sea. The extension of this metaphor into the image of the boat on the wild sea draws out the slippage between river and sea waters which occurs throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*;[286] this is further suggested through the use of *undis* to describe the waves of the pushing force of the torrent, where waves are simultaneously associated with both river waters and sea waters. This 'cross-contamination' of water is then continued into the wild waters of the storm buffeted sea (*fera aequora* 27), where the storm is representative of the bad fortune which causes the torrent of fickle friendship.[287] The amalgamation of sea and river further contributes to a loss of cycle, where instead of a seasonal, regular cycle, there are spontaneous storms at sea, and where there is a transition from river to sea, here there is no sense of transition, and rather, all water is the same all the time.

The lack of separation reflects a lack of process, and movement within that process, which is further reflected by the boat as in the middle of the unspecified waters (*mediis aquis* 28). Lying in the middle of the buffeted waters further shows a lack of movement, as the wrecked ship is unable to return to the beginning of its journey, nor reach the end.[288] Being 'stuck' in the middle is especially relevant to the poet's transformed state in exile, where there is a lack of renewal or even progression to memorial through death.[289] The loss of renewing cycles is a product of the

[285] Dependence is key in the exile poetry and is explored in more detail in chapter 4.
[286] Sea and river slippage occurs most explicitly in *Epistulae ex Ponto*. 4.10.45-60, which is discussed further in chapter 5.
[287] This sudden storm again could link back to the sudden, unpredictable whims of Augustus presented in the exile poetry, through the association with thunder, and therefore Jupiter, and as the cause of the poet's friends turning away.
[288] Ships are often used a metaphor for poetry, particularly in reference to epic. See Ingleheart (2006a) for more on subversive storm imagery in the *Tristia* particularly.
[289] Discussed in chapter 5, where the poet is stuck in between life and death, where the image is particularly dependent on the directionality of the river.

environment, where the unpredictable spontaneity of the sea storm and the torrent are linked through a lack of seasonal cycle, and the ambiguous amalgamation of waters, emphasising lack of movement and renewal. This shows a transition in the exile poetry from renewal and innovation to endurance and survival. This realigning of poetic priorities is reflected in the lack of movement of the ship, and the resistance of Maximus in this metaphor, where the torrent should provide an alternate space but instead now presents an overwhelming force to be endured.

The resistance to the torrent represented by both the thorns in the previous simile, and Maximus in the present one, connects the idea of poetry and its audience with an ability to endure the threat of being washed away. McGowan highlights how the 'abiding presence' of Ovid's poetic voice balances out the 'inexorable force of history that had him physically banned from Rome';[290] the opposition between the unrelenting force of history, tied to Augustus' political power, and Ovid's poetry is encapsulated in the image of resisting a torrent. The torrent, separate from its connection to natural time, represents a threat to Ovid's poetic continuation, where, as the poet is physically absent from Rome, there is potential for his memory to be lost as well.

This motif then has a temporal dimension, as resisting the torrent through poetry and continued friendship is a way of facilitating poetic continuity beyond that of Augustus' bounded temporal control. Where previous river floods have created alternate space, to be filled with reworked and renewed material, here the aggressive linearity of the torrent denies that room for deviation from the norm. However, as the flood is a renewing force through what is left behind, here, Ovid's poetry, given the chance to survive through his friends, becomes that potential source of continuity beyond death for the poet.

Conclusion

As one aspect of seasonal river behaviour, torrents and floods are a key feature of Ovid's poetic temporality. Usually, torrent imagery appears in conjunction with a flooding image, where the torrent marks issues of excess, which spill outside of a river's boundaries into a flood. The movement of torrents and floods outside a contained linear flow creates a sense of spatial disruption in excess, which delays a

[290] McGowan, 2009: 204.

linear narrative. The excess inherent in a ‘full’ torrent creates a sense of filling, or enriching material, which disrupts the narrative. The outwards movement of a flood then creates an alternate space in which to explore this excess enriching material. Through the spatial disruption of flooding, boundaries are blurred, and material transformed, mimicking the process of flooding and renewal within the landscape. This then links back to a larger seasonal connection, where the cycle of torrents and floods is shown to be a cyclic occurrence in spring, drawing the excess material into a wider cycle of continuation, where the poet’s continuity is aligned with the environment.

In the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the poet’s continuity as aligned with the water cycle is threatened by a disconnect with natural cycles, and a realigning of torrent imagery with dominant forces in Rome. In this, torrents are separated from flooding imagery, reframing them as an aggressive linear flow with no relief in the outwards movement of a flood. That the torrents are not able to enter the alternative space required for transformation and renewal reflects the exile poetry as presented as a static state, or an ending for the poet.

This sense of ending, and therefore threat to the continuity of the poet, is further emphasised in the disconnect between torrents and the seasons, separating the poet and his poetry from continuity aligned with the cycles of the natural environment. This loss of cyclic behaviour is shown through the reframing of torrents as caused by rainfall, and the frequent slippage between river waters and sea waters. Blurring flow and destination reflects a loss of movement, while the emphasis on storms and rainfall denies the reassuring predictably of the seasonal river cycle, and instead places renewal and continuation as subject to spontaneous storms. As renewal now lies outside the power of the poet, the focus for continuation in poetry turns to a sense of almost static endurance, resistance in the face of overwhelmingly aggressive linear flow. As part of this, Ovid’s poetry, separated from a larger cycle and from Rome, becomes a motif of enduring continuation through its ability to connect to Rome, dependent upon his audience.

This sense of endurance and lack of movement is drawn out further in the next seasonality section, which focuses on the lack of flow in seasonal river behaviour experienced less often: drying up and freezing.

Chapter 3. Redefining Seasonality: Dust and Ice

The movement of the river is key to its association with the continuous flow of time. In the previous chapter, I discussed how an excess of flow, river flooding, can be part of a seasonal cycle, which creates a temporary spatial and temporal disruption, before it returns to a more obviously linear flow. It is in these moments of disruption that Ovid's authorial strategies for modelling poetic time come to the surface. This chapter continues the seasonal focus but explores the less frequently experienced aspects of seasonal river behaviour: drought, and freezing, both of which lead to a lack of motion within the river.

Both drying up and freezing cause it to appear as if the river has stopped flowing, either through heat and lack of water, or through a surface coating of ice.[291] This lack of movement undermines continuity and dynamism as qualities of rivers, and initially threatens the viability of the environment. Threatening the viability of the environment, alongside the loss of movement and change within the river waters orients concerns towards the future, particularly when the water might return. In this way, the lack of movement caused by rivers drying up or freezing creates a space for the consideration of future continuation, which, through the seasonal connection, is also linked with renewal.

However, in the ostensible absence of moving waters this renewal becomes more of a complete ending and new beginning, through the stop and start nature of the waters. These new endings and beginnings in the image of intermittent rivers highlight moments of rupture, particularly in *Amores* 3.6, where ending of one flow of water creates space for another. However, in the absence of moving waters there is also the danger of stagnancy, as suggested by the continuous unending anger of the poet in the *Ibis*.

This contrast between stagnancy and movement is also shown through the icy Hister in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the coating of ice initially presents an absence of movement. However, through the seasonal connection and representation of alternate movement across the frozen river, the poet is able to

[291] Ashton (2007): Large rivers rarely completely freeze, as a coating of ice on the surface of the water acts as an insulator for the water below. Smaller streams comprised largely of ground flow may freeze and form layers of ice.

indicate continued poetic production, in an alternate form. In the exile poetry, this continued poetic production is particularly connected to incorporating new territories into the Roman literary sphere, mirroring Augustus' claim to have brought the Hister under Roman power. Through using the absence of moving waters to consider endings and beginnings, as part of a larger seasonal cycle, the poet can show the creation of new literary timelines, and ensure his own poetic continuity.

The first section of this chapter, *Dust*, deals with seasonal drought: the lack of movement and sense of ending shown through the drying up of a river's flow. Temporary or seasonally dependent rivers are an essential part of the landscape, and support various ecosystems both when they are flowing and when they are not.[292] The Italian climate and river cycle taken as a whole leads to dry periods in the summer, where river flow can be exceedingly low, and streams dry up completely.[293]

Arguably, the title of this section is a slight misnomer, since Italian rivers largely have rocky rather than muddy beds; however intermittent rivers are often associated with dry cracked earth and the absence of river water in ancient writers.[294] In *Amores* 3.6, the dried earth of an intermittent river is specifically highlighted, in connection with the dry season (*aut premis arentem pulverulentus humum* 96). This focus on the dry, dusty earth emphasises the absence of water in the earth, and loss of movement within that. Lack of water caused a threat to the populace of Rome, either directly, or through effects on agriculture.[295] Through the emphasis on dry, dusty earth, within the context of this threat to land productivity, intermittent rivers are framed by their absence and ending.

The river in *Amores* 3.6 is persistently characterised through strategies of negation, defined against rivers behaving in opposite ways, and its excess of water when it

[292] Datry, et al., 2016. Presently, the treatment of intermittent rivers under international law can vary, with many not getting the legal protection of perennial rivers, even though they make up some of the most common fluvial systems in the world (Acuña, et al., 2014).
[293] Skoulikidis, et al., 2017: 6.
[294] Ovid, *Remedia.* 617-9: hidden love permeates like water into dry soil; Pliny, *Natural History*. 12.104: shallow lake drying up in summer; Virgil, *Georgics.* 4.427-8: rivers baked down to mud.
[295] Of course, as discussed in the previous chapter, too much water can also be a threat to the populace. For discussion of the tensions between water and the city of Rome, see Larmour and Spencer (2007: 19). Interestingly Dio describes Tiberius appointing a permanent board to look after the river Tiber, trying to maintain a consistent flow regardless of the season; 'so that it should neither overflow in winter nor fail in summer, but should maintain as even a flow as possible all the time' (Dio.57.14.7), suggesting fears for the continuous flow of the river.

should be lacking water. Through these strategies of negation, the torrent is framed by the sense of absence suggested in the dry earth of intermittent rivers, and shown to be lacking. This absence causes a threat to the continuation of the *amator*'s love affair, and suggests the imminent ending of the *Amores*, which is further shown through the connection between impotence and suppressed flow in the following *Amores* 3.7. Through this theme of loss of productivity and ending, as well as comparison to rivers associated with other genres, the poet shows the imminent completion of the *Amores*, and suggests continuity through a change in subject.

Simultaneously coloured by a sense of ending and renewal, the catalogue of rivers in Pythagoras' speech further interacts with the image of intermittent rivers. In this, rivers settling to dry beds (*aut exsiccata resident* 15.272) form part of a list of opposite endings and new beginnings, as part of Pythagoras' broader discourse on change and renewal. As part of the final book of the *Metamorphoses*, and within the metapoetic justification of transformation, this presentation of intermittent rivers more clearly shows how the absence and ending they represent fits into a larger cycle of change and renewal.

In contrast, the absence of water in the *Ibis* 107-140 is not tied to a dusty dry ground and is rather framed as rivers actively denying their flow to Ibis. In denying their waters to only Ibis, overall flow is maintained without the implication of unproductive dusty beds. This lack of dust rather reframes the circumstances of exile as a potentially productive state, even if that productivity is the poet's continuous, unending anger. Through this absence, and loss of clear seasons, time in the *Ibis* is shown to be unending, but stagnant and unchanging. Comparison between *Amores* 3.6, *Metamorphoses* 15, and the *Ibis* draws out competing ideas of continuation: through stability and stagnancy, or through change and renewal.

The second section of this chapter, *Ice*, develops the image of absent water flow as a threat to continuity, and focuses on frequent images of frozen rivers in the exile poetry. Seasonal freezing is not necessarily the absence of water, but rather its changed form. Lucretius acknowledges this when describing parts of the water cycle, singling out the relationship between ice and rivers:

et vis magna geli, magnum duramen aquarum, 530

et mora quae fluvios passim refrenat aventis,

and the great power of ice, that great hardener of the waters, that obstacle which everywhere curbs back the eager rivers[296] (*DRN*. 6.530-1)

Here, rivers are characterised as universally restrained by ice, where the ice is in some way holding back, or curbing the flow of the river. This suggests a decreased flow, which makes it more difficult for rivers to continue their flow – yet not impossible. This restrained movement in the icy river waters is emphasised in Ovid's poetry; initially, the apparently static waters of a frozen river create a sense of being separated from the progression of time, and as such, lacking a past and future.[297] The suggested loss of future in the frozen environment is inherently in contrast to the fertile, productive lands of Italy, and the canalised and tamed flow of water through aqueducts, further emphasising the contrast of the exilic environment to that of Rome.[298]

Yet the natural reality of river freezing adds some underlying movement to the ostensibly static frozen rivers. In rivers with low flow velocity, a solid continuous ice sheet can form over the river, yet the whole river itself does not freeze. The flow of the water itself is still maintained. In rivers with a stronger flow, like the Danube, ice formation is less of a continuous sheet, and forms from slush and ice floes impacting together – making it less consistent and more of a haphazard covering.[299] Within this, there is still movement in the frozen river. As solid ice provides a hard surface, the river can be crossed. As flooding rivers moved outwards to facilitate continuation in a new direction in the previous chapter, the movement of tribes across the frozen Hister mirrors this movement in a new direction, marking the changed theme of Ovid's poetry in exile.

[296] Trans. Rouse (1924).
[297] Mihajlović (2018) discusses the idea of the Hister representing a border between people without history and the 'Roman present'. Grebe (2010) argues Ovid is outside of life and time, although as I argue in chapter 5, this sense of death is not as final/lacking in future as it may initially appear.
[298] *Tristia*. 3.12.22 describes swimming in the Virgo aqueduct in spring, in contrast to the frozen water in exile – discussed below. Whilst superficially presented as a continuous and controllable flow, aqueducts were imperfect, and often subject to leaking; Frontinus also discusses how water could be illegally siphoned off from the aqueducts, disrupting the flow of water (*de Aquis* 7).
[299] Morales-Marín, et al. (2019).

This section discusses the tension between surface static and loss of continuity, with the principle of underlying movement. First, I explore the frozen Hister in *Tristia* 3.10, focusing on the river as a way of marking both static and passing time. I then discuss 3.10 with 3.12, and the broad sense of continued seasonal time across the collection. Building on the idea of seasonal movement as continuity I show how tribal movement across the frozen Hister in *Tristia* 5.10 starts a new literary timeline in the exilic environment, even in the poet's physical absence from Rome, through continuation in an alternate form.

Dust

This section focuses on *Amores* 3.6, the river catalogue in lines 270-80 of Pythagoras' speech of *Metamorphoses* 15*,* and *Ibis* 107-112*.* It details how intermittent rivers as an aspect of seasonality highlight a sense of absence and ending, which may allow future movement in another poetic direction. This aspect of new beginnings inherent in the drying up of rivers is then brought out further through Pythagoras' speech in the *Metamorphoses*. In contrast, *Ibis* 107-140 uses the threat of an absence of water to show unending anger, but in the stagnant state of exile, in the poet's physical absence from Rome.

Perhaps an unusual choice to start with, the overwhelming torrent in *Amores* 3.6 also represents rivers drying up – it is explicitly presented as an intermittent river.[300] In this poem, the *amator* wants the seasonal torrent to return to its usual low flow, remembering when he was able to cross it:

> *parvus eras, memini, nec te transire refugi,*
>
> *summaque vix talos contigit unda meos.*
>
> Small wert thou, I remember, nor did I fear to cross, and thy highest water scarce touched my ankles.[301] (*Am.* 3.6.5-6)

Throughout the poem, the narrator refers to the *exemplum* of rivers drying up, and the torrent itself. Through the example of famous poetic rivers, the torrent should learn the appropriate way to behave, and so become one of the memorialised rivers

[300] *Amores.* 3.6.96, the river is said to run in winter, and dry up in summer, discussed further later in this section.
[301] Trans. Showerman (1914).

in poetry.[302] By asking the torrent to change and introducing examples of rivers changing their behaviour, the poet highlights the redefinition of seasonal river behaviour, in connection with continuity through memorialisation in poetry, in order to bring out how changing form can lead to continuation.

This aspect of rivers drying up is first demonstrated in the *exemplum* of the river Enipeus, who reduced his flow for his love of Tyro:

> *siccus ut amplecti Salmonida posset Enipeus,*
>
> *cedere iussit aquam; iussa recessit aqua.*
>
> Enipeus, to dry himself for the arms of Salmoneus' child, bade his waters retire; the waters, so bid, retired. (*Am*. 3.6.43-4)

This story is also briefly mentioned by Propertius (1.13, 3.19), and at *Metamorphoses* 6.115-6, as part of Arachne's tapestry. With the exception of 3.19, which focuses on Tyro's extreme desire for the river god, the other versions of this story attribute her rape to Poseidon, in Enipeus' form.[303] The version in *Amores* 3.6 is unique in specifically referring to the Enipeus as withdrawing his waters in order to be with Tyro, in contrast to Propertius 1.13, which refers to the all-consuming nature of the rape as a mingling with the river water.[304] In Propertius' version, the Enipeus maintains its flow; in the *Amores* it holds back its waves, specifically becoming dry (*siccus* 43). In this absence of water and changed form, the river god is able to be with Tyro. Here, the *amator* manipulates the myth in order to highlight the importance of the river drying up in the *exemplum*, as well as highlighting the power of the river god to be able to withdraw its flow.

As Goldschmidt argues, epic poetry is a primary source of *exempla* for Roman readers, in which *exempla* are used to transmit memory, and readers encouraged to learn from the *exempla* of great men in epic.[305] In *Amores* 3.6, the use of *exempla*

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[302] The irony, of course, is that this unnamed river that does not obey the commands of the narrator is still immortalised through Ovid's poetry.
[303] Propertius, 1.13.21-22, 3.19.13-14; Horace, *Odes*. 3.7.23; Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. 6.115-6 Poseidon shown as Enipeus in Arachne's tapestry. Tyro loved Enipeus the river god, yet he did not reciprocate. Poseidon then disguised himself as Enipeus in order to rape Tyro.
[304] Propertius 1.13.21 describes the river 'mingling' (*mixtus*) with Tyro (Richardson, 1977: 182) – this aspect of mingling is important for the idea of blurring boundaries essential to this chapter, and is discussed further below.
[305] Goldschmidt, 2014: 150, with reference to Keith (2000).

echoes this process of memory transmission, as well as learning. The *amator* uses river *exempla* from other literary works in order to try and change the torrent's behaviour, asking it to dry up and act out of season. The use of *exempla* to school the epic torrent then flips the narrative of learning from epic, as the elegiac lover schools the epic torrent on how to behave, transferring new, elegiac memory to the literary timeline.

However, the torrent fails to learn from the river *exempla,* and instead acts in accordance with the cycles of the natural environment. Jones argues that this poem humorously shows the *amator* trying to tell the river how to behave properly, instead of acting against its own nature by flooding and not helping the *amator*.[306] Whilst there is an element of humour here, I would argue that this disjunct between the *exempla* and the environment functions in two ways: it highlights the agency of the natural environment, in that it does not respond to the needs of the *amator;* [307] it also presents this as a moment of 'exemplary rupture', where the torrent does not attempt to mirror the behaviour of the river *exempla*.

As discussed in the introduction, moments of 'exemplary rupture' deviate from the norm and form new lines of continuity.[308] The river *exempla* come from the epic genre, and form part of the torrential flow which physically stops the elegiac love affair from continuing. However, the river refusing to hold back its waters like the epic *exempla* causes a rupture, which creates a new line of continuity. This new line of continuity is shown through the reworking of the myth to focus on the drying up of Enipeus. This reworking starts an alternate poetic timeline, within the *exempla* connected to the aspect of drying up the narrator desires, in order to continue his elegiac love affair.[309] As the *amator* is using the *exempla* from previous poets to convince the 'real' river to change its behaviour, the poet overtly acknowledges the blending of different types of poetry, and their senses of time. The flipped process of

[306] Jones, 2005: 90.
[307] 'real' – of course not necessarily a real, literal river that Ovid happened to stumble upon, but rather one that reflects that aspect of the real environment in contrast to the poetic *exempla*.
[308] Biesinger (2019), discussed in the introduction.
[309] Another ironic aspect of this poem is the contrast between this desire to continue, and the delaying strategies of elegiac poetry discussed by Gardner (2013); see discussion of this and contrast to epic in this poem in the previous chapter.

learning then further blurs the elements of conflicting genre at play here, whilst also highlighting new lines of poetic continuity in Ovid's future works.

The idea of contrast between genres is also inherent in the elegiac metre itself, as Morgan summarises:

> 'there is also a strong tendency for hexameter and pentameter to respond to each other, and both these phenomena reinforce the impression that the elegiac couplet is a self-enclosed unit, discouraging, without of course preventing, the construction of more extended periods. By contrast, 'epic narrative is free of these fetters', and consequently lends itself readily to longer sense units.'[310]

The contrast between hexameter and pentameter together within an elegiac couplet shows this sense of blending, whilst Morgan's main point about the length of lines of meaning in epic narrative reflects upon the nature of the torrent and the hypothetical perennial river here in *Amores* 3.6. The 'unfettered' epic torrent runs through the elegiac narrative, introducing the long form story of Anio and Ilia (and also making this one of the longest poems in the *Amores*).

In contrast, the elegiac lover is explicitly limited in his movement so that his attempted speed is pointless. This limited movement suggests restriction in elegiac metre, and progression to another bank as tied to production in an alternate 'art':

> *Si tamen hic standum est, si non datur artibus ullis*
>
> *Ulterior nostro ripa premenda pedi?*
>
> if I yet must stand here, if by no art the farther bank is given to my foot to tread? (*Am*. 3.6.11-12)

The contrast between the excessive movement of the anti-Callimachean torrent, and the limited movement of the elegiac lover mirrors the contrast between epic and elegiac metre.[311] The implication is that the elegiac metre of the *amator* is stuck on one side of the bank by his limited movement, limited by the absence of another hypothetical art - by another art (*artibus ullis* 11) he may be able to cross the river.

[310] Morgan, 2010: 347 (cf. Plautnauer, 1951: 27-8).
[311] Suter, 1989: 18-19.

The suggestion that another art may be able to facilitate movement further implies the imminent end of the poet's elegiac foray, and a transition into a genre which may allow more movement.

This potential transition into a different genre furthers *Amores* 3.1, which details a struggle between the competing Muses of Elegy and Tragedy, ending with the agreement to produce one more work of elegy, while a greater work presses the poet.[312] In this way, the intrusion of the epic torrent reiterates the pressure of writing in another genre, which would threaten the end of the poet's love elegy. This threat indicates time pressure for Ovid's elegies, which is out of the poet's control.

However, through the connection to seasonality, the anti-Callimachean torrent's continuity is also called into question through its temporary status, and the status of epic undermined. Now it is the torrent which is lacking, rather than the elegiac metre. The *amator* mocks the river for being seasonal, specifically drawing attention to its lack of flow in summer:

> *fontis habes instar pluviamque nivesque solutas,*
>
> *quas tibi divitias pigra ministrat hiemps;*
>
> *aut lutulentus agis brumali tempore cursus,* 95
>
> *aut premis arentem pulverulentus humum.*
>
> *quis te tum potuit sitiens haurire viator?*
>
> *quis dixit grata voce "perennis eas"?*
>
> In place of source thou hast only the rain and the melted snows, riches that sluggish winter serves to thee; either thou runnest a muddy course in the brumal time, or hast a dried and dusty bed. What thirsty farer has e'er been able then to drink of thee? Who in grateful tone has said of thee: "Mayst thou flow on for ever?" (*Am*. 3.6.93-8)

Here, this river is shown to be impermanent, and lacking a clear source such as a spring (93). This lack of fountain is then contrasted with the actual source, the

[312] *Amores* 3.1 suggests the imminent end of Ovid's love poetry, as a great work is closing in on him (*a tergo grandius urguet opus!* 3.1.7).

seasonal rains and snowmelts (93-4). The impermanence of lacking a source is further linked with the passage of time through the seasons, as the poet describes its muddy course in winter (95), or its lack of flow in summer which leads to dry, dusty, unproductive ground (96). Ovid's emphasis on the seasonal behaviour of the river, which is either too muddy or not flowing at all, and with its lack of spring meaning that no one can drink from it (97) could reflect a loss of inspiration, as there is no 'pure fountain' to drink from and receive inspiration to write poetry. This absence of water in the dry, dusty ground, and lack of fountain of inspiration suggest that even within the pressure to create epic, it may not be consistently productive.

The short-lived nature of the torrent, as tied to a lack of future, is further emphasised by the mocking of the *amator,* who asks: 'Who has said with grateful voice, 'may you flow forever!'? (*quis dixit grata voce "perennis easeas"?* 98). The use of *perennis* in the context of the torrent connotes continuous, perennial rivers, yet the adjective also evokes poetry itself as a continuous monument through a potential allusion to the final poem of Horace's third book of *Odes*.[313] Horace begins his final *Ode* with the declaration that he has finished a monument more lasting than bronze (*Exegi monumentum aere perennius* 3.30.1), which time will be unable to destroy (3.30.4-5). Horace characterises his poetry as a monument, allowing him a life beyond death and continued growth through the memory of his poetry.

In the context of *Amores* 3.6, mocking the epic torrent for not flowing continuously draws attention to the idea of a lack of continuity, and with the Horatian connection, continuity through poetry. As the torrent is temporary, there is an implication that it will not be able to facilitate the same kind of poetic afterlife as a continual river – yet as the torrent is tied to epic poetry, the kind of poetry elevated in poetic canon and literary education, there is an element of humour in the twisting of genres. Through this allusion, poetic afterlife is connected to the continuous flow of a river – not the temporary flow of a torrent.

[313] Horace *Odes* 1-3 were written and disseminated around 26BCE, while the first edition of *Amores* was circulated around 16BCE – this connection is made more likely by the self admitted later revisions of the *Amores.*

Lacking inspiration as tied to flow is continued in *Amores* 3.7, which deals with the *amator*'s sexual impotence in the face of a new sexual partner.[314] The *amator* in this poem has the opposite problem to that faced by the *amator* in 3.6, where the excess of water delays the elegiac love affair. Now, the *amator* is with his lover yet is plagued by drought, with his impotence linked to a fountain whose water has dried up due to a curse:

> *deficiunt laesi carmine fontis aquae,*
>
> and when a well is damned by charms, its water dries up; (*Am.* 3.7.32)

Here the lack of water is caused by magic, or more specifically, *carmine* (31). This is slightly different from the seasonal loss of flow in the previous poem, but continues the thematic link between a lack of fountain and a lack of inspiration. As the *amator* cannot perform, the poet also appears to have lost inspiration for his love poetry, in competition with the seasonal torrential flow of epic poetry. Yet, through the mirrored loss of water from a fountain, both *carmen* and the seasons are aligned as forces which can manipulate the flow of water. This again links seasonality with poetry, where the seasons can give power over poetic flow and continuity. The paradoxical idea of lacking inspiration as causing flow, characterised by the anti-Callimachean torrent, challenges the audience to rethink their initial ideas of poetry, in an Alexandrian frame of varied and challenging poetry.[315]

This challenging paradox lays the foundations for thinking about hybridity in the poetic form. The position of this poem as being between the extremes of summer and winter, as representing a torrent of spring, adds an element of hybridity, alongside the clashing images of dry and wet. The in-between aspect of this poem is further emphasised by its description as a muddy course in the winter solstice (*brumali*). Rather than referring to winter (*hiems*), the muddy nature of the torrent is specifically linked to the turning point between seasons and the start of marking a new year.[316] Through this, the torrent reflects a turning point to a new line of poetic

[314] Lateiner argues that in *Amores* 2.19, 'physical sex is subordinate to social interplay', leading to the rejection of simple sexual satisfaction (188), in an attempt to pursue the more difficult things in life and poetry.
[315] Lateiner, 1978: 188.
[316] Varro (*de Lingua Latina* 6.8) puts forward that *bruma* is so-called because it is the shortest day which marks a turning point in the season. He further writes that measuring from *bruma* to *bruma*

continuity in Ovid's career; the elegiac narrative is threatened in the short term by drought, but through a seasonal connection gains an element of continuity.

The temporal connection with the seasons is made even more clear in the contrasting description of the river's past and future state. The dried-up bed (*aut premis arentem pulverulentus humum* 96), backshadows the river, and the *amator*'s memory. In contrast, the end of the poem looks to the river's potential future, hoping it will be dry once again, through the changed behaviour of the seasons (*sint rapidi soles siccaque semper hiemps!* 106). Through the seasonal behaviour of the river here, the past and future are brought together, where although the *amator* wishes for the river to never flow, there is a sense that through seasonal cycles, this event could be repeated. In this way, the poet can play with the temporality of the seasons, blending both past and future to create his own poetic timeline through movement in alternate genres.[317]

Drought as a turning point and new line of continuity is further connected with renewal in *Metamorphoses* 15. In this, the figure of Pythagoras discusses his theories of the world, and describes the renewing of nature. This speech covers the differing flows of rivers, and a catalogue of rivers with changing behaviours:

hic fontes natura novos emisit, at illic
clausit, et aut imis commota tremoribus orbis
flumina prosiliunt, aut exsiccata residunt.
sic ubi terreno Lycus est epotus hiatu,
exsistit procul hinc alioque renascitur ore;
sic modo conbibitur, tecto modo gurgite lapsus
redditur Argolicis ingens Erasinus in arvis,
et Mysum capitisque sui ripaeque prioris

forms the year. In this way, *bruma* has strong temporal connotations for the marking of time, alongside that of the seasonal connection.

[317] This sense of blending past and future is discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

paenituisse ferunt, alia nunc ire Caicum;

nec non Sicanias volvens Amenanus harenas

nunc fluit, interdum suppressis fontibus aret. 280

Here Nature sends forth fresh fountains, there seals them up; and rivers, stirred by some inward quakings of the earth, leap forth or dry up and sink out of sight. So, when Lycus is swallowed up by the yawning earth, he emerges far away and springs forth again with different appearance. So Erasinus is now engulfed and now, gliding along in a hidden stream, reappears as a lordly river in the Argolic fields. And they say that the Mysus, ashamed of his source and former banks, now flows in another region as Caïcus. The Amenanus now flows full over the Sicilian sands, and at times, its sources quenched, is dry.[318] (*Met.* 15.270-80)

This section shows the use of the changed behaviours of rivers to mark the passage of time, and the continually renewing and changing cycles of nature. Here, the arrival of new fountains brings the closure of some (270), while some rivers rise, and others dry up (271-2).[319] In this catalogue with flowing rivers, the unproductivity of the dry rivers is framed as part of a wider cycle. By placing the items in this catalogue in opposition, there is a sense that with the springing of new fountains comes the necessary endings of others. The process of endings and beginnings denies the static time one might associate with the drying up of a river, and instead frames this behaviour as part of a larger cycle of renewal through transition.

In this speech, changing river behaviour is a gradual transition across large periods of time rather than seasonal transition – made more apparent in the previous lines where Pythagoras describes the process of plains transforming into valleys through flooding (265). Here, the focus is how deep time continues, and the landscape changes as part of that. Little argues that in this speech, nature is not a *deus ex machina*, but rather that it shows the law of nature working through the slow process

[318] Trans. Miller (1916).
[319] There may also be allusions to Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*. 5.261-4, where the consistency of the water cycle, as facilitated by new fountains, leads to perennially flowing rivers.

of time.[320] This slow process of time is important for highlighting the aspect of deep, cyclic time to which seasonal river behaviour belongs, in contrast to the shorter, linear time of humanity. Rather than the exaggerated seasonal behaviour of the river in *Amores* 3.6, here the process of rivers changing the environment through time is slowed, to create this sense of change over time that continued seasonal behaviour such as flooding brings. This links back to the broader presentation of cyclic time through nature, in comparison to a linear, teleological frame. By aligning poetic power with the changing behaviour of rivers, the poet can lay a claim to the eternal temporality of natural cycles, particularly in terms of consistent renewal, with ending one work and beginning another.

This extended sense of natural time is exaggerated in the *Ibis*, through further seasonal manipulation. The curse poem mirrors the lost Callimachean *Ibis*, and is explicitly concerned with time from the very beginning.[321] *Tempus ad hoc* (1) introduces the poem as 'up until this time', covering the poet's life and works.[322] Within this temporal frame, the poet then looks to the future, declaring that he will be Ibis' enemy until all the seasons blur into one – using an *adynaton* to express the likeliness of that happening.[323]

> *Et ver autumno, brumae miscebitur aestas,* 37
>
> *Atque eadem regio vesper et ortus erit;* 38
>
> spring shall mingle with autumn, summer with midwinter, and the same region be both evening and sunrise;[324] (*Ib*. 37-8).[325]

In this, the poet suggests that the autumn, spring, and summer will mix together (*miscebitur* 37). As previously touched upon, *misceo* is an important word for both

[320] Little, 1970: 358.
[321] See La Penna (1956: XXXII-LV) and Williams (1992: 173-4) for discussion of *Ibis* and Callimachean precedent.
[322] This mirrors the beginning of the *Fasti*, which starts with *tempora*. For more on these connections, and the conflicting temporal frame of the poem and its supposed publication date, see Hinds (1999: 62).
[323] *Adynata* are more commonly used for river behaviour, so it is interesting to see one here explicitly linked to seasons. River *adynata*, especially in the exile poetry, are discussed in more depth in the next chapter.
[324] Trans. Mozley (1929).
[325] See La Penna (1956: 11) for textual issues in this section, although lines 37-8 are well accepted.

river behaviour, and its subsequent temporal connotations.[326] Here, the seasons mingling together is simultaneously associated with a potential future sense of static time, where through the blurring of seasons there is a lack of the clear passage of time; it also then evokes the past, through the echo of the continued use of *misceo* in Ovid's works to describe this kind of amatory mingling.[327] This blurring of time finally relates to the poet's present condition in exile, where in both *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, this blurring of the seasons and static time is brought out through the impression of eternal winter.[328]

This process of mingling is also complicated further through the blurring of annual time, in referring specifically to the winter solstice blurring with summer (*brumae miscebitur aestas* 37). In this part of the *Ibis*, the specificity of *bruma* mingled with the seasons, rather than winter (*hiems*) builds on the abstract sense of time created by the seasons mingling, and emphasises the loss of markers of anthropocentric time – calendar years. *Tristia* 5.10.7-8 summarises this, through the image of the summer and winter solstices having no effect on the length of days, mirroring the blurring of time and the endless season presented here.

The combination of the past and future adds to the distorted temporality here in the *Ibis*, where the past, present, and future occur simultaneously, to place Ovid's poetry outside any clear sense of ordered time. Hinds argues that the *Ibis* is a corruption of Ovidian time in Tomis, and that, as part of this, the poet distances Ibis from the temporal schemes which organize the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*.[329] Whilst Ibis is distanced from the temporal schemes of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, the target of the poem is aligned with the static time of the poet in exile. This distances both Ibis and the poet from the claims to continuity in the renewing temporality of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, and threatens both their futures.[330]

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[326] *Misceo* as river behaviour: Virgil, *Georgics*. 1.7-9, *Fasti.* 1403-4, *Metamorphoses.* 12.320-22 – mixing river water with wine, *Tristia.* 3.10.27-8, *Epistulae ex Ponto*. 2.10.25-6, 4.10.45-6* – rivers mixing together. *Discussed further in chapter 5. *Misceo* as rivers mingling with lovers: *Metamorphoses*. 5.638 Achelous and Arethusa, Propertius, 1.13.20-21

[327] Mingling as a way of looking to poetic future discussed further in chapter 5. Mingling as lovers in previous works see above footnote.

[328] This is discussed more in the second part of this chapter.

[329] Hinds, 1999: 67.

[330] Renewing cyclic temporality of the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* previously discussed in chapter 2.

The threat to the future is further emphasised through the narrator's wish for the land to hold back its produce, and rivers to deny their waters to Ibis. Here, the image of the river *adynaton* appears, yet instead of maintaining behaviour until rivers stop flowing, the narrator actively wishes for the rivers to stop flowing, or deny their waters:

> *Terra tibi fruges, amnis tibi deneget undas,*
>
> *Deneget afflatus ventus et aura suos.*
>
> *Nec tibi sol calidus, nec sit tibi lucida Phoebe,*
>
> *Destituant oculos sidera clara tuos.* 110
>
> *Nec se Vulcanus nec se tibi praebeat aer,*
>
> *Nec tibi det tellus nec tibi pontus iter.*
>
> May the earth refuse thee her fruits and the river his waters, may wind and breeze deny their breath. May the sun not be warm for thee, nor Phoebe bright, may the clear stars fail thy vision. May neither Vulcan nor the air lend thee their aid, nor earth nor sea afford thee any path. (*Ib*. 107-112)

The rivers denying their waves echoes the position of exile: Ibis will be without water – both in the punishment of exile, and in the lack of water suggested by the environment in the exile poetry.[331] This lack of flow here is not representative of the environment at large, but rather aimed at Ibis specifically, through the repeated address (*tibi* 107, 109, 111, 112). Here, the narrator wishes for the continuity of the environment to not be available to Ibis; essentially that Ibis be disconnected from the land and water. The contrast between the productive environment and the denial of water to Ibis frames this as a direct threat to Ibis' existence, in his separation from

[331] Videau-Delibes (1991: 114-116) discusses the presentation of a lack of water in the *Tristia*, and argues for this as showing the poet's exiled status, without fire and water (*interdictio aquae et ignis).* Whilst I agree there is a sense of lacking flowing water, this does not necessarily lead to a complete lack of water for the exile poet, but rather that water is in a changed form. This is discussed further throughout the second part of this chapter.

the natural environment and its life-giving qualities (fruit and water).[332] Through this direct address, natural time continues for all except Ibis – creating alternate timelines of stagnancy and continuation.

Throughout these examples, images of drought are undermined by a connection with continued movement particularly associated with seasonal cycles, and the continuation of natural time. The initial loss of motion suggested by drought can indicate a temporary ending of one thing, but overall continuity through new beginnings and a connection to natural time. This differs in the exile poetry, where the loss of motion in the frozen river is tied to an extended winter.

Ice

Throughout the exile poetry, the Hister is described as frozen, alongside the rest of the natural environment, in contrast to other writers of the time which focus on it recently being bound or subdued.[333] In Ovid's exile poetry, the emphasis on the frozen environment creates a sense of eternal winter, which, combined with the lack of growth, presents an image of static, frozen time. The freezing river initially gives the impression of time being 'stuck' in the wintery season through the lack of movement. Yet, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter, there are still elements of movement within that icy form, suggested in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

The geographical and politico-ideological distance from Rome experienced by the poet in exile is also linked with a temporal distance, which leads to a sense of separation from the time of Rome. Mihajlović recognises the Hister as symbolic of the boundary between 'Roman time', which is presented as the superior *humanitas* of the present, and those external to Rome presented as retrogressive.[334] The frozen environment is often described in the exile poetry as *durus*, which becomes an

[332] Drought or drying up of rivers is also often associated with the future, through *adynata*, or through connection to prophecy as in Virgil, *Georgics.* 4.427, where it is in the space of the *cava flumina siccis* that Aristaeus is able to capture Proteus, and force him to give an oracle.
[333] Semantics for the Hister outside of Ovid tend to revolve around being bound or subdued, less often specifically frozen: Virgil's *Georgics* describes the bound Hister (*conjurato Histro* 2.497), frozen environment of the Scythians (3.349-81), with the wild Hister with yellow sand (*et torquens flaventis Hister harenas* 3.351), and unnamed frozen river (*Concrescunt subitae currenti in flumine crustae* 360), Horace's *Odes* 4.14 and 15 include the Hister in a list of subdued areas but do not include any description of the environment. Later, Lucan's *Pharsalia* describes the Hister as binding (*adliget Ister* 2.50), and describes the frozen Hister holding ships (5.437-8).
[334] Mihajlović, 2018: 766.

important point of contrast for Ovid's poetic flexibility through renewal and change, which has already been shown in the redefinition of river behaviour in the previous section.[335] On the liminal space of these two competing timelines, the frozen Hister is a permeable boundary and represents the blurred temporal space in between both senses of time. In this blurred space the poet is simultaneously able to access parts of Roman time, yet is also outside of it creating a sense of disconnection. It is in this initial absence of time that the poet is able to redefine natural seasonal river behaviour, playing with previous poetic precedents, and creating a new lines of poetic time which lays a claim to continuation even in absence from Rome.

This section begins by analysing the conflict between static and continuous time in *Tristia* 3.10, through the marking of time by the freezing of the Hister. The winters of the frozen Hister in *Tristia* 3.10 are discussed with respect to the seasonal connection across *Tristia* 3.8, 3.10, and 3.12, which reveals temporal movement across the collection, even in the absence of 'Roman time'. From this movement, I then explore how the movement of tribes across the frozen Hister in 3.10, 3.12, and 5.10 shows continuation in an alternate form, through incorporation of the environment of exile.

The contrast between static and moving time is clearly shown in the description of the frozen river in *Tristia* 3.10, where there is a tension between the persona's perception of the environment as static, and the acknowledgement of time passing through the seasons. Towards the beginning of the poem, the passing of time through seasons is described through the behaviour of the river Hister:

dum tamen aura tepet, medio defendimur Histro:

ille suis liquidus bella repellit aquis.

at cum tristis hiems squalentia protulit ora,

terraque marmoreo est candida facta gelu, 10

nec patitur Boreas et nix habitare sub Arcto,

[335] See Davisson (1982) and Helzle (1988), for discussion of the nature of *duritia* in Ovid's exile poetry.

tum patet has gentes axe tremente premi.

nix iacet, et iactam ne sol pluviaeque resolvant,

indurat Boreas perpetuamque facit.

Yet while the warm breezes blow we are defended by the interposing Hister; with the flood of his waters he repels wars. But when grim winter has thrust forth his squalid face, and the earth is marble-white with frost, and Boreas and the snow prohibit dwelling beneath the Bear, then 'tis clear that these tribes are hard pressed by the shivering pole. The snow lies continuously, and once fallen, neither sun nor rains may melt it, for Boreas hardens and renders it eternal.[336] (*Tr.* 3.10.7-14)

The seasonal freezing of the Hister becomes a marker of time passing in the exilic environment, in the contrast between the protection of the liquid Hister, and the permeable barrier of the frozen river. The specificity of the liquid waters (*liquidus aquis* 8), is contrasted with the frozen environment, made hard by Boreas (*indurat Boreas perpetuamque facit* 14). The frozen environment is made eternal through its hard nature, where the liquid river, and the barrier which comes with that, is fleeting in contrast. Starting the poem with reference to the liquid river, in the context of the frozen environment, highlights the seasonal passing of time, and the contrast of states within that. The specificity of liquid waters as a barrier highlights the idea of flexibility and movement as an important aspect of defence, in contrast with the idea of rigidity implied by *dura*. [337]

Yet there is also a temporal connotation to the rigidity of the waters and environment, where the hardened snow is eternal (*perpetuum* 14), in contrast to the seemingly fleeting liquid river. This once again draws out the sense of created static, eternal winter, through the process of Boreas hardening the snow. The conflict between the fleeting protection of the liquid river, and the eternal vulnerability of the frozen landscape highlights the conflicting temporal and stylistic choices for the poet in

[336] Trans. Wheeler (1924).

[337] The link between the warmer environment and thawed waters leading to a weakness in the Sarmatians is also shown in Tacitus' *Histories* 1.79, where the melting of snow and warmth hinders the Sarmatian men and leads to an easy victory for Roman forces.

exile. The appearance of these conflicting states places the poet in the middle, laying the foundations for blurring the boundaries between movement and static.

This conflict of states and styles is drawn out more in the extended description of the frozen Hister, and the vulnerabilities it causes. When it is warm, the Hister flows, and as such forms a barrier against outside tribes. However, when the Hister is frozen, the barrier fails, and the land becomes vulnerable to incursion from outside tribes:

> *ipse, papyrifero qui non angustior amne*
>
> *miscetur vasto multa per ora freto,*
>
> *caeruleos ventis latices durantibus, Hister*
>
> *congelat et tectis in mare serpit aquis;* 30
>
> *quaque rates ierant, pedibus nunc itur, et undas*
>
> *frigore concretas ungula pulsat equi;*
>
> *perque novos pontes, subter labentibus undis,*
>
> *ducunt Sarmatici barbara plaustra boves.*
>
> The very Hister, not narrower than the papyrus-bearing river, mingling with the vast deep through many mouths, freezes as the winds stiffen his dark flood, and winds its way into the sea with covered waters. Where ships had gone before now men go on foot and the waters congealed with cold feel the hoof-beat of the horse. Across the new bridge, above the gliding current, are drawn by Sarmatian oxen the carts of the barbarians. (*Tr.* 3.10.27-34)

The movement of the Sarmatici across the Hister flips the image of the river as a barrier, and instead it becomes a bridge (32). Batty states that this indicates migration was hard to control in this region, while Pieper suggests this emphasises the weakness of Augustus' control over this area.[338] Whilst there is an element of this as a criticism of Roman control in the area, I would add that this focus on

[338] Batty, 2007: 73; Pieper, 2016: 418.

movement over the frozen river, and the dual representation of barrier and bridge has important temporal connotations for Ovid's poetic time.

In this dual image, Ovid mirrors the language of the *Res Gestae*, in which Campbell argues the Hister simultaneously marks a dividing line between Rome and potentially hostile peoples, whilst also serving as a resource from which further wars of conquest were launched.[339] Like in the *Res Gestae*, here the Hister as bridge and barrier encapsulates two conflicting states: when the river stops moving, its primary characteristic, it facilitates movement of the poetic material in an alternate way. In both, even though there is a loss of movement in the river waters, lack of flow actually facilitates movement through innovation. Through this image of duality, the poet is able to mirror Augustus' language of division and conquest to highlight his own poetic power.

This poetic power mirroring imperial power is also shown through the incorporation of tribes into Ovid's poetry. Here, the movement of the tribes across the frozen river and their subsequent actions form the subject of the rest of the poem; the frozen river as a bridge facilitates the continuation of the poem, through allowing the incorporation of new material with new peoples.[340] As Augustus introduces new territories and peoples to Roman power through 'subduing' the river, so does Ovid introduce new environments through his poetry. The new bridges of the Hister allow the movement of tribes inwards, from the north bank to the south bank, in a mirror image of the journey from south to north the poet made at the beginning of the exile poetry.

This implication of continued movement beneath the surface of the frozen environment is then literalised in the continued flow of the river underneath the ice and carts crossing it. In this, the frozen river is framed as forming new bridges (*noves pontes* 33) which allows carts across. This is immediately followed by the description of the continued flow of the waves underneath (*subter labentibus undis* 33). McGowan suggests that Ovid's exile poetry revolves around the idea of 'poetic

[339] *Res Gestae* 30.1-2, Campbell, 2012: 188.
[340] It is important to note this image briefly appears in Herodotus 4.28, Strabo 7.3.18, Virgil, *Georgics* 3.360-2, before detailed descriptions in Ovid, *Tristia* 3.10, 3.12, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.2, 4.7, which are discussed in this section.

presence, in place of physical absence';[341] here, this presence/absence dichotomy is shown through the liminal space of the river as a permeable boundary, and the physical movement of the river waters underneath the ice. Continued movement, as linked to the movement of the tribes, shows this sense of poetic presence, even in spatial absence. Presenting the frozen river in this nuanced way allows this dichotomy to permeate the poem, highlighting the tension between the passage of time on the outskirts of the Roman sphere of influence, and Rome itself.

The continued passage of time even in the environment of exile is further shown in the seasonal transition between *Tristia* 3.8, 3.10, and 3.12. Evans notes this seasonal transition, but does not reflect on the temporal connotations of this in the natural environment, rather marking it as 'a calendar year of sufferings'.[342] In *Tristia* 3.8, the poet describes himself in autumn (3.8.29), while 3.12 is about spring in Rome. In *Tristia* 3.10, the liquid river is contrasted with the frozen environment of gloomy winter (*tristis hiems* 9), which undermines the warmer seasons in favour of presenting a lasting frozen environment.[343] Gloomy winter characterises *Tristia* 3.10, and creates a sense of transition between seasons in *Tristia* 3.8, 10, and 12, from autumn, to winter, to spring.[344] Comparing 3.10 to just 3.12, there is a sense that time is only passing in Rome, and that those on the outskirts are stuck in a static time of perpetual winter. However, with the inclusion of 3.8 there is a sense that there is this passage of time, but that it is somehow out of synchronisation, or incompatible with the present of Rome.[345]

Overall, this presents a sense of time passing seasonally in the complete book of *Tristia* 3, even if it does not appear to move in individual poems. Through this link to the continual movement of natural time even in the space of exile, there is a sense of long term continuity for the poet within the continuous production of poetry. Once

[341] McGowan, 2009: 3.
[342] Evans, 1975: 8.
[343] The similarity of *Tristia* and *tristis* could also be a reference to the broader collection as a whole. In this, as gloomy winter, *tristis hiems*, brings the cold wind which hardens the ice and makes it eternal, so too can the poet lay a claim to this sense of eternity, through solidifying his work in the collection of *Tristia*.
[344] This ordered transition from autumn to winter to spring could also link back to the mingled seasons of *Ibis* 37-8, where here in *Tristia* 3 there is a more ordered sense of time, in contrast to the disrupted, oppositional seasonality wished upon Ibis.
[345] Incompatibility with the present of Rome, and the vulnerability caused by this loss is discussed further in chapter 4.

again, the sense of static time created by the frozen river is contrasted with the passing of time indicated by the manipulated seasonality of the poet.

These contrasting senses of time as linked to the poet's own time are emphasised even further through the intertextual allusions of *tristis hiems*. This specific collocation of 'gloomy' and 'winter' occurs in *Georgics* 4.135, in the context of a Corycian farmer who is able to make the most of the land through careful use of the seasons.[346] *Tristis hiems* is then picked up in the *Ars Amatoria* (1.409), where the poet advises that not only farmers and sailors should take note of the seasons, but also lovers, particularly when celebrating their partner's birthdays.[347] Noticing the passing of time through the seasons flows from the farmer in the *Georgics*, through to the ideal lover in the *Ars*. This highlights the idea of noting the seasons, where seasonal time passes in both the bucolic and epic genres, and before appearing in Ovid's own didactic elegy. This draws out the idea of seasonal time and genre as linked, which is then redefined to focus on the needs of Ovid's own poetic time in the *Ars*. In this way, this phrase signifies layers of differing poetic time as signalled by the seasons. The appearance of *tristis hiems* in *Tristia* 3.10 adds another layer to the changing of seasonal time, where the exile poetry is initially characterised by the frozen time of winter, yet through paying attention to the seasons, the temporal manipulation which characterises this winter of the exile poetry is drawn out.[348]

Layering adaptations of poetic time is also suggested in the comparison between the Nile and the Hister, in the introduction of the seasonally frozen river (27-30). Here, the Hister is compared in size to the unnamed Nile, before its description as frozen (*congelat* 30). Without naming the Nile, the poet describes it as papyrus bearing (*papyrifero* 27) and flowing through many mouths (*multa per ora* 28). *Papyrifero* appears purely Ovidian from our extant sources, and is elsewhere only used once,

[346] Virgil, *Georgics*. 4.127-148. Interestingly, the gloomy winter here is explicitly linked to the stopping of a river's current through ice (*glacie cursus frenaret aquarum* 146), showing rivers freezing to be a recognised aspect of seasonal change outside of Ovid's reworking. The Corycian gardener himself is the subject of much discussion, see Clay (1981) for an overview. Outside of the *Georgics*, the specific collocation of *tristis hiems* only occurs in Ovid's works: *Ars Amatoria* 1.409, and *Ibis* 201.
[347] *Ars Amatoria*. 1.400ff. begins with *tempora*, highlighting a key theme of this section as time, especially linked to the seasons, as well as religious festivals. This could also then link to the *Fasti*, which starts with *tempora*, and covers the seasons and religious festivals. If so, this creates another link of continuity through the reworking of seasonality, as well as characterising the continuous tension of the anthropocentric calendar as dependent on natural, seasonal time.
[348] *Tristis hiems* also occurs in *Ibis*. 201, but this appears to be less closely linked to the specificity of generic time, and rather to cold wind facilitating hailstorms.

again to describe the Nile (*Met.* 15.753) as part of a lengthy list of territories added to the empire by Caesar.[349] Also in this list is Pontus, but no Hister. Through the repetition of the Ovidian *papyrifero*, there could be a link between the Nile named in the *Metamorphoses* list, and the unnamed Nile in comparison with the Hister here. In this connection, the Hister is as large as the Nile, whilst both represent the edge of Roman rule.[350] Through this, the Hister and the Nile are constructed as equal perhaps also for poetic material. As in *Metamorphoses* 15, Caesar conquered the Nile and brought it into Roman territory, so does the poet bring the Hister into Roman territory through his characterisation of the landscape.

The emphasis on papyrus could also connote the materiality of writing.[351] Through the act of writing, the poet can rewrite history. Where in the *Metamorphoses*, Briton, Egypt, Numidia, Libya and Pontus are presented as conquered, and untroubled, *Tristia* 3.10 focuses on the continued threat to Rome's borders.[352] The Nile is both representative of the high epic genre timeline, and also the more recent military victories of the Caesars. In comparison, the Hister is a new subject of poetry, also representative of recent military victories, but through Ovid's exile poetry, elevated and redefined.[353] Here, Ovid's poetry can redefine the Tomitan environment, and by extension, Caesar's victories.[354] He can also rewrite his own works, further adding to the sense of continuation through change within this adapted seasonality. In this way, the two rivers can represent two different timelines, with multiple layers of meaning. [355]

Redefininition of exilic time poetic time in comparison with 'Roman time' is also highlighted in the conflict between past and present springs in *Tristia* 3.12. The poem begins with the arrival of spring, before turning to a description of spring in Rome,

[349] Whilst the association between papyrus and the Nile is not wholly Ovidian, both Hill (2000: 226 n.753-4) and Luck (1977: 212 n.27) agree the specific adjective *papyrifero* is only in Ovid.
[350] See Horace, *Odes*. 3.3.45-48 as straits of Gibraltar, located in Thrace, and the Nile as distant shores of Roman rule.
[351] See Catullus, 35.2 for a nice example of this, where the poet addresses the papyrus the poem is written on.
[352] *Metamorphoses* 15.773-57, territories described as *domuisse*.
[353] The temporal distance between the Nile and Hister in poetry is discussed further in chapter 4. The redefinition of the Hister, and Tomis is also shown in *Tristia* 3.9, where Tomis becomes Medea's family home; this further cements the environment into the literary tradition.
[354] See Pieper (2016) for more discussion of how Ovid's presentation of the Tomitan environment undermines Augustus.
[355] Competition between the Nile and the Hister also occurs in *Epistulae ex Ponto.* 4.10.57-8, and is discussed further in chapter 5.

and then by contrast, spring in Tomis and the arrival of sailors from the unfrozen sea. Although the poet laments being separate from Rome, spring arrives in both regions, and time is seemingly synchronised again. After describing the blooming of the natural environment in Rome, the poet turns to spring activities such as festivals, playing sports, and bathing in the Virgo aqueduct, emphasising the present nature of spring through *iam* (5) and the repetition of *nunc* (19-21). This is then contrasted with the arrival of spring in Tomis, where once again the frozen Hister serves to mark the seasons, although in this instance, it is its melting which marks the arrival of spring in Tomis:

> *at mihi sentitur nix verno sole soluta,*
>
> *quaeque lacu durae non fodiantur aquae:*
>
> *nec mare concrescit glacie, nec, ut ante, per Histrum*
>
> *stridula Sauromates plaustra bubulcus agit.* 30
>
> *incipient aliquae tamen huc adnare carinae,*
>
> *hospitaque in Ponti litore puppis erit.*
>
> But mine it is to feel the snow melted by the spring sun and water which is not dug all hard from the pool. The sea, too, is no longer solid with ice, nor as before does the Sauromatian herdsman drive his creaking wagon across the Hister. Some ships will begin to voyage even as far as here, and soon there will be a friendly bark on Pontus' shore. (*Tr*. 3.12.27-30)

Here, the melting of the ice allows the Hister to flow again, reinstating its position as a boundary for the northern tribes (29-30), yet now allowing movement from the sea into Tomis. This rewrites the image of the previous poem 3.10, and as such, seemingly reinstates the temporal boundary between the Roman present, and the apparently retrogressive exterior territories, with Ovid on the boundary.

Yet this reference to the unfrozen river focuses on the recent past, and the near future, in the place of clear markers of the present. In this, the poet focuses on describing the past in present tense *sentitur* (27), *fodiantur* (28), *concrescit* (29), *agit*

(30), which is then negated through *nec*, rather than describing these events strictly in the past, or focusing on the present as the section describing spring in Rome does, *venit* (6), *vernat* (8), as well as continued use of temporal markers such as *iam* (5), *nunc* (20). This use of negation frames the spring of Tomis in terms of lacking winter, echoing the strategy of negation used against the torrent in *Amores* 3.6.

In *Amores* 3.6, this strategy of negation led to a sense of rupture, which I would argue is also suggested here. In contrast to the spring of Rome, which is characterised by spatial markers of Rome, architecture and festivals, spring in Tomis is very much characterised by new journeys. In showing how the spring in Tomis is not similar to a Roman spring, a rupture is caused, creating space for a new line of continuity. Pandey argues that the use of negation, alongside an 'emphasis on nature's lack of artifice', makes the foreign landscape 'vividly present' for a Roman audience.[356] In contrasting the artifice of Rome with the nature of Tomis, Pandey's sense of vivid presence is built upon a foundation of the absence of Rome. Bringing the two together through comparison again shows the poet incorporating this new landscape into the Roman poetic sphere, mirroring the Augustan narrative of control and incorporation.

This mirroring of Augustan narratives is also apparent in the movement of ships which evokes Venus' association with spring in *Fasti* 4:

> *vere monet curvas materna per aequora puppes*
>
> *ire nec hibernas iam timuisse minas.*
>
> in spring she bids the curved ships fare across her natal seas and fear no more the threats of winter.[357] (*F.* 4.131-2)

Here, spring as a protective element against winter enabling the movement of ships mirrors *Tristia* 3.12. However the association of Venus with spring in the *Fasti* also links the process of spring renewal with the foundation of Rome, through the extended description of Venus' links with the Trojans and the Julian clan (*Fasti* 4.119-124). This extended description explicitly makes the connection between Venus and the foundations of Rome, and the processes of growth, renewal, and

[356] Pandey, 2018: 218-9.
[357] Trans. Frazer (1931).

protection in spring. Drawing these connections through to *Tristia* 3.12, and the mirrored movement of ships here also evokes this sense of renewed foundations, where the renewal of movement to Pontus re-enables the movement of Ovid's poetry to Rome. As in *Tristia* 3.10, where the Nile and Hister were placed as equal poetic subjects, through the link to spring in *Fasti* 4, both Rome and Tomis are renewed by the spring, and as such, there is hope for the poet's new line of continuity here.

This continuity is shown at the point the herdsman is no longer able to cross the unfrozen river, where the temporal frame then moves towards looking to the future. Now that the Hister has unfrozen, ships will be able to sail to Pontus – described in the future tense, *incipient* (27), *erit* (30). Claassen suggests that through poetry, the poet is able to evoke past and future as present time stands still;[358] this evocation of past and future in a static present can be conceptualised by the river here, although the sense of present time is less standing still, and more standing in between, as the river marks the liminal temporal space occupied by the exile, between old and new timelines.

Here the unfreezing of the river is clearly the turning point between the two temporal frames, where the loss of movement over the river by the herdsman facilitates the movement of other outside forces, by ship.[359] With this changed form of movement comes a returning connection to Rome, made clear through the poet's desire to hear another speak Greek or Latin (39). Here, with the river as the representative liminal space in between both timelines, the present of Rome is brought together with the time of the exilic environment. The changing state of the Hister signals the competing elements of both senses of time.

The loss of temporal boundaries and changing sense of time is also present in the changing state of the river, where even in the past tense, the connection between recently melted snow (27) and the renewed movement of waters in the lake (28) creates a sense of process from melting snow to moving waters.[360] Here, the use of *soluta* (27) as loosened, but also set free, creates this sense of unorganised movement, in contrast to the hard contained waters of the lake (*durae aquae* 28).

[358] Claassen, 2008: 182.
[359] This idea of a turning point for different types of movement between seasons also echoes the use of *bruma* in the first section of this chapter, as a seasonal marker relecting a turning point in the year.
[360] See chapter 2 for connections between melting snow and seasonal floods.

The loose physicality of the waters is tied to the loss of clear temporal boundaries, as the mixed state of the water transitions between allowing temporal connections from the north, back to the south and Rome. This again flips the idea introduced in *Tristia* 3.10, where the movement of the Hister is a clear barrier to the movement of peoples, and the icy waters facilitate movement. Here, the melting of the snow leads to movement, which is then compounded by the reference to sailors moving up the river Hister – simultaneously contained and flowing.[361]

Spring as new movement also resituates the poet in the literary timeline, as it evokes the beginning of Horace's spring poem, in which sharp winter loosens its grip as spring appears (*solvitur acris hiems* 1.4). Corbeill argues that within *Odes* 1.4, 'the cyclical working of the seasons forms a contrast with the linear progression – and subsequent termination – of human life'.[362] Through this potential allusion to death and life *Odes* 1.4, there is also the potential for a lack of continuity, even in the seasonal renewal of spring. Once again, the poet is in between both senses of time, where his humanity is characterised by vulnerability, and a potential loss of continuity of exile. However, his poetry, associated with natural time and seasonal river cycles, may yet continue with renewed movement. Through the concept of melting, and loosening of waters, there is a process of transition from past to potential futures, which is linked to both the environment of the poet, a transition from Rome to Tomis, but also a sense of continuation through a transition of poetic material – from the poet's earlier works to the new type of poetry produced in exile.[363]

The blurring of temporal frames, with both static and movement is made explicit in the comparison of time in *Tristia* 5.10. From the opening line, the poem is concerned with time. The poet begins by describing how they have spent three years in Pontus, measured by the freezing of the Hister:

> *Vt sumus in Ponto, ter frigore constitit Hister,*
>
> *facta est Euxini dura ter unda maris.*

[361] This movement through the sea is in contrast to the lack of alternate movement in the torrent imagery of Ovid's exile poetry, discussed in the previous chapter.
[362] Corbeill, 1994: 91.
[363] The link between the state of exile and the guaranteed production of poetry is discussed further in chapter 5.

At mihi iam uideor patria procul esse tot annis,

Dardana quot Graio Troia sub hoste fuit.

Stare putes, adeo procedunt tempora tarde, 5

et peragit lentis passibus annus iter.

Nec mihi solstitium quicquam de noctibus aufert,

efficit angustos nec mihi bruma dies.

Scilicet in nobis rerum natura nouata est,

cumque meis curis omnia longa facit. 10

An peragunt solitos communia tempora motus,

stantque magis uitae tempora dura meae?

Since I have been by the Pontus' shore, thrice has Hister halted with the cold, thrice has the water of the Euxine sea grown hard. Yet already I seem to have been absent from my country as many years1 as Dardanian Troy was besieged by the Grecian foe. One would think that time stood still, so slowly does it move, and the year completes its journey with lagging pace. For me the solstice lessens not the nights, and winter shortens not the days. In my case surely nature has been made anew and she makes all things as tedious as my own sorrows. Or does time in general run its wonted course, and is it only for my life that time stands cruelly still?[364] (*Tr*. 5.10.1-12)

Here, it is specifically this aspect of freezing that allows the poet to count the passing years, in contrast to any calendar, political, or religious events. The poet focuses on the specifics of the seasonal cycle, where the Hister freezing happens as a yearly occurrence, rather than as a permanent state. This immediately draws attention to the passing of time, even in the face of a frozen environment. The specificity of the Hister and the sea freezing three times, *ter* (1) is introduced in the first line, again

[364] Trans. Wheeler (1924).

contradicting any absence of time the poet describes in line 12. In this way, it is clear how river behaviour is used to signify the passing of time, even in a frozen state.

Pieper argues that using ice to mark the passing of time undermines the Augustan calendar, and that a loss of time in this way reflects cultural instability.[365] He further suggests that this loss of time shows the failure of Romanisation in Tomis and the newly conquered territories of Rome in general. However, I am reluctant to wholly agree with the idea that marking the passage of time by seasonal behaviour reflects cultural instability, considering that the Julian calendar was reformed in order to align more with seasonal behaviour, showing the close alignment between the two in Roman thought.[366] As such, I am not so sure that the loss of calendar time is necessarily cultural instability, but rather part of Ovid's distinctive poetic time, tied to natural time through the seasons.

The poem focuses on the contrast between two times – shown through the temporal signifiers of *ut* (1), here used in the sense of since, and now (*iam* 3), showing the contrast between different temporal phrases that will characterise this poem.[367] This contrast between past and present is further highlighted through the first lines' attention to the specific number of years spent in exile, which is then contrasted with an abstract sense of time in both the connection to Troy (4) and the insignificance of the seasonal solstices (7-8).

The specificity then of both the named Hister and Euxine sea freezing as a marker of time passing, even with a lack of explicit movement, is then contrasted with the overblown temporality of the comparison between the poet and the Greek siege of Troy. In this, the poet associates geographical distance with temporal distance, suggesting that they are distant (*procul* 3) in both time and space, and aligning their time in exile with the length of the Trojan war (4). In this way, the poet can associate his works, and his place alongside the frozen Hister, with the highly mythologised position of Troy - as the siege of Troy is remembered through artistic works, so too will Ovid's depiction of his exilic landscape. Framing his time in exile within the timeframe of the siege at Troy, and the cause of Aeneas' journey to found Rome

[365] Pieper (2016: 418).
[366] See Rüpke (2017: 51) for more detailed discussion of calendar reform in the early principate.
[367] Luck (1977: 315 n.1) suggests *ut* as equivalent to *ex quo tempore.*

also mirrors the framing of historical time on the Fasti Capitolini discussed in the introduction, where the calendar was reformed to date according to the foundation of Rome.[368] By measuring time from the time spent in siege at Troy, there is a subtle suggestion that as time in Rome can be measured by literary-historical events, so too can Ovid's exile time.

Connecting the siege at Troy to Ovid's exile time also contributes to a sense of extended time, from mythical events to the present. This extended time frame is also shown through the blurring of time in the description of the summer and winter solstices in lines 7-8, where the poet describes his lack of time through another depiction of contrasts. In this, the summer solstice does not shorten the nights, nor does the winter solstice shorten the days. As discussed previously, *bruma* also emphasises this blurred boundary, as the solstice as a moment on the point of change between seasons. This creates an overall impression of not necessarily static time, but unmarked natural time. The blurring of seasonal boundaries builds on the sense of frozen time, and extends it, to create a time of prolonged suffering (*meis curis omnia longa facit* 10), almost as if there is no end to the exile's suffering. This again presents another blurred boundary – the boundary between life and death, the temporal frame within which the poet is stuck.[369] In this way, the depiction of the frozen river can signify both the passing of time through the seasons, and also the blurring of boundaries between timelines. At this point, the lack of clear seasonal turning points in the seasons show the river as the only way of marking time, tied to producing poetry.

Blurring boundaries and mixing between both sides of the river is more explicitly shown in the poet's later consideration of the history of Tomis, and the changing nature of its originally Greek population. The combination of the past and present of Tomis is exemplified by the motif of Persian trousers (34), where the poet compares the dress of the population of Tomis to their presumed ancestors. Incorporating past and present in extended time also allows the poet to highlight the history of the region, and elevate its prestige. This comparison highlights the mingling of cultures here, into something new – which is key for the depiction of nature in this poem. The

[368] Discussed previously in the introduction.
[369] This theme of being stuck between life and death forms the main discussion in the second part of chapter 5.

acknowledgement of the old transitioning into something new through the liminal space of the boundary of the Hister has been primed in the introductory lines of the poem, where the poet suggests that the reason time passes slowly in exile is because nature has been made new (*rerum natura nouata est* 9).

Claassen suggests that in the exile poetry, time and the seasons form part of a malevolent nature which conspires against the poet, which could be suggested in the unfamiliarity of nature here. [370] However, I want to push this beyond malevolent and suggest that in the unfamiliarity of nature here, the poet's suggestion that nature has been made new is enacted through Ovid's exaggerated descriptions of the natural environment of exile.[371] As this poem forms part of the final few poems of the fifth book of *Tristia*, by this point, Ovid's poems have redefined the behaviour of the natural environment, from the position of an exile.

It is also important to notice the placement of *rerum natura* here, perhaps hinting at a Lucretian connection. In this, the poet is taking part in a tradition of defining nature, as well as being part of the continuous time of the poetic canon. Yet as part of this, the poet redefines nature, changing it to suit his own sense of poetic time. Here, this redefinition of boundaries, both through the seasonality of the frozen river Hister, and through the lack of change in the seasonal solstices, comes together to highlight the forging of a different sense of natural time, linked to Ovid's own poetic time. In this way, the incorporation of new landscapes, and further redefinition of rivers through that, contributes to the new 'temporal frames' constructed in the exile poetry.[372]

These 'temporal frames' are made explicit by lines 11-12, where the poet suggests he inhabits his own separate sense of time. The *dura tempora* are explicitly the poet's, which adds to the sense of subjectivity built up by the repeated use of *mihi* (7-8). In this, the poet separates his own sense of time from that of everyone else, marking his poetic time as appearing to be frozen. In this way, it mirrors the frozen Hister, both in its frozen state, and as a space in between, or outside of competing timelines. This sense of separation is important here in two ways, it emphasises the

[370] Claassen, 2008: 43.
[371] See Williams (1994: 3) for discussion of the 'unreality' of Ovid's exile as a created environment, not doubting the reality of Ovid's exile.
[372] Hinds, 1999: 52.

geographical and temporal separation hinted at in the link with the siege of Troy, whilst also highlighting the poet's redefinition of time.

Yet this is complicated by the use of *dura* (12) to describe the poet's time, which echoes the use of *dura* to describe the frozen waters in the opening couplet (2). The repetition of *dura*, from its first use to describe the frozen waters which mark time, draws a connection between the hard personal time of the poet, and the continued passage of time through the seasons of exile. This again shows the continued contrast between ideas of static time for the poet, and continuation elsewhere.[373] The poet links a superficial sense of static time to his own poetry, and absence from Rome, yet the consistent references to the continued passing of time show this to be a created image. In this way, the sense of time in the exile poetry reflects that of a frozen river – static and unmoving on the surface, with a continued, if sluggish, flow underneath.

Conclusion

The representation of seasonal river behaviour in Ovid's poetry has a direct impact on the conceptualisation of poetic time within it; through flooding, and through seasonal drought and freezing, the poet's manipulation of this seasonality, and therefore time, can be observed. Through the contrasting images of drought and flow in *Amores* 3.6, *Metamorphoses* 15, and *Ibis*, the poet can mark initial threats to continuity as necessary endings, which facilitate continuity through renewal. The representation of dusty river beds marks the complete absence of water and loss of productivity, where returning flow signals a new beginning. This is inherently tied to the continuity of natural time through recurrent reference to the perpetual movement of the seasons with particular reference to the 'turning points' within them. These turning points mark moments of change, and the beginning of new lines of continuity. Without those new lines of continuity through change, there is a risk of becoming stagnant.

As part of this manipulated seasonality, the poet blurs seasonal boundaries, creating either competing ideas of river behaviour which link to competing genres, or over-

[373] The description of the poet in exile as *dura* also echoes the sense of environmental determinism previously discussed in this chapter, where peoples in colder climates are 'hardened' by the temperature. See Irby (2016: 252-55) for further discussion of this in Tacitus' description of German tribes.

emphasising one aspect of seasonality, the freezing of the river, in order to indicate contrasting states of time. The process of freezing itself is one of a transition between states, where the process incorporates the same material in new forms. The blurring of boundaries is more broadly important for the idea of rivers as a boundary, where both in this chapter and chapter 5, the river Hister is emblematic of a transitional point where the poet resides in the middle. The frozen river as facilitating the movement of tribes is particularly important for the transition of Ovid's exile poetry, where the river allows the blending of both Roman and 'foreign' material in the continuation of Ovid's poetry.

This blending of material, and intrusion of the foreign into the Roman literary sphere mirrors the Augustan narrative of the river as simultaneously a barrier and a point through which to expand and conquer further territories. Through this mirroring between political/imperial power and poetic power, Ovid's sense of exilic time is linked to Augustus' continuity, much as his state of exile is – this mirrored position is discussed further in the next chapter.

As the previous chapters have focused on the redefinition of seasonality, where flooding, drought, and freezing as aspects of the natural seasonal cycle are reworked to create an image of the 'new normal' for river behaviour and poetic time, the next chapters will focus on unknown, or unnatural aspects of river behaviour.

Chapter 4. The Natural Unnatural: Rivers and the Extraordinary

This chapter builds on the disruptive behaviour of both flooding and seasonal variation, and looks specifically at the more extraordinary aspects of river behaviour described in Ovid's works. I am using 'extraordinary' here as a way of describing the concept in-between the marvellous and the monstrous, tying into aspects of impossibility and incomprehensibility of the marvellous, alongside the unnaturalness of monstrosity.[374] The concept of 'extraordinary' encapsulates behaviours which are exaggerated or inverted aspects of expected natural river behaviour – specifically flooding, drought and river reversal. This pushes beyond experienced river behaviour into the unnatural, and questions expected ideas of order. With this in mind, this chapter will examine how the extraordinary behaviour of rivers in the *Metamorphoses* and the exile poetry signify a space outside of time which questions ideas of the future, interacting with elements of teleological, ordered time characterised in the Augustan period.[375]

This chapter contains two parts, the first of which focuses on apocalyptic river behaviour in books 1 and 2 of the *Metamorphoses*, exploring how the extreme flooding and drying behaviour of the rivers affects the conceptualisation of time in both instances, and how this reflects on metapoetic readings of the epic. In this, it is specifically the temporary threat of lack of continuation, caused by extreme flooding and spatial disruption, combined with the lack of continuation through extreme heat and drought, which creates a space for consideration of poetic time and the poet's place within it. In contrast to the river *adynata*, the disruption to the continuation of the environment, although extreme, is temporary. I argue that, through his representation of river behaviour, the threat of lack of continuation actually works to consolidate Ovid's place in the literary tradition. Within this, I also show how the need for divine inspiration in restarting natural cycles undermines the agency of the

[374] Hardie (2009: 2-4) characterises the marvellous in Augustan literature variously as 'unexpected', 'paradoxical', and concerned with 'impossibility', particularly in the description of *adynata.* Lowe (2015: 14) argues that monsters and hybrid forms can represent creative choices, while monstrosity itself represents 'established norms in conflict with new thinking' (1). Both of these concepts are concerned with the disruption of order, and an expected norm, which is particularly important for the extraordinary river behaviour of this chapter.

[375] Augustan 'ordered' time is discussed in the introduction.

natural environment, positioning natural continuity as dependent in some way upon a divine figure.

The second section of this chapter focuses on the use of river *adynata* to indicate loss of future, with one example from *Heroides* 5, and then examples from the exile poetry. Although this motif has its roots in earlier Greek precedents, such as in Euripides' *Medea*, where the rivers are said to be turning back to their sources as Medea decides on her revenge against Jason, *adynata* appear to be used more frequently in Latin literature.[376] In river-reversal *adynata*, the expected continuous, unidirectional flow of a river is used to guarantee continuity of future behaviour. The guarantee of behaviour only ends in the hypothetically impossible situation of rivers reversing, and therefore implicitly guarantees continuity of behaviour for an indeterminate amount of time. Through this, the expected, 'ordinary' behaviour of rivers in the environment guarantees the future; however, with the frequent appearance of river *adynata* in Ovid's exile poetry, this expectation of continuity and guaranteed future is undermined by the unknown and unexpected environment of exile.

Whilst they are common in other Augustan poets' works, Ovid's use of *adynata* is limited, with examples of river reversal *adynata* only appearing in *Heroides* 5, and then the exile poetry. In fact, his use of *adynata* in general is almost exclusively limited to the exile poetry. Previous scholarly discussions have argued that this is a stylistic shift;[377] building on this, I focus on how the exile poetry uses the unexpected and unpredictable environment of exile to highlight an insecure future for the poet. In this, the poet's sudden separation from Rome and its knowable natural environment causes a disruption in poetic time.[378] This links back to the idea of static time and the hostile environment in the previous chapter, but looks at this explicitly in terms of the vulnerable future. The use of river reversal *adynata* plays on the expected continual behaviour of rivers to highlight disruption to both time and place, showing that the

[376] Euripides, *Medea* 410. Canter (1930: 40) and Greene (1938: 245) both agree that Latin literature has more examples of *adynata*.
[377] Canter (1930), Greene (1938).
[378] The 'knowable' environment of Rome refers to both a knowledge of the space of Rome, and within that, its history. Thinking of the space of Rome as a palimpsest combines both the present and the past within the space, in contrast to the space of exile, which lacks these layers of history outside of the expectations created by previous literary depictions of Scythia (e.g. Virgil *Georgics* 3). For the idea of Rome as a palimpsest in Varro's works see Spencer (2018: 62-4). For comparison of the 'depth' of space in descriptions of Rome in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and exile poetry see Reitz (2013).

impossible future may become possible. This disruption not only separates the poet from the 'Roman' present, but also disturbs the potential for the continuation of Ovid's poetry and reputation, in both the present and future.

These ideas of separation and vulnerability which characterise the persona of the exile poetry will be read in conjunction with Mann's theory of the Natural Feminine Sublime. The sudden realisation of dependence on the natural environment, and vulnerability due to the changing conditions of that environment are key aspects to the use of extraordinary river behaviour in Ovid's poetry. In the apocalyptic episodes, the power of rivers appeals to a sense of awe and magnitude, yet the role of the gods and poet within these episodes reiterates narratives of anthropocentric power. In contrast, the exile poetry is characterised by vulnerability in the face of an unexpected and undependable environment, as well as vulnerability as the poet is forced to depend on his friends, and the emperor's good will, to survive.

Through both sections, the extraordinary behaviour of rivers is intrinsically linked to ideas of continuance, and looking towards the future. This builds on the previous temporal manipulation of the natural behaviour of rivers, and moves towards the abstract and future-threatening behaviour of the extraordinary.

Apocalyptic Behaviour

This section focuses on the extreme flooding and drying behaviours of rivers in the apocalyptic episodes of the *Metamorphoses*, the flood in book 1, and Phaethon's fall in book 2. This extreme behaviour goes beyond the seasonal cycle of river flow, or even intermittent seasonal rivers. Rather, here the rivers are shown to be pushed out of their seasonal cycle and expected flow. This extreme disruption to their expected continuous flow has equally extreme repercussions for Ovid's sense of poetic time in the already chaotic temporality of the *Metamorphoses*. It is explicitly within the discontinued flow of the river that Ovid creates a disrupted space; these disrupted spaces, through the lens of Bakhtin's chronotope, allow for questions of epic temporality, poetic hierarchy, and the continuation of literary chronology to rise to the surface.

Flooding

Ovid describes the chaos caused by river flooding in his version of the world ending flood suffered by Deucalion and Pyrrha in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*. This

describes how Jupiter wants to punish humanity after Lycaon's crime, and does so by calling upon the rivers to flood the world.[379]

sic opus est! aperite domos ac mole remota
fluminibus vestris totas inmittite habenas!' 280
iusserat; hi redeunt ac fontibus ora relaxant
et defrenato volvuntur in aequora cursu.
Ipse tridente suo terram percussit, at illa
intremuit motuque vias patefecit aquarum.
exspatiata ruunt per apertos flumina campos 285
cumque satis arbusta simul pecudesque virosque
tectaque cumque suis rapiunt penetralia sacris.
si qua domus mansit potuitque resistere tanto
indeiecta malo, culmen tamen altior huius
unda tegit, pressaeque latent sub gurgite turres. 290
iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant:
omnia pontus erat, derant quoque litora ponto

Put forth all your strength, for there is need. Open wide your doors, away with all restraining dykes, and give full rein to all your river steeds." So he commands, and the rivers return, uncurb their fountains' mouths, and in unbridled course go racing to the sea. Neptune himself smites the earth with his trident. She trembles, and at the stroke flings open wide a way for the waters. The rivers overleap all bounds and flood the open plains. And not alone orchards, crops and herds, men

[379] Lycaon was turned into a wolf by Jupiter for attempting to kill him and feed him human flesh – also the first human transformation in the *Metamorphoses*. Narrated by Jupiter in *Metamorphoses* 1.209-43. See Segal (2001b) on the presentation of Jupiter in this episode, or Feeney (1991: 199) for a broad overview of the links between Jupiter and Augustus.

> and dwellings, but shrines as well and their sacred contents do they sweep away. If any house has stood firm, and has been able to resist that huge misfortune undestroyed, still do the overtopping waves cover its roof, and its towers lie hid beneath the flood. And now the sea and land have no distinction. All is sea, and a sea without a shore.[380] (*Met.* 1.279-92)

The rivers are ordered to loose their reins (280), and flow with their full power. The rivers having previously been restrained in some way emphasises this sense of the expected or controlled natural world– where before the rivers' flow had been controlled, now they can flow unrestrained with their full force.[381] The chaotic force of the rivers breaks apart the ordered landscape, and fills the land in its excess through the flood. The flood also blurs river and sea water, shown through the transition of *flumina* (285) to *pontus* (292) to characterise the flooding waters. This further disrupts any sense of an ordered landscape, emphasising the breaking of boundaries between land and sea, fresh and salt water.[382]

The breaking of the earth by Neptune (*intremuit motuque vias patefecit aquarum* 284) echoes other flooding descriptions, where the river waters break through their own banks, here, Neptune is breaking the earth to provide new ways for them to flow. The gods are instigators of the destruction, rather than the natural behaviour and cycles of the rivers. This disconnects this river behaviour from the natural seasonal cycle normally signified by flooding, and signifies a loss of natural order. This loss of connection to seasonal cycles hints at a loss of natural time, as the expected continuation of the natural environment which signifies natural time is lost; through this disruption, this episode is framed as a complete renewal and restart, separated from the earth's previous history.

This restart is also shown through the separation of this moment from historical time as well, through the destruction caused. The rivers flow through fields and wash away any form of human collaboration with the landscape, i.e. vineyards and livestock (285). The rivers in their flood wipe out all life on land, without

[380] Trans. Miller (1916).
[381] Wheeler (2000: 41) also compares this to Phaethon's lack of control over the horses of the sun chariot, mirroring spatial disorder between the two episodes.
[382] Blurring of sea and river water also discussed in chapter 2 and 5.

discrimination (*nullum discrimen* 291). This aspect of destruction of cultivated space is important when considering how the river interacts with other aspects of the landscape, and how that changes the temporal dynamic of the space – if the river is effectively wiping away the landscape of the present, and the markers of human cultivation upon it, it wipes away any historical temporal markers such as crops and buildings, causing the absence of this in a particular 'historical' moment. The particular impact of humanity on the earth as a layer of geological time is highlighted by Chakrabarty;[383] here, that impact is wiped away, and the earth supposedly begins anew.

Although this account does lead to a sense of renewal, it is one that must be put in place by the gods, who order the rivers to return, rather than their return being part of their natural behaviour.[384] This disrupts the natural cycle of time, as represented through the cycles of nature and their seasonality. Feeney suggests that in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid subverts previous methods of literary chronology in favour of creating his own sense of time;[385] here the use of the chaotic destruction of the overwhelming river floods symbolises this reframing of time, where at this point in the narrative, time cannot be measured by the cycles of nature, but instead is subject to the overwhelming force of the narrator. Displacing this moment in the narrative outside of markers of historical and natural time, before then signifying a process of renewal and restart serves to temporally realign the *Metamorphoses*. The contrast between renewal through natural cycles and renewal through an overwhelming force challenges the audience to consider the power behind narratives of beginnings and renewal.

This temporal disruption and absence from linear historical and cyclic natural time is emphasised through the spatiality of the flood waters. After Jupiter tells the rivers to flood the earth, the waters join the sea and begin to rise until they cover everything but mountains. This is described as looking like the earth is just a sea without shore (*omnia pontus erant, derant quoque litora ponto* 293). Lateiner highlights the infinite and disorientating aspects of the spatiality of the sea in Homeric epic;[386] this is

[383] Chakrabarty, 2018: 25; discussed in introduction.
[384] Separation between physical river waters and river-gods discussed in chapter 2.
[385] Feeney, 1999: 18.
[386] Lateiner, 2014: 72.

echoed here in the *Metamorphoses*, where the endless sea caused by the flood leads to spatial and temporal disorientation. The encompassing of the earth by water flattens out the space; here there is nothing distinctive about the environment, and nothing able to identify it as set in a specific location or historical moment. This moment in the narrative now lies outside of any sense of linear time, causing a sense of timelessness which delays the narrative. Wheeler approaches this from a narratological perspective, describing the effect of the disorder caused by water as Ovid shifting into 'descriptive mode', where narrative momentum is lost.[387]

The spatiality and movement of the waters in this section also deny a sense of the 'regular' continuation of the agricultural cycle, a collaborative process between humanity and the natural environment. This is shown through the inversion of the regular agricultural cycle, as the man rows the fields he used to plough, and sails over fields of grain (294-6).

> *Occupat hic collem, cumba sedet alter adunca*
>
> *et ducit remos illic, ubi nuper arabat:*
>
> *ille supra segetes aut mersae culmina villae* 295
>
> *navigat, hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo.*
>
> *figitur in viridi, si fors tulit, ancora prato,*
>
> *aut subiecta terunt curvae vineta carinae;*
>
> Here one man seeks a hill-top in his flight; another sits in his curved skiff, plying the oars where lately he has plowed; one sails over his fields of grain or the roof of his buried farmhouse, and one takes fish caught in the elm-tree's top. And sometimes it chanced that an anchor was embedded in a grassy meadow, or the curving keels brushed over the vineyard tops. (*Met.* 1.293-8)

The markers of the continuation of agricultural time such as ploughing and harvesting, have been first inverted, then completely stalled by the flood, which occurs again in book 2. This destruction spatially represents the lack of continuation

[387] Wheeler, 2000: 30.

inherent in this extreme flooding event, as it destroys the potential future produce from the agricultural land, as well as stopping any further development in humanity.

This disorientated natural space is further emphasised through the irregularity of the endless sea. The specific movement of the flood waters also denies a sense of continuation, as 'new' waves are described as beating the mountain tops (310).

> *obruerat tumulos inmensa licentia ponti,*
>
> *pulsabantque novi montana cacumina fluctus.*
>
> The sea in unchecked liberty has now buried all the hills, and strange waves now beat upon the mountain-peaks. (*Met*. 1.309-310)

This echoes the creation of the world in the first lines of the *Metamorphoses*, where rivers are created to enter the earth or the sea, and 'beat' upon the shores (1.42).[388] This initially appears to reset the timeline of the *Metamorphoses* back to the creation of the world, yet that first creation is clearly organised temporally, through stages of nature created (e.g. *principio* (34), *tum* (36)). This imitation of the original waves beating the shores is described as *novi*, with its multiple connotations of newness and unnaturalness, which highlights the unusual inverted spatiality of the waters which normally hit the shores, hitting the mountain peaks.[389] This once again inverts the expected natural cycle of high to low, mountain to sea, highlighting a lack of order. The directionless repetition of the waves denies a sense of the expected cyclic progression of flooding and returning as here the waters have nowhere to return to,

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[388] *principio terram, ne non aequalis ab omni*
parte foret, magni speciem glomeravit in orbis. 35
tum freta diffundi rapidisque tumescere ventis
iussit et ambitae circumdare litora terrae;
addidit et fontes et stagna inmensa lacusque
fluminaque obliquis cinxit declivia ripis,
quae, diversa locis, partim sorbentur ab ipsa, 40
in mare perveniunt partim campoque recepta
liberioris aquae pro ripis litora pulsant.
he first moulded the earth into the form of a mighty ball so that it might be of like form on every side. Then he bade the waters to spread abroad, to rise in waves beneath the rushing winds, and fling themselves around the shores of the encircled earth. Springs, too, and huge, stagnant pools and lakes he made, and hemmed down-flowing rivers within their shelving banks, whose waters, each far remote from each, are partly swallowed by the earth itself, and partly flow down to the sea; and being thus received into the expanse of a freer flood, beat now on shores instead of banks (*Metamorphoses* 1.34-42).

[389] Lewis and Short (1879) '*novus'* as new, strange, unusual. *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (2012) '*novus'* as in a novel or unfamiliar manner.

and rather are stuck hitting the mountain tops they would normally flow from. The disturbed spatial patterns create a sense of discomfort, where it is clear that the earth cannot remain in this unsettled state – marking this as a moment ready for recalibration.

This stagnancy is important for the temporality of this section – here, both the continuation of natural time through natural cycles, and the continuation of the historical through the continued exploits of humanity are delayed by this excess of water. As this, for the moment is the only form of movement within the narrative, the audience is forced to wait, absorbing the 'descriptive mode' described by Wheeler. The delay disrupts a previously expected teleological future introduced at the beginning of the poem, and undermines the position of humanity within that future.[390] This delay disrupts the expected flow of the narrative, and leaving the audience dependent on the poet's 'recalibration' of the poem's narrative temporality.

If we take this extreme flooding behaviour as an example of the extraordinary, we might consider how this sense of delayed time might interact with or even disrupt Augustan narratives of order. This seeming lack of continuation in both natural and historical time, caused by Jupiter and delayed until the intervention of Jupiter, presents the concept of order and continuation as explicitly linked to the whims of this overwhelming figure of power. This is the extraordinary, disrupting order and showing power to be in the hands of Jupiter- of course, within the narrative of the poem, the power also belongs to the poet.

The flood only ends at Jupiter's order, which leads to Neptune recalling the flooding rivers (324ff.) It is specifically when Jupiter notices the stagnant earth (324), that this renewal of natural order is put into place.[391] Jupiter as a figure of power ends the timeless state, and resets with receding waters and a return to natural cycles. Segal has productively argued for the association between Jupiter and Augustus in the *Metamorphoses*;[392] I think this is important here for the consideration of differing versions of renewal. Jupiter is both instigator and 'fixer', which colours the sense of

[390] *Metamorphoses* 1.2-4 begins the poem with an appeal to the gods, as well as the poet, to sing the song from the beginning of the world to present times – linking the power of the poet and the gods in beginnings and renewal.
[391] The process of the earth's renewal needing Jupiter's intervention is also repeated in Phaethon's fall in book 2, discussed below.
[392] Segal (2001b), see Feeney (1991: 220) for more general associations.

renewal here – he causes the sense of chaotic time and threat to the future, only to then appear to 'fix' it. In this context, the process of renewal here is shown to be unnatural, and forced. The reversal of the rivers, and the flatness of the flood, come together to spatially represent the disruption of time in the universe, with the destruction and renewal of humanity being explicitly linked to the organisation of time.

Initially, this appears as a straightforward renewal of humanity;

> *rex superum trepidare vetat subolemque priori*
>
> *dissimilem populo promittit origine mira*
>
> As they thus questioned, their king bade them be of good cheer (for the rest should be his care), for he would give them another race of wondrous origin far different from the first. (*Met.* 1.251-2)

The specific reference to creating a new race after the destruction of the flood explicitly shows renewal and rebirth, but also suggests a completely new start. The loss of historical and natural time in the previous destruction of the flood marks this as a space ready for a new start; yet within that destruction both humanity and the earth suffered a forced transformation, and so are unable to change or move forward in the same way as renewal caused through natural cycles.[393] Nature becomes dependent on Jupiter to instigate the process of renewal, suggesting a loss of natural renewal in this process, and highlighting the lack of change within it.

This is further undermined by the survival of Deucalion and Pyrrha - there are still remnants of humanity and the world before, such as the buildings which were not washed away by the floods, merely covered (288-90). While there is clearly a sense of great destruction, traces of the previous generation remain. Feldherr suggests that Ovid uses these connections between generations of humanity to contemplate the human form in the present of the *Metamorphoses'* audience, where the new race of humanity shares the same shape as the old, and thus almost becomes a memorial to the old race.[394] This aspect of memorial to the old within the new echoes both Ovid's poetic time, and Augustan narratives of renewal. Here, redefining the origin of

[393] Forced transformation as a theme leading to static highlighted in chapter 1.
[394] Feldherr, 2010: 127.

humanity through the destruction of the earth recalibrates the sense of time within the narrative, but never actually threatens the future continuity of the poem. This allows Ovid to play with both the literary and political narratives of renewal, highlighting the presence of the old in the new.

Renewal through remnants is also shown in the natural environment, as the rivers are shown to return to their channels, and where the waters had covered and disrupted natural cycles, they now dissipate and reveal the past markers on the earth, as well as leaving their own mark – the slime on the trees (347). In this way, the rebirth of humanity is marked by the remnants of the old, in much the same way as the waters of the flood leave behind minerals essential for the new life on the land. The renewal of the natural environment echoes the renewal of humanity, where it is made clear that elements of the past are always incorporated in any sense of renewal – this is important for both Ovid's place in the literary tradition, as he seeks to evolve the epic genre as well as Augustan narratives' preoccupation with straightforward ideas of restoration and renewal, showing a more layered depiction of the blending of old and new in renewal.[395] The timeless space created by the extraordinary behaviour of rivers shows the recalibration of poetic time, and how flawed processes of forced renewal can threaten the future.

Drying Up

This sense of delayed continuation which threatens the future is then mirrored in book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*, where Phaethon's mishandling of Apollo's chariot leads to the extreme drought of major rivers. This episode presents an inversion of the excess of water in book 1, where it is an excess of heat which threatens the continuation of the earth. Campbell suggests that rivers drying up non-seasonally are intrinsically linked to the end of days as they are the reversal of a river's vitality and continuity;[396] thus, the future is tied to the continued flow and unidirectional flow of a river. In this way, the dried up river motif has intrinsic connotations of looking forward to a time which hasn't happened yet. This is important for continuing concerns with the future of the *Metamorphoses'* own narrative time, and more generally ideas of rejuvenation and continuation in terms of Ovid's work in the wider literary chronology.

[395] *Res Gestae* 8.
[396] Campbell, 2012: 121.

Once again, a moment of timelessness is created through the disruption of expected patterns of the cultivated landscape; in the previous section I showed how ploughing, and a river's continuous movement from source to sea linked the disruption of natural time to the disruption of historical time, and created a 'non-moment' of timelessness. More broadly, this episode is an inversion of the flooding in book 1, indicated in the inverted description in lines 263-71. Where the flooding in book 1 starts with Neptune striking the earth to command the rivers to flow uncontrollably (*ipse tridente suo terram percussit* 1.283), this starts with rivers drying up, and ends with Neptune unable to lift himself out of the sea (2.270-1). Similarly, the Nereids and dolphins amongst the tall branches in book 1 (*delphines et altis incursant ramis* 1.302) are spatially flipped, where in book 2 they avoid jumping out of the water and hide in caves (*latuisse sub antris* 2.265-9). The sea without shore in book 1 becomes plain sand in book 2, and where the waters rose in book 1, the waters recede in book 2. In this way, the two accounts almost mirror each other, both in terms of extreme inversion of natural patterns, but also more literally in the spatial patterning of the river behaviour.[397] Where we might expect the rivers to flow continuously, source to sea, here we have them smoking, giving the impression of evaporation and water moving upwards, disrupting expected landscape patterns. This is even more extreme in the Nile's case, which turns back to hide its source (254-6).

The excess of heat has caused the complete reversal of natural behaviour, as the perennial rivers hide in order to escape the heat, or are set alight:

nec sortita loco distantes flumina ripas

tuta manent: mediis Tanais fumavit in undis

Peneosque senex Teuthranteusque Caicus

et celer Ismenos cum Phegiaco Erymantho

arsurusque iterum Xanthos flavusque Lycormas, 245

quique recurvatis ludit Maeandros in undis,

[397] See Wheeler (2000: 37-47) for a thorough discussion of the repeated imagery and themes in the two apocalyptic events; he argues that this repetition cements the position of chaos within the narrative structure.

Mygdoniusque Melas et Taenarius Eurotas.

arsit et Euphrates Babylonius, arsit Orontes

Thermodonque citus Gangesque et Phasis et

Hister;

aestuat Alpheos, ripae Spercheides ardent, 250

quodque suo Tagus amne vehit, fluit ignibus

aurum,

Nor do rivers, whose lot had given them more spacious channels, remain unscathed. The Don's waters steam; old Peneus, too, Mysian Caïcus, and swift Ismenus; and Arcadian Erymanthus, Xanthus, destined once again to burn; tawny Lycormas, and Maeander, playing along upon its winding way; Thracian Melas and Laconian Eurotas. Babylonian Euphrates burns; Orontes burns, and swift Thermodon; the Ganges, Phasis, Danube; Alpheus boils; Spercheos' banks are aflame. The golden sands of Tagus melt in the intense heat (*Met.* 2.241-52)

The muddled behaviour of the rivers, defined by their opposites, ie. smoking (*fumavit* 241), burning (*arsit* 248), and dry (*siccat* 257) disrupts natural patterns. The description of the rivers specifically burning, (*arsit*, 248, *ardent* 250), highlights this contrast between the elements, where the rivers are acting completely against their nature. The rivers in this catalogue are perennial, rather than the intermittent rivers discussed in the previous chapter. This particularly reinforces this idea of nature acting in disorder, in a reversal of a river's expected qualities. This reversal highlights the threat to the continuity of these rivers which are known and relied upon as perennial, and therefore, the threat to the future.

This excess of heat causes a lack of balance in the world, and disrupts the natural cycle of the river flow, and time – as echoed by the lack of the sun circling the earth, with the passing of days. Zissos and Gildenhard suggest that the outcome of Phaethon's fall, where the earth is burnt and nature in chaos indicates chronological

regression, and a reversal of time to the primordial chaos of Lucretius.[398] Temporal regression and reversal is particularly important, and echoed in the description of the rivers drying up. As their flow is evaporated, they are static and unmoving, unable to flow onwards to the sea in their natural progression. This also resonates with the Stoic conceptualisation of the cosmic conflagration, which is broadly characterised by a process of renewal in which everything remains the same, and as such, the future is fated and inescapable.[399] Temporal regression then becomes an essential part of altering this inescapable future, as it offers an opportunity to rewrite the timeline – which is shown in the catalogue of retreating rivers in this episode.

The specific rivers used in this catalogue provide further connections to both past literary works and the future of poetry. In this, a potential lack of future is highlighted through the catalogue of rivers from lines 242-59, most of whom carry strong historical or literary connotations. At first, this catalogue of twenty-seven rivers appears to present the rivers in no clear geographical order, which is part of what Jones suggests is catalogues of rivers implying 'geographical exhaustiveness';[400] this adds to the chaotic spatiality of this section, but the rivers chosen also contribute to the underlying temporal meaning.

The rivers in this section differ slightly from the first, as they are presented by name in an extended catalogue, in contrast to the abstract and ambiguous rivers of the earth in book 1. Spencer discusses the idea of 'moving through' a landscape, where 'individual landscape elements change depending on how they are connected up';[401] alongside the disordered path, which could reflect the chaotic narrative progression of the *Metamorphoses*, there is also an element of temporal progression in the geographical range of rivers.[402] I would divide the river catalogue into three sections: mythical/literary rivers such as the Peneus, Eurotas, and Xanthus, rivers with a military and imperialising connotation, such as the Nile, Rhine, and Rhone, and finally ending with the Tiber, which combines myth, conquest, and civilisation. Now obviously these are not strict sections, nor mutually exclusive categories; however I

[398] Zissos and Gildenhard, 1999: 35.
[399] Long, 2006: 258.
[400] Jones, 2005: 81, 89.
[401] Spencer, 2010: 48.
[402] This temporal element is indicated through the presence of the Maeander in the middle of the catalogue – as discussed in the introduction, it also physicalizes effect of river on environment over time through silting up (Campbell, 2012: 321-22).

argue they more broadly show a trend from the heavy literary mythical past, to the rivers associated with recent military and literary endeavours of Ovid's present, before ending with the Tiber, and its future.

To demonstrate this temporal ordering I will focus on four key rivers: the Xanthus, Cayster, Nile, and Tiber. The Xanthus is described immediately as destined to burn again (*arsurusque iterum* 245), highlighting a connection with book 21 of the *Iliad*, where the Xanthus fights Achilles so that he might stop polluting his waters with dead bodies, but Hephaestus protects Achilles by setting the Xanthus on fire and boiling his waters.[403] Anderson suggests that this acknowledgment of the future of the river 'plays with the chronology of myth.[404] Playing with chronology in this way situates this event in the *Metamorphoses* as within the past of the literary tradition, looking towards the 'future' of the *Iliad*, almost cementing the poem into the literary history.

This acknowledgement of the future of epic myth is further reinforced by the reference to the Cayster and its swans;

> *et, quae Maeonias celebrabant carmine ripas*
>
> *flumineae volucres, medio caluere Caystro;*
>
> and the swans, which had been wont to throng the Maeonian streams
> in tuneful company, are scorched in mid Caÿster. (*Met.* 2.252-3)

This image appears as a simile in *Iliad* 2.461-7, and in *Aeneid* 7.698-705, with a focus on their singing echoing the sound of men marching. The swans and the epic simile again draws attention to the literary future of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, with the *Metamorphoses* presented as the precedent. Looking towards the literary future also reflects onto the temporality of the *Metamorphoses* itself. The swans and the river Cayster appear later in book five of the *Metamorphoses*, drawing a connection here to the internal temporality of the narrative, as well as the place of the poem in both the past and future of the literary tradition.

[403] Homer, *Iliad* 11.200-377.
[404] Anderson, 1997: 255.

In this way Ovid uses the image of the rivers drying up to allude to the future, and the idea of continuance – both in terms of acknowledging the literary precedents for his work, as well as cementing his own work within that literary tradition. The drying up of rivers creates an opportunity to explore potential literary futures, as the threat to continuation forces consideration of the future. The association of specific natural features with specific temporal moments allows a literary map to be plotted, all in only the second book of the *Metamorphoses*. This echoes Müller's suggestion that literary texts can revise and renew chronotopes of the past, where Ovid can build on recognisable spaces in previous works to renew elements of the literary tradition in his own work.[405] This layered allusion to the motif of the Maeonian swans recognises the presence of past literary works in contemporary literature, much as the remnants left behind of the flood go on to form the new race of humanity. Here we can see elements of Ovid's own consideration of the epic genre reflected in this space – where one aspect is recognition of previous influences, as well as looking to the present and future of the genre.

The allusion to literature of Ovid's present in the past of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is continued further, through the reference to the Nile;

> *Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem*
>
> *occuluitque caput, quod adhuc latet: ostia septem*
>
> *pulverulenta vacant, septem sine flumine valles*
>
> The Nile fled in terror to the ends of the earth, and hid its head, and it is hidden yet. The seven mouths lie empty, filled with dust; seven broad channels, all without a stream. (*Met.* 2.254-6)

Anderson suggests the Nile is personified here, and effectively runs in reverse in order to hide its source.[406] This alludes to the common image of the Nile and its hidden source, a mystery among ancient writers.[407] The image of the deliberately concealed source also appears in *Amores* 3.6, and Horace echoes this in *Odes* 4.14, where the Nile appears as part of a list of new territories Augustus has conquered.

[405] Müller's ecological chronotope is explained in introduction.
[406] Anderson, 1997: 265.
[407] Pliny *Natural History* 2.51.

This image is not a particularly Augustan innovation, but the connection between the Nile and fleeing or hiding might be particularly emphasised at this time. In the *Aeneid*, the Nile is depicted on Aeneas' shield as calling the defeated to his 'streams with many hiding places', (*latebrosaque flumina* 8.713). In Propertius 3.11, Cleopatra is described as fleeing to the Nile to escape a triumph, (*fugisti* 3.11.51), and in 4.6, again seeking a hiding place in the Nile, (*illa petit Nilum cumba male nixa fugaci occultum* 4.6.63). Even later in the *Metamorphoses*, again in book five, Egypt and the Nile are referred to as a place in which to flee.[408]

Merrills suggests that Lucretius cements the idea of Nile as a geographical puzzle in the Latin west, building on tropes from earlier Greek literature, but does not explore this connection with deception.[409] I do not necessarily think this is a strong awareness of this trope from Ovid, but rather a cultural theme which may have started with the *Aeneid*, and the rhetoric of Augustus' victory at Actium, which echoed through the literature of the time.[410] Conscious or unconscious allusion aside, this conception of the Nile reaches forward to Ovid's present, through the semantics of fleeing and hiding associated with the river. This foregrounds the image of the Nile here as the Nile presented in Augustan literature. This allusion again shows an aspect of looking towards the future, as the 'past' of the *Metamorphoses* here is linked to the present of Ovid's Rome, again placing the poem in both the past and the present of the literary tradition.

The Nile acts as a transition point from the mythical to Ovid's present, leading into rivers which appear in the poetry of Ovid's contemporaries, with an imperialising connotation:

> *fors eadem Ismarios Hebrum cum Strymone siccat*

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[408] *emissumque ima de sede Typhoea terrae*
caelitibus fecisse metum cunctosque dedisse
terga fugae, donec fessos Aegyptia tellus
ceperit et septem discretus in ostia Nilus.
how Typhoeus, sprung from the lowest depths of earth, inspired the heavenly gods with fear, and how they all turned their backs and fled, until, weary, they found refuge in the land of Egypt and the seven-mouthed Nile. (*Metamorphoses* 5.321-4.)

[409] Merrills (2017: 159) suggests another connection between the Nile and deception in 5.187-8, where Nileus 'falsely', *ementitus*, claims he is descended from the river.

[410] The potential connection here with the representation of the Nile in the triple triumph is attested by Propertius 2.1.31. See Östenberg (2009: 234-5) for more on the visual representations of rivers in Octavian's triple triumph.

Hesperiosque amnes, Rhenum Rhodanumque

Padumque

The same mischance dries up the Thracian rivers, Hebrus and Strymon; also the rivers of the west, the Rhine, Rhone, Padus (*Met.* 2.257-9)

These rivers represent highly militarised areas of Roman territory, with the Hebrus and Strymon representing the area of Thrace, and the Rhine and Rhone representing the northern Germanic territories. The rivers in this section draw attention to the outer northern edges of Roman territory, before moving inwards towards the Tiber, and the destiny of Rome. That this focuses on the north-western rivers rather than the also contested and militarised south eastern edges shows this as a preoccupation with the new, where expansion in the north reflects a newer, unknown expansion, in contrast to the 'older' civilisations of the south east.[411]

The spatial progression across the landscape ties the narrative down to geographical reference points that were more common in the discourse of Ovid's culture, drawing focus away from the old literary rivers, and towards the rivers associated with more recent military victories. This further highlights the use of dried rivers to reflect on potential futures – Ovid makes no reference to the historical events themselves, only to the rivers. This lessens the emphasis on one definite future, instead leaving it to the audience to make the connection to the narrative future, and their more immediate past.

Zissos and Gildenhard suggest that in book two of the *Metamorphoses*, the narrative reality is torn between competing variants, in a disruption to linear progress.[412] Although they are talking more about the narrative incongruities of the progression of time in book two, the idea of competing narrative variants is really important in this section. In this particular moment, the use of rivers with both literary and mythical precedents, as well as those associated with recent military victories creates this

[411] This also explains the presence of the Hister in the previous temporal section of the catalogue, as it was a long settled Greek colony – in spite of its depiction in Ovid's exile poetry. Campbell notes the Rhine and Rhone specicially as symbolic of conquest and the acquisition of the natural environment (2012: 26), marking a particularly Roman aspect of river tradition – conquest.
[412] Zissos and Gildenhard, 1999: 39.

sense of competing variants of time, which come together to create the present of the *Metamorphoses*. This brings historical and geological time together, blending recent historical events with the continuous presence of rivers in the landscape. This is particularly emphasised by the inwards motion of these last few rivers; as the references get closer to the literary present, they also lead inwards to Rome, and the Tiber.

The end point of the Tiber in the catalogue of dried up rivers emphasises these ideas of competing variants of time being drawn together to look towards the future. While the previous rivers have focused on a subtle progression from the mythical literary past to the more recent military victories of Rome, the inclusion of the Tiber and its promised power pins down the temporal moment in the present of the *Metamorphoses'* composition, looking towards its future:

> *cuique fuit rerum promissa potentia, Thybrin.*
>
> and the Tiber, to whom had been promised the mastery of the world. (*Met.* 2.259)

Anderson describes this as an 'ostentatious anachronism', where it is consciously chronologically out of place – the narrative of Roman mastery is very much situated in Ovid's present.[413] This sense of conscious temporal manipulation is expanded upon by Wheeler, who argues that anachronisms in the *Metamorphoses* 'deauthorize any single versions of mythological history by opening up alternative possibilities and force the audience to revaluate its understanding of the poem's narrative'.[414] Through this destabilisation of any single mythological narrative, in the restart of the dried up river, there is space for Ovid's own retellings in the future literary tradition. Here, through this anachronism, the temporal structure of the poem is brought to the surface. Although the Tiber has dried up at this point in the narrative, this phrase looks forward to the future of the *Metamorphoses*, and the present of its composition. The promised power is linked to the flow of the Tiber, which is flowing in the present of the audience.[415]

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[413] Anderson, 1997: 256.
[414] Wheeler, 1999: 128.
[415] See Gildenhard and Zissos (2004) for discussion of Rome as the narrative telos of the *Metamorphoses*, and how references to Roman civilisation in the first two books situate contemporary

In this way, looking forward to the future present through the image of the dried up river creates a sense of cyclic inevitability, where the dried up rivers will return and resume flowing, so will the Tiber (and Rome) achieve its promised power. Connecting the promised power and the flow of the river in this way creates a sense of guaranteed continuity – the Tiber is flowing, and so too is the power of Rome. The fate of Rome is tied to the fate of the river, and the power of the river is continuous, regardless of its flow. This manipulates the *adynata* of rivers drying up or reversing, tying the future of Rome to the flow of the Tiber, which although disrupted at the present narrative moment, the audience know to be continuous in their present.

This idea of using the past to move forward echoes the cultural turn during Augustus' rise to power. Through the chronotope of the dried up river, which considers both source and continuation, the *Metamorphoses* is aligned with the literary tradition, laying a claim to both the past of the epic genre, and its continuation. Ovid disturbs the normal flow of time and literary history, making his present part of the literary past, and Rome's landscape part of the mythic landscape – mirroring Augustus' own repositioning of himself into mythic history.

Mirroring poetic and imperial power continues in the repetition of Jupiter returning the world to order, mirroring the end of the flood in book 1. Schiesaro argues that Jupiter here 'is the guarantor of a poetic order, or a hierarchy of genres, which still holds in the face of Ovid's protests';[416] the use of 'guarantor' is especially relevant when considering the river *adynata*. Here, Jupiter has restored order through allowing the rivers to flow again, and reinstates their position as a guarantee of future behaviour, seemingly leaving no room for Ovid's generic innovations. However, as I just discussed, the narrative of the *Metamorphoses* has been woven into the geological time of the landscape through the mythical allusions in the river catalogue. The timeless space of the disrupted river chronotope, combined with recognisable geographical spaces represented by river names, allows the ideals of Ovid's present to be cemented into the past, creating an almost guaranteed future for both Rome and Ovid's works. This then links back to the *adynata* trope, where the continuity of

Rome as the telos of the poem. As Ovid and his poetry are situated within that contemporary Rome, I would argue that this narrative telos also helps to secure the future of the *Metamorphoses*, and Ovid's place in the future literary tradition.

[416] Schiesaro, 2014: 101.

the river is used to signal a guarantee in the presence of fears for the future; here, Ovid has guaranteed his own works in the future, and the literary tradition, when it continues after the apocalypse has been resolved.

The future-threatening flooding and drought behaviours of the rivers in these examples from the *Metamorphoses* give a space to highlight ideas of poetic continuity in dialogue with literary predecessors. In this, there is a sense of control or at least engagement with the temporality of the natural environment from the poet, positioning his poetry as eternal, even as natural cycles are disrupted. In these episodes, although the future initially appears threatened through this behaviour, through allusions to the future of the text, and mirroring imperial power, the future of Ovid's work is shown to be secure. This is an important point to consider in comparison to the use of river *adynata*, where this future, as tied to the continuity of rivers, is not so stable.

River Reversal

The key part of previous uses of *adynata* has been that aspects of the environment will continue to behave in expected patterns, and that the hypothetical future proposed is as equally unlikely to happen as that environmental continuity is to change. This imagery is based around the extremes of environmental behaviour, as opposites, rather than just slightly unusual instances. This is most commonly seen in the image of the river reversing its flow back to its source, rather than flowing in a forward linear motion from source to sea. For example, Propertius uses the expected directionality of a river's flow to signify the extraordinary that would have to occur before his love ended:

> *nulla prius vasto labentur flumina ponto,*
>
> *annus et inversas duxerit ante vices,*
>
> *quam tua sub nostro mutetur pectore cura:*
>
> Sooner shall deep rivers flow backward from the sea and sooner the year bring on its seasons in inverted order, than the love for you in my heart shall change[417] (1.15.29-32)

[417] Trans. Goold (1990).

The lack of river flow to the sea is used as an extraordinary impossible future situation, which would occur before the end of the *amator*'s love. This blends the present and the future, where the continuation of the expected natural environment is used as a guarantor for the continuation of present behaviour.

This mixture of present and future depending on hypothetical and unlikely events is especially interesting when considering Ovid's use of *adynata* in his exile poetry. Previously in Ovid's poetry, rivers reversing has only occurred in instances of magic, or in *Heroides* 5.[418] The use of rivers reversing to describe magical powers indicates the idea of unnatural behaviour in river reversal, while the appearance of rivers reversing in *Heroides* 5 is more linked to the theme of this section, disrupted continuation, and the unknowable future represented by the inconsistent environment. Firstly this section explores the river reversing *adynaton* in *Heroides* 5, with its connections to genre, femininity, and the representation of the future through cycles of the environment. This *adynaton* is particularly important as it is shown to be false, linked with the betrayal of Oenone by Paris. The rest of this section builds on the failure of the environment, focussing on the use of river reversal *adynata* in Ovid's exile poetry, and their connection with genre, the realised hypothetical future, and the unknowable environment of exile.[419]

As examples of river *adynata* only appear in Ovid's epistolary poems, genre clearly is an important aspect for the role river *adynata* play in Ovid's conceptualisation of poetic time. In this, I would like to build on Doblhofer's suggestion that Ovid's letters play with the idea of reciprocity inherent in the genre, and draw out the suggestion of potential dependence that this implies.[420] To clarify this a little further, the letters expect a response of some sort, which introduces an element of dependence on that response. With that aspect in mind, elements of the natural feminine sublime come into play here, particularly in the exile poetry.[421] In this, Mann takes ideas of alterity, and with concerns of environmental crisis suggests that with the representation of

[418] Ovid *Heroides* 6.87; Ovid *Amores* 1.8.6 both have women able to control the flow of rivers through magic.
[419] *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.5.21-4, 4.5.41-4.
[420] Doblfhofer, 1978: 139.
[421] Freeman (1995: 2) describes the feminine sublime as Otherness, specifically characterised by excess and the unrepresentable. This is key for Ovid's works in this chapter, particularly in the *Heroides* and in his exile poetry, where the narrator is aligned with Otherness, either through representing the voices of mythical women, or through the Otherness imposed by the foreign environment of the exile poetry.

the excessive natural environment, there is also a terrifying realisation of dependence and loss. With this realisation of dependence, our relationship with the earth is categorised by vulnerability.[422]

Although Ovid's works do not engage with contemporary ideas of climate change, as I have previously argued in earlier chapters, the conceptualisation of time in his poetry relies on the continuity of the environment. It is in Ovid's epistolary poetry that this idea of dependence and vulnerability, aligned with ideas of the Other, are drawn to a head. This sense of dependence and vulnerability affects the sense of time in the exile poetry, as the poet cannot rely on the continuity of his environment nor his poetry.[423] The key aspect of the epistolary genre, the idea of waiting for a hypothetical response is then tied to the idea of a hypothetically secure environment, which is then shown to be false in all Ovid's uses of the river *adynata*.

As such, aspects of the reworked feminine sublime will be used in this section to illustrate the changing relationship between the constructed subject of the exile poetry and his new unknown environment. Firstly I explore the constructed feminine subject in *Heroides* 5, and the dependence on the continuation inherent in the use of river *adynata* as guarantees of the future. I then compare this with the loss of the predictable and continuous environment in Ovid's exile poetry, and how that aspect of vulnerability affects the presentation of poetic time.

Heroides

In *Heroides* 5, Oenone writes to Paris, and makes reference to an engraving of a poem on a tree which utilises the river reversal *adynaton* to attest to the everlasting nature of Paris' love:[424]

CUM PARIS OENONE POTERIT SPIRARE RELICTA,

AD FONTEM XANTHI VERSA RECURRET AQUA. *30*

[422] Mann, 2006: 138.
[423] Ovid is the most frequent user of *adynata* in the Augustan period, with only one use in Horace and three in Propertius. In Propertius, the implication is that the *adynata* will never happen, while in Horace, it is suggested that rivers can flow backwards as the extraordinary has happened. This is furthered in Ovid's exile uses, where rivers are frequently shown to flow backward, and used to show that the extraordinary has happened and is connected with the unbelievable exilic environment.
[424] Oenone is also connected to liquid through her name, in its meaning of 'wine woman'.

Xanthe, retro propera, versaeque recurrite lymphae!

sustinet Oenonen deseruisse Paris.

IF PARIS' BREATH SHALL FAIL NOT, ONCE OENONE HE DOTH SPURN, THE WATERS OF THE XANTHUS TO THEIR FOUNT SHALL BACKWARD TURN.

O Xanthus, backward haste; turn, waters, and flow again to your fount! Paris has deserted Oenone, and endures it.[425] (*Her*. 5.29-34)

In this, Oenone calls for the river Xanthus to reverse, as the hypothetical future of Paris leaving her has occurred, and as such, so should the river reverse. Here, the supposedly consistent behaviour of the environment, indicated by the expected progression of rivers from source to sea, has been undermined, alongside Paris' character.

The specific reference to the river Xanthus in this *adynaton* is interesting, as it draws attention to the role of the Xanthus in the epic tradition, alongside Paris' role. Jacobson highlights how the incorporation of the Xanthus draws a connection between Paris breaking his oath, and the reversal of the Xanthus in *Iliad* 21 when it is polluted with bodies.[426] Paris' decision to leave Oenone then leads to the reversal of the Xanthus in the *Iliad* – making the *adynaton* appear true. Ovid uses extraordinary behaviour of rivers to play with the temporality of the literary tradition, writing his own work as an antecedent to the *Iliad.*

This reversed temporality also becomes important for the genre, where letter writing is inherently 'behind' time, as there is a temporal gap between the moment the letter is written and sent, and the moment it arrives.[427] In this, Oenone is associated with the past, looking 'forward' to the moment when the Xanthus will reverse in the narrative of the *Iliad*. Here, the future of epic narrative is drawn into the present narrative of Ovid's poetry.[428] In this way, this poem is retroactively inscribed into the

[425] Trans. Showerman (1914).
[426] Jacobson, 1974: 183 n.18.
[427] See above, but also more extensively discussed in reference to exile poetry.
[428] Drinkwater (2007) also shows the link between Ovid's Oenone and previous literature, where she is connected to Paris' death in Parthenius' *Erotica Pathemata 4*, once again placing her in the wider literary context.

epic tradition, but on the outskirts, looking forward to the transition to epic poetry in Paris' future but unable to take part.[429] This subtly incorporates Ovid's work into the literary chronology of epic, while allowing him to play with the temporal complexities of the epistolary mode.

This link to the literary mode is also made more apparent through the use of *carmen* (28) to describe the inscription carved into the tree which holds the *adynaton* promising Paris' perpetual love. In this, *carmen* refers to the engraving, the poem, i.e Oenone's letter, as well as the outward form of *Heroides* 5 itself.[430] Here, *carmen* alerts the audience to the possible metapoetic connotations in this section, alongside the use of the river Xanthus and the river by the etched tree. This sets up the connection between metapoetics and the natural environment, which is then further expanded upon in the *adynaton* itself.

The *adynaton* is carved onto the tree in lines 29-30, introduced by *carmen*, and labelled as a site of memory. In this, it is not just the use of the river behaviour that links this to the natural environment, but also the literal incorporation of the promise into the continuity of the natural world, through the carving in the tree.

> *populе, vive, precor, quae consita margine ripae*
>
> *hoc in rugoso cortice carmen habes:*
>
> O poplar, ever live, I pray, that art planted by the marge of the stream
> and hast in thy seamy bark these verses (*Her*. 5.27-8)

This implicitly links the growth of the tree to the growth of their love; yet in this poem the natural environment is shown to be vulnerable.[431] Bradley highlights how even the placement of the tree next to the river shows the precarity of nature, as it is 'too close to the water to escape erosion and final collapse'.[432] Here, the position of the river is key to the lack of continuity in Paris' behaviour; through the process of time,

[429] Drinkwater, 2015: 386.
[430] Drinkwater, 2015: 390. Link between magic and poetry in river reversal may also hint at some of the other uses of river reversal in Ovid's work to this point; that of the feminine magic user, capable of turning the tides of nature through unnatural forces. Through Oenone there is a connection between both power over the watery environment, and femininity itself. See (Bolton, 2009) for more on links between feminine and water in the *Heroides*.
[431] *Heroides* 5.41 - Trees cut down to make ships
[432] Bradley, 1969: 161.

symbolised by the passing of the water but also in the eventual erosion process of the waters in the landscape, this memory will disappear. Drinkwater argues that Oenone allies herself with the 'rhythms of nature' as a way of making a claim to Paris through the amount of time they spent together; but here it is apparent that her alignment with natural time yet inability to read the wider poetic timeline of Paris' inevitable absence marks her as out of place.[433] In this, the sense of continuation through the environment that Oenone claims and is aligned with, is undermined by the inconsistency of nature throughout the poem and the wider literary tradition.

This failure to read poetic time is made more apparent through a closer examination of the carving into the tree bark motif. The association with natural cycles and the memorialisation of Paris and Oenone's love in the tree would initially imply a sense of growth and continuation, as well as the importance of writing and memory in this idea of continuation.[434] However, inscribing into aspects of the natural world is an important pastoral image, as well as one which reaches back into previous literary works.[435] In Callimachus' *Aetia*, Acontius carves Cydippe's name into the trees to declare his love, but also carves into an apple in order to trick her into promising to marry him.[436] Here there is a link between this idea of carving verses or names into the natural environment, and deceptive promises that appears in *Heroides* 5.

However, there is a typical Ovidian subversion to this act of written continuation – Paris' love does not continue. The connection between the continuity of Paris' love and the continuity of the natural environment is called into question, causing Oenone to call upon the Xanthus to reverse its waters (33). Fabre-Serris suggests that this particular *adynaton* plays on Oenone's lack of foresight, in that she was not able to predict the future from the changing environment.[437] This again subverts the link between Oenone and the poet, here, where Oenone is supposed to be able to see the future due to her rape by Apollo, she cannot predict Paris' change of heart. This also subverts Parthenius' account of Oenone and Paris, where Oenone is shown to

[433] Drinkwater, 2015: 388. Oenone is also the daughter of the river god, implicitly linking her with river behaviour.
[434] See also Virgil. *Eclogues.* 10.73 for love growth with tree. A potential connection between water, trees, and female vulnerability in love poetry could also be made in Daphne's transformation into a tree in *Metamorphoses* 1, and its connection with writing (discussed in chapter 1).
[435] Callimachus. *Aetia.* 73, Virgil. *Eclogues*. 5.13-14, 10.52, Propertius. 1.18.22
[436] Callimachus. *Aetia.* 67, 73.
[437] Fabre-Serris, 2012: 20.

be able to prophesy, and predict Paris leaving, but is not able to reach Paris in time to heal him.[438] Playing with prophecy shows Oenone's inability to correctly read or interact with poetic time in this poem, in contrast to the reader and the poet, who can use previous poetic works to foretell the future of her narrative.[439]

This idea of failure to predict the future is important for both her alignment with the environment, and her role as the letter writer. Here, Oenone's alignment with alterity suggests an element of the feminine sublime experience, which is built upon specifically by her dependence on the patterns of the environment - here, her dependence on the expected continuous patterns of the environment to guarantee Paris' future behaviour has failed her, leaving her vulnerable.[440] Her dependence and vulnerability is specifically linked to her use of expected river behaviour to 'guarantee' the future behaviour of Paris, and his failure disrupts that view of the environment. In this way, the expected behaviour of rivers is particularly tied to the idea of a hypothetical future, but one which is shown to be vulnerable to outside forces.

The hypothetical future is also important for Oenone's role as the letter writer, in which she is inherently stuck in the past, writing towards a hypothetical future. This compounds the sense of vulnerability in her position, as her continuation depends in some part on the process of writing and receiving responses. These connections between failure to read the environment, and the vulnerability experienced by the subject in this breakdown are important for the depiction of time in the exile poetry, which relies on this sense of failure to highlight the disruption of expected continuation, through the unknown environment.

Exile poetry

In the exile poetry, this aspect of the unknown environment is taken to the extreme, as in both the *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*, the narrator is now in the position of vulnerability waiting for a response, aligned with the women of his *Heroides*. This is shown in *Tristia* 1.8, where the beginning of the poem opens with a river reversal *adynaton*,

[438] Parthenius. *Erotica Pathemata*. 4.3-6
[439] See Barchiesi (1993) for ideas of 'negotiation between author and reader' involved in this temporal manipulation in the *Heroides*.
[440] See also Lindheim (2000) on how Oenone is aligned with pastoral poetry, in contrast to elegiac lovers Helen and Paris.

which the narrator predicts will happen as the behaviour of his friend has changed. This echoes the use of river reversal in *Heroides* 5, where the supposed guarantee of the environment is shown to be flawed through its alignment with fallible human behaviour. Here, the narrator is in a similar position to Oenone, calling for the rivers to reverse as they have been betrayed, and the guarantee of the continuous environment is undermined.

"In caput alta suum labentur ab aequore retro
flumina, conversis Solque recurret equis:
terra feret stellas, caelum findetur aratro,
unda dabit flammas, et dabit ignis aquas,
omnia naturae praepostera legibus ibunt, 5
parsque suum mundi nulla tenebit iter,
omnia iam fient, fieri quae posse negabam,
et nihil est, de quo non sit habenda fides.
haec ego vaticinor, quia sum deceptus ab illo,
laturum misero quem mihi rebar opem." 10
tantane te, fallax, cepere oblivia nostri,
afflictumque fuit tantus adire timor,
ut neque respiceres nec solarere iacentem,
dure, nec exequias prosequerere meas?

To their sources shall deep rivers flow, back from the sea, and the sun, wheeling his steeds, shall hurry backwards; the earth shall support stars and the sky shall be cloven by the plough, water shall produce flame and flame water; all things shall proceed reversing nature's laws and no part of the universe shall keep its path; everything that I once called impossible shall now take place, and there is nothing that one

> ought not to believe. All this I prophesy because I have been deceived by that man who I thought would bring aid to me in my wretchedness.
>
> Treacherous one, did you forget me so utterly or were you so afraid to approach me in my misfortune that you did not regard or comfort me in my downfall, cruel man, or become one of my funeral escort? (*Tr*. 1.8.1-14)

The extraordinary behaviour of the environment is shown through complete opposites, such as fire and water, as well as the earth bearing stars and the skies being ploughed (3-4). Claassen also points out how the association with fire and water links to the position of the exile, where the loss of civic rights was defined as forbidding water and fire.[441] She associates this with the Stoic ideas of extinction through fire and water, but does not then make the association with the apocalyptic episodes in book 1 and 2 of the *Metamorphoses*.[442] Hinds suggests that this *adynaton* alludes to *Metamorphoses* 1.17, where the poem begins in chaos, and that here the 'world which is reverting to Chaos is, specifically, the universe constructed by Ovid'; essentially, he argues that this is about the revision of the teleology of the *Metamorphoses* in exile.[443]

Building on both scholars, I would argue that alongside this allusion to chaos and Stoicism, there are also elements of the extraordinary river behaviour in books 1 and 2, which deal with the excessive behaviour of rivers leading to the natural environment being viewed in terms of opposites. This has been discussed in more depth in the first section of this chapter, where my main point was that these chaotic disruptions can represent the conflicting poetic temporalities at play in the *Metamorphoses,* looking towards the literary future.

Here, in *Tristia* 1.8, the chaotic reversal of rivers is alluding not only to the chaos of *Metamorphoses* 1.17 as Hinds suggests, but also to the conflicting temporalities laid out in book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*, through the connection between the chaotic

[441] Claassen, 2008: 136; see also Grebe (2010) for more about the legal conditions of Ovid's exile and the association with lack of fire and water.
[442] This is also alluded to through the image of ploughing the opposite – in *Tristia* 1.8.3 this is the sky, *caelum findetur aratro*, in *Metamorphoses* 1.294, it is rowing the fields which used to be ploughed, *et ducit remos illic, ubi nuper arabat*.
[443] Hinds, 1999: 59, Hinds also highlights that the previous poem, *Tristia* 1.7, is explicitly about the *Metamorphoses*.

rivers. Looking back on the *Metamorphoses* at the start of the poem, and near the beginning of Ovid's exile works in general, creates this sense of rewinding and rewriting, before going on to then look towards the future of Ovid's reality in exile. The chaotic river behaviour in the *adynaton* looks towards the future, through the past of Ovid's works, while the aspect of prophesy looks to the past, considering the continuity of both his past and present works.

From this allusion to the past of Ovid's works, the appearance of forgetfulness signals a concern for the continuity of Ovid's poetry. The narrator refers to his person being forgotten completely (*tantane te, fallax, cepere oblivia nostri* 11), and washed away in the river Lethe (*cunctane Lethaeis mersa feruntur aquis?* 36). Here, the narrator suggests that the impossible behaviours exhibited by his friends could only be made possible through the act of forgetting – the narrator's lack of physical presence in Rome has caused him to disappear from memory. The connection here between the environment, particularly rivers, and the act of remembering, links back to *Heroides* 5, where it is the tree by the river which becomes a monument to Paris' failed promise, and to Oenone's failure to accurately predict the future. Yet the presence of the river threatens the erosion of that memorial, here the Lethe threatens the memory of Ovid, and potentially threatens his works as a monument to that memory.[444]

Later references to the Lethe in Ovid's exile poetry also link it to the loss of time, either in terms of memories or sense of the passing of time.[445] This evokes the frozen static time of the exilic environment, but also echoes Mann's concept of the natural feminine sublime, which focuses on loss, particularly in reference to the natural environment. She argues that the sense of sublime created by the natural environment in times of climate crisis draws into focus ideas of loss which are specifically characterised by the concept of dependence;[446] whilst the sense of

[444] See Hardie (2007) for the paradoxical role of the Lethe as both forgetting and a motif of intertextuality in the *Remedia Amoris*. Chapter 2 also discusses 'enduring' being washed away by torrents in the exile poetry – another threat to both the poet and the text.

[445] *utque soporiferae biberem si pocula Lethes,*
temporis adversi sic mihi sensus abest.
and just as if I were drinking slumber-bringing Lethe's draughts, I lose the sense of evil days. (*Tr*. 4.1.47-8).
Also *Tristia* 4.9.1-2. Interestingly, in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.1.17, the narrator suggests they are able to overcome the powers of the Lethe.

[446] Mann, 2006: 134-8.

climate crisis is not strictly the same for Ovid's works, the idea of a rapidly changing and unknowable environment is reflected in his exile poetry. The alignment of the poet with the previous figure of Oenone and the Otherness of exile also positions Ovid within the broad category of 'alterity', which defines the particular vulnerability of the loss of dependability. This loss in relation to the natural environment draws out ideas of dependence in Ovid's work, where the poet is dependent on being remembered through literary presence in Rome to guarantee the continuation of his works and his memorialisation as part of literary tradition.

Claassen argues that Ovid's exile poetry frequently uses the idea of memory in order to create moments outside of time and space;[447] as I previously argued in this chapter, the apocalyptic behaviours of rivers can be used as chronotopes to indicate this temporal and spatial disjunction. Here, the *adynaton* in conjunction with reference to the river Lethe indicates an aspect of the breakdown of memory – moments associated with past friendships and presumably guaranteed environmental behaviour are broken down, which obscures the future of Ovid's works. The Lethe suggests both the end of Ovid, and a new future through metempsychosis – but not quite yet.[448] This loss of memory once again indicates a timeless space, reiterating reversal and opposites in this poem, where supposedly fixed sites of memory such as the natural environment and events in Ovid's past in Rome, are lost through lack of presence in Rome. In this way, the separation between Ovid and Rome not only affects the present time, but starts to reach back into the past, as well as the future.

The threat to past works, and their continuity through their place in the literary tradition is also shown in the temporality of this poem. Williams argues that the overall temporal sequence of this poem is 'as retrogressive as the disorder pictured in the *adynata*';[449] as previously discussed, we can see how disruptive river behaviour can more broadly function as a chronotope to represent aspects of poetic time key to the genre. Here, time is going backwards, wiping away memories, thus causing an absence of Ovid's works in the future through the loss of his poetic

[447] Claassen, 2008: 46.
[448] The narrator in the exile poetry as stuck between life and death is discussed in the following chapter.
[449] Williams, 1994: 119.

memory. The genre relies on a sense of response, and so the sense of time has an aspect of dependence, but rather than being relative to 'Roman time', here the time is relative to the natural environment, which (from the poet's perspective) has been disrupted and is no longer recognisable. To just go back to the *Metamorphoses*, rather than the rewriting of time in book 2 which allows Ovid's works to be retroactively inscribed on the landscape as part of the poetic tradition, here the unpredictable behaviour of rivers in the environment indicates a loss of that place, through a loss of the memory inscribed in the natural environment, as in *Heroides* 5.

Even as *Tristia* 1.8 ends on a note looking to the future, it also ends on this note of forgetting and loss. In the final stanza, the narrator asks the addressee to make it so that he can forget the offences of the present, in order to go back to praising him in the future. In this, the loss of memory here also draws into focus the idea of dependence, which as I discussed earlier, is key to the epistolary genre. Although confused as to why the narrator would be wanting to forget this offense against him, Luck suggests that this final stanza focuses on Ovid expecting help, 'or at least a response'.[450] Here the dependence aspect of the genre is brought out, as the narrator wants a response to his poem – in place of the immediate response he would normally receive in the environment of Rome. This aspect of dependence is particularly important for the temporality of memory, as the poet relies on the continuation of poetry through others in order to guarantee his future.

This draws the poem back full circle to the confused temporality of the start, where the misfortunes of the present lead to an ambiguous future. This aspect of looking towards the future is also shown through the subjunctive *sim* (49), indicating the two potential options for the narrator's future poems about his friend. The potential response to Ovid's poem would appear to dictate the course of action the next poems would take, either that of praise or complaint (*et illo officium laudem, quo queror, ore tuum* 50). Here we can see the dependent relationship key to the genre made explicit, as the future of Ovid's poetry is dictated by the response to his works in Rome.

Loss of memory and future in river adynaton is also shown in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.6. In this, the narrator writes to his friend Brutus, thanking him for his continued

[450] Luck, 1977: 74 n.49. 'Ovid erwartet Hilfe, zumindest aber einen Brief von ihm'.

friendship, and discussing the death of Augustus. In the final lines of the poem, the focus on memory and the environment really comes to the forefront with the use of another river *adynaton* to end the poem.

> *hoc ego praecipue sensi, cum magna meorum*
>
> *notitiam pars est infitiata mei.*
>
> *inmemor illorum, vestri non inmemor umquam,*
>
> *qui mala solliciti nostra levatis, ero.*
>
> *et prius hic nimium nobis conterminus Hister* 45
>
> *in caput Euxino de mare vertet iter,*
>
> *utque Thyesteae redeant si tempora mensae,*
>
> *Solis ad Eoas currus agetur aquas,*
>
> *quam quisquam vestrum, qui me doluistis ademptum,*
>
> *arguat ingratum non meminisse sui.* 50
>
> This I felt above all when the most of my friends denied knowledge of me. I shall forget them, but you I shall never forget, who lighten the woes of my trouble. Sooner shall the Hister, all too near me, turn his march back from the Euxine sea towards its source and, as if the age of Thyestean banquets should return, the chariot of the sun shall sooner be driven towards the eastern waters than that any one of you who have mourned my exile shall call me a forgetful ingrate. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.6.41-50)

This *adynaton* is linked to the continuation of the narrator's memory, in a reversal of the previous example; here, it is the narrator who guarantees his own future behaviour alongside the environment, rather than the addressee's. In this, the behaviour of the local environment of Ovid's exile is linked to the poet's continued friendship, and specifically, the continuation of his memory. This places the agency of the act of remembering back onto the narrator, where previously in *Tristia* 1.8 it has been the narrator wishing to forget, as his friends supposedly had. Here, in

Epistulae ex Ponto 4.6, there is a sense of continuation tied to the poet that does not appear in *Tristia* 1.8.

The Hister as the marker of continued memory highlights the role of the exilic environment in Ovid's future. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.6, it is the Hister which is called upon, to guarantee the continuation of his future behaviour, and more specifically for the continuation of the memory of friendship. This is similar to the river *adynaton* in *Heroides* 5, where it is the Xanthus that was called upon – that had a clear allusion to the future of Paris' story, and I would argue that here the Hister has a connection to the future of Ovid's exile works.

This *adynaton* makes a claim to the future of the poet's behaviour, where it is specifically the environment of Ovid's exile that is called upon to make this guarantee. There is a connection between the supposed lack of history for people in this area, and the potential for its future reputation through Ovid's writings.[451] As the poet settles into his environment, and as the environment becomes more known to both himself and his audience through his writings, there is more of a sense of control here. Going back to Claassen's suggestion that time and the seasons are presented as conspiring against the narrator,[452] here we can see this start to fade, as the poet aligns his behaviour with the continuation of the natural environment of his exile through the reference to the Hister. In this *adynaton*, clearly linked to the ideas of remembrance and continuation, the environment of Ovid's exile is finally edged into this idea of the 'Roman present', where realigning with the expected continuation of the environment, this area is more fully incorporated into Roman culture.[453]

This sense of continuation is not only limited to the poet's behaviour though, but also to the passage of time in the land of his exile. In the previous chapter, I discussed how the frozen river in the exile poetry shows an aspect of timelessness, or separation from dominant 'Roman time'. Here, the poet acknowledges the passage of time in his exile, describing spending 5 years in exile (5). In contrast to other aspects such as lack of growth and frozen waters, this explicitly indicates the passage of time in the land of Ovid's exile, and the idea of continuation; both of

[451] Mihajlović, 2018: 766, discussed in chapter 3.
[452] Claassen, 2008: 43, previously referenced in chapter 2.
[453] Of course, the narrator still shows an element of discomfort at the presence of the river, too close (*coterminus* 45).

Ovid's poetry, and his punishment. Even though Augustus himself has not continued, his punishment still stands – this aspect of continuation through acts is really important here.

Both the poet and the emperor are in conflicting acts of continuation, where the emperor has died, but through his continued punishment, and his apotheosis, continues. As the Hister marks Ovid's continued state in exile, his continued letters to friends might ensure his continued poetic presence in Rome. [454] The poet is suffering from a living death in exile, but through his poetry and his friends, will continue. In this way, as the poet can attest that the Hister will not reverse, in his uncomfortably close position, he is able to at least promise a continuation of his poetic presence if not a physical presence in Rome in the future.

Mirroring continuation for both imperial power and the poet's continued punishment is also shown in the link between the Hister and the time of Thyestes (45-7). It is not only through Ovid's continued exile that Augustus lives on, but also through the act of appointing a successor, and the continuation of the imperial family. This is suggested through the allusion to returning to the time of Thyestes' banquet, as the Hister reverses implying a return to the past. Interestingly, the story of Thyestes does not appear in any depth in Ovid's works, with any references mostly used to signify unnatural behaviour.[455] In this image there is an element of mutually barbaric imagery, where the Hister is associated with the savage behaviour of the house of Atreus; this simile further links the 'backwards' time of Tomis to acts of barbarity.

There could be an allusion here to the continuation of Augustus' rule and power through imperial succession, linked to ideas of barbarity.[456] One of the main themes of the House of Atreus stories is the idea of family crimes being passed down, violent interfamily relationships, and lines of succession ending through barbaric means.[457]

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[454] Williams, 1994: 43-4 discussed Ovid's poetic presence in physical absence; see also how remnants lead to renewal and continuation in flooding described in chapter 2 and the first section.
[455] *Ars*. 1.327 – love leads to bad times, Apollo chariot dawn, *Metamorphoses* 15.462 - vegetarianism, *Ibis.* 359 – incest , 545 – curse to be eaten with reference to father. *Heroides*. 16.207-212 connection with sun chariot.
[456] If we accept a potential allusion to Phaethon here as well, there is another link to anxieties of succession. See Boyd (2012) for discussion of how the Phaethon episode plays with ideas of lineage, interacting with the *Odyssey*.
[457] Atreus and Thyestes kill their half-brother, Atreus and Thyestes fight over the throne, Atreus kills Thyestes' sons and serves them as food, Atreus' son Agammenon kills his daughter Iphigenia, his wife Clytemnestra kills him, his son Orestes kills Clytemnestra…

The specific reference here to the Thyestean banquet, which has not occurred in detail in Ovid's previous works, in this poem broadly concerned with the poet's continued punishment and Augustus' death could allude to the complexities of Augustus' successors. Where the poet here is guaranteeing his continuation through association with the environment, albeit the rougher environment of his exile, the allusion to these ideas of incest and filial cannibalism pushes this aspect of barbarity onto Augustus' claim to continuation as well. Here, once again, the poet and the emperor mirror each other in claims to poetic and political continuity.

The use of river reversal *adynata* in Ovid's works draws out anxieties surrounding continuation, through the connection with the continuity of the natural environment. In the *Heroides, Tristia*, and *Ex Ponto*, we can see how the idea of the impossible is made true, by the river *adynata* being linked to something that has already happened, rather than a hypothetical situation. In this, the sense of continuous time indicated by the continuous flow of a river is shown to be fallible, undermining aspects of Ovid's own narrative time as linked to river behaviour. This feeling is particularly heightened in the exile poetry, where the environment is unknown, and presented as being stuck in the past.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how extraordinary aspects of extreme river behaviour create a space in which to consider the future of Ovid's poetic time. This is amplified through the inherent lack of continuity in the extreme flooding and drought behaviours of *Metamorphoses* 1 and 2, as well as the river reversals in *Heroides* 5, *Tristia* 1.8, and *Ex Ponto* 4.6. In this, the genre of each example of river behaviour interacts strongly with the form of temporality presented – in the *Metamorphoses*, past epic precedents are incorporated into the present and future of the text, where overall Ovid's work is retroactively inscribed into the mythical landscape, guaranteeing his works in the future. This is in contrast to the aspects of dependency inherent in Ovid's epistolary poetry, which places the persona of each poem in a position of vulnerability, with a lack of control over their future. This is amplified by the inversion of the *adynata* trope, where the river reversal is usually presented as a guarantee of future behaviour; in Ovid's epistolary poetry this guarantee is shown to be false, and the continuity of the natural environment undermined.

This threat to continuity and the future as represented by the inversion of natural patterns are in direct dialogue with Augustan narratives of superiority over the natural environment, and the prospect of imposing a sense of control over the future.[458] In this, Ovid as author mirrors Augustus' power, and claims to the future. However, in the exile poetry, this mirroring is undermined, and the poet's dependence on the *Pax Romana* centralised in Rome is drawn out.[459] This aspect of dependence is particularly highlighted by river reversal, as it presents a chaotic loss of the continuity guaranteed by access to a regular water supply. Through this, extraordinary aspects of river behaviour draw these ideas of lack of continuity to a head, allowing consideration of different aspects of known and unknown futures through different genres of poetry.

This sense of known and unknown futures will be developed further in the final chapter, *Rivers and the End*, which considers how rivers can provide a sense of continuity in crossing spatial and temporal boundaries in the foreign environments of exile, and even death.

[458] See Beagon (2009: 302) for an idea of Augustan narratives encouraging role models in the past and securing the future.
[459] *Tristia* 2.1.201-2.

Chapter 5. The Natural Unnatural: Rivers and the End

Building from the extraordinary behaviour of rivers, which questions continuity, this chapter explores rivers as a transitional point between life and death. Rivers are an important aspect of Greco-Roman ideas of death in a multitude of ways; ideas of purification, drowning, and pollution through deaths in battle all intersect with the more obvious connection to the rivers of the underworld. The river Styx characterises the most commonly referenced image of an underworld river, where being ferried across the river shows the process of passing from life to death. The four other underworld rivers, the Lethe, Acheron, Phlegethon, and Cocytus each have their own characteristics, marking aspects of the environment of the underworld.[460] Most relevant for transitional points between life and death are the Lethe and Styx. The Lethe acts in a purificatory function, washing away memories as a process of reincarnation – yet as we have seen in previous chapters the river Lethe itself becomes metonymic for losing memory, and as such also carries the threat of being forgotten, or washed away. These conflicting dual aspects of both life and death, purification and pollution, and continuity and ending are inherent parts of river behaviour, and as such, influence the depiction of time through river behaviour in Ovid's works.

As discussed in the first chapter, one of the key ideas of rivers as time is the idea of continuity, which is encapsulated by Pythagoras' speech in the *Metamorphoses*, which likens time to a river, continually moving and renewing.[461] That continuity through movement is an important aspect of how rivers can facilitate transitions between life and death, as well as become symbolic of the process of death, of which the river Styx plays an important role. Pythagoras' speech calls for his audience not to fear death and the river Styx, as the soul/spirit continues on after the body's death.[462] The link here between the Styx, as something which exemplifies

[460] Gantz (1993: 124) briefly describes instances of underworld rivers in Greek myth. Although Underworld rivers are Greek in origin, they occur throughout Latin literature – see Hope (2009: 103-104) for a discussion of the difficulty in unravelling the two traditions. Some references to aspects of underworld rivers in Latin poetry: Acheron is characterised by its depth, and darkness (*Metamorphoses* 5.538-41, 11. 503-6); Cocytus is sluggish/slimy (Virgil, *Aeneid.* 6.298); Phlegethon is used to wash/bathe bodies (*Metamorphoses* 5.544-5, 15.531-2).
[461] *Metamorphoses* 15.179-85 – discussed in chapter 1.
[462] *Metamorphoses* 15.153-9.

final death, and renewal indicated by spiritual continuation is important for the role of rivers in the transition between life and death.

Although Pythagoras here dismisses the Styx and the kind of death it represents, there is more of an implicit thread connecting the two ideas he presents, through the inherent continuous quality of rivers – this contradiction between the role of the river Styx as a boundary between life and death, an ending in some way, and yet also as a body of flowing water which facilitates that movement between those two states, encapsulates the dichotomy at the heart of this chapter. Part of my argument in this chapter is that this river, although superficially representing a barrier, or boundary to be crossed, in fact highlights the process of transition involved in death, and life after death through poetry. This is important for the overall presentation of time through river behaviour in Ovid's works, as it ties together the overall quality of continuity with the abstract behaviour of the role of rivers in both the literal and metaphorical processes of death.

This chapter focuses on rivers and their role in the transition between life and death. A large part of this will deal with the role of the Styx in both the *Metamorphoses* and the exile poetry, but also with how real-world rivers can act in ways which facilitate or deny a sense of continuation after death. Of course, the Styx is not the only river of the underworld. However, the Styx and Lethe by far outweigh the other underworld rivers in terms of their representations in Ovid's works. The Styx is claimed to be the subject of poets, as 'false and terrifying decorations' (*falsi terricula mundi Met*. 15.155), yet the Styx itself does not have any significant appearances in the *Metamorphoses*.[463] Instead, it features more prominently in the exile poetry, as a signifier for the kind of death the poet experiences as an exile. Therefore, the second part of this chapter mostly focuses on the role of the Styx, and how it interacts with ideas of death and memorialisation in the exile poetry.

This chapter consists of two sections, the first, 'Life after Death', explores how rivers can facilitate or negate continuation of the artist's voice after their death. This section will particularly focus on the transformations of Orpheus and Canens, as artist

[463] Styx in *Metamorphoses*, used for divine promises (1.187-9, 734-7; 2.100-102; 3.289-91), and to signify depth and death (1.137-40; 3.75-6, 271-2, 502-5, 692-5; 4.434; 5.114-18, 504-5; 6.661-666; 10.11-13, 696-7; 11.499-501; 12.320-22; 13.465-7, 154-5, 586-91; 15.153-55, 791-3).

figures within the *Metamorphoses*.[464] In this, both the river Hebrus and the river Tiber play an important role in facilitating the afterlives of the artist's voices, through repetition and transportation in the Orpheus episode, and through the act of memorialisation and connection to Ovid's present in the Canens episode.

The second section of this chapter, 'Exile and Living Death', discusses how rivers in the exile poetry, and particularly the Hister, deny this sense of continuation through apotheosis or memorialisation after death. Instead, they indicate how the poet is stuck between the boundaries of life and death. In this, the Hister is often likened to the Styx, although rarely wholly mapped onto it. The initial idea of the Styx as a final death expressed by Ovid's Pythagoras speech highlights part of its role as marking the boundary of the underworld, and the crossing of that boundary superficially marks the transition from life to death. Campbell takes this point further, suggesting that the rivers of the underworld 'constituted an impenetrable barrier';[465] one of the key themes of this chapter is pushing against that idea, and rather arguing that the rivers of the underworld, particularly the Styx, constitute more of a transitional point, that is in fact penetrable, similar to the way the frozen Hister is both boundary and gateway.[466] Through comparison of the way rivers can facilitate or deny continuity after death, this chapter investigates Campbell's suggestion of underworld rivers as the ultimate barrier, and highlights how rivers associated with death can both facilitate and hinder poetic continuation.

Life After Death

I approach this section of the chapter through two episodes in the *Metamorphoses*, Orpheus' death and Canens' transformation, and the role rivers play in facilitating some sort of afterlife. This occurs in two ways, through transportation and repetition in Orpheus' death, and through witnessing and memorialisation in Canens'. The transformations of Orpheus and Canens are particularly important for ideas of life after death for the poet, as they have variously been recognised as artist figures and metapoetic episodes within the poem.[467] The connections between Orpheus and

[464] I will not be discussing Glaucus' transformation in *Metamorphoses* 13.947-57, or Aeneas' apotheosis in *Metamorphoses* 14.586-608, but would suggest that both episodes show the integral physical role rivers play in facilitating life after death both Glaucus and Aeneas' afterlives.
[465] Campbell, 2012: 239.
[466] See chapter 3.
[467] Orpheus and Canens: Farrell (1999), Orpheus: Theodorakopoulos (1999), Canens: Papaioannou (2004).

Canens are clear: both are singers who are able to affect the natural environment, both lose their partners and spend days wandering in mourning. This aspect of mourning again highlights the theme of death and memorialisation, which is key in enabling a poetic afterlife. Most importantly, they both end beside rivers, which help to facilitate an afterlife for the artist. In both of these episodes, the themes of repetition and renewal are important aspects of how rivers can facilitate life after death, which are then destabilised in the exile poetry.

The potential for life after death is a recurring theme in Orpheus' story, through the potential recovery of Eurydice, Orpheus' return to life after descent into the underworld, and the continuation of Orpheus' body beyond his death. After losing Eurydice for the second time, Orpheus tries to cross the Styx again to repeat his first journey to the underworld – however, he is unable and must wait at the bank of the river:

> *orantem frustraque iterum transire volentem*
>
> *portitor arcuerat: septem tamen ille diebus*
>
> *squalidus in ripa Cereris sine munere sedit;*
>
> Orpheus prayed and wished in vain to cross the Styx a second time,
> but the keeper drove him back. Seven days he sat there on the bank in
> filthy rags and with no taste of food.[468] (*Met*. 10.72-4)

The appearance of Orpheus immediately after Hercules' apotheosis highlights the potential for life after death, yet, as Leach demonstrates, through these comparisons between heroes and artists, 'the artist becomes a helpless figure at odds with nature and the authority of the gods'.[469] Orpheus, as a helpless figure at odds with nature and the authority of the gods is prevented from crossing the river Styx again, leaving him helpless at the bank, separate from nature (*Cereris sine munere sedit* 74).[470] Orpheus' inability to specifically cross again (*iterum transire* 72) suggests a failure in unchanging repetition, and also highlights the unnaturalness of Orpheus' original

[468] Trans. Miller (1916).
[469] Leach, 1974: 107.
[470] This inability to cross the Styx appears again in the exile poetry, discussed in the second section of this chapter.

journey to the underworld; as Campbell argues of the rivers of the underworld, they are 'impenetrable'.[471] Yet this recognition of a potential secondary crossing undermines complete impenetrability, at least for an artist figure like Orpheus, by highlighting the occurrence of the first crossing. This makes explicit the artist's power to cross the boundary between life and death, where the boundary is more flexible for an artist figure than for a regular mortal.[472] The artist is shown to have a tenuous claim to power over their journey to the underworld through the power of art, but that power is subject to failure, and cannot be repeated without transformation.[473]

Orpheus' stagnancy is emphasised by his position outside of time and nature, where he sits at the bank of the river, unable to cross, for seven days without food (73-4). The reference to Ceres highlights ideas of life and death through agricultural cycles, but shows Orpheus to be outside of those cycles through lack of food. By being outside of life, and yet unable to cross the river, it appears as though Orpheus is in a timeless state in between life and death, however, this state is bookended by references to the passage of time. Orpheus mourns at the bank of the Styx for seven days, and later is described shunning women for three years (78-80). In the context of the *Metamorphoses* this episode plays with narrative time, as Eurydice's death and Orpheus' introduction occurs at the start of book 10, but his narrations continue until the end of the book, before the poet takes over narration of Orpheus' death at the start of book 11. This mirrors Achelous' extended narration in books 8 and 9, and the superficial state of timelessness this creates.[474] Here, Orpheus' grief and narration throughout contribute to a timeless state in contrast to the attention to time shown by the external narrator, subtly capturing the temporal manipulation at play in this episode, and how it interacts with the theme of grief. Here, the narrator has power over time, but Orpheus does not. This contrast between a timeless state of grief with an inability to cross the Styx and transition fully to death, and the continued passage of time outside of that is more fully taken up in the exile poetry and discussed in the second section of this chapter. Here in the *Metamorphoses*, the role

[471] Campbell, 2012: 149. See also Jones (2005: 20), discussed more fully in the second section of this chapter.
[472] This is also suggested in Aeneas' apotheosis, where Venus highlights that Aeneas cannot cross the Styx twice, and therefore must be made divine (*Metamorphoses* 14.590-1). These connections between artist and hero apotheosis are explored more in Leach (1974).
[473] See the second section of this chapter for the importance of this motif and the impenetrability of the Styx in the exile poetry.
[474] See chapter 2 for time and Achelous.

of the Styx as barrier and facilitator is used to indicate the timeless state of the grieving artist in comparison to the temporal manipulation of the external narrator.

The role of rivers in Orpheus' death also highlights this temporal manipulation, through the maenads mimicking destructive river behaviour, and cycles of flooding. In this, Orpheus is ripped apart by a group of maenads who cannot hear his singing, and are thus not affected by his art. Ovid describes the maenads using agricultural equipment as weapons, and the disruption of the agricultural cycle through their violent presence:

pars torquent silices; neu desint tela furori,

forte boves presso subigebant vomere terram,

nec procul hinc multo fructum sudore parantes

dura lacertosi fodiebant arva coloni,

agmine qui viso fugiunt operisque relinquunt

arma sui, vacuosque iacent dispersa per agros

sarculaque rastrique graves longique ligones;

quae postquam rapuere ferae cornuque minaces

divulsere boves, ad vatis fata recurrunt

and some threw stones. And, that real weapons might not be wanting to their madness, it chanced that oxen, toiling beneath the yoke, were plowing up the soil; and not far from these, stout peasants were digging the hard earth and sweating at their work. When these beheld the advancing horde, they fled away and left behind the implements of their toil. Scattered through the deserted fields lay hoes, long mattocks and heavy grubbing-tools. These the savage women caught up and, first tearing in pieces the oxen who threatened them with their horns, they rushed back to slay the bard; and, as he stretched out his suppliant hands, uttering words then, but never before, unheeded, and moving

them not a whit by his voice, the impious women struck him down.
(*Met.* 11.30-8)

The maenads are similar to flooding rivers, which disrupt agricultural cycles initially through overwhelming destruction. The maenads themselves are called *agmine,* a crowd, band, or a collected motion moving forwards (34). This sense of motion moving forward echoes Lucretius' use of *agmine* to refer to rivers (5.271), which, combined with the aggressive forward spatiality of the maenads, could indicate a connection to the destructive renewal of a river flood.[475]

This destructive renewal is further shown in *dispersa* (35) describing the agricultural tools as weapons scattered across the fields. Being scattered or dispersed throughout the fields mimics the spatial disruption of river flooding, where river waters flow widely over the land. This is also then applied to Orpheus' body, where his limbs are described as lying scattered (*iacent diversa* 50).[476] *Dispersa* and *diversa* both indicate the kind of spatial disruption, specifically not being contained in one place, which defines images of river flooding. It also echoes the specific stages of river flooding which come before the element of renewal – the destruction and the pause or slowing of the waters. Leach highlights this aspect of destruction, where 'in the hands of the raging women, nature becomes a means of destruction'; she argues that this episode signals Orpheus' failure to impose order on nature through his art.[477]

I would argue that there is a sense of order contrasted with disorder in the nature presented here, but as I have previously argued, destructive nature is not necessarily entirely disordered nature. Initially, the focus on the oxen ploughing the earth, and the workers digging (31-2), highlights the process of the agricultural cycle, as they prepare the earth for future crops (32). The maenads disrupt this process and interrupt the continued repetition of the agricultural cycle. If we were to look only at the disrupted agricultural cycle, this sense of disorder may be the overwhelming

[475] Lucretius. 5.261-72 describes the constant flowing of rivers and waters of the sea, and gives examples of evaporation and dispersal for why the earth does not flood. See spatial disruption through flooding in chapter 2.
[476] *Diversa* also appears in *Metamorphoses* 1.40 to describe the ordering of the 'widely separated rivers' in the creation of the earth. Of course, the contrast between order and disorder in the process of creation is also important in this episode, and has resonances here.
[477] Leach (1974: 126) also briefly acknowledges an 'ironic recollection' of Virgil here, in the undermining of the image of farmers and singers as producers of order in nature.

motif of Orpheus' death. However, the association between the maenads and river behaviour undermines this sense of overwhelming disorder, through the role river flooding plays in enabling the future productive use of the land. The maenads force Orpheus' transformation from life to death, which does not immediately bring about renewal and continuation; however, this transformation does facilitate the process of continuation through the Hebrus' acceptance of Orpheus' head.

The disordered state leading to renewal and artistic afterlife is particularly important in the description of Orpheus' body after his death. The violent death is a form of forced transformation for Orpheus, causing an inability to produce art, yet the landscape still responds to his presence. In this, there is a sense of being between life and death, in a process of transition as the river Hebrus receives both Orpheus' head and lyre, both aspects of his musical craft:

Te maestae volucres, Orpheu, te turba ferarum,

te rigidi silices, te carmina saepe secutae 45

fleverunt silvae, positis te frondibus arbor

tonsa comas luxit; lacrimis quoque flumina dicunt

increvisse suis, obstrusaque carbasa pullo

naides et dryades passosque habuere capillos.

membra iacent diversa locis, caput, Hebre, lyramque

excipis: et (mirum!) medio dum labitur amne, 51

flebile nescio quid queritur lyra, flebile lingua

murmurat exanimis, respondent flebile ripae.

The mourning birds wept for thee, Orpheus, the throng of beasts, the flinty rocks, and the trees which had so often gathered to thy songs; yes, the trees shed their leaves as if so tearing their hair in grief for thee. They say that the rivers also were swollen with their own tears, and that naiads and dryads alike mourned with dishevelled hair and clad in garb of sombre hue. The poet's limbs lay scattered all around; but his head and lyre, O Hebrus, thou didst receive, and (a marvel!) while they floated in mid-stream the lyre gave forth

> some mournful notes, mournfully the lifeless tongue murmured, mournfully the banks replied. (*Met.* 11.44-53)

While the rest of Orpheus' body lies scattered, the river Hebrus receives his head and lyre, which are said to float in the middle of the river (*medio dum labitur amne* 51). The lyre continues to lament (*queritur lyra* 52) and the lifeless tongue still murmurs (*lingua murmurat exanimis* 52-3), showing two contradictory states of life and death through the contrast between active verbs and the adjective lifeless. This marks Orpheus as being in between life and death.

Orpheus' head as in the middle of the river then further shows the artist between life and death. Understanding crossing the river Styx as the transition from life to death, and Orpheus then being unable to cross the river again, shows how at this point, stuck in the middle, the poet is not fully dead, or fully alive.[478] This middle stage as represented by being in the middle of river waters shows being trapped in a transitional state, which later becomes a more fully developed motif in the exile poetry. However, this state is not necessarily permanent for Orpheus, as the river Hebrus actively facilitates his transition from life to death, whilst also offering potential for a life after death through repetition.[479]

Potential for life after death is shown in the response of the natural environment to Orpheus' head and lyre. While the head and the lyre float in the middle of the stream, they lament (*queritur* 52) and murmur (*murmurat* 53), to which the banks of the river respond (*respondent flebile ripae* 53). Here, nature is still responding to Orpheus after his death – through mourning, but also through repetition. Theodorakopoulos compares this sense of murmuring to Virgil's Orpheus' clear voice after death in the *Georgics*, and argues that through this comparison, Ovid's Orpheus is a failure for artistic continuation, where his silence is a lack of creative voice.[480] Whilst I agree that here there is a sense of a loss of clear artistic voice, this in itself does not cause a complete failure of artistic continuation; the riverbanks still respond and repeat Orpheus' voice, even after his death. This is further highlighted

[478] The specificity of the head in the middle of the water here has important resonances with *Tristia* 4.5.21-2, where it is the exiled poet's head in the waters of the Styx. The importance of this is discussed in more detail in the second section of this chapter.
[479] *Caput* can also be understood as source, see *Amores* 1.8.6 for a river-based example. This adds another layer here of beginnings and endings, as the head is transported to a new area, where a new story can begin.
[480] Theodorakopoulos, 1999: 159; *Georgics* 4.523-7.

through the repetition of *flebile* in both the description of the head and the lyre (52), and then in response of the riverbanks (53), creating a connection through repetition. In this way, the river can facilitate a sense of continuation through the act of repetition, and memorial in mourning.

The river accepts Orpheus' head and music, and as part of this, responds to his craft; this mirrors the process of a poet joining the literary tradition through the addition of their works, and continued response to them. In this way, the river helps to achieve artistic continuation and life after death through continued engagement with the memory of his works. This is explicitly linked with Orpheus in *Tristia* 4.1.17-8, where he appears in a list of examples of using music to lift sorrows. Orpheus is said to sing while he mourns his wife, here in the *Metamorphoses*, the riverbanks mourn Orpheus. Through this link of repetition throughout texts, and the subject of mourning, there is a sense of artistic continuation through the process of repetition in memorial. Therefore, although Theodorakopoulos suggests that the figure of Ovid in exile and Orpheus are failures of artistic continuation through a lack of voice, here aspects of repetition and memorialisation facilitate an artistic life after death, through joining the wider river of the literary tradition.[481]

The river also facilitates this process through physically transporting Orpheus' head:

iamque mare invectae flumen populare relinquunt
et Methymnaeae potiuntur litore Lesbi: 55
hic ferus expositum peregrinis anguis harenis
os petit et sparsos stillanti rore capillos.
tandem Phoebus adest morsusque inferre parantem
arcet et in lapidem rictus serpentis apertos
congelat et patulos, ut erant, indurat hiatus. 60
Umbra subit terras, et quae loca viderat ante,

[481] Literary tradition as river discussed in chapter 1, 'The River as Poetry'.

cuncta recognoscit quaerensque per arva piorum

invenit Eurydicen cupidisque amplectitur ulnis;

hic modo coniunctis spatiantur passibus ambo,

nunc praecedentem sequitur, nunc praevius anteit 65

Eurydicenque suam iam tuto respicit Orpheus.

And now, borne onward to the sea, they left their native stream and gained the shore of Lesbos near the city of Methymna. Here, as the head lay exposed upon a foreign strand, a savage serpent attacked it and its streaming locks still dripping with the spray. But Phoebus at last appeared, drove off the snake just in the act to bite, and hardened and froze to stone, just as they were, the serpent's widespread, yawning jaws. The poet's shade fled beneath the earth, and recognized all the places he had seen before; and, seeking through the blessed fields, found Eurydice and caught her in his eager arms. Here now side by side they walk; now Orpheus follows her as she precedes, now goes before her, now may in safety look back upon his Eurydice. (*Met*. 11.54-66).

Here, the river Hebrus transports Orpheus' head to the sea, then on to the shores of Lesbos. It is only once Orpheus' head has made it to these shores and been saved from the snake by Apollo that his shade can once again return to the underworld and be reunited with Eurydice. Through the north to south journey of the river, and subsequent sea journey to Methymna, Orpheus is able to transition from life to death. Contrastingly, Ovid makes the opposite journey from south to north in exile, and is then unable to fully transition from life to death.[482]

After Orpheus' shade has been released, and returns to the underworld, he is able to recognise the places he had already visited, yet within this, there is no mention of a repeated crossing of the Styx. This lack of explicit crossing of the Styx may align with Aeneas' apotheosis in book 14, where Venus argues that crossing the Styx a second

[482] Both this reverse journey, the role of Apollo, and the connection to exile are discussed more fully in the second section of this chapter.

time is too much for her son.[483] The idea of 'too much' here highlights both the unnaturalness of the first crossing, as well as the finality within it – by avoiding a second crossing, both Orpheus and Aeneas are aligned less with death, and more with transformation through apotheosis. Orpheus' death and second journey down to the underworld is a different type of apotheosis, rather than death as a finality.

This continuation beyond death is also implicated in Orpheus' return to Eurydice, where the two repeat their original story, swapping places and each looking back. Segal argues that being able to look back in this way suggests Orpheus' success;[484] it also serves to highlight the life after death that Orpheus is able to attain through repetition. Repetition has already been shown to be important in the transmission of the artist's voice in this episode through the riverbanks repeating the murmurings of Orpheus' head. In a similar way, here the most famous part of the Orpheus story, his loss of Eurydice through looking back, has been rewritten and is continuously replayed. As the Orpheus story is also one which has a strong literary tradition of being retold, this has a metapoetic slant as well. While Ovid's Orpheus may have lost his voice, in contrast to Virgil's, awareness of the act of rewriting and repetition highlights the process of continuation through joining the literary tradition that is so important to Ovid's sense of artistic continuation. Here, as Orpheus can gain some sense of a life after death through his repetition and memorial by the riverbanks, as well as his afterlife in repeating and rewriting his ending, so too can Ovid lay a claim to that sense of afterlife through telling the story, and his own story being repeated through the wider flow of the literary tradition.

Joining the literary 'flow' as a form of life after death is continued in Canens' story in *Metamorphoses* 14. Like Orpheus, Canens is also described as being able to move rocks and stop rivers, and also suffers with the loss of her spouse.[485] The story is narrated by a nymph servant of Circe to Macareus, one of Odysseus' men. This is within Macareus' narration of Odysseus' stories to Aeneas, layering multiple narrators and audiences. The nymph describes how Circe transforms Canens'

[483] *satis est inamabile regnum*
adspexisse semel, Stygios semel isse per amnes."
It is enough to look at the unpleasant kingdom once, to cross the Stygian river once.' *Metamorphoses* 14.590-1
[484] Segal, 1972: 490.
[485] *Metamorphoses* 14.337-340 describes Canens being able to influence nature through her singing.

husband Picus into a woodpecker when he rejects Circe, and Canens' subsequent mourning:

sex illam noctes, totidem redeuntia solis

lumina viderunt inopem somnique cibique

per iuga, per valles, qua fors ducebat, euntem; 425

ultimus adspexit Thybris luctuque viaque

fessam et iam longa ponentem corpora ripa.

illic cum lacrimis ipso modulata dolore

verba sono tenui maerens fundebat, ut olim

carmina iam moriens canit exequialia cycnus; 430

luctibus extremum tenues liquefacta medullas

tabuit inque leves paulatim evanuit auras,

fama tamen signata loco est, quem rite Canentem

nomine de nymphae veteres dixere Camenae.'

Six nights and as many returning dawns beheld her wandering, sleepless and fasting, over hills, through valleys, wherever chance directed. The Tiber was the last to see her, spent with grief and travel-toil, laying her body down upon his far-stretching bank. There, with tears, in weak, faint tones, she poured out her mournful words attuned to grief; just as sometimes, in dying, the swan sings a last funeral-song. Finally, worn to a shade by woe, her very marrow changed to water, she melted away and gradually vanished into thin air. Still her story has been kept in remembrance by the place which ancient muses fitly called Canens from the name of the nymph.' (*Met*. 14.423-34)

Within the context of the layered narrative, the reference to the dying swans singing funeral songs (*carmina iam moriens canit exequialia cycnus* 430) echoes the same image of the swans on the river Cayster in the river catalogue in book 2, as well as

the swans in book 5.[486] Here, although the river Cayster is not mentioned by name, through the image which has come through from Homer, Virgil, and books 2 and 5 of the *Metamorphose*s, it is clear to see a temporal thread, which draws together the poetic lineage made obvious by the layered narration.[487] Canens' mourning song likened to the Cayster swans, which are a repeated literary motif, shows continuation beyond death through incorporation into the literary timeline. Here, through the swan and river imagery, the poet highlights how repetition can facilitate life after death, echoing throughout future poetry.[488] This repetition, or being memorialised within an aspect of the landscape, is important for both the Orpheus and Canens episodes, as that repetition or memorialisation is facilitated by rivers.

This is perhaps made clearer by the presence of the Tiber as a witness to Canens' transformation, and the subsequent naming of a place in the landscape. It is specifically the river Tiber who is the subject of the verb *adspexit*, as the last to see Canens (426). The river is shown to bear witness to Canens' transformation, paying particular attention to her transformation and marking it, acting as a connection between the mythical past of the *Metamorphoses* and the present of its audience. This connection has already been hinted at in the catalogue of dryads and nymphs of the surrounding areas of Rome, which introduces Picus (14.326-34). Tissol argues that this catalogue highlights the spatial connection between this ancient story and the familiar local ground of the Roman countryside;[489] I suggest that it also draws a temporal connection, which is then compounded by the presence of the river Tiber. In this, the landscape functions to combine the mythical past of the *Metamorphoses* with the present of Ovid's Rome, particularly through the role of the river Tiber signalling continuation.

The continuity of the river, and its role in witnessing Canens' death, draws these spatial and temporal threads together to link ideas of memorialisation and continuity. Canens' final resting place as specifically on the banks of the river Tiber (*corpora ripa* 427), frames the location with the Tiber at the centre as she transforms into

[486] Previously discussed in chapter 4.
[487] See Papaioannou (2004) for further connections between swan imagery in both Canens and Cygnus' transformations, and the epic aspirations signalled within.
[488] Also interesting to note *Tristia* 5.1.10, where the narrator calls himself a swan, not wanting to be silent – link to stuck between death and continuation discussed further in the second section of this chapter.
[489] Tissol, 1997: 211.

nothing. This place is then singled out as marked by fame (*fama tamen signata loco est* 433), highlighting that even without a body or specific grave, through fame and the witnessing of the river, Canens is remembered, and can thus continue.[490] The emphasis on the Tiber viewing Canens' transformation, as well as framing the river at the centre of the landscape encourages the audience to visualise the current landscape of the Tiber and this area, whilst reading the *Metamorphoses*, drawing a further temporal connection between the 'past' of the poem and the present landscape of the audience.[491]

Theodorakopoulos argues that life and death are not static states in the *Metamorphoses*, but rather that landscape transformations deny a sense of closure and facilitate the movement of the narrative.[492] Through this narrative movement, and placing the image of the familiar landscape at the centre of the image, part of Canens' transformation facilitates poetic continuation – even as she is subsumed by the landscape, she lives on through the continuity of the landscape. Her death or transformation leads to the next section of the *Metamorphoses*, and its continuation. The association then of her transformation, alongside the continuous presence of the river Tiber, marks the role of poetry in the continuation of the artist's memory.

This sense of continuity tied to the memory of the landscape is made all the more interesting when considering the origins of Canens here. As Myers highlights, Canens is not attested before Ovid, and she argues that there is no evidence of a place named after Canens in Italy.[493] Both she and Tissol discuss 'Camenae' as the location alluded to here, alongside a connection with the muses, but it is unclear as to whether Canens as a place Ovid provides an *aetion* for ever existed.[494] The presence of this invented character then, next to the Tiber, which is a continuous presence in Rome, reiterates the act of retroactively inscribing poetic presence on

[490] See Myers (1994: 108-9) for the significance of *fama* here in identifying and undermining narrative authority.
[491] Leach (1988: 211) comments on how visual imagery in Latin literature can give a 'reality' to the reader.
[492] Theodorakopoulos, 1999: 149.
[493] Myers, 1994: 108-9.
[494] Tissol, 1997: 214. Varro *Ling*. 6.75 also discusses the verb to sing (*cano*) as having an etymology in Camena, and *canto* as a derivation of Camenae, further emphasising the metapoetic undertones of Canens in this location. See Spencer (2019: 73-79) for further discussion.

the landscape which was discussed in chapter 4.[495] Using the Tiber to witness Canens' transformation validates her presence in the landscape, and writes a new legacy for that place on the river bank.

Farrell argues that in this, Canens exemplifies a body/voice dichotomy in the *Metamorphoses*, where the artist is shown to attain afterlife through the continued autonomy of their voice.[496] As the riverbanks of the Hebrus repeated Orpheus' voice after his death, the Muses here continue to sing Canens' name (*quem rite Canentem//nomine de nymphae veteres dixere Camenae* 433-4). The combination here of the loss of body, but continuation through the landscape is facilitated through repetition, either through the banks of the river themselves, or through the Muses singing in memory on the banks of the river Tiber. The reading of the *Metamorphoses*, as tied to rivers in the real landscape, adds to the continuation of artistic memory through the literary landscape, rather than a physical memorial – which is an important aspect of literary life after death in the exile poetry.

Exile and Living Death

This section builds on my discussion of rivers as facilitators of life after death, with a closer look at Ovid's exile poetry, and how rivers are presented in a way which undermines or even denies this opportunity for poetic continuation offered by an artistic afterlife. Grebe suggests that Ovid presents his exile as, in part, a kind of 'living death', arguing that banishment signified the crossing of the boundary between life and death.[497] Her term 'living death' will prove extremely useful for this chapter, however I would like to pull back from the idea of a complete, successful crossing of the boundary between life and death in the exile poetry, and rather suggest that through allusions to the river Styx in the environment of Tomis, a sense of being stuck between the living and the dead appears. The poet as amidst life and death, unable to transition between the two states with the help of river water as shown in the previous section, feeds into the overall liminality and 'between times' of the exile poetry. This inability to cross fully into death also draws out anxiety around memory and being memorialised, which Ingleheart has commented on in relation to

[495] This juxtaposition is also shown in the contrast between the specified time period of mourning (423), and the timelessness of the Tiber. This mirrors both the previous Orpheus episode, and Ovid's timeless state stuck at the banks of the Hister in the second section of this chapter,
[496] Farrell, 1999: 138-9.
[497] Grebe, 2010: 499.

Tristia 3.3, but which I would like to expand to consider the exile poetry more broadly, and the role of the underworld rivers and memory within it.[498]

While it may appear that the environment of Tomis is likened to death and the underworld, I argue that the representation of the Hister and the river Styx complicates this notion of a straightforward death of the poet. Although the Hister and the Styx are often aligned in the exile poetry, and other aspects of the natural environment shown to be dead or decaying, the Hister is frequently shown to be separate, and sometimes worse, than the Styx itself.[499] I want to draw out this separation, and to explore how the Hister being aligned with the Styx, and other mentions of the Styx in the exile poetry, highlight being stuck on one side of the bank or the middle of the river, unable fully to cross or transition.[500]

Of the river Styx and its relation to time, Jones argues:

> the ultimate transition of life is visualised as a familiar type of ritualized border crossing. There is a temporal element to all of these rites of passage and they are one way trips. In this respect, they resemble a river not in its identity as a boundary, but as a directional flow of water. The river resembles time, passing in only one direction. Once a rite of passage is accomplished, one's status has been changed and (normally at least) there is no going back.*[501]*

Superficially I agree with this, however, as my previous section has shown, the significance of a one-way trip across the river is undermined by the presentation of afterlives facilitated by other rivers. Crossing the river and changing status as a one-way trip is a particularly important idea for the exile poetry, where the poet is unable to fully cross the river, and has experienced a change of status which, theoretically at least, could be changed back. The differences between the Styx and the Hister then become even more important, in that the Hister is shown to be a boundary which is susceptible to travel in both directions, through its freezing in winter – which also then makes both sides of the banks vulnerable to death.[502] Thus, the aligning of the

[498] Ingleheart (2015).
[499] *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.14.11-12 – discussed in more detail below.
[500] It is also important to note that Roman influence was more centred on the right side of the bank (Mihajlović, 2018: 768), so this idea of being unable to cross also interlinks with physical reality.
[501] Jones, 2005: 20.
[502] Discussed in chapter 3, where the frozen river allows violent incursions.

Styx with the two way notion of the Hister shows the process of crossing the river and dying as less of a one way journey, and indicates the awkward position of the poet as someone unable to cross the boundary either into life or death. Being stranded at the banks of the Styx, with the possibility of crossing or turning away then colours the presentation of both the Hister and the Styx in the exile poetry, and the sense of being immobilised in time with two potential futures.[503]

Being 'in-between' two states is shown in *Tristia* 4.5, where the poet is stuck in Stygian waters as the poet reaffirms his friendship with Messalinus, once again asks for Augustus' clemency, and describes the conditions of his exilic environment:

> *quod licet (et tutum est) intra tua pectora gaude*
>
> *meque tui memorem teque fuisse pium,*
>
> *utque facis, remis ad opem luctare ferendam,*
>
> *dum veniat placido mollior aura deo;*
>
> *et tutare caput nulli servabile, si non*
>
> *qui mersit Stygia sublevet illud aqua;*
>
> *teque, quod est rarum, praesta constanter ad omne*
>
> *indeclinatae munus amicitiae.*
>
> This thou mayst do, and 'tis safe: rejoice within thine own breast that I have remembered thee, and that thou hast been loyal, and as thou art doing, strain thine oars to bear me aid until the god is appeased and a gentler breeze shall come; save a life that none can save unless he who submerged it lifts it from the Stygian waters, and give thyself—a rare thing it is—to every service of unswerving friendship.[504] (*Tr*. 4.5.17-24)

Here, the poet describes his position as in the Stygian waters, where only the person who first submerged him is able to lift him out (*qui mersit Stygia sublevet illud aqua*

[503] The consequences of being stuck in limbo, unable to fully cross into the underworld are shown in *Aeneid* 6.295-336.
[504] Trans. Wheeler (1924).

22). The position here of *Stygia* between both the verb to submerge (*mersit)* and the verb to uplift (*sublevet)* shows the potential for two futures here, with the river Styx positioned in between. The separation of *Stygia* and *aqua* allows water to flow between the verbs of both potential futures, with the poet (*illud*) caught between being rescued and the water itself. This is even further emphasised by the spatial dimension of *mersit* and *sublevet*, which characterise opposing forces pushing downwards, and raising up. In this, the downward motion, indicating further movement into the waters and death by drowning, is explicitly contrasted with the notion of being raised up out of the waters.[505]

The narrator is literally in the middle point in the transition between life and death, as represented by being in the river water itself. This reflects the position of the exiled poet, as in the water in between the two potential futures which face him. By being in the water, with the threat of drowning but also of rescue, being 'stuck' in time is also drawn to the surface. The narrator has no power over this timeless state caused by potential futures beyond his control, in contrast to the temporality of the timeless states presented in the *Metamorphoses.*[506] Here, there is no sense of continuation through progression to the afterlife, and the eulogising memory that comes with that, yet the narrator is also unable to be a part of the temporality of the living world.[507]

The use of *caput* (21) here is also significant, as it more broadly means life, but can also more specifically mean head.[508] It is unclear which is meant specifically here, but I suggest that with the use of *caput* as head, there are echoes of both the Orpheus episode in the *Metamorphoses*, and the idea of death and burial in *Tristia* 3.3. As discussed in the previous section, the Hebrus receives Orpheus' head, and echoes his song with its banks – leading to a sense of continuation, though a lack of life and renewal within that. In this episode, it is the head of the poet which is in the waters of the metaphorical Styx – where this same sense of potential for continuation but loss of life within that is echoed.

[505] There could also be a potential link here between Achilles' partial invulnerability after being dipped in the Styx and the future of Ovid's new poetic form.
[506] See chapter 2 and 3.
[507] As discussed in previous chapter, epistolary mode means always behind the times, in conjunction with the static time of the frozen environment (chapter 2).
[508] As previously discussed, *caput* can also mean source of both poetry and rivers (*Am.*1.8.16), which here adds another layer to the idea of the poet being between life and death, as the source of the poetry and the river of poetry are being overwhelmed by the force of the river.

In *Tristia* 3.3, the poet describes his head lying unburied on barbarian shores, as part of his overall narrative of poetry as a memorial.[509] Here, again we can see a link between Orpheus and Ovid, as this echoes the transportation of Orpheus' head by the Hebrus to a foreign shore (*peregrinis harenis* 56) where it is then attacked by a snake and saved by Apollo (*Met.*11.56-60).[510] The specificity of the Hebrus receiving the head of Orpheus, as a northerly river in a similar region to Ovid in Tomis by the Hister also points towards this link between the two poets.[511] Plenty of other scholars have pointed out the connections between the poet and Orpheus as a poet figure, but I would extend this to a specific connection with the behaviour of the river Hebrus, and the river behaviour in the exile poetry.[512]

In comparison to the Hebrus, the transportation potential of the river Styx in the *Tristia* metaphor is not initially apparent as the poet is stuck in the waters, unable to cross the river to death or return to the world of the living – however, he has been carried to a foreign land, where he is vulnerable to attack, potentially without the protection of an Apollo figure. Ingleheart argues that in various ways, the *Tristia* undermine Augustus' self-presentation as a patron of the arts and as a patron of poets;[513] here, Ovid's retelling of the Orpheus myth reiterates this, as it is linking the potential to be saved from the Stygian waters with Apollo's rescue of Orpheus' head. Apollo is of course, the patron of poetry, and appears in the *Metamorphoses* to have stepped in to protect the head of the poet. Orpheus is then able to cross into the underworld for the second time and reunite with his wife. There are further allusions here to the poet's position in exile – the *topos* of returning to his wife has been a consistent theme throughout the *Tristia*, and through links to Orpheus in the *Metamorphoses*, that idea reappears here.

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[509] *sed sine funeribus caput hoc, sine honore sepulcri*
indeploratum barbara terra teget!
but without funeral rites, without the honour of a tomb, this head shall lie unmourned in a barbarian land! *(Tr.* 3.3.45-6)
See Ingleheart (2015) for more on this poem as a challenge to Augustus through differing claims to monumentality – although she does not connect this with Orpheus.
[510] Tomis described as *peregrinus: Tristia* 1.1.59, 4.8.25; *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.1.3.
[511] Hebrus often described as in snow, frozen – like Hister. Horace *Epistles* 1.3.3-4, *Aeneid* 12.331-3; *Georgics* 4.523 associates Hebrus, Getae, and Orpheus.
[512] See Theodorakopoulos (1999: 158-9) for the disembodiment of Orpheus as linked to the exiled Ovid.
[513] Ingleheart, 2006b: 91.

With these allusions, all rests on the decision of Augustus, as the supposed patron of the arts and poets, to rescue Ovid's head from the waters, after his 'death' through exile. This emphasises the role of Augustus in the poet's current position of being in the waters of the Styx, in the middle of life and death.[514] Through this link to the head of Orpheus in the river Hebrus in the *Metamorphoses,* Ovid can undermine Augustus' presentation of himself as patron of the arts. By using the specific idea of the head in the waters, Ovid can subtly lay blame on Augustus whilst also calling for rescue and a return to Rome. As a totality this highlights Augustus' role in the frozen temporality Ovid faces, where the continued writings of Ovid's present works are guaranteed by Augustus' refusal to change his mind. By highlighting the role both Ovid and Augustus have in the continued production of this poetry, the poet can attempt some way of overcoming his position in exile and call for movement.

Of course, the multitude of meanings for *caput*, and the reference to being aided by oar (19), complicate this notion a little. The need to be aided by oar could indicate the narrator presenting himself as in a ship, which would show needing to cross the river, either way, and being ferried across as part of the ritualized crossing of the Styx.[515] The image of the ship is commonly held to be a metaphor for poetic works;[516] needing a gentle breeze, and the oar aiding the narrator could allude to this idea, and link back more broadly to connections of the poet on a ship in the exile poetry.[517] However, it is important to note the absence of a specific ship the narrator may be on in this poem, in comparison to *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.9.74 where a ship is specifically referenced as the mode of exiting the region of the Styx.[518] The use of *mersit* and *sublevet* (22) show specific ideas of watery deaths, emphasising drowning, again highlighting the importance of the specific body or head in the waters.[519] Ingleheart also makes the convincing argument for *caput* meaning head

[514] Oliensis (2004) discusses the 'symmetrical and reciprocal' nature of the poet's unending time in exile, and the undending anger of Augustus in *Tristia* 4.
[515] *Aeneid* 6.408-16 describes the ferryman Charon helping Aeneas to cross the river, conversely, he blocks Orpheus from crossing the river again in *Metamorphoses* 10.72-4 and Virgil, *Georgics* 4.502-3.
[516] References for ships as poetry *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.14.22; *Fasti* 1.466; 2.3, 2.863-4; 3.790; 4.18, 4.729-30. See Green (2004: 33) for the inconsistent use of ships as poetry in the *Fasti*.
[517] References to Ovid on a ship *Tristia* 1.4, 1.10; *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.14.22.
[518] This image is discussed in more detail below.
[519] *Mersit, mergeo*: *Metamorphoses* 10.697 – Cybele wants to submerge Hippomenes and Atalanta into Styx (due to Venus wanting praise) – death, decided not strong enough punishment – transformation into lions. *Sublevet* also used for the idea of continuing to live in *Tristia* 1.3.102.

specifically in *Tristia* 3.3;[520] this meaning continues throughout the *Tristia*, to here in 4.5. The body in the waters of the Styx as a mid-way point between life and death is also continued in *Tristia* 5.9, where the example of a swimmer from shipwreck is specifically used as the focal point of the metaphor for receiving help – mirroring this metaphor in 4.5 and solidifying the link to the specific body in the water.

The head and body in the waters of the Styx, echoing Orpheus and representing the lack of control the poet has over his own narrative time and the future of his works, is also important when considering the idea of the swimmer presented in Ovid's previous works. In comparison to the previous narrative control over time and the future represented by rivers, *Tristia* 4.5 presents a lack of control through a lack of swimming. In both the *Ars Amatoria* and *Remedia Amoris*, swimming across a river is used as a metaphor for 'going with the flow', literally.[521] In both, the narrator encourages their pupil in love to swim with the flow of the river, rather than against it. In the *Ars* particularly, this is put forward as an example of conquering the river, and ultimately, the target of the pupil's affections:

> *Obsequio tranantur aquae: nec vincere possis*
>
> *Flumina, si contra, quam rapit unda, nates.*
>
> By compliance are waters swum; nor can you conquer rivers if you swim against the current's flow.[522] (*Ars.* 2.181-2)

Here the swimmer is presented at a distance from the didactic narrator figure, and used as an example of waiting out your lover. Starr highlights the sense of control that comes with swimming across the river, which I extend outwards to a control over time.[523] Delaying in both *Ars* and *Remedia* suggests time controlled by the lover,

[520] Ingleheart, 2015: 290.
[521] *Stultus, ab obliquo qui cum descendere possit,*
Pugnat in adversas ire natator aquas.
Foolish swimmer, who fights against the opposing waters, when he could descend sidelong. (*Rem.* 121-2.)
[522] Trans. Mozley (1929).
[523] Starr, 2001: 565.

where going with the flow of the river aligns the lover with the flow of time – both the river and the swimmer working most efficiently for elegiac aims.[524]

In comparison, the swimmer in *Tristia* 4.5 is the narrator, stuck in the Stygian water waiting for a rescue. This takes away the sense of power and control over time that comes with the knowledge of how to most effectively swim with the river, and instead places the narrator as the victim of this flow of time, unable to cross the river, and so stuck in its flow. Here, the option of two potential futures, being rescued or drowning, neither of which are under the poet's control, highlights the more overwhelming sense of being dragged by the flow of the river of time.[525] This is in contrast to the narratorial control over temporality shown in the *Metamorphoses,* and again highlights this separation between the river waters and the poet in the exile poetry.

The loss of control over waters through the image of swimming is also shown in *Tristia* 5.9, where the poet thanks an unnamed friend for their help throughout his exile and attempts to memorialise their deeds without naming them. As part of this, the narrator once again puts himself in the waters of the Styx, needing aid:

> *cumque perhorruerit casus pars maxima nostros,*
>
> *pars etiam credi praetimuisse velit,*
>
> *naufragiumque meum tumulo spectarit ab alto,*
>
> *nec dederit nanti per freta saeva manum,*
>
> *seminecem Stygia revocasti solus ab unda.*
>
> *hoc quoque, quod memores possumus esse, tuum est.*
>
> When most men shrank with dread at my fall—some even would have it believed that they had feared it—and gazed from a safe height upon my shipwreck, extending no hand to him who swam in the savage

[524] See also Propertius 3.9.35-6, which contrasts epic poetry represented by sailing swollen sea, and elegiac poetry as delaying in a small stream. For more on delaying as a strategy of the elegiac genre see Gardner (2013).
[525] Virgil, *Georgics* 1.199-200 presents aggressive flow of a river as a negative force, Horace *Odes* 3.29.33-4 – 'rest carried along like a river' – suggests a more laissez faire approach.

seas, thou alone didst recall me half lifeless from the Stygian waters. (*Tr*. 5.9.15-20)

The narrator describes how others have merely watched his shipwreck from afar, and not offered help to the swimmer left behind in the waters. Here, the swimmer is stuck in savage sea (*freta saeva* 18); where there is no indication of trying to swim with or against the current, instead it is implied that the waters are wild and directionless, perhaps even suggestive of the sea. Directionless wild waves fits with previous descriptions of the natural and political environments of Tomis, where the lack of agricultural growth and violence from a supposedly insecure border undermine the order of a natural cycle suggested in Ovid's previous works. This also reiterates the sense of blurred spatial boundaries previously discussed in chapter two and four, as river and sea water mixes. The potential connection to the sea is then undercut by the next line, which references the Stygian waves (19). This brings the more abstract concept of wild waves back to the idea of river waters, specifically, the river marking the border between life and death.

Looking back on the swimmer in this context, directionless wild waves make it hard to follow the advice set out in Ovid's previous works – how can the narrator swim with the current to cross and conquer the river if there is no direction to the river? This echoes Jones' argument introduced at the start of this section; the one-way directionality of the Styx is what allows it to function as a marker of transition from life to death. Here, the lack of directionality highlights the difficulty of that transition for the narrator, as stuck in between the two states of life and death, unable to follow the current in its supposed one-way flow.

This is more fully emphasised in the next line, where the narrator describes himself as half dead (*seminecis* 19) in the Stygian waters. *Seminecis* is interesting considering the theme of a living death in the exile poetry – this is its only use in all the exile poetry, and it is only used once more in Ovid's entire corpus.[526] This occurs in the *Metamorphoses*, used to describe a victim of Lycaon's as being half dead (or

[526] Anderson (1997: 174 n.228) argues that Ovid's use of this is derived from Virgil, and that Virgil invented the compound, but as it also appears in Livy 23.15.8.3, 29.2.15.3, this seems unlikely. In comparison, *seminecis* occurs 5 times in the *Aeneid*; 5 times in V. F. *Argonautica*; 5 times in Statius, *Thebaid.*

half alive) when being boiled and roasted to be served to Jupiter.[527] Once again, *seminecis* is being in water, and being in between life and death, with interesting resonances in the context of being killed and served to Jupiter, and Ovid's position as an exile at the mercy of Augustus. Claassen summarises the position of the narrator in the exile poetry, where they are 'simultaneously dead, in a frozen and sterile underworld, and alive and sentient';[528] the duality inherent in the exile's position as both life and death is neatly summed up in *seminecis*. The sibilance of *seminecis* and *Stygia* links the two ideas together, showing the narrator as half dead specifically in his position in the Stgyian waters. Once again, the image of the river Styx, as associated with the Hister, is used to portray the poet's position as between life and death in exile. Being 'stuck' between both states in the river waters reiterates being unable to fully transition between the two states by crossing the river, leading to a sense of stalled narrative temporality in this moment.

Being half dead is associated with being lifted out of the water, specifically described as being recalled (*revocasti* 19). Aside from the obvious connection to being recalled from the brink of death, through being lifted out of the waters, this verb also has connotations of withdrawing, restoring, and recalling soldiers;[529] here, there is an implicit connection with the sense of going back, or returning. In the context of the exile poetry, this echoes the poet's continued pleas for a return to Rome, where here, being recalled from the Stygian waters can be linked with a return to Rome, and as such, a return to life.

Luck connects this line with Terence's *Hecyra*, where Pamphilus thanks his father's slave Parmeno and says that he brought him back from hell to the light of day, which Luck argues undermines the image in the *Tristia*.[530] However, I do not think this connection is immediately obvious; aside from the connection with the idea of bringing someone back from the dead, with the verb *reducem,* there is no direct

[527] *Metamorphoses* 1.228.This victim is described as a Molossian hostage – see Ziogas (2013: 327-8) for interplay between names, wolves, and narrative.
[528] Claassen, 2008: 181.
[529] Lewis and Short (1879).
[530] Luck, 1977: 314 n.19. Terence, *Hecyra* 852. *egon qui ab Orco mortuom me reducem in lucem feceris sinam.* The plot of the comedy revolves around Pamphilus' rape of an unknown woman (Philumena), who later becomes his wife. When she becomes pregnant, Pamphilus and his father Laches fear infidelity, before Laches' slave reveals that it is Pamphilus' child, and that Philumena is the woman he raped before his marriage. I accept that this potential connection could undercut some of the dramatics of this metaphor, but I am not entirely convinced it is a clear connection to begin with.

connection with the idea of being half dead, or being recalled from the Styx specifically. In *Tristia* 5.9, the use of *revocasti* differs from the idea broadly put forward in Terence through this specific connection to the waters of the Styx, and the act of swimming. The key presence of the water emphasises this as a middle point which the poet is submerged in, only to be rescued by another. This once again shows the Styx/Hister as a marker between life and death, with the narrator having no agency, nor is the river able to facilitate any kind of transition as the rivers do in the *Metamorphoses*.[531] Placing the narrator as the object of the verb emphasises the sense of dependence in this poem, and the exile poetry more broadly, where the poet is dependent on others to ensure the continuation of his poetry, locked in a battle of wills with the emperor.

It is through this revocation from the waters that the poet is able to continue his verse and look towards the future, through the act of memorialisation. Immediately following this rescue from the Stygian waters, the narrator dedicates their poetry to the unnamed friend:

> *hoc quoque, quod memores possumus esse, tuum est.* 20
>
> *di tibi se tribuant cum Caesare semper amicos:*
>
> My very power to remember this is due to thee. May the gods and Caesar ever grant thee their friendship! (*Tr*. 5.9.20-21)

This places the poem itself as an act of memory, where the poem is a result of the friend recovering the poet from the waters of the Styx – leading to some sense of continuation. The act of memorialisation through poetry echoes other lines in this poem, which discuss the potential reputation the unnamed friend could have had, through the publication of their name in Ovid's poetry.[532] This continues the theme of

[531] Lack of control over death is also shown at end of the poem, the narrator is only able to wish for a short life; *dumque—quod o breve sit!—lumen vitale videbo*
While – let that be short! – I see the light of life (*Tr.* 5.9.37).
[532] *Tristia* 5.9.3 I would have sung in memory of your service *(te canerem solum, meriti memor, inque libellis)* – linking to a potential future of his poetry, through the act of memory.
Tristia 5.9.7-8 the present would know of your kindness, and future ages, if our words would last a long time (*te praesens mitem nosset, te serior aetas,*
scripta vetustatem si modo nostra ferent). This is another connection to the memorialisation of his deeds in poetry leading to future memory – if his writings should survive – with potential for continuation beyond death.

Ovid's poetry as a memorial, and through that, a claim to continuation after death in the future.

The claim to continuity through poetry is then immediately contrasted with the narrator calling for the gods and Caesar to grant everlasting friendship (*semper amicos* 21) to the unnamed recipient of this poem. This then changes the focus from the potential future offered by Ovid's poetry, to the present and future offered by Caesar. The use of *semper* appeals to everlasting continuation outside of a definite time. These two lines next to each other, immediately following the narrator's rescue from the Styx, encapsulate the two opposing potential futures which cause the poet to be in this half dead state. On one hand, the recipient allowing their name to be published in Ovid's poetry and gaining some sense of life beyond death through the act of poetic memorialisation; however, this option faces potential wrath from the Caesar, as the poet himself has faced.[533] On the other hand there is the more immediate future offered by continued and eternal friendship with the Caesar, which the poet himself is continually attempting to access. The two possibilities, the poet or the Caesar, place the two ways of continuation, or powers over life, in contrast with each other.

Competing memorialisation and power over life after death is brought out by Ingleheart's analysis of *Tristia* 3.3, which focuses specifically on monumentality, and poetry as a competing way of being remembered. In that, she focuses on the lack of Augustus' name in 3.3, and how that can undermine monuments as a claim to immortality, as opposed to memorialisation through poetry.[534] This echoes the name of the poet being mixed amongst those of other poets in the *Ars*, in contrast to being washed away by the Lethe. The Lethe river is an instrument of forgetting, threatening to remove all trace of name and legacy. In this, it can also be connected to the destructive threat of flooding, washing away markers in the landscape as a way of creating a timeless moment. In the face of this threat, the name here becomes a monument in contrast to the waters of the Lethe.[535] This focus on the name also links with the unnamed enemy in *Tristia* 4.9, whose name and actions the poet says

[533] *Tristia* 5.9.33 not being injured by the memories of a friend (*ne tamen officio memoris laedaris amici*) – potential repercussions for being memorialised in Ovid's poetry.
[534] Ingleheart, 2015: 300.
[535] *Ars.*339-40, which will be discussed further below.

will be consigned to the Lethe.[536] The lack of name undermining claims to successful memorialisation is also presented here, as the lack of name hinders the potential for the recipient's memorialisation in poetry – where the Caesar's everlasting friendship is placed in contrast with the potential overwhelming power of Ovid's poetry.[537] In comparison, it could be considered lacking. By having these two competing futures immediately follow the explicit association between being half dead and being in the Styx, the poet can place the river as central between the two potential futures, as rivalling aspects of poetic continuation.

Rivalling poetic continuations are drawn out more explicitly in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.8, where the poet plays with the past and the present to undermine his own presentation of static time, and gesture towards some sense of continuation through poetry. This is shown through underlying connections between the Hister and the Styx, and the Hister and Tiber. This poem begins with the poet addressing his friend Severus, and describing how he suffers in the war-torn land of his exile, often having to act as a soldier. He describes this poem as having been written on the field of battle (10). The present of the poet's exile is then undercut by a minor historical digression in which the narrator tells the history of the city of Tomis. This starts with the old city described as being specifically on the banks of the double named Hister (*stat vetus urbs, ripae vicina binominis Histri* 11); both the specificity of the banks, and the dual named river are important here for the structure of this poem, and the presentation of time within it.

Gaertner suggests that this second name refers to the Danube, and that the Latin poets preferred to use Hister;[538] this is a sensible conclusion. However, in the context of Ovid, I would like to complicate this notion slightly. Ovid uses the name Danube three times in his whole surviving corpus, three of which are in the exile poetry, and out of thirty-one mentions of the Hister/Danube river overall by name. Contrastingly, the Hister and the Styx are implied to be the same, or used to identify the same location, seven times.[539] This adds another layer to the *binominis Histri*, in

[536] *Tristia* 4.9.2.
[537] Natural imagery similes (27-32); interestingly no overwhelming floods in comparison to earlier poetry – see discussion in chapter 2.
[538] Gaertner, 2005: 435 n.11.
[539] *Tristia* 1.2.65-8; 4.5.22*; 5.9.19*; *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.8*; 3.5.55-6; 4.9.74*; 4.14*; * are discussed in this chapter.

that if one were to only read the exile poetry, its other name could equally be the Styx. I am not arguing that it could only be the Styx, but rather, that there is an underlying idea here of the Styx as one of the Hister's dual identities. This, combined with the digression about the foundation of Tomis, where Ovid is exiled and in whose present this poem is supposedly set, connects this line to the section after the digression into the epic past. Here, the use of the river name, in connection with the rest of the exile poetry, hints at more of a link between the present and the past in this poem, that is then repeated throughout.

Rebuilding the prestige of Tomis' past, and the suggestion of control over time and history within that is made more overt in the reference to the Styx, and returns to the present of this poem:

sed memor unde abii, queror, o iucunde sodalis,
accedant nostris saeva quod arma malis.
ut careo vobis, Stygias detrusus in oras,
quattuor autumnos Pleïas orta facit.
nec tu credideris urbanae commoda vitae
quaerere Nasonem, quaerit et illa tamen.
nam modo vos animo dulces reminiscor, amici,
nunc mihi cum cara coniuge nata subit:
aque domo rursus pulchrae loca vertor ad urbis,
cunctaque mens oculis pervidet usa suis.

But mindful of my beginning, my dear comrade, I complain of the addition of cruel warfare to my misfortunes. Since I have been separated from you, thrust down to the very shores of the Styx, the rising of the Pleiads is now bringing on the fourth autumn. Yet believe not thou that 'tis the joys of city life that Naso seeks—and yet even them he seeks—for at times I have memories of you, my pleasant friends, at times thoughts of my daughter and my dear wife steal over

> me, and from my own house I am once again visiting the localities of
> the beautiful town, my mind surveying everything with eyes of its own.
> (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.8.25-34)

This section flips from memory (25), to the present (26-7), to the passing of time (28), to the past of the poet's life in Rome (33-4). The present, associated with the Styx and the poet's position in exile, is placed alongside the explicit reference to the passing of time in exile, 'rising Pleiades make this the fourth autumn' *(quattuor autumnos Pleïas orta facit* 28). The previous marker of the lack of time, the Styx, is directly connected with the four autumns that have passed. This, combined with the placement of the poet as specifically on the shores of the Styx, serves to slowly undercut the idea of being stuck in time as presented in the *Tristia*. The specificity of the Stygian shores (*oras* 27), in comparison to the banks of the Hister (*ripae* 11) mirrors the place of the old city on the banks of the river, but moves away from this image slightly. Whilst *oras* can mean shores, it can also mean extremity, limit, or edge of a boundary.[540] This once again connects Ovid's position in exile with the edge of the Roman world, and therefore stuck at the edge of 'Roman time'.[541]

However, as has been suggested by the more confident manipulation of time in the structure of this poem, there is potential within the *oras* for movement away from this liminal space. The more common use of *oras* as shores, and a connection with the sea rather than rivers, undercuts the previous image of being stuck in the waters of the Styx.[542] The potential allusion to the sea through the use of shores rather than banks also connects to the final stage of a river's journey, into the sea. This lack of clarity here may reflect a transition or ending, through the implied ending of the river's journey into the sea. Here, connected with the naval imagery in the final lines of the poem, there is potential movement away from the static time of this region, through the ship. The ship offers a way to travel across the sea and away from this place, and a return to the expected directionality of river flow and time – in a reversal of the opening poems of the *Tristia*. In this way, the association with the river Styx is

[540] Lewis and Short, (1879).
[541] Habinek (1998: 164) discusses the effect of this isolation from Rome, and how supports colonialization and construction of the imperial subject – in this way, although the poet appears outside 'Roman time' he still actively takes part in contributing to the power structures that support the empire.
[542] Lewis and Short (1879) recognises *ora* as a sea coast in particular; *ripa* is exclusively used for river banks in Ovid's works, occurring 30 times in connection with rivers.

adapted to show this development in the narrator's experience of timeless exile, where rather than the river representing a boundary or transitional point that the narrator is not able to cross either way, here the association with the sea and return of the poet's previously wrecked poetic craft allows for a potential future transition – the restarting of time.

This temporal manipulation and potential for the future is continued in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.9, where the narrator describes himself as on a ship in the Stygian waters:

> *iudiciis igitur liceat Flaccoque tibique*
>
> *talibus Augusti tempus in omne frui.* 70
>
> *quod tamen ab rerum cura propiore vacabit,*
>
> *vota precor votis addite vestra meis.*
>
> *et si quem dabit aura sinum, laxate rudentes,*
>
> *exeat e Stygiis ut mea navis aquis.*
>
> *praefuit his, Graecine, locis modo Flaccus, et illo* 75
>
> *ripa ferox Histri sub duce tuta fuit.*
>
> Therefore may it be your lot and that of Flaccus to enjoy for all time such verdicts of Augustus. But in his leisure from the more pressing cares of state add both your prayers, I beseech you, to mine, and if the breeze shall belly any sail, loosen the cables that my bark may set forth from the Stygian waters. The commander of this region, Graecinus, was till recently Flaccus, under whose charge the turbulent banks of the Hister were safe. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.9.69-76)

This image of the ship is more explicit than the previous example, and is associated again with the Stygian waters. Here, the ship is ready to sail, merely waiting for outside forces such as the wind, and the release of the rope still tied to the dock (73-4). Once again, there is an association between the Styx and the Hister, with the river names in reasonably close proximity, tied to the location of Ovid's exile. The image of the ship on the Stygian waters, waiting for both the breeze and the

loosening of the rope echoes the previous examples where the poet is stuck in time, in the waters of the Styx, unable to transition. Although now, instead of being physically in the waters as in the earlier metaphors, the poetic craft has reappeared. Waiting for a breeze to set sail evokes *Tristia* 4.5.20, where the poet is waiting for a gentler breeze from the calm god – both examples highlight how much the potential futures of the poet depend on other people, and dependent on others, yet there is potential for movement.

When discussing the second poem of the *Tristia*, and the sea journey within it, Ingleheart highlights the link between the narrator asking for a breeze for his journey in *Tristia* 1.2.85, and Anchises praying to Jupiter for a breeze to get to Italy at *Aeneid* 3.521.[543] This continued motif plays with the idea of journeying to Italy, as well as the epic foundation myth of Rome. Whilst the inevitability of the epic narrative ensures that Aeneas and his men will reach Rome, the same is not certain for Ovid. In *Tristia* 1.8, the breeze initially pushes the poet towards Italy, making it clear it is Augustus who is ensuring Ovid's exile. Continuing from this, the breeze then represents a potential return to Rome, but can only be given by the god of storms, as Anchises prays to Jupiter. Within that, there is an inherent sense of dependence in waiting for the breeze which has the potential to remove the poet from his dock on the Styx, and remove this sense of being stuck in time. In this way, the combination of the ship and the Stygian shores creates the image of a reverse sea journey, away from static time, and back to Rome.[544]

The potential new journey, back to poetry and back to Rome is also indicated in the inclusion of historical 'Roman time', through reference to the recently pacified riverbank:

praefuit his, Graecine, locis modo Flaccus, et illo 75

ripa ferox Histri sub duce tuta fuit.

[543] Ingleheart, 2006a: 77.

[544] *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.14.11-14: Styx and Hister separate places, Hister worse than Styx – shows move away from being in the waters unable to transition, and again shows desire to leave. Poet compared to earth lower than Styx, wild grass, and the swallow – chaotic, out of bounds again. The reliance on a breeze could also draws out a connection to the epic genre within the return to Rome, where the Greek armies must wait for breeze caused by Iphigenia's sacrifice to be able to sail to Troy.

hic tenuit Moesas gentes in pace fideli,

hic arcu fisos terruit ense Getas.

hic raptam Troesmin celeri virtute recepit,

infecitque fero sanguine Danuvium. 80

quaere loci faciem Scythicique incommoda caeli,

et quam vicino terrear hoste roga:

The commander of this region, Graecinus, was till recently Flaccus, under whose charge the turbulent banks of the Hister were safe. He held the Moesian tribes to loyal peace, he cowed with his sword the Getae who trust in the bow. He recovered with swift valour captured Troesmis, dyeing the Danube with barbarian blood. Question him about the face of this land, the rigours of the Scythian climate; ask him about the terror that I suffer from the foe so close at hand (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.9.75-82)

The move back to the Hister connects to the previous metaphor, linking the Hister and the Styx once again as the present position of Ovid's exile. The Stygian waters the poet is ready to depart from, which no longer overwhelm the swimmer of the *Tristia*, here mirror the recently pacified banks of the Hister. Through the presence of Flaccus, as a fellow Roman, the riverbanks have been domesticated and put under control. The appearance of Flaccus highlights recent Roman presence in the area, and shows the environment of Ovid's exile as affected by current events in Rome. In this way, this section highlights the mingling of 'Roman time' with the environment of exile, and the formation of a new kind of temporality in the exile poetry.

This is further exemplified through the dyeing of the Hister with blood in battle (*infecitque fero sanguine Danuvium* 80).[545] Here, the Hister is referred to as *Danuvium*, echoing the *binominis Histri* of *Epistulae ex Ponto*. 1.8, another poem which indicates the passing of time through connection in memory with Rome. The

[545] Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.86-7, 11.391-5, 12.35-6 show the Tiber dyed with blood, as different aspects of claiming the landscape. Ovid, *Tristia* 4.2.37-8 shows blood stained representation in triumphs, see Östenberg (2009) for more on rivers in triumphs.

pollution of the Hister, dyeing it with blood, indicates this strengthened connection between the passing of time enabled by Rome, and the poet's position in exile. Here, the polluted waters show the influence of the physical might of Rome, as well as an aspect of claiming the landscape.[546] However, this also highlights the mixed temporalities here, as the reference to the recent past of Flaccus, aligned with his arrival back in Rome, shows the interactions between the two environments, and the possibility of a return journey to Rome. As the blood mingles with the waters of the Hister, so does Roman temporality mingle with the time in exile, through the process of memory, and through Ovid's presence in poetry. This echoes the mirroring of Tomis and Rome in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.8, and more generally highlights the way that conflicting temporalities facing the poet are being synthesised.

The mixture of 'Roman' time, and exile time is continued by the poet when he requests that Graecinus ask Flaccus to verify the content of his poetry, specifically, the freezing of the land and sea (80-86). In this way, the poet is calling on another to witness the landscape, in another reversal of the *Metamorphoses'* rivers witnessing the artists.[547] The presence of Flaccus in Rome presents the poet with an opportunity for verification, as the recent past of this poem becomes the present in Rome when Flaccus returns and can tell of his time at the banks of the Hister. This flips the image of the poet waiting or being behind the times of Rome, and instead makes events at the Hister the focus, which Graecinus can ask about.[548] This renewed focus on the exilic environment signifies poetic control, and mingles Rome and Tomis, through the repetition of the content of Ovid's poetry, rather than appearing entirely separated from Rome.

Here, asking for confirmation in Rome shows continuous interactions in the present of Rome with Ovid's poetry, which has been muted in the epistolary format. This contrasts the image of static time initially presented in the frozen land and sea the poet asks to be confirmed. In this way, the two temporalities come together, moving away from the lack of transition in the *Tristia* through to a synthesised sense of time. This is summed up in the image of the ship on the Stygian shores, ready to leave

[546] This suggests another return to the epic mode, through the motif of the polluted river as the Scamander in *Iliad* 11, and the Tiber in *Aeneid* 6.
[547] Discussed in previous section, the Hebrus and Tiber both witness Orpheus and Canens' death, and play a role in their artistic afterlives.
[548] *Tristia* 5.8 highlights the poet's desire to receive letters from Rome.

and seek new pastures. At this point, the plea for external aid remains, but the poet is able to forge his own mingled temporality, shown through the idea of water pollution, in the meantime. This shows the more confident temporal manipulation of the *Epistulae*, in contrast to the sense of extreme static time in the *Tristia*.

This sense of mingled time through pollution is also reiterated through the river catalogue in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10, where the poet explains how the sea is able to freeze:

adde quod hic clauso miscentur flumina Ponto,
vimque fretum multo perdit ab amne suam.
huc Lycus, huc Sagaris Peniusque Hypanisque Calesque
influit et crebro vertice tortus Halys,
Partheniusque rapax, et volvens saxa Cinases
labitur, et nullo tardior amne Tyras,
et tu, femineae Thermodon cognite turmae,
et quondam Graiis Phasi petite viris,
cumque Borysthenio liquidissimus amne Danapris
et tacite peragens lene Melanthus iter,
quique duas terras, Asiam Cadmique sororem,
separat et cursus inter utramque facit,
innumerique alii, quos inter maximus omnes
cedere Danuvius se tibi, Nile, negat.
copia tot laticum, quas auget, adulterat undas,
nec patitur vires aequor habere suas.

Moreover, here the rivers mingle in the landlocked Pontus, and the sea loses its own power because of many a stream. Here the Lycus, here

> the Sagaris, the Penius, the Hypanis, the Cales flow in and the Halys twisting in many an eddy, the destroying Parthenius, and the Cinases glides along tumbling his boulders, and the Tyras inferior to no stream in swiftness, and thou, Thermodon, familiar to the bands of women, and thou, Phasis, sought by Grecian heroes, Borysthenian Dnieper with its clear river, and Melanthus, quietly completing his gentle course, and the river1 which separates two lands, Asia and Cadmus's sister, making its way between them, and countless others of which mightiest of all the Danube refuses, O Nile, to yield to thee. The wealth of so many waters corrupts the waves which it augments, not allowing the sea to keep its own strength. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10.45-60)

Here, the combination of all the rivers entering the sea are described as polluting or defiling the waves (*adulterat undas* 59). The specific idea of pollution here is more explicit through the use of *adulterat*, in contrast to the use of *infecit* in the previous poem. *Adulterat* has mostly negative meanings, around pollution, corruption, and adultery, and is mostly used in Ovid's poetry for the adulterous meaning. This connects the idea of pollution with the act of adultery, and perhaps echoes the previous themes of Ovid's love poetry. This connection with adultery indicates a sense of acting outside of a pre-established relationship, as Ovid now operates in Tomis, outside of Rome. Within this sense of pollution associated with Tomis, the dilution of the sea by the fresh-water rivers cause the sea to lose its power (*nec patitur vires aequor habere suas* 60). The lack of power of the sea could link back to the loss of potential for the sea as a motif for travelling: instead, it is weakened by its environment – as the poet depicts himself as weakened by the Tomitan environment.

However, in the context of this and the previous poem, this mixing may not be as negative as it initially appears. DeBrohun has previously argued for hybridity in *Metamorphoses* 12 as focused on opposites, such as *natura* and *cultus*; here there is an element of nature and culture hybridity where within this catalogue, and the specific rivers which appear in it, the 'barbaric' northern rivers appear to pollute the waves of the sea.[549] However, there is also the implication that the rivers are powerful enough to defeat the power of the sea, rather than being subsumed by it as

[549] DeBrohun (2004).

in previous representations of rivers at the end of their journeys. In this way, the rivers can withstand a sense of ending in some way, maintaining their own power, against the mass of sea water. The sea then is transformed through freezing, adding another dual element of static through ice, and movement through transformation. Therefore, although a sense of continuation or movement is lacking in the sea itself, there may be a sense of continuation, or at least denial of an ending in the rivers themselves.

Davisson argues that this description of the rivers and the frozen sea enables Ovid to highlight his own *duritia* as 'not rigidity but a resilience which enables him to write flowing and lively verse'; in this she argues that the poet is compared and contrasted with the natural environment, but there is also a link here between the poet and the adulterous rivers.[550] As they are able to cause the sea to transform, and deny their own ending through being subsumed by the sea, so does the poet create moments of transformation which deny his own ending, and allow him to access a continuation through his 'living death' in exile. The adulterous behaviour of the rivers mirrors the poet's own adulterous behaviour, both in terms of his previous works and in his incorporation of the exilic environment in the continuation of his poetry. In this way, the rivers as pollution can be read as both a negative portrayal of the environment of exile, as well as a recognition of the role of exile poetry in the poet's life beyond death. This links back to the mingling of time in 4.9, and this sense of competing aspects of memorialisation for the poet and the *princeps*.

This denial of ending is perhaps made even more explicit through the first line of this catalogue, which describes the rivers as mixing together (*miscentur* 45). This does not hold the strong connotations of the later *adulterat*, but does link to ideas of mixing, and is often used for rivers, and sex. Through these connections, it echoes the *Ars Amatoria*, which hopes for the poet's name to be mixed amongst the names of other poets, and his works not given to the Lethe:

> *Forsitan et nostrum nomen <u>miscebitur</u> istis,*
>
> *Nec mea Lethaeis scripta dabuntur aquis:*

[550] Davisson, 1982: 29.

> Perhaps too my name will be joined to theirs, nor will my writings be given to Lethe's waters; (*Ars*. 3.339-40)

Here the mixing of Ovid's name with the other poets will contribute to a sense of continuation, beyond the loss of memory associated with death through the river Lethe. In this way, mixing things together in a watery sense may not always be a negative thing.[551] Drawing this through to the exile poetry, the verb *mixta* is used in *Tristia* 3.15 to describe the poet's fears that his Latin will be mixed with the Pontic language (*timeo ne Sintia mixta Latinis* 49). This fear for the future then is realised in the *Epistulae*, where the poet says he has written and performed a poem in Getic.[552] It is clear to see how this idea of linguistic pollution links with the mixing and polluting waters here in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10, but within the context of the *Ars Amatoria*, and the continued production of Ovid's exile poetry, perhaps this is not wholly negative. Through the mixing of the rivers, they are able to freeze the sea, and deny their own ending, and create a memorable monument through new poetry. Through the combination of Latin and Getic, the poet continues to compose, creating monuments to his own continuity. This sense of combination guarantees a sense of continuity, which the timeless environment may have originally denied.

Miscetur also appears in another river context in the *Ex Ponto*, used with the comparison of the Nile and Hister in *Tristia* 3.10.25-30.[553] This comparison is then continued here in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10. As previously discussed, mixing with the sea used for the Hister here facilitates continuation underneath the covering of ice, as representing static time. Mixing and continuation is presented in contrast with the Nile in both, though more explicitly here in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10. Within this, the Nile and Hister are placed in competition with each other - in *Tristia* 3.10.27-30 the Hister is said to be as large as the Nile; in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10, it is said to be greatest of the rivers, refusing to give up to the Nile:

> *innumerique alii, quos inter maximus omnes*
>
> *cedere Danuvius se tibi, Nile, negat.*

[551] *Misceo* also used for mixing wine and water, see Ovid, *Am*ores 1.4.29 – diluting not always bad.
[552] *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.13.
[553] See chapter 3 for further discussion of this poem, and the sense of continuation underlying the static time presented here.

> Countless others of which mightiest of all the Danube refuses, O Nile, to yield to thee. *(Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10.57-8)

This competition between the two rivers comes at the end of the river catalogue, drawing the journey across the Pontus to a close with this comparison. Jones suggests that the catalogue of rivers here, in no geographical order, 'creates a new reality for the rivers, one in which demands of poetry take precedence over the constraints of geography';[554] here the new reality for the rivers, not limited by geography is important, particularly in the context of the mixing of the waters. Through the use of this catalogue, in a context where catalogues of rivers have previously been used to indicate a timeless space for the ordering of poetic time in the *Metamorphoses*, the poet can once again reorder his own poetic time.[555] In this new reality, the Hister is placed as equal to the Nile, superficially in size, but also potentially in future reputation.[556] Placing the two rivers equally at the end of the catalogue brings the timeless space to a conclusion in these rival aspects, where the Nile as representative of old, traditional, as well as the subject of poetry celebrating its defeat at the hands of Augustus – now the Hister is a comparable subject of poetry, through for the future of Ovid's poetry.

It is interesting to note that the Nile has previously been used as a figure of competitive comparison in Propertius, where the Tiber is said to have been forced to endure the threats of the Nile (*et Tiberim Nili cogere ferre minas* 3.11.42). This poem celebrates victory over Egypt at Actium, near the beginning of Augustus' regime. Egypt was then incorporated into Roman power, and then went on to be essential to the continuation of Roman power through its production of grain – heavily linked to the flow of the Nile. In this way, continuation is associated with the incorporation of the river. Looking back to Hister's refusal to give up to the Nile in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10, there could be an allusion here to that idea of competition and power in Propertius, where as the Nile was incorporated into Roman power and became part of its guaranteed continuation, here Ovid is claiming an aspect of this continuation. His poetry, centred around the Hister (rather than the Tiber), refuses to give power to

[554] Jones, 2005: 90.
[555] See chapter 4.
[556] As Manoloraki (2013) cogently argues, the Nile can also function as a symbol of poetic authority for poets, and often appears as a historically significant object of study. The comparison here serves to realign poetic authority, incorporating the Pontic region through Ovid's poetry.

the Nile and thus decentres the position of Rome, and shifts the focus of power to the Hister.[557] Through incorporating, or mixing, those aspects of his exile with his poetry, Ovid can decentralise Roman time for the present, and look to the future of his poetry with the continuation guaranteed by its mixing into Roman society.[558]

At the end of this catalogue, the narrator explains why they have chosen to include their theories on why the sea freezes in this region:

> *"detinui" dicam "curas tempusque fefelli.*
>
> *hunc fructum praesens attulit hora mihi.*
>
> I would say, "I have given pause to my cares and beguiled the time;
> this is the profit the present hour has brought me. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10.67-8)

Here, pondering the cause of the sea freezing through the catalogue of rivers offers the narrator a chance to delay time and deceive his cares. This explicit reference to delaying, holding back, or occupying cares (*detinui* 67) and deceiving time (*tempusque fefelli* 67), highlights the function of the river catalogue as creating a timeless space, abstract from the present of his exile. This echoes the more confident manipulation of time in the catalogue in book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*, and suggests the poet as being once again capable of manipulating time.

Delaying time is then linked with the present hour (*praesens hora)* where this poem is a gift from that present hour. This then shows the present hour of Ovid's exile as actively initiating this manipulation of time, showing that the exiled poet is still capable of manipulating time, through the incorporation of his exilic experience.[559] In this way, the timeless space the poet is stuck in is now shown to be a construction of the poet, rather than the lack of control in the previous poems in the *Tristia*. Where those poems used being 'stuck' to look to two different futures beyond death, out of the poet's control, here there is a future facilitated by transition from the living death

[557] Interestingly, there are only two named references to the Tiber in Ovid's exile works, *Ibis* 138 (only 1 line after a reference to the Hister), and *Tristia* 5.1.30-2.
[558] I do not want to frame this as an active attempt at decolonising, but perhaps a rather more self-centred approach to expanding the frame of the literary tradition. For Ovid's poetry as solidifying a colonial image of the Pontic region, see Habinek (1998).
[559] Exile also forces the poet to endure unstructured time – see Claassen (1999: 186) for this phenomenon in Ovid's exile writings.

of exile to living and producing in exile, where the poet reclaims exile itself as a disruptive force which gives authority and continuity outside of the norm – perhaps even mirroring the disruptive force of a river flood.

Being outside of time and the norm, and beyond death is set up at the beginning of the poem:

> *gutta cavat lapidem, consumitur anulus usu,*
>
> *atteritur pressa vomer aduncus humo.*
>
> *tempus edax igitur praeter nos omnia perdet:*
>
> *cessat duritia mors quoque victa mea.*
>
> Drops of water hollow out a stone, a ring is worn thin by use, the hooked plough is rubbed away by the soil's pressure. So devouring time will destroy all things but me: even death keeps aloof defeated by my endurance. (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10.5-8)

Here the passage of time is manifested through the effects of water, use, and the earth (*gutta, usu, humo* 5,6). In this, the passage of time is inevitable and irresistible, and leads to the wearing out of the stone, the ring, and the plough. The example of the water drop highlights the power of water in changing the environment over time, whilst also drawing attention to the changed form of the stone. This aspect of change is then tied to a sense of ending, through the use of *consumitur* in the second analogy, and *atteritur* in the third analogy – over time, both the ring and the ploughshare are consumed or worn away, signalling their loss of function. Through this change brought about by the passage of time, they face a kind of death. This is made more obvious in the next line, which explicitly states the destruction caused by devouring time (*tempus edax* 7), to all but the narrator.[560] In this way, the narrator is shown to be outside the flow of time, but also implicitly outside of the processes of change and transition. This mirrors the position of the narrator in the waters of the Styx in the *Tristia* – there, where they were unable to transition from living to death, here again they cannot change and transition to death.

[560] *Metamorphoses* 15.872 – works will not submit to devouring time

This lack of transition is initially presented as negative, the narrator outside of time is unable to see any endings for his troubles. However, in the context of the later river catalogue of this poem, being outside of time is not necessarily so negative. The timeless space of the catalogue offers a way of passing time for the narrator and shows his capability for manipulating poetic time. The narrator as being unable to change and achieve an ending is also undermined through the mixing of the rivers, implicitly linked with the narrator through the idea of linguistic pollution. With this context in mind, I want to look back to Davisson's argument of the poet's *duritia* as flexible – here, the process of being outside 'Roman' time and incorporating other aspects into his poetry allows the poet to transition, and regain temporal control. In this way, the narrator is shown to be susceptible to change, and therefore capable of achieving transition from life to death. The duality of having conquered death, but also not living anymore may signal a sense of transition from a living state, but still outside of death, mirroring Orpheus' and Canens' poetic afterlives. Where Canens is transformed outside of death, so too is the poet able to continue beyond death, outside of time, through the contribution of the rivers in the catalogue; the poet's own continued transformation and apotheosis.

Conclusion

So, returning to Campbell's suggestion at the start of this chapter that the underworld rivers constitute an impenetrable barrier; rather than a barrier, in Ovid's poetry, rivers associated with death often show a process of transition, and facilitate movement, rather than deny it. This process of transition is a key aspect of a river's inherent continuity, even in representations of the Styx, which we may initially think would represent a clear ending. In this way, Jones' discussion of the one-way directionality of the Styx, tied to a clear change of state, is problematised by the kind of afterlives represented by rivers in key works of the post-exile poetry: the *Metamorphoses, Tristia,* and *Epistulae ex Ponto.* Throughout the poems discussed in this chapter, this multi directional process of transition has been shown through the representation of the Styx and Lethe alongside other real-world rivers, in order to highlight ideas of continuation through poetic afterlives.

This sense of life after death is most obvious in the *Metamorphoses*, where in comparison to the river Styx, the river Hebrus facilitates a poetic afterlife for Orpheus, and enables him to transition from life to death. This is in contrast to the

river Styx, which serves to highlight a timeless state of mourning, and being outside of natural time. This timeless mourning is then undermined by the temporal control of the narrator, aligned with the overall flow of time. Similarly, Canens' afterlife is facilitated by the river Tiber, as a site of memorial which stretches a temporal thread through from the mythical past of the *Metamorphoses* to the present of Ovid's Rome. This connection through the landscape also serves to highlight Canens as out of time, particularly through the invention of her character and resting place. In this way, the poet combines the old and the new through ideas of death and memorialisation, as facilitated by the Tiber, to highlight an external sense of poetic afterlife for the author.

This control over time is then unsettled in the exile poetry, particularly the *Tristia*, where the river Styx serves to highlight the timeless state of the poet. This is represented through the narrator as stuck in the middle of the river Styx, mirroring the frozen state described in chapter three, and emphasising the process of transition as unable to fully enter the temporalities of either life or death. This is aligned with the figure of grief, Orpheus, in a way which implicates the emperor in the poet's lack of temporal control. The imagery of the poet stuck in the process of transition continues through associations between the Hister and the Styx, and comparison with swimming motifs from Ovid's previous works, which separate the narrator and the flow of the river, highlighting a lack of temporal control. Throughout this, the theme of memorialisation through death is an underlying motif, which, due to the poet's state in between life and death, leads to anxieties around a lack of continuation through memorial. This is also shown in the comparison of different aspects of continuation through memorial, and the focus on memorial through naming in poetry – which is put in opposition with the lack of memory facilitated by the Lethe, as part of the process of death.

In the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, there is movement in the transition from life to death, in that the poet moves from being in the waters to outside them, and to connections with the sea and a sense of momentum. This highlights the aspect of transition in rivers facilitating the process from life to death, but this aspect of transition is then used to highlight the transformation of Ovid's poetry; as Davisson argues, his poetry survives due to its flexibility. This is represented through the idea of river pollution, both of pollution through death, but also through mixing of different natural elements.

This flexible style and more confident temporal manipulation in poetry is then put in contrast with the potential afterlife offered by political power, and found to compare admirably. In this way, rivers in the *Epistulae ex Ponto* start to move beyond the initial sense of static time presented in the *Tristia*, and towards facilitating the transition to death, and the afterlife that comes with that for the artist.

Conclusion

'This is me, anonymous, water's soliloquy,

All names, all voices, Slip-Shape, this is Proteus,

Whoever that is, the shepherd of the seals,

Driving my many selves from cave to cave…'[561]

In the final lines of Alice Oswald's *Dart,* quoted above, the voice of the river Dart identifies and questions, mirroring the beginning of the poem as it enters the sea to endlessly repeat its cyclic flow. This circular construction brings the end of the poem back to the beginning, and the river's flow begins again, even in its ending. Within this relatively recent riverine poem, the Dart's continuity through cyclic repetition is made clear. Taking inspiration from this (and perhaps even contributing to the river's continuity), I would like to end my thesis by going back to the questions of my beginning.

At the start of this thesis, I asked the broad question: how does the natural environment help to conceptualise time? Within this, I proposed to focus on river behaviour specifically because of its frequent use as an image for time. As part of an ecological approach to analysis, I focussed on the agency of the natural environment, and arranged my thesis to reflect river behaviour as an actor in the lived environment, alongside more culturally constructed and contextualised meanings. This led to the division of my thesis into two main sections, 'Redefining Seasonality', and 'The Natural Unnatural', within which chapters were organised around river behaviour. Before returning in detail to draw conclusions on my specific research questions, it seems appropriate to offer a brief summary of the key points and findings of each chapter.

Overview of chapters

In the first chapter of this thesis, 'What is an Ovidian river?', I explored four key aspects of an Ovidian river, and how they interacted with other contemporary authors' ideas of rivers. The first of these four discussions, rivers as poetry, examined the literary motif of the spring as poetry, as well as the Callimachean

[561] Alice Oswald, *Dart* (2002).

torrent. Contending with Fowler's idea of feminizing flow, I explored how the Ovidian image of the poetic river incorporated literary chronology as a continuous river flow, to which new poetry could be added and memorialised through continuous citation and adaptation.[562] Much discussion of poetic rivers focuses on the river as image for the individual poem: I bring out its application to poetic tradition.[563] The second section of this chapter discussed the river as time, analysing both the linear course of a river as historical or anthropocentric linear time, and the river as part of the water cycle and mirroring natural (deep) time. This section focussed on explicit metaphors linking rivers with time in Ovid's works: *Amores* 1.8, and Pythagoras' speech in *Metamorphoses* 15.179-185. Within this, I showed that through the use of the image of the river as time, the poet is able to blend both metaphors for forms of time to highlight alternate forms of power and continuity.

This chapter also discussed the expectation of constant motion within river images, through analysis of *Remedia Amoris* 249-258, and *Ibis* 135-140. I showed that the initial expectation of continuous movement in the river images in these poems was undermined by images of stagnancy, highlighting the need for constant movement and change within Ovid's poetic temporality. This need for change then became a central theme for the final section of this chapter, and the fourth aspect of Ovidian river behaviour: transformation. Querying Anderson's suggestion that Ovid's rivers in the *Metamorphoses* are unable to transform, I broadened the idea of transformation to include how river waters themselves can transform the wider environment through floods and flow over time.[564] Within this, I discussed the two-way process of river transformation in *Metamorphoses* 1.544-552 through Daphne's transformation, Midas' cleansing at the river Pactolus in *Metamorphoses* 11.136-145, and the river Anigrus' contamination in *Metamorphoses* 15.281-4.

From this consideration of two-way transformation, I then explored the representation of the Rhine as stained by blood in the imaginary triumphs of *Tristia* 4.2 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.4. Here, I showed that rivers could be active

[562] Fowler (2002), discussed in chapter 1.
[563] Jones (2005) focuses on narrative structures reflected in rivers in Augustan literature, but does not expand this to consider wider literary chronology in connection with literary springs of inspiration, and how this can reflect a wider poetic flow.
[564] Anderson (1997: 199) suggests that rivers in the *Metamorphoses* cannot transform others – chapter 1.

transformers in the landscape, as well as be transformed in turn. By contributing to continuation through changed form, they might also be vulnerable to coerced transformation themselves, which forces their continuation to take shape in an altered, and potentially weaker form. Showing this two-way process highlights interactions within the environment, particularly drawing out issues of agency in Ovid's depiction of the natural environment.

From an interrogation of these four key aspects of Ovidian rivers' behaviour, the overall notion of continuity through continuous motion arose, which then became a baseline against which to compare river behaviour in the following chapters.

The second chapter introduced 'Redefining Seasonality', with a focus on the seasonal river behaviour of floods and torrents. Through analysis of the spatial disruption of river flooding within the wider environmental context of seasonal cycles in *Amores* 3.6 and Achelous' flood in *Metamorphoses* 8-9, I showed that the disruption caused by flooding is inherently temporary, and serves to start a process of change and renewal. This process of change and renewal is then shown to be tied to the wider renewing cycles of the natural environment through the connection with seasonality, through analysis of *Ars Amatoria* 2.339-44, *Remedia Amoris* 649-52, and *Fasti* 2. In this way, the appearance of river flooding in Ovid's poetry serves to align his works, and poetic control, with a sense of perpetuity that is facilitated through renewing cycles. This builds on the idea of literary chronology conceptualised as continuous river flow, where cycles of citation and repetition within poetic genres facilitate poetic continuation.

Within this discussion of natural cycles and the outward spread of excess water, the excessive linear force of torrents was shown to reflect oppressive power, disconnected from naturally renewing cycles. These linear torrents in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.2 and 2.3 refused movement in a non-linear direction, and the poet describes himself being dragged by the waves. As part of adapting to this excessive force which denies movement in alternate directions, the poet seeks potential pain through grasping onto hard rocks and thorns of a potentially frosty audience. This adaptation marks a change from poetic power associated with river behaviour in poetry not set in the exilic environment, whereas in *Epistulae ex Ponto*, rivers can be

an overwhelming force which threatens the poet's continuity. This overwhelming force is aligned with powers in Rome, rather than the poet himself.

The third chapter, and second section of 'Redefining Seasonality', introduced seasonal river behaviour in which water flow appears to halt. This paradox of static flow emerges from images of river drought in *Amores* 3.6 and *Metamorphoses* 15, and river freezing in *Tristia* 3.10, 12, and 5.12, with comparison to *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.2. Initially, river drought may appear disruptive; however, my findings suggested that while a continuous river flow was idealised, it did not reflect the reality of rivers in the lived environment; intermittent rivers were common in the Italian landscape. This contrast significantly reframes the initial image and potentially negative implications of a loss of motion when situated within the progressive context of the wider environment. From this premise, I showed that intermittent rivers, where drought was temporary and connected to seasonal cycles, highlighted necessary endings as a way of facilitating change in narrative direction – creating new lines of continuity. In *Amores* 3.6 and the catalogue of rivers in Pythagoras' speech in *Metamorphoses* 15, these necessary endings are aligned with continuation and endurance through changing form.

Moving from the loss of motion initially suggested by the temporary drought of intermittent rivers, 'Ice' focussed on the representation of the frozen Hister in the exilic environment. Drawing on the reality of river freezing in the lived environment, in which ice rarely permeates the whole flow, this thesis showed that the initial image of the static, eternal winter of exile had underlying movement built in through a continuous seasonal connection. Through the passage of the seasons across *Tristia* 3.8, 3.10, and 3.12, the image of static winter is undermined, and rather shows continuation in an alternate form, a model hinted delicately but powerfully by my new reading of the rivers in environmental context. My examples reflect and shape the changing direction of Ovid's poetry, which in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* revolve around the exilic environment, and contributes to a new image of Tomis.[565] In this way, the initial loss of continuity suggested by loss of movement is shown to include necessary endings, and new directions, in facilitating Ovid's poetic continuity. This gives a new twist to the understanding of the place of the exile poetry in Ovid's

[565] As touched upon in my discussion of the exilic environment, this is partly a colonial creation which justifies Roman control (Habinek, 1998: 151), which Ovid utilises and adapts – discussed in chapter 3.

oeuvre. In both sections, new forms of movement created by initial loss of river movement show the creation of new lines of continuity, where political and poetic power through temporal manipulation are mirrored.

The fourth chapter moved from seasonality to unnatural river behaviour, focussing on extraordinary river behaviour. This considered the world-ending flood in book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*, and its inverse mirror, the destructive extreme heat of Phaethon's fall in book 2 of the *Metamorphoses*. Both of these episodes deal with exaggerated river behaviour, flooding and drought, which is directly linked to the end of the world and its subsequent renewal. Through analysis of these behaviours, this thesis showed that the excessive, unnatural river conduct in these apocalyptic episodes negated natural cycles of renewal. The undermining of natural cycles of renewal highlighted the presence of an overwhelming figure of power, which in attempting to control the destruction and renewal of the world, threatened continuity.

This sense of threatened continuity was further explored through the paradoxical behaviour of river reversal, again forming extraordinary river behaviour. Here, I exploited Mann's theory of the Natural Feminine Sublime, where the sublime experience inspired by the environment is undercut by its vulnerability, in order to dig deeper into the relationship between rivers behaving extraordinarily and the premise of this signalling a threat to continuity. This vulnerability is particularly relevant for the poet and the environment in exile: the image of river adynaton is largely limited in Ovid's works to the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto.* River reversal is normally presented as the end of the world; this thesis revealed the assumptions of continuity and linearity of the natural environment implicit in that statement, as well as showing how Ovid uses unexpected spatial patterns of rivers to show threats to continuity in the exilic environment, and the vulnerability of dependence in exile.

Finally, the fifth chapter of this thesis completed 'The Natural Unnatural' with a focus on rivers as a transitional point between life and death. This chapter, split into 'Life after Death' and 'Living Death', compared the process of apotheosis and continuity through the landscape in Orpheus and Canens' deaths in the *Metamorphoses*, with the poet's presentation of his own living death in exile in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto.* The first section showed how whilst the river Styx became a barrier to Orpheus, after his death, the river Hebrus facilitated poetic continuation through

repetition of his words, and transmission through the landscape. Canens' transformation also echoes the process of a poetic figure being remembered by the landscape, where the Tiber in part memorialises her name. From this, I built on Theodorakopoulos' argument that landscape transformations in the *Metamorphoses* deny closure, and showed that rivers particularly facilitate continued movement, and life after death for poetic figures.[566]

From rivers facilitating continued movement and life after death in the *Metamorphoses*, I turned to the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the river Hister is often aligned with the river Styx. I demonstrated how Jones' conceptualisation of the river of death as a unidirectional transitional point is undermined in Ovid's exile poetry, through the image of the permeable Hister as the Styx.[567] This permeability presents both sides of the river as vulnerable to death, while the poet often presents himself as stranded in the waters between both banks. Being 'stuck' in the waters reflects a sense of being 'stuck' in time, where the poet is unable to return to the land of the living and continue writing poetry in the same vein as before, yet also unable to cross fully into death and live on through memory. Being between life and death, as being in the middle of river waters, does allow for some continued movement though, especially in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In these later poems, options for alternate movement and continuation appear through motifs of ships, alternate genres, and the implication that adapting further is a way forward. Through these examples of continued movement, permanent ending is denied; instead, the poet in the exilic environment is able to attain some sense of life after death. Through undermining permanent ending through death, the poet can mirror political life after death, particularly interacting with Augustus' death and political afterlife.

Throughout this thesis, continuity and motion emerged as key characteristics of poetic continuity, allowing the poet to be remembered as part of the larger literary river. These aspects of continuity and motion form part of the answer to my first specific research question:

How does river behaviour interact with the Ovidian conceptualisation of time?

[566] Theodorokopoulos, 1999: 149, discussed in chapter 5.
[567] Jones, 2005: 20, discussed in chapter 5.

Across Ovid's extant corpus, references to rivers appear just over four hundred times.[568] While some of these references refer to location, or amongst a catalogue as part of a location, often rivers are subject to extended description and discussion. *Amores* 3.6 is one of the key examples of the importance of rivers to Ovid's poetic identity, where the longest poem in the collection is dedicated to the unnamed torrent, in contrast to other mythical rivers' behaviour. This poem encapsulates metapoetic discussions on genre hierarchy, suggestions of the idealised environment, and contrasting temporal and seasonal behaviours. Following this river image from Ovid's earlier poetry then, there is a pattern of rivers consistently appearing at points to show metapoetic discussion, as well as impact upon a wider environment. Again, the appearance of the river Achelous, subject of an extended metapoetic section which crosses two books of the *Metamorphoses*, deals with the role of the narrator, whilst also showing the actions of the river waters themselves to be outside of anthropomorphised control. The agency of river behaviour as part of larger natural cycles is aligned with Ovid's poetic temporality, showing independence from more anthropocentric Augustan narratives of time in his earlier poetry.

This lack of control over rivers and their roles in the wider environment is made even more apparent in the exile poetry, where the sudden frequency of river *adynata* in comparison is used to show a changing unpredictable environment, mirroring the poet's exilic environment. The appearance of rivers in the exile poetry is not merely limited to *adynata* though, as the icy Hister often takes centre stage in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as an emblematic example of the frozen environment of Tomis. The rivers of the exilic environment, in their changed form and apparent lack of movement, question poetic agency over time, and where loss of water undermines the poet's independence, showing his time to be subject to overwhelming power.

Through close analysis of river behaviour, this thesis has explored the intersection between rivers and Ovidian poetic time, revealing how the poet aligns himself with natural time, as represented by rivers, in order to present an image of poetic continuity. This continuity is largely framed in terms of the water cycle, where movement and change form key aspects of renewal, which in turn facilitates Ovid's

[568] I count 413, searching by variations on *amnis, flumina, torrentis, rivus*, and named rivers across Ovid's extant corpus. Of these references, 220 are subject to extended discussion (beyond a passing reference to identifying a location).

poetic continuity. Within this model, rivers offer aspects of both linearity and cyclicality: the course of the river shows a linear sense of bounded time, while the river as part of the larger water cycle shows the wider continuity offered in cycles of renewal. Through this, Ovid's poetic continuity is not straight-forwardly linear, nor wholly cyclic, but rather incorporates elements of both conceptualisations of time to show perpetuity beyond mortality. Through this temporal blurring in river waters, Ovidian agency and power over time mirrors Augustan narratives of temporal manipulation, particularly in ideas of renewal, and new lines of continuity.

The river does not, however, guarantee continuity; it is often shown to be vulnerable, or threatened. As I have demonstrated, river-flooding, drought, and freezing in Ovid's corpus complicate continued movement, and produce instances of productive rupture. Close analysis of the spatiality of river waters within the wider environment denies unidirectional flow, allowing for deviations in both a spatial and temporal sense. As Wohl argues, 'any aspect of river process or form reflects inequalities in time and space';[569] within Ovid's corpus, those temporal and spatial inequalities within the riverine environment become negotiations of continuity, and power within that continuity. As such, river behaviour interacts in both spatial and literary terms within Ovid's conceptualisation of time, where poetic continuity represented by river flow is complicated by the river's role in the wider environment.

What assumptions does this make about the natural environment?

One of the key assumptions about the natural environment within Ovid's work is that of continuity, which is then consistently queried and undermined through disruptive or unnatural behaviour of rivers. This undermines the image of guaranteed natural continuity suggested by ancient use of river *adynata* and rather reflects river behaviour in the lived environment.[570] Being unable to depend on the natural environment's continuity, particularly emphasised in the exile poetry, mirrors the sense of vulnerability suggested by Mann's theory of the natural feminine sublime.

Mann's theory of vulnerability complicates traditional notions of the sublime, and is specifically tied to the awareness of dependence upon the earth through

[569] Wohl, 2014: 3.
[570] River *adynata* in Greco-Roman literature, and the expectation of continuity discussed in chapter 4.

experiencing the sublime and the fear in the instability of that environment.[571] Focusing on dependence on the natural environment, acutely apparent through the image of running water which is essential for many aspects of human life, highlights changing attitudes to the security of the environment across Ovid's poetry. The initial image of a loss of running water in the exilic environment contrasts with the previous security suggested by the continuous flow of rivers, and undercut by the poet's threatened future within a changed environment. Fears for the future of the environment, and particularly humanity's place within it, shows that even within the ancient world, the security of the natural environment was not guaranteed.

Does this conceptualisation of time change across the corpus?

This image of threatened continuity is reflected more overtly in the river behaviour of the exilic environment. There, river freezing and reversal highlight the discontinuities of the environment, whilst an association between the Hister and the Styx presents the poet in exile as being trapped in a living death.[572] The death-associated frozen landscape of Tomis is not a purely Ovidian invention. However, through analysis of the river behaviour in the *Ibis, Tristia*, and *Epistulae ex Ponto,* this thesis has shown that Ovid builds on wider cultural assumptions about and expectations of the exilic environment to highlight threats to his poetic continuity, to the vulnerability and dependence of his position in exile, and to the need for adaptation in his poetry. These expectations of the exilic environment, created through cultural stereotypes and the work of other poets, present the area as frozen, violent, and particularly hard (*dura*);[573] the frozen Hister, then, compared to the rivers of his non-exilic environment poetry, shows a transition away from continuity through alignment with natural time, and rather continuity through survival and adaptation. Whilst Helzle suggests that this adaptation equates to a process of becoming *dura*, this thesis showed that Ovid's exilic works play with the idea of movement underneath a static surface, where the environment and the poet are still able to change and transform

[571] Mann, 2006: 147.
[572] Grebe (2010) argues for the poet as being dead but still living; my discussion in chapter 5 complicates this notion a little.
[573] Virgil, *Georgics* 3.360-61, which Martin (1966), Evans (1975), Williams (1994) argue feeds into Ovid's depiction of the exilic environment. Cultural stereotypes about the northern regions are also discussed in chapter 3.

beyond being monumentalised in one static image.[574] Through the changing depictions of rivers across the corpus, the poet can highlight his own changing forms of poetic continuity, particularly affected by political power in his respective environments.

How does the agency of rivers interact with the idea of time?

At the start of this thesis, I set out to analyse how the agency of rivers could interact with the idea of time, taking an ecological perspective and considering environmental agency outside anthropocentric subjectivity. Although this approach is complicated by the analysis of poetry, where the natural environment is necessarily mediated through the poet, examples of river agency have been shown throughout this thesis. Considering river agency in Ovid's poetry has drawn out an interesting dichotomy between the agency of the physical waters of the river, and personifications of the river god. This is most apparent in my discussion of the river Achelous in books 8 and 9 of the *Metamorphoses*, across the second and third chapters of this thesis. Within this discussion, I showed a separation between the river god Achelous, who was unable to control his own waters, and the waters themselves. In this separation, the waters followed a larger natural cycle, in which the river-god Achelous was unable to intervene.[575] This separation further adds to the sense of continuity in natural cycles, whilst also showing potential vulnerability in the anthropomorphised form of the river.

Vulnerability in the anthropomorphised form of the river is also shown in the presentation of the Rhine in Ovid's imaginary triumphs in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where the river god is described as discoloured or stained with blood.[576] The vulnerability of the anthropomorphised form of the river, caused by physical violence, shows some of Hughes' idea of the vulnerable natural environment.[577] However, the slight separation between the continuity and behaviour of the waters, and the anthropomorphised river gods, suggests a recognition of the agency of the natural

[574] Helzle (1998: 81) suggests the poet becomes *dura* due to his environment, whether that is to the benefit or detriment of his poetry is unclear; Davisson (1982) argues for the flexibility of the poet in exile in contrast to becoming *dura*, this thesis argued for a combination of the two states, where an initial idea of becoming hard and unmoving is a surface layer to an undercurrent of movement and poetic production.
[575] See Achelous discussion in chapter 2.
[576] *decolor* (*Tristia* 4.2.42), *infectas* (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.4.108), discussed in chapter 1.
[577] Hughes, 2014: 231.

environment itself. In this recognition, the actual river waters themselves are rarely able to be controlled or shown as subject to human power. The integrity of the river waters then feeds into Ovid's use of natural (deep) time, as something beyond anthropocentric power and control.

Ovid's natural time as beyond anthropocentric power is an important image for the poet's own depiction of time and agency, where the confidence of the earlier poetry, aligned with the agency of the natural environment, is then undercut in the exile poetry. This undermined confidence is specifically reflected in the unexpected behaviour of river waters in the exile poetry. In this way, the agency of the environment is particularly important for reflecting on the poetic and political interactions in Ovid's poetry, played out in images of powerlessness and control in river behaviour.

Moving forward with stronger flow – Research Contributions

This thesis has demonstrated that consideration of the lived experience of river behaviour within its environment can elucidate Ovidian time as part of his poetic corpus. Building from Chakrabarty's suggestion of distinct geological and historical time in the Anthropocene, this thesis has shown how the blending of both senses of time in Ovid's poetry shows a claim to power through alignment with the natural environment.[578] That power is highlighted through the idea of 'continuity', tied to the continuity of natural time. Yet within that, this thesis also showed that natural continuity could be vulnerable to powerful, overwhelming external forces. The complex rivers of Ovid's poetry, marked by their own extreme power and capability for change as well as vulnerability, echo some contemporary climate concerns. These concerns are made most apparent in Mann's natural sublime, where fear for the natural environment's future and our place in it colours any experience of the natural sublime.[579]

This narrative of power and vulnerability nuances Hughes' analysis of the natural environment in the ancient world, where Hughes presents the natural environment as something to be acted upon, without considering the two-way interactions between the environment and the peoples of ancient societies in their so-called

[578] Chakrabarty, 2018: 18; discussed in the introduction.
[579] Mann (2006), discussed in introduction and chapter 4.

'decline'.[580] This thesis respects the agency of the natural environment itself, marking two-way interactions even within a literary depiction. Consideration of river behaviour in the context of the lived environment develops the river as time image beyond that of simply symbolic, and draws in the synchronicity of the natural environment which shows its continuity beyond anthropocentric concerns. This separation from purely anthropocentric concerns also renegotiates the power structures of writing about nature – where here, recognition of the river as part of a wider connected network in the environment allows us to consider wider concerns of environmental vulnerability, as well as altering an anthropocentric perspective on what might be positive or negative for the environment.[581]

The significance of following post-phenomenological thought throughout my analysis is clear in the conclusions, which highlight the importance of interactions between the poet and river processes in understanding Ovid's creation of poetic time. Recognising subjectivity and differing experiences within landscapes aids analysis across changing environments, particularly in the post-exile poetry, where the changing position of the poet affects interactions with the environment. In this way, a post-phenomenological approach can be useful for literary and environmental scholars in recognising the agency of the environment, and presenting a less universalising approach to understanding experiences with and within the environment.

This consideration of the natural environment alongside literary concerns is useful for both scholars of the natural environment and literary scholars, bridging the gap between previous scholarship which presented the natural world as an object, rather than an active part of meaning-making and current thinking which gives agency to the natural environment.[582] In this way, this thesis will be useful for both literary and environmental scholars interested in how rivers in the natural environment can interact with ideas of time, and particularly in Ovidian interactions with both natural and political power.

[580] Hughes (2014), discussed in introduction.
[581] Smith and Ward (1998: 19) discuss this in relation to flooding, where floods are a natural part of environmental cycles, and are only 'disruptive' when affecting human settlements.
[582] Pitfalls of the literary approach by Segal (1969), and Jones (2005), discussed in the introduction.

With the focus on Ovid, this thesis also adds to understandings of the Ovidian corpus, particularly the role of the environment in Ovid's exile poetry. Within this thesis, I have pushed beyond the acceptance of a straightforward static and dead natural environment presented in exile, and rather shown the complexities within that image. Although I have not had scope within this thesis to incorporate sustained critical analysis of the imperialistic representations of the natural environment in Ovid's exile poetry, I hope that this exploration of the complexities of the frozen environment helps to move scholarship beyond accepting ancient cultural narratives of deterioration and culturally unproductive land in the north, and instead push for a more nuanced consideration of the environment even within the dramatized depiction in ancient authors.[583]

More broadly, I have also shown the image of the poetic tradition as a river in Ovid's works, where the spring of inspiration is developed into a broader image of cyclic flow and continuity within that. Through the image of the river as poetic tradition, and subsequent analysis of how river behaviour in Ovid's works interacts with that image, this thesis demonstrated the renegotiation of Ovid's position within the poetic tradition. This process of renegotiation, as shown through 'disruptive' river behaviour, highlights Ovidian innovation within a broader poetic tradition.

Using the image of the poetic river, and highlighting his own works' addition to its flow, also has a political dimension. As this thesis has shown, Ovidian renegotiation of poetic time often intersects and competes with Augustan reconceptualizations of time, particularly in its control and manipulation. This is demonstrated through analysis of competing ideas of continuity in Ovid's works, both tied to natural and anthropocentric forms of time, and is felt particularly acutely in the exile poetry. In the exilic environment, the threat to Ovid's poetic continuation, and his alternate forms of memorialisation through innovative works directly interact with Augustan narratives of continuity through memorialisation, and the ruler's imminent death. Through the redefined river image, tied to Ovid's poetic identity and view of poetic time, Ovid exploits the tension between poetry and political power to create a space for his own

[583] Habinek (1998: 158-159) takes issue with accepting Ovid's depiction of the uncultivated natural environment, arguing it forms part of an imperialising gaze. Whilst not denying that imperialising gaze, I argued that with a consideration of the wider natural environment, the contrasting conditions of Tomis are not necessarily always negative.

power beyond that of Augustus. In that space, Ovid creates his own competing conception of time to Augustus' redefined 'Roman time', which goes beyond Roman imperialism and aligns with the natural environment.

Meeting the sea – What next?

By analysing river representations across a range of environments, rather than an individual river, this thesis has demonstrated how the environment itself can affect conceptualisations of time in ancient thought; this recognition of how the natural environment contributes to meaning could be taken as a starting point for examining other aspects of the natural environment within ancient material, especially as my thesis is limited to the study of rivers within the larger umbrella of the natural environment.

My thesis has largely discussed rivers within the Ovidian corpus, due to the unique mix of political, cultural, and literary change during Ovid's writing career, which is explored through changing depictions of river power and vulnerability. However, I believe that there could be more river scholarship within Classics in future scholarship; Jones has already shown some of the possibilities in analysing across a range of authors, whilst the potential for analysis of rivers within a single work would push even further into the complexities of the river image.[584]

As other aspects of the natural environment, larger bodies of water such as seas and oceans could also be considered alongside the role of rivers, particularly in comparisons with directionality, and how the lack of clear directionality in oceans and seas might interact with different aspects of poetic time. In keeping with post-phenomenological enquiry, which thinks about interactions within a larger natural environment, consideration of rivers alongside permanent bodies within the environment (i.e. mountains), in contrast to transient actors in the environment (i.e. animals, plants), could also prove fruitful for further enquiry into temporality and the natural environment in the ancient world. As previously discussed in this thesis, rivers encompass both permanence and transience, which could be drawn out

[584] Lucan's *Bellum Civile* seems particularly ripe for river analysis; Giusti (2015) has ably discussed the metapoetic connotations of the crossing of the river Rubicon, and Zientek (2014) discusses the role of the natural landscape within the poem, yet none yet have done so with an environmental riverine focus.

further through comparison to mountains and animals as alternate actors in the environment.

Within this, continued work to try and recentre the agency of the natural environment within analysis will still fall into difficulty with the necessary caveats of the nature of literary sources; however, as I have shown, the study of ancient literature is greatly enriched by a holistic consideration of the role of the natural environment in creating meaning.

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