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Myth and the Authorial Persona in Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

The *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* are crucial for understanding Ovid's use of myth, as he repeatedly uses mythological *exempla* to illustrate his own condition in exile and to characterise the authorial mask which he adopts in the exilic epistles. My doctorate approaches the author-persona relationship by investigating how Ovid utilises mythological references to construct his persona in literary terms, a methodology that rejects any attempt to reveal the "man behind the mask" and instead focuses on appreciating the complexity of the authorial exilic persona in its own right. By focusing on the mask of the author, this thesis looks in-depth at how the authorial persona is constructed by references to myth and literature, and how this often relates back to other Ovidian personae. My work focuses on the most common myths found in the exile works featuring the gods, epic protagonists, other heroes, the Underworld, and famous wives. The mythical *exempla* found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* are commonly equated with the author's depiction of himself, or paralleled with the portrayals of his wife, friends, and enemies. As these mythical *exempla* are deployed, Ovid often makes allusions to other texts (Ovidian as well as those by other authors) which feature either the same narratives or characters, giving rise to a rich interplay of myth and intertextual allusions. All in all, the authorial figure in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the *relegatus poeta*, becomes increasingly mythologised as he assumes the guises of the protagonists of tragedy and epic; persecuted, abandoned, and doomed to remain away from his homeland like Ulysses, Jason, and Philoctetes.

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In loving memory of a great friend and colleague, Donald Murray.

“All visible objects, man, are but pasteboard masks. But in each event – in the living act, the undoubted deed – there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will strike, strike through the mask!”

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*.

Introduction

This thesis will explore how Ovid uses myth to construct his authorial persona in exile and how, in this process, the author creates allusions to other literary texts.[1] Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*,[2] Ovid uses myth either as a means of characterising his own authorial persona, the *relegatus poeta*,[3] or as a way of illuminating the changing relationship between the author and the text. In the course of this thesis, I shall pay close attention to how the persona of the *relegatus poeta* is portrayed as a literary construct in its own right. As such, this thesis will not search the exile works for biographical information concerning Ovid the man, but will instead concentrate on the mask of the author as written into the text of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

My thesis represents a significant advance in the field of Ovidian exile studies because my work provides an in-depth analysis of how Ovid constructs the authorial voice in the exile works as a literary creation, characterised by the mythical parallels the *relegatus poeta* adopts and shaped by the persona's relation to previous personae and texts in the

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[1] On the relationship between allusion and intertextuality in Latin poetry see Hinds (1998) 17-51.

[2] This thesis will confine the study of Ovid's persona to the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* because both collections are composed as first-person elegiac epistles and the authorial voice found in the *Tristia* is strongly similar to that of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. I shall not be including the *Ibis* in this thesis because of its high degree of invective content. I am open to the possibilities that the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* were revised during Ovid's exile (for the possibility of Ovid revising the *Met*. in exile, see Kovacs (1987) and Ingleheart (2010a) 93; on Ovid's work on the *Fasti* during his relegation, see Platnauer (1951) 17; Fantham (1985) 257-66 and (1992) 166-70; Barchiesi (1997) 177-8, 259-71; Newlands (2002) 200-1), and I shall treat the 'double' *Heroides* as exilic texts (for more on this, see nn. 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 99).

[3] I shall refer to the authorial persona in the exile works as the *relegatus poeta*. I have chosen to use this term because Ovid stresses his own plight repeatedly as a *relegatus*, but the strong authorial voice (coupled with some instances where Ovid suggests to the reader that he is offering them autobiographical information, particularly in *Tristia* 2 and *Tristia* 4.10) suggests that Ovid is very much concerned with painting a picture of himself not only as *relegatus* but also as a *poeta*, a poet who paid the price for writing his earlier erotic verses with his endurance of exile in his old age.

Ovidian corpus, thus laying to rest the quest for the "man behind the mask".[4] Ovid constructs the authorial persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by drawing a number of often repeated parallels with characters from myth. The persona is likened to heroes who are driven away from their homelands, deserted by their comrades, or persecuted by gods.[5] The associations between such characters and the persona mythologises the authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, leading to an ambience of loneliness in the exilic epistles that creates a literary world characterised by abandonment and degeneration.

First of all, this main introductory section to the thesis will define the key terms for this investigation (namely myth and persona) before considering my theoretical stance regarding the concept of the persona in antiquity and my position concerning the popular quest for the "man behind the mask" in Ovidian scholarship. I will then consider how Ovid's construction of the *relegatus poeta* in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is influenced by the circumstances surrounding his exile and how the mythologisation of the authorial voice in his earlier collection, the *Heroides*, influences Ovid's use of myth to construct his authorial persona in the exilic epistles. Finally, I shall analyse previous scholarship on myth in the exile works and how Ovid constructs the authorial persona, and position my work within the field.

Myth in the Ovidian corpus stars a cast of thousands, and this thesis will focus on how Ovid uses myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as a means of constructing his own authorial identity in particular. Therefore I will select the most prominent and pertinent

[4] For previous works of scholarship that have sought to elucidate details of Ovid's life from the exilic epistles, see Wilkinson (1955); Frécaut (1973); Dickinson (1973); Thomsen (1979); Claassen (1986), (1987), (1988), (1990b), (1996), (2001), (2008); Helzle (1989a).

[5] In the course of this thesis I shall consider how Ovid uses mythical parallels to explore the limits of the applicability of myth and literature as a means of expressing the "reality" of his exile. The reality that I will consider here should be understood as the "reality" of Ovid's exile as he presents it to the reader in the text. I shall not undertake any investigations concerning whether Ovid was ever really exiled or not; what is important for the focus of this thesis is that Ovid presents himself to the reader as an exile in his own poetry. My approach is influenced by Sharrock (2000), whose article on the construction of characters in Propertian elegy does not argue whether the reality in the elegiac verse is either a product of fiction or history, but rather concentrates on analysing how Propertius constructs characters and situations in the text. On the possibility that Ovid was never exiled, and that his voyage to Tomis is fictional, see Fitton Brown (1985) and Claassen (1986) 27.

instances where Ovid associates himself with a character from myth, and it may be prudent to consider a definition of myth at this point. Burkert's (1979) definition of myth centres upon the *gravitas* with which a narrative was endowed by a group of people, resulting in myth being distinguished from stories or folk tales on the basis of it being "a traditional tale ... held to be not a passing enjoyment, but something important, serious, even sacred."[6] Graf (2002) builds upon Burkert's (1979) categorisation, developing it to illuminate the importance of cultural specificity for such narratives, thus defining myths as "traditional tales with immediate cultural relevance."[7] Graf's (1993) work also considers exactly what is meant by the term "traditional", explaining that myths are handed down from one generation to the next in a community, without any discernible identification of their exact origin.[8] The nebulous nature of the origins of myth provides an opportunity for different versions of tales to be told in works of literature: "A myth is not a specific poetic text. It transcends the text: it is the subject matter, a plot fixed in broad outline and with characters no less fixed, which the individual poet is free to alter only within limits."[9] The adaptability and malleability of myth that we see in different works of literature is a direct consequence of myth, or μῦθος, being used as a term to denote a tale that is inherently fictional.[10] While these definitions highlight the importance of a fictional narrative for a given civilisation as the deciding factor concerning whether a narrative is regarded as a myth or as a story, we should also be aware that Ovid does not always treat myths with reverence. As Graf (2002) suggests, when reading the works of Ovid we should be alive to the author's propensity for handling serious myths with a light, playful (and at times irreverent) touch without necessarily assuming that there is no deeper meaning to Ovid's use of myth.[11]

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[6] Burkert (1979) 3-4.
[7] Graf (2002) 108.
[8] Graf (1993) 2.
[9] *Ibid*.
[10] Graf (1993) 2 (cf. Burkert (1979) 3). For examples of how μῦθος was used see Hdt. 2.23.1, 2.45.1. For an overview of how μῦθος was used by Herodotus, Thucydides, and Plato, see Graf (1993) 1-3.
[11] Graf (2002) 108.

The definitions offered by Burkert (1979) and Graf (2002) provide a sound working model of what a myth is, but it is worth considering that Ovid provides us with a definition of myth within the exilic epistles themselves. Ovid labels narratives that feature heroes as *fabula* (*Tr*. 1.5.80)[12], a term that categorises the narrative as being wholly fictitious, as explained concisely in Cicero's *De Inventione*:[13] *fabula est, in qua nec verae nec veri similes res continentur, cuiusmodi est 'angues ingentes alites, iuncti iugo'*.[14] Therefore Ovid's definition of myth rests on the fictitious content of the narrative, and it is this unreality of myth that he plays with in *Tristia* 1.5.[15] In this epistle, Ovid compares himself to Ulysses at length, and in the process he creates an association between himself and the ocean-wandering hero.[16] As Ovid compares his fate to that of Ulysses, he repeatedly contrasts his own hardships with those of the Ithacan hero (56-78) before concluding:

adde quod illius pars maxima ficta laborum est:

ponitur in nostris fabula nulla malis (*Tr*. 1.5.79-80)

Here, it is Ovid who has to endure the one thing that Ulysses never had to suffer: inescapable reality.[17] While the myth of Ulysses provides a reflection of the author's circumstances (although the author's hardships surpass those of Ulysses), and this parallel helps to construct the image of our author as a persecuted wanderer, ultimately Ulysses' situation is not real,[18] as is communicated by Ovid and his choice of terminology.[19]

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[12] I shall be using Hall's (1995) edition of the *Tristia*.
[13] I am using Friedrich's (1884) edition of *De Inventione*.
[14] Cic. *Inv*. 1.27. This passage also differentiates *fabula* from *historia* (a real historical narrative) and *argumentum* (a plot) on the basis of how much truth is contained in the narratives (on this, see also Graf (2002) 108-10).
[15] For the textual evidence for splitting *Tristia* 1.5 into two poems, see Hall (1995) 26-8.
[16] This will be more fully discussed in Chapter Two: Epic Protagonists.
[17] On Ovid's use of myth as a means of comparing his reality in exile to the wider poetic tradition, see Rahn (1958) 115-19; Besslich (1972) 185.
[18] Ovid labels Ulysses' suffering as *ficta* in 79, stressing the fictionality of the character's hardship. For Ovid's use of *ficta* in the exile works to describe his own verse, and the suggestion that Ovid does not believe Odysseus' "tall tales" of his wanderings in *Tr*. 1.5, see Ingleheart (2010a) 289-90.

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid treats myths as *fabulae*; while they are not real, they are nevertheless important because they can be used as a parallel for the author in exile and contribute towards the construction of his persona. The beginning of *Tristia* 3.8 exemplifies Ovid's handling of mythology in these terms, as he wishes to be a range of mythical characters before admitting that this is just a fantasy:

Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem consistere curru,
misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum;
nunc ego Medeae vellem frenare dracones,
quos habuit fugiens arce, Corinthe, tua;
nunc ego iactandas optarem sumere pinnas,
sive tuas, Perseu, Daedale, sive tuas,
ut tenera nostris cedente volatibus aura
aspicerem patriae dulce repente solum,
desertaeque domus vultum, memoresque sodales,
caraque praecipue coniugis ora meae.
stulte, quid o frustra votis puerilibus optas
quae non ulla tulit fertue feretue dies? (*Tr.* 3.8.1-12)

Ovid sees that what he wishes for is impossible (*frustra*, 11) and that his prayers are childish (*votis puerilibus*, 11), thus casting the myths he has treated in the previous lines as unreal. In this example, we can see that Ovid has chosen a range of characters from myth that all have one thing in common – flight - to act as a contrast to his own set of circumstances. Thus, these rejected mythical parallels of characters who experienced flight serves to increase the helplessness of our author, who remains very firmly rooted on the ground as an abandoned figure at the edge of the world. As we shall see in the course of this thesis, Ovid is very adept at selecting myths to convey a particular situation, and he is also very skilled at cherry-picking elements of myths that best suit his agenda at any given point.

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[19] Ovid also categorises the myth of Orestes and Pylades as a *fabula* at *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.2.97. On the myth of Orestes and Pylades in Ovid's exile works see Ingleheart (2010b).

The malleability of myth that Ovid embraces is a direct result of viewing myth, *fabula*, as being fictitious in nature because this provides an opportunity for the creation of narratives (or new narrative elements) surrounding pre-established tales that have featured in previous literary works. As Graf (2002) comments, to Ovid, "myths, *fabulae*, are poetic texts, written by specific or sometimes unnamed poets of the past."[20] Therefore mythic narratives provide fertile ground for the author to develop intertextual play by making reference to other literary works that have also recounted the exploits of a hero. In these scenarios it is important to remember that myth is not set in stone; it is protean and adaptable. As we shall see, there is plenty of opportunity for innovation and creativity when dealing with myth, even when it comes to narratives that have already been treated by a number of authors before Ovid, and we should also be aware that it is an artist's prerogative to challenge and play with canonical versions of myths.

In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, there is an impressive array of famous mythical heroes, heroines, and gods.[21] This thesis will focus on how Ovid uses self-reflexive comparisons to characters from myth to construct his authorial persona, and I will therefore concentrate on the myths that Ovid associates with his authorial voice.[22] This means that I will only be examining instances where Ovid directly associates himself with a character (or their situation) from an exilic perspective. I have chosen a range of myths to investigate in the exilic epistles, particularly those myths that are often repeated (such as those connected with Jupiter) or are developed at length as a reflection of the author's circumstances (for

[20] Graf (2002) 110.

[21] Claassen (2008) 265-83 provides a database of mythical characters who feature in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (updated from her 2001 article), dividing the myths into those who appear only once in each text, or recur elsewhere over a period of five stages of the author's exile. Unfortunately these results tables are not a wholly correct representation of all the myths that feature in the exilic epistles, and as such they have not provided the basis of my own study, but they are very useful at conveying the scope of mythical content in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

[22] This approach is similar to that of Sharrock's (2000) article that explores how Propertius uses mythical *exempla* to construct the character of the authorial persona in Propertian elegy.

instance, myths concerning Ulysses, Jason, and Philoctetes).[23] I will also consider how Ovid depicts his marriage by equating his wife with several heroines, as this extends the parallelism he constructs between himself and a number of heroes (for example, depicting Ovid's wife as Penelope adds more depth to his own association with Ulysses). In addition to exploring the most well-developed mythical parallels in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, I will also consider characters who do not occur very frequently, but who are nevertheless important for understanding the authorial persona (for instance, Oedipus only occurs once in the exilic epistles, but in a passage that is crucial for explaining the relationship between the author and his pre-exilic texts). My assessment of myth in the exilic epistles will focus on how Ovid uses mythical *exempla* to characterise his persona, the *relegatus poeta*, as an abandoned and persecuted figure.

The concept of the authorial persona in ancient poetry is a vexed topic, and it is debatable whether the notion of an author's mask is a deliberate creation by the poet, or whether it is constructed in the mind of the modern reader.[24] I wish now to consider the terminology I shall be using when discussing the persona, and I would also like to explore the existence of the persona as a concept in ancient literature. Elliott's (1982) monograph on the history of the authorial persona in Western literature approaches defining the modern literary persona and runs into not insignificant difficulties of terminology in approaching a definition of the modern literary persona: "anyone looking seriously at the controversies over the persona quickly sees that much argument is terminological rather than substantive. Opponents are not agreed on what their central term means. Writers who

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[23]Ovid's repetition of mythical *exempla* has previously been viewed in a negative light by scholars. At times, Wilkinson (1955) 322-66 finds mythological *exempla* monotonous and tedious. For instance, Wilkinson (1955) 360 complains "must we wade through ... eight couplets of examples of legendary heroes more fortunate in that their place of exile was somewhere intrinsically desirable?"

[24] Nagle (1980) 90 touches upon the common problem faced by many readers: "In reading the works of an author, one forms an impression of his appearance and personality. The desire to confirm this impression is manifested in curiosity about the author's actual appearance and the events of his life. The attempt to satisfy this curiosity is often disappointing, since the reader's impression is formed about the persona, rather than the historical person."

attack the persona are likely to think the term entails a complete separation between the author and the pose he assumes: the mask having nothing to do with the wearer of the mask. Proponents have a much more flexible idea of the relation between persona and author, mask and wearer becoming almost indistinguishable at times."[25] Elliott (1982) approaches defining the persona by analysing the roots of the term "persona", as stemming from πρόσωπον, the Greek for "mask", producing the literary term *persona*, itself Latin for "mask".[26] Elliott (1982) then explores the original usage of this term in the ancient theatre as actors assumed a character in a narrative by donning a physical mask, before moving on to consider how this physical disguise evolved into the conceptual "mask" worn by the authorial voice in a text.[27] While Elliott's (1982) consideration of how we might approach defining the literary persona is undoubtedly based upon modern literary criticism of contemporary works of Western literature, it does nevertheless provide a pragmatic starting point for our own theoretical exploration of authorial personae in ancient works. It is Elliott's (1982) idea of the conceptual mask, adopted by authors to disguise their real identities and shaped to create an impression of their own choosing, that I wish to coopt for my investigation into Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

While modern works on persona theory are no doubt hindered in their application to Latin literature by the fact that these theories are themselves shaped by concepts born out of modernity and, as a result, their application to ancient texts is tantamount to superimposing modern values and ideas onto the ancient world, we should be aware that work such as Elliott's (1982) monograph provides us with a sound starting point for debating the existence of the persona in classical antiquity. Indeed, academic discourse in the world of twentieth century English literature encouraged a reaction from philological circles. Clay's (1998) influential article focuses on the theoretical possibility that ancient authors had a relatively similar idea of the authorial persona to that of modern authors. Clay (1998) self-consciously takes inspiration from modern criticism and explains how it shapes his approach by creating awareness in classical scholarship concerning the "difference between the poet

[25] Elliott (1982) 18.
[26] Elliott (1982) 19-21.
[27] Elliott (1982) 19-32.

of the poem and the poet *in* a poem."[28] Clay (1998) provides a sound overview of the presence of authorial personae in Greek and Roman literature, but argues that there is a significant difference in the way that Latin literature seems to have a more fully developed distinction between the author of the text and the persona he adopts as narrator,[29] born out of the very different composition and performance context that emerged in Rome where readers became much more commonplace than audiences: "literacy and the ancient book opened a gap between a poet and his audience, and the absence of the performing poet is solved by the mask or persona of the writer."[30] While Clay (1998) proposes that the author assumes a role, and with it a certain illusory or masked identity when composing a text in ancient Rome, and argues that while in practice this may be tantamount to constructing an authorial persona, ancient authors "contrasted the poet himself in his life outside of his poetry with his poetry- *versiculi*, *liber*, or *pagina*. The word *persona* in our literary sense of the term occurs only in late authors such as Diomedes and Servius."[31] Thus, while we understand that the word "persona" is used to denote an assumed authorial voice in a text as a primarily modern concept, it can still be pragmatic to use this term in connection with ancient literature, as long as we are aware that it is a literary term that has been borrowed from the field of modern literary theory. Clay (1998) concludes his assessment of persona theory in antiquity by commenting on how we can make use of recent literary theory to shape our understanding of ancient works, providing that we focus our enquiries into the ancient authorial persona on how authors assert their own identity in their own texts (as opposed to seeking out any formalised literary theory on the concept of the persona in ancient sources).[32] In this thesis, therefore, I shall concentrate my analysis of Ovid's persona on how Ovid constructs his authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by exploring how he uses mythical *exempla* to create the persona's identity as a literary construct.

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[28] Clay (1998) 17.
[29] See also Rudd (1976) 145-81, who argues for an awareness that ancient authors, as artists, are capable of creating and presenting a number of personae that do not necessarily reflect their own personal values.
[30] Clay (1998) 30.
[31] Clay (1998) 35.
[32] Clay (1998) 39-40.

The work of Elliott (1982) and Clay (1998) provides a useful starting point for this investigation, but it is worth contemplating alternative views on the idea of the ancient persona. Mayer (2003) argues that the application of modern persona theory is unhelpful to philological enquiries because it anachronistically superimposes a modern concept onto ancient authors, who may have had their own, totally independent, idea of the authorial mask.[33] Mayer (2003) discusses how Greek authors conceptualised the authorial voice in their texts, before attempting to define the Roman view of the authorial persona as a fleeting and temporary construct, an assumed role in a given scenario: "the Romans were of course also aware of the assumption of a personality or role, and to describe it used their word for mask, *persona.*"[34] However, after acknowledging that authors adopted guises in their own texts, identities which may not necessarily represent their own personal views, Mayer (2003) ultimately rejects the idea of the persona by concluding that ancient readers understood a character's words to be a true representation of the author's personal views and, as such, "there is little or nothing to suggest that an ancient reader was in a position to recognise the sort of generic persona a modern critic postulates as a matter of course."[35] Despite Mayer's (2003) assertions that ancient readers would not have discerned any difference between the persona and the authorial voice, Mayer nevertheless includes a considerable section in his article on exceptions to his thesis, most notably Ovid: "Ovid, however, provides our most suggestive case of the denial of a connection between his life and his poetry. It is highly significant that the denials are only to be found in his poetry written in exile: *Tristia* 2.353-546 and 3.2.5-6 … Ovid suffered because a significant reader, Augustus, failed to disconnect the writer's life from his poetry."[36] Here, Mayer (2003) concedes that Ovid is an important exception to his theory concerning the absence of a self-consciously stylised authorial mask in ancient literature. In the course of this thesis, I shall explore the authorial voice as an illusory mask, or persona, whose identity is constructed by Ovid in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. As we shall see, Ovid self-consciously constructs the authorial persona throughout the exilic epistles, but the mask Ovid creates in the *Tristia*

[33] Mayer (2003) 57.
[34] Mayer (2003) 62.
[35] Mayer (2003) 78.
[36] Mayer (2003) 68.

and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is a very different character from the versions of the poet we find in the pre-exilic collections of the Ovidian corpus.[37]

The authorial voice in the Ovidian exile works is that of a forlorn individual who laments his fate as an exile, and looks back upon his erotic works as the cause of his downfall. This means that while there is a significant difference in tone and attitude between the characters of the *relegatus poeta* and the elegiac *amator*, there is necessarily a degree of interaction between the exilic persona and his previous incarnations in amatory poetry. This is particularly in keeping with the way that the exile works relate to, and refer back to, the cause of the author's downfall. Even though the author self-consciously constructs the *relegatus poeta* in a very different vein from his previous, and confidently ambitious, personae found in the elegiac works, his exilic persona occasionally exhibits characteristics reminiscent of earlier authorial guises such as the *praeceptor amoris*. Holzberg's (1997) monograph on Ovid and his works views the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as a disjointed elegiac realm where the *relegatus poeta* assumes the stock roles of amatory elegy, thus resurrecting previously discarded personae, particularly when the *relegatus poeta* adopts elegiac diction or Ovid appears to speak in the voice of the *praeceptor amoris* to his own wife.[38] While the exile works continue to feature various personae familiar from the elegiac world (such as the *amator* and *praeceptor amoris*) the author is not averse to using familiar images from erotic elegy in an exilic context, thus highlighting the change in his fortune from his days as an elegiac poet in Rome: "Zur zweiten Kategorie gehören einige der Stellen, an denen der Verbannte über die Barbaren am Schwarzen Meer berichtet. Pfeil und Bogen der Geten ersetzen jetzt die entsprechende Bewaffnung Amors. Aber während der Liebesgott den *poeta*/*amator* in *Amores* 1.1, als dieser von Waffen und Kriegen singen,

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[37] Thomsen (1979) 26 considers that the authorial voice in the exile works constructs a very different character from the personae found in earlier Ovidian texts, particularly the amatory works, and she approaches this disjunction without falling into the trap of believing the pose of autobiographical revelation: "most readers see some instances of posing in some of Ovid's earlier elegiac poems, [and] I would ask that we read the elegies from exile without assuming in advance that Ovid has stripped off every mask". After a promising theoretical start, Thomsen (1979) 38 later claims to have unveiled the author's emotional stance towards his poetical works.

[38] Holzberg (1997) 182.

also eine Art *Aeneis* verfassenwill, in einen Elegiker verwandelt, verkörpern die Barbaren am Schwarzen Meer die Welt des Heldenepos, in die der Elegiker als Verbannter nun doch noch hineingezogen wird."[39] Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid recalls previously adopted personae in order to construct a contrast between his current set of circumstances and his past as a poet of erotic verse. The downfall of Ovid, the man and artist behind the mask, is played out before us in literary terms as Ovid uses elegiac images, motifs, and vocabulary to contrast his previous career with the sombre authorial voice of the ruined *relegatus poeta*. The interplay between the experiences of Ovid as a man and the personality of the authorial persona is an intricate matter,[40] and certain works of previous scholarship have previously prioritised examining the "man behind the mask"[41] over appreciating the complexity of the authorial mask as a literary feature in its own right.

Indeed, one of the most recent publications in this area, Claassen (2008), adopts an almost evangelical stance with regard to the search for the "man behind the mask" in the Ovidian exile works. Claassen's (2008) monograph approaches the authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in a way that stresses Ovid's role as the creative poet behind

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[39] Holzberg (1997) 182.

[40] This is further complicated by Ovid's tendency to play with the distinctions between reality and literature when he defends himself from the charge of teaching adultery. Williams' (1994) 168-9 comments that, in the exile works, "Ovid bases his claim to moral probity on a distinction which is itself a specious poetic ploy, namely the distinction between the 'unreality' of the projected persona of the poet in his poetry and the 'reality' of the alleged private life of the poet outside his poetry ... Thus Ovid's position ... is like that of the man who says, 'To be frank, I regularly tell lies. Do believe me, I regularly tell lies.'"

[41] Wilkinson (1955) 285-365 interprets the exile works as a reflection of Ovid's personality and moods, as if the author were telling the story of his life from an exilic perspective. Frécaut (1972) 329-67 conducts an investigation into a selection of Ovidian texts and produces psychological conclusions about the author's personality and sense of humour. Dickinson (1973) 158 claims that Ovid's own personality emerges from the text of the exile works. Both Bouynot (1958) and Schilling (1972) investigated the use of mythology in the exile works and arrived at biographical conclusions concerning the author's growing maturity in age. Thomsen (1979) 38 and 78 attempts to guess at the author's emotional feelings for his creations. Claassen's career in Ovidian studies sought to unveil the "man behind the mask", beginning with her (1986) doctoral dissertation which was then reworked into several articles that adopted the same approach ((1987); (1988); (1990b); (1996); (2001)). These articles were recently amalgamated into her (2008) monograph which includes reworked sections of her original publications.

the text, and attempts to unveil the emotions of the man behind the poetry. Claassen (2008) chooses to divide the authorial identity in exile into three personae (*poeta*, *exul*, and *vates*) based upon her analysis of the emotional intensity the author experiences as he composes verse.[42] Claassen (2008) defines these three authorial masks in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* with reference to each other; the *poeta* is "both the pre-exilic carefree Roman artist and the composer of the exilic poetry … The *poeta* is emotionally involved with his craft, positively or negatively",[43] the *exul* "refers to the exile, whether as a type of the victims of Augustan ire or the historic Ovid himself. Here emotion is of paramount importance: his relationship with wife and friends, his mental agony and experience of physical suffering, his penitence over his *error* and indignation about the punishment of his *carmen* and, most importantly, his religious feelings and his feelings towards Augustus",[44] whereas the *vates* persona is the revelation of the unifying man behind these masks:[45] "the speaker of timeless truth that is something different from a simplistic approach to the exiled poet as a changed man."[46] Claassen's (2008) method of engaging with Ovidian personae in the exile works emphasises the importance of Ovid's personal, private emotions and ultimately reveals that such an exploration is a quest to find the "man behind the mask", the opinions and personality of Ovid as an individual human being.[47] Therefore, Claassen's (2008) exploration of the identity of the man behind the authorial mask approaches the author-text relationship by attempting to discern the degree (and nature of) emotional connectivity the individual man feels with his own poetry.[48] However, Claassen (2008) does

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[42] Claassen (2008) 8. See also Claassen (1986), which likewise divides the authorial persona in the Ovidian exile works into three facets: *poeta*, *exul,* and *vates*, and Claassen (1988), which also splits the authorial voice into three dimensions in the exile works and concentrates on identifying moments where they converge.
[43] Claassen (2008) 9.
[44] *Ibid*.
[45] On the concept of the *vates* in wider Augustan literature and how this pertains to Ovid, see Newman (1967b) 100-14; Galinsky (1969) 105; Nagle (1980) 142-7.
[46] Claassen (2008) 9.
[47] Claassen (2008) 8-9.
[48] Claassen adopts a similar analysis in her (1990b) 103 article, which adopts a very psychological approach to "examine Ovid's exhibition, in the exilic poetry, of a 'wavering identity', that is, his use of related literary devices, personification and depersonalisation, to convey his psychological reaction to exile."

not convincingly state how this level of intimate knowledge about the poet, the "man behind the mask", can ever be irrefutably achieved.

If one approaches the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* intending to discover the "man behind the mask", the real emotions of the true man composing these verses, then there is a temptation to read these epistles as a form of autobiography. Of course, the greatest danger with such an autobiographical approach is that there is a chance of overlooking literary elements of the text or of reading any stylistic features, such as the characterisation of the authorial persona, as a genuine confession of the author's own character. Therefore, there is a certain degree of antithesis between a method of literary criticism which accepts, and indeed explores, the self-conscious construction of an authorial persona and the autobiographical approach which reads texts in order to glean personal information about the poet. While there is a degree of opposition between these two methods of approaching Latin literature, this does not necessarily mean that the critic has to adopt one stance at the expense of the other; just because the author self-consciously constructs a persona for himself to adopt in a certain text, this does not necessarily mean that the poetical collection does not contain any autobiographical information. Indeed, there is a certain overlap between the biographical content of any literary work and the persona which the author adopts, as Clay (1998) has noted: "most ancient readers were interested in the man or woman behind the poem and became themselves the poets of biographical fictions. A brief survey of this manner of reading ancient poetry will suggest, in some measure, the great obstacles that stood in the way of any ancient theory of the literary persona. The practice of ancient poets is another theme, as the biographical fashion of literary criticism, which has persisted well into this century, has obscured the rhetorical practice of ancient poets."[49] This biographical fashion of literary criticism has been applied to the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in the past,[50] memorably in Helzle's (1989a) article attempting to discern the identity of Ovid's wife. Helzle (1989a) read the Ovidian exile works to discover any autobiographical content that might reveal the identity of the author's wife, arriving at the speculation that

[49] Clay (1998) 10-11.
[50] For more on this see n.41.

"the apparently anonymous woman seems to have been called Fabia Ovidii."[51] There is a significant danger in reading the Ovidian exile works with the intention of obtaining any personal information concerning the author, since Ovid deliberately and self-consciously constructs an authorial persona (and indeed, makes reference to other personae from his other poetical collections such as the *praeceptor amoris*), thus creating a blurring of the boundary between authorial persona and the "man behind the mask."[52] This means that one can never fully be confident about whether any supposedly personal information that Ovid includes in either the *Tristia* or *Epistulae ex Ponto* is in fact the confessional details that they purport to be or, rather, is simply yet another instrument for the construction of his authorial persona as an exile.[53] In this thesis I will concentrate my analysis on the construction of the authorial persona as written by Ovid in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, as this is the image of himself that he deliberately created as a lasting representation of his identity as an artist in his own poetry.

The persona of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is defined by his status as an exile, doomed to remain away from Rome, and this state of existence is the fundamental cornerstone of Ovid's construction of his authorial persona in the exile letters. The circumstances surrounding Ovid's relegation to Tomis, namely the cause of his exile and the role that Augustus played in Ovid's expulsion from Rome, are important factors in understanding how Ovid portrays his downfall from an exilic perspective because this influences the myths Ovid chooses to represent both his relegation by Augustus as well as his relationship with the erotic work that brought about his downfall. Before we consider

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[51] Helzle (1989a) 185.

[52] Holzberg (1997) 200 regards the relationship between poetic persona and autobiography in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as essentially a question concerning to what extent the author's exile shaped his authorial persona and ultimately reads the authorial voice as a work of literary fiction.

[53] Thomsen (1979) 176 encapsulates the elusive and shifting nature of the authorial voice in the exile works quite neatly: "Ovid tries on a number of masks, playing roles which one might expect of someone in his situation: an embarrassed penitent confessing his past poetry was reprehensible simply because it was erotic, a broken-hearted wretch admitting that his present poetry is poor because it is written out of a lack of any better activity, a humble devotee confident that Augustus rewards all pious behaviour. Repeatedly and deliberately Ovid undermines these poses, whether by blatant inconsistencies or by subtler means."

how the author's portrayal of his relegation is shaped by the charge of teaching adultery and the personal involvement of the Princeps, let us first explore how Ovid's poetry came under the accusation of subverting the moral legislation of the Augustan regime.

Ovid's relationship with the Augustan regime was never straightforward. As a poet whose earliest collection, the *Amores*, focused upon the erotic exploits of the first person narrator, the *amator*, the author's work did not sit comfortably with Augustus' image of a new Rome founded upon an austere morality, encouraging respectable behaviour, and promoting sexual restraint.[54] It was, however, Ovid's subsequent poetical collection, the *Ars amatoria* that incorporated a didactic dimension to Ovidian erotic verse and so brought Ovid into the closest engagement with Augustan ideology. It is one thing to compose poetry recounting the adventures of an elegiac *amator*, but it is quite a different (and more controversial) set of affairs to be seen to teach the uninitiated how they can adopt such a lifestyle for themselves. In the guise of the authorial persona, the *praeceptor amoris*,[55] Ovid claims to be able to instruct any reader in the skills of love,[56] which can be learnt just as any other talent:

Si quis in hoc artem populo non novit amandi,

hoc legat et lecto carmine doctus amet.

arte citae veloque rates remoque moventur,

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[54] On the complex relationship between Ovid's poetry, Augustan literature and Augustan politics, see Barchiesi (1994); Galinsky (1996) 261-8; Davis (2006); Miller (2009). On Ovid and the politicised landscape of Augustan Rome: Boyle (2003). On Ovid's attitude towards Augustus in the exile works, see Evans (1983) 10-30; Williams (1994) 154-209; Barchiesi (2001a) 79-103; Ingleheart (2010a).

[55] *ego sum praeceptor Amoris* (*Ars* 1.17).

[56] For examples of erotodidactic elements in erotic elegy before Ovid's *Ars amatoria* see Tibullus 1.4, 1.6 and *Amores* 1.4 (on these see Murgatroyd (1980) 128-59, 185-207; McKeown (1989) 76-102). On erotodidactic elements of first-person subjective amatory poetry see Wheeler (1910a), (1910b), (1911); Ingleheart (2010a) 350-1.While there are instances where elegists have adopted the role of teacher in their works prior to Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, Ovid's *praeceptor amoris* is nevertheless a new and different persona compared to any other adopted by a poet before. In the guise of the *praeceptor amoris* Ovid achieves a lengthy, sustained, and stylised pose as teacher to his readership throughout an entire collection, self-consciously offering the reader a chance to learn the skills of love.

arte leves currus: arte regendus Amor (*Ars* 1.1-4)[57]

However, bearing in mind that Augustus had introduced new legislation controlling the sexual behaviour of Roman citizens and condemning adultery,[58] Ovid carefully states at the beginning of the first book of the *Ars amatoria* that his work is not intended for a section of Roman society, respectable women, to whom the new sexual laws were applicable:

este procul, vittae tenues, insigne pudoris,

quaeque tegis medios instita longa pedes:

nos Venerem tutam concessaque furta canemus

inque meo nullum carmine crimen erit (*Ars* 1.31-4)

Here, Ovid pays lip-service to the moral legislation as he instructs women wearing *vittae tenues* (31) and *instita longa* (32) to be absent from his readership, referring to the standard dress of Roman matrons, unmarried free-born girls, and Vestal Virgins, effectively reducing his readership to the less respectable women in Rome who are not subject to the sexual legislation.[59] While, ultimately, an author can never truly restrict the readership of their work since the distribution of their ideas and texts is beyond their own control after their work comes into the public domain, Ovid nevertheless includes a careful caveat to his *Ars amatoria* indicating that the author did not intend this work for respectable ladies. Ovid treads a careful tightrope; while the author claims to be able to teach *any* reader (*Siquis* (*Ars* 1.1)) the skills of how to love (1-4), Ovid also places a restriction on the readership of his own text and thus absolves himself from any blame of teaching Roman women the art of

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[57] I shall use Kenney's (1995) edition of the *Ars amatoria*.

[58] Augustus passed both the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* and the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* in 18 BC, aimed at regulating sexual relationships and encouraging marriage in Rome. For the ancient evidence for these adultery laws, see Riccobono (1945) 112-28. On the technicalities of these laws, see Treggiari (1991) 277-98. For an assessment of how these laws played a part in Augustus' larger scheme of moral regeneration for the Roman people, see Syme (1939) 443-6. On the importance of these laws for Ovid's exile in light of his *Ars amatoria*, see Ingleheart (2010a) 2-4.

[59] Hollis (1977) 38. On the precise relevance of these laws for different groups of people, see Treggiari (1991) 60-80, 277-98.

seduction. Nevertheless, when a political regime has strict views on the acceptability of who sleeps with whom, instructing *anyone* in the arts of love is a potentially controversial act. The (supposed) restriction of the readership of the *Ars amatoria* has a significant impact on Ovid's relationship with the erotodidactic text after his relegation as it determines how, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid portrays Augustus as all-powerful and depicts himself as a persecuted wanderer. In addition, the identification of Ovid's intended readership for the *Ars* also influences how Ovid portrays his career as one of degeneration from an exilic perspective, as well as how Ovid relates to earlier texts in the corpus (especially the collection that caused his relegation).

In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto,* Ovid presents the *Ars* as the reason behind his relegation and this determines the poet's relationship with his pre-exilic works. While the *Ars amatoria*, the poet's most controversial work, has been remembered by posterity as the cause of Ovid's downfall, the poet himself comments that his relegation was brought about by two factors. Even though the author himself acknowledges that he was relegated on the charge of teaching adultery, Ovid also specifies that he also made a mistake by perhaps seeing something unwittingly. In *Tristia* 2, Ovid attributes his downfall to both a *carmen et error* (207). The *carmen* mentioned in *Tristia* 2.207 must be the *Ars amatoria* because Ovid mentions in 211-12 the role that teaching played in the collection (*doctor*, 212),[60] and it is this didactic element to the text that caused his downfall (thus meaning that Ovid could not be alluding to the *Metamorphoses* in *Tristia* 2.207, as some scholars have previously supposed).[61] Therefore the *carmen* of which Ovid speaks can be understood as a reference to his controversial *Ars amatoria*, yet his *error* remains unidentified. Since Ovid himself does not specify either his *error* or what he saw (or indeed whether the *error* was something that he saw),[62] the exact nature of the poet's *error* remains unknown.[63] As a result, it is the

[60] For more on this see Ingleheart (2010a) 203.
[61] Some have mistakenly thought that the *carmen* mentioned in *Tr*. 2.207 was the *Metamorphoses*, for this see Rand (1928); Nagle (1995) (*contra*: Ingleheart (2010a) 203-7).
[62] Elsewhere, in *Tristia* 3.5.49-50, Ovid mentions that he was unintentionally a witness to something that he should not have seen: *inscia quod crimen viderunt lumina, plector, / peccatumque oculos est habuisse meum.*
[63] For a variety of speculations on what Ovid might have seen in the imperial household, or the possibility that he may have been involved with Julia's relegation in the same year (8

more readily identifiable *carmen* that dominates the poet's own account of the cause of his downfall throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[64]

The result of Ovid's misdemeanours was his relegation at the hands of the Princeps, and throughout the exilic epistles Ovid presents Augustus as being solely responsible for his punishment. In *Tristia* 2, Ovid recounts how Augustus himself personally punished the author (as opposed to effecting his punishment by obtaining a decree of the senate):[65]

vita data est, citraque necem tua constitit ira,

o princeps parce viribus use tuis!

insuper accedunt, te non adimente, paternae,

tamquam vita parum muneris esset, opes.

nec mea decreto damnasti facta senatus,

nec mea selecto iudice iussa fuga est:

A.D.), see Rand (1928) 89-92. See also Thibault (1964) 20-32, who includes a number of Latin sources musing on the poet's *error*. Williams (1994) 174-9 considers Ovid's literary presentation of the *error* that he claims was responsible for his downfall, and also provides a critical evaluation of other theories surrounding the relegation of the author. On the seven year gap between the publication of the *Ars* and the poet's exile, and how this affects our understanding of the exact reasons why Ovid was exiled, see Ingleheart (2010a) 4-5. On the various theories over why the poet was exiled, Dickinson (1973) 155-6 astutely suggests that the mystery surrounding the *error* has stolen attention away from Ovid's poetry.

[64] Throughout the exile works, especially in *Tristia* 2, Ovid has a tendency to recall the amorous content of the *Ars* in instances where he claims he is attempting to seek pardon for his offence. On this, see Wiedemann (1975) and Barchiesi (2001a) 79-103. Williams (1994) 201-9 convincingly argues for the presence of the *Ars amatoria* throughout *Tristia* 2, where Ovid cheekily includes allusions to the forbidden *Ars* in his own defence speech against the charge of teaching adultery. On *Tristia* 2's focus on the *Ars*, see Ingleheart (2010a) 4-5. On the presence of Ovid's amatory poetry throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, see Davis (2006) 119-27.

[65] On the technicalities of Ovid's exile, see Ingleheart (2010a) 145-55. Thibault (1964) 4-11 argues that Ovid was not tried because he had not committed a crime (cf. Ingleheart (2010a) 4, who argues that teaching adultery was not a crime). Owen (1924) 40-7 considers that Ovid was charged with *maiestas*, while Syme (1986) 117-8 draws links between Ovid's exile and that of Silanus, who was involved with the disgrace of Julia II, in AD 8.

tristibus invectus verbis – ita principe dignum –

ultus es offensas, ut decet, ipse tuas.

adde quod edictum, quamvis inmite minaxque,

attamen in poenae nomine lene fuit:

quippe relegatus, non exul, dicor in illo,

privaque fortunae sunt ibi verba meae (*Tr*. 2.127-138)

Here, Ovid thanks Augustus for designating him *relegatus* as opposed to *exul*, since this would allow Ovid to both live and also to keep his property (127, 130), thus ensuring that his family would not be impoverished in his absence.[66] Despite Ovid's protestations about the difference between being relegated and exiled in 137, he does not consistently make this distinction throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Instead, the author uses the terms interchangeably to refer to his own situation,[67] allowing us to infer that the exact technicalities of how someone is removed from their homeland are not as important as the fact that they are forcibly driven from their own country. This is reflected in the way that Ovid likens himself to various mythological characters who are removed from their homeland, regardless of whether they have been driven from their native land (Jason), abandoned (such as Philoctetes), or are simply a long way from home (like Ulysses). In addition, the fact that Ovid holds Augustus personally responsible for his relegation is an important factor when we come to consider how the Princeps is portrayed as an omnipotent divine persecutor in the exile works.[68]

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[66] For the conditions of *relegatio* and the retention of property and Roman citizenship, in comparison with the loss of civic status and depleted wealth of an exile, see Dickinson (1973) 154-5; Claassen (1990a) 175 and (1999) 150-1. On the precise legal technicalities of Ovid's exile, see Ingleheart (2010a) 141-55.

[67] On Ovid's literary precedent for presenting relegation and exile as synonymous, see Claassen (1990a) 102; Claassen (1999) 571; and Ingleheart (2010a) 153-4.

[68] Marg (1959) analyses the mythical comparisons for Augustus found in the *Tristia* and suggests that Ovid selects mythical narratives (involving angry divinities such as Jupiter and Neptune) that place emphasis on the role of the Princeps and his decision to relegate the author (cf. also Marg (1968)).

The circumstances surrounding Ovid's relegation not only determine the author's portrayal of the Princeps, but they also influence how Ovid relates to his earlier erotic texts from an exilic perspective and how Ovid presents his career as being in a state of decline. This is especially pertinent in instances when the relegated poet looks back upon his erotic works, including the *Ars amatoria* that caused his downfall, as a ruined individual. The authorial preoccupation with the charge of teaching adultery in the *Ars amatoria* is evident when the poet refers to his own elegiac poetry in the exile works, particularly in *Tristia* 2. As we discussed earlier, Ovid places the blame for his downfall on his earlier poetry as well as a mysterious *error*. In the passages where Ovid openly considers his fate, he often refers to his erotic collections. For instance, in *Tristia* 2, the author comments:

perdiderint cum me duo crimina, carmen et error,

alterius facti culpa silenda mihi;

nam non sum tanti, renovem ut tua vulnera, Caesar,

quem nimio plus est indoluisse semel.

altera pars causae superest, qua carmine turpi

arguor obsceni doctor adulterii (*Tr*. 2.207-11)

Through discussing the cause of his own downfall in the exile works, Ovid ensures that his poetry self-consciously engages with the erotic elegiac works composed in Rome. As we shall see, there are also more nuanced similarities (as well as differences) in tone, metre, and content between the exile works and the amatory elegiac collections. The circumstances surrounding Ovid's exile, namely the charge of teaching adultery in the *Ars amatoria*, determines the persona's relationship with earlier texts in the corpus throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

The *Tristia* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto* may be haunted by the *Ars amatoria*, but Ovid also uses references to other pre-exilic texts to construct his exilic persona. As Ovid composes elegiac epistles in exile, his situation and artistic choice of form is reminiscent of his earlier epistolary collection, the *Heroides*, which features the voices of abandoned heroines. I shall now consider the similarities between the exilic epistles and the *Heroides*

and how Ovid uses allusions to this earlier collection to construct his exilic persona and mythologise the authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

The *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* consist of epistles written to the author's wife, friends, enemies (who remain unnamed in the *Tristia*, but are named in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*)[69] composed in elegiac couplets. The adoption of such a form recall Ovid's single *Heroides*,[70] a collection of amatory elegiac epistles composed towards the beginning of the author's career in Rome.[71] Nagle (1980) proposes that the elegiac epistolary form of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is adopted in a deliberate attempt on the part of the author to evoke the *Heroides* in the minds of his readers and thus establish a sense of continuity between his earlier amatory works and the epistolary collections written in exile.[72] Just as the author uses the shared elegiac epistolary form of the *Heroides* and the exile works to highlight a sense of continuity between these texts in the author's corpus,[73] Ovid also uses this generic similarity as a foil which highlights the changing fortunes of the author.[74] Thus, the adoption of the elegiac couplet for the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* invites the reader to compare the exilic epistles with the *Heroides* and so indicates that Ovid is returning to (and engaging with) an earlier phase in his poetic career.[75] Ovid's choice to compose the

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[69] For the importance of anonymity for the *Tristia*, see Oliensis (1997).

[70] On the novelty of the Heroidean genre, see Barchiesi (2001a) 169. On using the approach of analysing the Kreuzung der Gattungen to appreciate Ovid's *Heroides*, a style of analysis pioneered by Kroll's (1924) paper, see Barchiesi (2001b); Braund (2001).

[71] On the relationship between Ovid's exilic epistolary collections and his *Heroides*, see Rahn (1958); Nagle (1980) 20-3; Rosenmeyer (1997).

[72] Nagle (1980) 21.

[73] Rahn (1958) considers the exile works as a generic development of the elegiac epistle found in Ovid's *Heroides*, and he views Ovid's use of myth in both collections as an important factor in the continuity between these collections. Rahn's (1958) article sees a similarity in the way that Ovid uses mythological *exempla* to represent his own fate in these collections, and focuses particularly on the author's use of the Odysseus figure. This approach to the use of myth in the exile works to refer back to the author's earlier corpus is admirable, because it is not constrained by a desire to unveil or decode a rigid structure of mythic narratives.

[74] "Ovid's use of the elegiac metre compels the reader to think about the differences and similarities between the standard situations of erotic elegy and the unique situation which inspired the exilic elegies. Ovid calls attention to his choice of meter in various ways, to make sure the reader realises its role of the constant", Nagle (1980) 22.

[75] Harrison (2002) 89.

Tristia and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as elegiac epistles signifies a return to literary form that highlights the similarities between the *Heroides* and the exile works, particularly concerning the mournful tone of each of the collections.[76] The formal similarity between the exile works and the *Heroides* invites us to appreciate the tonal likeness between the collections, paying particular attention to the role that sadness plays in each text.[77] The parallels between the heroines of Ovid's *Heroides* and the exiled author in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* also include feelings of abandonment and loss of status. Rosenmeyer's (1997) influential article argues that the construction of the *relegatus poeta* throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is highly influenced by earlier works in the corpus which are similar in generic terms (particularly sharing the same form), notably the *Heroides*: "Ovid's exilic persona reveals itself over the course of his correspondence as a literary pastiche of other texts and identities ... crucial to Ovid's self-presentation are allusions to his own previous masterpieces. I interpret his choice of the letter form for the exile poems as not only an allusion to, but also an authorial statement of identification - on some level - with his earlier epistolary work, the *Heroides.*"[78] Rosenmeyer (1997) also interprets the similarity between the *Heroides* and the exile works as a contributing factor towards the construction of the author's exilic persona, as this encourages us to appreciate the similarities between the exiled author and the abandoned heroines who are presented as the authors of the Heroidean epistles: "Ovid and his heroines ... see themselves as fractured, wounded creatures separated from their proper environments; they are forced to beg for a return to their previous position, namely the status of a stable relationship (with a lover or Augustus) or a secure home."[79] The formal and tonal similarities between the *Heroides* and the exilic epistles are important means by which the exiled poet can create allusions to the *Heroides*

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[76] While the *Heroides* and exile works share tone and atmosphere, we should also be aware that they both contain a high level of elegiac vocabulary. On the use of elegiac motifs and erotic diction in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, see Nagle (1980) 44-70.

[77] "As the title *Tristia*, 'sad things', suggests, the books from exile naturally share with the *Heroides* the quintessential elegiac theme of lamentation: *lacrima*, 'tear', and its cognates occur 41 times in the *Tristia* and *ex Ponto*, *tristis*, 'sad', and its cognates 55 times", Harrison (2002) 89-90.

[78] Rosenmeyer (1997) 29.

[79] Rosenmeyer (1997) 29-30.

and thereby evoke the voices of deserted women seeking reinstatement.[80] These echoes of abandoned individuals, who pour out their sadness into elegiac epistles, are key components in the construction of the authorial persona of the *relegatus poeta* that we find in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

While the formal and stylistic similarities between the exilic works and Ovid's earlier erotic elegiacs, such as the *Heroides*, serve to highlight the changing fortunes of the author who was once composing verse in Rome but is now relegated to Tomis, these similarities also foreground the parallel destinies of the abandoned heroines and the exiled author.[81] Thus the sadness of the deserted women of Ovid's *Heroides* can be appreciated in tandem with Ovid's own misery at Tomis and this shared misery contributes towards the Ovidian persona of the *relegatus poeta*. However, while these references to earlier amatory elegiac works no doubt contribute significantly towards the construction of the authorial persona throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, we should not overlook the importance that these textual parallels with the *Heroides* have for characterising the author's marriage. Just as the heroines wrote letters to their lovers, so too Ovid composes epistles to his wife who remains in Rome. Ovid's relationship with his wife recalls the situations of the lonely women in the *Heroides*, but it is also reminiscent of the elegiac relationship between the *amator* and the beloved. Ovid's decision to compose epistles to his own wife can be seen as a novel addition to the elegiac genre,[82] which typically includes a *puella* as the *amator*'s beloved.[83] In Hinds (1999) article, he argues that *Tristia* 1.6 contains many similarities in structure and tone to Ovid's earlier amatory elegies and draws comparisons between the relationship

[80] On the *relegatus poeta*'s attempts to achieve reinstatement from his exile in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, see Stroh (1971) 2; Thomsen (1979) 40-2; Nagle (1980) 43, 71-8. Fulkerson (2005) 149-51.

[81] Fulkerson (2005) 143-51 argues that, in the exile works, Ovid shapes his persona in the likeness of the abandoned women of the *Heroides*, thus writing himself into their female community of authors from an exilic perspective.

[82] While the ancients understood the metrical structure of verses to be indicators of the text's generic concerns, the content, diction, style and tone of a work are also important factors when considering the genre of a text. On the relationship between genre, form, content, and style see Conte (1994) 106-9. For genre as a rough matrix of guidelines as a means of communicating ideas about the text between the author and reader, see Segal (1994) and Conte (1994).

[83] Hinds (1985) 15.

between our exiled author and his wife and that of the *amator* and *puella* of erotic elegy.[84] The portrayal of the author's relationship with his own wife as being similar to that between the *amator* and *puella* in erotic elegy suggests a certain degree of continuity in the corpus and a degree of kinship between erotic elegies and exilic elegiac verses, while at the same time providing the readers of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* with a framework of reference with which to understand the author's relationship with his wife. Hinds (1999) argues convincingly that Ovid places his own wife amongst the heroines of literature, who act as paradigms of spousal fidelity.[85] As Ovid compliments his wife by not only including her amongst the ranks of faithful wives found in mythology, but also by inserting her into their number as the ultimate model for such literary heroines, Hinds argues that Ovid also writes his wife as one of the elegiac *puellae* of the *Heroides*.[86] Therefore the exiled author effectively rewrites his own Heroidean corpus to incorporate his loyal wife: "If Ovid, weakened by exile, exerts the strength to do justice to his wife's merits, and if she were awarded first place among Ovid's *Heroides*, which heroine would thereby be relegated to second place? Why, none other than Penelope, whose epistle currently opens the collection."[87] Ovid evokes the *Heroides* by utilising its epistolary elegiac form for the composition of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, but in the same exilic texts that resurrect the Heroidean generic form, the author actively chooses to rewrite the Heroidean corpus itself from an exilic standpoint. Therefore, Ovid engages with his pre-exilic Heroidean texts from an exilic perspective. At the same time, Ovid uses allusions to the *Heroides* to characterise his wife in mythical terms, and the parallels that the author draws between his wife and heroines (as well as the equations between Ovid and the husbands of the heroines) mythologises the portrayal of his marriage in the exilic epistles.

When Ovid uses references to the *Heroides* to construct the authorial persona (and the portrayal of his marriage) in exile, this is reminiscent of the way that Ovid mythologised the authorial voices in the *Heroides*. Since the *Heroides* are posed as epistles from mythical

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[84] Hinds (1999) 123-4.
[85] Hinds (1999) 124-8.
[86] Hinds (1999) 124.
[87] Hinds (1999) 128.

heroines (such as Penelope)[88] Ovid adopts the guise of their identities through which to speak as author.[89] As Ovid adopts the masks of these mythical heroines, his authorial voice becomes mythologised. Given that Ovid interacts with the *Heroides* from an exilic perspective as a means of characterising his authorial persona in mythical terms,[90] it will be revealing to explore how Ovid uses myth in similar terms in texts composed in exile.

I would now like to consider the possibility that the 'double' *Heroides* were written during Ovid's relegation because this collection of six elegiac epistles is posed as a set of three letters and three replies between mythical heroes and heroines. This thesis will follow the hypothesis in Kenney's (1996) edition that the 'double' *Heroides* were composed during Ovid's relegation at Tomis. The most convincing evidence for Kenney's hypothesis is that in all elegies written before the poet's exile, "he adheres rigidly to the rule that the pentameter should end with a disyllable."[91] The works known to have been either composed, or revised, in exile do not adhere to this metrical stipulation.[92] Excluding the 'double' *Heroides*, there are twelve instances of a pentameter ending with a quintsyllable, and thirty-one instances of a pentameter ending with a quadrisyllable in the Ovidian corpus.[93] Out of these forty-three instances, forty-one occur in either the *Tristia* or *Epistulae ex Ponto,* which were composed in exile, and two occur in the *Fasti,* which was revised in exile.[94] In the 'double' *Heroides* there are three pentameters which end with either a quadrisyllable or a quintsyllable: *Her.* 16.290 (*pudicitiae*),[95] *Her.* 17.16 (*superciliis*), and *Her.* 19.202 (*deseruit*).[96] It is perfectly possible that just these three lines were added by the

[88] Consider the opening of the collection when Ovid assumes the mask of Penelope, who poses as the 'author' of the epistle: *Haec tua Penelope lento tibi mittit, Ulixe* (*Her*. 1.1).
[89] On the relationship between Ovid and the mythical heroines as authors, see Rosenmeyer (1997); Lindheim (2003); Fulkerson (2005).
[90] On Ovid portraying himself as an abandoned heroine in the exile works, evoking the female authors of the *Heroides*, see Rosenmeyer (1997) and Fulkerson (2005) 144-51.
[91] Kenney (1996) 21.
[92] Kenney (1996) 21-2.
[93] Platnauer (1951) 17.
[94] Platnauer (1951) 17. For the exilic dimension of Ovid's *Fasti*, see n. 2.
[95] I shall use Kenney's (1996) edition of the 'double' *Heroides*.
[96] Platnauer (1951) 17.

author during his time at Tomis,[97] but it is also possible that a greater portion (or possibly the whole) of the 'double' *Heroides* was at least revised (or wholly composed) in exile,[98] and that only three lines of the work are metrically symptomatic of this. Metrical analysis alone cannot prove when and where the 'double' *Heroides* were written, since these facts cannot ultimately be proved. Instead, the basis of the argument for exilic composition should also take into account the shared themes, motifs and content of the exile works and the 'double' *Heroides*.[99]

If the 'double' *Heroides* were composed in exile (as this thesis accepts), this means that Ovid, as he presents the reader with epistles "sent" by a mythical character who is masquerading as the author, uses mythical characters as conduits that mask the authorial voice in the 'double' *Heroides*. By posing as a number of characters in the 'double' *Heroides*, Ovid mythologises his authorial voice during the post-exilic years of his artistic career. In this thesis I would like to explore how Ovid, in the same period of his career in exile when he composed the 'double' *Heroides*, mythologises his authorial persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by likening himself to a number of mythical characters. The parallels that Ovid constructs between these literary characters and the *relegatus poeta* constructs his persona in mythical terms and so mythologises the authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The *Heroides* and 'double' *Heroides* are crucial for understanding the role that myth plays in the construction of the authorial persona in the exilic epistles, and their influence on the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* suggests a degree of continuum in the Ovidian corpus. Indeed, the similarities between the erotic elegiac collections and the elegiac verses composed in exile could be said to be evidence of continuity in the corpus,[100]

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[97] Kenney (1996) 22.
[98] Kenney (1996) 22-3.
[99] On this see Reeve (1973); Kenney (1996) 21-3; Rimell (2006) 184-5.
[100] For details and examples of such similarities and differences between the erotic elegies and the exile works, see Harrison (2002) 90-2. See also Thomsen (1979) 40 for an overview of the thematic similarities and parallel imagery between the exile works and erotic elegy.

while the innate differences in tone and content could be interpreted as being symptomatic of an abrupt rupture in the corpus.[101]

I would now like to consider the influence of Ovid's earlier elegiac works on the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, with a particular focus on how Ovid uses the similarities and differences between pre- and post-exilic works to construct the exilic persona of the *relegatus poeta*: an image of the author quite unlike any seen before in the corpus, but nevertheless a persona that (although very different) exists in relation and reference to Ovid's pre-exilic personae and texts. Holzberg's (1997) monograph on Ovid's relationships with his literary creations argues that the influence of amatory elegy on the exile works goes beyond the elegiac epistolary form of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Holzberg (1997) considers that it is not just the evocation of the *Heroides* in the portrayal of the relationship between Ovid and his wife in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* that recalls the world of amatory elegy, but that recurring motifs and themes particular to erotic elegy can also be found in the exile works (which often include the use of specifically elegiac language or present individuals in especially elegiac roles).[102] Thus the elegiac form of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* can be understood to recall amatory elegiac texts and the exile works and, while they often adopt the erotic diction of the *Amores*, these later texts ultimately stand apart as a different literary world from Ovid's elegiac Rome.[103] As Ovid uses elegiac themes, motifs, and scenarios in the exilic epistles, Ovid encourages parallels to be drawn between the elegiac *amator* and *relegatus poeta* in exile. Williams (2002) has analysed the parallels between the *amator* and the *relegatus poeta*, and concludes that Ovid makes parallels between them to create a picture of an *exclusus poeta* in exile.[104] This *exclusus poeta* is a character who recalls the *exclusus amator* familiar from Ovidian erotic elegy, but

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[101] On this see Videau-Delibes (1991). Conversely, Rahn (1958), Thomsen (1979), and Nagle (1980) argue for a sense of continuity within the Ovidian corpus, based upon the generic, tonal, and stylistic similarities between the author's earlier and later works. It is admirable that both Rahn (1958) and Nagle (1980) are also open to the consideration of the elements of discontinuity within the corpus, and Nagle (1980) 14 considers the methodology of her study in depth by discussing how the author's changed fate as an exile no doubt influenced his artistic work.

[102] Holzberg (1997) 182.

[103] *Ibid*.

[104] Williams (2002) 351.

with a decidedly exilic twist on an amatory scenario.[105] For instance, the persona is no longer suffering restricted access to a hardhearted girl, enduring the effects of Cupid's arrows and inevitable lovesickness; now the persona is locked out of Rome by exile, fears the arrows of tribal warfare, and suffers from bona fide ill health.[106] Nagle (1980) has also argued that Ovid's return to the same genre as his amatory verses earlier in his career highlights the similarity between the exiled author and elegiac *amator* but her investigation does not primarily focus on defining the authorial persona in exile, but rather concentrates on the establishment of the major themes of the exile works and Ovid's attempts to increase his readership's sympathy while at Tomis:[107] "By depicting his exilic *dolores* in terms appropriate to erotic *dolores*, Ovid causes the reader to see the pathos of his situation."[108] This allows us to understand the contrasts, as well as the similarities, between the *amator* of the pre-exilic amatory elegy and the *relegatus poeta* found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* composed at Tomis.

There is, however, a major difference between the persona of the *relegatus poeta* and any other authorial mask that Ovid has previously adopted, a distinction that concerns the degenerative stance that the authorial voice adopts throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Throughout the Ovidian exile works, the poet maintains that he is losing his talent at composing verse:

contudit ingenium patientia longa malorum,

et pars antiqui nulla vigoris adest (*Tr*. 5.12.31-2)

The poet mourns that, while he is currently in exile, he is no longer as talented as he was in his youth at Rome, and this insistence on poetic decline at Tomis has previously been taken at face value by scholars as an indicator that Ovid's poetry written in this period was not

[105] *Ibid*.
[106] *Ibid*.
[107] For an overview of the similarities between amatory and exilic elegy, see Nagle (1980) 42-70.
[108] Nagle (1980) 69-70.

very accomplished.[109] Williams (1994) has convincingly argued that such statements concerning compositional ability found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* should not be accepted as advertisements of second-rate verses, instead they are nothing more than an authorial stance, or a pose of poetic decline.[110] Williams (1994) suggests that Ovid's pose of poetic decline in exile is not intended to arouse sympathy from the reader, but is an exercise in literary complexity to further embellish the text, thus demonstrating a command of poetical composition on the part of the author that betrays Ovid's claims of his degenerating talent.[111] Williams' (1994) monograph focuses on this complex construction of the authorial pose of decline: "in the exile poetry Ovid does more than pay lip-service to the topos of self-deprecation. Far from employing the theme as an occasional ornament which literary precedent obliges him to use, he makes it fundamental to his Tomitan persona by adapting the *recusatio* motif of the poet's enfeebled *vires* and *ingenium* to represent a much more radical, personally damaging and seemingly irreversible decline in poetic creativity."[112] Claassen (1986) is an important precedent for this approach,[113] as she provides a thorough analysis of the literary complexities of Ovid's compositional prowess and the author's self-portrayal as a struggling exiled poet in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* throughout her doctoral thesis.[114]

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[109] For example, see Fränkel (1956) 119-21, 130-3, 137-8; Wilkinson (1955) 359-61, who complains that the exile works are full of homogeneity and monotony (*contra* Dickinson (1973)); Otis (1966) 339.
[110] Williams (1994) 51-2.
[111] *Ibid*.
[112] Williams (1994) 54.
[113] See also Claassen (1989), which provides an in-depth analysis of the metrical constructions found in the exile works, concluding that the exiled poet is far from diminished in his abilities. Claassen (1989) views the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as the prosodic culmination of his corpus.
[114] Nagle (1980) 109-66 is also an important forerunner to Williams' (1994) assessment of the Ovidian persona in exile, and in her monograph she investigates the author's claims that the degeneration of his poetic powers are due to the inhospitable nature of his surroundings, concluding that this is little more than a rhetorical pose. Nagle's (1980) 147-57 monograph considers the positive and confident aspects of the author's pose in the exile works in addition to his self-deprecation. Prior to the work of Nagle, Thomsen (1979) 2 argues that Ovid adopts a pose of sadness and decline, intended to exploit the reader's

Through Ovid's stance of poetic decline, he constructs a degenerating authorial persona who reflects the subdued and mournful tone of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Thus it becomes clear that the exile works, even though they are composed in elegiac couplets, are a very different world from the erotic texts written in Rome.[115] This is the inherent difference between the pre-and post-exilic elegies, as the main "theme is lamentation, not erotic pleasure."[116] This mournful, depressed ambience of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* also goes hand in hand with the importance of death in the exile works. The motif of death is omnipresent throughout both the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as Ovid routinely likens his situation in relegation at Tomis to his own death and presents the authorial persona as a dead man.[117] Nagle (1980) argues that in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid thereby returns elegy to its original, mournful function.[118] This, in turn, supports the wider motif of

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expectations of the exile works and so surprise the reader with the underlying literary complexity of the work.

[115] Another notable difference between the exilic elegies and Ovid's amatory verses is the broad range of topics treated in these later epistles. On the influence of Catullus on Ovid's exilic works, evident when author chooses an erotically–focused genre as a vehicle for non-amatory themes in the exile works, see Nagle (1980) 39-43. For the origins of Augustan elegy in Catullus, see Wheeler (1915); Luck (1959) 51-61; Ross (1969) 166-9; Ross (1975) 1-17; Whitaker (1983) 62; Booth (1999) xxv-xxvii.

[116] Harrison (2002) 90.

[117] The motif of exile as a form of death pervades the whole of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. For example, in *Tr*. 1.3 Ovid depicts himself as a corpse at his funeral on the night he leaves Rome for Tomis (21-24, 77-8, 89). On the poem as Ovid's funeral, see Nagle (1980) 23-4. Ovid also imagines his own funeral at *Tr*. 5.1.48 and his own tomb at *Tr*. 3.2.23-4, 29-30. Similarly, at *Tr*. 3.3.65-88, Ovid imagines his ashes being returned to Rome and the epitaph on his tomb (73-6). Elsewhere in *Tr*. 3.3, Ovid considers whether it would be better to die than be an exile (29-46). At *Tr*. 3.11.25-32 the author reproaches the unnamed addressee whose hostility has harmed the author, who is presented as a dead man. At *Tr*. 3.13.21 Ovid claims that a funeral would be more appropriate than a birthday celebration. Ovid is close to death in *Tr*. 5.1.11-14, when he sings his swan song, traditionally sung before the bird dies (cf. Dido at *Her*. 7.1-2). Ovid portrays himself as dead and his loyal friend as weeping at his funeral in *Pont*. 1.9.17-18. At *Pont*. 2.3.42 and *Pont*. 3.4.75-6 Ovid likens himself to a dead man. At *Pont*. 4.16.47-52 Ovid is a dead man. Ovid also implies that he is dead by presenting himself as being in the underworld by presenting the geographical locale of Tomis as being near the Styx at *Pont*. 1.8.27, 2.3.44, and 3.5.56. For a discussion of exile, death, and decline of poetic style, see Nagle (1980) 22-35.

[118] Nagle (1980) 22-3. In contrast, Claassen (1996) 576-9 argues that Ovid's depiction of exile as death owes a literary debt to Cicero's letters from exile, the elegies of Propertius, and Ovid's own *Heroides*.

exile as death which permeates the entirety of the Ovidian exile works and overshadows the tone of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*: "Ovid constantly reiterates that exile has caused not only a civic death, but also his poetic death. The prominence of death in the exilic elegies can also be related to the obsession with death in amatory elegy."[119] Ovid foregrounds the origins of elegy in lamentation by incorporating the theme of death throughout the exile works,[120] but the morbid tone of the text can also be associated with erotic first person subjective love poetry, which often dwells on the topic of death and dying.[121] Ovid's inclusion of the theme of death in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* recalls the role of death in erotic elegiac poetry, but the significance that this theme is given in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (given the all-pervasive nature of the equation between life and death and the role this plays in the construction of the authorial persona as being dead)[122] creates a mournful tone. This sombre ambience indicates that the world of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is a very different arena from the realm of erotic elegy, but

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[119] Nagle (1980) 22-3.

[120] This can be understood in tandem with the concept of exile as a form of death. On the ancients' concept of exile as death: Owen (1889) 99; Wistrand (1968) 9-26; Doblhofer (1987) 166-78. For an analysis of the literary precedents (including Cicero and Horace) for Ovid's depiction of exile as a form of living death, see Nagle (1980) 23; Claassen (1996).

[121] On death and the origins of elegy, see *Amores* 3.9.3-4, where Ovid refers to the origins of the genre in his lament for Tibullus; Boucher (1965) 18; Rosenmeyer (1968); Nagle (1980) 22-4. For an analysis of how Ovid's self-portrayal as dead can be understood as an attempt to write himself into the literary tradition of other Roman authors who have presented themselves as deceased, particularly those who have "died from love" in the elegiac tradition, see Williams (1994) 197.

[122] Ovid plays with the notion of exile as a form of civic death, a concept based on the loss of Roman citizenship that accompanies such a status (for more on this see n.66, 67, and n.120) in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by linking it to the literary theme of death found throughout these collections. Strictly speaking, Ovid was relegated and therefore did not lose his Roman citizenship (as previously discussed), so it could be said that Ovid's engagement with the idea of exile as a form of civic death is not without irony. However, we should remember that the poet does not seem to make a clear distinction between the terms *exul* and *relegatus* in his own poetry, and uses these terms interchangeably throughout the exilic collections. On exile as a form of civic death, see Claassen (1996), who provides an analysis of how the theme of death, and especially civic death, is used in Roman literature composed during the author's exile focusing particularly on the works of Cicero, Ovid, and Seneca. On Ovid's self-portrayal as a dead poet and citizen in the exile works, see Nagle (1980) 23-32.

nevertheless the world of exile exists in reference to the erotic works of the Ovidian corpus.[123]

Ovid's self-depiction as being dead in the exile works creates a sombre and subdued authorial persona. This persona is established at the beginning of the *Tristia*, where the proem of the collection establishes the authorial voice and sets the tone of the text. This is similar to the way in which Ovid shapes his rhetoric at the beginning of other poetic collections,[124] thus creating a new identity for himself by changing his rhetoric in the opening lines of a new work. Therefore, we can see the exile works as being in keeping with Ovid's desire to manipulate the authorial voice in the text, but we should also be aware that each authorial stance Ovid adopts is self-consciously stylised as being slightly different from any persona previously adopted. Ovid's presentation as a ruined poet at the beginning of the *Tristia* contrasts with his previous incarnations, indicating that the exile works are a very different world to the rest of the Ovidian collections even though the opening proem establishes a novel authorial stance, just as the proems in previous works also establish the authorial persona. For instance, in the proem of the *Amores*, in which Ovid famously claims that Amor stole a metrical foot leaving the poet composing in elegiac couplets instead of epic hexameters (*Amores* 1.1.1-4), the poet is struck by Cupid's arrow and feels love's force:

questus eram, pharetra cum protinus ille soluta

legit in exitium spicula facta meum

lunavitque genu sinuosum fortiter arcum

"quod" que "canas, vates, accipe" dixit "opus."

me miserum! certas habuit puer ille sagittas.

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[123] For the suggestion that Ovid creates a new genre of exile poetry in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, see Claassen (1990a) 229-51.

[124] Gildenhard and Zissos (2000) have convincingly argued that Ovid styles his authorial persona in the opening lines of each collection, from the *Amores* up to the *Metamorphoses*. I would like to extend the approach of Gildenhard and Zissos (2000) to incorporate the exile works into this vision of Ovid as a poet who self-consciously styles his authorial persona at the beginning of each text.

uror, et in vacuo pectore regnat Amor (*Am*. 1.1.21-6)[125]

Here, the reader is presented with the authorial figure's metamorphosis not just from an epic poet into an elegist, but also from the author of the text into the central character for the collection, the enamored *amator*.[126] Gildenhard and Zissos (2000) have previously argued that the opening lines of the *Amores* create the persona of the *poeta amator*.[127] Thus, the proem is programmatic for the authorial persona found throughout the collection, and Ovid uses the generic hallmarks of elegy to transform himself from the poet *of* the text into the poet *in* the text, the ardent lover.[128] Ovid's self-portrayal at the beginning of the *Tristia* could not provide a starker contrasting set of circumstances from the ambitious young poet at the beginning of the *Amores*, but the way that Ovid establishes the authorial voice and tone of the collection in the opening lines is strikingly similar. As the author describes the shabby new volume of poetry composed in exile, [129] he also elaborates on the fate of the author who suffers a similar existence away from Rome:[130]

Parve – nec invideo – sine me, liber, ibis in urbem,

ei mihi! quo domino non licet ire tuo.

vade, sed incultus, qualem decet exulis esse;

infelix, habitum temporis huius habe.

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[125] I shall use Kenney's (1995) edition of the *Amores*.

[126] Gildenhard and Zissos (2000) 70-1. It is also ironic that the previous Ovidian incarnation that Ovid alludes to in *Amores* 1.1.1-2 is that of an epic poet, who is transformed into an elegiac poet by an intervening Amor (2-4), who is little more than a literary fiction. On this, see McKeown (1989) 7-15.

[127] Gildenhard and Zissos (2000) 70-1.

[128] *Ibid*.

[129] Nagle (1980) 20 argues that the proem of the *Tristia* makes it clear to the reader that Ovid has returned to composing personal elegies after the *Metamorphoses*, which was constructed in epic hexameters. This change in metre from the most generically valorized metre – epic hexameter- can be seen as a contribution to the author's pose of poetic decline in exile.

[130] On the opening of *Tristia* 1 as the depiction of a master/slave relationship between the author and his work (who can go where the poet cannot), reminiscent of Horace *Epistles* 1.20, see Rahn (1958) 107-9; Frécaut (1972) 311-13; Nagle (1980) 82-4.

nec te purpureo velent vaccinia fuco –

non est conveniens luctibus ille color –

nec titulus minio, nec cedro charta notetur,

candida nec nigra cornua fronte geras.

felices ornent haec instrumenta libellos:

fortunae memorem te decet esse meae.

nec fragili geminae poliantur pumice frontes,

hirsutus passis sed videare comis.

neve liturarum pudeat; qui viderit illas,

de lacrimis factas sentiet esse meis (*Tr*. 1.1.1-14)

In this instance Ovid creates an image of himself as an author in the opening lines of the work, just as he has previously established his personae at the beginnings of his earlier collections. Even though the *modus operandi* is the same in the *Tristia* as in earlier proems, the effect is quite different, thus indicating that the authorial persona that we will encounter in the exilic epistles will be a very dissimilar character from Ovid's previous incarnations. At the beginning of the *Tristia*, Ovid characterises his book as an outcast returning home, with its shabby appearance reflecting his own miserable and funereal fate,[131] as well as mirroring the poor composition of the verses.[132] In this process Ovid also constructs his new authorial persona of the *exul* living out his days far away from Rome, a

[131] On this, Hinds (1985) 14 comments "In keeping with the circumstances of its master, the book is to be squalid and unkempt." See also Williams (1994) 60, who argues that "Ovid's subtle manipulation of his language to establish a correspondence here between the physical and poetical complexions of the book is paradoxical in implication: the skill with which he makes the physical description suggest the poor quality of the contents hardly supports the contention that his abilities are in terminal decline." See also Nagle (1980) 90; Williams (1992).

[132] This should be understood as part of the author's pose of poetic decline in the exile works. For more on this, and how it is an important facet of the construction of the authorial persona of the *relegatus poeta*, see Williams (1994) 1-2.

scenario which leads the book to make its own way to Rome, as the author cannot travel with it. The emphasis on physical distance and the way that the book travels alone, with tattered edges to mourn the death of its poet-parent (Ovid),[133] establishes the subdued tone of the *Tristia* and also constructs the subdued authorial persona, an abandoned figure in decline (or already dead); an Ovid that we have never seen before.

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid depicts the authorial persona as a poet in decline, waiting for a recall to Rome that will never come. Understanding how Ovid uses mythical narratives and *exempla* in the exilic epistles is crucial to appreciating how Ovid constructs the authorial voice in these collections, particularly when he associates himself with mythical characters who are persecuted by gods, doomed to wander far from home, or abandoned by their comrades. Ovid's depiction of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* has very dark overtones which cast a sombre shadow over the *relegatus poeta*, as well as contrasting with Ovid's earlier deployments of myth in the pre-exilic elegiac works.[134] Whitaker's (1983) monograph on the use of myth in Ovid's pre-exilic works proposes that the author either uses myth to illustrate a given point or as a source of humour,[135] and mythical *exempla* are used fleetingly and without profound (or hidden) meaning.[136] In contrast, Davisson (1993) convincingly argues that we should interpret the use of myth in Ovid's elegiac works as being more than a superfluous, yet beautifully entertaining, decoration to the text.[137] Rather, Davisson's (1993) inquiry focuses on how the use of mythical *exempla* challenges the authority of myth and how *exempla* actively subvert master narratives composed by other authors.[138] While Davisson (1993) champions a

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[133] Claassen (1990b) 111-2 argues the dishevelled appearance of the book in *Tristia* 1.1 portrays the volume as being in mourning for the deceased author Ovid, thus contributing towards the poet's pretence of being dead in the exile works, something which we have seen is an important facet of the authorial persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

[134] On the function of myth in subjective first-person erotic verse and elegy, see Day (1938) 1-36; Luck (1959) 51-61; Cairns (1979) 224-5; Lightfoot (1999) 72-3.

[135] Witty *exempla* function on a slightly more sophisticated level by "comprising uses of myth by Ovid solely or primarily for the sake of wit, a joke, a humorous sally": Whitaker (1983) 141.

[136] Whitaker (1983) 164.

[137] Davisson (1993) 216.

[138] *Ibid*.

nuanced analysis of the importance, and function, of Ovid's use of mythological *exempla* in the author's erotic elegies, she also argues for a certain degree of consistency between the use of myth in the *Amores* and in the exile works:[139] "in both the pre-exilic poems and the elegies from exile, many of Ovid's apparently superfluous or inappropriate examples function to demonstrate the limits of the usefulness of paradigms and the desire to master tradition rather than be mastered by it."[140] Therefore we should be aware that, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid's utilisation of myth can play a number of roles in the text (and more than one role at once), ranging from creating references to master narratives, alluding to other literary texts, contributing towards the construction of the authorial voice in exile, or perhaps adding a touch of humour to a passage.

The importance of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* becomes most apparent when we take a closer look at how the author repeatedly draws a number of parallels between himself in exile and certain mythological characters. An article by Broege (1972) was one of the first works to cast a spotlight on Ovid's autobiographical use of mythology in the exile works, paying particular attention to the number of mythical parallels the author draws between himself and the characters in his own text. Broege (1972) focuses on detailing the range and frequency with which Ovid equates himself with various characters from a number of genres, resulting in a summary of the usage of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Broege (1972) structures her enquiries primarily in terms of the main generic affiliations of each mythical character, but also in terms of a chronological view of the exile works which begins with *Tristia* 1 and ends with the fourth book of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Claassen (2001) also adopts this linear, chronological line of enquiry for her analysis of the use of myth in the exile works.[141] Claassen's (2001) primary focus in this

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[139] Davisson (1993) builds upon Thomsen's (née Davisson) (1979) thesis which explores the use of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, likewise focusing her investigation on the theme of consistency. For an assessment of how mythical *exempla* are manipulated, distorted, and repeated, see Thomsen (1979) 137-77.

[140] Davisson (1993) 213.

[141] Cf. Claassen (2008) 160-84 which also phrases intellectual enquiry into the author's self-referential use of mythology in terms of a linear chronological trajectory. See also Claassen (2008) 261-83 for the numerical statistics gathered by this intellectual enquiry, which had been divided up into earlier and later stages of the poet's exile.

article is to explore whether or not there is an underlying pattern, or a deeper agenda, behind Ovid's deployment of various mythological *exempla* throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[142] Claassen's (2001) ambitious aims provide much food for thought, and her study also provides a number of tables of results listing the frequency of mythical *exempla* in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* without any in depth consideration of how each myth is used.[143] However, Claassen's approach of discerning a chronological development in Ovid's use of myth inherently involves imposing a rigid superstructure onto the use of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[144] As Claassen (2001) analyses the occurrences of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as a means to unravelling the author's grand scheme of mythical parallels,[145] she superimposes this pattern onto a timeline for the poet's exile by dividing up the frequency of mythical parallels onto the earlier and later stages of the poet's exile at Tomis. Therefore, Claassen (2001) argues for the categorisation of myths into discrete groups based on the linear trajectory of time within the author's exile, from the beginning of *Tristia* 1 to the end of *Epistulae ex Ponto*. While assuming a roughly chronological order for the verses composed during the author's relegation provides a pragmatic structural line of enquiry, there is a certain degree of debate concerning the publication of some areas of the exile works. For instance, Gaertner (2005) argues for the publication of *Pont*. 1-3 as an organic unit as opposed to the view that

[142] Claassen (2001) 16-17.

[143] Claassen (2001) 17 indicates that she does not have sufficient space for this level of analysis in an article. Cf. Claassen (2008) 163 which, likewise (despite being a monograph), does not analyse these results tables due to lack of space.

[144] Claassen (2001) seems to have adopted a more definite methodological stance than found in her earlier work. Claassen (1988) 165 approaches the use of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in a much more flexible manner, incorporating room for the mutual exclusivity found in these texts, but nevertheless she does maintain that there is a grand superstructure waiting to be discovered: "Oxymoron and paradox abound, and examples of adynaton increasingly reflect the central metaphors of exile, with exile appearing as the adynaton that, paradoxically, has been realised. The poet develops a web of imagery, which forms a consistent pattern and becomes part of the fabric of the poetic depiction of exile."

[145] Such an approach also implies that with adequate research one will be able to illuminate a pattern which lurks behind the mythological *exempla* in the text, and thus enlighten the reader as to some kind of overarching meaning.

the four books of the *Epistulae ex Ponto* belong as one unit together,[146] and Helzle (1989b) considers that *Pont.* 4 must have been published posthumously. Even though there is some discussion as to the exact details of the publication of the exilic collections, there are other potential pitfalls when assuming a rigid chronological framework of enquiry. Ultimately, one cannot assume or prove that the author composed the exile works in a rigid chronological manner. Even if the collections were published in the same order that we have today, this is not evidence that the author composed verses in the same order that they are presented to us, nor is it evidence that he never rewrote or restructured individual poems, or indeed edited books as a whole. For these reasons, this thesis will not impose a structure of earlier and later stages of verse composition during the author's relegation when exploring the exile letters.

Despite certain methodological issues in Claassen's (2001) article, Claassen's paper suggests an important new concept that sets her work apart from other enquiries into Ovid's use of myth in the exile works: Ovid's construction of the myth of exile. In the process of exploring the applicability of mythological *exempla* for the construction of the authorial persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid uses the rejection of some mythical parallels as a means of characterising his own poetic persona as the *relegatus poeta* suffering in exile. As the author repeatedly likens himself to heroes who have to endure hardship as they wandered from home, only to deconstruct this parallel by stressing that their lot was not as difficult to endure as Ovid's own sorrow, to a certain extent the authorial persona becomes mythologised since it is repeatedly associated with fictional characters. However, even though the authorial persona is often associated with mythical heroes, Ovid is careful in that he places his own exilic persona above these fictional characters, since it suffers the most by comparison. Claassen (2001) has argued convincingly for the mythologisation of the poetic persona through association with fictional characters,

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[146] Gaertner (2005) 2-5. In *Pont*. 3.9.51-4 Ovid claims that he collected individual letters and put them together as a unit, but does not mention whether he used the same method for composition in the other books of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Evans (1983) 110-12 and 153-4 argues that Ovid collected letters and published them as books 1-3 of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, but the different scope, tone, and time of composition for *Pont*. 4 suggest that it was published after Ovid's death.

resulting in the figure of the author himself being written into myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*: "this heroic figure survives in the place of death … greater than Jason who dared the Pontic main but deserted his faithful supernatural helper Medea, greater than Odysseus, whose wanderings took him home, greater than Hercules or Theseus who braved the Underworld and lived to tell the tale - greater even than Aeneas, father of the Roman race, this emaciated near-wraith stood up to and defeated the envious onslaughts of the greatest God yet devised in the mind of man [Augustus] - and survived beyond death to create a picture of endless suffering but resilient renewal. This is the 'singular myth' that the poet Ovid creates in exile."[147] Here, Claassen (2001) interprets the use of mythical parallels for the authorial persona in exile as a means of bolstering the consolidation of the mythologisation of the *relegatus poeta*, resulting in Ovid writing himself into the mythical tradition as the ultimate myth of the Roman poet relegated to Tomis. Likewise, Claassen (2008) analyses the variety of mythical equations in the exile works as contributing towards the myth of Ovid in exile: "the myth of exile partakes of the fleeting character of all myth. Its details shift with every retelling. Its hero exists alone within a zone of silence, persecuted by an angry God, and consoled by a transcendental goddess ... All nature conspires with the silently relentless God to hound the hero, who stands alone, aided only by the very goddess who originally brought about his ruin." [148] This thesis will argue that the construction of self-referential mythological parallels with the exilic persona contributes markedly towards the mythologisation of the *relegatus poeta* at Tomis, yet prioritising the mythologisation of the authorial persona (as in Claassen's (2001) and (2008) investigations) runs the danger of overlooking the other functions that myth plays throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The depiction of fictional characters in the exile works also contributes towards the characterisation of the Tomitan region, the portrayal of the Princeps, and the depictions of Ovid's correspondents. We should also not forget that Ovid operates in a rich intertextual framework of Latin (and also Greek) literature and, as such, seeks to write his own works into these literary traditions (and also incorporate the exile works into his own corpus).

[147] Claassen (2001) 41.
[148] Claassen (2008) 181. Cf. Claassen (1988) 168. See also Claassen (2008) 8-10, 39, 180-3.

In the course of this thesis, I will analyse how Ovid uses mythical *exempla* to construct the authorial persona of the *relegatus poeta*, a lonely and abandoned individual who has suffered at the hands of fate. This investigation will be particularly interested in how Ovid uses myth as a means of illustration, how he parallels mythical narratives with what purport to be his own experiences in exile, and how he associates mythical characters with the persona of the *relegatus poeta*. Therefore this thesis will consider how Ovid uses myth by examining the treatments of certain literary characters or narratives in the exile letters one at a time, and how these individual myths relate to the broader use of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as a whole.

The first chapter of this thesis will consider the portrayals of the gods in the exile works, and how they are depicted as either helping or hindering the lives of mortals. In this chapter, we shall see that Ovid allegorises his relegation at the hands of Augustus as a form of extreme punishment by a god, and in this process the poet likens himself to a number of mythical characters who were killed or hounded by Jupiter. This chapter will also explore how Ovid depicts the gods as having power over his destiny, and how the portrayals of gods such as Neptune and Minerva are important for supporting his equivalence with epic heroes, whose fates were determined by the divine aid of Minerva and the persecution of Neptune.

The second chapter will consider how the author parallels his existence as an exile with the fate of a number of epic protagonists, particularly ocean-wandering heroes such as Ulysses and Jason, who were also helped or hindered by divinities. The second chapter will also consider how Ovid uses epic protagonists such as Achilles and Ulysses to construct links back to the earlier amatory works in the Ovidian corpus, as well as the importance of intertextual references to Homeric epic in the exile letters.

The third chapter of this thesis will explore the portrayals of other heroes in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, focusing on how myths like that of Theseus and Pirithous showcase the theme of loyal devotion between friends. While some mythical narratives focus on the fidelity of friends in the face of adversity, and are equated with Ovid's continued friendships from exile, the author also uses mythical narratives which feature the act of abandonment as an opportunity to illustrate his desertion by fair-weather friends and

the animosity he receives from his enemies. The myths of Philoctetes, Oedipus, and Telegonus all feature the abandonment or murder of a character with whom the author aligns himself in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, thus contributing towards Ovid's self-depiction as an isolated and dejected figure at Tomis.

Moving on from the world of heroes, the fourth chapter will consider how Ovid portrays female mythical characters in the exile letters. The vast majority of women who appear in these epistles are depicted as being faithful and devoted wives who remain loyal to their husbands while they are absent. The portrayal of Penelope as a paragon of wifely virtue is paralleled with the author's own wife, something which also further supports Ovid's own equation with Ulysses. Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne are also likened to Ovid's wife, and their tragic tales of devotion in the face of death complement the steadfastness of the author's wife, who remains loyal to Ovid even though he endures living death in his state of relegation. Finally, the fourth chapter will analyse the portrayal of another woman in the exile works, Medea, and how her depiction as a bad wife is categorically without any association to any reader, addressee, or real person throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. I will demonstrate that the character of Medea reflects the barbarity of the author's exile, and the myths surrounding her origins at Colchis illustrate the savagery of the region to which the author is relegated at the very edge of the civilised Roman world.

The conclusion of this thesis will consider the broader implications for how individual myths are portrayed in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. I will demonstrate that Ovid uses myth to characterise his authorial persona in exile and, as a result, his authorial mask becomes increasingly mythologised in its own right and becomes an extra character in the literary cast of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Chapter One: The Gods

There are a number of gods portrayed in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and these deities play important roles in determining the fate of the author, who aligns himself with mythical characters who have either been helped or hindered by divine entities. This chapter begins by analysing the depiction of Jupiter in the exile works, because the portrayal of the almighty god is very much concerned with providing a mythical allegory for Augustus' punishment of Ovid. The parallel between the Princeps and Jupiter is the most frequent portrayal of divinity in the Ovidian exile works,[149] and contributes greatly towards the author's self-depiction as a victim who has been severely punished by his exile as he parallels himself with mythical characters that have been on the receiving end of Jupiter's wrath. Even though the most common mythical parallel for Augustus is Jupiter, there are a few instances where the Princeps is likened to Neptune. The inclusion of Neptune in the exile letters provides some variation on the motif of Augustus as Jupiter, while also supporting the equation between Ovid and Ulysses, who was persecuted by Neptune (a parallel which is a wider concern of the exilic epistles and will be discussed more fully in Chapter Two). The myth of Neptune as divine oppressor in the exile works is greatly indebted to Homer's *Odyssey*, and it comes as no surprise that when Ovid casts himself as the new Odysseus, hounded by Poseidon, he should remember Athena's role in the Homeric epic as the divine sponsor of Odysseus by including Minerva as his own patron deity in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. After discussing how Minerva aids the poet in exile I shall consider another god, Amor, who, while he does not either punish or help the exiled poet, appears to Ovid in person and consoles him in his misfortune.

Overall, the gods play key roles in determining the life of the poet throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The gods have the power to ruin the poet, and such divine oppressors change the author's circumstances irrevocably as they are portrayed as having the ability to obliterate a mythical character with whom Ovid aligns himself. In

[149]Claassen (1988) 165-6 suggests that throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid emphasises Jupiter in his depictions of deities, and minimises those of other gods.

circumstances where literary characters have evaded the death blow from a god, there is a chance that they could either plead for mercy or appeal to another god for their help. Ovid looks most favourably towards the example of Minerva in this sense, as she has intervened in the fates of epic heroes such as Ulysses and Jason in the *Odyssey* and *Argonautica* (respectively), thus setting a precedent for the possibility of her favouring the author with similar assistance. While the other gods are portrayed as major players in the poet's life when Ovid assumes the guises of a mythical character, Amor appears at the foot of the poet's bed in the middle of the night and converses with the author directly about his current life and how his situation contrasts with his previous existence as an elegiac poet in Rome. The gods have the power to ruin the author if they so choose, or to aid Ovid (or console him) after his downfall. The circumstances surrounding Ovid's exile (particularly the way that Augustus was personally responsible for Ovid's relegation) determines the characterisation of Jupiter in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as well as influencing the way that Ovid brands himself as a mythical victim of Jupiter, thus allegorising his relegation at the hands of the Princeps as being struck by the thunderbolt of Jupiter.

Jupiter

The relationship between Ovid, Augustus and Augustan ideology is complex no doubt because of the former's erotodidactic pose in the face of the anti-adultery legislation,[150] on the one hand, and, on the other, the subsequent relegation of the author to Tomis at Augustus' bidding.[151] In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, composed during the author's relegation, the relationship between the poet and the Princeps is explored through

[150] On the legal technicalities of the *Leges Iuliae* and their relation to Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, see the Introduction.

[151] On Ovid and the Augustan regime see n.54 and the Introduction. While the figure of Augustus Caesar is very frequent throughout the exile works, Ovid explicitly states that Augustus was personally responsible for his exile at *Tr*. 1.3.5-6, 85-6, 5.61-2; 2.7-8; 3.8.11-12; 4.5.8, 9.11-12; 5.7.7-8, 9.11-14, 10.19-24; *Pont*. 1.2.59, 7.43-8; 2.7.55-6; 3.6.7-10, 7.39-40.

mythological parallels between heroes, equated with the author, who are persecuted (or even, in some cases, killed) by Jupiter,[152] who is likened to Augustus.[153] This is further complicated by the awareness that Ovid has likened Augustus, whose own ideology stressed his divinity as the son of the deified Julius Caesar,[154] to Jupiter in his epic *Metamorphoses*.[155] Ovid parallels his relegation at the command of Augustus with being hit by the thunderbolt of Jupiter and, because Jupiter's weapon wields a mortal blow, Ovid can develop the mythical allegory as an extension of the theme of exile as death as he associates himself with the dead victims of Jupiter (for instance, as we shall see in this section, Ovid likens himself to Capaneus, Phaethon, and Semele).[156] However, since some heroes do, very rarely, survive such punishment, authorial self-identification with these characters can also reflect the author's hope of recall. Jupiter's role as a divine antagonist who strikes individuals with his thunderbolt features as one of the most commonly repeated mythical images in the exile works, as Ovid routinely equates his banishment at the hands of Augustus with being on the receiving end of Jupiter's punishment.

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, there is a recurring and well-developed equation between Augustus and Jupiter,[157] a comparison that operates on a number of levels including instances where Ovid likens Augustus to Jupiter, states that

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[152] On how Ovid's portrayal of Augustus as Jupiter can be understood in literary terms as part of the tradition of presenting powerful figures in Roman politics in mythological terms, see McGowan (2009) 63-92.

[153] While Jupiter is a frequent mythological character in the exile works, parallels between the god and Augustus are explicitly drawn at *Tr*. 1.1.73; 2.179, 215-218, 333-4; 3.12.46; 5.2b.2. In other instances, Jupiter is indirectly associated with Augustus through the author constructing parallels between himself in exile and the victims of Jupiter: *Tr*. 2.33-4, 143-4; 3.5.1; 11.61-2; 4.3.63-78; 5.5-6; 9.14; 5.3.29-34; *Pont*. 1.7.49-50; 2.1.13. For an assessment of how Augustus is portrayed as Jupiter in the exile works and how this possibly relates to Ovid's refusal to write a Gigantomachy, see Williams (1994) 190-3.

[154] On Augustus' self-presentation as *Divus Filius* see Zanker (1988) 33-7.

[155] On the depiction of Jupiter and Augustus in the *Met*.: Segal (2001). On the portrayal of *divus* Augustus in Ovid: Fowler (1915), Scott (1930) and Fishwick (1991). For the ongoing association between Augustus and Jupiter and its ideological ramifications: Galinsky (1996) 318. On the representation of Augustus as Jupiter in the works of other Augustan poets see Fraenkel (1957) 280-3 and Williams (1994) 172-4.

[156] For a discussion of Ovid's portrayal of exile as death see the Introduction and nn. 117, 120, 121, 122.

[157] See n. 153.

Augustus is Jupiter, and uses myth to create an allegory of his relegation. Firstly, let us explore how Ovid associates Augustus with Jupiter, before considering how Ovid portrays the Princeps *as* Jupiter in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Throughout the exile works, Jupiter is presented as being all-powerful and inescapable:

nil adeo validum est, adamans licet adliget illud,

ut maneat rapido firmius igne Iovis (*Tr*. 4.8.45-6)

Just as the king of the gods is omnipotent, so too is his human counterpart. In the epistle to Sextus Pompeius, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.4, Ovid mentions that his addressee treats Augustus as a god, thereby setting the Princeps on a par with Jupiter in the celestial hierarchy:

cumque deos omnes, tum quos impensius aequos

esse tibi cupias cum Iove Caesar erunt (*Pont*. 4.4.33-4)[158]

Here, the association between Jupiter and Augustus is expressed in their shared position above all other gods, and is reflected in the way that their names are juxtaposed in *Pont*. 4.4.34. Jupiter is presented as being an omnipotent divinity and an association between Augustus and Jupiter allows us to infer that Augustus enjoys a similarly powerful position. The mythical parallel of Jupiter is also deployed in *Tristia* 2, where Ovid uses a comparison between the all-powerful god and the Princeps to convey the extent of Augustus' power in Rome being like the power that Jupiter has over the world:

sed, nisi peccassem, quid tu concedere posses?

materiam veniae sors tibi nostra dedit.

si, quotiens peccant homines, sua fulmina mittat

Iuppiter, exiguo tempore inermis erit:

nunc ubi detonuit strepituque exterruit orbem,

purum discussis aera reddit aquis.

[158] I shall use Richmond's (1990) edition of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

iure igitur genitorque deum rectorque vocatur,

iure capax mundus nil Iove maius habet.

tu quoque, cum patriae rector dicare paterque,

utere more dei nomen habentis idem (*Tr*. 2.31-40)

Jupiter is presented as the father and ruler of the gods and Augustus is depicted as his real-life Roman equivalent.[159] However, while the comparison between Augustus and Jupiter may be flattering in the way that it suggests that the Princeps has an all-encompassing power, this parallel is also used later in the *Tristia* to criticise the Princeps as an inattentive reader:

altera pars causae superest, qua carmine turpi

arguor obsceni doctor adulterii.

fas ergo est aliqua caelestia pectora falli,

et sunt notitia multa minora tua;

utque deos caelumque simul sublime tuenti

non vacat exiguis rebus adesse Iovi,

de te pendentem sic dum circumspicis orbem,

effugiunt curas inferiora tuas (*Tr*. 2.211-220)

After commenting that, like Jupiter, Augustus must be busy exercising his power over the world, Ovid comments that some small matters no doubt evade the comprehensive attention of the Princeps, as they would escape even Jupiter's notice:

mirer in hoc igitur tantarum pondere rerum

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[159] Augustus is portrayed as the Roman equivalent of a number of mythical and divine entities, parallels which may be chosen to construe the Princeps as an imposing individual. On this see Thomsen (1979) 159-60.

te numquam nostros evoluisse iocos?

at si, quod mallem, vacuum tibi forte fuisset,

nullum legisses crimen in Arte mea (*Tr*. 2.237-40)

Here, the Princeps is complimented by being likened to Jupiter, yet this compliment is slightly turned on its head when it is used to suggest that Augustus did not carefully read the evidence which was the basis for the author's condemnation. In this way, Ovid criticises Augustus for being a less than careful and attentive reader, yet at the same time softens the brunt of this remark by including the flattering comparison between the ruler and the king of the gods. Ovid here manages to point out rather subtly an error on the Princeps' part, yet avoids making a hostile accusation. In this way, by developing the comparison between Augustus and Jupiter as rulers of the world who cannot concern themselves with minor matters, the poet at once creates a veiled criticism of Augustus while simultaneously strengthening his defence of the *Ars* in *Tristia* 2.[160]

Ovid develops the association between Augustus and Jupiter by depicting the Princeps as the king of the gods. When addressing *Tristia* 5.2b to the Princeps,[161] Ovid opens his epistle with the self-deprecating *si fas est homini cum Iovi posse loqui* (2), addressing Augustus as if he were Jupiter. In this instance, Ovid addresses Augustus as if speaking to a deity and places the Princeps in the role of the god in question. An extended comparison between Augustus and Jupiter also occurs in *Tristia* 3.1, where Ovid depicts Augustus as Jupiter in the description of the Princeps' home. While Ovid's latest volume goes on a tour around the city, its guide points out the temple of Jupiter (32), and the book sees a doorway, which it believes to be the house of Jupiter:

"*hic Stator, hoc primum condita Roma loco est."*

singula dum miror, video fulgentibus armis

conspicuos postes tectaque digna deo.

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[160] For the presence of the *Ars* in *Tristia* 2, and Ovid's defence of the *Ars*, see Williams (1994) 201-9.

[161] On the manuscript evidence for separating *Tr*. 5.2b from *Tr*. 5.2a, see Hall (1995) 179.

“an Iovis haec” dixi “domus est?”; quod ut esse putarem,

augurium menti querna corona dabat.

cuius ut accepi dominum, “non fallimur” inquam,

“et magni verum est hanc Iovis esse domum.

cur tamen adposita velatur ianua lauro,

cingit et augustas arbor opaca fores?

num quia perpetuos meruit domus ista triumphos,

an quia Leucadio semper amata deo est?

ipsane quod festa est, an quod facit omnia festa?

quam tribuit terris, pacis an ista nota est?

utque viret semper laurus nec fronde caduca

carpitur, aeternum sic habet illa decus?”

“causa superpositae scripto testata coronae:

servatos cives indicat huius ope.”

“adice servatis unum, pater optime, civem,

qui procul extremo pulsus in orbe iacet (*Tr*. 3.1.32-50)

Augustus’ house is portrayed as having the attributes of Jupiter, thus allowing us to infer that Augustus, the owner of the home, is the omnipotent deity (38). The door posts of the house are described as being distinctive *fulgentibus armis* (33), which leads the reader to expect that this is a reference to the lightning bolts of Jupiter, particularly since the temple of Jupiter Stator was pointed out in the preceding line (32) and the book asks if these doorposts belong to the house of Jupiter himself (35). Bearing in mind that the inscription clarifies that the laurels on the house are those awarded to Augustus in recognition of

saving the lives of citizens (47-8),[162] we can identify the resplendent arms in 33 as the *clipeus virtutis*, which was also awarded to Augustus in 27 BC by the Senate.[163] There is a similar play on the objects bestowed on Augustus' house and the attributes of Jupiter in the description of the *querna corona* in 36. The *querna corona* could quite easily be found adorning the house of Jupiter, since it is made of oak leaves and these are associated with the king of the gods (35-6).[164] However, the *querna corona* (36) on this particular door frame is a reference to the *corona civica* awarded to Augustus (later clarified at 47-8).[165] In the description of the arms and the oak leaves on the house of Jupiter in this passage there is a significant play with the reader's expectations, particularly as Ovid describes the attributes of Jupiter on the house while simultaneously playing on Augustus' name in this section by using words that both echo the name of the Princeps (such as *augurium* (36)[166] and *augustas* (40)[167]) and also evoke the grandiose connotations of "Augustus".[168] These

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[162] Aug. *RG* 34.2 (on this see Cooley (2009) 262-6). Also in 27 BC Octavian was awarded the "civic crown, depicting a laurel wreath, bestowed on those who had saved Roman citizens from death", Eck (2003) 49. On this also see Shotter (1991) 27.

[163]For the awards granted to Octavian in 27 BC by the Senate, see Aug. *RG* 34.2 (on this see Cooley (2009) 266-71). Octavian was awarded honours by the Senate in 27 BC, one of which was "mounting a golden shield in the Senate chamber that listed his four cardinal virtues: valor, clemency, justice, and piety. The senators declared that one could cite countless examples of Octavian's outstanding qualities, which he embodied in an ideal fashion" (Eck (2003) 48-9). On this also see Shotter (1991) 27. For an assessment of the ideological importance of the virtues of *virtus*, *clementia*, *iustitia*, and *pietas* see Zanker (1988) 95-7; Galinsky (1996) 80-90.

[164] In Homer *Od*. 14.327-30, Odysseus consults the oracle of Zeus at Dodona, whose will is interpreted from the noise the oak leaves make as they blow in the wind. On the ongoing association between Jupiter and oak, see Cook (1903a), (1903b), (1903c), (1904a), (1904b), (1904c); Zanker (1988) 93.

[165] See n.162. The wreath of the civic crown was constructed from oak leaves and placed on the doors to Augustus' own house, Zanker (1988) 93-4; Galinsky (1996) 34, 208, 218. While the oak leaves of the civic crown evoke Jupiter, the god associated with the oak tree, Ovid also mentions that there are laurel leaves and wreaths adorning the front of the house (39, 45). For the laurel as evocative of Apollo, Augustus' patron deity, see Zanker (1988) 92-4; Galinsky (1996) 218, 272.

[166] For the religious connotations of *augurium*, see OLD *s.v.* 1-2.

[167] For *augustus, -a, -um* as an adjective to denote something (or someone) as venerable, worthy of honour, and dignified, see OLD *s.v.* 1-3.

[168] On the name "Augustus" and its range of imperial, religious, sacred, and divine connotations (particularly how it enables the Princeps to share a title with Jupiter), see

associations between the attributes of Jupiter, the arms and the oak leaves, and the house of Augustus are then developed by the compliment that the house is *digna deo* (34). However, *Tristia* 3.1 develops the association between Augustus and Jupiter further than simply bestowing the house of the Princeps with the attributes of the god. Augustus is not just likened to a god, he *is* Jupiter himself: *hanc Iovis esse domum* (38). In addition, as Ovid identifies the house of Augustus by describing it as if it were the house of Jupiter, Ovid highlights the attributes of the king of the gods which are common to the symbolic objects adorning the house of Augustus (such as the arms and the oak leaves). Therefore, Ovid highlights the ideological reasons behind these awards, namely saving the life of a citizen and *clementia*,[169] so it is with some irony that Ovid critically comments that the Princeps has condemned the author, a Roman citizen, to the death of exile (47-50).

So far we have considered two instances where Ovid criticises the Princeps (*Tr*. 2.237-40; *Tr*. 3.1.47-50), but there is a curious depiction of Jupiter as an adulterer in *Tristia* 2 that besmirches the comparison between Augustus and the god:

constiterit Iovis aede, Iovis succurret in aede

quam multas matres fecerit ille deus (*Tr*. 2.289-90)

It is unexpected that Jupiter is presented here as an *exemplum* of an adulterer given that, as previously discussed, Augustus has been equated with the god within *Tristia* 2 (which is itself a defence of the *Ars* in light of the charge that it teaches adultery). So it is unusual that Jupiter, who elsewhere in the poem appears as the divine commander of the world and heavens and is thus likened to Augustus, is also used as an example of a serial adulterer. Potentially this couplet has a subversive element because it reminds the reader that Jupiter is not the most monogamous of gods elsewhere in the Ovidian corpus,[170] particularly since it

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Zanker (1988) 98; Wallace-Hadrill (1993) 16-17. For *augustus, -a, -um* from *augeo*, "to increase", see OLD *s.v.* 1.

[169] On the morality of Jupiter's use of the thunderbolt and Augustus' *clementia* in the exile works, see Thomsen (1979) 53-4.

[170] For example, within the Ovidian works, Jupiter commits adultery with the following mortal women: Europa (*Her*. 4.55; *Am*. 1.10.8, 3.12.33-4; *Met*. 2.846-75, 6.103-4, 8.122-3; *Fasti* 5.605); Io (*Her*. 14.88, 95, 99; *Am*. 1.3.20-4, 2.19.28-30; *Ars* 1.78; *Met*. 1.588-600); Leda

occurs in *Tristia* 2, which is itself concerned with disproving that the Ovidian works had anything to do with inciting illegal activities such as adultery. While highlighting the extra-marital, amorous, and extracurricular hobbies of Jupiter is daring enough, are we meant to connect this in any way with Augustus, who has been paralleled with Jupiter earlier in *Tristia* 2? Since Augustus is not directly mentioned in *Tristia* 2.289-90, we cannot claim that he is directly implicated in Jupiter's portrayal as an adulterer, yet this negative portrayal of the god raises an important problem with the use of myth in the exile works: if an equation between a mythical character and a person has been repeatedly established, then can we read a particular example of the myth as a reference to that person even if they are not named? In this case, we cannot read Jupiter as Augustus directly but, since this parallel has been explicitly drawn earlier in *Tristia* 2, the reader is unable to deactivate an association between Jupiter and Augustus and is therefore left with a latent concept of the Princeps whenever Jupiter is named. Therefore, the negative connotations of Jupiter in *Tristia* 2.289-90 seem to taint the parallelism drawn between the god and Augustus. It could be possible that the depiction of Jupiter as an adulterer in *Tristia* 2.289-90 is a subtle, disguised attack on the Princeps who, after relegating Ovid for supposedly inciting adultery, would hardly be happy with such a comparison.

When Augustus is portrayed as the king of the gods, he is presented in a mythical, divine light. This increases audience sympathy for Ovid,[171] who is only human in comparison and as such will not be able to defend himself against the persecution of a god.[172] However, as we shall explore in the course of this thesis, Ovid is not hesitant about portraying himself

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(*Her*. 8.68, 78; 16.252, 292, 294; 17.55; *Met*. 6.109); Danae (*Am*. 2.19.28-30, 3.8.29, 12.33-4; *Met*. 4.610-11, 697-8, 6.113); Leto *(Met*. 1.517, 6.336-8); Callisto (*Met*. 2.422-40; *Fasti* 2.162); Semele (*Met*. 3.260-315; *Fasti* 6.485). Also consider Jupiter as a notoriously wayward husband at *Ars* 1.633-636 and Jupiter as an infamous seducer of human women at *Ars* 1.713-14.

[171] On Ovid's self-depiction as the victim of Jupiter's lightning bolt as an expression of his lack of control over his own fate, and as an attempt to garner reader sympathy, see Thomsen (1979) 53.

[172] There is something to be said, however, of the outcome of Odysseus' persecution by Neptune, a narrative which is mobilised as an allegory for the author's relegation by Augustus, since Odysseus did ultimately escape the god's destruction and return home to Ithaca (Hom. *Od*. 13).

in the guise of mythical heroes and he allegorises his relegation by Augustus in mythical terms in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. As a result, the relationship between Ovid and Augustus becomes mythologised as it is paralleled with examples of heroes who have been persecuted by gods, especially when Ovid depicts himself as having been hit by the thunderbolt of Jupiter when he was relegated. For instance, in *Tristia* 1.1 Ovid likens himself to Phaethon, who was the victim of Jupiter's thunderbolt when he took command of the chariot of the sun and lost control:

vitaret caelum Phaethon, si viveret, et quos

optarat stulte, tangere nollet equos.

me quoque, quae sensi, fateor Iovis arma timere;

me reor infesto, cum tonat, igne peti (*Tr*. 1.1.79-82)

Phaethon appears as an example of the man who dared to go higher than a mortal should, and was brought back down to earth with a crash. Ovid uses this mythical *exemplum* to express his own condition by associating his punisher, Augustus, with the divine Jupiter who killed Phaethon. It is intriguing that Ovid uses a somewhat complex *exemplum* in terms of the relationship between metaphor and physicality. As the author mobilises a very physical mythological *exemplum* to describe his relegation, Ovid paradoxically creates a mythical allegory for his real situation in exile as he maps the violent downfall and physical obliteration of Phaethon onto the intangible downfall in status of the author, who is now metaphorically dead in exile. Phaethon's gruesome demise in *Tristia* 1.1 recalls his death in *Metamorphoses* 2.301-28:[173]

intonat et dextra libratum fulmen ab aure

misit in aurigam pariterque animaque rotisque

expulit et saevis compescuit ignibus ignes (*Met*. 2.311-313)

[173] I am using Tarrant's (2004) edition of the *Metamorphoses*.

This vivid description of Phaethon's Icarian downfall emphasises the cause of his peril: daring to take the chariot of the Sun, and stressing his role as charioteer as he dies (*ab aure / ... aurigam* (311-312)). This prefigures Phaethon's epitaph, which identifies him as the son of Apollo, in whose chariot he perished:

HIC SITUS EST PHAETHON CURRUS AURIGA PATERNI

QUEM SI NON TENUIT MAGNIS TAMEN EXCIDIT AUSIS (*Met*. 2.327-8).

The *CURRUS AURIGA* of the epitaph recalls the emphasis on the role of the chariot in the description of Phaethon's demise (311-12). In light of the reference to Phaethon in *Tristia* 1.1 and his equation with the author, it is interesting to investigate the poetic links in Phaethon's epitaph. While Apollo (*PATERNI*, 327) is the father of Phaethon, he is also the patron god of poetry and poets.[174] In addition, the emphasis on the chariot in his epitaph and the description of his demise might also be connected with poetry and metaphors of poetical progression. In the *Ars*, Ovid metaphorically describes the beginning of his erotodidactic work in terms of driving a chariot:

arte leves currus: arte regendus Amor.

curribus Automedon lentisque erat aptus habenis (*Ars* 1.4-5)

Tiphys et Automedon dicar Amoris ego (*Ars* 1.8)

This metaphor is extended and used again at the conclusion of *Ars* 3, providing a cyclical structure to the work:

lusus habet finem: cycnis descendere tempus,

duxerunt collo qui iuga nostra suo (*Ars* 3.809-10).

Throughout the *Ars*, the progression of the poetical narrative is likened to that of a chariot, while the authorial role becomes the driving force of the charioteer. The importance of this charioteering metaphor in Ovid's poetic corpus allows us to read poetic significance into the depiction of the author as Phaethon in *Tristia* 1.1.79-82. The Phaethon parallel is an

[174] See Ross (1975) 27-8; Miller (2009).

extremely apt equation for the author who is enduring the death of exile as a result of Augustus' judgement concerning one of the author's verse collections. Phaethon, the son of Apollo (the patron deity of poets), dares to drive his chariot too ambitiously and is struck down by the judgement of Jupiter. Thus, Ovid resurrects the charioteering metaphor for authorial control in the *Tristia*, and uses this old image from his pre-exilic texts to construct an allegory for his demise in mythical terms, branding himself as the poetic Phaethon of the Augustan regime. In addition, there is an opposition between the two chariot drivers with whom Ovid identifies himself: while successful at the beginning of his career he is equated with the champion charioteer, Automedon, in the *Ars,* and after his fall from grace and subsequent exile he portrays himself as Phaethon, the worst chariot driver, in the *Tristia*, thus contributing towards the wider theme of the myth of poetic decline in exile.[175]

Ovid also identifies with Phaethon in *Tristia* 4.3, a letter to Ovid's wife, where we see the author parallel himself with a number of mythical characters who were all the victims of the same god, Jupiter. Jupiter, when portrayed in the guise of the divine punisher, not only operates as a metaphor for Augustus' relegation of the author, but also functions as a unifying central core theme which ties together a range of mythical characters with whom the author equates himself in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. This provides the author with the chance to identify with a number of Jupiter's victims, whose fates at the hand of the king of the gods may at first glance seem very disparate, but upon closer inspection a common theme between the mythical *exempla* emerges. *Tristia* 4.3 contains a series of mythical *exempla* intended to demonstrate that she should not be ashamed of her husband because he has been relegated by Augustus, and contains a number of mythical *exempla* of heroes who were hit by Jupiter's lightning bolt:

cum cecidit Capaneus subito temerarius ictu,

num legis Evadnen erubuisse viro?

nec, quia rex mundi conpescuit ignibus ignes, 65

ipse suis Phaethon infitiandus erat;

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[175] On the myth of poetic decline in exile, see Williams (1994).

nec Semele Cadmo facta est aliena parenti,

quod precibus periit ambitiosa suis.

nec tibi, quod saevis ego sum Iovis ignibus ictus,

purpureus molli fiat in ore rubor (*Tr*. 4.3.63-70)

Capaneus (63), Phaethon (66), and Semele (67) were all killed by the same god, Jupiter, thus unifying an otherwise very different group of mythical *exempla*. This disparate trio of mythical *exempla* foreshadow the god's own appearance in 69, when he punishes the author. There is one aspect of the demise of these three characters that is common to all their downfalls: it could be reasonably argued that each of them bears a degree of responsibility for their own deaths. Capaneus arrogantly claimed that even Jupiter could not stop him from invading Thebes;[176] Phaethon stole the chariot of the Sun, which ran out of control and was in danger of destroying the world;[177] and Semele made Jupiter swear by the Styx to grant her a wish, and then asked that he reveal himself in divine form.[178] As such, these three mythical characters each have a degree of culpability in their own downfalls and,[179] as Ovid writes himself into this list, the author's equation with these mythical figures tantalisingly suggests that Ovid is presenting his relegation as being partly his fault through paralleling himself with a number of mythical characters who are partly to blame for their deaths.[180] This not only aligns Ovid with Capaneus, Phaethon, and Semele but also contributes towards the broader equation between Jupiter and Augustus. These lines also develop the relationship between Ovid and Phaethon, given similarities between the ends

[176] The death of Capaneus, and the responsibility that the hero takes for his own demise, will be more fully discussed in the Evadne section of Chapter Four: Women found later in this thesis. For the death of Capaneus, see A. *Th*. 440-6; E. *Supp*. 494-505.
[177] Cf. *Met*. 2.1-400.
[178] See *Met*. 3.287-309.
[179] Thomsen (1979) 54-7 sees Capaneus as a blameless victim of fate like Semele and Phaethon before later backtracking her assessment to conclude that Phaethon and Semele are responsible for their deaths.
[180] In Chapter Four I shall take a closer look at how Ovid explores his culpability for his downfall through aligning himself with mythical characters who are either to blame for their own deaths (like Capaneus) or are responsible for the deaths of their loved ones (such as Admetus).

of the lines 65 and 69. In 65, Jupiter brings about the downfall of Phaethon when he quelled *ignibus ignes*. The use of fire here foreshadows the ending of 69 which describes the exiled author as *ignibus ictus*. This verbal similarity between the death of Phaethon and the relegation of Ovid consolidates their equation elsewhere in exile works (*Tr*. 1.1.79-82), and also alludes to *Metamorphoses* 2.313, where Jupiter likewise quenches *ignibus ignes*. Thus, the author creates an affinity between himself and Phaethon, and also writes himself into a tradition of mythical heroes and heroines who have suffered at the hands of Jupiter in *Tristia* 4.3. Therefore, Ovid allies himself with a range of various mythical characters in a list which is unified by Jupiter and builds up to the final crescendo of the *exempla*, which is the author himself. While, on the one hand, Augustus is repeatedly equated with a single figure, Jupiter, the author constantly shifts his own parallels to encompass not just one mythical figure, but several different mythical characters who were all persecuted by Jupiter. So, in the arch-nemesis figure of Jupiter (and the divine Augustus), Ovid manages to provide a unifying linchpin from which to exploit the god's depiction in Graeco-Roman myth and subsequently locate his own authorial persona at multiple points of apposition by simultaneously portraying himself as a range, and number of, mythical victims of Jupiter. This no doubt increases the sympathy of the reader for the exiled author but also, on the other hand, does so with a typically Ovidian stylistic literary flair as he changes guises frequently, leaving Augustus behind in the staid and repetitive costume of Jupiter.[181]

Ovid not only identifies with those struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt at the time of their death, but also with such figures after their demise, thus drawing comparisons between himself and the injured party. In *Tristia* 3.5, a letter praising the loyalty of a true friend, the author portrays their friendship as if his correspondent had dared to defy Jupiter himself and touch the corpse of his friend:

ut cecidi cunctique metu fugere ruinam,

versaque amicitiae terga dedere meae,

[181] Claassen (1988) 169 views Ovid's depiction of Augustus in the exile works in a more negative light, commenting that "the poetry of exile conveys a damning portrait of Augustus in his last years as an essentially paradoxical figure, a mortal god, an unjust ruler, a cruel father, and an Envy that tries unsuccessfully to destroy the prophetic voice of poetry."

ausus es igne Iovis percussum tangere corpus (*Tr*. 3.5.5-7)

As the unnamed addressee of this epistle is likened to a true friend who has dared to touch the body blasted by Jupiter, in doing so he defies the condemnation of the god, and, by inference, Augustus too, who is equated with Jupiter throughout the exile works. In *Tristia* 3.5, it is not clear whether the body of the victim is alive or dead, tantalizingly suggesting a connection with the omnipresent motif of exile as a form of living death yet also,[182] simultaneously, suggesting that victims can survive being hit by Jupiter's thunderbolt.

While Ovid likens himself to the victims of Jupiter's lightning bolt to embellish the recurring motif of exile as a form of death, there are a few instances where the victims have survived thanks to the mercy shown to them by Jupiter. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.7, a letter to Messalinus, Ovid portrays Augustus as Jupiter and discusses the mercy with which his banishment was dealt to him. In this process, he portrays himself as one who has been struck by the thunderbolt of Jupiter, but who survives because of the merciful way in which he has been punished:

quaque ego permisi, quaque est res passa, pepercit,

usus et est modice fulminis igne sui.

nec vitam nec opes nec ademit posse reverti (*Pont*. 1.7.45-7)

In this epistle, Ovid is keen to clarify the exact terminology of his banishment as a *relegatus* as opposed to an *exul*, meaning that he is allowed to keep his property and there is also the possibility of return (47). Just as Augustus was merciful to Ovid in a legal sense by rendering him only *relegatus* when he could have made him a full *exul*,[183] this sense of restraint and *clementia* is transferred from reality and into the mythical sphere, where Jupiter's thunderbolt is not used to its full potential, but only *modice* (46). This divine representation of Augustus is strengthened by the use of Jupiter as a mythical *exemplum* in the following lines:

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[182] For the influence of Cicero on Ovid's self-presentation as a living corpse in the exile works, see Nagle (1980) 33-5.
[183] On the differences between the status of *exul* and *relegatus*, see the Introduction.

si sua per vestras victa sit ira preces.

at graviter cecidi. quid enim mirabile, siquis

a Iove percussus non leve vulnus habet? (*Pont*. 1.7.48-50)

This reiterates the sense of mercy with which Augustus, in his guise as Jupiter hurling thunderbolts, dealt out the author's punishment. In addition, these two lines also add extra details concerning the fate of the author: even if Jupiter was merciful and did not harm the victim as much as he could have done, he would nevertheless still have dealt the sufferer a severe (*non leve*, 50) wound. Thus, the author is engaged in a delicate balancing act; at once praising the *clementia* of the Princeps, but at the same time conveying the horrific extent of his banishment.

In *Tristia* 4.9 Ovid also discusses the merciful way in which Augustus has branded him a *relegatus*, but in this epistle Ovid explores the possibility that he may one day be reinstated. As a result, there is a chance that Ovid may one day be recalled to Rome. Here, as in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.7, the banishment and sense of hope at the prospect of return are expressed through a mythical *exemplum* which throws Augustus into the role of Jupiter wielding thunderbolts at an oak tree:

et patriam, modo sit sospes, speramus ab illo:

saepe Iovis telo quercus adusta viret (*Tr*. 4.9.13-14)

In *Tristia* 4.9 the image of the oak, once struck by lightning and then growing green again, conveys the sense of hope that once blasted by Jupiter, there is a chance of rejuvenation. Here, the tree acts as a metaphor for the author's own desire for repatriation and recovery in the wake of his banishment to Tomis. This image of convalescence is further adapted in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6, where the author mentions the fate of Jupiter's thunderbolts:

fulminis adflatos interdum vivere telis

vidimus, et refici non prohibente Iove (*Pont*. 3.6.17-18)

This metaphor for the author's condition not only provides an *exemplum* for humans surviving the wrath of Jupiter, but also suggests that those who have survived are no longer

hounded by their oppressor and are allowed to go free, providing a hopeful test case for the author's (prospective) eventual recall and reinstatement.[184]

While there are times when Jupiter is portrayed as a merciful deity, as we have just considered in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6, he is also accused of punishing individuals unjustly. Indeed, Jupiter is characterised as a divine persecutor later in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6:

Iuppiter in multos temeraria fulmina torquet,

qui poenam culpa non meruere pati (*Pont*. 3.6.27-8)

Here, Jupiter is not presented as a merciful deity, but as an over-zealous avenger, contrasting with the author's hope of recall by a merciful god only a few lines earlier (*Pont*. 3.6.17-18). This could be interpreted as reflecting badly on Augustus, with whom the king of the gods has been repeatedly identified throughout the exile works. However, in the preceding lines, Ovid has been careful to draw a distinction between the shameful behaviour of Jupiter on the one hand, and the kindly behaviour of the Princeps on the other:

principe nec nostro deus est moderatior ullus;

iustitia vires temperat ille suas (*Pont*. 3.6.23-4)

Here, the author treads a careful political tightrope: while condemning the unjust behaviour of Jupiter, with whom the Princeps has been strongly identified elsewhere, he delicately separates this divine behaviour from that of Augustus by clearly stating that Augustus morally supersedes the king of the gods in terms of administering *clementia*. In such a way, Ovid communicates that those who suffer at the hands of Jupiter's thunderbolts do not always deserve such harsh punishment, thus absolving the poet of guilt whilst at the same time not insulting the Princeps by calling his judgement into question. Thus, Ovid deconstructs the Jupiter/Augustus equation to serve his own purposes in this epistle. However, since this equation has been so firmly, clearly, and repeatedly stated throughout the exile works, it cannot be ignored in this case, resulting in an implied, tacit parallel

[184] For *exempla* of mythical figures who, after being removed from their homeland, eventually return see the Ulysses section as well as the Philoctetes section.

between Augustus and Jupiter (since this equation is omnipresent elsewhere) which calls the fairness of Ovid's relegation into question.

As we have previously considered, Ovid uses the myth of Jupiter as divine arbiter to illustrate the power wielded by the Princeps and to construct his own identity as a victim. However, there are occasions when Ovid treats his fate in a slightly humorous manner. In *Tristia* 2, the author claims that his errant ways have provided the divine Princeps with a chance to demonstrate his *clementia* by relegating the author (and no doubt recalling him later) as opposed to exiling him indefinitely:

sed, nisi peccassem, quid tu concedere posses?

materiam veniae sors tibi nostra dedit.

si, quotiens peccant homines, sua fulmina mittat

Iuppiter, exiguo tempore inermis erit (*Tr*. 2.31-4)

Here, Augustus is not only portrayed as Jupiter, but there is also play on the typical image of the thundering divine Princeps dealing out punishment. Instead of presenting Jupiter as hurling the thunderbolt with inhuman, deadly accuracy and obliterating his victims, here we see the god furiously and frantically hurling thunderbolts faster than they can be produced, leaving him temporarily unarmed.[185] This slightly cheeky play on an image which is taken very seriously elsewhere in the exile works adds a touch of humour to *Tristia* 2.

The depiction of Jupiter in the exile works as divine punisher is closely intertwined with the portrayal of Augustus, the man personally responsible for the author's relegation to far-flung Tomis. As such, the Princeps is portrayed as an unjust divine persecutor in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, but (paradoxically) one who is merciful and may reinstate his victim by recalling Ovid to Rome. Just as Ovid mythologises his relegation to Tomis as like being struck by the thunderbolt of Jupiter, he paints a grandiose picture of the authorial persona's fate as an exile. Ovid is the victim of Augustus' divine judgement, and as such he

[185] Jupiter also appears unarmed in *Fasti* 3.437-40, where he is portrayed as a youth before he had acquired his weaponry following the battle with the giants.

identifies himself with a range of mythical characters that were killed by Jupiter. While Ovid may portray himself as a victim, the mythical parallels he chooses indicate that he is not an entirely blameless individual. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid adopts a number of mythical guises to allegorise his relegation at the hands of the Princeps, but Augustus is left with the often-repeated parallel of Jupiter. While the Princeps is by far most commonly portrayed as Jupiter, there are at least two instances which present us with a variation on this theme by depicting Augustus in the role of Neptune.

Neptune

On the occasions in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* when the role of divine persecutor is fulfilled by Neptune instead of Jupiter, these instances tend to support the wider equation between the author and Ulysses because Poseidon was the main divine antagonist in Homer's *Odyssey*. Throughout the exile letters, Ovid likens himself to a range of mythical heroes (particularly epic protagonists such as Ulysses and Jason) all of whom have endured the hardship of a divine oppressor. As we shall see later in the next chapter of this thesis, Ovid draws a repeated parallel between himself and Ulysses, who was also doomed to wander far from home, persecuted by a god and separated from his loving wife. Ovid highlights the fact that Ulysses was persecuted by Neptune and uses this as a mythical parallel for the author's own punishment at the hands of the Princeps. The equation between Neptune and Augustus is then further explored in other comparisons where Ovid complains that he has a fate worse than that of Ulysses because the author is being punished not by Neptune but by the more powerful king of the gods, Jupiter, whose authority cannot be overruled.

The depiction of Neptune in the exile works can provide a welcome change to the repeated equation between Augustus and Jupiter as divine antagonist, a variation which is particularly fitting since it also provides an effortless extension of the parallel between Ovid and the Homeric hero, Odysseus. In Homer's *Odyssey*, the main divine antagonist is Poseidon, who persecutes Odysseus throughout his journey in revenge for the blinding of

his son, Polyphemus.[186] However, even though Odysseus, a mortal man, is hounded by a god, he is eventually triumphant and obtains his desired goal, a return to Ithaca.[187] This is an optimistic model for Ovid's own suffering in exile: relegated to Tomis by the divine Augustus, Ovid may defy this punishment by enduring hardship in the meantime but returning to Rome eventually. This motif is present at *Tristia* 1.2.9, where Ovid establishes his recurring equation with Ulysses by introducing Neptune as a mythical equivalent for Augustus: *saepe ferox cautum petiit Neptunus Ulixem.* Given that *Tristia* 1.2 is set in a storm at sea on Ovid's voyage to Tomis,[188] the casting of Augustus in the role of Poseidon to the author's Odysseus is an extremely apt mythical parallel. In addition, *Tristia* 1.2.9 presents us with a variation on the recurring image of Augustus as Jupiter as Ovid incorporates Neptune in Jupiter's stead,[189] a diversification that simultaneously solidifies the parallel between Ovid and Ulysses.

Tristia 3.11 also develops further similarities between Ovid and Ulysses by detailing their suffering as a result of divine punishment. However, the mythical expressions are slightly modified in this instance:

crede mihi, felix, nobis collatus, Ulixes,

Neptunique minor quam Iovis ira fuit (*Tr*. 3.11.61-2)

This couplet still uses myth as a suitable means of expressing the harshness of Ovid's exilic reality, but it introduces an important set of distinctions as the author highlights that using myth to portray reality is still valid, but then questions which myth should be used. The Neptune-Augustus parallel worked well in the stormy seas of *Tristia* 1.2 to support and consolidate the Ulysses-Ovid equation, but when Jupiter is compared to Neptune in *Tristia* 3.11, Neptune is upstaged by his more powerful brother. The undermining of the Neptune-Augustus parallel in *Tristia* 3.11 rewrites the Neptune-Augustus parallel of *Tristia* 1.2, thus indicating that there is no discernible effort to establish a system of mythical imagery which

[186] Hom. *Od*. 1.23-30, 81-95; 5.309-28; 9.584-96; 13.142-87.
[187] Hom. *Od*. 13.
[188] On this see Ingleheart (2006a).
[189] For Jupiter as the imperial divinity: Claassen (2008) 125-6. See also Jupiter section.

is set in stone in the exile works:[190] myth is malleable, changeable and re-writable in these collections, just as it is in wider classical literature. In addition, the invocation of the Jupiter-Augustus parallel in *Tristia* 3.11 to upstage the persecution of Ulysses by Neptune in *Tristia* 1.2 also reflects the game of competitive suffering in which the poet has engaged Ulysses in the exile works, something that will be discussed more fully in the next chapter of this thesis.[191] In his struggle to endure more hardships than the Odyssean hero, Ovid engages Ulysses in a game of divine one-upmanship: while Ulysses may have a sea god persecuting him the poet, relegated to dry land, has the inescapable king of the gods on his tail. So while Ulysses no doubt has a worthy adversary to contend with, Neptune is at least a god who can be overruled or countered with the aid of another deity, such as Minerva. Jupiter, however, is an ultimate authority whose power cannot be challenged. Even though Jupiter's power cannot be superseded, there is some hope for our punished author as long as he has the chance to turn his attentions to another god who may offer some support in his plight, such as Minerva, the divine protectress of epic heroes.

Minerva

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid depicts himself as an ocean-wandering hero, driven far from home and persecuted by a divine antagonist. The depiction of Minerva in the exile works often supports the author's attempts to equate himself with epic heroes such as Jason and Ulysses, two heroes who both benefited from the goddess' divine intervention.[192] In the exile letters, Ovid uses parallels with Jason's voyage to Colchis to depict his own retreat into exile as a voyage to the ends of the earth and, in this process, he

[190] For an example of an attempt to reveal a systematic use of myth in Ovid's exile works see Claassen (2008) 160-84.
[191] This will be more fully discussed in the chapter on Ulysses in the exile works. Also see n. 266.
[192] In contrast to my reading, Claassen (1986) 305 interprets the role of Athena as divine protectress to the author's Jason or Ulysses as a mythical equivalent for the relationship between the Muse and Ovid.

repeatedly stresses that he is under the protection of Minerva, just as Jason was protected by Athena. The portrayal of Minerva as a helpful deity who may aid the exiled author further supports Ovid's repeated attempts to cast himself as the Odyssean hero who has been persecuted by Neptune. However, in the world of the exile works the aid that Athena brings Odysseus may not be a realistic option for our relegated author. Ovid highlights a potential scenario in which Minerva's aid might be ineffective in his own case as a means of stressing that the authorial parallel with Ulysses is a viable option only up to a certain point: while Ulysses is a character from literature and myth who gets help from Minerva,[193] Ovid is living in real life and may not receive such help from a benevolent deity. In this way, Ovid uses the myth of Athena as a divine protectress of epic heroes as a means of exploring the applicability and limits of mythical parallels for his own situation. Overall, Ovid uses the myth of Minerva to construct an image of himself as an epic hero like Jason or Ulysses who, far away from home and in adverse circumstances, receives help from a benevolent deity. The protection of Minerva is not a novel set of circumstances for our author, however, as Ovid creates an image of himself as a favourite of Minerva right from his birth, through his Argonautic voyage to Tomis and during his exile.

In *Tristia* 4.10,[194] the epistle which poses as a form of autobiography by recounting Ovid's life story from his birth, his early family life with his brother, his education, and his rise to fame as a poet, we can see the blend between myth, biography and persona most notably in 9-26. Here, the author describes his early family life, yet a number of mythical references creep in, which resonate with the wider use of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* to construct the authorial voice of the *relegatus poeta*. This is particularly pertinent

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[193] Throughout Homer's *Odyssey*, Athena acts as the divine sponsor of Odysseus and aids him many times: Hom. *Od*. 1.44-95, 5.1-42, 382-7, 6.13-47, 110-18, 224-35, 321-31, 7.14-81, 8.1-23, 186-200, 13.187-440, 16.154-77, 454-9, 17.360-4, 18.69-70, 19.1-52, 20.30-55, 21.1-10, 22.205-40, 23.156-61, 344-72, 24.472-89.

[194] My approach to *Tristia* 4.10 is primarily influenced by the work of Nagle, whose (1976) article (written under her maiden name, Fredericks) and (1980) 12 monograph approach this epistle as "a poem which happens to be autobiography, not an autobiography which happens to be a poem." In contrast, Fränkel (1956) 131-3 interprets *Tristia* 4.10 as a sincerely biographical poem (cf. Frécaut (1972) 332-6 for a similar opinion). See also Paratore (1958) who concludes that *Tristia* 4.10 is artificial and pedestrian, and d'Agostino (1969) who explores *Tristia* 4.10 as a reflection of the author's spirit and intellect.

when Ovid mentions that he was born on a day sacred to Minerva as this creates an image of the poet being born into the protection of the goddess, thus setting the scene for the author's transformation into an ocean-faring hero like Jason or Ulysses in later life. Firstly, Ovid recounts his birth and that both his own birthday, and that of his brother, fell on the first day of the *Quinquatrus* festival held in Minerva's honour:

nec stirps prima fui: genito sum fratre creatus,

qui tribus ante quater mensibus ortus erat. 10

Lucifer amborum natalibus adfuit idem:

una celebrata est per duo liba dies;

haec est armiferae festis de quinque Minervae,

quae fieri pugna prima cruenta solet (*Tr*. 4.10.9-14)

The mention of Minerva here recalls elsewhere in the exile works where Ovid has mentioned the Roman goddess,[195] and has painted her as his divine protectress on his voyage to his place of exile at the ends of the earth (cf. *Tristia* 1.10.1-2).[196] Following the description of how Ovid and his brother were born on days sacred to Minerva, the poet moves on to recount his early life and how, from a tender age, he was accustomed to write verse, even though his father tried to dissuade him from this course of action:

protinus excolimur teneri, curaque parentis 15

imus ad insignes urbis ab arte viros.

frater ad eloquium viridi tendebat ab aevo,

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[195] The depiction of Minerva as the author's patron goddess, moulding him in the same vein as Jason and Ulysses, will be more fully discussed later in this thesis.

[196] Claassen (1987) 41 argues that in *Tr*. 4.10 Ovid blends his autobiography with mythology to create the myth of exile, branding himself as a veritable Odysseus or Jason aided by Minerva, a "heroic exile [who] partakes of the heroic propensities of all mythic heroes, standing alone in a mythical world where malevolent nature conspires with a relentlessly angry god to persecute him."

fortia verbosi natus ad arma fori:

at mihi iam puero caelestia sacra placebant,

inque suum furtim Musa trahebat opus.

saepe pater dixit: "studium quid inutile temptas?

Maeonides nullas ipse reliquit opes."

motus eram dictis, totoque Helicone relicto

scribere temptabam verba soluta modis:

sponte sua numeros carmen veniebat ad aptos,

et quod temptabam scibere versus erat (*Tr*. 4.10.15-26)

This lively description of the Muse tempting Ovid away from his studies could be said to recall the opening of Ovid's *Amores* (*Amores* 1.1.1-4) when Cupid infamously steals a foot of poetry away from the working poet thus leaving him composing in elegiac verse,[197] or it could remind the reader of the end of the *Amores*, when the poet is turning his attention towards tragedy (*Amores* 3.15.15-18) and so bids farewell to the elegiac Muse: *imbelles elegi, genialis Musa, valete,* / *post mea mansurum fata superstes opus.* (*Amores* 3.15.19-20). *Tristia* 4.10 not only mythologises the young poet's choice to pursue an artistic career, but does so in a way that evokes the construction of an earlier authorial persona, the *amator*, and the destruction of that persona at the end of the collection. In this way, we can understand that *Tristia* 4.10 highlights and self-consciously alludes to the act of constructing and deconstructing an authorial voice in a particular collection, thus making us more aware of the presence of the *relegatus poeta* in the supposedly autobiographical poem of the Ovidian exile works. The Ovidian persona and autobiography thus seem inexorably intertwined, since the author cannot relate one without including shades of the other. In this way there is a rich interplay between the authorial persona and Ovid's biography: while

[197] On the presentation of the Muses in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, see Williams (1994) 150-3. For an assessment of the Muses and the consolation they offer the exiled author, see Schilling (1972) 209-11.

his persona of the *relegatus poeta* is clearly defined by the man's status as an exile, his autobiographical pose in *Tristia* 4.10 is also highly influenced by his use of myth to construct the persona of the *relegatus poeta* elsewhere in the Ovidian exile letters.

While Ovid may have been born a favourite of Minerva, the protection of this goddess is even more important when Ovid is driven into exile, traversing the same seas as Jason and the Argonauts. Ovid uses the myth of Minerva as the divine sponsor of epic heroes as a way of drawing subtle parallels between himself and Jason, since the protective role Minerva plays during Ovid's voyage to Pontus recalls Athena's guidance as Jason's patron.[198] Apollonius' *Argonautica* specifies and stresses the importance of Athena's involvement with the building of the *Argo*:

> Νῆα μὲν οὖν οἱ πρόσθεν ἐπικλείουσιν ἀοιδοὶ
> Ἄργον Ἀθηναίης καμέειν ὑποθημοσύνησιν (A. R. *Arg*. 1.18-19)[199]

This is explicitly referred to in *Tristia* 3.9, a poem which features the myth of how Medea cut up her brother on her flight from Colchis with the Argonauts, thus providing an etymological explanation for the name Tomis.[200] This poem opens with the image of the *Argo*, ploughing through the sea, and it is noted that it is the ship *quae cura pugnacis facta Minervae* (*Tr*. 3.9.7). This recalls the description of the *Argo* found at the beginning of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, and also evokes the role which Athena played as Jason's divine protectress throughout the Hellenistic epic.[201] Minerva is also involved in the production of the ship which bears Ovid to Pontus, since the ship has a tutelary figurehead of the goddess placed on its prow:[202]

> *Est mihi, sitque precor, flavae tutela Minervae,*
>
> *navis et a picta casside nomen habet* (*Tr*. 1.10.1-2)

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[198] On this see Henderson (1997) 144-6.
[199] I am using Seaton's (1900) edition of the *Argonautica*.
[200] This will be more fully explored in the section on Medea in Chapter Four: Women.
[201] Athena as divine patron of Jason and the Argonauts: A. R. *Arg*. 1.18-19, 109-114, 300-2, 526-7, 549-52, 721-4, 768, 960, 2.537-40, 598-603, 1187-9, 3.1-111, 340, 4.580-3.
[202] On the use of *tutela* to denote figureheads on ships see *OLD s.v. tutela* 2b.

The use of *tutela*, denoting protection or guardianship,[203] to describe the carving conveys a notion that Ovid is being watched over by the goddess, as if she were his divine protectress as well as Jason's.[204] Ovid notes that the ship which bears him into exile was built under the guidance of Minerva, alluding to the original construction of the *Argo* in Apollonius' epic, and the author then invites an equation between himself and the hero of that epic, Jason.[205]

While in exile at Tomis, Ovid expands the imagery of his downfall being brought about by a divine entity beyond the equation of Augustus and Neptune by including the possibility that he may be aided by another important figure, just as Ulysses was helped by other gods. In *Tristia* 1.2, an epistle in which Ovid describes a storm on his route to Tomis, the poet comforts himself by remembering that while he has been punished by the divine Augustus, another god may come to his aid just as Minerva helped Ulysses:

saepe ferox cautum petiit Neptunus Ulixem:

eripuit patruo saepe Minerva suo.

et nobis aliquod, quamvis distamus ab illis,

quis vetat irato numen adesse deo? (*Tr*. 1.2.9-12)

Here, Ovid uses Minerva's role as a patron goddess as an encouraging *exemplum*, optimistic that he may also feel the benefits of support from someone in power.[206] This instance is an example of how the author constructs a parallel between his life and Ulysses', only to self-consciously re-clarify his position later by detailing the differences between himself and the

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[203] OLD *s.v.* 1.

[204] Nagle (1980) 166 interprets *tutela* in a slightly different sense, claiming that the ship itself is named the *Minerva*, rather than bearing tutelary carving of the goddess on its prow (cf. Fränkel (1956) 118-19, who also refers to the ship carrying Ovid into exile as the *Minerva*).

[205] Rahn (1958) 115-18 understands the significance of the goddess' protection of the ship which bears Ovid into exile as the commencement of Ovid's own "Odyssey" throughout *Tristia* 1, something which contributes significantly towards the author establishing himself as an Odysseus figure.

[206] Nagle (1980) 166 argues that Ovid profits from the goddess' aid when composing poetry in the exile works, thanks to her importance as the goddess of flute players in *Fasti* 3.833-4 and 6.651-710.

character (11-12), thus leaving the reader with the impression that myth is not a suitable parallel for reality. Ovid instigates a discourse on the applicability of myth in *Tristia* 1.2 by likening his plight to that of Ulysses but then actively re-negotiating this equivalent relationship. Ovid also recalls how Ulysses enjoyed Minerva's aid in *Tristia* 1.5, a letter to a faithful friend which includes an extended parallel between Ulysses and the author. However, when Ovid notes that Ulysses had friends in high places, he does so in a way that highlights the *differences* between his plight and that of the Odyssean hero:

> *me deus oppressit, nullo mala nostra levante:*
>
> *bellatrix illi diva ferebat opem.*
>
> *cumque minor Iove sit tumidis qui regnat in undis,*
>
> *illum Neptuni, me Iovis ira premit.*
>
> *adde quod illius pars maxima ficta laborum est:*
>
> *ponitur in nostris fabula nulla malis* (*Tr*. 1.5.75-80)

Here, Ovid deconstructs his equivalence with Ulysses by noting the differences between their situations: while Ulysses was wandering the seas he did at least have one god to help him, whereas Ovid does not.[207] As such, Ovid emphasises his own hardship as being worse than that of Ulysses, and the poet is involved in a competitive struggle of one-upmanship with a character who is also enduring the horrors of divine persecution.[208] Such a complex relationship between the authorial figure and a literary character is further complicated when the poet self-consciously reflects on the major difference between himself and a character in 79-80: Ulysses is a protagonist from *myth*, whereas Ovid has to live out his life in the *real world*.[209] The construction, and later deconstruction, of this Ovid-Ulysses parallel

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[207] On the comparison of Ulysses' suffering with that of the author in *Tr*. 1.5, see Williams (1994) 108-114.

[208] This competitive struggle between Ulysses and Ovid will be more fully explored in the section on Ulysses in Chapter Two.

[209] See nn. 5 and 17.

serves to heighten the sympathy of the reader, as we are left considering the almost unimaginable possibility that Ovid's sufferings are worse than those of Ulysses.

The portrayal of Minerva as a divine protectress in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* supports Ovid's construction of parallels between himself and both Jason and Ulysses. In addition, Ovid also uses the same myth of Minerva as divine protectress to the epic heroes quite independently from the explicit parallels drawn between the author and Jason or Ulysses. This results in Ovid becoming portrayed as an epic hero in his own right, as the next Jason or Ulysses of literature. All in all, Ovid's self-portrayal as the next mythical hero under Minerva's guidance develops the parallelism between the author and heroes who also enjoy the goddess' protection, such as Ulysses and Jason. Claassen (2008) has previously argued that Ovid identifies himself with a composite wandering epic hero,[210] who is a "Jason-Ulysses" figure.[211] However, while there are indeed similarities between the usage of the Jason and Ulysses myths in the exile works (particularly given that both these heroes enjoy the patronage of Minerva), which go some way to justify Claassen's willingness to roll them into one unified mythical entity, it should also be remembered that there are significant differences in the ways that Ulysses and Jason are used as mythological paradigms in the exile works. For instance, the spousal parallels of Jason and Ulysses with the author and his wife could not be more different; while Ovid develops his self-depiction as Ulysses by extensively drawing a parallel between his own wife and Penelope,[212] the author refuses to extend his own equation with Jason to associating his wife with Medea.[213] Instead, I would prefer to interpret the usage of Minerva as supporting the comparisons between the author and both Ulysses and Jason,[214] affording an interpretation of Ovid the exiled author as being like either Jason or Ulysses instead of conglomerating the figure of the author, Jason, and Ulysses into one mythical entity. In this way, the divine patronage of Minerva offers a glimmer of hope to the authorial figure who is elsewhere punished by other divinities such

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[210] Claassen (2008) 173-9.
[211] Claassen (2008) 176.
[212] This will be more fully discussed in the sections on Penelope and Ulysses later in the thesis.
[213] For more on this, see the section on Medea in Chapter Four.
[214] For the important role Athena plays in the life of Jason see n.201. On Athena as the protectress of Odysseus, see n.193.

as Neptune and Jupiter. Minerva operates in the exile works as a divinity who offers help to the author from a distance, but she never appears to the poet to bring him aid in person. There is one deity, however, Amor, who appears before the poet and offers him consolation in his suffering.

Amor

As we have just seen, the gods play major roles in the fate of the author in the Ovidian exile works, as they either persecute or aid various mythical characters that are paralleled with the author. While Jupiter, the king of the gods, is the key player in determining Ovid's destruction or survival, Neptune and Minerva also have their parts to play in the persecution or salvation of the author, who is likened both to Ulysses and Jason in this respect. The depictions of Jupiter, Neptune, and Minerva all involve the author assuming the guise of a mythical character who is either aided or hindered by their divine intervention. However, there is one other notable divine entity included in the Ovidian exile letters, Amor, who physically appears to the author at night in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3. Amor speaks to Ovid directly, without either party assuming the guise of a mythical parallel in order to construct an allegorical representation of the author's relegation (compared with, for instance, how Neptune is depicted as the adversary of Ulysses, who is likened to Ovid). Instead, Amor converses one-on-one with the author, in a discussion which seems to be the only one of its kind in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* where a mythical character communicates directly with the author. While such abandonment of mythical parallels is a little unusual in comparison with the depictions of the other gods in the exile works, it can be seen as quite fitting that the poet converses directly with Amor, since both characters seem to be shadows of their former selves. The appearance of Amor to Ovid serves to

highlight the changed circumstances of the exiled poet, by using the portrayal of a downcast Amor as a mirror to reflect Ovid's degeneration at Tomis.[215]

In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, a letter to the poet's friend, Maximus, Ovid recalls how one night as he was sleeping he suddenly awoke to find Amor standing at the foot of his bed. Amor appears as a dishevelled and rather tatty version of the shining and commanding god he once was in the *Amores*.[216] Through the conversation between the poet and Amor (*Pont*. 3.3.13-94), Ovid alludes back to the physical description of Amor in his triumphal procession in *Amores* 1.2, thus connecting his exile works back to these pre-exilic collections, but also highlighting the contrasting situations of Amor in the corpus. In exile, Amor is now a shadow of his former glory as the god we saw in the amatory elegies, indicating his changing fortunes and also paralleling them with the altered lot of the poet who is now disgraced in exile:

territus in cubitum relevo mea membra sinistrum,
pulsus et e trepido pectore somnus abit.
stabat Amor, vultu non quo prius esse solebat,
fulcra tenens laeva tristis acerna manu,
nec torquem collo neque habens crinale capillo,
nec bene dispositas comptus, ut ante, comas.
horrida pendebant molles super ora capilli,
est visa est oculis horrida pinna meis,
qualis in aeriae tergo solet esse columbae,

[215] Amor's appearance in *Pont*. 3.3 also operates as a geographical marker for the region, something which will be discussed more fully in the Medea section.
[216] Amor's speech also contains a high level of generic hallmarks which evoke the world of the *Amores*. For more on this, and how Amor's elegiac diction contributes towards generic flux in the world of exile (and particularly how this relates to the characterisation of the Tomitan landscape), see the section on Medea in Chapter Four.

tractantum multae quam tetigere manus (*Pont*. 3.3.11-20)

Here, Amor appears a rather sorry version of what he used to be; he is no longer adorned with jewellery (15), his hair is not carefully arranged as usual (16), and his face is unkempt (17). In addition, Amor is described by the author as very self-consciously different from how he appeared previously (*vultu non quo prius esse solebat*, 13) in the erotic elegies, suggesting a significant change from his former existence. The description of Amor as looking unusually unkempt ends with the image of a dove that has been petted too many times, and is no longer white as a result (19-20); an unpleasant picture conveying the extent to which Amor's fortunes have changed. Indeed, Amor's portrayal in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 could not be further from his depiction in *Amores* 1.2, where he leads the love-struck poet in chains in his triumphal procession. Here, Amor appears resplendent, bedecked by gems and surrounded by beautiful white doves as he celebrates his success:

en ego, confiteor, tua sum nova praeda, Cupido;
porrigimus victas ad tua iura manus.
nil opus est bello: pacem veniamque rogamus;
nec tibi laus armis victus inermis ero.
necte comam myrto, maternas iunge columbas;
qui deceat, currum vitricus ipse dabit;
inque dato curru, populo clamante triumphum,
stabis et adiunctas arte movebis aves.
ducentur capti iuvenes captaeque puellae:
haec tibi magnificus pompa triumphus erit.
ipse ego, praeda recens, factum modo vulnus habebo
et nova captiva vincula mente feram.
Mens Bona ducetur manibus post terga retortis

et Pudor et castris quicquid Amoris obest.

omnia te metuent, ad te sua bracchia tendens

vulgus "io" magna voce "triumphe" canet.

Blanditiae comites tibi erunt Errorque Furorque,

assidue partes turba secuta tuas.

his tu militibus superas hominesque deosque;

haec tibi si demas commoda, nudus eris.

laeta triumphanti de summo mater Olympo

plaudet et appositas sparget in ora rosas.

tu pinnas gemma, gemma variante capillos,

ibis in auratis aureus ipse rotis.

tunc quoque non paucos, si te bene novimus, ures;

tunc quoque praeteriens vulnera multa dabis.

non possunt, licet ipse velis, cessare sagittae;

fervida vicino flamma vapore nocet.

talis erat domita Bacchus Gangetide terra:

tu gravis alitibus, tigribus ille fuit.

ergo cum possim sacri pars esse triumphi,

parce tuas in me perdere victor opes (*Am*. 1.2.19-50)

In the *Amores*, Amor is portrayed as a powerful god at the top of his game, celebrating his triumph and conquest of the poet, Ovid. Amor's hair is carefully arranged and styled with gems (*Am*. 1.2.23, 41), contrasting with his disordered locks in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3.15-16. In his elegiac triumph, Amor's wings are similarly bedecked with jewels (*Am*. 1.2.41) and he

rides on a chariot pulled by Venus' snow white doves (*Am*. 1.2.23); a resplendent image which is the complete opposite of the miserable state of Amor's tarnished and tainted wings in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3.19-20. The *Epistulae ex Ponto* presents us with a very different image of Amor than the one we have previously seen in the Ovidian corpus; the god is no longer the powerful divinity celebrating his success, as in the *Amores*, but, rather, at Tomis he is a downcast and sorry shadow of his former glory.

The change in Amor's depiction in *Amores* 1.2 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, from a triumphal conqueror to an unkempt deity, mirrors the changed circumstances of the poet who now lives out his life in relegation at Tomis.[217] That downcast Amor, as the reflection of the author's change of fate, should stand before Ovid's eyes is to a certain degree ironic given that Ovid blames Amor for what has happened. Ovid addresses Amor concerning his own changed fortunes as a result of his relegation for having composed the *Ars amatoria*:

"*o puer, exilii decepto causa magistro,*

quem fuit utilius non docuisse mihi,

huc quoque venisti, pax est ubi tempore nullo,

et coit adstrictis barbarus Hister aquis?

quae tibi causa viae, nisi uti mala nostra videres?

quae sunt (si nescis) invidiosa tibi (*Pont*. 3.3.23-8)

Ovid addresses the god directly and blames Amor for his current existence in exile, before then allowing the god to comfort the author by replying that the *Ars amatoria* did not teach adultery, thus absolving the author of any responsibility for his relegation insofar as his

[217] It is tempting to link this description of a downcast Amor with the image of the first volume of the *Tristia* as a shabby book in mourning for the death of its poet-parent, Ovid, (for more on this, see the Introduction) thus contributing towards the mournful and sombre ambience of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

literary creations are concerned (67-71).[218] Ovid answers the description of Amor's physical deterioration since the days of the *Amores* by stating how his own reputation has been ruined as a direct result of having composed erotodidactic elegiac verse. In this way, the change in the author's fortune is mirrored in the presentation of the god, and Ovid parallels his own downfall with the demise of Amor's good looks.

The appearance of Amor in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 connects therefore with earlier portrayals of the god in elegy (particularly in the *Amores*) but here he appears to the exiled author in a very different light: the allusion back to *Amores* 1.2 heightens the contrast between the erotic elegies and the poet's current state of exile, making us more aware of the difference and distance between texts while also reflecting the author's change in fortunes in the dishevelled representation of the winged god.

This depiction of Amor serves to highlight the extent to which Ovid's life has changed since his days as an erotic poet in Rome composing the *Amores* and the *Ars amatoria*. This change in Ovid's fortunes, from an ambitious young elegiac poet to an exiled author, is reflected in the physical description of Amor who is now a mournful and shabby shadow of his former glory. In some ways Amor is an exceptional deity in the world of Ovid's exile, since he converses directly with the poet and also mirrors his downfall. However, the way in which Amor reflects the demise of the author can also be seen as being in keeping with the roles that the other gods play in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, as their actions are also intertwined with the fate of the author. The gods play powerful parts in the Ovidian exile works, as they are portrayed as having the power of life and death and the ability to destroy the author but also as having the potential to reinstate Ovid at Rome. The omnipotence of the gods, as well as their control over the poet's fate, no doubt reflects the conditions surrounding the author's relegation. As I previously discussed in the Introduction, the exact details of the offence Ovid committed are elusive, but what is certain is that Ovid holds Augustus personally responsible for his banishment. Such an authoritative action from one individual is echoed in the portrayal of the Princeps as Jupiter, who has the ability to

[218] In contrast, Claassen (1987) 33 reads the dialogue between Amor and Ovid in *Pont*. 3.3 as Amor admonishing the *Ars amatoria* as being the cause of Ovid's exile, and she argues that this is tantamount to putting the blame for the author's exile squarely on Ovid's shoulders.

obliterate any human with one strike of his thunderbolt. As Augustus is identified with Jupiter, Ovid repeatedly associates himself with the victims of the god. Therefore, Ovid mythologises his own relegation by constructing a recurring scenario of mythical role plays where Augustus assumes the guise of the persecuting god, and Ovid plays the role of the victim.

Overall, the gods are the key players in the world of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Jupiter, Neptune, and Minerva are able to make and break epic heroes just as much as they may destroy or help the poet. While these gods are capable of destroying Ovid in exile, they can also offer aid (like Minerva) or pay a visit to an old acquaintance fallen on hard times (like Amor). Overall, Ovid paints a picture of being at the mercy of divinities in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, something which echoes his own sense of helplessness in relegation and supports his self-presentation as a victim. Depicting Neptune and Minerva, in particular, as two gods who can either persecute or aid heroes (respectively) who are paralleled with the author also contributes towards Ovid's self-presentation as Ulysses and Jason, since Poseidon hounded Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey* while Minerva continued to sponsor Odysseus, and she also aided Jason in the *Argonautica*. The role of these gods in the exilic epistles operates as an extension of the author's desire to portray himself as an ocean-wandering hero, something that I will discuss in the next chapter on epic protagonists.

Chapter Two: Epic Protagonists

This chapter concerns the depiction of the main epic protagonists found in the exile letters, particularly the leading heroes of epic literature such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as well as Apollonius' *Argonautica*.[219] This chapter will first explore the portrayal of Ulysses in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, because of his association with the gods Neptune and Minerva, who (as mentioned in the previous chapter) decide the fate of the Ithacan king. The chapter will then move on to consider the depiction of Achilles in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, since the portrayal of Iliadic narratives in the exile works are very much concerned with exploring the themes of persecution, mercy, and victimhood (which are also important for the identification of the authorial figure with Ulysses). Finally, I shall discuss how Ovid identifies himself with another epic protagonist, namely Jason from Apollonius' *Argonautica*,[220] and how his characterisation as an ocean-wandering hero (much in the

[219] In this thesis I shall not be including a section of analysis on the presentation of Aeneas in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Aeneas is mentioned by name several times in the exilic epistles (*Tr*. 1.2.5-10; 2.261-2, 533-6; *Pont*. 1.1.33-6, 3.3.62) but, however, there is only one instance that constitutes a named, self-reflexive use of a mythical *exemplum* to characterise the author's persona. In *Tr*. 1.2.7, in a passage where Ovid parallels himself with a number of heroes who have been persecuted by one god only to be championed by another, Ovid likens himself to Aeneas. It is also worth considering *Tr*. 1.3, where Ovid recounts his last night in Rome before he goes into exile, as it is heavily reminiscent of Aeneas' last night in Troy (on this, see Huskey (2002); Ingleheart (2006a) 79). Huskey (2002) 91 argues that Ovid does not present himself as Aeneas throughout the *Tristia*, but rather evokes the *Aeneid* in *Tr*. 1.3: "Instead of becoming a new Aeneas, he [Ovid] is an entirely new character, an intimation rather than an imitation of Vergil's protagonist". One could reasonably expect these early authorial parallels with Aeneas in *Tr*. 1.2 and 1.3 to be developed in more depth throughout the collection, as Ovid extends the equation with Ulysses (made in *Tr*. 1.2.9-10) elsewhere in the exile letters. If the author had chosen to develop this parallel with Aeneas then it would not, however, be without significant potential pitfalls – how could Ovid, seeking reinstatement to Rome, brand himself as the new Aeneas when he has been personally exiled by the hero's most famous descendant, Augustus? For more on how Ovid chooses to develop the Ulysses parallel and abandons the equation with Aeneas, see Ingleheart (2006a) 74-80.

[220] On genre and the *Argonautica*: Campbell (1981); Beye (1982); Clauss (1993); Deforest (1994); Knight (1995); Fantuzzi & Hunter (2004).

same vein as Ulysses) contrasts with his previous incarnations as a lover in earlier Latin elegiac poetry.

As we mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, the mythological parallel that the Ulysses myth offers is very inviting to our author, who can allegorise his relegation at the command of Augustus as the persecution of Ulysses by Neptune. In this chapter we shall see how the opposition that Ovid faces in exile is not only mythologised in terms of divine oppressors such as Neptune, but how it is also expressed through the antagonism of semi-divine heroes and kings. The author occasionally identifies himself with those who have been wounded by Achilles, a demigod hero, in instances where he is grateful that Augustus was merciful and did not punish him with the full force available, likening this to a man who has felt the spear of Achilles and yet lives. While the implicit parallelism between Achilles, who is semi-divine, and Augustus could be interpreted as a demotion in terms of comparing the Princeps to an entity who is not wholly divine (in comparison with the Jupiter parallel for Augustus that we explored in the previous chapter), it is not as unflattering as the association between Augustus and Pelias, the King of Iolcus, who is mortal. The associations between the antagonists of epic heroes and Augustus both extend and add depth to the parallels Ovid constructs between himself and the heroes, and this is particularly evident in the way that Ovid depicts himself as a Ulysses figure in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Ulysses

The exilic portrayal of Ulysses can be connected with wider themes and motifs concerning the figure of the author in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, particularly divine punishment, the relationship between myth and reality, and the importance of intelligence as a character trait. Odysseus, and Ulysses in Latin literature, [221] is characterised as a rather different kind of Homeric hero; one who has the brains to match his brawn. This is particularly evident in

[221] The protagonist of Homer's *Odyssey* will be referred to as Odysseus in the context of Greek literature, and as Ulysses in connection with Latin literature.

the depiction of Ulysses in the *Metamorphoses* and, as Pavlock (2009) has argued, the way that Ovid identifies with the character and portrays Ulysses as an authorial figure. I will argue that there is a similar identification between character and persona present in the exile works, yet in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* there is a competitive edge between Ulysses and the author, as Ovid vies to portray his suffering in exile as being somehow harder to endure than any adverse circumstances that the Ithacan hero experienced.[222] In addition, Ovid repeatedly draws comparisons between himself and Ulysses on the basis that both have suffered unjust punishment by a god, evoking Ovid's own reduced circumstances in the wake of Augustus' wrath, and that both he and Ulysses have a loyal wife waiting for them to return home.[223] To understand just how apt a parallel Ulysses is for the relegated author, it would be useful first to consider the literary precedents that present Ulysses as an intelligent man who is unjustly punished by a deity and who wanders the seas away from home, aspects of his characterisation which form the basis of any comparisons between the hero and Ovid the author.

Ulysses is portrayed in the exile works as the hero who, persecuted by Neptune, is doomed to wander the seas far away from his home and wife, Penelope. The major source texts for the depiction of Ulysses as an epic hero are Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. While Odysseus is successful on the battlefield several times in the *Iliad*,[224] his character comes to the fore in his own νόστος narrative, the *Odyssey*. It should be remembered that Odysseus is an exceptional hero; although he has proven himself on the battlefield in the *Iliad*, it is not his physical force that distinguishes his excellence from the other warriors at Troy, it is, rather, his superior intellectual capabilities that set him apart from other Greeks. His cunning, the zenith of which was inventing the idea of the Trojan horse to penetrate the city's defences,[225] defines his characterisation in Homer, where he is known as

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[222] For an autobiographical reading of the Ulysses parallel, see Claassen (2008) 160-84.
[223] The depiction of Penelope in the exile letters will be more fully assessed in Chapter Four.
[224] Throughout the *Iliad* Odysseus makes a number of kills: Democoon at Hom. *Il*. 4.498; Coeranus, Alastor, and Chromius at Hom. *Il*. 5.677; Pidytes at Hom. *Il*. 6.30; Hippodamus, Hypeirochus, Deiopites, Thoon, Ennomus, Chersidamas, and Charops at Hom. *Il*. 11.420-30. Odysseus also volunteers to fight Hector at Hom. *Il*. 7.168.
[225] Apollod. *Epit*. 5.13-19; Hyg. *Fab*. 108; *Aen*. 2.259-64.

πολύτροπος and πολύμητις.[226] This Homeric epithet typifies his characterisation as an intellectual hero, and particularly defines his characterisation at the beginning of the *Odyssey*:[227]

> Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
> πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν:
> πολλῶν δ᾽ ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
> πολλὰ δ᾽ ὅ γ᾽ ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
> ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων (Hom. *Od*. 1.1-5)[228]

Here, Odysseus' epithet highlights the intellectual nature of this Homeric hero. In addition, the proem also indicates that the epic will focus on his wanderings while he is away from his homeland after the fall of Troy before he can successfully make his way back to Ithaca. This removal from one's own homeland is something which the portrayals of Ulysses in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* identify explicitly with, while also implicitly hoping that a similar νόστος can be achieved by the author.

Cunning and intelligence are key aspects to the characterisation of Odysseus in Homeric epic, giving the character an intellectual edge over his physically dominating counterparts. The difference between a warrior successful in combat and the intellectually intimidating hero is explored in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* when Ulysses and Ajax compete for the arms of Achilles. The contest for the armour of the deceased Achilles between Ajax and Ulysses consists of speeches by each character on the topic of why they deserve to be awarded the prize over the other. In a rhetorical contest such as this, Ulysses' cunning

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[226] Πολύτροπος is used as an epithet of Odysseus at *Od*. 1.1 and 10.330. Odysseus is also described as πολύμητις many times in the *Odyssey*. For instance: *Od*. 2.173, 4.763, 5.214, 7.207, 240, 302, 8.152, 165, 412, 463, 474, 468, 9.1, 11.354, 377, 13.311, 382, 416, 14.191, 390, 439, 15.380, 16.201, 17.16, 192, 353, 453, 18.14, 51, 124, 312, 337, 365, 19.41, 70, 106, 164, 220, 261, 335, 382, 499, 554, 582, 20.36, 168, 183, 226, 274, 21.404, 22.1, 34, 60, 105, 170, 320, 371, 390, 430, 490, 23.129, 247, 263, 24.302, 330, 356, 406.

[227] On the meaning of πολύτροπος and how this defines the characterisation of Odysseus as both a cunning hero and one that wanders from the proem of the *Odyssey* onwards, see Peradotto (1990) 94-119.

[228] I am using Allen's (1908) edition of the *Odyssey*.

intelligence provides him with an incredible ability for manipulating words in his favour during a lengthy speech (*Met*. 13.128-380), leaving him branding Ajax as an uncouth brute, an "all brawn and no brains" type of hero as he recalls carrying the dead body of Achilles:[229]

> *scilicet idcirco pro nato caerula mater*
>
> *ambitiosa suo fuit, ut caelestia dona,*
>
> *artis opus tantae, rudis et sine pectore miles*
>
> *indueret? neque enim clipei caelamina novit,*
>
> *Oceanum et terras cumque alto sidera caelo*
>
> *Pleiadasque Hyadasque immunemque aequoris Arcton*
>
> *[diversosque orbes nitidumque Orionis ensem]* (*Met*. 13.288-94)[230]

Ulysses self-consciously portrays himself as being a different type of hero from those like Ajax when he confidently asserts his own intellectual superiority:

> *... deprensus Ulixis*
>
> *ingenio tamen ille, at non Aiacas Ulixis* (*Met*. 13. 304-5)

While Ulysses' speech in *Metamorphoses* 13 recalls Odysseus' martial exploits in the *Iliad*, it also stresses the decidedly intellectual nature of this epic hero, particularly his *ingenium* (305),[231] which nevertheless distinguishes him from other Iliadic heroes, such as Ajax. Ulysses' rhetorical skill at rewriting the events of the Trojan war to his advantage in the contest for the arms of Achilles not only characterises him as intellectually superior, but also establishes him as a vehicle for challenging the canonical validity of the Homeric accounts of myth. As Pavlock (2009) has convincingly argued, Ulysses's *ingenium* and prowess in public

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[229] On the contrasting Ovidian characterisations of Ulysses and Ajax, see Papaioannou (2007), Pavlock (2009) 110, and Hopkinson (2000) 10-22.
[230] On 294 see Tarrant (2004) 382.
[231] On the importance of Ulysses' intelligence in the *Metamorphoses*, and how this is relevant to the author, see Thomsen (1979) 86; Otis (1966) 283-5; and McGowan (2009) 197-201.

speaking as he recalls how the Trojan War unfolded (from his perspective) constructs him as an authorial figure who can be identified with Ovid.[232] Since Ulysses is associated with the authorial persona of the *Metamorphoses*,[233] his highly focalised account of the Trojan War can be interpreted as Ovid attempting to re-write Homeric epic, as Pavlock (2009) comments: "Ulysses' account of the Trojan War is in effect a microcosm of Ovid's own Trojan narrative: much as the clever Greek diminishes Ajax and even Achilles for his own purposes, so the poet frequently undermines heroic grandeur as he diverges from Homer."[234] Therefore, the authorial persona found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* identifies with Ulysses, a character in the text, and such a close relationship between the Ovidian authorial persona and the character of Ulysses sets a precedent for Ovid portraying himself as Ulysses in the exile works.

In the *Metamorphoses* Ulysses was portrayed as an authorial figure but, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, this parallel is inverted as Ovid depicts himself as a Ulysses figure. Thus, the equivalence between the author and character is resurrected from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and, while the focus of the equation is changed slightly, the underlying character trait behind the parallel remains the same. The portrayal of Ulysses as an Ovidian figure in the *Metamorphoses* rests upon the importance of *ingenium* for his characterisation in *Metamorphoses* 13.304-5 (quoted above), a word that conveys the Ithacan's natural talent with words because it is used to denote the poetical genius of authors (including Ovid).[235] For instance, Propertius refers to his own *ingenium* in 3.2.25-6: *at non ingenio quaesitum nomen ab aevo / excidet: ingenio stat sine morte decus*. In addition, Ovid begins *Tristia* 2 by claiming that he has been ruined by his own poetic genius: *Quid mihi vobiscum est, infelix cura, libelli, / ingenio perii qui miser ipse meo?* (*Tr*. 2.1-2). In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid repeatedly equates himself with Ulysses and he creates an impression of himself as a Ulysses figure: "Ovid's identification in the exile poetry with

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[232] Pavlock (2009) 110-31.

[233] Ulysses also appears as an authorial figure in *Ars* 2.123-42, where he narrates the Trojan War to Calypso, draws out a map of Troy on the sands of the beach, and *ille referre aliter saepe solebat idem* (*Ars* 2.128). On this see Galinsky (1975) 4-5.

[234] Pavlock (2009) 130.

[235] McGowan (2009) 198. On the meaning of *ingenium* as poetic talent, see Newman (1967a) 395-6; Ingleheart (2010a) 63.

Ulysses depends in part on the understanding that he too is endowed with a degree of cunning intelligence or what might be readily identified with his *ingenium*, natural capacity or genius."[236] In the exilic epistles, Ovid claims that his *ingenium* has brought about his own downfall,[237] and has also deteriorated because of the suffering of exile: *non haec ingenio, non haec componimus arte* (*Tr*. 5.1.27).[238] Thus, the role of *ingenium* in the author's exile and its alleged absence in his exilic verses is crucial to Ovid's claims concerning his degenerating compositional ability in exile, and this in turn contributes towards the pose of poetic decline that defines the *relegatus poeta*.[239] Therefore, *ingenium* plays an important function in the construction of Ulysses' character and it also contributes towards the exiled author's pose of degeneration as he establishes the persona of the *relegatus poeta*.

The identification of the exiled author with Ulysses rests upon a shared cunning intelligence, or *ingenium*, as McGowan (2009) has convincingly argued,[240] that defines both the characterisations of the authorial persona and the mythical character. Thus, the emphasis on Ulysses' intellectual prowess and cunning suggests continuity with his depiction in the *Metamorphoses*. However, there is also a note of discontinuity with the Ulysses parallel in the *Metamorphoses* and the exile works, because the focus of this authorial parallel is modified: while the *Metamorphoses* emphasised Ulysses' intelligence and cunning as a means of enabling competition and one-upmanship between Ovid and Homer, the focus of the authorial parallel in the exile works is on Ulysses' suffering in comparison to the hardship endured by the author. The mythical equation that Ulysses provides for Ovid's own suffering also provides a baseline of comparison for the author to use when considering his own life, resulting in a competitive game between the author and the mythical character as Ovid competes with Ulysses to be the one who endures the most hardship. The exilic identification with Ulysses focuses on the suffering of the poet and so encourages a kind of literary competition with previous exiles in earlier literature, including

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[236] McGowan (2009) 198.
[237] For instance, Ovid claims that his *ingenium* caused his ruin at *Tr*. 2.28 (on this see Ingleheart (2010a) 80) and at *Tr*. 3.3.73-4.
[238] On the relationship between *ingenium* and *ars*, see McGowan (2009) 197-201.
[239] This is in contrast with the role that *ingenium* plays in Ulysses' victory over Ajax and his successful homecoming, as observed by McGowan (2009) 198.
[240] McGowan (2009) 197-201.

Ulysses in Homer's *Odyssey*, as Ovid strives to write himself into the tradition of mythical exiles.[241] In this process Ovid identifies with both Ulysses and Homer simultaneously as he is at once both the author of and the persona of the *relegatus poeta*.[242] This unification of identification with both Homer and Ulysses results in a unique form of competitive suffering between Ovid and a mythical hero, a contest which is also inexorably entangled with a striving for literary superiority with Homer: the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* "make public the claim to contain and even to outdo the some of suffering that was connected in antiquity with Homer and Ulysses. The figures of Homer and Ulysses bestow upon the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* a universal and universalizing character, one that transcends the immediate sequence of historical circumstances and lays claim to an immortality guaranteed by the foremost authorities on suffering and fame within the literary tradition of Greece and Rome."[243]

The competitive suffering between the author and Ulysses is explored in depth in *Tristia* 1.5, a letter to a faithful friend, which constructs an extended comparison between Ovid and Ulysses only to deconstruct it, leaving us with the impression that Ovid's suffering is so great that he cannot be compared to Ulysses any longer. The deconstruction of mythical parallels in *Tristia* 1.5 serves to increase audience sympathy for the author whilst at the same time contributing towards Ovid's broader, over-arching discourse on the applicability of appropriating myth to reality. The relationship between myth and reality in *Tristia* 1.5 has been analysed in Williams' (1994) monograph which comments on how Ovid uses the myth of Ulysses to construct his version of reality in the text: "Ovid now draws on Ulysses as an exemplar of fictional suffering against which the poet can establish the 'reality' of his own hardships ... Just how effective is the ploy of emphasizing the intensity of one set of misfortunes by putting them into fictional rivalry with those of Ulysses? The obvious answer is that hyperbole of this kind quickly undermines the apparent point of comparison. Mythical *exempla* can be used to give guidance, but when our experiences are set in immediate competition with them we can easily find ourselves fictionalising our own lives

[241] McGowan (2009) 169-202.
[242] *Ibid*.
[243] McGowan (2009) 201.

rather than adding a dimension of reality to the myth."[244] The contested equivalence between mythical character and author is evident in the extended comparison between Ovid and Ulysses in *Tristia* 1.5.53-84 which is constructed to highlight the differences between Ulysses and Ovid.[245] This is achieved by establishing a comparison between Ovid and Ulysses and then immediately rejecting such an equation by noting how, for all the various *comparanda*, Ovid's own condition is so much worse than Ulysses' that the equation is redundant:

si vox infragilis, pectus mihi firmius aere,
pluraque cum linguis pluribus ora forent,
non tamen idcirco conplecterer omnia uerbis,
materia vires exsuperante meas.
pro duce Neritio, docti, mala nostra, poetae,
scribite: Neritio nam mala plura tuli.
ille breui spatio multis erravit in annis
inter Dulichias Iliacasque domos:
nos freta sideribus notis distantia mensos
sors tulit in Geticos Sarmaticosque sinus.
ille habuit lectamque manum sociosque fideles:
me profugum comites deseruere mei.
ille suam laetus patriam victorque petebat:
a patria fugi victus et exul ego.
nec mihi Dulichium domus est Ithacave Sameve,
poena quibus non est grandis abesse locis,
sed, quae de septem totum circumspicit orbem
montibus, imperii Roma deumque locus.
illi corpus erat durum patiensque laborum:

[244] Williams (1994) 108-9.
[245] McGowan (2009) 175-81 reads *Tr*. 1.5 as Ovid's attempt to compare his own sufferings with Ulysses' as a means of comparing himself, the author of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, with Homer, who composed the tales of Odysseus.

invalidae uires ingenuaeque mihi.
ille erat adsidue saevis agitatus in armis:
adsuetus studiis mollibus ipse fui.
me deus oppressit, nullo mala nostra levante:
bellatrix illi diva ferebat opem.
cumque minor Iove sit tumidis qui regnat in undis,
illum Neptuni, me Iovis ira premit.
adde quod illius pars maxima ficta laborum est:
ponitur in nostris fabula nulla malis.
denique quaesitos tetigit tamen ille Penates,
quaeque diu petiit, contigit arua tamen:
at mihi perpetuo patria tellure carendum est,
ni fuerit laesi mollior ira dei (*Tr*. 1.5.53-84)

The structure of this episode reflects the ultimate rejection of equivalence between Ovid and Ulysses: while many hexameters begin with *ille* and describe Ulysses (59, 63, 65, 71, 73), their matching pentameters describe Ovid's contrasting situation using a form of *ego* (64, 66, 72),[246] thus matching *ille* in the preceding hexameters.[247] In this way the author plays with and adapts the typical use of the elegiac couplet in amatory contexts:[248] the pentameter does not expand upon or rephrase the hexameter, but instead it is used to contain contrasting information to the hexameter, thus encouraging us to read the hexameter and pentameter separately.[249] The pentameter is no longer dependent on the

[246] 74 does not contain a form of *ego*, but uses the equivalent, *ipse*.
[247] Ovid also uses the structure of the elegiac couplet to illustrate the difference between Augustus and himself in *Tr*. 2.219-34, where Augustus occupies the hexameter lines and Ovid remains in the pentameters. On this, see Barchiesi (2001a) 88-90.
[248] For an assessment of how Ovid constructs largely grammatically self-contained couplets in amatory elegy, where the pentameter tends to restate or expand on the hexameter, and how Ovid does not adhere to this metrical model for elegiac couplets in the exile works, see Claassen (1989) 353-6.
[249] The way that Ovid constructs a list of contrasts between his own situation and that of Ulysses inherently involves comparing their situations and inevitably discerning a degree of likeness in their fates: "The rhetorical *amplificatio* the poet employs here to make his own suffering seem greater than Ulysses makes, in the end, an analogy out of an antithesis: Ovid

hexameter in terms of content, even though it may be dependent in structural terms by being the second half of an elegiac couplet and also by being the second item in a comparison. In addition, it is fitting that in this act of comparison Ulysses occupies the hexameter, the traditional meter of epic,[250] while Ovid occupies the pentameters, the metre so closely identified with his own amatory elegies.[251] These frequent, stark contrasts emphasise the differences between Ovid and Ulysses, with whom he is now engaged in a competitive struggle for his readership's sympathy, but the repetition and scale of these comparisons also introduces a note of hyperbole into this passage.[252]

As we have just seen, in *Tristia* 1.5 Ovid constructs a parallelism with Ulysses only to deconstruct this comparison by emphasising the extent of his own suffering and downplaying the hardships endured by Ulysses. This is particularly evident when Ovid details the differences between their situations by arguing that Ulysses is more suited to his life as an exile due to his background as an epic hero, something which puts our author, previously an elegiac love poet, as a distinct disadvantage. In this comparison, Ovid creates an opposition between the epic hero and the elegiac poet, yet also plays on the hero's reputation for being a Lothario. Ovid proposes that Ulysses was fully prepared for his time away from his homeland due to his hardy, warlike lifestyle, whereas Ovid has led a much more cultured and sheltered life prior to his relegation (*Tr*. 1.5.71-4). *Mollibus* (*Tr*. 1.5.74) can not only be used to denote something unwarlike, unmanly or feeble,[253] but also has erotic overtones.[254] It frequently features in elegiac poetry,[255] and can be understood as a

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is, on the surface, worse off than Ulysses, and yet their experiences overlap in so many aspects that the similarities outweigh the differences" (McGowan (2009) 179).

[250] On how Ovid uses epic diction to portray the epic scale of his hardships in comparison to those of Ulysses, see Williams (1994) 110-14.

[251] For the pentameter as the defining meter of Ovidian erotic elegy, in contrast with epic hexameter, see *Am*. 1.1.1-4.

[252] There are also, possibly, some humorous aspects of the Ulysses comparison in *Tr*. 1.5. Frécaut (1972) 321-3 argues that the writer's bitter irony and sarcasm, lying behind his sense of humour, reveal Ovid's inner despair.

[253] Cf. *OLD* s.v. 5, 10 and 13.

[254] Pichon (1902) 205-6.

[255] For examples of *mollis* as a particularly elegiac word used to denote the antithesis of warlike, see *Her*. 9.72, 14.56; *Am*. 1.9.42. *Mollis* is also used to describe the genre of first-

generic hallmark. Here, *mollibus* characterises the poet as belonging to the elegiac world,[256] recalling his amatory works and suggesting that he belongs more to that universe than to that of epic, to which Ulysses belongs (71, 73).[257] This is neatly reflected in the structure of the couplet: Ulysses performs his epic deeds in the hexameter, whereas the pentameter is filled with unwarlike erotic activities. Therefore, the individual elegiac couplets can be understood to reflect and embody the notional contrast and tensions between the two genres as well as the differences between the two men. As Williams (1994) has commented, "the language in these lines is rich in programmatic implication and contrast: while such terms as *durus* and *arma* locate Ulysses in the world of epic, the words *adsuetus studiis mollibus* locate Ovid in the antithetical world of elegy."[258] In contrast to the urbane and refined poet, Ulysses is prepared for exile because of his past as an epic hero (*erat adsidue saevis agitatus in armis*, 73). However, the succeeding couplet, describing the poet's own history (*adsuetus studiis mollibus,* 74), contains the generically loaded *mollibus*, hinting to readers that the *studiis mollibus* in his past may be a tongue-in-cheek sexualised reference to his previous incarnations as the *amator* and *praeceptor amoris* earlier in his poetic career. Understanding the pentameter in this way encourages a rereading of the preceding hexameter, questioning just what kind of *saevis ... armis* Ulysses was involved with, given that Ulysses' extramarital sexual exploits are more fully recorded than those of other epic heroes,[259] and that *militia amoris* is a prominent elegiac feature in the *Amores* and *Ars*.[260]

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person erotic poetry: Cat. 64.8; Propertius 1.7.19, 2.1.2; *Ars* 2.159, 3.344; *Tr*. 2.307; *Pont*. 3.4.85.

[256] Ovid also describes himself as *molle* in *Tristia* 4.10, where he recalls being struck by Cupid's arrow: *molle Cupidineis nec inexpugnabile telis / cor mihi, quodque levis causa moveret, erat* (*Tr*. 4.10.65-6). Ovid also describes his own heart as *molle* in *Pont*. 1.3 where he describes his feebleness in exile: *pium vis hoc seu vis muliebre vocari, / confiteor misero molle cor esse mihi. / non dubia est Ithaci prudentia, sed tamen optat / fumum de patriis posse videre focis* (*Pont*. 1.3.31-4).

[257] The opposition between the martial world of Ulysses and the amatory world of the author is also explored in *Heroides* 3, where Briseis attempts to convince Achilles that her elegiac methods of persuasion would be more effective than those of epic heroes such as Ulysses (*Her*. 3.129).

[258] Williams (1994) 113.

[259] For instance, in *Tristia* 2.379-80 Ovid recalls Ulysses' affairs with Calypso and Circe, relationships that also featured in Homer's *Odyssey* (*Od*. 5 and 10, respectively). *Epistulae ex*

Thus, Ovid's recall of Ulysses' renown as an epic hero with these words can be understood as a suggestively tongue-in-cheek remark reminding the reader that, while Ulysses is an epic hero, he is one who is distinguished by his extramarital relationships. Therefore, Ovid plays upon Ulysses' reputation as an epic hero by juxtaposing him with the image of the refined elegiac poet, but in reality this plays upon Ulysses' own complex brand of heroism which leaves the reader more aware of the common ground between Ulysses and the elegiac poet than this apposition would at first suggest.

The role of extramarital sex in the Ulysses myth is also called into question more explicitly in *Tristia* 2. As Ovid defends his *Ars* from the charge of teaching adultery, the poet lists previous authors who have treated erotic topics but have not been penalised. Among these previous poets is Homer, whose *Odyssey* is rewritten:[261]

aut quid Odyssea est nisi femina propter amorem,

dum vir abest, multis una petita procis? (*Tr*. 2.375-6)

Just as Homer's epic is presented in an erotic light by reducing it to the tale of Penelope being pursued *multis... procis* (*Tr*. 2.376),[262] Ulysses' love affairs in the *Odyssey* are also highlighted:

unde nisi indicio magni sciremus Homeri

hospitis igne duas incaluisse deas? (*Tr*. 2.379-80)

In this couplet, Ovid uses erotic terminology to elegiacise the Homeric epic: love is metonymised as *ignis*,[263] while growing sexual desire is described by the vivid verb

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Ponto 4.10.13-14 also makes light of Ulysses' fate, pointedly detailing the six years of "endurance" that Ulysses suffered with Calypso.

[260] On *militia amoris*: Murgatroyd (1975); Lyne (1980) 67-78; Conte (1989) 444-5; Wyke (1989); Gale (1997); Sharrock (2002a) 102, (2002b) 150.

[261] On how Ovid reduces the Homeric epic to an amatory narrative, and how Ovid's defence of the *Ars* in *Tristia* 2.375-6 writes himself into the literary canon, see Williams (1994) 193-4.

[262] On this see Ingleheart (2010a) 303-5.

[263] For *ignis* as love, see Pichon (1902) 165-6.

incalescere.[264] Ovid also elegiacises the *Odyssey* by reducing it to the story of Ulysses' love affairs in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10, a letter to Albinovanus. During an extended comparison between Ovid's own sufferings and those of Ulysses, Ovid strives to make light of Ulysses' endurance in favour of highlighting the plight of the author. This includes an eroticised reading of Homer's epic:[265]

an grave sex annis pulchram fovisse Calypso

aequoreaeque fuit concubuisse deae? (*Pont*. 4.10.13-14)

In this epistle, Ovid reminds the reader of the less than terrible aspects of Ulysses' endurance and emphasises the erotic elements found in Homer's *Odyssey* to minimise the sufferings of Ulysses in comparison to the hardship endured by Ovid in relegation at Tomis. Thus, the author constructs a game of competitive struggle for hardship between Ulysses and the figure of the exiled poet (particularly in *Tristia* 1.5 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10).[266]

While Ovid chooses to recast the *Odyssey* as an elegiac interlude between the Trojan War and Ulysses' νόστος by highlighting his amorous dalliances with Circe and Calypso, this is potentially awkward when the author has elsewhere repeatedly established a parallel between Penelope and his wife.[267] This could be very problematic, as it implies that Ulysses and Ovid are equivalent, so by highlighting Ulysses' infidelities doubt might be cast upon the poet himself. Ovid carefully negotiates this potential pitfall by insisting on the differences between his sufferings and those of Ulysses in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10.9-34; while Ulysses endured hardship away from home he did at least have a goddess to comfort him, whereas Ovid is all alone, far away in Tomis accompanied only by local tribes in a hostile landscape. This competitive aspect of the parallel between Ulysses and Ovid not only emphasises the

[264] OLD *s.v. incalesco* 2. On the understanding of Homer as an *index* on the adulterous affair between Odysseus and Calypso, see Ingleheart (2010a) 306-7.
[265] This may remind us of the passages in the *Ars* where Ulysses takes a break from his voyage while he stays with Circe: *Ars* 2.103, 123-42.
[266] On this "competitive struggle" between Ovid and Ulysses, see McGowan (2009) 169-202.
[267] The parallel between Ovid's wife and Penelope will be analysed in more depth in the Penelope section in Chapter Four.

author's plight, but also reaffirms his devotion to his spouse, who is elsewhere portrayed as the faithful Penelope who waits for him to return to Rome.[268]

Ovid also extends the parallel between his authorial persona and Ulysses by noting their common desire to go back home. The *relegatus poeta*'s feelings of disconnection with his native land is mythologised by likening Ovid's longing for Rome to Ulysses' desire to return to Ithaca, and this is connected with his desire to achieve νόστος in a similar way by being recalled to his own homeland.[269] In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3, an epistle to the poet's friend Rufinus, Ovid likens his own homesickness to that of Ulysses, who also longed to return home:

sive pium vis hoc seu vis muliebre vocari,

confiteor misero molle cor esse mihi.

non dubia est Ithaci prudentia, sed tamen optat

fumum de patriis posse videre focis.

nescioqua natale solum dulcedine cunctos

ducit, et inmemores non sinit esse sui.

quid melius Roma? Scythico quid frigore peius? (*Pont*. 1.3.31-7)

In the process of using Ulysses as a mythical *exemplum* of homesickness, Ovid draws a parallel between his own situation and that of Ulysses as well as between the intended destinations of their νόστοι: Ithaca and Rome. Ithaca has its own mythical aura because it is the elusive, and almost unattainable, goal of the protagonist's quest,[270] and equating Ovid's condition with that of Ulysses creates a parallelism between their desired destinations

[268] For more on the depiction of Ovid's wife as Penelope, see Chapter Four.
[269] For Ovid's longing for home in the exile works as a reflection of the frustrated erotic desire in amatory elegiac verse, see Nicolai (1973) 109.
[270] On how Ovid uses the exilic epistles as a way of creating a fantasy that he has returned home to Rome, see Nagle (1980) 89-90.

(Rome and Ithaca respectively).[271] This means that the author is not only mythologising his own condition, but is also implicitly mythologising Rome itself by paralleling it with Ithaca, resulting in the city becoming a distanced, unattainable and, to a certain extent, mythical goal.

Ovid also uses the mythical paradigm of Ulysses' longing for Ithaca in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.14, a letter to his confidant Tuticanus, complaining that he is unwell in the Tomitan locale (5-6). Ovid expresses his homesickness through his hatred for his local area in exile:

sed nihil admisi, nulla est mea culpa, Tomitae,

quos ego, cum loca sim vestra perosus, amo (23-4)

The poet then follows this remark with the mythical *exemplum* of Ulysses, who also wanted to return to his homeland:

quis patriam sollerte magis dilexit Ulixe? (*Pont*. 4.14.35)

Here, Ovid portrays Ulysses' homesickness as a token of his loyalty to his homeland, resulting in the hero becoming the mythical paragon of patriotism. Through using this paradigm, Ovid implies an association between his authorial persona and Ulysses due to their similar situations and feelings (as Ovid presents them). This patriotism, of course, reflects well on the author, who hopes to be eventually recalled by the Princeps and reinstated at Rome. The parallel between the author and Ulysses here offers Ovid some hope for the future, since Ulysses did, eventually, return home to Ithaca.[272] However, while Ulysses' story may have had a relatively happy ending, Ovid does not yet know how his story will end. From Ovid's perspective in exile, there is a possibility that he could indeed be recalled to Rome (just as Ulysses returns to Ithaca), or he could be left to die at Tomis. So, while Ulysses' fate is a closed book, Ovid's destiny remains open and hanging in the balance, something which gives our author the extra edge in his competitive suffering with Ulysses; while the mythical character can go home and end his misery, there is a very real chance that the author might not be so fortunate.

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[271] Ovid also draws a comparison between Ithaca and Rome at *Tr*. 1.5.67-70 (quoted above).
[272] Hom. *Od*. 13.

For Ovid, the alternative to returning to Rome is to live out the rest of his life in relegation at Tomis, surviving in a place of savagery for a considerable length of time. This harsh prospect is something that Ulysses never had to endure himself, since his brushes with monsters only occurred during his voyage home. This means that our author faces a much more wretched prospect than Ulysses as he lives out his life at Tomis, a possibility that he explores in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10. As we have already discussed, *Tristia* 1.5 explores the competitive suffering between Ovid and Ulysses as the author constructs a comparison with Ulysses on a largely couplet-by-couplet basis. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10 structures the parallel between Ovid and Ulysses in a slightly different manner by establishing one section which concerns Ulysses (9-20) before including a second section which dismisses this parallel (21-30):

exemplum est animi nimium patientis Ulixes,
iactatus dubio per duo lustra mari,
tempora solliciti sed non tamen omnia fati
pertulit, et placidae saepe fuere morae.
an grave sex annis pulchram fovisse Calypso
aequoreaeque fuit concubuisse deae?
excipit Hippotades, qui dat pro munere ventos,
curvet ut impulsos utilis aura sinus;
nec bene cantantis labor est audire puellas,
nec degustanti lotos amara fuit:
hos ego, qui patriae faciant oblivia, sucos
parte meae uitae, si modo dentur, emam.
nec tu contuleris urbem Laestrygonos umquam
gentibus, obliqua quas obit Hister aqua:
nec vincet Cyclops saevum feritate Piacchen,
qui quota terroris pars solet esse mei.
Scylla feris trunco quod latret ab inguine monstris,
Heniochae nautis plus nocuere rates.
nec potes infestis conferre Charybdin Achaeis,
ter licet epotum ter vomat illa fretum,

qui, quamquam dextra regione licentius errant,

securum latus hoc non tamen esse sinunt (*Pont*. 4.10.9-30)

This passage serves to undermine the sufferings of Ulysses by highlighting the events in the Odyssean narrative which were less than unbearable, and by suppressing the less desirable parts of the narrative. In 23-8 Ovid trumps the endurance of Ulysses by comparing the Cyclops, Scylla, and Charybdis to the cruelty of Piacches,[273] the Heniochi,[274] and the Achaei.[275] The hyperbolic nature of this comparison is ridiculous at first glance: how could Piacches be more dangerous than a Cyclops, the mythical monster? The basis of Ovid's comparison here lies in the fact that Piacches is a genuine threat in the real world, and as such could pose a physical threat to the author, whereas the Cyclops belongs to the realm of fantastical creatures of myth and literature. Indeed, it may be the case that a Roman reader would have been more intimidated by the threat posed by fierce tribes at the edge of the Empire than by the Cyclops, whose portrayal was tamed and almost endearing when he appeared as a love-struck giant in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[276] Such depictions of the Cyclops in literature produce in a certain degree of familiarity in the mind of the Roman reader. In contrast, the hostile tribes and kings of the Black Sea region are deeply unknown by comparison.[277] These barbarian communities reside at the very edge of the Roman Empire; distant, alien, and an unsettling prospect for a contemporary reader in Rome. These peoples almost represent a caricature of the Romanocentric view of hostile savages at the very edge of the world – a ferocious king, and tribes who have a reputation for widespread cannibalism and piracy.[278] Indeed, McGowan (2009) has also argued for an appreciation of how intimidating these barbarians must have been to a Roman reader in comparison with the threats Ulysses faced on his journeys: "While these tribes posed little or – what's more likely – no actual threat to Ovid on Pontus' western coast in Tomis, their names were

[273] For Piacches as a barbarian king, see Richmond (1990) 126; McGowan (2009) 186-7.
[274] On the Heniochi, a local tribe in the Black Sea region, see McGowan (2009) 186, 187 n 44.
[275] For the Achaei, another tribe native to the region, see McGowan (2009) 187 n 44.
[276] Polyphemus is struck with passion for Galatea in *Met*. 13.738-897, adopts a gentler disposition, and even brings her gifts in an attempt to win her over, evoking Theoc. 6 and 11.
[277] For instance, Piacches is not attested elsewhere in extant Latin literature.
[278] Arist. *Pol*. 8.3.4 (1338b).

probably already known at Rome for piracy and, possibly, for cannibalism ... these strange and fierce-sounding peoples from the Black Sea are perhaps most striking for their resemblance to mythical figures from Homeric epic; for again they serve to counterbalance – and even outdo! – the monsters Ulysses himself meets in the *Odyssey*."[279] In his competitive struggle with Ulysses, Ovid writes the local hostile tribes of the Black Sea region as if they were mythical entities comparable with the antagonists of Homeric epic. In this process Ovid plays upon the Romanocentric view of the edge of the Empire as a dangerous and savage place as a means of highlighting the very real danger that our author claims to be in at Tomis, so close to these hostile pirates and cannibals.

While Ovid may be afraid of real pirates ranging the Black Sea, there is also some cause for concern with regard to metaphorical shipwreck in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Throughout the recurring equation between Ovid and Ulysses, the motif of shipwreck as an expression of ruin features in several instances. In a wider equation between himself and the mythical character, the author comments that *solent hiemem placidam sentire carinae: / non Ithacae puppi saevior unda fuit* (*Pont*. 2.7.59-60), again noting that his suffering is more severe than Ulysses'. This particular instance contributes towards the broader concern of the Ovid-Ulysses parallel which deals with exaggerating the misfortunes of Ovid, and disparaging those of Ulysses, to highlight just how appalling Ovid's condition must be, if it is worse than that of the wandering Odyssean hero. Homer's *Odyssey* depicts Odysseus' shipwreck at the hands of Poseidon, who causes a storm to ruin his ship in retribution for the blinding of Polyphemus,[280] something which is mentioned in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6.19: *quia Neptunus navem lacerarat Ulixis,* and can be inferred from *Tristia* 1.2.9-10 which features Neptune's persecution of Ulysses as a mythical *exemplum* in an epistle relating Ovid's hopes to survive a storm at sea en route to Tomis when he fears being shipwrecked.[281] The mythical *exemplum* of Ulysses being shipwrecked by Neptune in *Pont*.

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[279] McGowan (2009) 186-7.
[280] See n. 186.
[281]Claassen (1990b) 108-9 argues that in *Tristia* 1.2 the storm itself is personified as a sentient being who, convinced of the poet's innocence and the unjust nature of his punishment by Augustus, allows the poet to survive. On *Tr*. 1.2, see Huskey (2002) and Ingleheart (2006a).

3.6.19 qualifies the poet's earlier claims that Augustus has punished him for writing the *Ars* (*Pont*. 3.6.7-10) and follows the equation between Augustus and Jupiter, who strikes mortals with thunderbolts (*Pont*. 3.6.17-18).[282] As we discussed in the Neptune section of Chapter One, Ovid's identification with Ulysses implies a parallelism between Neptune and Augustus, and it could be beneficial to consider this in nautical-poetical terms. If Augustus, portrayed as Neptune, has ruined Ovid who, depicted as Ulysses, has become shipwrecked, could we consider this as part of the wider theme of presenting poetical compositional prowess in nautical terms?[283] Since the progression of the text is allegorised as that of a ship throughout the Ovidian corpus,[284] then the author's claims of his degenerating powers in exile can be taken alongside his descriptions of shipwreck.[285] This means that the equations between Neptune sinking Ulysses' ship and Augustus ruining Ovid can be understood as part of a larger motif of shipwreck as an expression of poetic degeneration in exile.[286]

Ovid's identification with Ulysses in the exilic epistles characterises the *relegatus poeta* as πολύτροπος, a wandering figure imbued with tremendous intelligence. The characterisation of Ulysses is highly reminiscent of his portrayal as πολύτροπος in Homeric epic and also evocative of his presentation as an intellectual Homeric hero in *Metamorphoses* 13, where the portrayal of Ulysses as an intellectual figure in the contest for the arms of Achilles also creates a certain degree of identification between the mythical character and the figure of the author. This identification is not confined solely to the *Metamorphoses*, but rather develops further throughout the exile letters as Ovid portrays

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[282] See Jupiter section in Chapter One.

[283] On the literary feature of nautical imagery, see Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 165-6. For the use of nautical imagery as an expression of poetic progress in the Ovidian corpus, see Williams (1994) 131.

[284] The *praeceptor amoris* uses nautical imagery as a metaphor for the progression of the *Ars amatoria* at *Ars* 1.5-8; 771-2; 2.5-8; 3.25-6. Ovid also uses nautical imagery for poetical progression in the exile works at *Tr*. 2.547-8.

[285] On the motif of shipwreck in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as an expression of Ovid's poetic downfall and as a facet of his stance of poetic degeneration, see Williams (1994) 131.

[286] Thomsen, whose doctoral thesis focuses on establishing links between the exile works and the amatory texts in the Ovidian corpus, interprets the nautical imagery in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as a modification of the image of the *amator* as a worn-out old ship (Thomsen (1979) 52-3).

himself as a Ulysses removed from his homeland. However, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, while the poet parallels himself with Ulysses, he also vies with the mythical character and strives to highlight how his own suffering at Tomis exceeds anything experienced by the Ithacan hero. The hero of Homer's *Odyssey* provides an extremely apt equation for the exiled author, and a fertile ground for exploring the application of myth to reality as well as providing a mythical allegory for the author's banishment at the hands of Augustus. Odysseus is not the only Homeric protagonist to provide parallels for the author, since, as we shall see in the next section, the depictions of Achilles in the exile works also provide a sound basis for exploring discourses of powerlessness and the author-text relationship found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Achilles

The portrayal of Achilles, the protagonist of Homer's *Iliad*, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* focuses on exploring the various relationships which occur between men, whether loyal friendships, power struggles, or persecutions. Mythological *exempla* which feature Achilles can be understood as reflecting the various stages or dimensions of the Achilles myth: while some examples focus on his erotic adventures as a lover, others focus on his friendships with other Iliadic warriors at Troy or on his defeat of Hector. This means that different aspects of the Achilles myth are associated with the author, and they are used to reflect the fortunes of the poet. For instance, Achilles is often portrayed as a lover in texts which recollect the erotic elegiacs of Ovid's early career, yet his depiction in the exile letters focuses on his role as persecutor on the battlefield and there he is equated with a number of individuals, including Ovid and Augustus. Different facets of the Achilles myth, therefore, are mapped onto the trajectory of the author's own career. Before analysing depictions of Achilles as an Iliadic warrior in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* and how this reflects the themes of power and powerlessness in the exile letters, let us consider how Achilles' characterisation as a boy in erotic texts mirrors the exiled author's relationship with the *Ars amatoria*.

Achilles is most well-known for his role on the Homeric battlefield of the *Iliad*, but he was not always portrayed in literature as such a masculine hero. Indeed, in the Ovidian elegies, we are treated to a vision of Achilles cross-dressing as a youth on Skyros before he goes to Troy. In the Ovidian depiction of Achilles' tender years, the character is still defined by his violent tendencies, but his victims are mere girls as opposed to warriors on the battlefield. In the pre-exilic amatory works Achilles is portrayed as a violent oppressor in *Ars* 1, where he operates as a mythical *exemplum* justifying the rape of girls. Here, Achilles is not an epic hero, but rather a young man being concealed on Skyros, where he dresses as a girl in order to avoid going to Troy:

turpe, nisi hoc matris precibus tribuisset, Achilles
veste virum longa dissimulatus erat. 690
quid facis, Aeacide? non sunt tua munera lanae;
tu titulos alia Palladis arte petes.
quid tibi cum calathis? clipeo manus apta ferendo est;
pensa quid in dextra, qua cadet Hector, habes?
reice succinctos operoso stamine fusos: 695
quassanda est ista Pelias hasta manu.
forte erat in thalamo virgo regalis eodem;
haec illum stupro comperit esse virum.
viribus illa quidem victa est (ita credere oportet),
sed voluit vinci viribus illa tamen. 700
saepe "mane!" dixit, cum iam properaret Achilles:
fortia nam posito sumpserat arma colo.
vis ubi nunc illa est? quid blanda voce moraris

auctorem stupri, Deidamia, tui?

scilicet, ut pudor est quaedam coepisse priorem, 705

sic alio gratum est incipiente pati (*Ars* 1.689-706)

Here, in the erotodidactic *Ars*, Achilles is portrayed as a sexually violent, dominating oppressor, whereas references to his character in the exile works focus on his role as an Iliadic hero on the battlefield and his domination of others is desexualized and operates as part of a power dynamic exclusively enacted in violent, physical terms between men. While Achilles' characterisation in the *Ars* is defined by his sexual violence against girls, he does meet his match in the erotic Ovidian elegies when, as a boy, he is physically disciplined by his teacher, Chiron, and this is something that is referred to in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, an epistle to the poet's friend Maximus, Amor appears before the author at night and Ovid recalls how his downfall was caused *Artibus … meis* (38), referring to the erotodidactic *Ars amatoria* which brought about the poet's relegation on the charge of teaching adultery.[287] Ovid then claims that he is the only teacher who has been destroyed by his own pupil (46), referring back to the opening passage of the *Ars* in which Ovid establishes himself as the *praeceptor amoris* with Amor as his pupil (*Ars* 1.17). This claim in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 is illustrated by a number of mythical *exempla* of teachers and pupils, among whom are Chiron and Achilles:

at non Chionides Eumolpus in Orphea talis,

in Phryga nec Satyrum talis Olympus erat.

praemia nec Chiron ab Achille talia cepit,

Pythagoraeque ferunt non nocuisse Numam.

nomina neu referam longum collecta per aevum,

[287] I have previously discussed the role that Amor plays as a god in the exile works in Chapter One, and I shall consider the appearance of Amor in terms of how the god shapes the barbaric landscape in the Medea section in Chapter Four.

discipulo perii solus ab ipse meo (*Pont*. 3.3.41-6)

This alludes to the beginning of the *Ars amatoria*, which describes Chiron's relationship with Achilles:

Phillyrides puerum cithara perfecit Achillem

atque animos placida contudit arte feros.

qui totiens socios, totiens exterruit hostes,

creditur annosum pertimuisse senem;

quas Hector sensurus erat, poscente magistro

verberibus iussas praebuit ille manus.

Aeacidae Chiron, ego sum praeceptor Amoris;

saevus uterque puer, natus uterque dea (*Ars* 1.11-18)

Such a description of the savage Achilles subdued by his tutor, Chiron, features as a mythical parallel to Ovid's own troubled relationship with Amor, who is cast in the role of Ovid's pupil in the opening passage of the *Ars amatoria* (*Ars* 1.17-18). Here, the relationship between teacher and pupil is dominated by the teacher, whose penchant for corporal discipline leads the student to fear his master. The author self-consciously styles himself as the master of Love and likens this to the relationship between Chiron and the young Achilles. This is alluded to in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, when Ovid remarks that he is the only teacher who has been ruined by his pupil (in this case, Amor) in 46 (quoted above). By using the mythical *exemplum* of Chiron and Achilles, Ovid alludes to the earlier episode at the beginning of the *Ars*, where he also presented himself as the tutor of Amor. This allusion serves to highlight the difference in power balances between the *Ars* and the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. While the relationship between Chiron and Achilles in the *Epistulae ex Ponto* remains unchanged from its initial description in *Ars* 1.17-18, the relationship between the *praeceptor amoris* and his charge, Amor, has changed dramatically as the ex-pupil becomes the cause of his old teacher's downfall, a situation that directly contrasts with the image of Achilles fearing his tutor in *Ars* 1. The reversal of power in *Ars* 1 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 illustrates that Ovid

is deliberately creating allusions to his earlier works by using mythical characters, such as Achilles and Chiron, as *exempla* to create stark contrasts between his earlier persona, the *praeceptor amoris,* and the relegated author who is now ruined in exile. The unchanged nature of the mythical *exemplum* of Achilles and Chiron (as well as their stable relationship) contrasts markedly with the changing fortunes of the *poeta* which it illustrates, in turn highlighting the rise and fall of the author's fortunes. In addition, this allusion also operates on a more subtle and ironic level: while the author claims that Amor was the cause of his relegation and expresses this through the mythical *exemplum* of Chiron and Achilles, the allusion to *Ars* 1 is a reference to the very text which caused his exile. Understanding the allusion to *Ars* 1 in *Pont*. 3.3 allows a more nuanced reading of the lines surrounding the appearance of Chiron and Achilles in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3: since we are aware that there is an allusion to the *Ars* via the mythical *exemplum*, we can now reread the *Artibus ... meis* (38) and *Artibus ... tuis* (70) as direct references to the *Ars amatoria*. The static nature of the portrayal of Achilles and Chiron gives an impression that their violent and troubled relationship is perpetually defined by fear and corporal punishment.[288] Let us move on, however, to look at how the mature Achilles is portrayed as an Iliadic hero in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

In *Tristia* 2, Ovid recalls Achilles' role as the protagonist of the *Iliad*, but does so in a manner that highlights the amatory nature of the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon. While postulating that it is unfair that his *Ars* should be censured because of the alleged adultery contained within, the author notes many examples of the works of other authors which contain erotic themes. Here, he notes that Homer's *Iliad* is little more than two sets of quarrels between two men over a woman:[289] Paris and Menelaus (*Tr*. 2.371-2) over Helen, and Achilles and Agamemnon concerning Briseis (373-4):

Ilias ipsa quid est, nisi turpis adultera, de qua

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[288] In contrast to the depiction of the relationship between Chiron and Achilles as one of a domineering teacher and fearful pupil in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, in the *Fasti* we see a different side to their emotional bond. In *Fasti* 5, Chiron is scratched by a poisoned arrow and dies, with Achilles weeping as if it were his own father dying before his eyes (399-414).
[289] On Ovid's erotic reduction of Homer: Williams (1994) 193-4 and Ingleheart (2010a) 301-3.

inter amatorem pugna virumque fuit?

quid prius est illic flamma Briseidos, utque

fecerit iratos rapta puella duces? (*Tr*. 2.371-4)

The erotic content of these lines suggests links to the earlier amatory works, which frequently use Achilles and Briseis as an erotic mythical *exemplum*: *Amores* 1.9.33; 2.8.13; *Heroides* 3; 20.69; and *Remedia* 777. However, the use of the elegiacally charged *flamma* as a synonym for love,[290] lust or erotic passion in *Tristia* 2.373 is reminiscent of *Remedia* 485-6, which re-invents the quarrel over Briseis in an imaginative fashion, rendering the affair as a mythical *exemplum* on the benefits of keeping more than one mistress:

ergo assume novas auctore Agamemnone flammas,

ut tuus in bivio distineatur amor (*Rem*. 485-6)

Here, the *flammas* of Agamemnon for Briseis and Chryseis in *Remedia* 485 echoes the *flamma* for Briseis in *Tristia* 2.371, yet the similarity in language belies the contrast in the focus of the two mythical *exempla*. In *Remedia* 485-6, Agamemnon feels passion for two women and is unchallenged by another male, but in *Tristia* 2.371-2 one woman is the centre of attention for two competing men. This indicates a change in focus of the Briseis/Achilles relationship: it is no longer a private affair between them as lovers (as in the *Remedia*), because a second, competing male party, Agamemnon, has been introduced to the scenario in the exilic works: now the Briseis/Achilles mythical *exemplum* focuses on the power struggle between Achilles and Agamemnon. This reflects how Achilles becomes a centre for the exploration of power in the exile works, particularly concerning how his own treatment of enemies can be understood as a reflection of Augustus' responsibility for the relegation of Ovid.

Achilles' fame as an epic hero in Homer's *Iliad* also provides fertile ground for exploring the relationship between the author and the *Princeps*, who are both paralleled with Achilles in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In the exile letters the grown-up Achilles

[290] Pichon (1902) 150.

is portrayed as a warrior and a poet, and it is in this sense that the exiled Ovid identifies with Achilles. At the beginning of *Tristia* 4, the author claims that he still composes poetry when in exile as a means of consoling himself and easing his sorrow at being relegated. Ovid's description of his poetical composition in exile is followed by several examples of people who sing while they labour to ease their suffering: a *fossor* (5), he who *innitens limosae servus harenae* (7), an oarsman (9-10), the *fessus … pastor* (11-12) and a slave-girl (14).[291] After these examples from daily life, mythological *exempla* are seamlessly introduced:[292] Achilles (15-16) and Orpheus (17-18), who both sang to ease their grief at being separated from their loved ones:

exul eram, requiesque mihi, non fama petita est,
mens intenta suis ne foret usque malis.
hoc est cur cantet vinctus quoque compede fossor,
indocili numero cum grave mollit opus;
cantet et innitens limosae servus harenae,
adverso tardam qui trahit amne ratem;
quique ferens pariter lentos ad pectora remos,
in numerum pulsa bracchia iactat aqua.
fessus ubi incubuit baculo saxove resedit
pastor, harundineo carmine mulcet oves.
cantantis pariter, pariter data pensa trahentis,
fallitur ancillae decipiturque labor.
fertur et abducta Lyrneside tristis Achilles

[291] On the bucolic aspects of Ovid paralleling himself with a labourer, oarsman, and shepherd, see Williams (1994) 61-5.
[292] Williams (1994) 65.

Haemonia curas attenuasse lyra.

cum traheret silvas Orpheus et dura canendo

saxa, bis amissa coniuge maestus erat (*Tr*. 4.1.3-18)

The introduction of mythological *exempla* alongside images from daily life creates a sense of slippage between reality and myth, and also suggests that myth is a suitable parallel for describing Ovid's own life as he aligns himself with Achilles. As we shall see in this chapter, Achilles is a very adaptable mythical parallel for Ovid to manipulate in the exilic epistles; at times he is likened to Ovid, and on some occasions he is associated with Augustus.

In contrast to *Tristia* 4.1, Ovid equates Achilles with Augustus in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.7, an epistle to the poet's friend Messalinus. Here, Ovid is thankful that Augustus was merciful in relegating him, meaning that there is a chance of the author's return and that he retains his property (43-8). Ovid then follows this comment with the examples of one who has been punished by Jupiter, who was merciful and did not hurl the thunderbolt at full force (49-50) and a man who has been stabbed by the spear of Achilles, who did not hurl the spear as forcibly as he could have done:

ipse sed hoc vidit, qui pervidet omnia, Caesar:

stultitiam dici crimina posse mea.

quaque ego permisi, quaque est res passa, pepercit, 45

usus est modice fulminis igne sui.

nec vitam nec opes nec ademit posse reverti,

si sua per vestras victa sit ira preces.

at graviter cecidi: quid enim mirabile, siquis

a Iove percussus non leve vulnus habet? 50

ipse suas etiam vires inhiberet Achilles,

missa gravis ictus Pelias hasta dabat (*Pont*. 1.7.43-52)

This couplet implies an identification between the man wounded by Achilles (Telephus) and Ovid because it is preceded by an equation between Jupiter and Augustus and also by an allusion to the author's downfall.[293] There is a similar parallel drawn between Achilles and Augustus in *Tr*. 1.1, who has, metaphorically, punished Ovid in the same way that Achilles has wounded his foe.[294] When lamenting his misfortunes, the poet complains that:

namque ea vel nemo, vel qui mihi vulnera fecit

solus Achilleo tollere more potest (*Tr*. 1.1.99-100)

Here, Ovid is likening his position to that of Telephus, the man whose wound could only be taken away by the man who dealt it,[295] Achilles, and in this way he is paralleling himself with Telephus and also, by implication, his punisher Augustus with Achilles.[296] Here, Ovid likens his own relegation to the physical pain of Telephus, and as such he transposes a metaphorical wounding onto a real, physical wound from combat in battle.[297] The eventual healing of Telephus reflects the hope that the author may one day be recalled to Rome and his wound of exile will likewise be healed.[298] The way in which Ovid identifies himself with both the victim of Achilles and Achilles himself in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* demonstrates how Ovid is able to exploit the malleability of myth in the exilic epistles to effectively illustrate a given rhetorical point. In addition, Ovid is also willing to adapt the mythical equations he constructs in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and this is evident in the way that he parallels Achilles with himself, Augustus, and even his loyal friends.

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[293] For more on this see the Jupiter section in Chapter One.

[294] On the importance of the Telephus myth for the repudiation of the elegiac *praeceptor amoris* from an exilic perspective, reading the appearances of Telephus in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* alongside those of Philoctetes and as references to the *Remedia amoris*, see Thomsen (1979) 56-9.

[295] For the myth that Telephus' wound could only be healed by the rust of Achilles' spear, see *Met*. 12.112: *opusque meae bis sensit Telephus hastae*. On the characterisation of Achilles in *Met*. 12, see Papaioannu (2007) 50-79.

[296] Thomsen (1979) 58-9 reads the equivalence of Augustus and Achilles in the exile works as an indication that Augustus should show mercy to Ovid in the same way that the rust of Achilles' spear healed Telephus.

[297]For more on the depiction of Ovid's relegation as a mortal wound, see the sections on Philoctetes and Oedipus and Telegonus in Chapter Three.

[298] The concept of exile as a wound will be more fully explored in Chapter Three.

Elsewhere in the exilic epistles, Ovid uses the myth of Achilles as an opportunity to explore the loyalty of his friends by likening his relationship with them to the famed loyalty between Achilles and Patroclus. In texts composed before the author's relegation, as well as in the exile works, Achilles and Patroclus operate as the paradigm of male friendship and loyalty. In *Ars* 1.743, Achilles and Patroclus appear as a mythical *exemplum* illustrating that true friends do not chase each other's girlfriends:

at non Actorides lectum temeravit Achillis (*Ars* 1.743)

Here, Ovid manipulates the famed loyalty between Achilles and Patroclus on the battlefield to provide an erotic mythical *exemplum* in his erotodidactic *Ars*. The mutual loyalty of Achilles and Patroclus is not only restricted to matters of the heart in the Ovidian corpus, but is also present in their depictions in battle in the exile works. This is first implied at *Tristia* 1.9.29-30, a letter to an unnamed loyal friend, where Achilles and Patroclus' relationship, worthy of being praised by the enemy, illustrates that even Ovid's opponents would be impressed by the addressee's loyalty to the author:

quae fuit Actoridae cum magno semper Achille,

laudari solita est Hectoris ore fides (*Tr*. 1.9.29-30)[299]

This mythical *exemplum* operates as a paradigm of masculine friendship to illustrate how the addressee's steadfastness as a comrade in standing the test of adversity is indicative of true friendship.[300] The use of Achilles and Patroclus as a paragon of fidelity in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3.41-2 re-iterates their use in *Tristia* 1.9, but *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3, a letter to the poet's loyal friend, Maximus, also dwells on the notion of death:

cerne, quid Aeacides post mortem praestet amico:

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[299] On the division of *Tr*. 1.9 into two epistles see Hall (1995) 39, 42.

[300] The depth of Achilles' relationship with Patroclus is made explicit in *Tristia* 2, the author's defence of the *Ars* which rests upon the fact that other authors have written amatory works but have not been punished. At *Tristia* 2.411-412 Ovid recalls an author who narrated the love of Achilles, possibly for Patroclus: *nec nocet auctori, mollem qui fecit Achillem, / infregisse suis fortia facta modis* (*Tr*. 2.411-412). For discussion of a satyr play on this topic and the possibility of a homoerotic dimension to the relationship: Ingleheart (2010a) 324.

instar et hanc vitam mortis habere puta (*Pont*. 2.3.41-2)

The addressee is thrown into the role of the grieving Achilles after the death of Patroclus, with whom the author identifies. Thus, the inclusion of Achilles and Patroclus acts as a paradigm of male friendship and loyalty, which is paralleled to Ovid and the addressee, and on the other hand it also adds towards the construction of the figure of the author in exile by evoking the equation of exile and death in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

The depiction of Achilles in the exile works also contributes to the theme of death in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* through his presentation as a victor on the battlefield. In *Tristia* 3.5, a letter to an anonymous loyal friend, Achilles is used as an example of how the magnanimity of conquering heroes can be expressed in the mercy they show to their defeated foe: *quo quisque est maior, magis est placabilis irae* (31). Achilles appears as a mythical *exemplum* to illustrate this point, and he appears in a position of power over Priam, who is requesting the return of his son's body:

maius apud Troiam forti quid habemus Achille?

Dardanii lacrimas non tulit ille senis (*Tr*. 3.5.37-8)

This image of Priam weeping as he supplicates Achilles to return the body of Hector, is repeated in *Tristia* 5.1, where the parallelism between Ovid and Priam on the one hand, and Augustus and Achilles in positions of power on the other, is developed:

cum non sit Priami lacrimis offensus Achilles,

tu fletus inhibes, durior hoste, meos? (*Tr*. 5.1.55-6)

Here, the tears of Priam (in both *Tr*. 3.5.37 and *Tr*. 5.1.55) as he begs for the return of Hector's body allude to the scene in Homer's *Iliad* 24 where, after Priam has supplicated Achilles, Achilles is moved to tears by the old man's request and they both weep for their losses:

ὣς φάτο, τῷ δ᾽ ἄρα πατρὸς ὑφ᾽ ἵμερον ὦρσε γόοιο:
ἁψάμενος δ᾽ ἄρα χειρὸς ἀπώσατο ἦκα γέροντα.
τὼ δὲ μνησαμένω ὃ μὲν Ἕκτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο

κλαῖ᾽ ἀδινὰ προπάροιθε ποδῶν Ἀχιλῆος ἐλυσθείς,
αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς κλαῖεν ἑὸν πατέρ᾽, ἄλλοτε δ᾽ αὖτε
Πάτροκλον: τῶν δὲ στοναχὴ κατὰ δώματ᾽ ὀρώρει.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεί ῥα γόοιο τετάρπετο δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,
καί οἱ ἀπὸ πραπίδων ἦλθ᾽ ἵμερος ἠδ᾽ ἀπὸ γυίων,
αὐτίκ᾽ ἀπὸ θρόνου ὦρτο, γέροντα δὲ χειρὸς ἀνίστη,
οἰκτίρων πολιόν τε κάρη πολιόν τε γένειον,
καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα (Hom. *Il*. 24.507-17)[301]

An allusion to this scene in *Tristia* 3.5.37-8 recalls the mercy and compassion found in the Iliadic hero of Homer's original epic, and implies that the author hopes that Augustus will yield to the tears of Ovid, just as Achilles yielded to Priam.[302] Thus, the equivalence between Priam and Ovid in the *Tristia* 3.5 reflects the author's optimism that his exile will be ended and he will be reinstated in Rome.

In conclusion, Achilles appears in a number of scenarios and he is paralleled with a number of individuals, particularly Ovid and Augustus. Thus, his portrayal both serves to illustrate and explore the role of power throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Achilles is often depicted as an oppressor, particularly in the examples where he is equated with Augustus, and this contributes towards the representation of the Princeps as a powerful figure in the exile letters. Achilles also features in mythical *exempla* which illustrate the downfall of the author, either through his identification with Achilles or through his association with Telephus, the victim of Achilles. Achilles also briefly features as an amatory paradigm in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, recalling his love for Briseis in earlier Ovidian elegiac texts, yet this paradigm is modified in the exile works to express a conflict in power between two men. Conversely, Achilles even features as a prominent paradigm of loyal friendship, demonstrating the extreme adaptability of this mythical

[301] I am using Monro and Allen's (1930) edition of the *Iliad*.
[302] This could be a reflection on the role that tears play in persuasion in Ovidian erotic elegy. On tears in Roman elegy: Fögen (2009b) 188-198. Both Thomsen (1979) 137-8 and Nagle (1980) 45-7 consider the persuasive importance of crying in the exile works as a reference to the advice of the *praeceptor amoris* in *Ars amatoria* 1.659-62.

exemplum in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Mythical *exempla* which feature Achilles in the exile works primarily centre upon relations between men: the power struggles, the difference between oppression and mercy, the tests of loyalty and friendship, and the pain of exile.

Jason

Jason is the third epic protagonist I shall consider from the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and his characterisation offers the author another opportunity to heroise his suffering in exile. Jason is an apt exilic parallel for Ovid because he is a character who, like Ulysses, is separated from his homeland and who sails the ocean. Jason is also an intriguing parallel because he is displaced from his home at least twice: his flight from Iolchos after the death of Pelias is the most famous example of removal from his homeland, but the quest for the Golden Fleece is also a displacement because Pelias intends to send him away indefinitely. As Ovid likens himself to the hero Jason, therefore casting himself in the role of hero, by inference (and, on occasion, explicitly) Pelias is associated with Augustus.[303] The depiction of Jason in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is defined by the two main divisions surrounding the character. Firstly, I shall consider how Jason's characterisation in the pre-exilic texts is in a predominantly negative light, in contrast to his presentation as a hero in the exile letters. I shall then analyse how Jason is presented in conjunction with Medea before the author's exile but, in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Medea is notable for her absence in passages where Jason features. The contrasting portrayals of Jason, based on whether the author was relegated or not at the time of composition, suggest a division between those works written at Rome and those composed in exile. Before Ovid's exile Jason appears in the amatory

[303] Similarly, Thomsen (1979) 66 also reads Pelias as a mythical representation of Augustus in the Ovidian exile works.

elegiac works as a negative mythical *exemplum*,[304] whereas in those texts which were composed in exile he is portrayed as a hero.[305]

There is a significant difference between portrayals of Jason's relationship with Medea in Ovid's pre- and post- exilic works. Before his exile, and particularly in amatory elegy, Jason is very much the failing husband of Medea,[306] yet after the author's relegation his portrayal becomes separated from that of Medea as he is presented as being either on his own or with his Argonauts (or alternatively, Medea appears with the Argonauts but Jason is notable by his absence).[307] This has an intriguing effect: based on their appearances in pre-exilic texts we would have expected Medea and Jason to appear alongside each other in the exile works. However, the reason for dividing the portrayals of Medea and Jason may lie in the contextual setting of the exile works, which contain many representations of married couples who are often equated with the author and his wife.[308] Since Ovid equates himself in the exilic works with Jason, and this may result in an implicit parallel between his wife and the infamous Medea, the divorce of these two characters ensures that no aspersions are cast upon the author's own spouse.[309] Therefore, Ovid stops short of developing himself as a fully developed Jason character by not including the spousal parallel which, for instance, accompanied his equation with Ulysses.[310] However, there may be other reasons for divorcing Jason from Medea, since it is not just Medea who has a negative reputation in Latin literature. Jason was not a devoted spouse and this could reflect badly upon the characterisation of the authorial persona and, as a result, minimise reader sympathy for

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[304] Cf. Propertius 2.21.21, 24.45-6; *Am*. 2.18.23; *Her*. 6, 12; *Ars* 3.33.
[305] *Tr*. 3.9.11-34; *Pont*. 1.3.75-6, 4.21-46, 3.1.1.
[306] It is possible that Ovid's lost tragedy on Medea (more fully discussed in the Medea section found later in this thesis) played an important role in the characterisation of Jason within the Ovidian corpus but, since the vast majority of the play is lost to us, it would be imprudent to speculate on the possible depiction of Jason in that text.
[307] Medea and the Argonauts feature at *Tr*. 3.9.7-34, but Jason is not mentioned.
[308] See Hinds (1999); Öhrman (2008). See also the sections on Penelope, Ulysses, Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne for other married couples who Ovid renders as spousal parallels.
[309] For a summary on the content of *Pont*. 1.4 and the absence of a Medea parallel with Ovid's wife: Claassen (2008) 174.
[310] On the merging of Ulysses and Jason into one composite heroic parallel: Claassen (2008) 175-6.

Ovid in exile. It would hardly be endearing for the author to present himself as the Jason to his wife's Medea when previous amatory elegy brands the hero as a less than ideal husband.

In Latin elegy Jason is often used as a mythical paradigm of an untrustworthy man. In Propertius 2.21, written to his beloved as a consolation that her lover has married another woman, Propertius calls upon mythical *exempla* of other deserted women and gives a specific mention to Medea and Jason: *Colchida sic hospes quondam decepit Iason* (Propertius 2.21.11).[311] Jason likewise features as a negative mythical *exemplum* in Propertius 2.24, when he abandons Medea after taking her with him away from Colchis:

iam tibi Iasonia nota est Medea carina

et modo servato sola relicta viro (Propertius 2.24.45-6)

The Propertian depiction of Jason as an ungrateful man who will abandon his lover is developed further in *Amores* 2.18.23 where Jason is characterised as being *male gratus*. Jason features briefly in Ovid's *Heroides*, where his character receives a negative appraisal from the pens of Hypsipyle and Medea in *Heroides* 6 and 12 respectively. *Ars* 3.33 portrays Jason at his worst, rejecting his wife, with whom he has had children, in favour of another woman:

Phasida, iam matrem, fallax dimisit Iason:

venit in Aesonios altera nupta sinus (*Ars* 3.33-4)

Jason is characterised in amatory elegy by his interactions with women. Since these relationships have the tendency not to end happily, it comes as no surprise that Jason's reputation is somewhat tarnished. *Ars* 3.33-4 plays on this elegiac characterisation by including Jason in a list of negative *exempla* at the beginning of a book which purports to be intended for a female audience (*Ars* 3.1-2). Therefore, the traditional elegiac portrayal of Jason is especially apt at the beginning of *Ars* 3, which uses Jason as an example of the type of romance that women could avoid, if only they would continue to read the rest of Ovid's dating manual:

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[311] I am using Barber's (1953) edition of Propertius.

quid vos perdiderit, dicam: nescitis amare;

defuit ars vobis: arte perennat amor (*Ars* 3.41-2)

As such, Ovid plays on the elegiac portrayal of Jason to further his own agenda in *Ars* 3 by mobilising the myth of the unfaithful Jason to act as a caveat to his (supposedly) exclusively female audience.

While Jason's characterisations in texts written before Ovid was relegated to Tomis are therefore predominantly negative, there are a couple of instances in the corpus that portray Jason in a quasi-positive light. This discrepancy is evident in the 'double' *Heroides*,[312] which provide a mixture of negative and positive portrayals of Jason depending on whether the character is writing an epistle or replying to one composed by his lover, keen to rebuff their lover's argument and in this process rewrite any mythical *exempla* in the original epistle. Paris, in *Heroides* 16.347, uses Jason as a positive example of absconding with women, whereas Helen's reply turns this on its head and highlights the negative aspects of this paradigm (*Her*. 17.229-30). Hero's reply to Leander, *Heroides* 19, also uses Jason's removal of Medea from Colchis as a favourable example of uncontrollable passion leading to men carrying off their women for Leander to emulate (175-6). The *Metamorphoses* also includes positive aspects of Jason's character, yet this is very much intertwined with the focalisation of the narrative through Medea. The *Metamorphoses* portrays Jason as the hero of the Golden Fleece narrative (*Met*. 7.1-158) and his characterisation is achieved through the eyes of Medea, who is madly in love with him:

quem nisi crudelem non tangat Iasonis aetas

et genus et virtus? quem non, ut cetera desint,

ore movere potest? certe mea pectora movit (*Met*. 7.26-8)

This tentative transition from romantic villain to hero, a change in which the functions of narrator and audience play important roles, lays the foundations for his appearance in the

[312] It is worth remembering that the 'double' *Heroides*, while highly evocative of the *Heroides*, were composed in exile. For more on this see the Introduction and Reeve (1973) and Kenney (1996) 21-22.

Tristia and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where he is not only portrayed as a hero but is also likened to the relegated author.

Tristia 1.2, recalling how the author endures a storm at sea, neither specifically names Jason nor contains an explicit parallel drawn between him and the author, yet there are a number of similarities between the author and the character which are strongly stressed and could be interpreted as references to the Golden Fleece myth. In line 3 the poet notes that he has been relegated due to *Caesaris irae*, which is repeated at 61 (with the very similar phrase *Caesaris ira*), 65-6 and 93-4. Jason was bidden to sail to Pontus in search of the Golden Fleece by Pelias, who, fearing that Jason was the man destined to kill him, mindfully devised a voyage whose completion would be very unlikely:

> αἶψα δὲ τόνγ᾽ ἐσιδὼν ἐφράσσατο, καί οἱ ἄεθλον
> ἔντυε ναυτιλίης πολυκηδέος, ὄφρ᾽ ἐνὶ πόντῳ
> ἠὲ καὶ ἀλλοδαποῖσι μετ᾽ ἀνδράσι νόστον ὀλέσσῃ (A. R. *Arg*. 1.15-17)

In *Tristia* 1.2, Ovid also comments that he is making for the same region as Jason:

> *obligor ut tangam laevi fera litora Ponti;*
>
> *quodque sit a patria tam fuga tarda queror* (*Tr*. 1.2.83-4)

Here, Ovid's destination, Pontus, geographically links him to Jason's own destination, Colchis.[313] While Ovid locates himself in the same geographical area as Jason, travelling to or from Colchis, this constructs an implicit equation between the poet and the hero who are both forcibly driven from their homelands to live as exiles.[314]

In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3, a letter to Ovid's friend, Rufinus, in which he bewails his misfortune at Tomis, Jason features as one of many historical and mythical examples of individuals who, like our author, have been exiled. This comparison portrays Ovid as unjustly

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[313] Cf. *Pont*. 3.1.1: *Aequor Iasonio pulsatum remige primum*.

[314] Ovid also develops the association between himself and Jason by noting that the ship which bore him to the Black Sea region was protected by Minerva, the patron goddess of Jason. For a discussion of how Ovid uses Minerva to highlight the parallel between himself and Jason, see the Minerva section in the previous chapter.

punished, while at the same time implying that Augustus is the person responsible. Ovid paints a sorrowful picture of himself as *miser* (*misero ... mihi,* 32) in exile by describing his isolation in a barren part of the world. By recounting the savage environment of this far-flung region (49-60), the author gains his readers' sympathy because of the horrendous nature of his situation:

> *orbis in extremi iaceo desertus harenis,*
>
> *fert ubi perpetuas obruta terra nives* (*Pont*. 1.3.49-50)

Highlighting the awful nature of his suffering increases sympathy for Ovid, who is relegated to the end of the world, a barbaric place at the end of the empire, just as Jason was bidden to sail to the edge of the known world to fetch the Golden Fleece.[315] After this passage, the poet provides a number of examples of individuals who have been unjustly punished with exile, among whom is Jason:

> *exul ab Haemonia Pirenida cessit ad undam,*
>
> *quo duce trabs Colchas sacra cucurrit aquas* (*Pont*. 1.3.75-6)

At first glance, Ovid's equation of himself with a hero like Jason seems flattering. However, in this instance Jason does not appear in a particularly heroic light. If he is going *ab Haemonia Pirenida … ad undam* (75) then he must be fleeing to Corinth after the death of Pelias, and the choice of verb *cessit* effectively conveys the swiftness of his retreat.[316] Here, Jason is not on an epic quest to get the Golden Fleece, but is fleeing into exile after his wife has murdered a king. In this somewhat problematic parallel with the author, it is notable that Medea, who played a large part in the death of Pelias,[317] is completely omitted from the account. In this way, Ovid avoids engaging with any spousal parallel with Medea in the exile works, something which is unusual given that Ovid repeatedly develops the spousal parallel with Penelope when he likens himself to another ocean-wandering hero, Ulysses.

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[315] A.R. *A*rg. 1.15-17 (quoted above).
[316] *OLD s.v. cedo* 2, 3, 12, 14 and *TLL s.v. cedo.*
[317] Cf. *Met*. 7.297-349.

The section of *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3 which includes Jason as a parallel for the author also includes other individuals who are in exile, both historical figures and mythical characters. As a result, this passage (*Pont*. 1.3.61-84) mixes the historical with the mythical at quite a complex level, since the real and fantastical are presented alongside each other with no discernment between their fictionality:

i nunc et veterum nobis exempla virorum,
qui forti casum mente tulere, refer,
et grave magnanimi robur mirare Rutili
non usi reditus condicione dati:
Smyrna virum tenuit, non Pontus et hostica tellus,
paene minus nullo Smyrna petenda loco.
non doluit patria Cynicus procul esse Sinopeus,
legit enim sedes, Attica terra, tuas.
arma Neoclides qui Persica contudit armis
Argolica primam sensit in urbe fugam.
pulsus Aristides patria Lacedaemona fugit,
inter quas dubium, quae prior esset, erat.
caede puer facta Patroclus Opunta reliquit,
Thessalicamque adiit hospes Achillis humum.
exul ab Haemonia Pirenida cessit ad undam,
quo duce trabs Colchas sacra cucurrit aqua.
liquit Agenorides Sidonia moenia Cadmus,
poneret ut muros in meliore loco.

venit ad Adrastum Tydeus Calydone fugatus,

et Teucrum Veneri grata recepit humus. 80

quid referam veteres Romanae gentis, apud quos

exulibus tellus ultima Tibur erat?

persequar ut cunctos, nulli datus omnibus aevis

tam procul a patria est horridiorve locus (*Pont*. 1.3.61-84)

Here, Ovid deliberately mixes examples of real, historical exiles with characters from myth. *Rutilius* (63) is the first example in the passage, alluding to P. Rutilius Rufus (c. 160-75 BC) a Roman legate who, condemned for *res repetundae*, went into exile in Smyrna.[318] 67 also features a historical individual, *Cynicus … Sinopeus*, Diogenes of Sinope, who was expelled for "defacing the coinage",[319] went to Athens and became one of the founders of Cynicism.[320] 68-9 describes the life of a historical figure who was exiled: Themistocles, a highly regarded and competent politician but who was undervalued by his people, and was exiled to Argos and, later, to Asia Minor.[321] 71 also features an exiled politician: Aristides, who was expelled from Athens in 483 BC and went to Aegina.[322] The run of *exempla* changes direction at 73-4, when the first mythical figure is introduced: Patroclus, who murdered Amphidamas' son while still a boy and came to live with Achilles.[323] 75-6 describes how Jason fled to Corinth in the wake of Pelias' death, followed by Cadmus founding Thebes in exile (77-8), the expulsion of Tydeus who later came to Adrastus (79) and Teucer's flight to Cyprus (80). The final *exemplum* in this list concerns the Roman statesmen and kings exiled to Tibur throughout history (81-2).[324] This passage begins with historical *exempla*, moves into mythical *exempla* and then returns to historical *exempla*, thus mixing the historical with

[318] Helzle (2003) 132-3; Gaertner (2005) 258.
[319] Gaertner (2005) 260.
[320] Helzle (2003) 133.
[321] Helzle (2003) 133-4; Gaertner (2005) 260-1.
[322]Helzle (2003) 134. For debate over Aristides' destination: Gaertner (2005) 261-2.
[323] This episode of Patroclus' life is narrated at Hom. *Il*. 18.326, 23.85-90; Apollod. 3.13.8; Ovid, *Fasti* 2.39-40. On Ovidian innovation concerning this myth, see Gaertner (2005) 263.
[324] See Gaertner (2005) 267.

the mythical and blurring the boundary between reality and fiction. The list of *exempla* finally ends by widening the number of *exempla* by including the community of all Romans exiled to Tibur. This not only contributes towards the confusion between history and myth, but also creates a community of exiles which includes Ovid, generating the sense that Ovid is not alone in his isolated state of exile. However, Ovid carefully considers in 83-4 that he is different from all the famous exiles of the Greco-Roman past because the place of his relegation is so much more unfavourable. Thus, Ovid claims that his sufferings are greater than those of any other exiled person, yet in this process he simultaneously writes himself into a tradition of displaced persons as its culmination.

This passage in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3 not only contributes towards the exile corpus' wider concerns of reality and fantasy, but also alludes to the *Fasti*. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3 features Jason (75-6), Cadmus (77-8) and Tydeus (79) as exilic parallels for the author. This is highly reminiscent of *Fasti* 1.489-92, where these three characters are also used as mythical *exempla* for exiled individuals. Carmenta, the divine mother of Evander, speaks to her son in an attempt to comfort him as they are banished from Arcadia (477-8):[325]

passus idem est, Tyriis qui quondam pulsus ab oris
Cadmus in Aonia constitit exul humo; 40
passus idem Tydeus et idem Pegasaeus Iason,
et quos praeterea longa referre mora est.
omne solum forti patria est, ut piscibus aequor,
ut volucri, vacuo quicquid in orbe patet (*Fasti* 1.489-94)[326]

Here, Carmenta reassures Evander that he is not alone in his state of exile, and that he can make anywhere his home, as Jason, Cadmus and Tydeus did. Just as the wandering heroes of epic endured their suffering, so too can Evander. The inclusion of these three mythical characters, as in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3, suggests that *quos praeterea longa referre mora est*

[325] On the role of Evander in the *Fasti*, see Fantham (1992).
[326] I am using Ehwald & Levy's (1924) edition of the *Fasti*.

(92) is an allusion to the other historical and mythical figures listed in the longer extract of exiles in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3. This allusion to the list of exiles in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3 suggests that Carmenta's advice to Evander can be read alongside Ovid's own situation, relegated to Tomis in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3. This might be a form of wish fulfillment on the part of the author, who sees himself as a kind of Evander figure and who wishes to be reassured that he too can endure exile just like the epic wandering heroes such as Jason.

The next poem in the *Epistulae ex Ponto* collection, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4. includes a section which features an extended comparison between Ovid and Jason, aimed at proving that the hero's sufferings were not as grave as those of Ovid:

otia corpus alunt, animus quoque pascitur illis;
inmodicus contra carpit utrumque labor.
aspice, in has partis quod venerit Aesone natus,
quam laudem a sera posteritate ferat.
at labor illius nostro leviorque minorque est,
si modo non verum nomina magna premunt.
ille est in Pontum Pelia mittente profectus,
qui vix Thessaliae fine timendus erat:
Caesaris ira mihi nocuit, quem solis ab ortu
solis ad occasus utraque terra tremit.
iunctior Haemonia est Ponto, quam Roma, Sinistro,
et brevius, quam nos, ille peregit iter.
ille habuit comites primos telluris Achivae,
at nostram cuncti destituere fugam.
nos fragili ligno vastum sulcavimus aequor,

quae tulit Aesoniden, sacra carina fuit.

nec mihi Tiphys erat rector, nec Agenore natus

quas fugerem docuit quas sequererque vias.

illum tutata est cum Pallade regia Iuno:

defendere meum numina nulla caput. 40

illum furtivae iuvere Cupidinis artes,

quas a me vellem non didicisset Amor.

illum domum rediit: nos his moriemur in arvis,

perstiterit laesi si gravis ira dei.

durius est igitur nostrum, fidissima coniunx, 45

illo, quod subiit Aesone natus, opus (*Pont.* 1.4.21-46)

Here, Ovid constructs a comparison between himself and Jason only to highlight the *differences* between their situations, leading to the accumulative impression that the author is equated with Jason yet also surpasses him in terms of the hardship he endures in exile. In these terms, the passage is highly reminiscent of *Tristia* 1.5.53-84, where the poet likens himself to Ulysses only to exaggerate the differences between their situations.[327] In *Tristia* 1.5, Ovid engages in a competitive struggle with Ulysses to ascertain who endures the most hardship in exile. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4.21-46 could be understood in similar terms, with the author competing against his own literary creations for the championship of exilic endurance. Appreciating this comparison to Jason in the same way as the earlier parallel with Ulysses allows us to understand how the author is keen to liken himself to epic wandering heroes, displaced from their native lands, yet also competes with them to highlight his own plight and thus increase his readership's sympathy. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4.21-46 also includes an explicit parallel between Augustus and Pelias, who sent Jason on

[327] See Ulysses section.

his quest for the Golden Fleece. As previously discussed, comparing Augustus, who is usually likened to Jupiter, the king of the gods, in the exile works,[328] to the illegitimate mortal son of Poseidon can be interpreted as a less than favourable demotion in terms of divinity. This potentially insulting comparison to Pelias is developed in the succeeding couplet which clarifies that Caesar's power is much greater than that of Pelias. While Pelias *vix Thessaliae fine timendus erat* (28) and confined to the Mediterranean, Caesar's influence extends to cover the same span of the globe as the sunlight touches (29-30). The comparison between Pelias and Augustus serves to bolster the extended equation between Jason and Ovid by stressing the similarity between their oppressors and adding another likeness between the two men.

In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4.31-4 Ovid also compares his current location and lack of companionship with Jason's more favourable existence with his band of Argonauts at his side. The comparison progresses to include the *Argo* and its helmsman, Tiphys (35-7). This alludes to Tiphys' appearance at the beginning of the *Ars*,[329] when the poet claims that he will be to the world of dating advice what Tiphys was to the *Argo*:

Tiphys in Haemonia puppe magister erat:

me Venus artificem tenero praefecit Amori,

Tiphys et Automedon dicar Amoris ego (*Ars* 1.6-8)

The reference to the *Argo* in *Ars* 1.6, picked up by *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4.36, strengthens the sense of allusion between these two passages. In addition, the beginning of *Ars* 1 develops the image of the poet in command of Love before the poet expressly states that *ego sum praeceptor Amoris* (17). This is alluded to in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4.41-2, where the author claims that Jason was aided by Cupid, whereas Ovid's downfall was brought about by Amor:

illum furtivae iuvere Cupidinis artes,

quas a me vellem non didicisset Amor (*Pont*. 1.4.41-2)

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[328] On this see the Jupiter section in the previous chapter.
[329] Helzle (2003) 151; Gaertner (2005) 296.

This at once strengthens the earlier allusion in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4 to the *Ars*, which featured Tiphys and the *Argo*, but at the same time highlights the differences between the two texts. Before he was relegated, the poet imagined himself as Tiphys and championed his skills as the teacher of Love himself. However, after his banishment to Tomis, Ovid rewrites these earlier comparisons: he is no longer Tiphys nor the *praeceptor amoris*. Instead of playing the role of Tiphys to the *Argo*, or the *praeceptor amoris* to the erotodidactic text, he has effectively rebranded himself as Jason, who is a fool for love and has Tiphys as his assistant. This reversal in the self-portrayal of the authorial persona could be interpreted as an attempt to rewrite the earlier erotodidactic text which was the cause of his relegation, almost as if in regret. Alternatively, it is equally likely that this sense of regret is simply feigned in order to increase reader sympathy while championing this banned work by repeatedly alluding to it in exile, thus drawing attention to his politically controversial work.

Epistulae ex Ponto 1.4 is also an example of how Ovid, when equating himself with Jason, rejects developing this parallel to its full potential by involving an equation between his wife and either of Jason's wives, Hypsipyle and Medea. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4 is addressed to Ovid's wife and concludes with the author imagining his being reunited with his wife when they are both old (45-58). It could be expected that, since his wife features at the end of the poem while the central portion focuses on developing a comparison between himself and Jason, that the poet would bring these sections together by extending the Jason parallel to include his wife in the role of either Hypsipyle or Medea. However, the poet ceases the Jason-Ovid parallel abruptly before likening his wife either to Medea or Hypsipyle, who could both be seen as insulting mythical equivalents for his spouse given that Medea is an infanticide and Hypsipyle is the Queen of Lemnos, an island defined by androcide.[330] Developing the Jason-Ovid parallel to encompass the author's spouse would not only be insulting to the author's wife, but would also be less than desirable for the author himself, since Jason swore fidelity to both of these women but then conveniently

[330] It should be noted that, in Hypsipyle's defence, she refused to kill her father when the androcide took place (A.R. *Arg*.1.620-6).

forgot his vows and left them both.[331] Neither aspect of any of the potential spousal parallels that the Jason myth offers to Ovid would make an endearing likeness for the author's relationship with his own spouse. Therefore, Jason does not appear in the husband role at any point in the *Tristia* or in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Instead, Medea and Jason appear separately. This authorial decision is so complete that when *Tristia* 3.9 narrates how the Argonauts bring Medea back from Colchis, Jason is not mentioned at all. The image of Medea, the *Argo* and the Argonauts without Jason is a very odd picture indeed, especially since the wider mythical tradition clearly notes that Jason brought Medea back from Colchis with him.[332] Such active omissions in the exile works ensure that there are no parallels drawn between Ovid's wife and Medea.

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid rewrites Jason as an hero, a paradigm of endurance in exile. Jason is no longer the fickle and heedless lover found in Ovid's erotic elegies; now he enjoys a positive press in the exilic epistles. Ovid's equation with Jason is not without its potential pitfalls, however, particularly as regards Jason's negative reputation as a deserting husband and his notorious wife, Medea. Extending the authorial identification with Jason to incorporate Ovid's wife would be problematic, and Ovid carefully negotiates this issue by omitting any mention of either Jason's love life or his wives in the passages that mention him. As such, Jason's characterisation as a paragon of exilic endurance relies upon the division that Ovid has created in his portrayal. By dividing Jason from Medea and by separating the ocean-faring hero from his past loves, Ovid can create a flattering parallel between himself and Jason. This association characterises the *relegatus poeta* as an individual driven from his homeland to the ends of the known world.

Heroes such as Ulysses, Achilles and Jason are not always the masters of their destinies, but are occasionally portrayed as powerless while a superior (such as a god or a childhood tutor) holds sway over them. Jason and Ulysses in particular are usually at the mercy of the gods' power as both depend on the help of Minerva, and Ulysses is persecuted by Neptune. When these heroes are associated with the author, then these equations add a

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[331] *Heroides* 6 is composed from an abandoned Hypsipyle, and *Heroides* 12 from a scorned Medea.
[332] See Apollod. 1. 133, 137-8 and A.R. *Arg*. 4.88-91, 206-409.

dimension of helplessness to the authorial persona, and this can be seen as contributing towards Ovid's self-portrayal as a victim. The author most commonly achieves the status of a victim by presenting himself as persecuted by a divine oppressor who is often paralleled with the Princeps. However, the author directly challenges the authority and sound decision-making of the Princeps in *Tristia* 2, where he rewrites the narratives of several epic works by highlighting the erotic content of each myth to unveil any adulterous content which is contained in the canonical works of previous authors (*Tr*. 2.371-80).[333] In this process, Ovid highlights the amorous contents of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, thus recalling the erotic preoccupations of martial heroes such as Ulysses and Achilles, and so simultaneously rendering his own *Ars amatoria* inoffensive by comparison, while also writing his own *Ars* into the established literary canon.

Ovid does not only reflect back to the *Ars amatoria* as a means of expressing his thoughts on the validity of the charge of teaching adultery, but Ovid also alludes back to the beginning of the *Ars amatoria* in order to contrast his current plight at Tomis with his previous status as a young elegiac erotodidactic poet at Rome and, as such, this contributes significantly towards the myth of poetic decline in exile. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, retrospective allusions to the beginning of *Ars* 1 are established with the recurring motifs of shipwreck and charioteering used as metaphors for the poet's pose of poetic decline. As the author likens himself to Ulysses, separated from his homeland and longing for return, this portrayal touches upon the shipwreck of Ulysses at the hands of Poseidon, an allegory for Ovid's own punishment at the hands of Augustus and a reversal of the motif of sailing a ship, used as an allegory for the poets' compositional progression throughout the *Ars*. While the act of sailing a ship can be understood as a symbol for the role of the poet composing the text, myths that involve charioteering can also be seen in a similar light in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. As we saw in the previous chapter, in the exile letters the image of the wrecked chariot features in depictions of Jupiter which focus on the murder of Phaethon, who was struck by the thunderbolt of Jupiter and obliterated as punishment for losing control of the chariot of the Sun. In the depiction of Achilles in the exile works, references to his chariot driver Automedon in *Tristia* 5.6 recall the beginning of

[333] On this see Ingleheart (2010a) 300-7.

the *Ars amatoria* where Automedon featured as a mythical *exemplum* for the *praeceptor amoris* and his construction of the erotodidactic collection.[334] As Ovid, the poet in exile, returns to the image of the chariot of Achilles it can be interpreted as a destructive force, maiming the body of the defeated foe Hector in *Tristia* 3.11.[335] The disparity between the image of the successful charioteer at the beginning of the author's poetic career and the use of the chariot as an image of death and mutilation in the exilic epistles strongly suggests that this motif is being used as part of the pose of poetic decline. An awareness of this contrast highlights the way that Ovid is actively deploying motifs in the exile works which mirror those used in his earlier erotic collections, thus indicating that Ovid is very self-consciously constructing contrasts between his days in Rome as an elegiac poet and his current state as a *relegatus poeta* at Tomis, something which inevitably contributes towards the pose of poetic decline in exile.

As we have already seen, on several occasions Ovid constructs parallels with Jason and Ulysses only to then deconstruct the equation by claiming that his suffering in exile surpasses any hardship endured by a mythical character. In these passages, the author stresses that one of his main disadvantages is that he does not have any companions like the Argonauts or Ulysses' men. However, even though Ovid is physically quite alone in his exile, the author is still in contact with his loyal friends and wife via his letters. As Ovid composes epistles to his wife, he repeatedly portrays himself as Ulysses, and his wife as Penelope (we shall discuss this spousal parallel more fully later in the thesis). As such, the parallels that we have explored between Ulysses and the author in this chapter can also be seen as part of a broader spousal parallel between Ulysses and Penelope and Ovid and his wife, as we shall consider in Chapter Four. Throughout his epistolary correspondence with his loyal friends, Ovid uses the mythical *exemplum* of the loyal friendship between Achilles and Patroclus as a means of expressing the loyalty between himself and his addressees. In this way, while Ovid is alone in exile at Tomis, he can use mythological parallels to give the

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[334] *numquid Achilleos inter fera proelia fidi / deseruit levitas Automedontis equos?* (*Tr*. 5.6.9-10).

[335] *Hector erat tum cum bello certabat; at idem / vinctus ad Haemonios non erat Hector equos. / me quoque, quem noras olim, non esse memento: / ex illo superant haec simulacra viro* (*Tr*. 3.11.27-30).

reader (and the addressee) the impression that the loyalty of his steadfast friends accompanies him at Tomis in the same way that Achilles was accompanied by Patroclus. Friendship between heroes is an important aspect of how myths are portrayed in the Ovidian exile works, as it contrasts with the author's own loneliness in exile, but also, paradoxically, reflects the loyalty of some of his addressees. The importance of loyal friendship for our relegated author will be more closely analysed in the next chapter, which explores the depictions of Theseus and Pirithous in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In the next chapter, however, we shall also see the antithesis of such loyalty between heroes when we take a look at the abandonment of Philoctetes by his comrade, Odysseus, and the deaths of Odysseus and Laius at the hands of their own sons, Telemachus and Oedipus.

Chapter Three: Other Heroes and the Underworld

As we saw in the previous chapter, loyalty between friends such as heroes like Achilles and Patroclus is an important theme in the exile works, as well as the comradeship of the men serving under the commands of Ulysses and Jason. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, we see a number of heroes who enjoy the comradeship of loyal friends, while the latter are in turn likened to the steadfast friends to whom Ovid addresses some of his letters. We shall see in the course of this chapter that Theseus and Pirithous offer a very suitable parallel for the author and his friends, particularly because their friendship was tested and they still remained loyal to one another. While there are such paragons of friendship among the heroes in the exile letters there are, however, also examples of abandonment in the myths depicted in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Philoctetes provides an apt equation for the author because he is a lonely figure who, after being deserted by his comrade Ulysses, is left to die on an island. Such abandonment by a comrade is not the most unforgiveable example of treachery in the exile works, since the author portrays his own poetical creation as a veritable Oedipus or Telegonus, thereby portraying the book as a son who kills his own father. The themes of loyalty and desertion are important for the depictions of heroes in the exile works, and also for how Ovid uses myth as a means of expressing his interpersonal relationships from an exilic perspective.

This chapter will firstly consider how the relationship between Theseus and Pirithous is portrayed as a paradigm of friendship throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and how Ovid uses this myth as a parallel for the relationship he (or his persona) enjoys with his own loyal friends. Ovid's friends continue to support the author even though he has been relegated, just as Theseus stood by Pirithous when they went down to the Underworld. In the process of establishing a parallel between Theseus and Pirithous and the author and his addressee, Ovid builds upon the metaphor of exile as a form of living death by portraying himself as Pirithous to his readers' Theseus. As such, Ovid paints a picture of himself as Pirithous, eternally stuck to a rock in the dismal Underworld which is Tomis.

After exploring how Ovid uses the myth of Pirithous we will move on to discuss how Ovid portrays himself as another abandoned and lonely figure, namely Philoctetes, creating a picture of the *relegatus poeta* as an isolated individual who endures suffering.[336] Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid also repeatedly likens himself to Philoctetes, who was marooned on the island of Lemnos after being bitten by a snake. In this way, Ovid associates himself with abandoned, lonely characters from myth throughout the exile works and so constructs a sorry picture of himself as the *relegatus poeta*. As the author identifies with maimed characters such as Philoctetes this supports and develops the motif of exile as a fatal wound which the author must suffer for the length of time he remains at Tomis.[337]

Finally in this chapter we will explore how Ovid, wounded by his exile, depicts the cause of his punishment in mythological terms. In the *Tristia*, Ovid parallels his banishment with the myths of heroes Oedipus and Telegonus, likening his downfall as a result of his own artistic creativity to the death of a father killed by his own son. In this chapter we shall see how the myths of heroes are paralleled with the author's relationships with his own friends and artistic creations, and how Ovid highlights the themes of loyalty and desertion to condemn some and praise others, such as steadfast friends who are on a par with Theseus.

Theseus

Throughout the exile letters, Theseus is portrayed as a loyal friend to Pirithous and the pair often feature as mythical *exempla* for the author's relationships with his male friends.[338] However, Theseus is potentially a problematic figure as a mythical exemplar of loyalty

[336] Thomsen (1979) 60-1 interprets the authorial parallel with Philoctetes as an attempt to garner reader sympathy.
[337] Ovid often talks about his relegation to Tomis in terms of being wounded: *Tr*. 1.1.99-100, 3.35-6, 2.20, 3.6.29, 11.19, 63-6, 4.1.35-6, 97, 5.2.9-10, 17-18, 7.34; *Pont*. 1.3.5-10, 16, 22, 87-8, 5.23, 6.22, 2.2.57, 3.94, 4.11.4, 19-20.
[338] *Tr*. 1.3.66, 5.19, 9.31-2, 5.4.26; *Pont*. 2.3.43-4, 6.26. 3.2.33.

because of the way that he abandoned Ariadne and left her to die on an island. Therefore, Ovid rewrites the Theseus myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by choosing not to portray the character as a lover, thus overlooking any aspect of the Theseus myth that could possibly highlight the character's reputation as an unfaithful and absconding individual that would contradict Theseus' depiction as a paragon of loyalty. The way that Ovid chooses to rewrite Theseus in exile and eschew any reminders of the character's problematic past with regard to his reputation as a lover is much like how Ovid recasts Jason in the exilic letters as an ocean-wandering hero and omits any potentially awkward aspects of the Jason myth (such as his treatment of Medea and Hypsipyle).[339] I shall argue in this section that Ovid exploits the malleability of myth to rewrite Theseus as a very apt paradigm for male friendship in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* and, in the process of manipulating the Theseus myth to produce the best possible reflection on the *relegatus poeta*, Ovid avoids potential problems that could be caused by Theseus' negative reputation as a lover by omitting any mention of his relationship with Ariadne.[340] Firstly, I shall consider how Theseus appears in the pre-exilic erotic texts in a predominantly negative light as a lover before, secondly, analysing how Ovid avoids this aspect of the Theseus myth in the exilic letters and chooses to rewrite Theseus as an exemplar of loyalty.

Theseus is particularly notorious for abandoning Ariadne on the shore of Naxos and sailing away without her, presumably leaving her to die. Catullus 64, narrating the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, features an ecphrasis of a coverlet which leads into an inset tale of Theseus and Ariadne including her desertion (Catullus 64.52-264). The image of sleeping Ariadne, abandoned on the shore, features as the opening simile of Propertius 1.3,[341] which tells of how the lover-poet came home after a night out to find Cynthia asleep. Ovid too engaged with the image of a bereft Ariadne in his *Heroides*, featuring an epistle posed as written by Ariadne on Naxos, beseeching Theseus to return for her.[342] The abandoned

[339] For more on this, see the Jason section in Chapter Two.
[340] Ariadne does feature in the exile letters, but not in conjunction with Theseus. In *Tr*. 5.3.41-2 Ariadne is mentioned briefly as the wife of Bacchus.
[341] Prop. 1.3.1-2.
[342] *Her*. 10.

Ariadne is a testament to Theseus' lack of loyalty, and it is his reputation as a deserting lover in Latin literature that portrays Theseus in a very unfavourable light.

Theseus is also depicted as an absconding lover in Ovid's *Ars amatoria*, where he is presented in a mostly negative manner. Theseus features in the *Ars* as a mythical *exemplum* at 1.509, 3.35, and 457. In all three examples, Theseus appears alongside one of his sons, Demophoon and Hippolytus, who are very much like their father in that neither of them is a suitable role model for erotic relationships. At *Ars* 1.509-11 Theseus and Hippolytus appear as mythical *exempla* illustrating that men should not over gild the lily when it comes to male grooming:[343]

forma viros neglecta decet; Minoida Theseus

abstulit, a nulla tempora comptus acu;

Hippolytum Phaedra, nec erat bene cultus, amavit (*Ars* 1.509-11)

The mention of Hippolytus and Phaedra here evokes Euripides' *Hippolytus*, but if we take this reference in conjunction with the mention of Ariadne and Theseus in 9 (as well as other instances where Theseus appears alongside his other son, Demophoon, elsewhere in the *Ars*) then the context of this passage may suggest an allusion to Ovid's own *Heroides* which includes epistles from Phaedra to Hippolytus,[344] from Phyllis to Demophoon,[345] and from Ariadne to Theseus.[346] Theseus and Demophoon also appear as mythical *exempla* in *Ars* 3, where Theseus takes on the role of the negative paradigm. At 35-8 Theseus and his son feature as a cautionary tale for the intended female audience of the third instalment of the *Ars*, since both Theseus and Demophoon abandoned women:[347]

quantum in te, Theseu, volucres Ariadna marinas

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[343] This echoes with Theseus' appearance in *Am*. 1.7.15, where Ariadne's disordered locks after her abandonment by Theseus are used as a positive *exemplum* of women still being beautiful even when upset.
[344] *Her*. 4.
[345] *Her*. 2.
[346] *Her*. 10.
[347] Theseus abandoned Ariadne, as previously discussed. His son Demophoon deserted Phyllis (*Her*. 2; Hyg. *Fab*. 59, 243.6).

pavit in ignoto sola relicta loco.

quaere, Novem cur una Viae dicatur, et audi

depositis silvas Phyllida flesse comis (*Ars* 3.35-8)

These mythological *exempla* are then repeated at *Ars* 3.457-60, where Theseus appears again as a negative mythical *exemplum* of men who are untrustworthy, also accompanied by his son, Demophoon:

parcite, Cecropides, iuranti credere Theseo:

quos faciet testes, fecit et ante, deos.

et tibi, Demophoon, Thesei criminis heres,

Phyllide decepta nulla relicta fides (*Ars* 3.457-60)

In addition, the use of Theseus and Demophoon as a father and son mythological *exemplum* which warns women against untrustworthy men recalls a similar instance in the Propertian corpus, where Theseus and Demophoon also feature as examples of men to be avoided:

parvo dilexit spatio Minoida Theseus,

Phyllida Demophoon, hospes uterque malus (Propertius 2.24b.43-4)[348]

The depiction of Theseus in the amatory works of the Ovidian corpus builds upon his characterisation as a cold-hearted cad in Catullus and his subsequent use as a negative mythological *exemplum* in Propertius. The portrayals of Theseus, alongside his sons Hippolytus and Demophoon, feature as negative erotic *exempla* and portray Theseus as the archetypal man best avoided by women. In addition, the way that Theseus is presented in conjunction with his two sons in the *Ars* recalls the negative press he suffered from the pen of Ariadne in Ovid's *Heroides*, a collection that also includes epistles by Phyllis and Phaedra who make amatory complaints about Theseus' sons. Theseus' lack of fidelity to his lover Ariadne results in his function as a negative exemplar of faithfulness in erotic verse. This

[348] On the separation of Propertius 2.24 into two poems, see Barber (1953) 64-5.

means that, when Ovid composes the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in exile, Theseus could potentially be a very problematic figure, considering his lack of loyalty to Ariadne. Ovid negotiates this possible pitfall by omitting any mention of Ariadne in conjunction with Theseus in the exilic epistles. Ovid rewrites the Theseus myth so successfully in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* that Theseus becomes a paradigm of fidelity in the exile letters, where he and Pirithous are presented as model friends. It is with some irony, however, that Ovid rewrites Theseus, a paradigm of untrustworthiness in erotic verse, as a paragon of loyal friendship in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

While Ariadne is largely absent from the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, there is one possible reference to her love affair with Theseus in the *Tristia*. *Tristia* 2, Ovid's defence of his *Ars* which is accused of teaching adultery, contains much discussion of preceding works of literature which have also contained erotic material although their authors have not been unjustly punished. Part of this discussion includes a list of tragic narratives instigated by love (381-420):[349]

quid Peliae generum, quid Thesea, quique Pelasgum

Iliacam tetigit de rate primus humum? (*Tr*. 2.403-4)

tempore deficiar, tragicos si persequar ignes,

vixque meus capiat nomina nuda liber (*Tr*. 2.407-8)

The description of the erotic content of Greek tragedy as *tragicus ... ignis* highlights the juxtaposition between the sombre tragic genre and its amatory content.[350] Theseus' brief appearance here as a mythical *exemplum* for the erotic motives found in tragedy could be a

[349] It may be worth remembering that Theseus is an important figure for fifth century Greek tragedy. On this, see Davie (1982); Sutton (1978); Calame (1990); Walker (1995); Mills (1997).

[350] *Ignis* has amatory connotations and it is used at *Tr*. 4.10.45 to metaphorically refer to the erotic elegies of Propertius: *saepe suos solitus recitare Propertius ignes, / iure sodalicii, qui mihi iunctus erat*. On the sexually charged language used to describe tragedy in *Tr*. 2.407-8, see Ingleheart (2010a) 322.

reference to lost plays concerning his doomed relationships with women.[351] If *Tristia* 2.403 contains a reference to lost tragedies about his heterosexual relationships, then this could allude to lost plays which narrate his abandonment of Ariadne.[352] While it is possible that *Tristia* 2 makes reference to tragedies about Ariadne and Theseus, this reference is veiled and ambiguous. It is equally possible that the tragedy Ovid mentions is in fact one on the topic of Theseus' homoerotic love for, and loyalty towards, Pirithous.

While the previous depictions of Theseus' love life in the Ovidian corpus may give us some idea about what kind of myth took the center stage in the tragedy (or tragedies) to which *Tristia* 2.403 refers, there is a possibility that *Tristia* 2.403 does not refer to Ariadne. In addition to treating the topic of Theseus' abandonment of Ariadne, *Tristia* 2.403 could also refer to lost tragedies which narrated the homosexual love between Theseus and Pirithous.[353] Ingleheart (2010a) considers the nature of the relationship between Theseus and Pirithous in *Tristia* 2, commenting that "given that rescue from death features in both surrounding myths, and the homosexual content of 406, the reader may recall tragic hints of an affair between Theseus and Pirithous."[354] While *Tristia* 2.403 may allude to a lost tragedy about Theseus' love for Pirithous, the two characters are also mentioned as the protagonists of a tragic play in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.6.

While the exile works contain many references to the myth of Theseus and Pirithous as paradigms of male fidelity,[355] there is also a reference to these characters as characters in a tragic play. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.6, an epistle to the author's loyal friend, Graecinus, Ovid mentions Theseus and Pirithous as an example of the best kind of male friendship:

non ita vixerunt Strophio atque Agamemnone nati,

non haec Aegidae Pirithoique fides.

quos prior est mirata, sequens mirabitur aetas,

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[351] Ingleheart (2010a) 319.
[352] *Ibid*.
[353] Ingleheart (2010a) 319-20.
[354] Ingleheart (2010a) 319.
[355] *Tr*. 1.3.66; 5.19; 9.31-2; 5.4.26.

in quorum plausus tota theatra sonant (*Pont*. 2.6.25-8)

This reference to the sons of Agamemnon and Sophios, Pylades and Orestes, featuring as a play on stage could be read either as an allusion to a performance of Aeschylus' *Oresteia* or Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*, or to a performance of a Roman tragedy on the topic of their friendship.[356] So, given the tragic context of the preceding hexameter and the theatrical setting of the succeeding couplet, we could also interpret the reference to Theseus and Pirithous in 26 as a reference to a lost tragedy on the theme of Theseus and Pirithous' friendship,[357] perhaps narrating their katabasis during which they both sat down on a rock only to find that they were stuck to it.[358] Opportunely, Heracles descended to Hades and rescued Theseus, but when Theseus attempted to free Pirithous, the Underworld shook and Theseus was forced to leave him behind.[359] The reference to Theseus and Pirithous on the tragic stage in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.6 establishes the pair of heroes as a model of fidelity for Ovid's exile letters and also evokes the tragic end to their friendship when Pirithous was left behind in the Underworld.

In the exile letters, Theseus occurs predominantly alongside Pirithous, providing a paradigm of male friendship which the author and his addressee should emulate. This parallel is first mobilised in *Tristia* 1.3, when Ovid recalls the loyalty of steadfast friends on the very night he left Rome for Tomis:

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[356] On Pylades and Orestes as paradigms of male friendship in the exile works, see Ingleheart (2010b). Several Roman tragedies seem to have treated the friendship between Orestes and Pylades: on this see Ingleheart (2010b) 238-9. Cicero reports Orestes and Pylades on the Roman tragic stage at Cic. *Am*. 24; *Fin*. 2.79, 5.63. For the surviving fragments of Pacuvius' *Chryses*, which features the friendship of Orestes and Pylades, see Schierl (2006) 212-39 fr. 62-86.

[357] It would be profitable to read *Tristia* 1.5.19-22 in the same light, since the couplet featuring the fraternal bonds of Theseus and Pirithous (19-20) is directly succeeded by another narrating the love between Pylades and Orestes (21-2). Theseus and Pirithous also occur in close proximity to Pylades and Orestes in *Tr*. 5.4.25-6.

[358] Theseus and Pirithous descended to the Underworld together as a mark of their friendship, according to Hom. *Od*. 11.630-1. Other sources mention that Pirithous wanted to go to the Underworld to abduct Persephone to be his wife, just as Theseus had abducted Helen, and Theseus accompanies him out of solidarity: Virg. *Aen*. 6. 392-7; Apollod. 2.124, *Epit*. 1.23-4.

[359] Apollod. 2.124, *Epit*. 1.23-4; Hyg. *Fab.* 251; 257.1; Hor. *Od*. 4.7.

quosque ego dilexi fraterno more sodales,

o mihi Thesea pectora iuncta fide! (*Tr*. 1.3.65-6)

The fraternal love of male friends is metaphorically hailed as *Thesea ... fides*, alluding to the famous male comradeship between Theseus and Pirithous and portraying Theseus as a paragon of fidelity. From this early epistle onwards, Ovid uses the myth of Theseus and Pirithous as a mythological equivalent for the relationship between the *relegatus poeta* and his friends who remain loyal to him when he is in exile.

After the introduction of the Theseus paradigm in *Tristia* 1.3, this equation is then repeated in *Tristia* 1.5, an epistle to a faithful friend. At the beginning of the letter, Ovid explains that throughout the collection, he will not be addressing his friends by name,[360] but rather will be replacing their names with those of mythological characters:

scis bene quem dicam, positis pro nomine signis,

officium nec te fallit, amice, meum (*Tr*. 1.5.7-8)

This use of the Theseus and Pirithous paradigm as a substitute for naming one of Ovid's loyal friends then occurs at 19-20, where Ovid claims that the love of a steadfast friend is truly appreciated when one is in dire straits:

si tamen haec navis vento ferretur iniquo,

ignoraretur forsitan ista fides.

Thesea Pirithous non tam sensisset amicum,

si non infernas vivus adisset aquas (*Tr*. 1.5.17-20)

Here, the recollection of the myth of Pirithous accompanying Theseus to the Underworld to represent a real individual is particularly useful in the case of epistles to friends who cannot be named in the *Tristia*, since it gives the addressee a sense of identity which they would otherwise lack, while also paying him a flattering compliment by likening him to a mythical

[360] On names and anonymity in the *Tristia*, see Oliensis (1997).

paragon of loyalty. In addition, Ovid here equates his faithful friend, whose fidelity he praises in 18, with Theseus who showed such loyalty to Pirithous (19), thus implying a parallel between himself and Pirithous, who was condemned to remain in Hades even while he was still alive (20). Thus, Pirithous, while admittedly still alive, is forced to endure a living death in the Underworld, and I consider this to be a mythical representation of the current state of civic death that the author portrays himself as enduring in exile at Tomis.[361]

The *exemplum* of Theseus and Pirithous in *Tristia* 1.5 is then succeeded by those of Orestes and Pylades (21-2) and Nisus and Euryalus (23-4) and these mythical paradigms are repeated in *Tristia* 5.4. *Tristia* 5.4, another epistle to a loyal friend, which also utilises the paradigm of Theseus and Pirithous, but develops this equation by including it in a list of other famous male friends:

teque Menoetiaden, te, qui comitatus Oresten,

te vocat Aegiden Euryalumque suum (*Tr*. 5.4.25-6)

Here, the inclusion of four pairs of loyal male friends (Achilles and Patroclus; Orestes and Pylades; Theseus and Pirithous; Euryalus and Nisus)[362] in one elegiac couplet consolidates and highlights the common theme of loyalty found in each of these different myths. At the same time, the repetition of the *exempla* of Theseus and Pirithous and Nisus and Euryalus

[361] On exile and Ovid's "death" see nn. 117, 120, 122. When considering the depictions of Theseus and Pirithous in the exile works it is useful to bear in mind that Ovid also extends the equation between exile and death to characterise his geographical surroundings by portraying his Tomitan locale as the Underworld. Williams (1994) 13 has previously argued for the portrayal of Tomis in the exile works as being on a par with that of the Underworld in Latin literature: "the physical characteristics of the Tomitan environment are also those of the Underworld. The cold of Pontus (*Pont*. 1.7.11-12, 4.12.33-4 etc.) is as unbearable and unrelenting as that of the Underworld (cf. *pallor hiemsque tenent late loca senta*, *Met*. 4.436). On the coast of the Black Sea only wormwood grows (*Pont*. 3.1.23-4, 3.8.15; cf. Plaut. *Trin*. 934-5, Cato *Agr*. 159); in all other respects the soil is barren (*Tr*. 3.10.71-6, *Pont*. 1.3.51-2) in accordance with both the Virgilian portrayal of Scythia (*G*. 3.352-5) and the familiar poetic vision of Hades (cf. *non seges est infra, non vinea culta*, Tib. 1.10.35) which was to be vividly recreated by Seneca in the *Hercules Furens* (698-702)." On the depiction of Tomis as being like the Virgilian Underworld in *Aeneid* 6 and the Home of Famine in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 8, see Claassen (1988) 166-7.

[362] For discussion of the possible homoerotic undertones to the Nisus and Euryalus myth, see Makowski(1989).

reinforces their use as *exempla* of friendship in *Tristia* 1.5. Furthermore, the high number of mythical *exempla* in this single couplet of *Tristia* 5.4 also emphasises the loyalty of the addressee and consolidates these *exempla* in a concise and punchy manner.

Theseus and Pirithous also appear as paradigms of male friendship in *Tristia* 1.9, with a particular focus on the myth of how their friendship was tested during their katabasis. In *Tristia* 1.9, a letter to one of the author's unnamed loyal friends, Ovid reassures him that Caesar will not be angry that they are standing by their friend but, in contrast, they will be all the more respected for their continued support (23-6). This sentiment is then followed by a number of mythological *exempla*, amongst which is:

quod pius ad Manes Theseus comes iret amico,

Tartareum dicunt condoluisse deum (*Tr*. 1.9.31-2)[363]

The Theseus and Pirithous parallel is also used in conjunction with a named friend, Maximus, in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3.43-4 and also features the myth of their katabasis:

Pirithoum Theseus Stygias comitavit ad undas:

a Stygia quantum sors mea distat aqua? (*Pont*. 2.3.43-4)

Here, as in *Tristia* 1.5 and 1.9, Theseus and Pirithous are portrayed as being present in the Underworld, which was the ultimate test of their loyalty to one another. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3.44, however, this recurring scenario is modified so as to be explicitly, and self-consciously, connected with the author's own situation when he implicitly identifies himself with Pirithous and apostrophises his addressee, asking *a Stygia quantum sors mea distat aqua?* Therefore, Ovid connects the katabasis of Theseus and Pirithous with the image of his own death and imagines Tomis as the Underworld. In turn, this connects with, and contributes towards, the recurring theme of exile as death which we find throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[364] However, the already frequent equation between exile and death is modified slightly in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.3.43-4, since it rests upon the katabasis of

[363] For the division of *Tr*. 1.9 into two epistles, see Hall (1995) 39, 42.
[364] On Ovid's exile and death, see n. 117.

these characters, and a katabasis is achieved by living heroes who temporarily go to the land of the dead and then return.[365] Does the modified exile-as-death equation imply that, like the heroes who perform katabases, the author will likewise return from Tomis, a place that, as we have seen, is depicted as the Underworld?[366] While this may suggest optimism about the poet's future, it should be remembered that the katabasis of Theseus and Pirithous was not wholly successful, since Pirithous did not return from the Underworld.[367] Bearing in mind that the comparisons between Theseus and Pirithous rest upon the identification of the pair with Ovid and a friend, could this then mean that Ovid does not hold strong hopes that he will be recalled from exile? This would be an unusual feature for a mythical parallel in the exile works, given that when Ovid chooses mythical equations for his situation, they tend to involve the capacity for return from the mythical character's place of suffering.[368] This often includes Ovid likening himself to heroes who successfully complete a katabasis by descending to the Underworld and returning from it while still alive.[369] In the case of Theseus and Pirithous, Theseus fails in his attempts to rescue his friend and bring him back to the land of the living. Indeed, this mythical parallel for the author is grim: exile as death has become exile as remaining in the Underworld indefinitely, a scenario from which there is no return. In this sense, the Pirithous parallel is a bleak one for the author, since it does not provide the option of the happy ending that other heroic narratives provide.

At the end of the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the parallelism between Theseus and Pirithous and the author and his loyal friends is so well established that only one half of the equation needs to be mobilised in order for the reader to infer the rest of the parallel. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.2, an epistle to Cotta, Ovid praises his friend's loyalty and offers him immortality in poetry in return:

occidit et Theseus et qui comitavit Oresten,

sed tamen in laudes vivit uterque suas.

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[365] Hyg. *Fab*. 251.
[366] On Tomis as the Underworld, see Williams (1994) 12-20.
[367] Apollod. 2.124; *Epit*. 1.23-4; Hyg. *Fab.* 251.
[368] See sections on Ulysses (in Chapter Two) and Philoctetes (in this chapter).
[369] See sections on Ulysses (in Chapter Two) and Alcestis (in Chapter Four).

vos etiam seri laudabunt saepe nepotes,

claraque erit scriptis gloria vestra meis (*Pont*. 3.2.33-6)

Ovid likens Cotta to both Theseus and Pylades, in two compact equations with two characters from two separate myths, which are packed into one hexameter for the reader to unravel. This plays on the reader's awareness of Greek tragedy and wider myth, and also indicates that these parallels have been repeated so often in the exile works as *exempla* of friendship that they no longer need to be spelled out in full. For instance, Ovid also likened his loyal correspondents to Theseus and Orestes in *Tristia* 1.5 and also in *Tristia* 5.4. The repeated parallel between Ovid's friends and Theseus reinforces the way that Ovid presents Theseus as a paradigm of loyalty and, in turn, heightens the compliment that this bestows upon his addressees.

The main role which Theseus plays in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* seems to be as a paradigm of the faithful male companion to Pirithous, who was doomed to eternity in the Underworld. This is repeatedly, and explicitly, likened to the author's own situation with regard to his steadfast male friends.[370] However, Ovid takes an ambitious step in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10.71-84, where he likens his faithful friend (Albinovanus) to the faithful Theseus, but he develops this comparison further by stating that Albinovanus can be Theseus if he remains loyal:

at tu, non dubito, cum Thesea carmine laudes,

materiae titulos quin tueare tuae,

quemque refers, imitere virum: vetat ille profecto

tranquilli comitem temporis esse Fidem.

qui quamquam est factis ingens et conditur a te 75

vir tanto, quanto debuit ore cani,

[370] For Theseus as a mythological *exemplum* with which to reward loyal friends by making them immortal in verse, see Nagle (1980) 76. On the use of *laus* and *fama* to praise male friends (and Ovid's wife) in the exile works: Nagle (1980) 76-81.

est tamen ex illo nobis imitabile quiddam,

inque fide Theseus quilibet esse potest.

non tibi sunt hostes ferro clavaque domandi,

per quos vix ulli pervius Isthmos erat, 80

sed praestandus amor, res non operosa volenti:

quis labor est puram non temerasse fidem?

haec tibi, qui praestas indeclinatus amico,

non est quod lingua dicta querente putes (*Pont*. 4.10.71-84)

Here, Ovid casts his friend, Albinovanus, as a loyal Theseus figure. In his application of the Theseus myth to describe the loyalty of Albinovanus, Ovid notes that while Theseus' heroic feats are impressive deeds of physical strength, maintaining your loyalty and affection for a friend in the face of adversity is an equally difficult prospect (78-81). Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid has created an image of Theseus as the ultimate friend, a paragon of fidelity which his own friends should aspire to. After Ovid has established Theseus as the ultimate exemplar of male friendship, he dethrones Theseus by claiming that anyone can be as devoted as him, thus undermining and belittling Theseus' achievement. Thus, in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10, Ovid diminishes the mythical *exemplum* of friendship that he has repeatedly constructed throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. At the same time, Ovid promotes his loyal friend by putting him on the same level as Theseus, providing an empowering and flattering source of encouragement to his addressee. In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid has consistently presented Theseus as a loyal friend, thus effectively rewriting the Theseus myth (insofar as he suppresses mention of Theseus' even more famous lack of erotic loyalty), but then Ovid destroys Theseus as a symbol of extreme fidelity by suggesting that any of his friends could replace him as the paragon of loyalty.

In conclusion, Theseus is portrayed as the paradigm of loyalty throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Ovid carefully negotiates the problems surrounding the characterisation of Theseus as an untrustworthy and fickle lover from earlier Latin literature

(particularly concerning his abandonment of Ariadne in Catullus 64) by omitting any mention of Theseus' relationship with Ariadne in the exile letters. Instead, the focus of Theseus' characterisation falls on his relationship with Pirithous, a friend to whom he was much more faithful than he ever was to Ariadne. As a result, Theseus and Pirithous become suitable paradigms of male friendship in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and they are repeatedly associated with Ovid and his loyal friends. Ovid most often falls into the role of Pirithous, who was unfortunately left behind in the Underworld, an image which aptly reflects the isolated author in relegation, doomed to live out a form of living death in exile. Even though Pirithous is left behind in the Underworld, Theseus has valiantly tried to save him but could not do so successfully, meaning that it was not Theseus' choice to leave Pirithous behind. Let us now consider the heroic comradeship of Ulysses and Philoctetes, a relationship that is in some ways the very antithesis of that between Theseus and Pirithous: while Theseus is forced to unwillingly leave behind his friend in the Underworld, Ulysses willingly abandons Philoctetes on an island where he is left to die.

Philoctetes

As we have just seen, the theme of loyalty among friends is important in the depictions of heroes in the exile works, and loyalty between comrades also plays a crucial role in the myth of Philoctetes, who was abandoned by his comrade, Ulysses, and left to die. According to Hyginus,[371] Philoctetes, a Greek hero who had been a suitor for the hand of Helen, sails with the rest of the Greek fleet for Troy.[372] During a break at Lemnos en route, Philoctetes is unfortunately bitten by a venomous snake. Since the wound is both serious and malodorous, Philoctetes soon proves to be unpopular with his comrades. Upon the orders of Menelaus and Agamemnon, Ulysses abandons Philoctetes, who is left alone on Lemnos

[371] Hyg. *Fab*. 36, 81, 102.
[372] On Ovid's use of the no longer extant works of the Augustan Hyginus as a source for his rendition of myths in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, see Claassen (2001) 13-14.

with no means of escape. In this section, I will argue that Ovid parallels himself with the abandoned and wounded Philoctetes, and I shall consider how this equation can work when the author has elsewhere in the exile works associated himself with Ulysses, the very hero responsible for Philoctetes' desertion. First of all, however, let us explore some important master narratives for the characterisation of Philoctetes in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Sophocles' tragic play, *Philoctetes*, begins on Lemnos with the arrival of Odysseus, who has returned to the island to pick up the bow of Heracles, which is in the possession of Philoctetes. Accompanied by Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, Odysseus needs to take the bow back with him to Troy to fulfill a prophecy that Troy will not fall without the bow of Heracles.[373] At the opening of the Sophoclean tragedy, Odysseus recalls his past treatment of Philoctetes, a man abandoned to suffer intense pain on an uninhabited island:

> Ἀκτὴ μὲν ἥδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς
> Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ᾽ οἰκουμένη,
> ἔνθ᾽, ὦ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεὶς
> Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, τὸν Μηλιᾶ
> Ποίαντος υἱὸν ἐξέθηκ᾽ ἐγώ ποτε,
> ταχθεὶς τόδ᾽ ἕρδειν τῶν ἀνασσόντων ὕπο,
> νόσῳ καταστάζοντα διαβόρῳ πόδα:
> ὅτ᾽ οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμὶν οὔτε θυμάτων
> παρῆν ἑκήλοις προσθιγεῖν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀγρίαις
> κατεῖχ᾽ ἀεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαις,
> βοῶν, στενάζων. (S. *Ph*. 1-11)[374]

Sophocles' play focuses on the persuasion of Philoctetes to return to Troy with Neoptolemus and Odysseus. The main obstacle for Odysseus is Philoctetes' hatred for him, a direct result of Odysseus' abandonment of the ailing Philoctetes on Lemnos. The

[373] Apollod. *Epit*. 5.8; Hyg. *Fab*. 102.
[374] I am using Pearson's (1924) edition of *Philoctetes*.

Sophoclean portrayal of Philoctetes as an abandoned and cruelly treated man proves fruitful for the exile works where Ovid portrays himself as Philoctetes abandoned by the Ithacan hero. The myth of Philoctetes is a very apt choice for an authorial parallel because it fits in very well with Ovid's overall exilic image: while Philoctetes is alone, deserted on an island, wounded physically, and left for dead by his comrades, Ovid is also alone, relegated to Tomis on the shores of the Black Sea, metaphorically wounded by his exile,[375] and repeatedly portrays himself as dead or dying.[376] This mythical parallel for our author is not, however, without its complications when we realise that the Philoctetes parallel may not be suitable in conjunction with the Ulysses equation which, as we have already discussed, is an extended and repeated parallel for Ovid. We are going to explore just how these two authorial parallels can coexist in the mythic framework of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* even though they are mutually exclusive, but let us first examine how the myth of Philoctetes' abandonment was treated in the *Metamorphoses*, a text where the author aligns himself with the character of Ulysses.[377]

Ovid engages with the Sophoclean narrative of Philoctetes and Odysseus in the epic *Metamorphoses*, which addresses the moral acceptability of Ulysses' abandonment of Philoctetes. The questionable morality of this deed is debated between Ulysses and Ajax in *Metamorphoses* 13, during the contest for the arms of Achilles between Ulysses and Ajax, when Ajax proposes that Philoctetes was both cruelly and unfairly treated:

> *expositum Lemnos nostro cum crimine haberet,*
>
> *qui nunc, ut memorant, silvestribus abditus antris*
>
> *saxa moves gemitu Laertiadaeque precaris,*

---

[375] It is possible that Ovid has adapted the motif of exile as a wound from an earlier source that is no longer extant. It is also possible that Seneca could also be drawing on these early lost sources in his later depiction of exile as a wound in *Cons. Helv*. 1-2. Ovid's wound can also be understood in more amatory terms, as a reflection of the wound of love (as we shall discuss later). Thomsen (1979) interprets Ovid's wound in the exile works as belonging to a wider discourse of medical imagery that permeates the exilic collections, thus supporting her comparison between the exile works and the *Remedia amoris* (Thomsen (1979) 46-67).

[376] See n. 117.

[377] For more on this, see the Ulysses section in Chapter Two.

quae meruit; quae, si di sunt, non vana precaris

et nunc ille eadem nobis iuratus in arma, 50

heu! pars una ducum, quo successore sagittae

Herculis utuntur, fractus morboque fameque

velaturque aliturque avibus volucresque petendo

debita Troianis exercet spicula fatis.

ille tamen vivit, quia non comitavit Ulixem (*Met*. 13.46-54)

Ulysses later replies to Ajax's argument by stating that he hopes that Philoctetes is still alive so that Ulysses can obtain his bow and arrow:

nec Poeantiaden quod habet Vulcania Lemnos
esse reus merui; factum defendite vestrum
(consensistis enim). nec me suasisse negabo 315
ut se subtraheret bellique viaeque labori
temptaretque feros requie lenire dolores.
paruit—et vivit! non haec sententia tantum
fida, sed et felix, cum sit satis esse fidelem.
quem quoniam vates delenda ad Pergama poscunt, 320
ne mandate mihi: melius Telamonius ibit
eloquioque virum morbis iraque furentem
molliet aut aliqua perducet callidus arte.
ante retro Simois fluet et sine frondibus Ide
stabit et auxilium promittet Achaia Troiae, 325
quam cessante meo pro vestris pectore rebus
Aiacis stolidi Danais sollertia prosit.
sis licet infestus sociis regique mihique
dure Philoctete, licet exsecrere meumque
devoveas sine fine caput cupiasque dolenti 330
me tibi forte dari nostrumque haurire cruorem:

[utque tui mihi, sic fiat tibi copia nostri:]
te tamen adgrediar mecumque reducere nitar,
tamque tuis potiar (faveat Fortuna) sagittis (*Met*. 13.313-34)

Philoctetes here proves to be a point of argument between two heroes competing for the arms of Achilles and debating the appropriateness of his treatment by Ulysses, thus recalling Sophocles' *Philoctetes*. While the portrayal of Philoctetes in the *Metamorphoses* is primarily focalised through Ajax and Ulysses in turn as they compete with each other rhetorically,[378] his presentation in the exile letters is very much centered upon his sufferings on Lemnos as a wounded outcast. The myth of Philoctetes presents Ovid with an opportune parallel for the portrayal of his own authorial circumstances as an abandoned and wounded figure because of the tragic Sophoclean source text. In addition, the consideration of how fairly Philoctetes was treated in *Metamorphoses* 13 offers our author the chance to present himself as a similarly unjustly treated individual who suffers disproportionate torment in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. There is, however, a notable difference in the portrayal of Philoctetes in the *Metamorphoses* and the exilic epistles in terms of the relationship between the author and character. While in the *Metamorphoses* Ovid identifies himself with the oratorical genius of Ulysses and Philoctetes serves as a point of argument,[379] in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* this author-character relationship shifts slightly and, even though Ovid continues to portray himself as the Ithacan hero, the author can also identify with Philoctetes, whose character gains importance once the author is relegated to Tomis.

In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid portrays Philoctetes as the paradigm of exilic suffering with whom he identifies, thus characterising the authorial persona as a similarly tormented and abandoned figure. Philoctetes appears in the opening epistle of *Tristia* 5 which contains an explanation of why the topic of this volume of the *Tristia* is so sad:

flebilis ut noster status est, ita flebile carmen,
materiae scripto conveniente suae (*Tr*. 5.1.5-6)

[378] See n.229.
[379] See the Ulysses section and nn.229, 230, 231, 232, 234, 235.

The poet then expands on how writing poetry in exile alleviates the author's own sufferings.[380] As Ovid imagines his addressee asking him why he continues to compose poetry in exile, the author replies:

exigis ut nulli gemitus tormenta sequantur,

acceptoque gravem vulnere flere vetas? (*Tr*. 5.1.51-2)

Ovid then includes a list of famous mythological victims who wept when they endured hardship. Among these *exempla* are Philoctetes and Priam:

ipse Perilleo Phalaris permisit in aere

edere mugitus et bovis ore queri.

cum non sit Priami lacrimis offensus Achillis,

tu fletus inhibes, durior hoste, meos?

cum faceret Nioben orbam Latoia proles,

non tamen et siccas iussit habere genas.

est aliquid, fatale malum per verba levare:

hoc querulam Procnen Halcyonenque facit.

hoc erat, in gelido quare Poeantius antro

voce fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.

strangulat inclusus dolor at mens aestuat intus,

cogitur et vires multiplicare suas (*Tr*. 5.1.52-65)

While Philoctetes' injured foot leads to cries of lamentation in his suffering,[381] his situation is not dissimilar to that of the author.[382] As both are relegated to a remote location for the

[380] On this, see Nagle (1980) 100-104.
[381] On the onomatopoetic elements of Philoctetes' cries see Luck (1977) 282-3.

foreseeable future and are isolated, it seems that both are living a form of exile.[383] It is also apt that Ovid has chosen to include Philoctetes in these mythical *exempla* in *Tristia* 5.1, since the list illustrates those who have suffered a *grave vulnus* (52) and Philoctetes famously bore an injured foot.[384] The author aligns himself with Philoctetes and Priam in a very similar manner at *Tristia* 5.4, when commenting that those in suffering cannot keep silent, and illustrates this by deploying the mythical *exempla* of Priam and Philoctetes:

> *quid Priamus doleat, mirabitur, Hectore rapto,*
>
> *quidve Philoctetes ictus ab angue gemat* (*Tr*. 5.4.11-12)

The repetition of the parallels with Priam and Philoctetes in *Tristia* 5.1 and 5.4 reinforces their suitability as alter egos for the author who suffers greatly just as Priam and Philoctetes did. However, the repetition of these parallels (as well as their juxtaposition) in *Tristia* 5.4 highlights the differences between the myths of Priam and Philoctetes: while Philoctetes was physically injured on the foot, Priam's wounds are emotional; the result of losing his son Hector and supplicating Achilles for the return of his son's maimed body. An awareness of the difference between corporeal and emotional wounds in *Tristia* 5.4 encourages a re-reading of the use of Priam and Philoctetes as *exempla* of wounded individuals in *Tristia* 5.1.[385] The mythical *exempla* in *Tristia* 5.1 are also a mixture of those individuals who are in physical pain, and those who are in emotional distress: Perillus is being tortured (53-4), whereas Priam is grieving the loss of his son (55-6), Niobe is mourning the death of her children (57-8), Procne laments the murder of her children (60), and Halcyone is grieving for her husband (60). At the end of this list, the final mythical *exemplum* is Philoctetes, whose wounded foot makes him cry out in pain. However, the following couplet clarifies that

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[382] This could also connect with the author's self-portrayal as "maimed": on this, see Tissol (2005). On the association between the authorial *corpus* and bodies, see Farrell (1999).
[383] Claassen (1990b) 581-3 interprets the way Ovid portrays himself as being wounded or ill in exile as a facet of his self-presentation as being dead, thus linking the imagery of maiming in the exilic corpus with the theme of death.
[384] Apollod. *Epit*. 3.27; Hyg. *Fab*. 102.
[385] On the relationship between mental and physical pain in the Ovidian exile works, paying particular attention to the philosophical concepts of *animus*, *mens*, and *corpus*, see Thomsen (1979) 92-105.

Philoctetes' pain is not just physical, for it is his *dolor* (63) that grows in strength as he groans in his cave. This description of Philoctetes' grief makes the reader aware that his maimed foot is not explicitly mentioned in the passage, creating an ambiguity over whether it is his injured foot or his grief at his abandonment that causes his sorrow (or, perhaps, both), further blurring the distinction between physical and emotional pain in this passage.[386]

Philoctetes continues to be a promising prospect for exploring the relationship between physical wounds and mental suffering in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The following epistle in *Tristia* 5 features Philoctetes and likens his situation as a wounded man in exile to that of the author, who was of poor health but has recovered (*Tr*. 5.2.3) yet still suffers from an ill mood at Tomis.[387] The relationship between the mythical *exemplum* as an illustration of the author's own condition in this instance further develops the exploration of the relationship between physical and emotional pain found in *Tristia* 5.1:

mens tamen aegra iacet, nec tempore robora sumpsit,

adfectusque animi, qui fuit ante, manet;

quaeque mora spatioque suo coitura putavi

vulnera non aliter quam modo facta dolent (*Tr*. 5.2.7-10)[388]

In *Tristia* 5.2, Ovid's letter to his wife telling her of his misery, the author again likens himself to Philoctetes, suffering from his wound in isolation:

paene decem totis aluit Poeantius annis

pestiferum tumido vulnus ab angue datum (*Tr*. 5.2.13-14)

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[386] For Ovid's tendency to convey subdued moods in physical terms, see Thomsen (1979) 50; Nagle (1980) 60-1.

[387] On the possibility that Ovid's descriptions of his ill health in the *Tristia* are allusions to the typical symptoms of love-sickness found in the genre of erotic elegy, see Nagle (1980) 61-2 and Williams (1994) 124. For the details of elegiac love-sickness, see Sabot (1976) 502-9. On the elegiac concept of love as a disease, see Lilja (1965) 100-9.

[388] For the division of *Tr*. 5.2 into two epistles see Hall (1995) 176, 179.

While Philoctetes provides an apt mythical parallel, which aligns reality with fiction by using mythical figures as a means of authorial self-portrayal, there is more complex play on the difference (and slippage) between reality and myth operating at several levels here when we understand that Ovid, while physically sick (and healed) yet mentally saddened in *Tristia* 5.2, can be understood as part of the extended metaphor of the pain of exile as a wound used throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. While *Tristia* 5.2 operates as part of this extended metaphor, the imagery of wounding becomes more complex when Philoctetes is used as a mythical *exemplum* for the author's sickness or sadness, since there is an element of play between real, physical wounds (such as Philoctetes suffered to his foot) and metaphorical ones (such as the misery in the mind of the author).[389] As we shall see in this section of the thesis, Ovid repeatedly uses the Philoctetes parallel to create an image of his exile as a wound, a metaphorical representation of Philoctetes' physical wound.[390]

Exploring the reference to Philoctetes in *Tristia* 5.2 in terms of how it contributes towards an overarching concern within the exile works for portraying the misery of exile as a physical pain highlights Ovid's predilection for playing on concepts of physical wounds in myth, but *Tristia* 5.2 also contains allusions that illuminate the exact nature of Philoctetes' wound, which was filled with poison:

paene decem totis aluit Poeantius annis

pestiferum tumido vulnus ab angue datum;

Telephus aeterna consumptus tabe perisset,

si non, quae nocuit, dextra tulisset opem.

et mea, si facinus nullum commisimus, opto,

vulnera qui fecit, facta levare velit,

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[389] Ovid routinely describes his exile as a wound, as noted in n. 337.

[390] Ovid elsewhere a similar technique by using parallels with Actaeon (ripped apart by his own hounds) to characterise his grief over his relegation as a physical wound. On the wound of exile and Actaeon, see Ingleheart (2006b); Rimell (2006) 27, 208; Ingleheart (2010a) 121-31, 148, 156-7, 404-5. On the Actaeon parallel for the author, and how Ovid uses it to cast himself as a similarly tragic figure, see Ingleheart (2006b), (2009) 200-3, and (2010a) 124-6.

contentusque mei iam tandem parte laboris

exiguum pleno de mare demat aquae (*Tr*. 5.2.13-20)

Here, Ovid likens his situation in exile to that of someone who has to endure a physical illness, and uses the mythical *exempla* of Telephus and Philoctetes to illustrate the extent of his suffering. In this process, Ovid likens himself to these heroes by highlighting that he too suffers from a wound, just as they did. In addition, these mythical *exempla* also provide optimistic parallels for the author, since both Philoctetes and Telephus were eventually cured of their wounds.[391] In this sense, both Philoctetes and Telephus assume the role of the patient as they have their wounds tended, and the author hopes that he too will one day have his wound healed. The inclusion of Philoctetes as an optimistic mythical *exemplum* for the convalescence of the author's wound recalls an instance in the *Remedia amoris* where Ovid also uses Philoctetes as an illustration of physical illness, and where the author and reader relationship is portrayed as one between doctor and patient:

vidi ego, quod fuerat primo sanabile, vulnus

dilatum longae damna tulisse morae (*Rem*. 101-2)

quam laesus fuerat, partem Poeantius heros

certa debuerat praesecuisse manu;

post tamen hic multos sanatus creditur annos

supremam bellis imposuisse manum.

qui modo nascentes properabam pellere morbos,

admoveo tardam nunc tibi lentus opem (*Rem*. 111-116)

However, here in the *Remedia* the reader is the patient and the *poeta* is the doctor, a reversal of the author's roles in *Tristia* 5.2: in the *Remedia* the author is not sick as in the

[391] For the healing of Philoctetes, see *Pont*. 1.3.5-8. For the healing of Telephus see *Met*. 12.112.

exile works, but is rather the picture of good health in his role as the doctor to the reader who is sick with love. In the *Remedia*, love is likened to the poison in Philoctetes' veins, and the *praeceptor amoris* is the only person who can cure the sufferer. An intertextual awareness of the depiction of Philoctetes in the elegiac *Remedia amoris* highlights possible genre conflation as Ovid casts himself as the author, wounded by his relegation to Tomis, just as the tragic Philoctetes was maimed and abandoned at Lemnos, but does so in such a way that recalls the motif of love as a wound that is commonly found in Roman elegy (particularly in the *Remedia*).[392] In addition, the recurrence of Philoctetes as a mythical *exemplum* in both the *Remedia* and the *Tristia* highlights the reader's awareness of how the role of the patient and doctor is inverted in the exile works: the author who was once the doctor to the reader (who was suffering from the wound of love in the *Remedia*) is now himself enduring the wound of exile in the *Tristia*. This creates an awareness of the difference between the persona of the *praeceptor amoris* found in the *Remedia amoris*, the capable doctor to the reader-patient, and the figure of the author as an ailing individual licking his wounds in the *Tristia* as he lives out his relegation at Tomis.

As Ovid establishes a repeated parallel between himself and Philoctetes, the reader begins to see the authorial persona in a similar light as an abandoned figure. Thinking of the authorial persona in exile as a deserted character can add a new understanding to our interpretation of mythic play in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1,[393] which features Philoctetes and Ulysses in close proximity. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, an epistle from the author to his absent wife, Ovid tells his spouse that his downfall has ensured his fame:

exposuit mea me populo Fortuna videndum,

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[392] For the image of love as a wound, see Propertius 2.12.12, 34.92, 3.8.21, 11.6, 21.32, 24.18, 4.4.30; *Her*. 2.48, 4.20, 6.40, 82, 7.190, 16.239, 278; *Am*. 1.2.29, 44, 2.9.4; *Ars* 1.21, 24, 166, 257, 262, 611, 3.572, 738; *Rem*. 44, 101, 125, 147, 283, 623, 729. On the language used to imagine love as a wound as a particularly erotic and elegiac concern, see Pichon (1902) 302. Nagle (1980) 57 considers the presentation of exile as a wound as an allusion to the image of love as a wound common in erotic elegy, but does not link this associative imagery to any mythical parallels Ovid draws in exile.

[393] On Ovid the author portraying himself as figures from tragedy in the exile works, see Ingleheart (2010b).

et plus notitiae, quam fuit ante, dedit (*Pont*. 3.1.49-50)

A number of mythical *exempla* follow to illustrate this point, amongst which are Philoctetes and Ulysses:

si minus errasset, notus minus esset Ulixes,

magna Philoctetae vulnere fama suo est (*Pont*. 3.1.53-4)

The inclusion of Philoctetes and Ulysses in the same couplet unifies these mythic parallels, yet this also highlights the unusual juxtaposition of these characters because it makes the reader think of the Sophoclean master narrative. In the Sophoclean play Philoctetes and Ulysses are great adversaries:[394] one cannot think of Philoctetes without thinking of his renowned opponent, for whom he has nothing but unadulterated hatred. The intrinsic and automatic association between Ulysses and Philoctetes in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1.53-4 is reflected in them sharing an elegiac couplet. However, having these two characters so close together leads us to wonder if Ovid could be toying with the construction of Ulysses as a persecuted man in Homeric epic, by putting him in the same couplet, right next to the person he famously persecuted in Sophoclean tragedy. In terms of mythic linear narrative, Ulysses and Philoctetes come together at Lemnos (as narrated in the eponymous Sophoclean tragedy) and then return to Troy together.[395] This means that it is counter to the wider mythic tradition, in terms of linear chronological narratives, for Ovid to place them in the same couplet when they are at such disparate times in their respective stories (while Ulysses is still wandering his way home to Ithaca, Philoctetes has already been recalled from exile, journeyed to Troy, and then returned home). This means that Ovid is manipulating mythic traditions to serve his own purposes; he is effectively cherry-picking the most apt characters at the most suitable points in their lives to illustrate his own authorial persona, and the internal consistency of such references is of secondary importance.

Just as the portrayal of the author as Ulysses encourages the reader (and Ovid too) to hope that the he may one day be recalled from Tomis and return to Rome, just as Ulysses

[394] S. *Ph*. 46-7, 263-75, 314-316, 1302-3.
[395] Apollod. *Epit*. 5.8; Hyg. *Fab*. 102.

eventually returned to Ithaca,[396] the adoption of the Philoctetes myth as a suitable parallel for the author's own condition has a similarly optimistic teleological advantage: since Philoctetes was healed and returned home, will the same happen for Ovid? In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3, an epistle sent to Rufinus to thank him for his *consolatio* (3-4), the author likens his own improvement in mood upon reading this letter to the healing of Philoctetes by Machaon:

utque Machaoniis Poeantius artibus heros

lenito medicam vulnere sensit opem,

sic ego mente iacens et acerbo saucius ictu

admonitu coepi fortior esse tuo (*Pont*. 1.3.5-8)

Here, the *vulnus* of Philoctetes reflects the metaphorical *vulnus* of the author in exile,[397] and Philoctetes' healing (6) implies that Ovid's misery has also been alleviated (9). Such a parallel between Philoctetes at the end of his suffering and the author suggests that perhaps Ovid too will be permanently cured of the grief of exile. While in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.3 we see that Philoctetes has been healed (so he must, therefore, have finally left Lemnos to be treated at Troy by Machaon) and we as readers are left to infer the rest of his story after the Trojan War, when he is free to return home.[398] While the ending of the Philoctetes' myth is omitted in this epistle, it leaves the question of the author's return open: will he also end his exile and be able to return home? Thus, while the uses of the Philoctetes myth which are repeatedly equated with the author's own condition, contribute much towards our understanding of the misery of exile as a grievous *vulnus*, they also imply that the author too will be recalled from Tomis, just as Philoctetes was brought back from Lemnos. Therefore the Philoctetes myth is a suitable parallel not just for the author's present condition, but also for his optimistic hopes for his future.

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[396] On this see Ulysses section.
[397] For more on this see n.389.
[398] Apollod. *Epit*. 6.15b.

In conclusion, Philoctetes is a very apt parallel for the author in exile, and the associations between Ovid and Philoctetes characterise the *relegatus poeta* as an unjustly abandoned figure, alone and wounded in a remote location. While we have looked at a number of examples from myth that showcase the importance of loyal friendship between heroes, the myth of Philoctetes is defined by his abandonment by Ulysses, who famously deserted him on Lemnos after his foot was wounded. The theme of abandonment also features in the next mythic parallel we shall explore in the exile works, focusing on how Oedipus (who was born with a deformed foot and was exposed as a baby) was responsible for the death of his own father. In addition, we shall also take a look at the depiction of Telegonus (the son of Ulysses and Circe), who was left behind by his own father on his voyage back to Ithaca, only to return one day and kill the Ithacan hero.

Oedipus & Telegonus

The portrayal of Oedipus and Telegonus in the exile works is very closely intertwined with the author's self-depiction as the poet-father of his own collections, which are envisaged as being a literary family.[399] As the poetical corpus of Ovid is allegorised as a family, the author uses the examples of Oedipus and Telegonus to explore how the *Ars amatoria* was responsible for his exile, a state of existence which Ovid portrays as being like death.[400] This exploration of the depictions of Oedipus and Telegonus in the exile works, and how it reflects the relationship between the poet and his work, will focus on *Tristia* 1.1 in

[399] Nagle (1980) 84 sees the father/child relationship between Ovid and his works as a development of the earlier imagery of the volumes as his slaves (see n.130).

[400] In the main Introduction to this thesis I considered how *Tristia* 1.1 sets the tone for the exile works as its dishevelled and funereal state reflects Ovid's depiction of exile as a form of living death. Claassen (1990b) 111-13 explores how the tatty presentation of the *Tristia* volume may be a reflection of the Roman tradition of presenting children in such a state at their parent's funeral, thus implying that this volume is a child of the poet mourning for the author who is metaphorically dead in exile.

particular, because it is in this epistle that the author brands his own *Ars amatoria* as a parricide.[401]

Tristia 1.1 features two mythical heroes who represent the antithesis of loyalty. Oedipus and Telegonus are both infamous parricides, and they are used in the exile works to characterise the poet's earlier erotic works from an exilic perspective, thus revealing much about the author's relationship with his own poetry. *Tristia* 1.1 opens the *Tristia* with a fantasy about how the new volume goes to Rome to find the shelf that houses the other works of Ovid. As the author instructs the book where to go and how to behave towards his other volumes,[402] we get an insight into the authorial relationship not just with the new book of the *Tristia*, but also with other works from the corpus, such as the early amatory works. While directing the interactions between his books, Ovid portrays himself as the father of his poetry and constructs the authorial corpus as a family. This allegorical rendering of the poet's interaction with his texts includes the portrayal of the *Ars* as being equivalent to mythological characters who infamously murdered their own fathers: Oedipus and Telegonus. This depiction of the *Ars* as a mythological parricide also contains complex etymological play on the names of Oedipus and Telegonus to illuminate generic similarities between past and present works, while also adding a touch of humour to an otherwise serious discourse on the author-text relationship in which the "dead" author is portrayed as being murdered by his own creation.[403]

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[401] Thomsen (1979) considers the portrayals of Oedipus and Telegonus in the exile works as a reflection of the depiction of loving parents and children in Catullus and erotic elegy. For the recurring image of the loving parent and child relationship in Ovid's exile works, and how the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* recall similar imagery in the *Remedia amoris*, see Thomsen (1979) 42-5, 68-77. Thomsen's (1979) approach fits in well with her doctoral thesis as a whole, which concentrates on the relationship between the exile works and Ovid's earlier elegiacs. My doctoral thesis concentrates on the use of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and I shall be approaching the depictions of Oedipus and Telegonus with this in mind, focusing on how these mythical *exempla* operate in the poetry of exile which (as we shall see) features a number of myths that involve the murder of a child by a parent (Althaea, Medea, Procne) or the killing of a parent by their offspring (Oedipus, Telegonus).

[402] On this, see Hinds (1985) and Williams (1992).

[403] For a psychological reading of Oedipal-like narratives in the exile works, centering upon the authorial persona's relationship with his own work, see Walker (1997).

Tristia 1.1 opens the *Tristia* with the poet addressing his own book, which is sent to Rome without its author. Due to Ovid's relegation to Tomis, the first book of the *Tristia* travels to a region where the author himself cannot go:

Parve – nec invideo – sine me, liber, ibis in urbem,

ei mihi! quo domino non licet ire tuo. (*Tr*. 1.1.1-2)

As the book travels around Rome, Ovid seems almost to live vicariously through the book as he imagines and directs its journey around the city:

vade, liber, verbisque meis loca grata saluta (*Tr*. 1.1.15)

Eventually, the volume arrives at the place where the rest of the Ovidian corpus is held in the author's own library, where this new volume is to come to rest after its long journey:

cum tamen in nostrum fueris penetrale receptus,

contigerisque tuam, scrinia curva, domum,

aspicies illic positos ex ordine fratres,

quos studium cunctos evigilavit idem (*Tr*. 1.1.105-8)

The author then instructs the new volume on how to conduct itself towards the others, and in particular notes that *tres procul obscura latitantes parte videbis* (111).[404] These three volumes constitute the three books of the *Ars amatoria* (since the three volumes *amare docent*, *Tr*. 1.1.112), which are often portrayed as the cause of the author's downfall because they were interpreted as verses that incited adultery. It was on the charge of encouraging extra-marital relations (and also committing an *error*) that Ovid was relegated.[405] Since this collection is depicted as being partly responsible for the demise of Ovid, the new volume of the *Tristia* is instructed to shun the *Ars*, which is equated with Oedipus or Telegonus:

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[404] On the witty humour of Ovid's innovative use of the metaphor of the poet's books as slaves to portray the volumes as a family, see Frécaut (1972) 311-13.
[405] *Tr*. 2.207. For more on this, see the main Introduction.

hos tu vel fugias, vel, si satis oris habebis,

Oedipodas facito Telegonosque voces (*Tr*. 1.1.113-114)

Oedipus and Telegonus are both famous parricides of ancient myth, and this implies that the *Ars* is responsible for the demise of its author by comparing the work to two characters who famously killed their fathers.

The mythical parallel between the *Ars amatoria* and Oedipus and Telegonus is followed by a direct command to the exilic volume to obey its father's wishes and avoid its brothers:

deque tribus, moneo, siqua est tibi cura parentis,

ne quemquam, quamvis ipse docebit, ames (*Tr*. 1.1.115-116)

Here, the *Tristia* is explicitly told not to love its *fratres* (107) if the new exilic collection has any regard for the wishes of its parent (the author), presumably due to a tense relationship between the *relegatus poeta* and Ovid's earlier erotodidactic work, which he partly blames for his downfall.[406] Ovid presents his own connection with his *Ars amatoria* as strained and uncomfortable, something which is quite fitting since it was one of the contributing causes of his exile, but the author here superimposes his own tense relationship with the *Ars* onto the relationship between his new exilic collection and the erotodidactic work as he fosters discord between his own literary works. The uncomfortable nature of the relationship between the author-parent and his errant child who brought about his downfall is conveyed by using two notable parricides to describe the *Ars*. The parallelism between the poet's works and Oedipus and Telegonus implies an association between their deceased fathers, Laius and Odysseus (respectively) and the exiled author. The equation between the author and the deceased fathers of Oedipus and Telegonus should be interpreted as in keeping with the broader theme of exile as a form of living death which is explored elsewhere in the

[406] In contrast, Thomsen (1979) 70-7 reads the parent-child imagery in the exile works as a way of exploring how Ovid, the man, feels emotionally about his earlier works. Her work persuasively argues for the continuing positive relationship between the author and his erotic works in the authorial corpus (stressing continuity throughout the corpus as a whole) but at times overlooks the significance of the mythical parallels of Oedipus and Telegonus.

exile works.[407] In addition, by using parricides as uncomfortably appropriate myths to convey the relationship between earlier collections and the author, the poet is also portrayed as the father of his works. This image of Ovid as the father of his poetry is a repeated motif elsewhere in the exilic epistles.[408]

Throughout the exile letters, the author and text relationship is allegorised as one between parent and child.[409] This allegory features in *Tristia* 1.1,[410] when it becomes clear that Ovid is not the parent of one collection, but of a whole family of poetical works. As the author instructs the new exilic volume to visit the shelves where his other works are kept, he advises the volume that *aspicies illic positos ex ordine fratres* (107). So just as Ovid is the parent of the current volume, he is also the father of its *fratres*. If one understands the reference to the *fratres* of *Tristia* 1 in the same way that we considered Ovid's self-portrayal as the parent of the exilic volume, then we can understand that Ovid is the poet-parent of a number of collections, which are therefore related to each other as siblings. Thus, Ovid is the father of a whole family that includes all his works as siblings. The Ovidian corpus is then depicted as a family, with Ovid the poet-parent at its head. If we understand the allegory in this way, then what kind of 'family' is the Ovidian corpus? The exilic volume is told not to entertain any familiarity with the *Ars* (116), implying that there is a certain distance between members of the corpus. This suggests a degree of hostility within the corpus (which is to some degree encouraged by the poet-parent in 115-116), but nevertheless the

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[407] For Ovid's portrayal of exile as death, see nn. 117; 122.

[408] Cf. *Tr*. 1.7.35; 3.1.66; 3.14.13. On personal metaphors in classical antiquity, including familial metaphors, see Curtius (1953) 131-4. On Ovid as a parent-poet in the exile works, see Thomsen (1979) 67-79; Nagle (1980) 84-5; Davisson (1984).

[409] The allegory of a parent and child as a means of describing the relationship between author and text is not widely found in antiquity, but is first found in Plato's *Symposium*: καὶ πᾶς ἂν δέξαιτο ἑαυτῷ τοιούτους παῖδας μᾶλλον γεγονέναι ἢ τοὺς ἀνθρωπίνους, καὶ εἰς Ὅμηρον ἀποβλέψας καὶ Ἡσίοδον καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ποιητὰς τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ζηλῶν, οἷα ἔκγονα ἑαυτῶν καταλείπουσιν, ἃ ἐκείνοις ἀθάνατον κλέος καὶ μνήμην παρέχεται αὐτὰ τοιαῦτα ὄντα (Pl. *Smp*. 209c-d). Catullus also describes his verse in similar terms: *Etsi me assiduo confectum cura dolore /sevocat a Doctis, Hortale, Virginibus, / nec potis est dulcis Musarum expromere fetus / mens animi* (Cat. 65.1-4).

[410] Ovid portrays himself as the father of his poetical works several times in the exile works: *Tr*. 1.1.114-16, 7.35, 3.1.66, 14.9-18, *Pont*. 3.9.9-12. See also *Tr*. 1.7.17-22, where Ovid likens himself to Althaea killing her son, Meleager, as he burns his own *Metamorphoses*.

works are still *fratres* (107) and constitute a family, however tense relations may be within the group. It is not only a sense of tension and distance between the *fratres* which is causing problems within this family unit: the relationship between the father and three offspring is also highly problematic, and this is expressed by Ovid's pertinent choice of Oedipus and Telegonus as mythological parallels for the *Ars*.

Both Oedipus and Telegonus are infamous for committing parricide in Greco-Roman mythology. In the tragic source text for the myth of Oedipus, Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, Oedipus discovers and regrets that he has accidentally married his own mother and also thinks that he has killed his own father.[411] However, it is worth noting that he did not intend to do either of these actions: without full knowledge of events he inadvertently fulfills a prophecy made at his birth.[412] Telegonus' situation is quite similar to that of Oedipus, since he also unwittingly kills his own father.[413] Telegonus is the son of Circe and Odysseus, and he learns of his parentage from his mother before travelling in search of his father to Ithaca.[414] The lost Sophoclean play, *Odysseus Acanthoplex*,[415] is thought to narrate Telegonus' arrival in Ithaca,[416] whereupon he has a disagreement with a man and engages him in a fight. Telegonus kills the stranger, only to later discover that this man was his father, Odysseus.[417] The scenario of getting into a fight with a stranger and acting rashly by killing them, is strikingly similar to the circumstances under which Oedipus thinks that he has killed his own father.[418] The use of Oedipus and Telegonus as paragons of parricide in the exile works could be connected with the wider concern about how the exiled poet relates to the *Metamorphoses*, something which is also expressed by deploying the warped

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[411] S. *OT* 1182-5.
[412] S. *OT* 711-715.
[413] Also observed by Hinds (1985) 20. Cf. Thomsen (1979) 72.
[414] Apollod. *Epit*. 7.16; Hyg. *Fab.* 125.10, 125.20.
[415] Pearson (1917) 105-15 fr. 453-61 and Nauck (1964) 230-2 fr. 414-23.
[416] For a summary of the contents of Sophocles' *Odysseus Acanthoplex*: Webster (1936) 175-6; Bates (1961) 242; Sutton (1984) 88-90; Ahl (1996) 163-4; Ahl (2007) 172. On the putative similarities between *Odysseus Acanthoplex* and *Oedipus Rex*: Sutton (1984) 90-4.
[417] Apollod. *Epit*. 7.36-7; Hyg. *Fab.* 127.
[418] S. *OT* 729-827.

parent-child relationship to explore the author-text connection when Ovid likens himself to Althaea when he burns his own *Metamorphoses* in *Tristia* 1.7.15-22.[419]

While the use of the Oedipus and Telegonus myths in *Tristia* 1.1 speaks volumes about the author-text relationship, the mention of these two characters is unusual when we consider how, in the rest of the Ovidian corpus, the names of Oedipus and Telegonus are only used as geographical markers. The first of these two mythological parallels for the *Ars* at *Tristia* 1.1.114 is Oedipus. While this is the only occasion on which he is named as an individual mythological character in the Ovidian corpus, his name does occur once more as a descriptive epithet. In *Metamorphoses* 15 Oedipus is mentioned as a geographical marker for the city of Thebes:

Oedipodioniae quid sunt, nisi nomina, Thebae? (*Met*. 15.429)

Here, the name of Oedipus appears as a descriptive epithet of Thebes and he does not really make an appearance as a literary character in his own right; his name is briefly mentioned as a geographical marker. This is in contrast with Oedipus' portrayal at *Tristia* 1.1.114, where he is mentioned as a mythological character and features as an important mythical *exemplum* for the author-text relationship. Such a contrast in the usage of the Oedipus myth gives the instance in *Tristia* 1.1 much more weight because it functions at a deeper level when considered in comparison with a purely descriptive marker in the *Metamorphoses*. In turn, this highlights the use of the Oedipus myth in *Tristia* 1.1 and makes us aware of just how pertinent it is: if Ovid is the poet and father of his literary works, then some have turned against their creator and brought about his destruction. Just as one should interpret this myth as an allegory for how the *Ars* ruined Ovid, one should also remember that

[419] On the relationship between the exiled poet and the *Metamorphoses*, with particular attention to *Tr*. 1.1 and the myth of Althaea killing her son Meleager, see Thomsen (1979) 72-4; Nagle (1980) 30; Hinds (1985) 20-8; Tissol (2005); Claassen (2008) 163-5. Claassen (2008) 164 reads the reference to Oedipus and Telegonus at *Tr*. 1.1.114 as a direct inversion of the Althaea myth in *Tr*. 1.7: "Althaea, the mother who caused the death of her son Meleager when she threw into the fire the faggot that represented his life, serves to represent Ovid in *Tr*. 1.7.17-18 as 'father-poet' who placed on the pyre the *Metamorphoses* as his own literary 'child'. This, then, inverts the topos of the exile's little book as an Oedipus or Telegonus (*Tr*. 1.1.114), prototypical parricides."

Oedipus killed his father accidentally, because he was unaware of his father's identity, suggesting that the *Ars*' role in the downfall of the author is not as premeditated and as unforgiveable as one might have first thought.[420]

Telegonus' portrayal in the Ovidian corpus is much like that of Oedipus, in the sense that he appears most often as a descriptive epithet of a city. Telegonus is mentioned twice in the *Fasti*, both times as a means of identifying the city of Tusculum:

factaque Telegoni moenia celsa manu (*Fasti* 3.92)

In a similar fashion, Tusculum is described as *Telegoni … moenia* at *Fasti* 4.71. In his role as geographical marker for Tusculum, the city which he founded and with which he is associated, he often appears side by side with his mother, Circe. This is in contrast to *Tristia* 1.1.114, where he occurs as an individual character in his own right as opposed to being a descriptive geographical marker.

When Telegonus is mentioned in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, he does not operate as a geographical marker, but rather functions as an extension of his mother, Circe, and adds an element of biographical description to her portrayal. As Ovid encourages his wife to supplicate Livia on his behalf, he notes that Livia is not a mythological monster, and proceeds to list a selection of such creatures. Here, it is clarified that Livia is not *Telegonive parens vertendis nata figuris* (*Pont*. 3.1.123). Circe is not named directly in this reference, but a learned reader can discern to whom this line refers to, since she is identifiable by being *Telegoni... parens* and has a talent for changing men into beasts.[421] As such, Telegonus here features as a means to an end: he is part of a circumlocution that identifies his mother, who has a reputation for manipulating the forms of men.

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[420]As we have already discussed (in the Amor section of Chapter One) Amor elsewhere defends the *Ars* against the author's condemnation that it deliberately or willingly brought about the downfall of its own poet-parent. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, Amor appears to Ovid and claims that there was no offence in the *Ars*, but that the unwitting deed of the author (the *error* alluded to in Ovid's own admission that his exile was brought about by *carmen et error* (*Tr*. 2.207)) must have brought about his exile (*Pont*. 3.3.67-76).

[421] Cf. Circe in Hom. *Od*. 10.233-43.

Changing bodies and forms are not only used to typify Circe, but can also reflect the relationships between the exile works and earlier amatory poetry. Hinds (1985) convincingly argues that verbal puns on physical disparity and etymological play on the name of Oedipus in *Tristia* 1.1.114 are used as a means of recollecting the earlier elegiac works in exile whilst simultaneously exploring the changing author-text relationship.[422] Hinds analyses the appearance of Oedipus in 114 on etymological grounds, noting that "Oedipus, as was common knowledge in antiquity, got his name from his *deformity of foot* – thus Οἰδί–πους."[423] Hinds proposes that naming the *Ars* as Oedipus is a pun based on the concept of physical feet and metrical feet in poetry, playing on the physical form of elegiac verses where one line of a couplet is metrically shorter than the other (the hexameter of six feet is followed by a pentameter which contains five feet), and as such "the books of the *Ars*, these latter day parricides *in elegiac feet*, [may] be thought of as being Οἰδί-ποδες in that same etymological sense."[424] Hinds then consider how using the name Oedipus as an insult to the *Ars* is a direct contrast to how Ovid, in his earlier career, used to view wonky-footed couplets of elegy as something beautiful.[425] For instance, consider *Amores* 3.1 where the author describes the physical appearance of Elegy in a woodland grove:[426]

hic ego dum spatior tectus nemoralibus umbris,

quod mea quarebam Musa moveret opus.

venit odoratos Elegia nexa capillos,

et, puto, pes illi longior alter erat.

forma decens, vestis tenuissima, vultus amantis,

et pedibus vitium causa decoris erat (*Am*. 3.1.5-10)

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[422] Hinds (1985) 18-20.
[423] Hinds (1985) 18.
[424] *Ibid*.
[425] There are a number of feet puns found in the Ovidian corpus. For instance, see *Tr*. 1.1.16, 2.16; *Ibis* 45-6. On this see Ingleheart (2010a) 73 and, on foot jokes in other Latin authors, Heyworth (1993) 95 n.23.
[426] Hinds (1985) 18.

Here in the *Amores* Ovid notes that, while the goddess may walk with a limp, she is no less beautiful.[427] There is no such compliment, however, in the foot pun we find in *Tristia* 1.1.114: "as the poet reflects on his newly-changed fortunes, his affair with the world of erotic elegy has gone a little sour; and the charming 'defect' characteristic of the elegiac *pes* (hexameter longer than pentameter) becomes, I suggest, fair game for covert personal invective: slight unevenness of length is caricatured as swollen deformity, and the troublesome books of the *Ars* find themselves labeled as Οἰδί-ποδες for more reasons than one."[428] From Hinds' work on the appearance of Oedipus in *Tristia* 1.1.114 we can appreciate that the myth of Oedipus is being used to comment on the generic similarity between the exilic epistles and the amatory elegies, but at the same time, because of the nature of the Oedipus myth, it is also being deployed to explore the changing relationship between the artist and his works.

The changing relationship between the author and his poetic creations throughout his career may also be evident in the name of "Telegonus" if we understand his mythical *exemplum* in the same way that Hinds (1985) analysed the etymological pun in "Oedipus". While Oedipus operates as a playful exploration of the changing fortunes of the poet between the initial composition of his earlier, amatory wonky-footed elegies and those composed in his current state of relegation which climaxes in the "pot calling the kettle black"[429] as the exilic work (which also shares the earlier works' elegiac form) pokes fun at the disfigured elegiac *Ars*, it may be possible to further Hinds' (1985) work by understanding the reference to Telegonus in similar terms. As the new exilic volume is told that the *Ars* is not only an Oedipus, but also a Telegonus, a similar humorous scenario may be occurring. Claassen (2008) has already noted that "'tele-gonus' implies 'driven afar', an apt name for an exilic work",[430] yet it seems that she has misunderstood to which work this mythological parallel is being applied: the term is descriptive of the *Ars*, and not the *Tristia*. While this

[427] *Ibid*.
[428] Hinds (1985) 18-19.
[429] I have borrowed Hinds' concise summary of the tone of these lines from (1985) 19.
[430] Claassen (2008) 170.

may indeed imply "driven" far, it could also be etymologically linked to γόνος,[431] "that which is born" or "begotten", meaning that Telegonus was "begotten far away", which would be fitting considering that he was sired by Odysseus while staying with Circe, far away from his native Ithaca. If, however, we approach this etymological meaning in the same way as Hinds' (1985) article interpreted the etymology of Oedipus as activating a pun on the physical appearance of the elegiac couplet, then perhaps we could glean a further literary interpretation of the significance of the term Telegonus from *Tristia* 1.1.114. If Telegonus was "begotten far away", then while this is a reference to the *Ars*, this would also be an extremely apt description for the new volume of the exile works that is journeying to Rome to join its brothers on the bookshelves: fathered far away in Tomis by the poet-parent, it travels a long way across the empire to join its *fratres*. If this is the case, then it is highly ironic (and also slightly humorous) for such an exilic volume to "point the finger" and call the *Ars* a "Telegonus" (in the parricidal sense as the son of Odysseus and Circe) while the *Tristia* volume itself, etymologically speaking, is tele-gonus, begotten far away in Tomis. While to a certain extent we may be "splitting hairs" over the etymology of the second morpheme of "Telegonus", we should not lose sight of the importance of the first. "Tele" stresses the important notion of distance in the name,[432] and this plays on the physical distance between the place of authorship in relegation (as opposed to being composed at Rome as the earlier Ovidian works were), the distance in time between composition of the current volume and the *Ars*, and also the emotional distance which is stressed between the exilic work and its treacherous brother.[433] The inclusion of Telegonus alongside Oedipus in 114 develops the author-text relationship beyond the realms of genre and myth by also including, and making us aware of this via etymological play, the notion of the poet-parent and the various relationships between the *fratres* in the Ovidian corpus. Here, the notion of distance inherent in "Telegonus" becomes very important, since it not only speaks volumes about the Ovidian corpus as a "family", but it also reminds the reader of the similarities

[431] LSJ *s.v.* γόνος 1.
[432] Hinds (1985) 18.
[433] *Tr*. 1.1.115-116.

between Ovid's situation and that of Odysseus,[434] since both create a child when far away from home.

The myths of Telegonus and Oedipus are used in the exile works as embodiments of the worst relationship possible between a parent and child, since both characters kill their own fathers. These potentially dangerous mythical *exempla* featuring murder within families are handled very well in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, as Ovid uses the parricides as allegorical representations of the poetical collection which was responsible for the author's own downfall. Therefore, Ovid, as the poet-parent of his creations, uses myth as a means of exploring the author-text relationship from an exilic perspective.

In conclusion, in this chapter we have explored how Ovid depicts his relationships with friends and his own artistic creations in mythological terms. The myths which Ovid chooses to use as allegorical representations of these relationships tend to emphasise the themes of loyalty and desertion, and featuring steadfast friends such as Theseus and Pirithous, Philoctetes and his untrustworthy comrade Ulysses, and the infamous Oedipus and Telegonus who killed their own fathers. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the paragons of friendship remain Theseus and Pirithous, who are repeatedly used as a flattering equation for some of the addressees of Ovid's epistles.

When Ovid aligns his loyal addressees with the loyal Theseus, throwing himself into the role of the faithful Pirithous, Ovid draws a parallel between the setting of their tragic narratives, the Underworld, and his own current location on the shores of the Black Sea. In this process, Ovid effectively depicts Tomis as the Underworld. The portrayal of Tomis as the Underworld in which both Ovid and Pirithous are trapped both plays on, and contributes towards, the recurring motif of exile as death. Throughout the exile works, Ovid repeatedly asserts that his life in relegation is like a form of living death, and his identification with Pirithous who is forever trapped in the Underworld further supports this assertion while, at the same time, emphasising the image of the *relegatus poeta* as an abandoned and forlorn individual.

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[434] For further discussion of the equation between Ovid and Odysseus, see the Ulysses section.

The parallel between Pirithous and Ovid in exile not only paints the author in a tragic light, but also has serious ramifications for his hope of recall to Rome. While Theseus bravely and faithfully tried to rescue his friend Pirithous from the Underworld, his attempts were all in vain and Pirithous was doomed to remain there. Thus, the equation between Pirithous and the author offers a rather pessimistic parallel for Ovid, who may be similarly trapped in his own Underworld at Tomis on a permanent basis. However, there are other more positive parallels found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. For instance, the author identifies himself with Philoctetes, who was marooned on Lemnos, but this myth does have a happy ending when Philoctetes is eventually rescued and brought to Troy, likewise implying that there is some hope of recall for Ovid.

As we have seen, throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid depicts his friendships in mythological terms by choosing particularly apt myths which illustrate the issues of loyalty and abandonment. These myths, particularly in the case of Theseus and Pirithous, support the association between Tomis and the Underworld, an equation which is an extension of the concept of exile as a form of living death. So far in this thesis we have explored how Ovid uses myths to construct his relationships with friends and enemies, as well as how Ovid's authorial relationship with his own corpus is portrayed through myths of desertion. Let us move on to consider how, in Chapter Four, Ovid uses myth in the exile works to characterise another kind of interpersonal relationship, particularly how the author presents his marriage. While Ovid lives out his relegation at Tomis, his unnamed wife remains far away at Rome. The author maintains his relationship with his current spouse by composing letters in which he praises her fidelity by likening her to several women who are famous good wives from myth, as we shall see in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: Women

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid uses mythical parallels and *exempla* to characterise his relationships with others, especially his friends (as we have just seen in the previous chapter) and, in particular, his wife.[435] This chapter will explore how Ovid portrays female mythical characters in the exile works. First of all, we will consider how Ovid likens his wife to a number of faithful wives from myth, depicting his spouse as being similarly devoted to her husband, and at the same time suggesting that the author is deserving of such loyalty while he is relegated. The second half of this chapter will move on to discuss the antithesis of the good wives who are paralleled with the author's own spouse, focusing particularly on how Medea is portrayed and how her characterisation reflects on Ovid's place of exile and his quality of life at Tomis.

Part One: The Canon of Good Wives in the Exile Works

In the exile letters, Ovid likens his spouse to a number of famously faithful wives from myth, characters that both complement Ovid's wife and act as paradigms of loyalty intended for her to emulate. Overall, Ovid's wife is depicted as being a paragon of spousal fidelity who continues to support her relegated husband even though they are separated by many miles.[436] The author tends to praise his wife by associating her with virtuous mythical women such as Penelope, Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne. These four famous wives from myth feature as role models for Ovid's wife in *Tristia* 5.5, and this catalogue of four faithful women is then repeated in *Tristia* 5.14 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1. So far in this thesis I have

[435] According to *Tr*. 4.10.69-74, Ovid had three wives in his lifetime. For speculation on the identities of these women, see Helzle (1989a).
[436] On the portrayal of Ovid's wife in the exilic elegies, see Hinds (1985); Helzle (1989a); Hinds (1999), Öhrman (2008).

approached the presentation of mythical characters by discussing the portrayal of individual heroes, but because these four women all feature in the same three poems I am going to, firstly, examine the three instances where all these women appear side by side as *exempla*.[437] Afterwards, I shall then discuss any further issues pertaining to each character, exploring any areas of their depiction that would benefit from deeper analysis in a section that focuses on the depiction of that character in particular.

The depictions of female mythological characters in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* reflect the fractured connection that the exilic letters have with Ovid's earlier corpus. For instance, the canon of good wives in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* often makes reference to the portrayal of these four virtuous women in Latin elegy, where they appear as paradigms of feminine virtue. In the exilic epistles, Ovid resurrects these models of feminine fidelity from his earlier elegiac corpus and uses them as encouraging *exempla* for his wife during his relegation.[438] The fact that Ovid opts to reuse these elegiac paradigms of loyalty in texts composed in exile suggests that the author is constructing links and associations between different texts in his corpus, thus suggesting a degree of continuity within the Ovidian corpus. Arguing that intertextual allusions constitute a sense of progression within the Ovidian corpus should not, however, eclipse that, while there are many similarities in the way that Ovid depicts these mythical women in exile, there are also notable differences in the way that their myths are used in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* when compared to his earlier verse.

As mentioned briefly in the main introduction to this thesis, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* are highly influenced by erotic elegy, yet these collections are also inherently products of the literary world of exile. This is evident in the way that the canon of good wives in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* rewrites the characters of these mythical women to reflect some of the main concerns of the exilic epistles, even though their presentation does recall some aspects of how these women feature in pre-exilic erotic elegy. For

[437] Öhrman (2008) 151-89 also structures her analysis of female mythical paragons in the exilic epistles by analysing Ovid's depiction of mythical wives in each letter.
[438] Ovid uses these mythological *exempla* for the benefit of his wife, much like their original use in erotic elegy as guidance for the beloved. For details on similarities and differences between Ovid's wife and the elegiac *puella*, see Nagle (1980) 44-6, 51-4.

example, the myths of some women in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (particularly Laodamia, Evadne, and Alcestis) involve the deaths of loved ones or even their suicides; dark plots that evoke the tragic master narratives found in the works of Euripides and Aeschylus. Ovid chooses to highlight the grim aspects of these myths in order to explore the extent of his own culpability concerning his relegation and its ramifications for his wife, as well as using references to these myths as a means of further characterising the literary world of exile as a grim and dark place. In this chapter, my analysis of how Ovid portrays female mythical characters in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* will demonstrate that Ovid's exile is a connected, yet inherently different literary world from anything that the author's readers have ever seen before. Firstly, let us now consider how Ovid constructs a canon of positive mythical *exempla* for his wife to emulate in *Tristia* 5.5, 5.14, and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1.

Tristia 5.5

Tristia 5.5, written by Ovid to his wife as a celebration of her birthday, contains a list of mythical heroines whose fame relies on their reliable and steadfast devotion to their husbands in times of trouble, intended as a comfort to the author's wife:

nata pudicitia est ista, probitasque, fidesque,
at non sunt ista gaudia nata die,
sed labor et curae fortunaque moribus inpar,
iustaque de viduo paene querella toro.
scilicet adversis probitas exercita rebus
tristi materiam tempore laudis habet.
si nihil infesti durus vidisset Ulixes,
Penelope felix, sed sine laude foret.
victor Echionias si vir penetrasset in arces,
forsitan Evadnen vix sua nosset humus.
cum Pelia tot sint genitae, cur nobilis una est?

nempe fuit misero nupta quod una viro.
effice ut Iliacas tangat prior alter harenas:
Laodamia nihil cur referatur erit.
et tua, quod malles, pietas ignota maneret,
inplerent venti si mea vela sui (*Tr.* 5.5.45-60)

Here the author explicitly parallels mythical *exempla* with the situation of his "widowed" wife as a means of reassuring his long-suffering spouse that she is in good company among other devoted wives. In this process, the author effectively writes his own wife into a catalogue of loyal spouses from myth.[439] This list of mythical *exempla* Ovid chooses to use is also notable in that it establishes a canon of wifely paragons that is used repeatedly in the rest of the exile letters. In *Tristia* 5.5, Penelope (51-2), Evadne (53-4), Alcestis (55-6), and Laodamia (57-8) are all mobilised as mythical *exempla* and are placed in close proximity to one another, something which is repeated at *Tristia* 5.14 and again in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1.[440]

The repetition of these four mythical *exempla* later in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* reinforces the idea that these four paragons of devotion constitute a canon of wives in the exile works. In two of the three cases where these characters appear together, in *Tristia* 5.5 and *Tristia* 5.14, Penelope features as the first heroine. It is could be argued that this reminds the reader of her position as the first epistle of Ovid's own *Heroides*,[441] but it is also possible to interpret her position as a reference back to her appearance in *Tristia* 1.6. In *Tristia* 1.6, Ovid comments that his wife is so loyal that she surpasses even Penelope:

tu si Maeonium vatem sortita fuisses,

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[439] Hinds (1999).
[440] See n.526.
[441] In some ways, *Tr*. 5.5 can be understood as Ulysses' reply to Penelope's Heroidean epistle, but a more explicitly overt sequel to the *Heroides* is reported as Ulysses' reply to Ovid's *Her*. 1 in the works of Sabinus. *Pont*. 4.16.13-14 notes that it was Sabinus bade Ulysses write back to Penelope over the sea, recalling Penelope's epistle to her husband in Ovid's *Heroides* (*Her*. 1.1.1). This could possibly related to the other recollection of the exchange between the two poets which is noted at the end of the *Amores* (*Am*. 2.18.21, 29). On Sabinus' works as replies to Ovid's *Heroides*: McKeown (1987) 87-8. On the identity of Sabinus and his artistic relationship with Ovid: Helzle (1989b) 176-7, 186; McKeown (1998) 382-4.

Penelopes esset fama secunda tuae:

prima locum sanctas heroidas inter haberes,

prima bonis animi conspicerere tui (*Tristia* 1.6.21-2, 33-4)[442]

The author's wish to have enough poetical talent to do his wife's loyalty justice and place her above Penelope can be understood as a desire to raise the fame of his wife above that of Penelope, but it can also be understood as a desire to rewrite the earlier Ovidian elegiac collections. Hinds (1999) convincingly argues that in this passage, Ovid is attempting to rewrite his corpus by supplanting Penelope's position as first among the women of the *Heroides* (since her letter to Ulysses opens the elegiac *Heroides*), when he names his own wife as the foremost heroine of the Ovidian corpus.[443] It is fitting, then, that in *Tristia* 5.5 we can see the author's promise to write his wife into first place among the heroines come to fruition as Ovid praises his wife's loyalty (45-8) just before citing Penelope as an example of devotion (51-2) and before a list of other virtuous women of myth.

Penelope's appearance as the first of a number of mythical *exempla* in *Tristia* 5.5 is repeated again in *Tristia* 5.14, and this repetition indicates a similarity in the structure of mythical *exempla* in the two epistles. In both cases, after mentioning his wife, Ovid employs Penelope to introduce a group of mythical *exempla* (containing other faithful spouses) which is concluded with the *exemplum* of Laodamia, before again returning the discussion to his wife. In *Tristia* 5.5 Penelope introduces a catalogue of women whose fame relies upon their husbands' suffering (51-2). After the inclusion of Evadne and Alcestis (53-6), the list concludes with Laodamia (57-8). In *Tristia* 5.14, Penelope appears first as a model of loyalty (35-6) and she is then followed by Alcestis (37), Andromache (37), and Evadne (38) before the list of *exempla* concludes with Laodamia (39-40) and the focus of the epistle returns to Ovid's wife (41-2). When Penelope is positioned at the opening of a list of female mythical *exempla* in *Tristia*. 5.5 and 5.14, this subtly enhances the equation of Penelope with the poet's spouse because Penelope is brought to the fore in both cases as the first example for

[442] *Tr*. 1.6.33-4 was transposed to its current place after 21-2 in ed. Ven. 1486. On this, see Hall (1995) 32.
[443] Hinds (1999) 127-8.

the author's wife to follow. In *Tristia* 5.5 the association between Ovid's wife and Penelope is developed by overtly paralleling Ulysses and Penelope with Ovid and his spouse at the very beginning of the epistle:

sic quondam festum Laertius egerit heros

forsan in extremo coniugis orbe diem (*Tr*. 5.5.3-4)

Heightening the compliment this comparison pays his wife, Ovid also claims that *edidit haec mores illis heroisin aequos, / quis erat Eetion Icariusque pater* (*Tr*. 5.5.43-4). Placing Penelope as the primary mythical *exemplum* for Ovid's spouse to emulate indicates her importance as a paragon of virtue in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. At the same time, this equation further supports (and also extends) the repeated parallel between the author and Ulysses. Having Penelope and Laodamia introduce and conclude the list of mythical *exempla* in two separate poems (*Tristia* 5.5 and 5.14) emphasises the importance of these paragons of wifely devotion both for the author's spouse and for the use of myth in the exile works as a whole, reinforcing the idea that these four famous wives are being fashioned as a canon of virtuous mythical heroines.

The way that Penelope and Laodamia frame the *exempla* in *Tristia* 5.5 and *Tristia* 5.14 may also be a literary nod to their appearances in Ovid's *Heroides*, as Penelope and Laodamia are the only two heroines from this catalogue to have their own epistles in the *Heroides* (*Her*. 1 and *Her*. 13 respectively). Indeed, the description of Protesilaus' fate in *Tristia* 5.5 recalls the prophecy of his death found in *Heroides* 13. In *Tristia* 5.5.57, Ovid identifies Protesilaus through circumlocution as being the man who first touched the Trojan shore. [444] While this reference plays on the etymological meaning of her husband's name, [445]

[444]Öhrman (2008) 172 has analysed the use of the Protesilaus and Laodamia *exemplum* in *Tristia* 5.5, and concludes that the structure of the *exemplum* constructs an opposition between the epic male hero and the elegiac beloved. In the elegiac couplet that contains the *exemplum* of Laodamia, the initial hexameter (57) describes Protesilaus leaping onto the shores of Troy, an image worthy of epic, whereas the following pentameter (58) describes his loyal wife. Thus, we can understand the content of the lines to reflect the genre of their meter: the hexameter is reserved for epic deeds, while the pentameter is the domain of the woman.

it also alludes to Laodamia's own recollection of the prophecy concerning her husband's fate in *Heroides* 13:

> *sors quoque nescioquem fato designat iniquo,*
>
> *qui primus Danaum Troada tangat humum* (*Her*. 13.91-2)[446]

Thus, *Tristia* 5.5.57-8, by focusing on Protesilaus' death on the battlefield, selects a notably epic aspect of the elegiac Heroidean epistle for emphasis in the exile works, stressing that the basis for Laodamia's fame lies in her husband's death, brought about by his own over-enthusiasm for warfare. This creates a certain tension between the elegiac Heroidean epistle and the exilic allusion to Protesilaus' death on the battlefield. Öhrman (2008) notes that *Heroides* 13 downplayed Protesilaus' desire to go to battle for the sake of "establishing Protesilaus as an elegiac character. In *Tr*. 5.5.57 on the other hand, the narrator draws our attention to the one motive of the myth which continually undermined Laodamia's description of Protesilaus as an ideal elegiac lover, namely his determination to prove himself in battle."[447] This allows "Ovid to trace the limitations of the elegiac genre – elegy belongs to the men worthy of contempt (or laughter), epic to men of prowess in battle, like Odysseus, Capaneus or Protesilaus. Such men cannot … be turned into elegiac characters without at the same time being surrounded by a sense of dramatic irony that continually undermines their ability to function according to the patterns of the new literary genre."[448] However, Öhrman's proposal is problematic insofar as Protesilaus is not just keen to prove himself in battle, but he is *too* keen and jumps off the ship first, thus ensuring his death without ever actually proving himself by engaging the enemy in combat over a period of time.[449] As such, he is hardly an Homeric warrior on the same level as Achilles, Hector, or Ajax who repeatedly fight the enemy on the battlefield throughout the Trojan War conflict, and so Protesilaus cannot be interpreted as an equally successful and battle-hardened epic

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[445] On the etymology of Protesilaus' name (πρῶτος + λαός ('first of the people') or πρῶτος + ἄλλομαι ('first leaper')) see O'Hara (1996a) 10 and Maltby (1991) 503.
[446] I am using Reeson's (2001) edition of *Heroides* 13.
[447] Öhrman (2008) 172-3.
[448] Öhrman (2008) 173.
[449] For the prophecy that the first Greek to touch Trojan soil would perish: Hyg. *Fab*. 103.

hero in a similar light. This makes him an almost ideal vehicle to explore the generic boundaries and tension between epic and elegy, something which is especially pertinent when Protesilaus appears in the role of an elegiac *amator* in *Heroides* 13.[450] In addition, Protesilaus' untimely death makes him an ideal parallel for Ovid in Tomis, as it suggests that the author is likewise deceased, thus subtly contributing towards Ovid's self-presentation as a dead man in exile.

The depiction of Laodamia in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* focuses exclusively on her role as a grieving widow, and *Tristia* 5.5 contributes towards this image. It is interesting that there is a shift in the way in which Laodamia is presented throughout the Ovidian corpus, which seems to occur between her appearances in Ovidian erotic elegy and the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The major difference between Laodamia's pre- and post-exilic portrayals is that she often seems to appear as a wife before exile, but she is exclusively presented as a mourning widow after exile. For instance, *Heroides* 13 is staged at a dramatic time when Laodamia and Protesilaus are apart, yet before Protesilaus has died:[451] *aulide te fama est vento retinente morari* (*Her*. 13.3). In the *Amores* she is the bereaved *comes extincto Laodamia viro* (*Am*. 2.18.38), yet in the *Ars* she is used as an *exemplum* to illustrate the idea that "absence makes the heart grow fonder" while Protesilaus was away: *Phylacides aberat, Laodamia, tuus* (*Ars* 2.356). In an uncharacteristic depiction of this otherwise tragically doomed character, Laodamia makes an appearance in *Ars* 3 modelling a centre-parting hairstyle:

longa probat facies capitis discrimina puri:

sic erat ornatis Laodamia comis (*Ars* 3.137-8)

Here, Laodamia is preoccupied with adorning her hair, an image that contrasts with her grief-stricken appearance after Protesilaus has died in *Iliad* 2.700-1.[452] Laodamia's keenness to make herself look attractive in the *Ars* seems to imply that her husband is still alive. While

[450] For Laodamia and Protesilaus as an elegiac ideal, in terms of being both *puella* and *amator* see Öhrman (2008) 78, 84-7, 88-96.
[451] On the dramatic timing of *Her*. 13: Kennedy (1984) and Reeson (2001) 116-124.
[452] τοῦ δὲ καὶ ἀμφιδρυφὴς ἄλοχος Φυλάκῃ ἐλέλειπτο / καὶ δόμος ἡμιτελής: τὸν δ᾽ ἔκτανε Δάρδανος ἀνὴρ (Hom. *Il*. 2.700-1).

Protesilaus may still be living in the *Ars*, Laodamia is briefly depicted as a widow in the *Remedia amoris*. Laodamia makes a much more sombre appearance in the *Remedia*, where she is used as a warning to the reader not to surround yourself with images of an old flame if you are trying to fall out of love with them:[453]

si potes, et ceras remove: quid imagine muta

carperis? hoc periit Laodamia modo (*Rem*. 723-4)

In contrast to her portrayal as a wife (and occasionally as a widow) in Ovid's erotic elegiacs, Laodamia is invariably presented as a grieving widow in the exile letters. Laodamia enters the world of Ovidian exile as a model of wifely fidelity as *comes extincto Laodamia viro* (*Tr*. 1.6.20), and she is likewise presented as a devoted widow at *Tristia* 5.5.57-8 and in *Tristia* 5.14.39-40, which includes Laodamia as one of the women featured in the repeated canon of faithful wives from myth.

Tristia 5.14

Tristia 5.14, an epistle addressed to Ovid's wife, reassures her that her fame as a loyal wife will be remembered by posterity for as long as people read about his downfall:

cumque viri casu possis miseranda videri,

invenies aliquas, quae, quod es, esse velint,

quae te, nostrorum cum sis in parte malorum,

felicem dicant invideantque tibi (*Tr*. 5.14.7-10)

[453] For Laodamia making a statue of Protesilaus, an object that she was extremely fond of, see Apollod. *Epit*. 3.30; Hyg. *Fab*. 104.

Ovid then recounts examples of self-sacrificing spouses whose fame relies upon their unflagging loyalty to their husbands, implied as a source of encouragement for the author's own wife in the face of his relegation:[454]

aspicis ut longo teneat laudabilis aevo

nomen inextinctum Penelopaea fides?

cernis ut Admeti cantetur et Hectoris uxor

ausaque in accensos Iphias ire rogos?

ut vivat fama coniunx Phylaceia, cuius

Iliacam primo vir pede pressit humum? (*Tr*. 5.14.35-40)

The inclusion of Penelope, Alcestis, Evadne, and Laodamia in this catalogue of famous wives recalls *Tristia* 5.5, where these four women are also featured. The repetition of these mythical *exempla* reinforces the roles these women play in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as the definitive spouses from myth. While this repetition contributes towards the construction of a canon of spousal mythical *exempla*, the addition of Andromache in 37 adds a welcome sense of variety to this catalogue.

While the mythical heroines that Ovid chooses to be part of the canon of faithful wives are inherently important due to the nature of their myths, the ways in which they are named can also reveal much about the intertextual framework within which the exile works are themselves located. In *Tristia* 5.14, Evadne is not directly named, but she is recognisable through circumlocution, a literary technique which recalls other appearances of the character in the Ovidian corpus where she has also been denoted in a periphrastic manner as *Iphias* ("the daughter of Iphis"). The reference to Evadne as *Iphias* in *Tristia* 5.14.38 may allude back to her similar identification at the beginning of *Ars* 3, where the myth of her self-sacrifice at her husband's death is used as an *exemplum* of female chaste devotion:

[454] Following the catalogue of mythical wives, some of whom give their lives for their husbands, Ovid is quick to clarify to his own wife: *morte nihil opus est pro me, sed amore fideque* (*Tr*. 5.14.41).

"accipe me, Capaneu: cineres miscebimus" inquit

Iphias in medios desiluitque rogos.

ipsa quoque et cultu est et nomine femina Virtus:

non mirum, populo si placet illa suo (*Ars* 3.21-4)

The use of the patronym, *Iphias*, to identify Evadne in *Tristia* 5.14 reminds the reader of her similar characterisation at the beginning of the third installment of the erotodidactic *Ars amatoria* and indicates another example of Ovid connecting his exilic epistles with the pre-exilic *Ars* that brought about his downfall.[455] In addition, the reference to Evadne throwing herself onto Capaneus' funeral pyre in *Ars* 3 reminds the reader that it was her husband's death that was the character's undoing, and an awareness of the important role that death plays in the myth of Evadne and Capaneus brings a morose tone to instances in the exile works where Ovid parallels his wife with Evadne, implying a similar equation between himself and her deceased husband.

Ovid also explicitly likens himself to the deceased Protesilaus when equating his wife with Laodamia in *Tristia* 5.14 (as well as in *Tristia* 5.5, as we have just discussed). The author's equation with Laodamia's departed husband throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* contributes towards the theme of death in the exile letters and also helps establish Ovid's pose as a dead man, mortally wounded by the blow of exile. In *Tristia* 5.5.57-8, Ovid imagines himself in the role of Protesilaus while his wife is Laodamia, Protesilaus' widow. Similarly, in *Tristia* 5.14.39-42, Laodamia is also presented as a widow, indicating that Protesilaus is dead. By implication, this casts Ovid, who has self-consciously styled his exilic persona as Protesilaus, as likewise deceased. This contributes towards the wider theme of exile as a form of living death, a motif which permeates the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[456] However, these examples which include Laodamia in *Tristia* 5.5 and 5.14 are also arguably

[455] The use of a patronym to identify a female mythical character is an elegiac feature, reminiscent of how Propertius uses epic patronyms to identify female characters, since Evadne is also called *Iphias* in Propertius 1.15.21 and Propertius 3.13.24. On patronyms as an epic feature in Propertian elegy see Warden (1982). For the importance of patronymics as a feature of Homeric epic: Graziosi & Haubold (2005) 57-8.

[456] For an exploration of Ovid's exile as a form of death see n.117.

humorous because they reveal this poetic conceit by making us aware that his wife could not really follow Laodamia to the Underworld to be reunited with the poet because Ovid is not really there: Ovid is not an insubstantial shade in the Underworld like Protesilaus, he is just in exile at Tomis. These depictions of Laodamia in the exile works indicate that portrayals of Laodamia and Protesilaus, when taken at face value, contribute towards the illusion of the author's own death. Yet, when this parallel is considered more carefully, we become aware that this myth in fact contributes towards the revelation of the poetic lie and thus opens up a disparate gap between the posed exilic persona and the real life author, who is in fact (at least at the time of composition) alive.[457]

Epistulae ex Ponto 3.1

The four paragons of wifely devotion featured in *Tristia* 5.5 and 5.14 are used again in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, an epistle which is also addressed to Ovid's wife. In this missive, Ovid encourages his wife to appeal to Livia's sense of mercy and ask for her husband to be returned to Rome. Ovid also praises his wife's loyalty, and provides a series of mythical *exempla* to encourage the continuation of her devotion, a list that is opened by the virtuous four women who have been previously featured in *Tristia* 5.5 and *Tristia* 5.14. Alcestis begins the catalogue of mythical *exempla* at 105-6 with the author's careful recommendation to his wife that she could, to a certain extent, follow these examples:

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[457] The *Tristia* and first three books of the *Epistulae ex Ponto* were published within Ovid's lifetime. For *Pont.* 1-3 as a unit: Thomsen (1979) 18; Gaertner (2005) 2-5. For the possible posthumous publication of *Pont.* 4 due to the collection's lack of revision and coherence as a unit: Thomsen (1979) 34; Helzle (1989b) 31-6. Claassen's work has an individual approach to dating the poetry of Ovid's exile, dividing the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* into five distinct phases which reflect the author's moods and emotional engagement with his own work, Claassen (2008) 13-28. Even though this approach to the dating of Ovid's exile works is very particular to Claassen's work on the relationship between the author and his poetry, she does acknowledge *Pont*. 4 to be a self-contained later phase that should be considered apart from other books of the exile works, possibly because of the author's death, Claassen (2008) 25-8.

si mea mors redimenda tua (quod abominor) esset,

Admeti coniunx, quam sequereris, erat;

aemula Penelopes fieres, si fraude pudica

instantis velles fallere nupta procos;

si comes extincti manes sequerere mariti,

esse dux facti Laodamia tui;

Iphias ante oculos tibi erat ponenda volenti

corpus in accensos mittere forte rogos (*Pont*. 3.1.105-12)

In this passage, Alcestis is closely associated with the paradigm of Laodamia in 109-10 through a play on the metaphorical and physical senses of following someone's lead.[458] This is achieved by the suggestion that Ovid's wife should follow the behavioural examples of Alcestis and Laodamia in a very literal sense by physically following these mythical heroines as they journey to the Underworld. This is conveyed in the use of *sequereris* (106) to describe how the author's wife would follow Alcestis, with the verb to be understood in a metaphorical sense at this stage. The use of *sequerere* in 109 could also be taken in this light initially, until the whole elegiac couplet is read. After reading the hexameter in conjunction with the following pentameter, the reader is now aware that Ovid's wife would not just be following Laodamia in a metaphorical sense, but also in a physical sense through the usage of *dux*, indicating a literal descent into the Underworld with Laodamia functioning as a leader or guide walking ahead of the author's wife. The usage of forms of *sequor* in both 106 and 109 not only plays on the distinction and blurring between the metaphorical and literal terms for following an example,[459] but also links the two mythical *exempla* of Alcestis and Laodamia. It is appropriate that Alcestis is closely associated to Laodamia through the use of the same Latin verb in their elegiac couplets; this linguistic similarity may be a

[458] For *sequor* as a physical action: *OLD* s.v. *sequor* 1, 2 and 3. In a figurative sense: *OLD* s.v. *sequor* 7, 9 and 10.
[459] See n. 458.

reflection of the similarities in their myths, as both women choose to die as an expression of their love for their husbands.

In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, Ovid even includes Laodamia's suicide (following the death of Protesilaus) in a list of *exempla* of wifely paragons in a letter to his wife (109-10), after clearly stating that he does not, of course, intend her to follow his advice literally (105). The reference to Laodamia's suicide here in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, as Ovid imagines Laodamia descending to the Underworld, reminds the reader of her tragedy as a widow driven to kill herself by her grief, and touching upon an important aspect of Laodamia's characterisation in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[460] As previously discussed, Laodamia is portrayed as both a wife and a widow in texts composed before the author's relegation, but only as a bereft widow in exilic literature. Laodamia's portrayal as a grieving widow can be seen in the way that Laodamia is often presented as *comes* to her husband, Protesilaus, in Latin literature and she is also portrayed in this guise in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1. In *Heroides* 13, sent when both Laodamia and her husband were still alive, Laodamia tells Protesilaus *me tibi venturam comitem, quocumque vocaris* (*Her*. 13.161), grimly foreshadowing her future fulfillment of this promise when she follows her husband to the Underworld. The *Amores* present Laodamia as a companion to her deceased husband: *et comes extincto Laodamia viro (Am.* 2.18.38). *Amores* 2.18.38 is repeated almost verbatim in *Tristia* 1.6.20: *aut comes extincto Laodamia viro*,[461] thus connecting earlier amatory works with the *Tristia*. This indicates a possible attempt at bridging the divide between portrayals of Laodamia before and after the author's exile which, simultaneously, also highlights the difference in the majority of presentations of her as *comes* following Ovid's relegation. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1 plays on Laodamia's role as *comes* by thrusting Ovid's wife into the role of a spousal

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[460] It should be noted that while Ovid presents Laodamia as a guide to the Underworld, implying that she is dead after she has commited suicide, Ovid does not actually present us with an image of Laodamia taking her own life. This is very much in keeping with her characterisation by other Latin poets, who also shy away from relating her suicide. Lyne (1998) 208 comments that "Homer left Protesilaus' wife 'poised on the brink of tragedy' … Catullus develops this suggestively suspended text to the extent that it is surely clear in his account that Laodamia will commit suicide (84, 105-7); but still the suicide is not actually described, still Laodamia is on the brink of tragedy."

[461] Both *Am*. 2.18.38 and *Tr*. 1.6.20 recall Catullus 68.80: *docta est amisso Laudamia viro*.

companion while Laodamia is promoted to being her *dux* (*Pont*. 3.1.109-10). The usage of the word *comes* to describe Ovid's wife plays on the usage of this word elsewhere in the corpus to denote Laodamia. Such play on *comes* has dark undertones because accompanying someone to the Underworld implies their death and it also occurs in a passage providing *exempla* of devoted mythological wives for the author's own spouse to consider. Not all play on *comes* Laodamia in the Ovidian corpus is so bleak, however, as *Ars* 3 includes a humorous aural pun on Laodamia's well-established role as *comes*, when Ovid recommends that girls with oval faces should part their hair, *sic erat ornatis Laodamia comis* (*Ars* 3.138). Whilst references to Laodamia in the exile works recall her earlier appearances in the corpus and thus connect the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* with Ovid's pre-exilic poetry, the differences in her portrayal indicate a subtle shift in both tone and content of the works, while also reflecting the sometimes fractured connections which the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* have with earlier literature.

Penelope

The strained connections between Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* and his earlier literature can be seen in Ovid's characterisation of Penelope in the exile letters, which present Odysseus' wife as an elegiac paradigm, but one that is intended for Ovid's wife in place of the mistress. Throughout the exile works, Penelope is characterised as a faithful wife, and her depiction is very much determined by her portrayal in Homeric epic and Latin elegy. Her reputation as a paragon of feminine virtue in erotic Roman elegy makes Penelope the ideal candidate for being a primary mythical *exemplum* intended for the author's wife to emulate. As Ovid likens his wife to Penelope numerous times, this parallel not only portrays the author's wife as the paragon of amatory devotion found in elegy, but also recalls her role as the patient wife of Homer's *Odyssey*. This Homeric dimension to the characterisation of Penelope also ties in well with the other myths that feature in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, particularly when the author likens himself to Ulysses. In this section, we shall examine how Ovid portrays his relationship with his wife as being like the marriage of Ulysses and Penelope, before moving on to discuss some of the other dimensions of

Penelope's characterisation in the exile letters. Elsewhere in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Penelope functions as a means of supporting a parallel between Ovid and Homer, as well as an equation for the author himself, since both Penelope and Ovid compose epistles within the Ovidian corpus (*Her*. 1 and the exile works, respectively). My analysis will highlight how Ovid manipulates the mythical character to construct links between the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* and his amatory elegiac collections, as well as with the works of other elegists such as Propertius and Sabinus.[462] These intertextual links contribute towards a sense of continuity and progression throughout the Ovidian corpus as the poet locates his exilic works within the wider context of Augustan elegy.

As we have just considered, Penelope often occurs amongst a cluster of other mythological heroines who are also held in high regard as paragons of wifely devotion throughout the exilic epistles.[463] Although Penelope is most celebrated as the chaste wife of Odysseus in Homer's epic *Odyssey*, her character is also coopted for the genre of love elegy, where she is often cited as a mythical *exemplum* of faithfulness for the beloved to follow.[464] This relates to the wider context of Latin love elegy, where Penelope is presented as a paragon of sexual fidelity.[465] Barchiesi (1992) has commented that Penelope is "non ... solo un personaggio epico: è un paradigma da elegia, notevole non solo per la sua frequenza, ma

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[462] I shall discuss Sabinus more fully later in this section.

[463] Penelope occurs with Andromache and Laodamia at *Tr*. 1.6.19-22, with Evadne, Alcestis and Laodamia at *Tr*. 5.5.51-58, with Alcestis, Andromache, Evadne and Laodamia at *Tr*. 5.14.36-40, and with Alcestis and Laodamia at *Pont*. 3.1.105-113.

[464] Penelope occurs as a paradigm of chastity and faithfulness when she is compared to Propertius' beloved, Cynthia, in Propertius 2.9. Penelope *poterat bis denos salva per annos / vivere* (2.9.3-4) whereas Cynthia is told *non una potuisti nocte vacare* (2.9.19). Penelope is also a paragon of fidelity at Propertius 3.12.38. Penelope is compared to *puellae* at Propertius 3.13.23-4, where Propertius condemns contemporary women by remarking that *hic nulla puella / nec fida Euadne nec pia Penelope*. Penelope is also compared to an elegiac beloved in Propertius 4.5, an invective poem aimed at Acanthis, the bawd whose influence over the mistress results in the *amator* being spurned: at 63, the lover-poet comments *his animum nostrae dum versat Acanthis amicae*, while it is claimed that the bawd's power is so great that she could sway Penelope: *Penelopen quoque neglecto rumore mariti / nubere lascivo cogeret Antinoo* (Propertius 4.5.7-8). In a similar vein, the Ovidian *praeceptor amoris* claims that his teachings are so effective that *Penelopen ipsam, persta modo, tempore vinces* (*Ars* 1.477). Penelope also occurs as a paradigm of faithfulness at *Ars* 2.355, and *Ars* 3.15.

[465] For Penelope as a paradigm of fidelity in erotic elegy, see n. 464.

anche per la stabilità della sua funzione esemplare ... nelle situazioni elegiache in cui il suo esempio è convocato, Penelope manifesta il valore dell'eros coniugale e della fedeltà ad ogni prezzo ... il fedele eros coniugale di Penelope si presenta per metafora come il grado estremo di ciò che il poeta innamorato può chiedere alla sua donna".[466] In this way, we can understand how Penelope operates in the exile works as an elegiac paradigm of fidelity paralleled with the devotion of the author's own wife and, in addition, her characterisation as the wife of Odysseus in Homer further supports the frequent equation between the author and Ulysses in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[467] This is not only an interesting generic development insofar as a character is relocated from the epic realm into the elegiac world,[468] but also because, in the exile works, Penelope is associated with Ovid's wife even though Penelope has been previously used as a comparison for the mistress in amatory elegy.[469] Hinds (1999) described the exile works as a "new sub-genre of spousal love elegy" which is distinguished by "a combination of praise and protreptic; in both respects the achieved and desiderated virtue of Ovid's wife is negotiated through a cataloguing of *exempla* of similarly praiseworthy women in mythology."[470] Before examining how Penelope is aligned with the author's wife, and how this contributes towards the mythologisation of Ovid's marriage, let us first consider how Penelope is portrayed as an elegiac beloved in the Ovidian corpus.

Recent scholarship has tended to interpret Penelope's characterisation in the exile works as reminiscent of her appearance in Ovid's *Heroides*, a collection which includes an epistle posed as being from Penelope to her absent husband. Ovid's Penelope narrates the urgent situation concerning the suitors in the palace (*Her*. 1.87-114)[471] as she waits for her husband's return, tapping into the overarching Homeric epic master narrative, yet in the

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[466] Barchiesi (1992) 23.
[467] For more on the author's self-portrayal as the Odyssean protagonist, see the Ulysses section in Chapter Two.
[468] On Homeric features in Propertian elegy: Evans (1971); Benediktson (1985).
[469] Further complications arise in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* when Ovid refers to his wife as *domina*: see n. 483.
[470] Hinds (1999) 124.
[471] I am using Knox's (1995) edition for the text of *Heroides* 1.

process she characterises herself in an elegiac light by labelling herself *puella* (115)[472] and claims *deserto iacuissem frigida lecto* (7) as she waits for her lover's return.[473] In the *Heroides*, Penelope is written as an elegiac *puella* waiting for her absent *amator*, Ulysses, to whom she addresses her epistle. The scenario with which we are presented in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is slightly modified, however, as it is Ovid who is absent from Rome and composing letters back to his wife, who is portrayed as the Penelope to his Ulysses. Claassen (2001), referring to *Tristia* 5.5, comments: "When the exile's wife has a birthday, he fondly imagines, in very much the spirit of the Penelope of *Heroides* 1, that Odysseus would once similarly have celebrated Penelope's remembrance day."[474] Hinds (1985) also connects the exilic portrayal of Penelope with Ovid's elegiac epistles, most notably in *Tristia* 1.6, a poem addressed to Ovid's wife on her birthday. At *Tristia* 1.6.21-2 Ovid tells his spouse that *si Maeonium uatem sortita fuisses, / Penelopes esset fama secunda tuae*. Ovid then tells his wife that, as a result, *prima locum sanctas heroidas inter haberes / prima bonis animi conspicere tui* (33-4).[475] Hinds convincingly argues that *heroidas* (33) alludes to Ovid's own amatory elegiac collection, the *Heroides*, in which Penelope's epistle occupies first place.[476] Consequently, we can understand the reference to Penelope (*Tr*. 1.6.22) as an Ovidian attempt to revise his amatory elegiac corpus by relegating Penelope's opening epistle to second place, and promoting his wife to the primary position within the collection.[477]

In the *Heroides*, Ovid rewrites Homer's *Odyssey* from Penelope's perspective and it comes as no surprise that she takes centre stage when Ovid again rewrites Homeric

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[472] Penelope also labels herself *anus* in *Her*. 1.116, contrasting with *puella* (115) and simultaneously highlighting the elegiac nature of *puella*. For *puella* as a generic term for the beloved: Pichon (1902) 244-5. Cf. *Ars* 3.59-82 which urges young women to enjoy themselves when they are young by reminding them of the loneliness of old age; *senectae* (*Ars* 3.59) is preceded by *puellae* (57), and the positions of both words at the ends of lines highlights the juxtaposition of youth and age, anticipating the following discussion on the temporary nature of amatory male attention. For *puella* as a generic term for the beloved: Pichon (1902) 244-5.

[473] This is reminiscent of Propertius' inability to sleep in an empty bed at Propertius 4.7.5-6.

[474] Claassen (2001) 33.

[475] On the order of these lines see n. 442.

[476] Hinds (1985) 28.

[477] Hinds (1999) 128.

narratives in the *Tristia*. In *Tristia* 2, when Ovid attempts to make his defence case for the *Ars*, the poet portrays Homeric epic in an amatory light. At *Tristia* 2.371-2 Ovid asks *Ilias ipsa quid est, nisi turpis adultera, de qua / inter amatorem pugna uirumque fuit?* After further illumination of the erotic focus of Homer's *Iliad* at 373-4, 375-6 Ovid reduces the narrative of Homer's *Odyssey* to *quid Odyssea est nisi femina propter amorem, / dum vir abest, multis una petita procis?*[478] This couplet has strong amatory connotations, with the erotic verb *petita* emphasising that many suitors pursued Penelope for love,[479] as opposed to the more traditional motivation of gaining political power.[480] The epic narrative is manipulated and transformed into an amatory scenario, while reference to *multis … procis* (2.376) recalls Propertius 2.9.4, where Penelope is complimented as *tam multis femina digna procis*, creating a linguistic echo which evokes the phraseology of erotic Augustan elegy. The use of erotically charged elegiac terminology also accompanies Penelope's characterisation in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where it is used to depict the author's wife in a manner similar to Penelope's "self-portrayal" as a *puella* in the *Heroides*.[481]

Penelope is also associated with Ovid's wife by the terminology used to denote her marital role. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid's spouse is not only referred to as *coniunx* and *uxor*, but also as *domina*.[482] In *Tristia* 3.3, Ovid's wife is addressed as *coniunx* (15) and *domina* (23, 41). Similarly, in *Tristia* 4.3, she is called *domina* (9), *coniunx* (35, 54), and *uxor* (49).[483] The intermingling of terms for wife and elegiac mistress recalls the "self-presentation" of Penelope in *Heroides* 1, who labels herself as both wife and beloved with *coniunx* (77, 84), *uxor* (97) and *puella* (115). The similar way in which Ovid's spouse and Penelope are presented as simultaneously wives and elegiac mistresses consolidates the parallel between the two women in the exile works (while potentially

[478] The vulgate attests *viris* instead of *procis*. For a justification of the reading *procis* and discussion on the potential play of *viris* with the *vir* of Roman elegy, see Ingleheart (2010a) 304.
[479] For *petere* as an erotic verb: Pichon (1902) 232.
[480] Ingleheart (2010a) 304.
[481] *Her*. 1.115.
[482] On *domina* as a feature of elegiac *servitium amoris*, see Lilja (1965) 76-89.
[483] Ovid's wife is also labelled *domina* at *Tr*. 4.8.11; 5.5.1, 15. For *coniunx*, *domina* and *uxor* as elegiac terms: Pichon (1902) 109-10, 134, 303 (respectively). On the difference between *coniunx* and *uxor*: Treggiari (1991) 6-7.

playing on the difference between the wife and mistress found in amatory elegy). The usages of *domina*, *coniunx* and *uxor* recall the stock characters of the mistress and the wife from love elegy,[484] indicating that the exile works are still operating with reference to the erotic elegiac sphere.[485] The mingling of terms to describe the same character (Ovid's spouse) suggests that the poet's wife is not simply performing just one of these stock roles, but rather that her identity transcends stereotypical pigeonholing. This implies that she is somehow more than a convenient *scripta puella* whose depiction serves to illuminate the *amator*'s own characterisation and who could be poetically discarded at will.[486] In addition, it is intriguing to note that Ovid's third wife is represented as both spouse and mistress,[487] whereas this was not the case for the wife who was depicted in the *Amores*.[488] *Amores* 3.13 recalls how Ovid took his spouse to the festival of Juno:

Cum mihi pomiferis coniunx foret orta Faliscis,

moenia contigimus victa, Camille, tibi (*Am*. 3.13.1-2)

Amores 3.13 is an abrupt divorce from the Ovidian persona of the elegiac poet-lover in the *Amores*; the preceding poem, *Amores* 3.12, focuses on his mistress, Corinna, but then the reader is suddenly presented with Ovid in the guise of the married man having a day out with his wife in *Amores* 3.13. The strict division between the character of mistress and wife in erotic elegy is abandoned in the exile works, when Ovid's wife is likened to Penelope, a character who is both beloved and spouse. So it is with some irony that the author presents

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[484] For elegiac female stock roles and how the portrayals of women in Latin literature conform to them: Wyke (1987a) 153.

[485] On the originality of Ovid casting his wife as the elegiac beloved in the exile works, and how Ovid connects this portrayal of his wife with the presentations of marital love in elegiac terms in Horace, Propertius, and Tibullus, see Nagle (1980) 43-4.

[486] On the *scripta puella* in erotic elegy as a facet of the *amator*'s characterisation: Wyke (1987b) 50; Wyke (1989) 42-3.

[487] In *Tr*. 4.10 Ovid talks of his marriages, and indicates that his current wife is not the same woman to whom he was married when he was younger: *paene mihi puero nec digna nec utilis uxor / est data, quae tempus per breve nupta fuit. / illi successit, quamvis sine crimine coniunx, / non tamen in nostro firma futura toro. / ultima, quae mecum seros permansit in annos, / sustinuit coniunx exulis esse viri* (69-74).

[488] For speculation on the identities of Ovid's wives: Helzle (1989a).

his third wife as both *domina* and *coniunx* in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[489] In addition, the portrayal of Ovid's third wife could also be indicative of the inherent difference between the Ovidian personae of the *relegatus poeta* and the *amator* of the *Amores* as the author inverts and rewrites his earlier amatory persona from the perspective of exile.[490]

The parallelism between Penelope and Ovid's spouse is not the only association between Penelope and other characters within the Ovidian corpus. Intriguingly, the exile works include an allusion to Homer having a relationship with Penelope at *Tristia* 1.6.19-22, which parallels Penelope with Ovid's wife and the author with Homer:

nec probitate tua prior est aut Hectoris uxor,

aut comes extincto Laodamia viro.

tu si Maeonium vatem sortita fuisses,

Penelopes esset fama secunda tuae (*Tr*. 1.6.19-22)

Hinds (1999) notes that since Andromache appears alongside Hector (19), and Laodamia appears with Protesilaus (20) "then our expectation in 21-2 ... is that Penelope will be paired with Ulysses. What happens instead is that the comparison changes tack and Penelope is paired with Homer."[491] At first it may seem odd that Homer is paired with Penelope, yet Hinds convincingly argues for a literary precedent for this passage in Hermesianax's *Leontion*:[492]

Λεπτὴν ἧς Ἰθάκην ἐνετείνατο θεῖος Ὅμηρος

ᾠδῆσιν πινυτῆς εἵνεκα Πηνελόπης,

[489]In contrast, Williams (1994) 152 does not view the author's wife as taking the place of the erotic beloved in the Ovidian exile works, but rather sees the depiction of the Muse in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as supplanting the role of the elegiac mistress.

[490] On how Ovid uses allusions to the *Remedia amoris* in the exile works to highlight the inefficacy of the *praeceptor amoris*' advice and so repudiate the earlier persona from an exilic perspective, see Thomsen (1979) 56-8.

[491] Hinds (1999) 136.

[492] *Ibid*.

ἦν διὰ πολλὰ παθὼν ὀλίγην ἐσενάσσατο νῆσον,

πολλὸν ἀπ' εὐρείης λειπόμενος πατρίδος

(Hermesian. fr. 7.29-32 Powell).

Here, Ovid aligns himself with Homer by stating that the bard had a romantic relationship with Penelope, a comparison which rests upon the tacit equation between Penelope and Ovid's own wife. Therefore, Ovid constructs parallels between both his wife and Penelope, as well as between himself and Homer as poets.

The relationship between Ovid and Penelope, argued for here, becomes more intriguing when we consider how Penelope is used to introduce the discussion of poetry written by other authors, including Sabinus, and how her character thereby contributes towards the construction of an authorial community. In his final poem, Ovid recalls his life as part of the literary community in Rome, whose authors include Sabinus *qui Penelopae rescribere iussit Ulixem* (*Pont.* 4.16.13). This remark alludes to the opening line of Penelope's letter in the *Heroides*: *Haec tua Penelope lento tibi mittit, Ulixe* (*Her*. 1.1.1). The similarity of word order between the two lines, as Penelope is named first and Ulysses second, highlights the difference between them; in *Heroides* 1.1.1 Penelope wrote to Ulysses, and in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16.13 we learn that she has finally received a reply from her husband in Sabinus' collection, which was presumably written as a "sequel" to Ovid's *Heroides* and included letters in reply to the heroines.[493] As Ovid uses Penelope and Ulysses as "stand-ins" for his own works and those of Sabinus, Ovid is choosing certain mythical characters (here, Penelope and Ulysses) to represent poetic collections. In turn, these literary collections provide an opportunity for Ovid to discuss his own works in comparison with those of other authors and in so doing he creates a community of poets within *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16. In the process, Ovid slips himself into this poetic society which operates at Rome, creating an

[493] On Sabinus' works as replies to Ovid's *Heroides*: McKeown (1987) 87-8. On the identity of Sabinus and his artistic relationship with Ovid: Helzle (1989b) 176-7, 186; McKeown (1998) 382-4. We should remain aware that the only extant evidence for Sabinus and his poetical works are the instances in the Ovidian corpus (discussed here) when he is mentioned by Ovid. Devoid of any surviving external evidence, it could be possible that Sabinus is a literary construct in the Ovidian corpus.

illusion that he is still part of the Roman verse-writing community despite being physically distanced from them by his relegation to Tomis. Ovid presents himself as formerly part of this community by remarking *et mihi nomen / tum quoque, cum vivis adnumerarer, erat* (3-4) before listing poets (5-44) and claiming *claro mea nomine Musa / atque inter tantos quae legeretur erat* (45-6). The only other evidence for Sabinus and his replies to the *Heroides* is found in *Amores* 2.18.27-8, where Ovid exclaims *quam cito de toto rediit meus orbe Sabinus / scriptaque diversis rettulit ipse locis!* Again, Penelope is foregrounded as the author of the first of Ovid's *Heroides* when he remarks that *candida Penelope signum cognovit Ulixis* (29). Thus, just as in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16, Ovid uses certain mythical characters to represent poetic collections by different authors, resulting in the creation of a catalogue of authors and their works. However, there is one notable difference between *Amores* 2.18.27-8 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16.13, and that is the comparative geographical locations of Ovid and Sabinus. As previously discussed, in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16, Sabinus and the other authors are located at Rome whereas Ovid is far away from them as he languishes in far-flung Tomis.[494] However, in *Amores* 2.18, Ovid is amongst the authorial community at Rome whereas Sabinus is absent in a remote land: *de toto rediit meus orbe Sabinus / scriptaque diversis rettulit ipse locis* (27-8).[495] The change in geographical location of Ovid and Sabinus serves as a reminder that Ovid was once reckoned amongst the literati in Rome, but is now exiled to distant Tomis at the end of the Empire.

Ovid, alone and separated from his wife as he lives out his relegation in Tomis for the foreseeable future, fears that his wife may no longer recognise him when they are reunited. This concern is very similar to Penelope's fears about her ageing appearance in *Heroides* 1. In the final couplet of *Heroides* 1, Penelope dreads that she has aged while Ulysses has been away:

certe ego, quae fueram te discedente puella,

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[494] The use of *tum* (*Pont*. 4.16.4) suggests that this situation continued for some time, thus heightening the sense that Ovid used to be amongst these poets, but this is no longer the case. One of the other authors in *Pont*. 4.16 is described as *praesidiumque fori* (42), indicating a Roman location.

[495] Sabinus here acts as a messenger bringing letters from mythical characters. On this poetical conceit: McKeown (1998) 399.

protinus ut redeas, facta videbor anus (*Her*. 1.115-16)

Öhrman (2008) proposes that characterising Penelope as an *anus* de-elegiacises her, since "the word *anus* often appears in 'canonical' elegy with distinctly negative connotations ... they are nurses, witches or bawds."[496] However, Ovid's use of *anus* may rather allude to Propertius 2.9, which describes Penelope *exspectando facta ... anus* for Ulysses (8). In addition, *anus*, which ends the pentameter of both the Propertian and the Ovidian couplets, is directly linked to *puella,* which concludes Ovid's preceding hexameter, juxtaposing these stock roles in erotic elegy.[497] Ovid describes his ageing appearance in a similar manner in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4, where he imagines that he is reunited with his wife and they have both grown old since they last saw each other. The poet is *canis aspergitur* (1), his face has *ruga senilis* (2) and he fears that his appearance has aged so much that *nec, si me subito videas, agnoscere possis* (5).[498] In the same poem, Ovid imagines that his wife *quam iuvenem discedens Urbe reliqui, / credibile est nostris insenuisse malis* (47-8), in a similar manner to Penelope's transformation from a *puella* to an *anus* during her husband's absence in *Her*. 1.115-16.[499] Through associating his own ageing whilst being separated from his spouse to Penelope's situation during the absence of Ulysses, Ovid connects his exile works to both his amatory elegiac corpus and also to Propertius 2.9.[500] This not only creates links between the exile works and other elegy, but also highlights the poignancy and sadness of *Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.4 because the contemporary external reader, aware of the Odyssean intertext, would have been waiting on tenterhooks to discover how Ovid's story

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[496] Öhrman (2008) 76. For *anus* in elegy: Tib. 1.3.84; 1.5.12; 1.6.58, 63; 1.8.18; Propertius 2.4.16; 2.9.8; 2.18.20; 3.25.16; 4.7.44; 4.9.61; *Am*. 1.8.2; 1.14.40; 2.6.28; 3.5.40; *Ars* 1.766; 2.329, 678; 3.70, 416; *Rem*. 254. On the importance of older women for the elegiac system: Myers (1996).

[497] Nn. 464, 472, 484, 496.

[498] This alludes to the extended recognition scene in the *Odyssey*, where Penelope does not at first recognise her estranged husband. Penelope does not acknowledge the man who stands before her in rags (Hom. *Od*. 23.128-32) yet once he is presentable he appears to look as Odysseus did and Penelope tests him by asking for their marriage bed to be moved (Hom. *Od*. 23.193-232).

[499] For the author's fear of growing old and thin as he and his wife age as a reflection of the elegiac motif of thinness as a symptom of love, see Nagle (1980) 44 and Ovid, *Amores* 1.6.5-6.

[500] On the elegiac elements of Ovid's ageing: Evans (1983) 82-3.

ends – will he be able to have an aged reunion with his loving wife (just as Odysseus and Penelope did),[501] or will he continue to grow old in exile?[502]

As we have seen, Penelope is often used to construct parallels between the author, his wife and other authors, thus contributing towards the larger picture of Ovid and other historical figures being described in mythological terms in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. The way that Penelope's characterisation in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* recalls her role as an elegiac paradigm in Augustan elegy suggests continuity between Ovid's pre- and post-exilic texts. But there are, however, notable differences in the way that the Penelope myth is used in exile, particularly when she is applied to Ovid's wife as an exemplar (and not the mistress familiar from erotic elegy) and she is also paralleled with the author. Penelope's depiction in the exilic epistles suggests that the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, while they are connected to Ovid's corpus, ultimately stand apart as an independent body of literature in their own right. The similarities and differences in the portrayals of myths in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in comparison with the author's pre-exilic texts are also evident in Ovid's characterisation of Laodamia in the exile letters.

Laodamia

As we have already seen in our discussions of *Tristia* 5.5, 5.14, and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, Laodamia is portrayed exclusively as a widow in the Ovidian exile works, thus contrasting

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[501] The way that Ovid describes himself and his wife as ageing increases the poignancy of *Pont*. 1.4, as it reminds the reader of the author's mortality. On this epistle Claassen (1996) 581 comments "The poet starts the Pontic epistles as an "old and grey" Odysseus-figure, longing for his apparently equally ancient wife (*Pont*. 1.4.1-2). This realistic touch, while contrasting "normal passages of time" at Rome and timeless, mythical thraldom on the Getic shores, removes his *cara coniunx* from a mythical world where a Penelope is forever alluringly young."

[502] If *Pont*. 4 was published at a later date than 1-3, then the audience would not know whether the author remained in exile or had been allowed to return to Rome. See also n.457.

with her presentation in Ovid's pre-exilic elegies. Laodamia is paralleled with Ovid's wife in the exilic letters, and Laodamia's characterisation as bereft implies that Ovid's wife is similarly widowed, thus reinforcing Ovid's claims that he lives out a form of civic death in exile at Tomis. Laodamia provides a flattering and apt parallel for Ovid's own loyal spouse in the exile works, but the parallelism between Protesilaus and Laodamia and Ovid and his wife also connects with the literary tradition of Roman love poets who equate their relationships with their beloveds to the love of Protesilaus for Laodamia. While the depiction of Laodamia in the exile works owes much to her portrayal in Ovid's elegiac works, we should not overlook that Laodamia is a protagonist in both Euripidean and Roman tragedy and it is her depictions as a grieving woman in these texts that influence her mournful characterisation in Ovid's exile letters. Before exploring how Ovid portrays Laodamia in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, let us first analyse the characterisation of Laodamia in previous literary texts, focusing on Greek and Roman tragedy, Homeric epic, and the Ovidian elegiac works.

The myth of Laodamia, the young wife whose husband is the first to die at Troy, is a wonderful potential plot for tragedians, but, sadly, only fragments of their works survive today. Fulkerson (2002) speculates that one of Ovid's main sources for the Laodamia and Protesilaus story must have been Euripides' now mostly lost tragedy, *Protesilaus*,[503] before later recasting her opinion in a more pragmatic light: "There are many other treatments of the myth, but few of them bear on my reading; we simply cannot tell how Ovid used them because they are so fragmentary."[504] There is another possible source for the myth of Laodamia and Protesilaus in Ovid, located in Greek tragedy, Sophocles' fragmentary Ποιμένες,[505] which featured Protesilaus as the first Greek to die on the shores of Troy. Roman tragedy also took up the literary baton of the Protesilaus myth with the character

[503] For the surviving fragments of Euripides' *Protesilaus*: Nauck (1964) 563-7 fr. 647-57. On the papyri of *Protesilaus*: Oranje (1980). On the possible plot of Euripides' fragmentary play: Jouan (1966) 317-36; Jacobson (1974) 197; Thomas (1978); Bettini (1999) 239; Lyne (1998); Foley (2001) 126; Reeson (2001) 173; Cairns (2003) 168; Pelliccia (2010). On the putative similarities between Euripides' *Protesilaus* and *Alcestis*: Jones (1948); Segal (1993) 242; Parker (2007) 123.
[504] Fulkerson (2002) 64-5.
[505] See Radt (1977) 395-403 fr. 497-521.

featuring in both Pacuvius' *Protesilaus* and Laevius' *Protesilaodamia*.[506] The *Protesilaodamia* seems to have treated the marital relationship between Protesilaus and Laodamia,[507] whose character is sufficiently well-developed for her to deliver a soliloquy on her marriage in fr. 18:[508]

... aut

nunc quaepiam alia te illo

Asiatico ornatu affluens

aut Sardinia aut Lydio

fulgens decore et gratia

pellicuit.

Courtney (1993) argues that this fragment is part of a soliloquy in which Laodamia considers the possibility that her husband has been unfaithful to her.[509] Even though the text is fragmentary, it does provide some evidence that Laodamia's character as a wife was constructed in some depth. As such, Laodamia's portrayal seems as though may not be limited to her status as a widow, as it is in Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Appreciating how tragic master narratives have shaped the myth of Laodamia prior to her appearance in the Ovidian exilic corpus allows us to appreciate how her myth contributes towards the important influence that tragic narratives have on the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, as we have already discussed in the cases of Philoctetes, Oedipus, Telegonus, and Pirithous. As we shall see in the rest of this chapter, the female heroines (particularly Laodamia, Alcestis, Evadne, and Medea) featured in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* are also shaped by tragedy. The existence of tragic master narratives for some of the myths that Ovid evokes in his exile works helps to set the tone of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, collections where

[506] For the fragments of Pacuvius' *Protesilaus* see Ribbeck (1852) 116. For the fragments of Laevius' *Protesilaodamia* see Courtney (1993) 130-5 fr. 13-19.
[507] Cf. Courtney (1993) 131-2 fr. 14-15.
[508] Courtney (1993) 133. On the plot of Laevius' *Protesilaus* see Harmon (1912); Fantham (1979); Lyne (1998).
[509] Courtney (1993) 133-4.

we see the author's own personal tragedy played out as he is forced to endure his relegation at Tomis.

Laodamia and Protesilaus not only owe their characterisation to Greek and Roman tragedy, but also to Homeric epic to a certain degree and this becomes important when we consider Ovid's treatment of the Laodamia myth in his pre-exilic corpus. In Ovid's *Heroides*, the letter "composed" by Laodamia considers her husband's fate and looks back to his death on the Homeric battlefield in the *Iliad*. Protesilaus features very briefly in the *Iliad* (2.695-710) as he leaps ashore onto Trojan soil only to be the first Greek casualty of war:

> τῶν αὖ Πρωτεσίλαος ἀρήϊος ἡγεμόνευε
> ζωὸς ἐών: τότε δ᾽ ἤδη ἔχεν κάτα γαῖα μέλαινα.
> τοῦ δὲ καὶ ἀμφιδρυφὴς ἄλοχος Φυλάκῃ ἐλέλειπτο
> καὶ δόμος ἡμιτελής: τὸν δ᾽ ἔκτανε Δάρδανος ἀνὴρ
> νηὸς ἀποθρῴσκοντα πολὺ πρώτιστον Ἀχαιῶν (Hom. *Il*. 2.698-702)

In *Iliad* 2.700-1, Laodamia is only mentioned in passing and is not even named,[510] and her characterisation is defined as being a mourning widow. While *Iliad* 2.700-1 may not illuminate Laodamia herself in any particular depth, an awareness of her brief portrayal in the *Iliad* can afford a more nuanced understanding of how her depictions in later Latin literature are influenced by her portrayal in Homeric epic. Protesilaus' appearance in the epic cycle and his wife's characterisation as grief-stricken at *Iliad* 2.695-710 provide an opportunity for generic play in *Heroides* 13, an elegiac epistle. Öhrman (2008) comments on *Heroides* 13 that "though Ovid undoubtedly lets his Laodamia adopt the voice of an elegiac character, the epic and traditional models of normative society continue to influence Laodamia's descriptions even of her relationship with Protesilaus."[511] *Heroides* 13 highlights the tension between epic and elegiac elements of this myth, particularly when Laodamia commands Protesilaus to fight in battle with the intention of coming home to her:

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[510] Laodamia is not named where Protesilaus occurs in Homer (*Il*. 2.695-710, 13.681, 15.705-6, 16.286). On the possibility that she was not named in wider Greek literature, see Ottone (2007) 382.
[511] Öhrman (2008) 79.

pugnet et adversos tendat Menelaus in hostes,

ut rapiat Paridi quam Paris ante sibi.

[irruat, et causa quem vincit, vincat et armis;

hostibus e mediis nupta petenda viro est.]

causa tua est dispar: tu tantum vivere pugna,

inque pios dominae posse redire sinus! (*Her*. 13.73-6)[512]

Laodamia's justification of her request relies upon her taking the main motivating force behind Iliadic epic and the ten year-long Trojan War, Menelaus' desire to reclaim his wife Helen, and highlights the amatory nature of Menelaus' quest. Laodamia's elegiac view of the Trojan War is particularly brought out as she characterises herself as *domina* in 76,[513] a generically loaded term that evokes the genre of elegy and places Laodamia within its generic framework. From *Heroides* 13 we can gather that Ovid has already written Laodamia's character in the Ovidian corpus, and she is a figure who is defined by her loyalty and devotion to her husband. As such, she is an ideal candidate as an exemplar for the author's wife in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

When Ovid cites Laodamia as a mythical *exemplum* to inspire his wife in the exile letters, Ovid writes himself into the literary history of authors of subjective erotic poetry who adopt the Laodamia and Protesilaus myth as a reflection of their relationship with their beloveds, thus contributing towards the construction of their authorial personae. The equation of Ovid's spouse with Laodamia in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* implies a parallelism between Ovid and Protesilaus, something which relates to a wider Latin literary tradition of narrating the myth of Laodamia and Protesilaus as a means of conveying the author's relationship with his lover, and Catullus 68 and Propertius 1.19 are important precedents here. In Catullus 68, the author recalls meeting his beloved in secret (66-9).

[512] On the removal of the possibly spurious lines 73b and 74, see Reeson (2001) 25, 155-8.
[513] For *domina* as an elegiac term see Pichon (1902) 134. For *domina* as an elegiac term applied to Penelope, Laodamia and Ovid's wife in the exile works see nn. 469, 483, 542.

Following the description of the house, the entrance of the unnamed beloved is likened to Laodamia stepping over a threshold:

ad quam communes exerceremus amores,

quo mea se molli candida diva pede

intulit et trito fulgentem in limine plantam

innixa arguta constituit solea,

coniugis ut quondam flagrans advenit amore

Protesilaëam Laodamia domum (Cat. 68.69-74)

Catullus equates Laodamia with the beloved, implying that Protesilaus is comparable to her lover, Catullus. Lyne (1998) has analysed this mythical parallel by assessing the emotional connection between the authorial persona and the mythical character of Laodamia, who has already been equated with the beloved: "on the profound question, love, a sad truth emerges: it is Catullus' rather than Lesbia's devotion which is imagined in the devotion of Laodamia."[514] In Catullus 68 we can see an important precedent for the exile works (which repeatedly portray Laodamia and Protesilaus as mythical equivalents to the author and his spouse) as Catullus not only parallels himself and his beloved with the mythical couple, but also equates the emotions of his authorial persona with those of Laodamia. Thus, Ovid writes himself into the Latin literary tradition of authors and characters by associating himself with the same mythical characters as previous Latin authors have done, notably authors who also engaged in first-person subjective erotic poetry.

Following the precedent set by Catullus, Propertius mobilises the Protesilaus and Laodamia myth to express the depth of his emotion for his own beloved. However, the Propertian version of this motif focuses on equating Protesilaus' great love for his wife with how the poet's persona feels towards Cynthia:

illic Phylacides iucundae coniugis heros

[514] Lyne (1998) 206.

non potuit caecis immemor esse locis,

sed cupidus falsis attingere gaudia palmis

Thessalus antiquam venerat umbra domum.

illic quidquid ero, semper tua dicar imago:

traicit et fati litora magnus amor (Propertius 1.19.7-12)

Propertius modifies the function of the mythical parallel with Laodamia and Protesilaus in Catullus 68 because he uses the myth to introduce a parallel for his own relationship with Cynthia (11-12), whereas Catullus used his own beloved as a means of introducing the mythical narrative. In addition, Propertius also changes the focalisation of the Laodamia and Protesilaus myth by directing "the story through Protesilaus, for it is Protesilaus who images Propertius himself and his belief that love, his love, can overcome death … In Propertius it seems to be the sheer power of Protesilaus' love – no piteous weeping appeals – that overcame death."[515] Just as the Propertian persona identifies with Protesilaus, so too does the Ovidian exiled poet. In *Tristia* 5.5, an epistle to the author's wife, Ovid lists a number of mythical *exempla* to illustrate that his wife's steadfastness would not be famous if it were not for his ill fortune. In *Tr*. 5.5.57-60 (previously discussed earlier in this chapter) Ovid likens his wife to Laodamia while simultaneously associating his own downfall with the death of Protesilaus. It is possible to identify the Ovidian exiled authorial persona with the Propertian persona of the *amator*, since both associate themselves with Protesilaus and their loved ones with Laodamia. One way of reading this identification is that it connects the *relegatus poeta* with the Propertian elegiac *amator*, possibly indicating a sense of continuity between earlier Roman poets and Ovid in exile. Alternatively, this recollection could indicate the fractured nature of this continuity, or even discontinuity, by inviting a comparison of two such diverse bodies of work such as Propertian amatory elegy and the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Thus, in turn, highlights the differences between the personae of the elegiac *amator* and the *relegatus poeta*.

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[515] Lyne (1998) 210.

Conversely, the myth of Laodamia and Protesilaus can also be used to construct links between the *relegatus poeta* and other personae from earlier texts in the Ovidian corpus. While there are significant changes in the way that Laodamia is presented as a widow from an exilic perspective in the Ovidian corpus, the character also plays a key role in connecting the authorial persona with the rest of the poet's works through the resurrection of previous Ovidian personae such as the *praeceptor amoris* from the *Ars amatoria*. Penelope and Laodamia appear together in *Tristia* 1.6.19-22, which is part of a letter written by Ovid to his wife comparing her to the famously devoted heroines of myth:

nec probitate tua prior est aut Hectoris uxor,

aut comes extincto Laodamia viro.

tu si Maeonium vatem sortita fuisses,

Penelopes esset fama secunda tuae (*Tr*. 1.6.19-22)

The appearance of Penelope and Laodamia together in *Tristia* 1.6 recalls their similar portrayal side by side as *exempla* of chaste and loyal wives in *Ars* 3.15-18, a passage which begins the *praeceptor*'s lessons in love to a (supposedly) female audience in *Ars* 3:

est pia Penelope lustris errante duobus

et totidem lustris bella gerente viro.

respice Phylaciden et quae comes isse marito

fertur et ante annos occubuisse suos (*Ars* 3.15-18)

Even though Laodamia is not named in this passage, the patronym "Phylacides" refers to Protesilaus, since he is the grandson of Phylacos and leader of the Phylacaeans before his sudden death at Troy.[516] Similar portrayals of Laodamia and Penelope in *Tristia* 1.6 and *Ars* 3 create an association between the erotodidactic work and the exile letters even though the portrayals of Laodamia in the pre- and post-exilic texts are very different. The depiction of Laodamia's relationship, as a character, with the authorial persona in the exile works can

[516]Cf. Hom. *Il*. 2.695-710.

also be seen as an evocation of earlier erotic texts by Catullus and Propertius that also used the myth of Laodamia and Protesilaus as a parallel for the authorial persona's relationship with the beloved.

Laodamia's characterisation as a devoted grieving widow defines her appearance in the exile letters, and her character provides an apt parallel for the author's own spouse, who remains at Rome while her husband is enduring a form of living death in relegation at Tomis. As Ovid likens his relationship with his own wife to that of Protesilaus and Laodamia, he further develops his own self-presentation as a deceased *exul*, while at the same time highlighting the love and loyalty in his marital relationship as it is associated with the elegiac paragons of erotic fidelity, Protesilaus and Laodamia. In creating a parallel between his own marital relationship and that of Protesilaus and Laodamia, Ovid also connects the exilic epistles with the amatory poetry of Propertius and Catullus, whose authorial personae also used the myth of Protesilaus and Laodamia as an expression of their feelings for their beloveds. Laodamia typifies the zenith of spousal devotion as she commits suicide to follow her husband to the Underworld.[517] As such, Laodamia's loyalty to her husband is overshadowed by the tragic darkness of her macabre self-sacrifice, a kind of selflessness in the face of death which we also see in the myth of Alcestis, who gave her life in place of her husband, Admetus.

Alcestis

Laodamia's aunt, Alcestis,[518] is also characterised by her selfless love for her husband. Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, is not directly named in the exile works, but is rather

[517] According to Hyg. *Fab*. 103-4, when Laodamia's father (Acastus) discovers her statue of Protesilaus, he orders the statue to be burnt on a ceremonial funeral pyre. Laodamia is so overcome with grief that she jumps onto the funeral pyre.

[518] Alcestis is the daughter of Pelias and her brother, Acastus, was the father of Laodamia, meaning that Alcestis is the aunt of Laodamia through blood, rather than marriage. For Alcestis as the daughter of Pelias see: *dumque redire voles aevi melioris in annos, / ut vetus*

identified through her devotion to her husband, Admetus. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Alcestis occurs as a paradigm of a faithful wife, and occasionally her role as a paragon of spousal devotion explicitly provides an exemplar for the author's wife to emulate. Alcestis is another wife who acts selflessly in the face of death in Greek tragedy, and her characterisation in the Euripidean master narrative links her with Laodamia and Evadne, who are similarly portrayed as loyal spouses in Euripidean tragedy.[519] Alcestis' depiction in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is defined by her tragic self-sacrifice as she puts her husband's needs before her own, yet we should also be aware that the exile works also contain allusions to the portrayal of Alcestis in Propertian elegy, thus providing an opportunity for the equation between Alcestis and the author's wife to contribute towards the portrayal of Ovid's spouse as being both a loyal wife and an elegiac beloved. Before discussing how Alcestis is presented as an *exemplum* for Ovid's wife to emulate, let us first take a look at Alcestis' depictions as a devoted wife in Greek and Roman tragedy, which influenced Ovid's reference to the tragic myth in *Tristia* 2.

The depictions of Alcestis in Greek and Roman tragedy define her as a loyal and (literally) self-sacrificing wife, providing an excellent compliment to Ovid's wife when she is likened to Alcestis in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. There are, however, darker undertones to the Alcestis myth, particularly the degree of responsibility her husband has for her untimely suicide, something which is explored in the Euripidean tragedy. In the *Tristia* Ovid also alludes to the morally contentious aspects of Admetus' culpability for Alcestis' death as a means of considering his own degree of responsibility for his wife's state of existence after his relegation. The character of Alcestis was extensively developed in Euripides' *Alcestis*, a tragedy which focuses on the death of Alcestis as a result of her husband, Admetus, being given permission to let another die in his place when Death comes to take him to the Underworld. After asking his older relatives (in vain) to take his place,

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Admeti decipiare socer (*Ibis* 439-40) (N.B. I am using Owen's (1915) edition of the *Ibis*). Acastus is also the son of Pelias (making him Alcestis' brother) and Laodamia is the daughter of Acastus (making Laodamia the niece of Alcestis): *me grandaevus Acastus* (*Her*. 13.25).

[519] The character of Medea, another famous wife from myth, is also explored in-depth in Euripidean tragedy, but her portrayal is antithetical to the other wives, as we shall discuss later in the Medea section of this chapter.

Admetus is left without a substitute. When the Fates are not happy to leave the mortal world empty-handed, Alcestis steps forward to offer herself in her husband's place and to die on his behalf. Euripides' tragedy opens with a monologue by Apollo, who sets the scene by explaining that he was so grateful for Admetus' hospitality when Zeus ordered him, a god, to serve a mortal, that he gave Admetus a gift, namely that he could escape his destiny by allowing another to die in his place:

> ὁσίου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὅσιος ὢν ἐτύγχανον
> παιδὸς Φέρητος, ὃν θανεῖν ἐρρυσάμην,
> Μοίρας δολώσας: ἤνεσαν δέ μοι θεαὶ
> Ἄδμητον Ἅιδην τὸν παραυτίκ᾽ ἐκφυγεῖν,
> ἄλλον διαλλάξαντα τοῖς κάτω νεκρόν.
> πάντας δ᾽ ἐλέγξας καὶ διεξελθὼν φίλους,
> - πατέρα γεραιάν θ᾽ ἥ σφ᾽ ἔτικτε μητέρα, -
> οὐχ ηὗρε πλὴν γυναικὸς ὅστις ἤθελεν
> θανὼν πρὸ κείνου μηκέτ᾽ εἰσορᾶν φάος (E. *Alc*. 10-18)[520]

Alcestis is presented as a faithful and selfless wife in Euripides' play, to the point of extreme self-sacrifice as she offers her life to be taken in place of her husband's:

> πῶς δ᾽ οὐκ ἀρίστη; τίς δ᾽ ἐναντιώσεται;
> τί χρὴ λεγέσθαι τὴν ὑπερβεβλημένην
> γυναῖκα; πῶς δ᾽ ἂν μᾶλλον ἐνδείξαιτό τις
> πόσιν προτιμῶσ᾽ ἢ θέλουσ᾽ ὑπερθανεῖν;
> καὶ ταῦτα μὲν δὴ πᾶσ᾽ ἐπίσταται πόλις:
> ἃ δ᾽ ἐν δόμοις ἔδρασε θαυμάσῃ κλύων (E. *Alc*. 152-7)

Here we can see that Alcestis is characterised as the zenith of wifely devotion, so concerned for the welfare of her husband that she will even offer up her own life in place of his. It is Alcestis' selfless dedication to Admetus that raises the question of who was to blame for her

[520] I am using Parker's (2007) edition of *Alcestis*.

downfall, a problematic issue that Ovid touches upon in the exile letters when using the Alcestis myth as a parallel for his own marriage. In Euripides' play, Apollo bestows upon Admetus the gift of avoiding Death, as long as another can take his place, and Admetus allows his wife to offer herself to Death in his stead. So while Admetus does not directly kill his own spouse, he must nevertheless take a degree of responsibility for her demise because he did not stop her sacrificing herself, or insist on dying himself.[521] After the death of Alcestis, Admetus' father chastises his son for allowing her to die, and blames him for killing her:

> σὺ γοῦν ἀναιδῶς διεμάχου τὸ μὴ θανεῖν
> καὶ ζῇς παρελθὼν τὴν πεπρωμένην τύχην,
> ταύτην κατακτάς: εἶτ᾽ ἐμὴν ἀψυχίαν
> ψέγεις, γυναικός, ὦ κάκισθ᾽, ἡσσημένος,
> ἢ τοῦ καλοῦ σοῦ προύθανεν νεανίου; (E. *Alc*. 694-8)

Later in the Euripidean tragedy, Admetus assumes his responsibility for letting his wife die in his stead. Admetus becomes concerned that other people regard him as guilty of bringing about his wife's death, and he does not either contradict or dismiss this widespread view of his own culpability. Admetus now sees his existence as one of shame as he imagines the criticism he could receive for his decision, thus implying that he has taken responsibility for his actions and for the death of his wife:[522]

> ἐρεῖ δέ μ᾽ ὅστις ἐχθρὸς ὢν κυρεῖ τάδε:
> Ἰδοῦ τὸν αἰσχρῶς ζῶνθ᾽, ὃς οὐκ ἔτλη θανεῖν
> ἀλλ᾽ ἣν ἔγημεν ἀντιδοὺς ἀψυχίᾳ
> πέφευγεν Ἅιδην: κᾆτ᾽ ἀνὴρ εἶναι δοκεῖ;
> στυγεῖ δὲ τοὺς τεκόντας, αὐτὸς οὐ θέλων

[521] For a discussion of the questions concerning morality and responsibility that Admetus' speech raises in 614-738, see Parker (2007) 177-9. On the nobility of Admetus and the morality of his actions in Euripides' *Alcestis* more generally, see Burnett (1965) and Dyson (1988).

[522] On this, see Parker (2007) 242-3.

θανεῖν. τοιάνδε πρὸς κακοῖσι κληδόνα

ἔξω. τί μοι ζῆν δῆτα κέρδιον, φίλοι,

κακῶς κλύοντι καὶ κακῶς πεπραγότι; (E. *Alc*. 954-61)

While Admetus comes to terms with the consequences of his actions, Heracles grapples with Death and brings Alcestis back from the Underworld.[523] We have already discussed how the myth of Alcestis is paralleled with Ovid's wife in *Tristia* 5.5, but it may be fruitful to take a closer look at a couplet in this epistle that explores the theme of culpability, particularly in light of the exploration of blame in Euripides' treatment of the Alcestis myth. After exploring a number of heroines whose fame relies on their steadfast fidelity as they suffer in the wake of the ruin of their husbands (among whom is Alcestis, *Tr*. 5.5.55), Ovid appeals to his spouse to remain loyal in a similar manner (*Tr*. 5.5.59-60). Following this, however, Ovid comments that his wife should not be punished for his mistakes and appeals for her to be spared such misery:

non mihi, qui poenam fateor meruisse, sed illi

parcite, quae nullo digna dolore dolet! (*Tr*. 5.5.63-4)

Ovid's appeal on behalf of his innocent wife rests upon him "taking the blame" for events and assuming responsibility for his own relegation.[524] It is particularly apt that this statement follows the use of Alcestis as a parallel for Ovid's spouse in *Tristia* 5.5.55, as this throws Ovid into the role of the tragic Admetus, a character who must come to terms with his own responsibility for the untimely demise of his own wife.

While Euripides is no doubt an important influence on the characterisation and portrayal of Alcestis in the Ovidian exile letters, it should be remembered that Alcestis was also a popular literary figure in Roman tragedy and this too could have influenced Ovid's

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[523] Heracles formulates a plan to recover Alcestis by accosting Death (E. *Alc*. 837-60) without Admetus' knowledge. Heracles later presents a woman to Admetus, and her identity is then revealed: Admetus and Alcestis are reunited (E. *Alc*. 1190-32).

[524] Claassen (1987) 32 considers how Ovid represents his culpability concerning his relegation, arguing that during the course of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid discusses his responsibility for this exile less and less as time passes and especially after the death of Augustus. For Ovid's culpability in *Pont*. 3.3, see n.218.

rendition of the Alcestis myth. Laevius composed an *Alcestis*, fragments of which survive thanks to Gellius. The lines of Laevius' tragedy, published in Courtney (1993),[525] suggest that roughly the same plot was followed as the Euripidean version. From the fragments we can surmise that Alcestis loves her husband and he is aware of this, as he addresses her: *carendum tui est* (fr. 7). Alcestis is also depicted as being *avens* to do something (fr. 9), presumably giving her own life in place of Admetus'. The extant fragments mention the Underworld (*silenta loca*, fr. 7), allowing us to infer that the tragedy also featured death. Of course these fragments are taken out of their immediate literary context, but if Courtney is correct in thinking that the play broadly corresponds to the plotlines of Euripides, then Laevius' *Alcestis* is also an important tragic precursor to the portrayal of Alcestis in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Even though the extant text of Laevius' *Alcestis* is fragmentary, we can appreciate that Alcestis was presented as a devoted wife and her fate involved facing death. Alcestis, therefore, has a literary history as a famously devoted spouse in both Greek and Roman tragedy before the exile works were composed, something which influences Ovid's use of the myth in exile and Ovid also mentions when commenting the fate of Admetus in *Tristia* 2.

Ovid refers to the myth of Alcestis and Admetus, as explored in Greek and Roman tragedy, in *Tristia* 2 when claiming that all genres are permeated by amatory content:

omne genus scripti gravitate tragoedia vincit:

haec quoque materiam semper amoris habet (*Tr*. 2.381-2)

Admetus is then included in a list of *exempla* of mythical characters in a variety of scenarios from tragedies instigated by love:

quid Peliae generum, quid Thesea, quique Pelasgum

Iliacam tetigit de rate primus humum? (*Tr*. 2.403-4)

Here, Admetus is identifiable as the *gener* of Pelias, who is Alcestis' father and therefore Admetus' father-in-law. It is interesting that this couplet also alludes to tragic versions of

[525] Courtney (1993) 123-7.

the death of Protesilaus. While this couplet focuses on the fates of Admetus and Protesilaus, their close proximity in one couplet echoes the way that Alcestis is, contextually, very closely associated with her niece Laodamia throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.[526] This characterisation of Alcestis as a, quite literally, self-sacrificing wife provides a fertile literary background for her role as a paragon of wifely devotion in the exilic epistles.

While Ovid alludes to the presentation of Alcestis in Greek and Roman tragedies in *Tristia* 2, elsewhere in the exile letters the depiction of Alcestis is also reminiscent of her role as a paradigm of fidelity in amatory elegy. In *Tristia* 5.5, 5.14 and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1 Alcestis is presented alongside Penelope, as previously discussed. This placement could be a reference to an appearance that Alcestis makes in the Propertian corpus, where she is named as a mythical *exemplum* alongside Penelope. In Propertius 2.6, a poem condemning infidelity, Alcestis and Penelope are offered as paradigms of chastity. The Propertian *amator* is suffering from jealousy at the thought of another man coming close to his beloved:

omnia me laedent: timidus sum (ignosce timori)

et miser in tunica suspicor esse virum (Propertius 2.6.13-14)

Propertius then exclaims that the husband of a faithful wife would be truly happy, and uses Alcestis and Penelope as precedents:

felix Admeti coniunx et lectus Ulixis,

et quaecumque viri femina limen amat!

templa Pudicitiae quid opus statuisse puellis,

si cuiuis nuptae quidlibet esse licet? (Propertius 2.6.23-6)

In this instance, both Alcestis and Penelope are identified by periphrasis; neither woman is directly named. Such circumlocution is also a common method of referring to Alcestis in the

[526] Alcestis occurs in combination with Penelope, Evadne, and Laodamia at *Tr*. 5.5.51-8; 14.35-40; *Pont*. 3.1.106-10.

exile letters, where a similar form of periphrasis is used.[527] Thus, when Ovid identifies Alcestis as the wife of Admetus he adopts the phraseology of erotic elegy, where Alcestis is similarly identified as a paragon of virtue, defined by her act of self-sacrifice in Greek and Roman tragedy. This suggests that Ovid is playing with a range of different source texts when composing the exile letters by making allusions to the tragedies of Euripides and Laevius in tandem with subtle references to Alcestis' role as a paradigm in Latin love elegy, thus locating his exilic collection in a rich intertextual tapestry of literature.[528]

Alcestis is portrayed in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as an ideal example of a faithful wife, implied as a model for the author's own spouse to emulate much in the same way as Penelope and Laodamia. Alcestis represents the most noble and selfless gesture of a wife as she steps forward to die instead of her husband. Her self-sacrifice in the face of death is something that associates Alcestis closely with Laodamia and Evadne, whose devotion to their husbands was also tested by death and treated in Euripidean tragedy. Let us now take a closer look at the final *exemplum* of a good wife in the exile works, Evadne, whose self-immolation illustrates her devotion to her husband.

Evadne

Evadne, the daughter of Iphis, was the wife of Capaneus who was so overcome by grief at the death of her husband that she committed suicide by throwing herself on Capaneus' funeral pyre. Evadne's devotion to her husband characterises her portrayal in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where she appears as a faithful wife intended for the author's wife to emulate. While the tragic demise of Evadne typifies her depiction in the Ovidian exile letters, the way that her husband died is also an important factor for understanding the exiled author's responsibility for the current situation of his wife. Before looking at how the fidelity of Evadne is portrayed in the exile works and wider Latin literature (such as her role

[527] Alcestis is identified as *Admeti ... uxor* in *Tr*. 5.14.37 and *Admeti coniunx* in *Pont*. 3.1.106.
[528] Cf. Barchiesi (2001a) 142-63; Harrison (2002) 90-3.

as a paradigm of fidelity in Propertius), let us first consider how tragic master narratives have shaped the use of the Evadne and Capaneus myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*.

Evadne's tragic demise in the wake of the death of her husband featured on the Greek tragic stage, where the deaths of Capaneus and his wife were played out in the works of both Aeschylus and Euripides. In Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, Capaneus defies the will of Zeus by proclaiming, on the very point of sacking Thebes, that nothing could stop him entering the city, not even the king of the gods himself. His arrogant challenge to the god results in Capaneus being struck by the lightning bolt of Zeus:

> Καπανεὺς δ᾽ ἀπειλεῖ, δρᾶν παρεσκευασμένος,
> θεοὺς ἀτίζων, κἀπογυμνάζων στόμα
> χαρᾷ ματαίᾳ θνητὸς ὢν εἰς οὐρανὸν
> πέμπει γεγωνὰ Ζηνὶ κυμαίνοντ᾽ ἔπη:
> πέποιθα δ᾽ αὐτῷ ξὺν δίκῃ τὸν πυρφόρον
> ἥξειν κεραυνόν, οὐδὲν ἐξηκασμένον
> μεσημβρινοῖσι θάλπεσιν τοῖς ἡλίου (A. *Th*. 440-6)[529]

Capaneus' pride and disregard for the authority of the gods also determine his characterisation in Euripides' *Suppliant Women*.[530] Here again, we see that it is Capaneus' arrogance that leads him to shout to heaven in defiance of the gods, an act for which he is punished by being struck by lightning. The fairness of the punishment is explored when the Herald comments on Capaneus' fate, remarking that if you view his death as unjust, then you are likewise arrogantly presuming that you have superior wisdom to the king of the gods:

> σὺ δ᾽ ἄνδρας ἐχθροὺς καὶ θανόντας ὠφελεῖς,
> θάπτων κομίζων θ᾽ ὕβρις οὓς ἀπώλεσεν;
> οὔ τἄρ᾽ ἔτ᾽ ὀρθῶς Καπανέως κεραύνιον
> δέμας καπνοῦται, κλιμάκων ὀρθοστάτας

[529] I am using Murray's (1937) edition of *Seven Against Thebes*.
[530] Conacher (1956) 22, 24-5.

ὃς προσβαλὼν πύλῃσιν ὤμοσεν πόλιν
πέρσειν θεοῦ θέλοντος ἤν τε μὴ θέλῃ;
οὐδ᾽ ἥρπασεν χάρυβδις οἰωνοσκόπον,
τέθριππον ἅρμα περιβαλοῦσα χάσματι,
ἄλλοι τε κεῖνται πρὸς πύλαις λοχαγέται
πέτροις καταξανθέντες ὀστέων ῥαφάς;
ἢ νυν φρονεῖν ἄμεινον ἐξαύχει Διός,
ἢ θεοὺς δικαίως τοὺς κακοὺς ἀπολλύναι. (E. *Supp*. 494-505)[531]

Euripides portrays Capaneus as an arrogant warrior who defies the will of Zeus, a characterisation that is very much in keeping with Aeschylus' rendition of the death of Capaneus.[532] Euripides's play, however, explores the results of Capaneus' actions beyond his own death by focusing particularly on how his fate has an impact on the life of his wife, Evadne, and how her death grieves her father, Iphis. Soon after the death of Capaneus, Evadne decides to self-immolate on her husband's funeral pyre. Dressed as if for a wedding, heightening the emotional aspects of this tragic scene, she stands before the funeral pyre of her husband, about to throw herself into the flames:

ὁρῶ δὴ τελευτάν,
ἵν᾽ ἕστακα: τύχα δέ μοι
ξυνάπτοι ποδός: ἀλλὰ τᾶς
εὐκλεΐας χάριν ἔνθεν ὁρ-
μάσω τᾶσδ᾽ ἀπὸ πέτρας πη-
δήσασα πυρὸς ἔσω,
σῶμά τ᾽ αἴθοπι φλογμῷ
πόσει συμμείξασα, φίλον

[531] I am using Murray's (1902) edition of *Suppliant Women*.
[532] It is worth noting, however, that Euripides' *Suppliant Women* also includes praise of Capaneus' character; a man who was of sound judgement and morals, yet one who let his pride get the better of him when he challenged the authority of Zeus (E. *Supp*. 857-71).

χρῶτα χρωτὶ πέλας θεμένα,
Φερσεφονείας ἥξω θαλάμους,
σὲ τὸν θανόντ᾽ οὔποτ᾽ ἐμᾷ
προδοῦσα ψυχᾷ κατὰ γᾶς.
ἴτω φῶς γάμοι τε:
ἴθ᾽ αἵτινες εὐναὶ
δικαίων ὑμεναίων ἐν Ἄργει
φανῶσιν τέκνοις: ὅσιος δ᾽
<ὅσιος> εὐναῖος γαμέτας
συντηχθεὶς αὔραις ἀδόλοις
γενναίας [ψυχᾶς] ἀλόχοιο. (E. *Supp*. 1012-31)

The relationship between the actions of Capaneus and the direct result they have on his wife (in that his death renders her so grief-stricken that she kills herself) that we see played out in Euripides' *Suppliant Women* can also be seen in the depiction of the Evadne and Capaneus myth in the Ovidian exile works. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid equates his wife with Evadne and himself with Capaneus and explores how Evadne's fame rose from her steadfastness in adverse circumstances when her husband was punished, just as Ovid has been punished himself by Augustus.[533]

In the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the association between Ovid's wife and Evadne implies a similar equation between Ovid and Capaneus, but in *Tristia* 4.3 Ovid overtly establishes this parallel. In *Tristia* 4.3, an epistle to the author's wife, Ovid tells his spouse that she should not be ashamed to be called his wife even though he has been relegated:

me miserum, si tu, cum diceris exulis uxor,

[533] We should see Ovid's association with Capaneus as being in keeping with his self-depiction as a man who has been hit by the thunderbolt of Jupiter, a poetic allegory for his relegation at the hands of the Princeps. For more on this, see the Jupiter section in Chapter One.

avertis vultus et subit ora rubor!

me miserum, si turpe putas mihi nupta videri!

me miserum, si te iam pudet esse meam! (*Tr*. 4.3.49-52)

Ovid then provides a number of mythical *exempla* to justify his opinion. Among these is Evadne, who was not ashamed of how her husband was struck by Jupiter's thunderbolt: [534]

nunc quoque ne pudeat quod sis mihi nupta; tuusque

non dolor hinc debet, debet abesse pudor.

cum cecidit Capaneus subito temerarius ictu,

num legis Evadnen erubuisse viro? (*Tr*. 4.3.61-4)

Ovid's association with Capaneus contributes towards the author's self-constructed image of himself as a "marked man", fated to be an exile and doomed to civic death by the highest authority of divine justice, and so representing the displeasure of Augustus as the lightning of Jupiter.[535] The Capaneus parallel for Ovid is also a particularly intriguing one when we realise that Capaneus is culpable for his own downfall: even though the hero may be a man of good standing and morals,[536] he nevertheless foolishly tempts fate by proclaiming that not even Jupiter could stop him from conquering Thebes. This parallel could be understood as a means for Ovid to explore his own culpability for his downfall in composing the *Ars amatoria*, and his responsibility for his exile and the hardship that his wife must live through as a result (much like Ovid's use of the Admetus and Alcestis myth, as we have just discussed). At the same time, Ovid's use of the Evadne and Capaneus myth also reflects the shame of relegation and the strain that this puts on his wife. When Capaneus is judged by

[534] This contributes towards the exile poetry's broader association between Augustus and Jupiter, who punishes a range of mythical characters by hitting them with a thunderbolt. For more on this see the section on Jupiter in Chapter One.

[535] Jupiter appears as the highest authority in the rendition of the Capaneus myth in Ovid's own *Metamorphoses*, where the hero is portrayed as being invincible except for the intervention of the king of the gods himself: *Capaneusque nisi ab Iove vinci* / *haud poterit* (*Met*. 9.404-5).

[536] See n.532.

Jupiter and is struck by lightning then his corpse is taboo, condemned to be disposed of separately from the bodies of god-fearing men.[537] This deep societal taboo surrounding Capaneus' corpse presents a challenge to a grieving widow, as mourners are not expected to mourn the deceased. Evadne's love for her husband overcomes this deep sense of shame, and she not only mourns her husband but also throws herself onto his funeral pyre. Thus, her devotion to her husband leads her to completely disregard the custom of cremating the body of one struck by lightning alone, as she joins her husband on the funeral pyre in a gesture of solidarity. Evadne's willingness to disregard the burial customs of society and to overlook the religious taboo of her husband's cremation highlights her love for her husband and her loyalty to him. Even in the face of condemnation by the king of the gods, Evadne still loves her husband above anything else: religious protocol, societal custom, or even her own life. When Ovid uses the Evadne myth as a parallel for his wife (and he uses an equation with Capaneus to explore his culpability for his wife's situation after his relegation), the deep condemnation of Capaneus and the strength of Evadne's love for him is highlighted as she opts to overlook such societal taboo. This, in turn, heightens the fidelity and love of Ovid's wife and also contributes significantly towards Ovid's self-portrayal as a doomed individual, struck dead by the judgement of Jupiter-Augustus.

Evadne's extreme loyalty to her husband and her tragic self-immolation on his funeral pyre in the tragedies of Aeschylus and Euripides contribute towards her reputation for infallible fidelity. This characterisation results in her becoming an apt mythical exemplar for comparison with the morals of the beloved in erotic Roman elegy, and in the *Tristia* we can see the influence of her role as a paradigm in erotic elegy in the exile letters. As we saw in *Tristia* 5.5, 5.14, and *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, Evadne is showcased as a mythical role model for the author's wife when she occurs as an example of a woman whose fame lies in her devotion to her unfortunate husband. Evadne's steadfastness in the face of adversity illustrates that Ovid's wife is in good company when she is loyal to her exiled husband, thus constructing a comparison between the virtues of the mythical character and the woman who is the object of the poet's affections (in the case of Ovid's *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, his wife). It is possible that such a comparison recalls the portrayal of Evadne in

[537] On this, see Whitehorn (1986); Hillard (1996); Toher (2001).

Propertian amatory elegy, where Evadne also features as a paragon of fidelity and is equated with the erotic beloved (somewhat to the detriment of the *puella*, Cynthia). Propertius 1.15 tells of how the *amator* fears that Cynthia is preparing to leave him:[538]

tu tamen in nostro lenta timore venis;

et potes hesternos manibus componere crinis

et longa faciem quaerere desidia,

nec minus Eois pectus variare lapillis,

ut formosa novo quae parat ire viro (Propertius 1.15.4-8)

Propertius then provides a number of precedents of women, amongst whom is Evadne, who are so devoted to their husbands that they would never desert them (in direct contrast to Cynthia):[539]

coniugis Euadne miseros delata per ignis

occidit, Argivae fama pudicitiae (Propertius 1.15.21-2)

The description of Evadne's ultimate act of fidelity, following her husband into death so that she cannot be parted from him, throws into relief the stark contrast with Cynthia, who is so degenerate that she cannot even be improved by mythical *exempla*:[540]

quarum nulla tuos potuit convertere mores,

tu quoque uti fieres nobilis historia (Propertius 1.15.23-4)

This sentiment is also expressed in Propertius 3.13 where it is extended to apply to all Roman females, and in the process also mobilises the characters of Evadne and Penelope as

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[538] Propertius 1.15.4-8, 32.

[539] On the use of Evadne as a mythological *exemplum* in Propertius 1.15, see Bennett (1972); Gaisser (1977).

[540] For the opinion that Propertius' use of the Evadne *exemplum* reveals more about the character of the Propertian *amator* (and his veiled threat of desertion) than it does about Cynthia, see Gaisser (1977) 390-1.

well as other mythical models of feminine chastity. When considering the unusual nobility of savage tribes compared with Roman luxury and excess, Propertius cynically decries the morals of Roman women:

hoc genus infidum nuptarum, hic nulla puella

nec fida Evadne nec pia Penelope (Propertius 3.13.23-4)

Both Propertius and Ovid provide women with the mythical *exemplum* of Evadne as a faithful spouse, and as such they suggest a comparison between the two women in need of guidance in both the exilic epistles and Propertian elegy, namely Ovid's wife and Cynthia. At Propertius 1.15.23-4, Propertius notes that Evadne's paradigm will be completely lost on Cynthia, a woman who cannot mend her ways. In contrast, there is no indication that Ovid's spouse will be unable to live up to the high expectations of Evadne's behaviour when she is presented with the mythical *exemplum* of Evadne, and it could even be inferred that she surpasses Evadne's virtue when the author claims that his wife would excel even Penelope (*Tr*. 1.6.19-22, 33-4).[541] The implied comparison between Ovid's wife and Cynthia highlights the contrast in their fidelity, yet the act of negatively comparing them inherently equates Ovid's spouse with the elegiac mistress to a certain extent.[542] This equivalence (even though it is achieved by a negative comparison) encourages us to see the exilic elegies in connection with earlier erotic elegies. However, this can only be held true to a certain extent since the contrasting content of the comparison also indicates that the association of the exile works with amatory elegy is not simply concerned with a straightforward sense of continuation, but that this is a more complex relationship which includes differences as well as similarities.

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Evadne appears as a paragon of fidelity, a woman so devoted to her husband that she sacrificed her life so that they could

[541] On the position of Ovid's wife in relation to the catalogue of mythical women featured in *Tr*. 1.6: Hinds (1999).

[542] On negative comparisons acting as equations see Feeney (1992). For details on similarities and differences between Ovid's wife and the elegiac *puella*, see Nagle (1980) 44-6, 51-4. Ovid's wife is labelled *domina* at *Tr*. 3.3.23, 41; 4.3.1; 4.8.11; 5.5.1, 15. For *domina* as an elegiac term: Pichon (1902) 134.

not be parted by death. The demise of Capaneus, and the character's association with the author, invites us to consider how the actions of a husband have consequences for the wife, and Ovid's own responsibility for his relegation, a civic punishment that tests his own wife's loyalty. The author's wife is portrayed as being steadfast like Evadne, and being willing to overcome societal taboos to stand by her husband, just as Evadne wanted to be near her husband in death and disregarded the protocol for burying those killed by lightning. The virtue of Evadne, and of the author's wife, reveals Ovid as a man who is worthy of such loyalty, even if he has to accept responsibility for the current hardship the married couple face. The devotion of Evadne to her husband even in the face of death reinforces her association with Laodamia and Alcestis, two other tragic mythical figures who highlight the theme of death in the Ovidian exile works. The similarity between these three women, and the fidelity they share with Penelope, strengthens the notion of there being a canon of good wives in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* that is repeated for the benefit of the author's wife. Before concluding our assessment of mythical women in the Ovidian exile works, let us turn our attention to a final female character, a woman who is also very famous from tragedy, albeit in a different way from any other female literary character we have previously considered: Medea.

Part Two: The Antithesis of Wifely Devotion

The depictions of faithful spouses such as Penelope, Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne operate as positive mythical *exempla* intended as paragons of virtue for Ovid's wife to emulate. However, the exile works are not solely populated by such good wives, but they also include their ultimate antithesis, embodied in the form of Medea. The depiction of Medea in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is not quite a straightforward matter because Medea is potentially a very dangerous mythical *exemplum* to deploy because of her reputation as murderess. Ovid's use of the Medea myth is very different from any other use of myth in the exile works in a number of ways, most notably in the way that she is never associated with, or directly paralleled with, any historical person (in one instance, however, she serves as a

negative *exemplum* but this is aimed to illustrate dissimilarity to a particular person). The depiction of Medea primarily serves to typify the landscape of the poet's exile, the society of the native inhabitants of the Black Sea region, and also to characterise the suffering of the *relegatus poeta* as a decline into barbarism as the poet gradually loses his Latinity (or so he claims). Even though the use of the Medea myth in the exilic epistles in some respects operates in a different way from the use of any other myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the characterisation of Medea also contributes to the key themes of the exile works (such as the relationship between the author and his corpus, the suffering of the *relegatus poeta*, and the recurring image of maimed bodies) in the same way that other myths shape the image of the poet in the world of exile. Ultimately, Medea's function is to characterise Ovid as an abandoned tragic figure, much like we saw earlier in Ovid's depiction of himself as Philoctetes and Pirithous, but in a manner that shies away from associating the sympathetic self-portrayal of the author with the infamy of Medea's infanticide.

Medea

Medea is a frequently treated mythological character in the Ovidian corpus, cropping up in his early elegiac works such as the *Heroides*,[543] featuring in the epic *Metamorphoses,*[544] and also occurring as a mythological *exemplum* in the exile works.[545] However, her myth was most fully treated (in the Ovidian corpus) in Ovid's lost tragedy, *Medea*. From the few remaining fragments of the play and references to it by other classical authors, it seems that the play was well-received in contemporary Rome.[546] The fullest reference to Ovid's tragic rendering of this myth within the Ovidian corpus itself occurs at the close of his erotic

[543] *Her*. 12 is posed as a letter from Medea to Jason.
[544] Medea, and her love for Jason, dominates the beginning of *Met*. 7.
[545] Medea features in *Tr*. 2.387, 526; 3.8.3, 9.9, 15, 43; *Pont*. 3.1.120, 3.80; 4.10.52.
[546] Quint. 10.1.98 and Tac. *Dial*. 12, as in Owen's (1915) edition. For more on the popular reception of Ovid's *Medea* in *Tr*. 2, see Ingleheart (2010a) 393-4.

Amores. As the poet bids farewell to the genre of amatory elegy in *Amores* 3.15,[547] he turns his attention to the genre of tragedy:

culte puer puerique parens Amathusia culti,

aurea de campo vellite signa meo:

corniger increpuit thyrso graviore Lyaeus;

pulsanda est magnis area maior equis.

imbelles elegi, genialis Musa, valete,

post mea mansurum fata superstes opus (*Am*. 3.15.15-20)

Here, since we are aware that Amathus (15) is a town in Cyprus and that this island is the traditional birthplace of Venus,[548] we can take *parens Amathusia* to stand as a reference to Venus, and so the *puer* who is her child must be Amor.[549] *Lyaeus* can be identified as Bacchus because this was one of his cult titles,[550] and he has dealt the poet a blow with his thyrsus, an item which is carried by worshippers of the god and can be interpreted in a poetical sense as a symbol of divine inspiration from Bacchus.[551] Given the associations between Dionysus and the tragic stage,[552] the appearance of Bacchus in 17-18 is a revelation that Ovid has received divine inspiration to write tragedy from the god himself. Ovid uses these two mythical gods to represent the genres of his works as he (apparently) ends his involvement with erotic poetry and turns instead towards composing tragedy. Since we know that Ovid did compose a tragedy on the topic of Medea, it would seem most likely that this is the play to which he refers at the close of the *Amores*.[553]

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[547] Cf. *Amores* 3.1, where Elegy and Tragedy appear to the poet in a woodland grove as he considers which genre to devote his time to.
[548] OLD s.v. *Amathus.*
[549] Venus is also referred to as *Amathusia* at Cat. 68.51.
[550] OLD s.v. *Lyaeus.*
[551] OLD s.v. *thyrsus* 1b.
[552] See Goldhill (1990); Segal (1997).
[553] On the dating of Ovid's *Medea* see McKeown (1987) 74-89.

A full assessment of the portrayal of Medea in the Ovidian corpus is almost completely overshadowed by the loss of Ovid's tragedy on this theme.[554] While we can only guess at the content of Ovid's lost tragedy from the few remaining fragments quoted by other authors,[555] it would seem likely that the author had his own work in mind when he writes the character of Medea into the rich mythical cast of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. For instance, as part of this defence against the charges of teaching adultery in the *Ars amatoria* in *Tristia* 2, Ovid argues that works of literature from all genres can have the potential to carry amatory instruction. After dealing with the erotic natures of epic poems such as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Ovid turns his attention to the genre of tragedy:

omne genus scripti gravitate tragoedia vincit:

haec quoque materiam semper amoris habet (*Tr*. 2.381-2)

Ovid then proceeds to name examples of tragic themes which rely upon love to propel the narrative and act as a catalyst for unfolding events,[556] such as Euripides' *Hippolytus* (383), and plays treating Canace (384) and Pelops (385-6), before including the narrative of Medea's myth as a further *exemplum*:

tingueret ut ferrum natorum sanguine mater,

concitus a laeso fecit amore dolor (*Tr*. 2.387-8)

While Medea is not explicitly named here, the bloody nature of the description of a tragic *mater*'s deed against her own children, emotively focusing on the gory description of a sword tinged with blood to imply the death of the children, is a clear indicator that Medea's double infanticide is implied in this hexameter. The graphic nature of this description of Medea highlights the violence with which she is associated, and the bloody barbarity which typifies her portrayal in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In addition, identifying Medea as a *barbara mater* (526) reinforces her portrayal in the exile works as a violent savage and a

[554] Huskey (2004) attempts a reading of Medea's portrayal spanning across the Ovidian corpus in terms of rhetorical devices for revealing information.
[555] Quint. 8.5.6 and Sen. *Suas*. 3.7.
[556] On Ovid's erotic reading of tragic narratives in *Tr*. 2.387-8, see Ingleheart (2010a) 294-5, 307-8.

product from the edge of the civilised world, the place to which the unfortunate author is now relegated.

Medea's appearances elsewhere in the Ovidian exile letters operate in a slightly different way to the other characters associated with tragic narratives, such as Philoctetes, to whom the author likens himself.[557] The myth of Medea is predominantly employed in the exile works either as an indicator of the geographical location of Ovid's place of exile or as a negative *exemplum*,[558] yet in these processes Ovid never actually fully likens Medea either to himself or to any other "real life" character within the exilic letters.[559] As a result, the author uses Medea to portray himself as a figure from the tragic stage, *like* Medea, but he does not ever present himself *as* Medea.

One of the most common uses of the Medea narrative in the exile works draws a parallel between the location in which the mythical tale took place and the current location of the author. In this way, the Medea myth can be interpreted as a geographical marker for the poet's own place in exile.[560] In *Tristia* 3.9, as Ovid laments the barbarous and inhospitable nature of his environment in Tomis, he considers that the etymological explanation of how the town got its name is most appropriate:

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[557] See Philoctetes section in Chapter Three.

[558] On the location of Medea's homeland, see Claassen (2008) 174-5, 182-3.

[559] As we shall see, Ovid repeatedly uses the Medea myth to characterise his place of exile. In the act of comparing Tomis to Colchis, not insignificant geographical problems arise. Tomis is on the western shore of the Black Sea, whereas Colchis is on the eastern. Ovid deliberately ellides Tomis and Colchis, despite the vast geographical distance between them. This is yet another example of how Ovid is extremely adept at cherry-picking aspects of myth to suit his own purpose (in this case, Colchis conveniently faces onto the same sea as Tomis) or, indeed, at rewriting myth to suit his own agenda (so that Colchis and Tomis become the same place).

[560] Even though any reader with a rudimentary ability to read a map would be aware that Tomis is nowhere near Colchis, what is important for our investigation is that Ovid's reality is the reality that he presents to the reader (see n.5) and, as an artist, he is fully entitled to disregard geographical facts in favour of creating a literary unity between Tomis and Colchis (this poetic licence is very similar to the artistic licence exercised by painters when they change the factual details of a landscape to suit the overall picture they are creating). Thus, the basis for Ovid's manipulation of the Medea myth in the exilic epistles to characterise his place of exile as barbarous requires a dose of good-natured suspension of disbelief on the part of the reader, who may also keep their tongue-in-cheek as Ovid plays fast and loose with mythical geography to serve his own agenda.

sed vetus huic nomen, positaque antiquius urbe,

constat ab Absyrti caede fuisse loco (*Tr*. 3.9.5-6)

The epistle then launches into an inserted narrative; a vivid account of how Medea, when escaping from Colchis with Jason and fearing that they would be caught by her father, butchered her brother and scattered his remains to ensure that their enemies stopped to pick up the pieces. Indeed, in Ovid's illumination on the grim etymology of Tomis there is no shrinking back from describing all the grisly details:

ac cito divellit divulsaque membra per agros

dissipat in multis invenienda locis.

neu pater ignoret, scopulo proponit in alto

pallentesque manus sanguineumque caput (*Tr*. 3.9.27-30)

Ovid uses this gory and violent narrative as the background scenery for his own situation as an exile. The author presents us with an etymological account of Tomis' horrific origins,[561] but things are further complicated when we realise that this story has been chosen not only to elucidate the name of Tomis, but also to convey the barbarity of the author's current surroundings:

inde Tomis locus hic dictus, quia fertur in illo

membra sui fratris consecuisse soror (*Tr*. 3.9.33-4)

Here, Ovid alludes to the Greek etymology for the name Tomis, presenting the dissection of Absyrtus as an aetion for naming the town after the Greek verb τέμνω, "to cut".[562] The very place itself is characterised by the mythical savagery and bloody murder which took place

[561] On Ovid and his use of etymology, see Ahl (1985); O'Hara (1996b); Keith (2001). On etymology in Latin literature more generally, see Maltby (1991); O'Hara (1996a); Booth and Maltby (2006).

[562] On this see Vulpe (1959) 44-5 and Nawotka (1994) 407-12.

there at the time of the Argonauts.[563] In *Tristia* 3.9.33-4 Ovid takes the real, physical location of his exile, and attempts to explain his own surroundings in mythological terms by painting the narrative of Medea's fratricide onto his own landscape around Tomis. Just as Medea dices up her brother and scatters him across the fields (27-8; 33-4) Ovid himself maps Medea's myth onto the reality of his location, metaphorically superimposing fiction and fantasy onto the Tomitan landscape in order to convey the harsh realities of living there.[564] This further highlights the barbarity of his location and surroundings at the fringes of the empire.[565] Ovid's rendition of the murder of Absyrtus in *Tristia* 3.9 could also be an allusion to a passage in Apollonius's *Argonautica* where, after Absyrtus has been killed, his body parts are similarly buried deep (both literally and metaphorically speaking) and intertwined in local geography.[566] After Medea and Jason have resolved to kill Absyrtus, Jason lies in wait:

> αὐτὰρ ὅγ᾽ αἰνοτάτῃσιν ὑποσχεσίῃσι δολωθεὶς
> καρπαλίμως ᾗ νηὶ διὲξ ἁλὸς οἶδμα περήσας,
> νύχθ᾽ ὕπο λυγαίην ἱερῆς ἐπεβήσατο νήσου:
> οἰόθι δ᾽ ἀντικρὺ μετιὼν πειρήσατο μύθοις
> εἶο κασιγνήτης, ἀταλὸς πάις οἷα χαράδρης 460

[563] For consideration of the various etymological and mythical accounts of the death of Absyrtus that may have shaped Ovid's own aetion of Tomis, see Nawotka (1994) 407-12. Alternatively, Tomis may be named after a local Greek hero called Tomos (Nawotka (1994) 413-15) or after the Thracian word for "promontory", referring to the geographical location of the town with regard to the Black Sea (Vulpe (1959) 45; Nawotka (1994) 415).

[564] In the course of this thesis I have argued that Ovid uses mythical characters and narratives (such as Medea, Philoctetes, and Pirithous) to mythologise his landscape, painting a picture of his place of exile as beyond the edge of the civilised world, an isolated island, or the Underworld (respectively). Claassen (1990b) argues a relatively similar line of thought, suggesting that Ovid characterises the landscape of his exile throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, providing a degree of personification that grows deeper the longer he lives there, but Claassen concludes that this process results in the landscape becoming a supporting character of the exile works, hostile and unfriendly to the author.

[565] On the barbarity of the Tomitan locale, far removed geographically, culturally, and conceptually from Rome, see Ingleheart (2010b) 224-5, 235-7.

[566] On the relationship between Apollonius and geography, see Meyer (2001). For the plot of the *Argonautica* being propelled by travel and the landscape see Clare (2002).

χειμερίης, ἣν οὐδὲ δι᾽ αἰζηοὶ περόωσιν,
εἴ κε δόλον ξείνοισιν ἐπ᾽ ἀνδράσι τεχνήσαιτο.
καὶ τὼ μὲν τὰ ἕκαστα συνήνεον ἀλλήλοισιν:
αὐτίκα δ᾽ Αἰσονίδης πυκινοῦ ἐξᾶλτο λόχοιο,
γυμνὸν ἀνασχόμενος παλάμῃ ξίφος: αἶψα δὲ κούρη
ἔμπαλιν ὄμματ᾽ ἔνεικε, καλυψαμένη ὀθόνῃσιν,
μὴ φόνον ἀθρήσειε κασιγνήτοιο τυπέντος.
τὸν δ᾽ ὅγε, βουτύπος ὥστε μέγαν κερεαλκέα ταῦρον,
πλῆξεν ὀπιπεύσας νηοῦ σχεδόν, ὅν ποτ᾽ ἔδειμαν
Ἀρτέμιδι Βρυγοὶ περιναιέται ἀντιπέρηθεν.
τοῦ ὅγ᾽ ἐνὶ προδόμῳ γνὺξ ἤριπε: λοίσθια δ᾽ ἦρως
θυμὸν ἀναπνείων χερσὶν μέλαν ἀμφοτέρῃσιν
αἷμα κατ᾽ ὠτειλὴν ὑποΐσχετο: τῆς δὲ καλύπτρην
ἀργυφέην καὶ πέπλον ἀλευομένης ἐρύθηνεν.
ὀξὺ δὲ πανδαμάτωρ λοξῷ ἴδεν οἷον ἔρεξαν
ὄμματι νηλειὴς ὀλοφώιον ἔργον Ἐρινύς -
ἦρως δ᾽ Αἰσονίδης ἐξάργματα τάμνε θανόντος,
τρὶς δ᾽ ἀπέλειξε φόνου, τρὶς δ᾽ ἐξ ἄγος ἔπτυσ᾽ ὀδόντων,
ἢ θέμις αὐθέντῃσι δολοκτασίας ἱλάεσθαι.
ὑγρὸν δ᾽ ἐν γαίῃ κρύψεν νέκυν, ἔνθ᾽ ἔτι νῦν περ
κείαται ὀστέα κεῖνα μετ᾽ ἀνδράσιν Ἀψυρτεῦσιν (A. R. *Arg*. 4.456-81)

An awareness of Apollonius' version of the murder of Absyrtus offers us the chance to appreciate how Ovid's rendition of the narrative differs, particularly concerning the role of Medea. In Apollonius' epic Medea is relegated to the role of the blood-spattered onlooker while the epic protagonist does the deed. However, in *Tristia* 3.9 Medea is the one who takes command of the situation and butchers her own brother, possibly reflecting her

characterisation as a murderess in Euripidean and Ovidian tragedy.[567] While the myth of the murder of Absyrtus plays out differently according to Apollonius and Ovid, there is a striking degree of similarity in the way that Absyrtus' body parts characterise the landscape. As we have just discussed, Ovid emphasises how Medea chops up her brother and scatters different parts of his corpse across the land, thus giving rise to the name Tomis. In Apollonius' version of the myth, Jason mutilates Absyrtus' body and buries the corpse in a location which has been known as the "Absyrteis" ever since. Therefore, both versions of the death of Absyrtus involve his murder, the gory details of his dismemberment, and an explanation of how his demise has given rise to local place names associated with his death. The allusion to this passage of the *Argonautica* found in *Tristia* 3.9 serves to highlight the way in which Ovid's surrounding landscape is associated with the savagery of Absyrtus' murder.

Ovid uses myth not just to provide an etymological explanation for the name of Tomis, but also to characterise his own environment as uncivilised and extremely hostile. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10 is an epistle to Albinovanus which laments that Ovid has spent six years in exile at Tomis in extreme hardship due to the "rough and ready" nature of his environment and its local populations:[568]

Haec mihi Cimmerio bis tertia ducitur aestas

litore pellitos inter agenda Getas:

ecquos tu silices, ecquod, carissime, ferrum

duritiae confers, Albinovane, meae? (*Pont*. 4.10.1-4)

Ovid illustrates his point about the primitive nature of the area by describing the surrounding landscape in mythological terms and comparing its savagery to that of monsters such as the Cyclops (23), Scylla (25) and Charybdis (27) before moving on to

[567] See also *Tr*. 2.387-8, which describes the blood on Medea's hands after she has killed her children.

[568] On the presentation of the Tomitan peoples and the Getae as savages inhabiting a barbarous location at the edge of the empire, see Williams (1994) 16-25.

describe the winds of the area (37-64). In this passage, there is a reference to the river Phasis:

et quondam Grais Phasi petite viris (*Pont*. 4.10.52)

Ovid uses the myth of Jason and the Argonauts' voyage to Colchis as a means of describing his own location in exile, which is also on the shores of the Black Sea. This contributes towards the mythologisation of the Tomitan landscape elsewhere in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.10. In this way, the author portrays Tomis as a land teeming with monsters and savages, thus increasing the barbarous horror of his exile at the edge of the empire.

Ovid not only uses the myth of Medea as a geographical marker to characterise the hostility of his environment, but also as a means of identifying himself with the character by explicitly noting the similarity of their locations. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, an epistle to the author's friend, Maximus, that recollects Amor's night-time appearance to Ovid, Amor mentions in passing that he has been to this area of the world once before:[569]

haec loca tum primum vidi, cum matre rogante

Phasias est telis fixa puella meis.

quae nunc cur iterum post saecula longa revisam,

tu facis, o castris miles amice meis (*Pont*. 3.3.79-82)

While Cupid notes that he has indeed been in this region before and he now appears in the same place again to see Ovid, thus drawing an explicit link between the author's place of residence and Medea's hometown, based upon their shared location on the coast of the Black Sea.[570] This passage alludes to Eros' role in Apollonius' *Argonautica* when he, at his mother's bidding, struck Medea with an all-consuming passion for Jason:

Τόφρα δ᾽ Ἔρως πολιοῖο δι᾽ ἠέρος ἶξεν ἄφαντος,
τετρηχώς, οἷόν τε νέαις ἐπὶ φορβάσιν οἶστρος

[569] In Chapter One we discussed how Amor consoles Ovid in his exile, but now let us take a closer look at how the god describes his role in the narrative of Medea and Jason.
[570] On the relative positions of Tomis and Colchis see nn. 559; 560.

τέλλεται, ὅν τε μύωπα βοῶν κλείουσι νομῆες.
ὦκα δ᾽ ὑπὸ φλιὴν προδόμῳ ἔνι τόξα τανύσσας
ἰοδόκης ἀβλῆτα πολύστονον ἐξέλετ᾽ ἰόν.
ἐκ δ᾽ ὅγε καρπαλίμοισι λαθὼν ποσὶν οὐδὸν ἄμειψεν
ὀξέα δενδίλλων: αὐτῷ ὑπὸ βαιὸς ἐλυσθεὶς
Αἰσονίδῃ γλυφίδας μέσσῃ ἐνικάθετο νευρῇ,
ἰθὺς δ᾽ ἀμφοτέρῃσι διασχόμενος παλάμῃσιν
ἦκ᾽ ἐπὶ Μηδείῃ: τὴν δ᾽ ἀμφασίη λάβε θυμόν.
αὐτὸς δ᾽ ὑψορόφοιο παλιμπετὲς ἐκ μεγάροιο
καγχαλόων ἤιξε: βέλος δ᾽ ἐνεδαίετο κούρῃ
νέρθεν ὑπὸ κραδίῃ, φλογὶ εἴκελον: ἀντία δ᾽ αἰεὶ
βάλλεν ὑπ᾽ Αἰσονίδην ἀμαρύγματα, καί οἱ ἄηντο
στηθέων ἐκ πυκιναὶ καμάτῳ φρένες, οὐδέ τιν᾽ ἄλλην
μνῆστιν ἔχεν, γλυκερῇ δὲ κατείβετο θυμὸν ἀνίῃ (A. R. *Arg*.3.275-90)

While Ovid's abandonment and demise in the Tomitan landscape primarily depicts Ovid as a tragic figure (through repeated references to Medea and equations with other tragic figures such as Philoctetes and Pirithous), the area nevertheless includes a small amount of erotic content in the form of a visiting Amor. It comes as no surprise that our guest star, Amor, brings with him a panoply of elegiac terminology in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 - in the very dialogue in which he recounts instigating one of the most famous love stories in epic and also sowing the seed of passion which brought about one of the most notorious tragedies. Medea is described as the *Phasias puella* (80),[571] and Ovid himself is seen in a manner thoroughly in keeping with *militia amoris* as a *miles* in Amor's *castrum* (82).[572] The appearance of Amor and his elegiac vocabulary in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 emphasises his incongruity in such a savage and barbarous locale as portrayed in the exilic epistles. This contrast serves to highlight the change in Ovid's circumstances brought about by his relegation.

[571] For *puella* as an elegiac term, see Pichon (1902) 244-5.
[572] On *militia amoris* as a feature of elegy: Murgatroyd (1975) and Gale (1997).

The myth of Medea in the exile works is very much involved with the portrayal of the hostile nature of Ovid's place of exile and the uncivilised world in which the author now lives. This, in turn, contributes towards the myth of poetic decline by providing a barbaric environment that is not conducive to writing poetry.[573] This is reflected in the shared adjective that describes both the author's surroundings and Medea: *barbarus*.[574] In addition, the use of this adjective also links the author with Medea, a character who is portrayed as a barbarian in Euripidean tragedy.[575] *Barbarus* is often used to characterise the area around Tomis and its local inhabitants,[576] but it is also used to describe individuals including Ovid (composing poetry in exile and himself amongst the natives),[577] and Medea.[578] The *barbarus* adjective simultaneously paints the Tomitan landscape as an uncivilised fringe of the empire, while also linking the horrific tragic figures associated with it to our author, Ovid.[579] Ovid uses the word *barbarus* to describe the less than eloquent aspects of his current verses, which have seeped in due to his waning Latinity.[580] These

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[573] On the Tomitans as a savage product of a barbaric landscape that is not supportive towards the author's endeavours to compose verse, see Nagle (1980) 112-14; Videau-Delibes (1991) 169-76; Williams (1994) 16.

[574] For the use of *barbarus* to characterise the Getae and the surrounding landscape of exile, see Williams (1994) 18-19. On *barbarus* as the antithesis of civilised, cultured, Roman society, see Haarhoff (1948) 216-21; Sinor (1957) 47-8; Dauge (1981) 413-49. On Ovid's concept of barbarity in the exile works and how it is in line with Ciceronian definitions, see André (1976).

[575] For Medea written as a barbarian in Euripides' *Medea*, see Bacon (1961) 152, 170-2 and Hall (1989) 35, 116. Mossman (2011) 14-28 argues that Euripides' portrayal of Medea as a barbarian is understated, given the rich array of literary precedents that offer Euripides the opportunity to exaggerate Medea's exoticism. For an appreciation of Medea's depiction as both a barbarian and a Greek in Euripides, see Luschnig (2007).

[576] *Tr*. 1.11.31; 2.1.206; 3.3.46; 9.2; 10.4, 34, 54; 11.7; 4.1.22, 82; 4.78, 86; 5.1.46; 2.31, 67; 7.20; 10.28, 30; *Pont*. 2.7.70; 3.1.5; 2.38, 100; 3.26. 4.2.38; 5.34. 9.93.

[577] *Tr*. 3.1.18; 14.30; 5.1.72; 5.7.52, 60; 10. 37; 12.55; *Pont*. 4.13.20.

[578] *Tr*. 2.526.

[579] *Barbarus* is also used to describe two other individuals in the exile works, Iphigenia (*Pont*. 3.2.78) and Danaus (*Tr*. 3.1.62).

[580] On the importance of Ovid's claims that his Latinity is waning, which is nothing more than a fiction to support his pose of poetic decline in exile, see Nagle (1980) 165; Williams (1994) 50-99. In contrast, Claassen (1999) interprets the author's complaints over his savage surroundings and loss of Latin in psychological terms, as opposed to being part of a rhetoric of decline in exile. Claassen (1999) 190-7 analyses the literary influences for Ovid's depiction of Tomis and how Ovid uses these allusions to previous authors to portray Tomis as a

claims should be appreciated as being a contributory factor in Ovid's pose of poetic decline. In this sense, Ovid's suggestion that he is beginning to sound like a barbarian is a crucial part of his stance as a degenerating poet and it comes as no surprise that even an urbane poet, when placed in a *barbarus* environment populated with *barbari* like the local tribes, should utter barbarisms just as the *barbarus* area produced the ultimate savage, Medea. Just as the hostile environment produced the barbarian Medea, the area also forces Ovid to produce barbarian verses:

in paucis extant Graiae vestigia linguae,
haec quoque iam Getico barbara facta sono.
unus in hoc nemo est populo, qui forte Latine
quamlibet e medio reddere verba queat.
ille ego Romanus vates – ignoscite, Musae! –
Sarmatico cogor plurima more loqui.
et pudet et fateor, iam desuetudine longa
vix subeunt ipsi verba Latina mihi!
nec dubito quin sint et in hoc non pauca libello
barbara: non hominis culpa, sed ista loci.
ne tamen Ausoniae perdam commercia linguae,
et fiat patrio vox mea muta sono,
ipse loquor mecum desuetaque verba retracto,

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reflection of his own psychological hell and misery in exile: "better to accept Ovid's portrayal of the horrors of the place as imaginary, as myth, a myth that externalises the internal horror of isolation and carries with it a higher order truth: that Augustus brought great misery to a Roman citizen, who sustained himself by exercising his persuasive, poetic creativity", Claassen (1999) 197.

et studii repeto signa sinistra mei.

sic animum tempusque traho, mentemque reduco 65

a contemplatu submoveoque mali.

carminibus quaero miserarum oblivia rerum:

praemia si studio consequar ista, sat est (*Tr*. 5.7.51-68)[581]

It is because of this savage area, associated with tragic figures such as Medea and Iphigenia,[582] that our author is becoming uncivilised in exile.[583] When Ovid blames the savagery of his surroundings for his descent into a linguistic world ignorant of Latin,[584] there is a temptation to take his claims at face value as an historical account concerning these local tribes. Podossinov (1981) analysed the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as a possible goldmine of information concerning the local tribes in the Black Sea area, only to conclude that Ovid's presentation of these peoples is primarily motivated by literary and stylistic concerns, and should not be seen as being historically accurate.[585] Indeed, Williams (1994) argues convincingly that such information concerning the local area and its tribes should be

[581] For the division of *Tr*. 5.7 into two epistles, see Hall (1995) 192, 194.

[582] On Ovid's use of the Iphigenia myth to express his condition in exile, see Ingleheart (2010b).

[583] Williams (1994) 24-5 argues that Ovid's description of himself living *discrimine nullo* (*Tr*. 5.7.29) with local tribesmen is an allusion to Virgil's *Aen.* 1.574 and *Aen*. 10.108, where the phrase is used to convey the confusion of racial identities which are destined to be parted. Ovid's allusion to the *Aeneid* in *Tr*. 5.7, and his self-depiction as a barbarian, is tinged with irony: "Though he lives under the same roof as some Pontic tribesmen, within no dividing wall (*discrimen*) to separate him from them... the *discrimen* which divides Ovid from the Getae is cultural, not physical. Hence the irony of Ovid's portrayal of himself as a *barbarus* because he does not speak the local language and cannot make himself understood by the Getae (37-8) although the term *barbarus* is used both of Ovid and his fellow inhabitants in this poem (28, 30, 37)."

[584] For the importance of Latin for defining Ovid's cultural identity in exile, and how Ovid's (supposed) loss of Latin could be due to his transition into a Getic poet, see Herescu (1958) 404-5; Nagle (1980) 133-40. We should be extremely wary of these suggestions because Ovid's claims of degenerating ability and cultural transition are all composed in Latin. On the literary precedent for Ovid's pose of linguistic decline, see Nagle (1980) 139-41.

[585] See also Claassen (1988) 163-4, who considers Ovid's account of local tribesmen as bearing little relation to reality.

understood as an authorial attempt to write the exile works into the literary tradition of ethnography.[586] On *Tristia* 5.7 in particular, Williams (1994) comments that "Ovid's depiction of the Tomitans and of his relations with them constructively exploits Virgilian reminiscence. If we view the poem as primarily descriptive and not a literary epistle, then we are no more alive to the potential of Ovid's literary language than the Getae are to his spoken language."[587] Therefore, the construction of Medea as a barbarian and the author's pose as a tragic figure, who blames the loss of his Latin on the savage area he lives in (and while the native community are not to blame, they certainly do not help) all actively contribute to the myth of poetic decline in exile.[588]

While Ovid may describe himself as *barbarus* as he loses his Latin, echoing his characterisation of Medea as a non-Greek (or, in this case, non-Latin) speaking barbarian inhabitant of the Black Sea region, we should remember that throughout the exile works there is only one instance where the author constructs a self-reflective reference to Medea. In *Tristia* 3.8 Ovid wishes that he could escape from Tomis in a variety of ways:

nunc ego Medeae vellem frenare dracones,

quos habuit fugiens arce, Corinthe, tua (*Tr*. 3.8.3-4)

Here Ovid expresses a desire to have both Medea's trappings and her situation, since a team of dragons and flight from a city would be an ideal exit from Tomis. However, it should be noted that while the author desires her situation, he does not actually wish to be her, nor does Ovid construct a direct, equivalent parallel between himself and the character. Indeed, the comparison between the author and the character here rests upon the difference between them: she can flee by supernatural means, whereas the author does not have this option and he has to remain where he is. His only consolation in this scenario is that the mythical *exemplum* of Medea allows him to wish that he had an equivalent of her dragon

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[586] Williams (1994) 8-25.
[587] Williams (1994) 25.
[588] For an overview of Ovid's claims to be losing his capacity to speak Latin in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and how this contributes towards a degenerative stance by ironically constituting the sort of *barbara lingua* despised by the narrator of the *Ars amatoria* (*Ars* 3.841-2), see Williams (1994) 50.

chariot, thus affording him an opportunity to imagine his own return to Rome, and the wife that he has left there (*Tr*. 3.8.9-10).[589]

There is only one example in the exile works where Medea is used as a mythical *exemplum* in comparison to a person. In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1, written to the author's wife, Ovid encourages her to supplicate Livia on behalf of her exiled husband:

quid trepidas et adire times? non impia Procne

filiave Aeetae voce movenda tua est (*Pont*. 3.1.119-20)

Ovid here states that Livia should not be feared, since she is neither Procne nor Medea, referring to two mythological women who have much in common. Procne is the wife of Tereus, who abducted and raped her sister Philomela.[590] Once she had discovered his crime, Procne murdered their son and cut up his body, which was then cooked and served as a meal to her husband.[591] Procne's revenge on her husband, murdering their son and feeding him to his own father, is not entirely unlike Medea's revenge on Jason: once she has discovered his plans to remarry she murders their two children as revenge.[592] While there is great similarity between the myths of Procne and Medea, they both serve as an example of just the sort of woman who Livia is not,[593] stressing the difference between their characterisation and that of Livia.[594] Procne and Medea here serve as figures who embody the antithetical qualities of good wives such as Livia and Ovid's spouse,[595] who continues to represent the author's own interests even while he is relegated. Therefore, in *Epistulae ex*

[589] On the use of the Medea myth as a means of providing a believable fantasy that Ovid has returned to Rome using a similar, magical, means of transportation, see Lee (1949) 115. For the use of the mind's eye to construct visions or fantasies of travel to Rome in the exile works, see Nagle (1980) 92-100; Claassen (1990b) 109-10.
[590] *Met*. 6.519-62.
[591] *Met*. 6.579-86, 619-74.
[592] E. *Med*. 1050-80.
[593] Conversely, Thomsen (1979) 133 claims that Ovid lists women who are dissimilar to Livia because he cannot think of any good women to associate her with.
[594] On Ovid's wife supplicating Livia, and the exile's relationship with the wider imperial family during his relegation, see Claassen (1987).
[595] Claassen does not interpret Livia as being represented as a good wife in the exile works, but rather argues for her equation with elegiac Livor based on her metrical investigations of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* (see Claassen (1989) 354 and (1990b)).

Ponto 3.1.119-20, Medea features as a negative mythical *exemplum*, functioning within a series of mythical *exempla* to illustrate her dissimilarity to a certain person.[596] Thus, Medea is never directly likened to anyone in the exile works. Perhaps this authorial decision to shy away from a fully developed parallel with Medea either for Ovid himself or for any of his addressees is a question of not wanting to insult oneself or one's addressee, given that Medea is infamous for committing multiple infanticide.

Medea is not only defined by her presence, but also by her absence when it comes to her association with the author. This is not wholly unlike the way in which Ovid constructs a parallel between himself and the epic protagonist Jason,[597] yet stops short of following through and likening his wife to Medea because, as a character, Medea is so strongly connected with the infamous murder of her children. Instead of drawing equations between himself and Medea, Ovid uses her story and location to contribute towards his self-portrayal as a tragic figure but, ultimately, Ovid does not go so far as to present himself as Medea (as opposed to the way in which he portrays himself as Philoctetes, for instance).[598] In contrast, Ovid readily draws parallels between his surrounding landscape and the location of Medea in Colchis. Ovid, therefore, creates a barbaric landscape by using the associations with Medea to create a tragic background for his own scenario, thus writing himself into the history of tragic figures in Greco-Roman literature. The use of the Medea myth in this way contributes towards the myth of poetic decline by arranging a barbaric backdrop to the central tragic stage of the exile works, in which Ovid himself will take centre stage as he stars in his own Roman tragedy, "*Ovid among the Getae."*

While there are many ways in which the use of the Medea myth is different from other mythical parallels found throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, in some ways it

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[596] It could be argued that the negative comparison that Ovid draws here inadvertently equates Medea with Livia, thus paralleling the wife of the Princeps with an unflattering mythical equivalent. This could potentially reflect rumours of problems within Livia and Augustus' marriage that are reported in the (later) work of Suetonius. For speculation on the less than perfect manner in which Augustus married the pregnant Livia, very recently divorced from Tiberius Nero: Suet. *Aug*. 62; *Claud*. 1. For accusations of Augustus' adulterous affairs during his marriage to Livia: Suet. *Aug*. 69, 71.1.

[597] See Jason section in Chapter Two.

[598] See Philoctetes section in Chapter Three.

can be understood as the culmination of mythical *exempla* in the exile works. Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* Ovid likens himself to various mythological characters, or uses them as positive *exempla* intended for his wife or friends to follow. Consequently, these mythical equations characterise the *relegatus poeta* as well as his portrayals of other real people. As such, the authorial persona, the *relegatus poeta*, becomes increasingly mythologised. In some ways, the Medea myth demonstrates the depth of mythologisation of the authorial voice throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Ovid is no longer equated with characters as he parallels himself with heroes, epic protagonists, or tragic figures. The *relegatus poeta* has become so fictionalised by his equations with such mythical characters that he does not need to parallel himself with Medea, he only needs her narrative as a framework to set the scene - a barbarous locale, complete with hostile and uncivilised natives. The real star of the show is the newest mythical character of all, Ovid the *relegatus poeta*.

In this chapter, we have seen how the depiction of female mythical characters in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* can be divided into two camps: the women who are paragons of wifely devotion, and the antithesis of such virtue. The women who figure as models of wifely behaviour provide a number of mythical parallels for the author's wife to emulate, and the exile works repeat the examples of Penelope, Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne several times, suggesting the formation of a canon of good wives in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Penelope's loyalty to her absent husband is long lasting as she waits twenty years for Ulysses to return to her. Other mythical parallels for the author's wife have their loyalty to their husbands tested in the face of death. While Laodamia and Evadne both commit suicide after their husbands have died, Alcestis gives up her own life in exchange for her husband's survival. All three of these women exemplify the most extreme forms of devotion to their husbands, and quite literally sacrifice themselves on their behalf. As Ovid equates his wife with these women, he implicitly parallels himself with their husbands, who are dead or facing death. This in turn extends the authorial persona's self-presentation as being dead, something which reflects the notion of exile as a form of civic death.[599] Ovid's associations with the husbands of these four virtuous women also contributes towards his self-portrayal

[599] For more on this, see the main Introduction.

as a "marked man" hounded by the gods (Ulysses was persecuted by Neptune, Capaneus was killed by Jupiter, and Admetus struggled with the "gift" that Apollo had bestowed upon him).[600] Despite this persecution, Ovid nevertheless deserves the loyalty of his wife, someone who will stand by him regardless of the social stigma of her husband's relegation.

From these four canonical wives in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the myth of Penelope offers an optimistic parallel both for Ovid and for his wife because Penelope is the only example of a wife who enjoys a happy ending to her story. After years of waiting for Ulysses to return, her husband eventually comes home and they enjoy their old age together. This parallel provides a happy prospect for the author because Ulysses' teleological fulfillment of his νόστος narrative reflects the optimistic hope of Ovid's recall to Rome, while also further supporting Ovid's self-depiction as a Ulysses figure throughout the exile works. In addition, instances where Ovid recalls references to the Penelope myth in Roman erotic elegy portray the relationship between Ovid and his wife as like that of the *amator* and the beloved, but by casting himself in the role of Ulysses, Ovid metamorphoses the position of Ovid's wife from *puella* to a matrimonial beloved. When portraying his wife as Penelope, Ovid tests the limits of the elegiac genre by casting his own wife in the traditional role of the mistress, and this can also be seen in the poet's use of the Laodamia and Protesilaus myth. As Ovid places himself in the role of Protesilaus, and his wife in that of Laodamia, Ovid writes himself into a tradition of Latin poets who have used these characters to explore the emotional feelings of the poetic personae towards the beloved mistress in erotic verse. When Ovid places his wife in the role of the *puella* of erotic elegy, Ovid pushes the boundaries of, and adapts, the genre of erotic elegy to suit his own purposes in exile.

Not all of the myths that Ovid provides for his wife to emulate are so positive, however, since three literary characters commit suicide. The myths of Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne are laced with death and the darkness of suicide, as each woman decides to end her life either out of loyalty to her husband or from a desire to be with him even in death. These dark (and somewhat dangerous) parallels for Ovid's wife are very tragic in nature,

[600] We should view this in conjunction with the poet's self-portrayal as being at the mercy of the gods in the exile works, and his equivalence with epic heroes who were persecuted by gods. For more on these factors, consult Chapters One and Two.

reflecting their master narratives from the Greek tragic stage.[601] As we explored earlier in this thesis, the tragic renditions of myths are very important for the portrayals of heroes in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*,[602] and we should see the tragic tones of these three mythical women as similarly contributing towards the atmospheric construction of Ovid as a tragic character. Exploring how the portrayals of female role models for Ovid's wife evoke tragic narratives does, however, make us more aware that it is not just Ovid who is a tragic character in the exile works: now we understand that his wife is likewise doomed by his exile.

The hardship that Ovid's wife experiences as a result of her husband's relegation is also brought to the fore when the author parallels her with Alcestis and Evadne, two women whose lives were ruined by the actions of their husbands. In the case of Evadne, she commits suicide after her husband has defied the power of Zeus and is struck dead by lightning. In the myth of Alcestis there is a similar degree of blame to be levelled at her husband, Admetus, who allows her to die for him after he fails to find anyone else to die in his place. Awareness that these husbands are responsible for the demise of their wives could possibly be said to reflect Ovid's own culpability for his relegation; it is, after all, a collection of his poetry that brought about his exile, a state of existence which had a severe impact on his wife.

Previous tragic renditions of the myths of Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne encouraged us to consider another woman who featured in Euripidean tragedy and who also appears in the exile letters. The depiction of Medea in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is very different from the treatment of Penelope, Laodamia, Alcestis, or Evadne, and it is quite fitting that this should be the case, given that Medea is a very distinctive character from these women. The four Greek canonical good wives are all paragons of virtue, self-sacrifice, and devotion to their absent husbands. Medea, on the other hand, is not Greek;

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[601] This could also potentially reflect the influence of tragedy on Ovid's earlier *Heroides*, particularly in the case of Laodamia who had her own epistle in that collection (*Her*. 13). On the tragic elements of Ovid's *Heroides* see Hinds (1993); Davis (1995); Casali (1995); Bessone (1995).

[602] For more on this see the sections on Theseus and Pirithous, Philoctetes and Ulysses, and Telegonus in Chapter Three.

she is a Colchian witch, a granddaughter of the Sun, and a wife who kills her children to spite her departing husband. Medea's barbarity and ruthlessness define her in the exilic epistles, where she is very much a reflection of the Roman view of the Colchian culture whence she comes.[603] The Black Sea area is portrayed as being barbarous, and so are the mythical characters that populate it. This is, of course, very bad news for our author, who now lives in Tomis as he composes the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. All in all, Medea and the myths surrounding her set the scene for Ovid's own tragic demise in the Black Sea region, where he dons the final authorial mask of his career, the *relegatus poeta*.

[603] Medea's characterisation reflects the Roman perspective of the location and cultural background of the Black Sea, just as the depictions of the Tomitans and Getae in the exile works reflect a Roman view of their geographical location. On this, see Williams (1994) 16-18.

Conclusions

This thesis has explored the construction of the authorial persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by examining instances where Ovid either likens himself to, or associates himself with, various mythical characters. Ovid uses repeated equations with mythical characters as a means of characterising his authorial persona, the *relegatus poeta*. As we have seen, the *relegatus poeta* is associated with a great range of literary characters, particularly those who are punished and remain away from their home or their loved ones. Chapter One explored how Ovid aligns himself with individuals who are persecuted by the gods, and in particular how Ovid associates divine persecutors such as Jupiter and Neptune with Augustus, whom he holds personally responsible for his relegation to Tomis. After analysing how Ovid portrays himself as a victim of divine judgement, we moved on to look at how Ovid depicts himself as an epic protagonist in Chapter Two, exploring how the author portrays himself as a wandering hero far from home much in the mould of Ulysses and Jason. Although the author presents himself as a veritable Jason or Ulysses, he is keen to note that his suffering outdoes any hardship experienced by either ocean-faring hero. The chapter then discussed how Achilles operates as a means of exploring the role that power plays in relationships, and how this relates to the depictions of epic protagonists at the mercy of divinities. The myth of Achilles in the exile letters also highlights his friendship with Patroclus, and it was this paradigm of male friendship that led us to examine the loyal friendship of Theseus and Pirithous in Chapter Three. The third chapter explored the themes of friendship and abandonment that typify the author's interpersonal relationships in the exile works, focusing particularly on the desertion of Philoctetes by his comrade Ulysses, and how the author allegorises his relationship with the *Ars* as being like the death of Laius at the hands of Oedipus or the demise of Ulysses brought about by Telegonus. Chapter Four also focused on the importance of loyalty in the portrayals of interpersonal relationships, but this time our enquiries centred upon the author's depiction of his wife, who is characterised by her association with paragons of wifely virtue such as Penelope, Laodamia, Alcestis, and Evadne. Finally, we explored the very antithesis of such good women,

embodied in the form of Medea, whose mythical narrative is so potentially dangerous that Ovid is very careful not to directly associate her with any actual person.[604]

This thesis has approached the mythical parallels that Ovid uses to construct his self-depiction and interpersonal relationships throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* in literary terms, and I have deliberately avoided combing the collections for any autobiographical information to reveal the so-called "man behind the mask". In contrast, my methodology has concentrated on appreciating the mythical parallels for the authorial persona in literary terms, concentrating on how Ovid uses these mythical *exempla* to characterise the authorial voice that he projects into the text. In addition, concentrating on these mythical equations as a stylistic element has encouraged us to read them as allusions to depictions of the same narrative by other authors, or to earlier instances in the Ovidian corpus where the same myth is treated. This has allowed us to explore the relationships (and sometimes changing relationships) between different treatments of the same myth and, occasionally, how these myths are used to construct different personae in the Ovidian corpus (and, in turn, how these personae relate to each other). This methodological advance has highlighted the importance of the masks the author assumes in his own works and has demonstrated that they are a valid line of enquiry in their own right because the author actively chooses to adopt them to shape the authorial voice in his own texts.

The mask that Ovid adopts as his authorial voice throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is heavily associated with the mythical parallels which are repeatedly drawn between the poet and the mythical *exempla* in the text. As Ovid chooses to parallel mythical characters with his own set of circumstances, the mythical *exempla* serve to characterise the authorial persona of the *relegatus poeta* itself. Therefore, the authorial voice in the exile works becomes increasingly mythologised, and almost seems to become a mythical character in its own right. We should remember that the *relegatus poeta* is not the only one characterised by the prevalence of myth in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*: just as Ovid characterises his own image in the text by likening himself to epic protagonists and tragic heroes, so too he casts Augustus as the antagonist of this mythical narrative. The Princeps is

[604] For the possibility that Ovid may construct a negative comparison between Medea and Livia see n. 596.

portrayed as the divine persecutor of the author (painted as the victim), a powerful figure who is at once ruthless and yet merciful in his omnipotence. Thus, Ovid uses the literary narratives associated with mythical characters as the casting board for the story of his own life in exile: when he is Ulysses, Augustus is his divine adversary Neptune, or, while Ovid is Jason, Augustus is Pelias, or when Ovid becomes Philoctetes, the Princeps is cast as Ulysses. On a more positive note, Ovid also uses mythical *exempla* to characterise his more enjoyable interpersonal relations, particularly concerning his wife. On these occasions, the author likens his wife to the paragons of spousal fidelity from myth, and in some instances, compliments his unnamed wife by telling her that she is more faithful than the wives of myth and should be reckoned as one of the great heroines of literature.

As Ovid uses mythical *exempla* throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* to characterise his interpersonal relationships as well as his own authorial persona, a great variety of mythical characters comes into play. As we have just seen, Ovid is fully prepared to change or adapt mythical narrative to suit his own purposes, particularly when using myth to depict his relationship with Augustus, as we have considered in the analysis of how Ovid uses the myth of Achilles to explore the themes of power, mercy, and victimhood. In addition, Ovid actively rewrites myth to suit his own purposes in exile, particularly in the cases of Jason and Theseus who, even though they are both notorious for abandoning female lovers, are rewritten as paradigms of fidelity in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. Ovid exploits the protean nature of myth, an important factor which often allows contradictory aspects of narratives and characters to coexist, and to serve his own purposes in characterising the *relegatus poeta*. Such manipulation of mythical parallels within the exile works suggests a subtlety and complexity of composition, something which is only matched by the high level of intertextual allusion the author exhibits throughout these collections.

As the author draws multiple parallels between himself and mythological characters, he also depicts interpersonal relationships and locations in similarly literary terms. Ovid often draws allusions to other texts which either feature the same mythological character or a narrative associated with them. In some cases, as we have seen, Ovid makes reference back to his earlier pre-exilic works or to the works of other authors, giving rise to a rich tapestry of intertextual allusions. These allusions can either create links between different

texts, or they can also serve to highlight the differences between them. This is particularly evident in cases where Ovid refers back to pre-exilic collections and uses such allusions as a way of highlighting the difference between his life in Rome and his later existence at Tomis after he was exiled. As we have seen, this is particularly evident in Ovid's depiction of Amor in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3, where he appears as a shabby and mournful shadow of his former self. This pitiful portrayal of Amor encourages the reader to remember how Ovid was once enslaved to Amor in the *Amores*,[605] which featured the god as a powerful entity. The appearance of Amor in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.3 also created a high degree of erotic diction in this epistle, as his appearance reminds the reader of the erotic elegies whence he comes; something that is reflected in the use of erotic elegiac terminology and the way that the epistle features many elegiac hallmarks such as *militia amoris*. As we have seen in the course of this thesis, there are many examples where Ovid uses myth to construct his authorial persona and also to typify this current exilic persona by making reference to other texts where the myth occurred, thus drawing comparisons between the author's success and downfall in these different texts. In this way, the use of myth and erotic diction to evoke Ovid's earlier elegiac texts in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* reveals a stylistic complexity and poetic competency on the part of the author, something which is at odds with Ovid's own claims that he is losing the ability to compose Latin.

Throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid repeatedly claims that his poetry is not especially accomplished, something which he blames on his reduced ability to compose Latin verse and his loss of linguistic ability. These claims are a crucial component in Ovid's adoption of a pose of poetic decline as he repeatedly apologises for the shabby state of his verses. However, literary analysis of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* indicates that we should not take these claims at face value. The protean nature of myth (as well as its adaptability to suit the author's poetic purpose) and the high degree of intertextual allusion found in the exile letters betrays the author's own claims to be experiencing some kind of degeneration in exile. Ovid's own insistence concerning his own lacklustre performance at Tomis should be seen as nothing more than being part of the mask of the *relegatus poeta* who adopts a pose of poetic decline. Relegated to Tomis, Ovid often stresses that he is

[605] *Amores* 1.2.19-50.

suffering from ill-health as well as being unable to compose Latin poetry, and perhaps his own insistence concerning his mortality should be understood in tandem with his pose of poetic decline. The motif of death pervades the entirety of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and our author repeatedly describes his voyage to Tomis, the surrounding landscape, and his own existence in terms of funerals and dying. Just as our author envisages his ultimate demise and death, so too does he insist that the quality of his verses are fading away and dying in a literary sense.

Just as the author's ability to compose adequate verse is presented as ebbing away, Ovid also depicts himself as a dying (or in some cases, dead) man. The recurring motif of death found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* is a reflection of the author's own preoccupation with his state as an exile.[606] In ancient times, exile was seen as being equivalent to death,[607] so it comes as no surprise that Ovid paints his exile as a form of living death.[608] The cause of Ovid's exile, namely the *Ars amatoria*, is in turn portrayed as being the reason behind the author's own death. Nowhere is this more prominent than in Ovid's use of the Oedipus myth, where Ovid brands his own erotodidactic verses as the murderer of their own originator, the father-poet. Thus, Ovid uses myth to explore the relationship he has with his own poetic creations.

When the author portrays one of his own poetic collections as a veritable Oedipus or Telegonus, it could be said that perhaps the relationship between the author and his texts could not deteriorate any further. Indeed, the relationship between the author and his pre-exilic erotodidactic *Ars amatoria* is complicated: on the one hand, the author defends his work against the charge of teaching adultery in *Tristia* 2 but, on the other hand, Ovid brands the *Ars amatoria* as an Oedipus that has destroyed its own father. As we have discussed, the

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[606] On how Ovid adapts the notion of exile as civic death and turns this idea into exile as poetic death, modifying this original concept to compliment his stance of poetic degeneration in exile and, thus, ultimately portraying himself as a dying Roman poet who lives on as a Getic poet, see Nagle (1980) 169.
[607] On this see Claassen (1996) and the main Introduction.
[608] Claassen (1996) 583-5 argues that, throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, Ovid constructs an elaborate paradox that through his living death as an exiled poet, the author will remain immortal in his poetry. On the irony that Ovid has achieved immortality in a literary work which portrays him as dead, see Nagle (1980) 171.

author's problematic relations with his earlier work influence his own view of his corpus as a whole entity, particularly when he instructs volumes of the *Tristia* not to have anything to do with the Oedipus on the bookshelf in *Tristia* 1.1. In this way, the problems in the author-text relationship between Ovid and the *Ars amatoria* have an impact upon the unity of the corpus as a whole, as the author seems to encourage the *Tristia* volume to keep apart from its brothers on the bookshelf. In some ways, this could be seen to support the scholarly notion of a rupture in the Ovidian corpus between those texts written before the author's exile and those composed at Tomis.[609] The miserable tone and preoccupation with death found in both the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* can also be said to support this assertion that there is some kind of disjunction within the Ovidian corpus. However, while the world of Ovid's exile is very different from any of the preceding collections, the author repeatedly constructs points of reference and allusions to earlier parts of his corpus via mythical *exempla*, generic diction, and repeated references to the *Ars amatoria*, suggesting a certain degree of continuity present throughout the corpus as a whole. In this thesis I have argued for the appreciation of the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* as an integrated part of the Ovidian corpus; aware of their self-conscious connectivity to the earlier works (particularly in the way that Ovid includes a high number of allusions to the *Ars amatoria*), yet respectful of their literary independence, standing alone from the other collections in terms of their unique mood and tone. The fractured nature of the connection between the exile letters and earlier Ovidian texts creates the impression of a broken Ovidian corpus, something that could be reflected in the motif of maimed and dismembered bodies that runs throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. In the exile letters, we are faced with a number of mythical characters whose bodies are in some way mutilated; whether it be Oedipus who was born with a deformed foot, Philoctetes who suffered a malodorous wound to his foot, Telephus who was wounded by the spear of Achilles, Actaeon who was ripped apart by his own hounds, Absyrtus whose body was butchered into pieces and strewn across the Tomitan landscape, or the *relegatus poeta* who constantly refers to his exile as a wound. I would like to think of this recurring image of the wounded or dismembered body as a reflection of the Ovidian corpus as a whole, wounded by the author's exile.

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[609] See n. 101.

Ovid's own insistence that he has been wounded by his exile, as well as his troubled relationship with his own texts, encourages us as readers to accept these comments at face value as the opinions of the author. Indeed, Ovid's defence of his erotodidactic verses in *Tristia* 2 and *Tristia* 4.10, where he presents us with the story of his life, invites readers to search the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* for any factual and autobiographical information. However, as we have seen in the course of this thesis, the autobiographical elements found in the exile works are often portrayed in highly literary and stylised terms. For instance, Ovid mythologises his birthday by noting that it was on a day sacred to Minerva, thus connecting it with the recurring motif of Minerva as a divine protectress of heroes in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. A similar mythologisation occurs in the portrayal of his third wife, who is repeatedly likened to the faithful wives of mythology such as Penelope and Laodamia. This mythologisation indicates the highly stylised nature of any autobiographical elements in the exile letters, thus indicating that there is a degree of slippage between the depiction of the author and the construction of the authorial persona in the text because Ovid mobilises the same myths used to construct the *relegatus poeta* to convey this (supposedly) factual information. There is no way of identifying where the autobiography of Ovid ends and the mask of the *relegatus poeta* begins.

Throughout this thesis, my methodological approach to the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* has appreciated the mask, or persona, of the author as a literary creation in its own right. Therefore, I have deliberately avoided reading autobiographical interpretations into Ovid's exilic epistles. I consider valuing the literary complexity of the mask over the quest for the "man behind the mask" as the main strength of my work. My self-consciously literary approach to analysing how Ovid creates the authorial persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* by using references to myth is a significant methodological advance in the scholarly field of Ovidian exile studies. I have demonstrated that the mythical *exempla* that Ovid deploys to illustrate his situation (be it an illustration of his interpersonal relationships, an allegory for his relegation at the hands of Augustus, or an exemplification of his scenario in exile) reflects back on the mask that it illustrates, therefore effectively mythologising the authorial voice. The mask of the authorial persona is the culmination of, and an intrinsic part of, the rich tapestry of myth in the exilic epistles. It is the myths that Ovid uses self-

referentially in these collections that create the literary landscape of exile: a world of abandonment, degeneration, and death.

Due to the constraints of a doctoral thesis, my investigation has been limited to the use of myth to construct the authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. I think that it would be immensely rewarding to develop the research in this thesis by applying my methodology to other exilic collections. For instance, it would be valuable to compare the construction of the authorial voice in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* with how Ovid uses myth in other exilic texts such as the *Ibis* and "double" *Heroides*. In addition, this research can easily be extended by investigating how Ovid's use of myth in a range of exilic texts compares with his use of myth in the pre-exilic corpus, with a particular focus on whether Ovid uses myth to construct and characterise his persona in his earlier collections and whether the authorial voice becomes as mythologised as it does in the exilic epistles.[610]

The mythologisation of the authorial persona, the inclusion of supposedly autobiographical material, and the highly stylised nature of Ovid's persona in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* create a complex play on the boundary between the mask and the man, tauntingly and tantalisingly tempting readers to feel that they have somehow formed an impression of Ovid as a person. It is the highly literary and artificial manner in which the authorial voice is constructed that means we can never fully distinguish a fact concerning the author's life from stylised elements of a literary construct aimed at embellishing the authorial voice of the *relegatus poeta*. The repeated parallels drawn between the *relegatus poeta* and mythical characters, particularly in the cases where mythical *exempla* are paralleled with the authorial persona, lead to a degree of mythologisation of the authorial voice, something which is explored through the rich interplay between myth and reality found in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*. As we have seen in this thesis, when considering the portrayals of various mythical characters in the exilic epistles and how they relate to the authorial voice, there is a large degree of slippage between reality and fantasy found in

[610] This approach is similar to one used by Sharrock (2000), who analyses how Propertius uses mythical *exempla* to construct the character of the authorial persona in Propertian elegy.

these collections. As a result, the authorial voice becomes more fantastical, and more fictional, as it is repeatedly represented by literary characters.

Overall, as the authorial persona of the *relegatus poeta* is increasingly defined by the mythical *exempla* associated with it throughout the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, the authorial voice becomes mythologised to a greater extent. In this way, we can understand Ovid's self-portrayal in the exilic epistles as another literary character; the culmination of all the parallels from myth drawn throughout both collections, a figure who situates himself in a thoroughly literary landscape. The last metamorphosis of Ovid's poetic career is in the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*, where his transformation into a character worthy of myth is complete. Ovid the *relegatus poeta* is a fantastical character who has the locale and situation of Medea, he is abandoned like Philoctetes, he is punished like Odysseus, he inhabits the Underworld like Pirithous, and he wanders like Jason, while his corpus bears the wounds of his banishment. Just as Ovid's body of work is dismembered by the removal of the banned *Ars amatoria*, the author also bears the wounds of his exile:

> *omnia perdidimus, tantummodo vita relicta est,*
>
> *praebeat ut sensum materiamque mali.*
>
> *quid iuvat extinctos ferrum demittere in artus?*
>
> *non habet in nobis iam nova plaga locum* (*Pont*. 4.16.49-52).

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