

GOLDEN AGE IMAGERY AND THE ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY
OF OVID'S *METAMORPHOSES*

by

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Dedicated to the memory of Dr. Jane V. Curran
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ABSTRACT

In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid brings together Golden Age imagery with contrasting scenes of destruction, making this paradoxical amalgam a motif within his epic. This study connects Ovid's use of Golden Age language to his portrayal of artistry in the poem, discovering that both within the stories of the epic and in Ovid's poetic style, artistic creation is emphasised in the context of this motif. Both natural fecundity and artistic creation emerge after the flood through the principle of *discors concordia* (*Met.* 1.433), which involves the unity of divine harmony and chaos; this principle is central to Ovid's use of Golden Age language. The discussion takes up the influence of Virgil and Lucretius on this motif, discovering that Ovid's synthesis of harmony and chaos draws on both forerunners. By uniting the Golden Age and its antithesis, Ovid reveals the conditions necessary for art, and thus for poetry itself.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

<i>Aen.</i>	Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i>
<i>Carm.</i>	Horace, <i>Carmina</i>
<i>DRN</i>	Lucretius, <i>De Rerum Natura</i>
<i>Ecl.</i>	Virgil, <i>Eclogues</i>
<i>G.</i>	Virgil, <i>Georgics</i>
<i>Id.</i>	Theocritus, <i>Idylls</i>
<i>Ling.</i>	Varro, <i>Lingua Latina</i>
<i>Met.</i>	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i>
<i>Phaen.</i>	Aratus, <i>Phaenomena</i>
<i>Plt.</i>	Plato, <i>Politicus</i>

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In the first book of his *Metamorphoses*, Ovid recounts the deeply traditional and familiar story of human moral decline through the Ages of Man; beginning with the Golden Age, he describes the gradual degradation of virtue in the Silver, Bronze and Iron Ages. The poet depicts the Golden Age in a form that can be traced back to Hesiod: a state of natural fecundity and peace, in which humans are able to live without agriculture, seafaring, law or conflict.¹ Although the Golden Age comprises only twenty-four lines of Book 1, the impact of this idyllic age as a *topos* of the entire epic is profound. A form of the Golden Age appears as a primary setting in the *Metamorphoses*; the *locus amoenus*, the ‘pleasant place’ in which many of the poem’s tales occur, contains many of the traditional attributes of the Golden Age. The harmony of this setting, however, starkly contrasts with the great violence that continually takes place within it. In opposition to Ovid’s recurrent destruction of the *locus amoenus* is his sublimation of chaotic scenes by means of Golden Age language. Catastrophe, in the *Metamorphoses*, may be painted in the imagery of paradise. The appearance of the Golden Age in the poem is strongly connected to Ovid’s overarching interest in ideas of artistic creation throughout the epic; both within the stories of the epic and in Ovid’s innovative modes of narration, this imagery is linked to an emphasis on ideas of art and creation. The great importance of the Golden Age motif to the epic has been largely neglected by Ovidian scholarship. The

¹ *Met.* 1.89-112. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ed. R. J. Tarrant, Oxford Classical Texts (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2004). For an enumeration of the Hesiodic characteristics of this age see William S. Anderson, Commentary to *Metamorphoses, Books 1-5*, by Ovid, ed. William S. Anderson (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 161; and Franz Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen, Kommentar Buch I-III* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1969), 48. For a thorough chronological account of the image of the Golden Age in pre-Virgilian literature, see Patricia A. Johnston, *Vergil’s Agricultural Golden Age: A Study of the Georgics* (Leyden: Brill, 1980), especially Chapter 2.

centrality of this *topos* and its implications for our understanding of the role of artistic creation in the *Metamorphoses* are long-overdue subjects for examination.

a. Ovid and the Tradition

The Golden Age, as it appears in Ovid's Ages of Man, is clearly connected to traditional accounts of the age, looking as far back as Hesiod's *Works and Days*.² The age is one of peace, in which the earth provides all human necessities and there is no need for striving or quarrel: *Aurea prima sata est aetas, quae uindice nullo, / sponte sua, sine lege fidem rectumque colebat* ('The Golden Age was the first to be sown, and it cultivated trust and virtue with no avenger, of its own accord, without law,' *Met.* 1.89-90).³ This age of concord and fecundity is most explicitly modelled on Virgil's Golden Age in the fourth *Eclogue*; of particular note is the resemblance between Ovid's *per se dabat omnia tellus* ('The earth gave all things of its own accord,' *Met.* 1.102) and Virgil's *omnis feret omnia tellus* ('The whole earth will bear all things,' *Ecl.* 4.39), as well as Ovid's *nondum praecipites cingebant oppida fossae* ('Steep ditches did not yet surround the towns,' *Met.* 1.95) and Virgil's *quae cingere muris / oppida* ('... which surrounded towns with walls,' *Ecl.* 4.32-3).⁴ Both are negative accounts of the Golden Age; rather than describing the divine harmony of the age in itself, both authors enumerate the features, associated with later sinfulness, that are absent from this idyllic world.⁵ Ovid thereby draws his reader's

² See e.g. H. C. Baldry, "Who Invented the Golden Age?" *The Classical Quarterly* 2 (1952): 89.

³ All translations are my own.

⁴ Virgil, *Opera*, ed. R. A. B. Mynors, Oxford Classical Texts (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1969).

⁵ See e.g. Bömer, *Buch I-III*, 48.

attention clearly to the model of the fourth *Eclogue*.⁶ Ostensibly, then, Ovid's Golden Age is steeped strongly in the tradition, referring in a conventional manner to the poet's immediate, renowned predecessor and the literary tradition as a whole. At first sight, Ovid's Golden Age is simply one part of the poet's densely-allusive cosmogony, which draws together many literary and philosophical accounts of how the world and human beings came to be.⁷

Despite the familiarity of the initial Golden Age in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid's use and distortion of this idyllic age and its concomitant imagery throughout the epic suggest that the motif of the Golden Age is more complex than it first appears. The poet in fact creates a surprising tension between the idyll and its chaotic antithesis. Even within the first account of the Golden Age, in fact, Ovid's use of agricultural language (*sero*, 89, and *colo*, 90) points toward a contrasting, agrarian view of the age, one found in Virgil's *Georgics* rather than the fourth *Eclogue*.⁸ An even more striking example of this tension between form and content occurs within the flood of Book 1. Only two hundred lines after the Golden Age proper, in the middle of the catastrophic flood sent by Jupiter to destroy the human race, the language of this peaceful age appears again in startling fashion. As floodwaters sweep away all living creatures, the reader unexpectedly encounters a Golden Age image: *nat lupus inter oues, fuluos uehit unda leones* ('The wolf swims among the sheep, the water carries the tawny lions,' 1.304). Ovid's grouping of the wolf, sheep and lion again intimates the Golden Age, particularly as it appears in

⁶ Although, as we will see, by drawing attention to the similarity between his account and that of Virgil, Ovid also highlights the differences between them: most obviously, that his Golden Age looks back to a mythical age while Virgil's anticipates the re-establishment of such a period in Rome. See Chapter 4.

⁷ For the multiplicity of stories in the first book of the *Metamorphoses*, see e.g. Elaine Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 22; Stephen M. Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics in Ovid's Metamorphoses* (Tübingen, Germany: Narr, 2000), Chapter 1.

⁸ See Chapter 4, 88-91.

Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*: *nec magnos metuent armenta leones* ('The flocks will not fear the great lions,' *Ecl.* 4.22).⁹ By placing this imagery, archetypal of perfect concord, in the midst of the flood, Ovid self-consciously manipulates the traditional language of the Golden Age. Both the original account of the age and this inverted use of its terminology recall the fourth *Eclogue*, and the linguistic parallel underscores the extraordinary character of the flood imagery.

Commentary on Ovid's flood, observing the paradoxical image with which Ovid depicts the catastrophe, has concentrated on the poet's humorous transformation of tradition. This commentary reaches as far back as Seneca, who accuses Ovid of reducing the great violence and potential pathos of the scene *ad pueriles ineptias* ('to juvenile absurdities,' *Naturales Quaestiones* 3.27.13).¹⁰ Anderson interprets Seneca's derision as directed against Ovid's "playfulness within a context of universal destruction."¹¹ The few scholars who have considered the image have taken their cue from Seneca but have understood this 'playfulness' in positive terms, focusing on the poetic exuberance and creativity of Ovid's deluvian imagery. Stephen Wheeler sees in Ovid's allusive description the same playfulness that Seneca scorns, but puts it in terms of positive poetic transformation: "It is difficult to exonerate Ovid from the charge of having fun with his description of the cataclysm."¹² Similarly, Otto Due writes that the entire scene of the

⁹ Anderson, *Books 1-5*, 180: "A commonplace in visions of the ideal world (Vergil's Fourth Eclogue, Horace's Sixteenth Epode, and the Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah 11:6) is that hostility among animals will cease: the wolf will dwell with the lamb. Ovid takes that idyllic theme and shows the two species sharing the same activity without hostility, but not as a symbol of peace and security. They are both swimming for their lives."

¹⁰ Seneca, *Naturalium Quaestionum Libros*, ed. H. M. Hine (Stuttgartiae: B. G. Teubner, 1996).

¹¹ Anderson, *Books 1-5*, 180.

¹² Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 31. Wheeler goes on to suggest that the wolf is present in the flood as a representation of poetic justice for the sins of Lycaon, who is transformed into a wolf just prior to the catastrophe.

flood is Ovid's way of showing himself to be a "virtuoso of description."¹³ In Ovid's manipulation of convention, commentators see the poet's inventiveness, his ability to take up tradition and rework it to fit the new form of epic poetry that he introduces.

Ovid's playfulness with Golden Age imagery in the flood is an example of the innovation that is present throughout the *Metamorphoses*. Another instance of Ovid's defiance of tradition occurs just a few lines away from the wolf, sheep and lion: here, Ovid clearly and deliberately places himself in opposition to Horace.¹⁴ In the *Ars Poetica*, Horace proclaims: *qui variare cupit rem prodigialiter unam / delphinum silvis appingit, fluctibus aprum* ('He who wishes to vary a single thing unnaturally depicts a dolphin in the woods, a boar in the waves,' 29-30).¹⁵ Ovid ostentatiously uses both of these examples, placing dolphins in the woods (1.302) and a boar in the flood waters (1.305), thus taking up and defying Horace's instructions to the decorous poet. Just previously, also, Ovid takes up a stanza of Horace's own *Carmina* 1.2 and transforms it: *piscium et summa genus haesit ulmo* (*Carm.* 1.2.9) becomes, in Ovid's hands, *hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo* (*Met.* 1.296). Ovid thus uses Horace's own words to fill out a scene of poetic exaggeration that mocks his predecessor's own description of proper poetry.¹⁶ By juxtaposing the two allusions, Ovid suggests that Horace's illustration of chaos in *Carm.* 1.2 is at odds with the poet's own description of poetry.

¹³ Otto Steen Due, *Changing Forms: Studies in the Metamorphoses of Ovid* (Copenhagen: Gylandendal, 1974), 108.

¹⁴ Ovid's first lines, as many scholars have noted, also deliberately challenge Horace's poetic project. See in particular Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 5; G. Karl Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: An Introduction to the Basic Aspects* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 81; E. J. Kenney, "The *Metamorphoses*: A Poet's Poem," in *A Companion to Ovid*, ed. Peter E. Knox (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 142-43.

¹⁵ Horace, *Opera*, edited by Edward C. Wickham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947).

¹⁶ Alessandro Barchiesi makes a brief reference to this allusion: Ovid alludes to Horace "as if to unmask a master who knew how to be, occasionally, less restrained than his classicizing prescriptions and literary-theoretical manifestos should allow him to be. The fish is caught (*deprendit*) on the Ovidian elm because untidy Horace left it in that surprising place (*haesit*)." Alessandro Barchiesi, *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 250. See also Due, 36.

The ways in which the poet employs and transforms the Golden Age motif within the *Metamorphoses* are evidently linked to his continual reshaping of the poetic tradition. Metamorphosis, as many scholars have observed, is at work not only on the physical beings within the poem but also on Ovid's own poetry, in his continual reworking of tradition, the expectations of his readers and his own mode of narration.¹⁷ This transfiguration in part accounts for Ovid's transformation of Golden Age imagery, and the recent scholarly emphasis on this poetic metamorphosis will be central to the current study. However, as we will discover, Ovid's use of the motif not only serves as a major example of artistic inventiveness, but in fact in a certain way reveals the very conditions that permit the artist to create and recreate.

b. The *locus amoenus*

The Golden Age, as a motif of the *Metamorphoses*, is central to the topography of the epic. Charles Segal, in his in-depth study of landscape in the poem, observes the primacy of the Golden Age among Ovid's settings: "the first landscape which we encounter is the idealized, eternal spring of the Golden Age."¹⁸ This original environment is then echoed in every *locus amoenus* when the poem moves past the flood into its myriad descriptions of human and divine metamorphosis. The *locus amoenus*, with its seeming impenetrability, is an image of Golden Age peace. Stephen Hinds describes Ovid's use of the setting thus:

¹⁷ See especially Andrew Feldherr, "Metamorphosis in the *Metamorphoses*," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, ed. Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁸ Charles Paul Segal, *Landscape in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Hermes Einzelschriften, vol. 23 (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner Verlag, 1969), 8.

Ovid's framing of his epic as, in effect, a narrative recreation of the history of the universe allows him to recapitulate within its boundaries the history of the ideal landscape at large: thus, just as all *loca amoena* in the Greco-Roman tradition can be referred back *intertextually* to the *topoi* of the Golden Age, so all the closely-packed *loca amoena* of *Met.* 1-5 can be referred back *intratextually* to the *topoi* in Ovid's own recreation of the Golden Age in *Met.* 1.107-12.¹⁹

The setting, then, presents with its peace and fecundity a microcosm of the Golden Age, drawing the reader's mind back to the original Age of Man. The first five books of the *Metamorphoses*, which are linked by their focus on stories of gods pursuing mortals, are given further unity by this recurrent landscape.²⁰ The connection between the *locus amoenus* and the Golden Age is most explicit in the setting of the rape of Proserpina in Book 5. This landscape, with its forest, waters and flowers, is a place of eternal springtime: *perpetuum uer est* ('spring is perpetual,' 5.391).²¹ There is a clear link between this description and Ovid's own original Golden Age, in which *uer erat aeternum* ('spring was eternal,' 1.107).²² The *locus amoenus*, with its "supernatural charge," evokes the divine harmony of the Golden Age.²³

The appearance of the *locus amoenus* within the *Metamorphoses* sets Ovid in relation to his poetic predecessors, in whose work the setting is characterised by poetic competition and pastoral peace. Untouched, serene, Golden Age landscapes appear as far

¹⁹ Stephen Hinds, "Landscape with Figures: Aesthetics of Place in the *Metamorphoses* and its Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, ed. Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 128.

²⁰ See e.g. Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 98.

²¹ For the typical components of the *locus amoenus*, see Segal, *Landscape*, Chapter 2. Also see E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), 195.

²² See Stephen Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone: Ovid and the Self-Conscious Muse* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 27-28.

²³ *Ibid.*, 28.

back as Homer's epics, and are particularly prominent in the work of Theocritus and Virgil.²⁴ In the latter two poets, the *locus amoenus* is especially associated with poetic competition, and comes to be characterised by specific terminology and imagery.²⁵ By the time Ovid is writing, then, there is a traditional way of composing these scenes as well as traditional content for the settings.²⁶ There may be tension within the *locus amoenus*, as both Virgil and Theocritus present it, but "such intrusive violence is generally softened in these poets by the sense of imaginative suspension and self-conscious removal from harsher reality in a setting which emphasizes beauty and grace."²⁷ Ovid's choice to make this long-established setting central to the *Metamorphoses* suggests that the poet intends to remind his audience of poetic convention while simultaneously transforming this tradition.

The first fully-developed *locus amoenus*, which occurs in the second book of the epic with the story of Callisto, explicitly draws on the Virgilian precedent. Jupiter, after the conflagration of the world caused by Phaethon's fall from the sun's chariot, rebuilds his homeland of Arcadia:

. . . *Arcadiae tamen est impensior illi*

²⁴ For a thorough discussion of this tradition, see Segal, *Landscape*, Chapter 4. For the Homeric precedent, see e.g. the description of Alcinous' garden, *Odyssey* 7.112-32. For the *locus amoenus* in Theocritus, see e.g. *Id.* 7 for a particularly well-developed example that evokes the Golden Age. Fantuzzi and Hunter write of Theocritus' landscape: "It is never a really wild countryside, a place of dangers and hardships, one quite inhospitable to humans; on the contrary, the Theocritean countryside is always peacefully under human control. Furthermore, there is, for the most part, sympathetic harmony between the countryside and the shepherds. The beauty of the countryside reflects and guarantees the sweetness of the music of the syrinx and of the context in which the shepherds listen." Marco Fantuzzi and Richard L. Hunter, *Tradition and Innovation in Hellenistic Poetry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 145. They also observe the appearance of the ideal landscape in Plato's *Phaedrus*, comparing the opening of *Id.* 1 to this dialogue. *Ibid.*, 146.

²⁵ For the importance of the *est locus* formula to the *locus amoenus* description, see Hinds, "Landscape," 124-27. See also idem, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone*, 37-38.

²⁶ See Curtius, 194-95.

²⁷ Segal, *Landscape*, 75. See also Hinds, "Landscape," 131; Daniel Garrison, "The 'Locus Inamoenus': Another Part of the Forest," *Arion* 2 (1992): 99.

*cura suae; fontesque et nondum audentia labi
flumina restituit, dat terrae gramina, frondes
arboribus, laesasque iubet reuiescere siluas.* (2.405-408)

(But his own Arcadia was a greater care for him; he restored the fountains and rivers that did not yet dare to flow, he gave grass to the land and leaves to the trees, and ordered the injured trees to become green again.)

The image of foliage, grass and waters evokes the traditional setting of Theocritus and Virgil. It is Ovid's reference to Arcadia that places him most clearly within the evolution of the poetic tradition, however; this allusion recalls the image of Arcadia that Virgil presents in his *Eclogues* as the setting for his shepherds' competition and his own composition.²⁸ Ovid's complete landscape description of Jupiter's Arcadia retrospectively unifies the erotic stories that precede it in Books 1 and 2. Earlier suggestions of landscape find their completion in this later illustration of the *locus amoenus*: for instance, Daphne's delight in the *siluarum latebris* ('retreats of the woods,' 1.475), the enclosed valley of Tempe (1.568-573), Jupiter's exhortation of Io, *pete . . . umbras altorum nemorum* ('seek the shade of the deep woods,' 1.590-91), and the setting of Syrinx's tale, *Arcadiae gelidis in montibus* ('in the chill mountains of Arcadia,' 1.689). Through his accounts of the *locus amoenus*, both partial and fully articulated, Ovid paints a picture of a complete landscape that draws together these many stories. By not fully describing each one, in fact, Ovid makes the reader more aware of the connectedness of the scenes; each one depends upon the others to provide a full image of the setting.

As the common features of these stories suggest, however, the *locus amoenus* is continually host to great and destructive violence even as it echoes the concord of the

²⁸ See *Ecl.* 4.58-59 (where Virgil suggests that he is in Arcadia himself), 7.4, 26 and 10.26, 31 and 33.

Golden Age. Far from being the setting of peaceful poetic competition, Ovid's *locus amoenus* is the setting of rape or other violation and the metamorphoses that result.²⁹ Again and again within the world of the *Metamorphoses*, the peace of the *locus amoenus* is perverted and becomes the site not of pastoral serenity but of brutality. Segal observes: "By transforming the locales which in the literary tradition are places of comfort and refuge from the harsher possibilities of life, Ovid leaves a world bare of protection and open at any moment to sudden arbitrary attack."³⁰ The tranquility of the landscape, traditionally echoed by the peacefulness of the scene and the beauty of the art created within it, instead becomes linked in Ovid's hands to the virginity and thus the vulnerability of the victim who inhabits it. Parry explains: "Thus the scene where violence or death is to ensue is itself virginal, so that the setting itself portends and prefigures the deed."³¹ Callisto's story most poignantly illustrates the connection between victim and setting. After her rape, the landscape itself is spoiled for her: *huic odio nemus est et conscia silua* ('the grove was odious to her, the forest an accomplice,' 2.438). The concord of the setting is always destroyed, and so the reader quickly comes to anticipate violence and discord when he is faced with a *locus amoenus*. Just as Ovid distorts tradition by using Golden Age imagery in the flood, so he transforms the conventional and paradisaical *locus amoenus* by associating it with violence.

c. Scholarship and Method

²⁹ The most prominent examples of this setting and its destruction in the first five books include: Daphne (1.452-567), Io (1.568-746), Pan and Syrinx (1.689-712), Callisto (2.401-507), Actaeon (3.138-252), Narcissus (3.339-510), Pyramus and Thisbe (4.55-166), Salmacis and Hermaphroditus (4.274-388), Pyreneus and the Muses (5.269-93), and Proserpina (5.385-571).

³⁰ Segal, *Landscape*, 74.

³¹ Hugh Parry, "Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Violence in a Pastoral Landscape," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 95 (1964): 276. See also Segal, *Landscape*, 39.

The imagery of the Golden Age thus permeates Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Strikingly, this imagery is always associated with violence and disorder, rather than the expected peace and fecundity of the tradition. Whether Ovid inserts the startling image of the wolf and sheep into the flood or a lustful and violent deity into a scene of natural paradise, he never allows the Golden Age to remain harmonious or catastrophe to be absolute. Even his first, seemingly-traditional account of the Ages of Man suggests something subversive through its use of agricultural language.³² It is the prevalence of the Golden Age motif, and its paradoxical appearance in the *Metamorphoses*, that is the concern of the current study. We will consider the ways in which this motif not only reveals Ovid's inventive approach to the poetic canon, but in fact elucidates the principles upon which his poetry, and art itself, depend.

The centrality of the *locus amoenus* to the world of the *Metamorphoses* is a topic that has been dealt with by several scholars, who have examined the tradition behind the setting, its symbolic associations and the expectations it arouses in the reader. Segal's rigorous monograph, which in part develops Parry's earlier article on the subject, is still of central importance to an understanding of Ovid's use of the *locus amoenus*.³³ Delving into the varied appearances of the setting within the epic, Segal proclaims: "It provides a unifying leitmotif, an easily recognizable thread leading through the continual variations of the individual tales."³⁴ By identifying the archetypal features of the setting and examining the myriad ways in which it appears in the poem, Segal illustrates this unifying function. The idea that the *locus amoenus* plays an important role in tying together the diverse and eclectic stories of the *Metamorphoses* has been influential on

³² See Chapter 4, 89-91.

³³ Segal, *Landscape*, and Parry.

³⁴ Segal, *Landscape*, 6.

more recent scholarship on the subject. The prevalence of this landscape, Stephen Hinds argues, also provides a kind of unity between the themes of the work and its physical cosmos: “An aspect of landscape symbolism peculiar to this poem . . . is the capacity of supernatural transformation to cause the symbolic and the literal to collapse fully into one another.”³⁵ This collapse of literal and symbolic is at work in the episode of Proserpina, for example: the maiden’s flowers fall to the ground when she is seized by Dis, and the god violates Cyane’s pool with his sceptre (5.421-27), symbolising rape.³⁶ The *locus amoenus*, then, provides a unifying motif between stories, between landscape and character, and between the symbolic and the literal facets of the epic.³⁷ Indeed, the repetition of the motif provides a key to our understanding of setting; the symbolic meaning of the scene takes on a clearer form at each appearance.

The traditional association of the *locus amoenus* with poetic competition, as well as the role the landscape plays as a unifying narrative element in the poem, makes the artistic implications of this setting a natural focus of the scholarship. It is Segal’s contention, for example, that Ovid forbids the ultimate victory of art that is implicit in Virgil’s and Theocritus’ interpretations of the setting. Instead, “Ovid’s settings . . . have the external trappings of pastoral, but not the spirit. They lack the genuine attempt to find or protect the removal and the peaceful appreciation of beauty that form the essence of

³⁵ Hinds, “Landscape,” 134. See Chapter 5, 132-37, for a consideration of how poetry and the cosmos mirror one another in the *Metamorphoses*.

³⁶ Hinds, “Landscape,” 134.

³⁷ Gregson Davis makes a similar argument about the narrative motif of hunting in the *Metamorphoses*. The persistence of a link between *venatio* and *amor* provides a mode of structural coherence within the epic, such that the literal and symbolic meanings of each become combined and blurred. It is only within the context of this motif as a whole that particular examples of hunting or erotic imagery become clear, Davis argues. Gregson Davis, *The Death of Procris: ‘Amor’ and the Hunt in Ovid’s Metamorphoses* (Rome: Edizioni dell’Ateneo, 1983), especially 11-20.

pastoral.”³⁸ Patricia Johnson’s own study of art in the *Metamorphoses* agrees with Segal’s interpretation, reading the danger inherent to Ovid’s *locus amoenus* as an indication of the difficulty of artistic creation in the poet’s time. Ovid’s focus on art, particularly the performance of art, reveals the relation of artist to audience: “His vision of the interaction of poetry and power could hardly be more bleak.”³⁹ This is particularly evident in Ovid’s account of the Muses’ contest with the Pierides and the story of Orpheus: “Ovid’s ultimately fatal pastoral settings are even less propitious for song than Vergil’s; the powerful prevail in the singing contest, while Orpheus’ seemingly safe pastoral performance venue will become the site of his dismemberment.”⁴⁰

Despite this opinion that art is destroyed within the *locus amoenus*, there has been a recent focus on the intensely aesthetic character of Ovid’s landscape descriptions. Hinds observes that the beauty of Ovid’s own art overcomes the violence inherent to the scenes: “The timeless beauty of these settings, the sense of them as a special, privileged space for the imagination, has for most readers lingered on, erasing or (perhaps in the end the same thing) stylizing the sufferings, and encouraging a kind of transcendent aestheticism.”⁴¹ Johnson and Hinds both comment on the parallels between the *locus amoenus* and the *theatrum*; Johnson compares Orpheus’ grove to a theatre, while Hinds observes the amphitheatrical overtones of Proserpina’s setting and Orpheus’ landscape.⁴² The metamorphoses that take place within the *locus amoenus* also, as we will see, suggest the

³⁸ Segal, *Landscape*, 82.

³⁹ Patricia Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile: Art and Punishment in the Metamorphoses* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 108.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁴¹ Hinds, “Landscape,” 148. See also Segal, *Landscape*, 12.

⁴² Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile*, 110; Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone*, 33-34.

creation of art in striking ways.⁴³ The character of the ‘pleasant place’ in the *Metamorphoses*, then, both within the narrative of the poem and in the poet’s telling of it, in certain ways evokes ideas of artistry. The scenes may be ones of destruction, yet they suggest an unexpected emphasis on creation and art.

These observations of the intensely artistic content and narration of the *locus amoenus* align with a general trend in recent Ovidian scholarship that sees the poet’s voice as the primary unifying element of the epic. As many commentators have observed, the seemingly infinite perspectives and modes of narration within the *Metamorphoses* leave the reader uncertain about what to grasp for some stability within the poem. Andrew Feldherr asserts that, in the context of these myriad poetic voices, “Ovid’s emphasis on metamorphosis suggests an antidote by refocusing our attention on the processes of representation and reading.”⁴⁴ Alessandro Barchiesi observes a number of narrative techniques in the epic, particularly authorial intrusions into the stories, that draw attention to how the poem is told, and so to Ovid’s voice as the “super-narrator”.⁴⁵ The multitudinous characters and gods and their various stories are all called into question, Kenney writes, so that “Ovid’s characters, no less than his readers, are left in no doubt as to who is in charge.”⁴⁶ The voice of the poet, recent scholarship proclaims, rather than a fluid chronology or thematic structure, is the true unifying element in the *Metamorphoses*.

⁴³ See Chapter 2, 22-24; Joseph B. Solodow, *The World of Ovid’s Metamorphoses* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 203-207.

⁴⁴ Feldherr, “Metamorphosis,” 178.

⁴⁵ Alessandro Barchiesi, “Narrative Technique and Narratology in the *Metamorphoses*,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, ed. Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), especially 185-86.

⁴⁶ Kenney, 147.

Art is also an abiding element of the cosmos of the *Metamorphoses*. Joseph Solodow's thesis that metamorphosis is a kind of art, "plucking something from the random flux of the universe, fixing it, establishing it as a clear point of reference for the rest of us," suggests that art, in the guise of metamorphosis, is a fundamental theme of the poem as a whole.⁴⁷ Art is linked to the cosmology of the *Metamorphoses* as well as to individual physical transformations; a number of scholars have observed the strong connections between the original cosmic demiurge and the figure of the artist. The cosmos, these connections indicate, is a work of art.⁴⁸ The world of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, these commentators suggest, is artistic both in the mode of its creation and in the principles of change and transformation that are central to it.

The artistic inventiveness evident in Ovid's treatment of the Golden Age and the *locus amoenus*, as well as the prominent role of artistry within the narrative, suggests a natural connection between Ovid's use of the Golden Age motif and the recent scholarly focus on the role of art in the epic. The connections between the *locus amoenus* and Golden Age imagery generally in the poem have yet to be examined, as do the connections between the Golden Age and the predominant ideas of art within the poem. The cosmos of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid indicates, involves a cycle of creation, destruction and recreation.⁴⁹ Like the cycle of flux and harmony involved in metamorphosis, the *locus amoenus* appears and is destroyed in a continual rhythm. Art, it seems, can emerge only as part of this endless cycle, partaking in both the formlessness

⁴⁷ Solodow, 207.

⁴⁸ See in particular Stephen M. Wheeler, "Imago Mundi: Another View of the Creation in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *The American Journal of Philology* 116 (1995): 95-121; Solodow, 213; Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 30; Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 13.

⁴⁹ For a discussion of themes of recreation, especially in the first book of the epic, see Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, Chapter 1.

of chaos and the harmony of the Golden Age. A more complete understanding of the role of art in the *Metamorphoses*, and of Ovid's own poetic project in writing his epic, necessitates a consideration of the Golden Age imagery that permeates the cosmos of the poem. The process of artistic creation is bound up in the very world of the *Metamorphoses*, and the motif of the Golden Age provides a necessary bridge between cosmic creation and human art. The echoes of the Golden Age that persist throughout the epic indicate that a new approach should be taken, one that looks at these many echoes in light of the many interpretations of the *Metamorphoses* that suggest that the poem is, in a way, about art itself.

In the present study, we will first examine the principles of *concordia* and *discordia* in the original cosmogony, the Golden Age and the world after the flood in order to determine how these principles are connected to ideas of creation and recreation in the first book of the *Metamorphoses*. We will consider the post-deluvian *discors concordia* (1.433) in relation to the new fecundity that emerges after the flood. This chapter will then take up the *locus amoenus*, looking at how the *discors concordia* appears in each 'pleasant place' and how this principle is associated with artistic creation through the process of metamorphosis. By examining cosmic processes of creation and destruction, we will discover a cycle of Golden Age harmony and opposing chaos that is central to ideas of artistry in the poem. The study will then move in Chapter 3 to the particular example of the *locus amoenus* that Orpheus creates for himself in Book 10, considering how the principle of *discors concordia* is at work in this scene, and the implications of this for Ovid's poetic philosophy. A few of Ovid's many allusions to other poetic sources will be taken up in order to reveal the ways in which the poet's literary creation of a new

form out of his predecessors' models is reflected in Orpheus' physical creation of the *locus amoenus*. In the fourth chapter, this idea of literary allusiveness will be considered in more depth through a reflection on Virgil's own use of the Golden Age motif in the *Aeneid* and the ways in which Ovid takes up and transforms his forerunner's use of the *topos*. We will examine Ovid's allusions to the paradoxes inherent to Virgil's own Golden Age, as well as his transformation of his predecessor's teleological image of Rome into his own cyclic motif of harmony and discord. Finally, returning to one of Ovid's earliest sources, the fifth chapter will take up the influence of the philosopher-poet Lucretius. The threads of Lucretian imagery evident throughout the *Metamorphoses* lead us to a clearer understanding of Ovid's association of art with harmony and discord, creation and destruction. We can better understand the way in which Ovid links the cosmos of his poem with ideas of art both within the poem and in his telling of it by contemplating the way in which Ovid connects the cosmos of the *Metamorphoses* to that of the *De Rerum Natura*.

This examination of Golden Age imagery in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* thus endeavours to bring to light the principles of artistic creation that recur throughout the epic. Drawing on recent scholarship on themes of art and creation in Ovid's poetry, as well as accounts of the poet's use of landscape, we will consider the various modes of artistic creation within the epic. Again and again within the *Metamorphoses*, scenes of devastation and disorder are portrayed in the language of divine harmony, while violence breaks in upon scenes of harmony and concord. In both the destruction of the Golden Age and the sublimation of destruction, Ovid suggests the idea of artistic creation within the narrative of the epic as well as in his writing of it. This close connection between the

Golden Age, its chaotic opposite and the idea of art suggests a kind of poetic philosophy at work within the world of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. By drawing chaos and harmony together into a cyclical *discors concordia*—both poetic and cosmic—Ovid intimates the conditions necessary for art, and thus for the creation of poetry itself.

CHAPTER 2. *DISCORS CONCORDIA*: CHAOS AND THE GOLDEN AGE

The Golden Age is a period of harmony; humans remain within their allotted boundaries because, in a world that freely supplies their livelihood, they need never venture past their limits in order to maintain their existence. Ovid's description of the Golden Age in the first book of the *Metamorphoses* emphasises these human boundaries by defining the Age in terms of what it is not: there is no law-making, no wall-building, no seafaring, no warfare, no agriculture.⁵⁰ The Golden Age is, in other words, devoid of all human craftsmanship. Ovid uses the Golden Age as a recurring element in his work, as we have seen; it is, in its original place in the Ages of Man and in its microcosmic form as the *locus amoenus*, continually re-created and destroyed within the *Metamorphoses*. The definition of the Golden Age in terms of the absence of human craftsmanship intimates that Ovid's use of the motif can help us to understand the poet's own views concerning the purpose and principles of craft and artistic endeavour. Ovid insists, as other ancient writers do, that the Golden Age must end if human are to be independently creative. However, his use of the Age as a *topos* of his work is more nuanced than this; the cyclical destruction of the Golden Age in fact reveals that human art depends on a tenuous balance of harmony and chaos, a paradoxical union of the Golden Age with the disorder of its destruction.

a. The Post-Deluvian World

⁵⁰ For a discussion of this negative representation of the Golden Age, see Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 23; Bömer, *Buch I-III*, 48.

The creation of the cosmos at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses* takes place through the harmonization of chaos. In the original confusion of matter, there are *non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum* ('the discordant seeds of things not well joined together,' 1.9). The divine *opifex* then orders the cosmic chaos, bringing these seeds together *in concordi pace* ('in concordant peace,' 25).⁵¹ This movement from *discordia* to *concordia* defines the process of cosmic creation at the beginning of the poem. The original demiurgic creation displays a great concern for symmetry. The cosmos takes tripartite form as earth, sea and sky (21-23), each element has its proper place (26-31), and living beings come to be in an orderly, balanced manner: *neu regio foret ulla suis animalibus orba* ('lest there be any region lacking its own animals,' 72). At the very beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, then, creation and harmonization are synonymous. Creation thus results in a concordant world, defined by its inherent boundaries and order.

As human morality deteriorates through the Ages of Man, and then in a more absolute sense in the destructive flood, the order of the original creation is destroyed; the harmony of the demiurge, in other words, reverts back to something close to the primeval *discordia semina*.⁵² Before the flood, the gods' discussion of the imminent catastrophe suggests that the flood will overturn the order of the demiurge: *quae sit terrae mortalibus orbae / forma futura rogant* ('They asked what the form would be of the earth bereft of mortals,' 1.247-48). This echoes the original generation of animals, created *neu regio foret ulla suis animalibus orba* (72). This repetition of *orbis* suggests that the flood

⁵¹ For a consideration of *discordia* and *concordia* in Ovid's creation account, see Damien Nelis, "Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.416-51: *Nova Monstra* and the *Foedera Naturae*," in *Paradox and the Marvellous in Augustan Literature and Culture*, ed. Philip Hardie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 250-51. See also Richard McKim, "Myth Against Philosophy in Ovid's Account of Creation," *The Classical Journal* 80 (1984-85): 97-108.

⁵² See Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 23-32. Wheeler considers the way in which Ovid depicts the reversal of cosmic order into chaos in the flood and throughout Book 1.

undoes the results of the divine creation, taking away living creatures and leaving the world again *orbis*. Most tellingly, the original boundaries between earth, sea and sky disappear in the flood: *iamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebat* ('and now sea and earth had no division,' 291).⁵³ The state of the cosmos after the flood, in its breakdown of cosmic order, thus involves a return to the original *discordia* of chaos.⁵⁴

The world must, therefore, be re-created after the flood. In this regeneration, however, Ovid entirely overturns the principles of the original divine creation. After the deluge, new principles of order and creation act in the cosmos, necessitating a redefinition of creativity within the poem. Animals emerge again after the creation of humankind: *cetera diversis tellus animalia formis / sponte sua peperit* ('of its own accord, the earth produced the rest of the animals in diverse forms,' 416-17). The language of autonomy recalls the Golden Age; just as that age produced virtue *sponte sua* (1.90), and the earth, also *tellus*, gave fruits *per se* (102), this post-deluvian world creates animals of its own accord. However, although the new order contains something of the Golden Age spontaneity, the mode of this new creation is strikingly different from that of both the original creation and the Golden Age of man. The Golden Age epitomises the *concordia* of the demiurgic creation. Richard McKim writes that in the Golden Age, "Men keep to their own shores, so that there is no war (97-100), just as God would create peace by keeping the elements within bounds."⁵⁵ The spontaneity of the Golden Age world, that produces fruits *per se*, thus perpetuates the harmonious balance of creation. Humans are given a particular place in the cosmos, and the givenness of the natural world

⁵³ See, for example, McKim, 106; and Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 30.

⁵⁴ See also M. S. Bate, "Tempestuous Poetry: Storms in Ovid's 'Metamorphoses', 'Heroides' and 'Tristia'," *Mnemosyne* 57 (2004): 301.

⁵⁵ McKim, 103.

means that they do not need to step outside their boundaries in order to maintain their existence through agriculture, mining or seafaring. The re-creation of animals after the flood contrasts with this harmony; the earth produces animals freely and without concern for their place within the cosmic order or their benefits for humanity. This regeneration of the natural world is linked to the Golden Age, and therefore the original creation, through its spontaneity, and yet at the same time it stands in opposition to the balance and order of the demiurgic cosmos.

The regeneration of the natural world after the flood, with its Golden Age spontaneity but unharmonious nature, epitomises a change in the mode of creation in the *Metamorphoses*. The very principles behind creation are transformed. While the movement of creation was previously from *discordia* to *concordia*, the new principle behind creativity holds together the two: *discors concordia fetibus apta est* ('a discordant concord suited to offspring,' 433).⁵⁶ The appearance of *discors concordia* as a new principle is a subject often discussed by scholars, whose focus is on Ovid's apparent shift to Empedoclean principles of Love and Strife.⁵⁷ This *discors concordia*, scholars agree, is a new creative principle that contrasts with the harmonising principle previously at work in the poem. In his discussion of the re-creation of animals after the flood, Damien Nelis proposes that in mixing Love and Strife, Ovid suggests "the creative potential inherent in the paradoxical *discors concordia*."⁵⁸ McKim also focuses on the life-giving force of the *discors concordia*; he writes that the "world of *concors pax* (25) would be, unlike ours, a lifeless one." He adds, "Life springs rather from *discors concordia* (433), not from the

⁵⁶ See, for example, Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 35: *discors concordia* "strikes a note that is dissonant with the *modus operandi* of the *deus et melior natura* who originally separated the chaotic strife of the elements . . . and kept them apart in harmonious peace. . . ."

⁵⁷ See Nelis, 248-67; Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 116; and Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 12-47.

⁵⁸ Nelis, 267.

rational order of a 'harmonious peace' but from the paradoxical mystery of a 'harmony of discord'."⁵⁹ There is a consensus in the scholarship, then, that a new mode of production emerges at this point after the flood.

Despite scholars' acknowledgement that *discors concordia* has a life-giving power, in deciphering the Empedoclean overtones of the *discors concordia* scholars have almost entirely ignored the distinctive creative nature of the world that emerges *from* this principle. As discussed above, the earth produces the natural world *sponte sua*, and yet without regard for harmonious order. The spontaneously-regenerated world has a new, striking character: it has the autonomy necessary to perpetuate its own existence. The earth which gives all things spontaneously in the Golden Age produces *natos sine semine flores* ('flowers born without seed,' 108). In direct contrast to these sterile flowers are the seeds of the new creation: *fecunda . . . semina rerum* ('the fecund seeds of things,' 419). The natural world of the Golden Age must be constantly renewed from within the earth itself by divinely-ordered spontaneous regeneration; in contrast, the earth after the flood produces creatures that are themselves self-sufficient and creative, because they contain the seeds with which to propagate their own generations. The mixture of discord and concord, strife and love, or destruction and production, fosters an independently creative world, one whose perpetuation is assured by *fecunda semina*. While the Golden Age earth, taken as an image of pure *concordia*, produces a natural world that is lush but not independent, the era following the flood generates creatures who have the power to re-create themselves.

In juxtaposition to the regeneration of animal life after the flood is the rebirth of humanity of stones, another aspect of the post-deluvian world that is given little

⁵⁹ McKim, 107.

consideration by scholars who view the *discors concordia* as Empedoclean. This re-creation, although it takes a very different form from the terrestrial regeneration of the animal world, also partakes in a new kind of creativity. Deucalion and Pyrrha, the only humans saved from destruction, pray: *dic, Themis, qua generis damnum reparabile nostri / arte sit et mersis fer opem, mitissima, rebus* ('Tell us, Themis, by what art the loss of our people may be repaired, and bear aid, most gentle goddess, to these submerged beings,' 379-80). Answering their prayers, Themis gives them the *ars* of the regeneration of mankind out of stones thrown behind their backs. Ovid's language in this scene, not only in the initial prayer but also in the transformation of the stones themselves, suggests that this regenerative metamorphosis is a kind of art; in fact, as Joseph Solodow discusses in detail, the actual transformation of the stones intimates artistry. Solodow references the passage in which the rocks become human:

. . . *ut quaedam, sic non manifesta, videri
forma potest hominis, sed, uti de marmore coepta,
non exacta satis rudibusque simillima signis.* (404-6)

(. . . then some unclear shape of a human could be seen, as if the beginnings of a work of marble, like rough figures⁶⁰ not completely finished.)

Solodow explains, "The simile suggests that the process of metamorphosis and artistic creation are alike: while turning into people the stones are on the way to becoming statues."⁶¹ The connection between this transformation and artistic activity, as well as the use of the term *ars* to describe the process, suggests that humans take up a new kind of creativity in the world after the flood. In this new cosmic structure, art is in the hands of

⁶⁰ Or 'statues'.

⁶¹ Solodow, 204. See also Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 30.

humans: a goddess gives the *ars* of creation to the only surviving human couple. In parallel to the new fertile character of the natural world, human creativity takes priority after the flood. The *discors concordia* of this new cosmic order gives plants and animals the fecund seeds with which to propagate their own species, and simultaneously gives humans the hitherto unknown fecundity of artistic production.

This regeneration of humanity is not the first appearance of art in the *Metamorphoses*; art is present at the very beginning of the cosmic creation, but as a possession of the divine creator alone. In the state of Chaos, the cosmos is *iners: nec quicquam nisi pondus iners* ('nothing except an inert/artless weight,' 1.8). This 'artless' world is then given shape by the *opifex*, or artisan (1.79).⁶² Wheeler considers the term *iners* in his definition of the initial creation as an artistic endeavour: "Considered in its root sense of lacking *ars*, [*iners*] . . . anticipates the principal metaphor of the cosmogony in which Ovid presents the divine creator as an artisan modeling an artifact."⁶³ At the beginning of the poem, then, *ars* is the domain of the cosmic creator. The new human artistry in the post-deluvian world reflects the artistic nature of the original cosmogony, taking up this divine creativity into the human realm; when Themis gives Deucalion and Pyrrha the *ars* with which to recreate the human race, she gives them the power of the *opifex*, the demiurgic artist. Just as the original creator formed the world as a piece of art, so the surviving human couple re-creates their own race by means of an *ars*, a

⁶² See Solodow, 213: "The language here, tellingly placed, suggests that as the world became recognizable in form and occupied increasingly by animals, plants and objects whose names and characteristics are known to us, it was evolving in the direction of greater artfulness." See also Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 106. Wheeler also notes the use of the term *mundi fabricator* (1.57), explaining that this and the term *opifex rerum* "bear witness to the especially Ovidian idea that art lies behind the order of nature."

⁶³ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 13. Wheeler takes up the question of the creator as artist in more detail in an article comparing the creation of the cosmos to the creation of Achilles' shield in the *Iliad*: Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 115-16. Also see Solodow, 213: "The chaos, the very first thing to be transformed, Ovid terms a *pondus iners* . . . which is a pun, meaning 'a mass' that is both 'inert' or 'sluggish' and 'inartistic' (from *in-ars*)."

transformation that is both defined as art and reflects the activity of sculpting. The new creativity of the human race, then, takes up the artistic power that characterises the original demiurge.

It is in the breakdown of order in the flood, the return to chaos, that humans assume their creative power; something in the disintegration of the cosmos in the flood rearranges the balance of the cosmos such that humans take on a new—and until this point divine—artistic capacity. This ability to give order to chaos, the artistry of the *opifex* who bound the elements *concordi pace*, becomes a human art. Segal writes:

The second creation of mankind after the Flood shows [a] three-way connection between metamorphosis, the creativity of nature, and the creativity of art. When Deucalion and Pyrrha throw the stones to replenish mankind, the transformation is compared to unfinished statues. For both art and nature, the creative process lies in giving ‘form’ to inchoate matter. . . .”⁶⁴

By relating art, metamorphosis and natural fecundity, Segal stresses the connection between artistic endeavour and the twofold regeneration of the world after the flood. This connection also makes the relationship between this post-deluvian activity and that of the cosmic creator more explicit: art, metamorphosis and natural creation all bring about the same movement from chaos to order, thus reversing the destruction of the cosmos in the flood. The *discordia*, the chaos that results from the flood, is given form again in part through the re-creation of humanity and of the natural realm. The earth, no longer *orbis* of its inhabitants, begins to take on an ordered form again. Unlike the work of the divine creator, however, this re-creation does not move in one direction toward pure harmony.

⁶⁴ Charles Paul Segal, “Ovid’s Metamorphic Bodies: Art, Gender, and Violence in the *Metamorphoses*,” *Arion* 5, no. 3 (1998): 17.

Instead, art depends upon the existence both of chaos, that which can be formed, and the power to harmonise, that which creates form.⁶⁵ For art to continue, these two sides must be held together; a world in which harmony completely supersedes chaos cannot contain the continual striving of human art, for it leaves no chaos out of which form may be created. Human creativity thus depends, as does natural reproduction, on the *discors concordia* that is the principle of this new world. It depends on the coexistence of chaos and harmony.

After the first regeneration of the human race after the flood, of course, human reproduction returns to its ordinary sexual mode. By the end of Book 1, Io gives birth to her son by Jupiter, Epaphus: *nunc Epaphus magni genitus de semine tandem / creditur esse Iouis* ('now Ephesus was believed to have been born from the seed of great Jove,' 748-49). No stones are thrown in this case; humans, like the *cetera . . . animalia* (416), clearly have *fecunda . . . semina* (419) with which to propagate their kind. However, the way in which Ovid sets the re-creation of humankind after the flood side-by-side with the re-creation of the animal world suggests that he is strongly aligning artistic and natural production, as Segal emphasises. Frederick Ahl, comparing the original creation of man (76-89) with the second creation after the flood, suggests that despite the two possibilities for the first creation,⁶⁶ there is an important similarity between them, one that contrasts with the regeneration after the flood: "The first man was born—*NATus*—either from divine seed (*divino sEMINe* [1.78]) or by *sEMINa*, seeds (1.80), retained by earth from her brother sky. . . . The imagery of the earlier age, then, is that of *vegetable*

⁶⁵ See, for example, the art of Pygmalion: *sculpsit ebur formamque dedit* ('he sculpted the ivory and gave it form,' 10.248).

⁶⁶ Either the demiurge creates the original humans from a divine model or Prometheus creates them out of earth that contains celestial seed.

regeneration.”⁶⁷ After the flood, on the other hand, Deucalion and Pyrrha recreate humanity not from *semina* but from stones and art. Human reproduction will, of course, return to the realm of *semina*; however, Ahl’s observation makes it clear that in the re-creation of mankind after the flood Ovid’s emphasis is on its very *separation* from the natural world. *Ars*, the new gift to humanity, is here compared with natural fecundity and yet also contrasted with it; what once belonged exclusively to the divine *opifex* is now possible for humans, and it is this power that sets them apart from the rest of the natural world even as their art possesses a similar fecundity.

The *discors concordia* of the world after the flood, then, has great significance for the idea of art itself within the poem. The regeneration of the world may well be an homage to Empedocles; Nelis’ study concludes, for example, that Ovid uses Empedocles to correct a Lucretian understanding of the way the cosmos operates, thereby preserving the principles that make metamorphosis possible.⁶⁸ Whether or not Ovid acknowledges a specific philosophical debt in this passage, however, it is essential to take note of the *discors concordia* and to fully consider its implications on the world that follows the flood. It is this principle that is at work in a cosmos with two strikingly new and closely linked capacities: the capacity of the natural world for autonomous sexual regeneration, and that of humankind for artistic production.

b. *Discors concordia* and the Golden Age

⁶⁷ Frederick Ahl, *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 113. Ahl’s capitalisation reflects his commentary on wordplay within the poem.

⁶⁸ Nelis, 266-67. However, we will examine the ways in which Ovid in fact here follows the Lucretian model. See Chapter 5, especially 120-25.

It is within this context, the emergence of a new cosmic order according to the principle of *discors concordia*, that the anomalous appearance of Golden Age imagery in the flood, the wolf swimming with the lamb (1.304), may be understood.⁶⁹ This image prefigures the new era of creativity, symbolising the unsettling and uncertain conditions, the *discors concordia*, upon which art depends. Golden Age peace epitomises the *concordia* of the original creation; the original harmony is still entirely maintained at this stage of the Ages of Man, and the lack of hostility (98-100) parallels the *concors pax* into which the *opifex* binds chaos (25). Denis Feeney sees the character of the original creation in terms of its inherent boundaries: “The cosmogony establishes the rules of the game, the fundamental boundaries whose limits the poem’s transgressions will explore.”⁷⁰ These boundaries have not yet been transgressed in the Golden Age; it is the following ages that will disturb these concordant cosmic limits with such activities as ship-building, warfare and mining. The flood, in contrast to the Golden Age, is a return to *discordia*, the chaos of creation; all boundaries are obliterated, even the *discrimina* between earth, sea and sky. However, through his use of imagery symbolic of the Golden Age, the idyllic image of the wolf and the lamb, Ovid demonstrates that the *concordia* of the Golden Age and the original creation does not entirely vanish even in the midst of the flood. Instead, this *concordia* is brought into a strange and paradoxical amalgam with the *discordia* of the flood. Indeed, the poem’s stories do not so much explore and contravene the boundaries of the cosmogony, as Feeney argues, as demonstrate the way in which these boundaries are dissolved in the post-deluvian world. The image of the wolf swimming with the lamb, then, is a poetic symbol of the *discors concordia* through which

⁶⁹ See Introduction, 3-5.

⁷⁰ D. C. Feeney, *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 194.

a fecund, creative world comes into existence. The language of order becomes perverted through its appearance in the midst of catastrophe, while discord is no longer simply chaotic: concord and discord exist in unity.

This irreverent but ultimately significant approach to the Golden Age is only one example of a motif that appears again and again throughout the *Metamorphoses*. The Golden Age, in the form of the *locus amoenus*, is never a place of static *concordia*, as we discussed above in the Introduction.⁷¹ Instead, the very concord that characterises the *locus amoenus* makes these beautiful spaces the hosts of great, discordant violence. The *locus amoenus* is a reflection of the victim who comes to harm within the place: “In many of these tales the violation of the virginity of the main character is paralleled by a metaphorical violation of a virginal quality in the landscape itself or by a transformation of the landscape from apparent purity and peace to the opposite,” writes Segal.⁷² In these tales, the idyllic nature of the landscape is seductive to the rapist in the same way as the victim is. When Jupiter first sees Callisto, for example, it is in the context of the *locus amoenus* that he has himself just created: his homeland, Arcadia. When he restores Arcadia to its former beauty after Phaethon’s conflagration of the earth, he sees—and pursues—the virgin Callisto.⁷³ The *locus amoenus* possesses the same *concordia* as the Golden Age and the original cosmic creation. However, *discordia*, in the form of the violation of both setting and victim, is not only attendant on but indeed linked to this concord. In each *locus amoenus* and its destruction, then, we see in microcosm the movement of the first book from the original creation to the flood: from harmony to chaos. This movement results not in a complete return to chaos, but instead in the *discors*

⁷¹ See Introduction, 6-11.

⁷² Segal, *Landscape*, 39.

⁷³ *Met.* 2.405-10. See Introduction, 9-10.

concordia which, as we will see, is the principle of creation not only in the post-deluvian world, but also in the microcosmic paradox of the *locus amoenus*.

At the centre of this comparison between the destruction of the world in the flood and the destruction of the *locus amoenus* is the way in which Ovid represents the activity of metamorphosis itself. The re-creation of humans after the flood, as we have seen, links the activities of natural and artistic creation, also demonstrating the connection between art and metamorphosis.⁷⁴ The transformation of stones into humans is described as an *ars* and also mirrors the activity of sculpting. This close relation between art and metamorphosis is true not only in the regeneration of mankind, but also in a great number of the metamorphoses that take place throughout the poem. Solodow, considering Ovid's use of such terms as *imago* and *signum*, terms associated with art, finds a strong connection between artistic creation and transformation in the scene after the flood as well as in the other metamorphoses of the poem.⁷⁵ This use of artistic terms is ubiquitous; as one example, Ovid describes the metamorphosis of Actaeon into a deer using the term *imago*: Actaeon's dogs *dilacerant falsi dominum sub imagine cerui* ('tear apart their master, under the image of a false deer,' 3.250). Actaeon has not merely been transformed into a deer; instead, he has been transformed into the *image* of one, like a sculpted piece of stone. Metamorphosis, then, is a kind of artistic transformation.

It is not only the language of metamorphosis that parallels the language of art; the result of physical transformation also bears a certain resemblance to that of artistic creation. Solodow writes: "Plucking something from the random flux of the universe, fixing it, establishing it as a clear point of reference for the rest of us, metamorphosis acts

⁷⁴ See again Segal, "Ovid's Metamorphic Bodies," 17.

⁷⁵ Solodow, 203-207. See also Feldherr, "Metamorphosis," 175.

like the eye and hand of an artist.”⁷⁶ The essential characteristics of the human are retained through transformation; thus in Actaeon’s transformation he is not entirely a deer, but *mens tantum pristina mansit* (‘his mind alone remained untouched,’ 3.203). Lycaon’s metamorphosis contains even more explicit reference to this preservation of original qualities: *canities eadem est, eadem uiolentia uultus, / idem oculi lucent, eadem feritatis imago est* (‘there were the same grey hair, the same violence of his face; the same eyes gleamed, and there was the same image of ferocity,’ 1.238-39). As Solodow’s work indicates, metamorphosis preserves those aspects of the original human that most define character rather than appearance. It ‘fixes’ these characteristics in a representation of the original that, like an artwork, clarifies these original characteristics for the spectator.⁷⁷ Those qualities that most define Lycaon’s monstrous character, for example, are preserved in his wolf form. The transformations that occur within the *locus amoenus*, then, as examples of metamorphosis, are akin to artistic creation. This *locus amoenus*, as we saw above, is the microcosm of the movement from concord to chaos that takes place in the original creation. Through this connection between metamorphosis and art, then, Ovid continually situates the idea of artistic creation within circumstances that parallel those that follow the flood: in other words, the *discors concordia* in which the Golden Age and its chaotic opposite are intertwined. In both the post-deluvian realm and the *locus amoenus*, this principle is the basis of artistry.

In his understanding of the relation between art and the Golden Age, Ovid draws in part on a tradition of antiquity that makes creativity antithetical to the Golden Age. The discussion of the Age of Cronus in Plato’s *Politicus* is a particularly clear example of this

⁷⁶ Solodow, 207.

⁷⁷ See also Segal, “Ovid’s Metamorphic Bodies,” 12.

point. Questioning whether this idyllic age would have been preferable, the Stranger declares:

εἰ μὲν τοίνυν οἱ τρόφιμοι τοῦ Κρόνου . . . κατεχρῶντο τούτοις σύμπασι ἐπὶ φιλοσοφίαν . . . εὐκρίτων ὅτι τῶν νῦν οἱ τότε μυρίῳ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν διέφερον.

(Plato, *Plt.* 272 b-c)⁷⁸

(If the children of Cronos . . . made full use of all these things [i.e. the advantages of their age] for philosophy . . . it is easy to decide that they differed infinitely in respect to happiness from those who live now.)

Human happiness, then, here depends not on the given luxury of a Golden Age, but on human creativity: philosophical inquiry and the acquisition of knowledge. This creativity, the Stranger intimates, is not inherent to the Age of Cronos. Stanley Rosen explains that “we may find it easy enough to conclude that in the absence of memory, experience, Eros, and work, there can be no philosophy.” He continues, “There is no mention of *thymos*, no opportunity for the development of *phronēsis*, and so it is likely that the counternormal epoch is an age of *epithymia*.”⁷⁹ Human effort is inherent to the present age, the Age of Zeus. In his study of myth and philosophy in the *Metamorphoses*, Richard McKim suggests that Ovid has a similar understanding of the Golden Age. He writes that “the poet is no admirer of the Golden Age any more than of the philosophers’ God,” and goes on to explain, “To the poet, both are not only unreal but unattractive, the higher nature’s cosmos being the negation of the metamorphic world of mythical

⁷⁸ Plato, “Politicus,” in *Opera*, vol. 1, ed. E. A. Duke et al., Oxford Classical Texts (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁷⁹ Stanley Rosen, “Plato’s Myth of the Reversed Cosmos,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 33 (1979): 79. Rosen does, however, emphatically note that “none of this leads directly to the conclusion that *ours* is an age ten thousand times more blessed than theirs.” In a similar way, the violence of Ovid’s *locus amoenus* suggests that the introduction of human art into the world does not necessarily make for a more blessed world either.

imagination, and the Golden Age being likewise a world of negatives where nothing of interest can ever happen.”⁸⁰ The end of the Golden Age, he argues, is a necessary condition of human productivity. In this sense, the continual destruction of the Golden Age can be understood in relation to the metamorphosis that is associated with this violation; metamorphosis, strongly connected to art itself, is only possible in a world in which humanity has moved past the Golden Age.

Ovid certainly draws on a tradition in which the Golden Age must be superseded if there is to be human creativity: the continual destruction of the Golden Age in the form of the *locus amoenus* suggests that art can only emerge when the idyllic world is destroyed. As we have seen, the Golden Age is defined by the absence of human creativity.⁸¹ However, the Golden Age is not entirely left behind in the movement toward human art, as McKim suggests that it is. In the regeneration of humanity out of stones, the similarity between the artistry intimated here and the artistry of the original creation indicates that the *opifex*'s harmonising power has not been obliterated. Instead, as we have seen, this power is taken up within the human realm. The conditions of creation are therefore not pure discord and chaos, but the *discors concordia* that produces the rest of the natural world. Ovid's continual return to the Golden Age through the *topos* of the *locus amoenus* indicates that this principle is the condition of all creation, not only the regeneration after the flood. By linking artistic creation with the end of the Golden Age over and over in the form of metamorphosis within the *locus amoenus*, Ovid reveals and emphasises for his reader the paradoxical conditions upon which art depends. Thus the poet cannot, as McKim claims, be dismissed as “no admirer of the Golden Age”. Instead, the poet is

⁸⁰ McKim, 105.

⁸¹ See above, 19. See also Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 23.

dependent on the harmony of the Golden Age just as much as he is dependent on its dissolution. He possesses the demiurge's power to harmonise, yet cannot possess this power until he no longer lives within the harmonious world that this demiurge creates.

c. Ships

The presence of the ship in the *Metamorphoses* is central to Ovid's multifaceted use of Golden Age imagery and to our understanding of the *discors concordia*; as a traditional symbol of human craft, the changing role of the ship in the poem helps to define the place of art within the text. Ships are an archetypal symbol of the decline of human virtue in the Ages of Man; the Golden Age is, in part, defined by their absence.⁸² The exploration of foreign soil that seafaring entails is dangerous to the human race both in its transformation of human capacities and in the ability it grants to the human to encroach on another's territory. As Hardie writes, "The ancient ship is a boundary-crosser: it traverses the sea and makes of the ocean a bridge rather than a gulf between lands; abstractly, the ship confounds the normal categories that limit human existence (land/sea, city/wilderness, animate/inanimate nature, motion/immobility)."⁸³ This disturbance of boundaries means that seafaring directly conflicts with the limits of the original cosmic creation and the Golden Age. McKim explains that Ovid "lets man enjoy a brief Golden Age . . . in which human life adheres to the same sort of restrictions as the

⁸² *Met.* 1.94-5. Also see, for example, *Ecl.* 4.38-39: *ipse mari vector, nec nautica pinus mutabit merces* ('neither the rider of the sea nor the nautical pine will exchange wages'); also Aratus *Phaenomena* 110-12: *χαλεπή δ' ἀπέκειτο θάλασσα, / καὶ βίον οὕτω νῆες ἀπόπροθεν ἠγίνεσκον* ('the dangerous sea was neglected, and ships did not bring the means of living from far away'). Aratus, *Phaenomena*, ed. and trans. Douglas Kidd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

⁸³ Philip Hardie, "Ships and Ship Names in the *Aeneid*," in *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble*, ed. Michael Whitby, Philip Hardie and Mary Whitby (Oak Park, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1987), 164.

higher nature had imposed upon the elements.”⁸⁴ The transgressing of these boundaries marks the end of the Golden Age, and so the ship, as the “boundary-crosser”, epitomises the end of this harmonious age.

The deluge reverses the established principles and boundaries of the cosmos, in many ways returning to the original cosmic chaos. When the flood waters recede, the world operates in a new way, according to new principles. Ovid describes the flood in close textual proximity to the Golden Age, and thus heightens the distinction he makes in terms of the morality of seafaring in the two passages: in contrast to its wicked character in the Golden Age, the ship becomes associated with piety in the flood through its role as the instrument of humanity’s salvation. Deucalion and Pyrrha, the most pious humans alive before the flood (322-23), escape destruction in a boat. Stephen Wheeler briefly notes Deucalion and Pyrrha’s preservation as an “ironic twist”, saying that “the original sin of seafaring enables the pious Deucalion and Pyrrha to survive the flood in a small boat.”⁸⁵ Wheeler describes the flood as a “mixing of natural categories,” suggesting that the role of the ship in this scene indicates moral chaos. It is true that categories are mixed in the deluge, but what Wheeler ignores is that this mixing of categories is never resolved in the post-deluvian world; instead, as the *discors concordia* of the world’s regeneration indicates, these natural categories remain permanently interconnected. As we have seen, the Golden Age is joined with its discordant, chaotic opposite after the flood, and this paradoxical mixture is the condition for the re-creation of the world. The ship, in its new role, is a symbol of this change: the piety of the Golden Age is united with the sinfulness

⁸⁴ McKim, 103.

⁸⁵ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 30.

of the later ages. As a result, the activity of ship-making is sublimated, and priority is given to human craft.

The role of the ship as a symbol of the *discors concordia* is in fact intimated even before the moral confusion that takes place in the flood; Ovid's descriptions of ships in the Golden Age and in the Iron Age suggest a certain amalgamation of categories by their intratextual reference to one another. In Ovid's depiction of the Golden Age, the poet uses the metonymy of *pinus* for ship: *nondum caesa suis, peregrinum ut viseret orbem, / montibus in liquidas pinus descenderat undas* ('the pines did not yet, cut from their own mountains, descend into the clear waters,' 1.94-5). The pine, in its untouched form, is associated with the sinful ship. As this is an often-employed metonymic device,⁸⁶ it would be unsurprising but for the appearance of the ship in the Iron Age: *quaequae diu steterant in montibus altis / fluctibus ignotis exultavere carinae* ('keels, which stood at length on high mountains, leapt in unknown waves,' 1.133-34). Here, in direct contrast to the preceding image, the sinful ship, as a keel, is described as standing in its pristine form on the mountains: the ship becomes a metonym for the tree. The pine sails in the ocean, and the keel stands on the mountain. Wheeler comments on this contrast, explaining that the double metonymy represents the "confusion of land and sea"—the confusion of the demiurgic parameters, in other words—brought about by the boundary-crossing ship.⁸⁷ He goes on to explain, "The *topos* of the first ship and nautical audacity is thus refashioned as a sign of the metamorphic chaos that dissolves the boundaries of the demiurge's original plan."⁸⁸ He thus suggests that these images indicate the way in which

⁸⁶ Anderson comments on this passage, noting the *pinus* as a common metonymic device, but does not make note of the following description of ships in the Iron Age. Anderson, *Books 1-5*, 162.

⁸⁷ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 24.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

the original harmony of the cosmos is thrown into disorder with the decline of man. However, as with Wheeler's commentary on the mixing of categories that takes place in the flood, it is worth considering this idea in relation to the *discors concordia* of the post-deluvian world. Ovid's double metonymy certainly does indicate the crossing of boundaries, but by referring the Golden Age forward to the Iron Age and the Iron Age back to the Golden Age, it also prefigures the way that these two will be brought together in the flood. What was seen as wicked and destructive of cosmic boundaries comes to be connected to piety, associated with Golden Age harmony. The ship, prior to the flood as well as within it, prefigures and symbolises the paradoxical, yet productive, *discors concordia*.⁸⁹

As a symbol of the discordant harmony involved in human creativity, the ship acts as a metaphor for the danger as well as the positive potential of craftsmanship: it may bring about the salvation of humanity or its downfall. This is particularly evident in Ovid's description of Phaethon's disastrous flight in Sol's chariot, in which the poet twice uses the metaphor of the ship to indicate the hazard of the flight. First, the horses, thrown into confusion by the lack of weight in the chariot, run *utque labant curvae iusto sine pondere naues / perque mare instabiles nimia leuitate feruntur* ('as curved ships waver without their proper weight, and are, unstable, borne too lightly through the sea,' 163-64). A few lines later, as the flight becomes more perilous, Phaethon is described thus: *fertur ut acta / praecipiti pinus Borea, cui uicta remisit / frena suus rector, quam dis uotisque reliquit* ('he is borne as a pine/ship driven by rapid Boreas, whose master lets go

⁸⁹ For a discussion of the ship in Ovid's 'Little *Aeneid*', see Chapter 4, 96-106.

of the subdued ropes, and leaves the ship to the gods and his prayers,' 184-86).⁹⁰

Anderson comments on both of these comparisons, noting that Ovid increases the helplessness of Phaethon by building on the first with the second: "No longer concerned with the balance and weight of the craft . . . he describes a ship that is borne along by a northern gale while the pilot abandons the tiller and entrusts the boat to the gods."⁹¹

These comparisons of Phaethon's impulsive endeavour to seafaring emphasise the danger inherent in overstepping boundaries; ships are a symbol both of humanity's greatest aspirations and the attendant potential for catastrophe.⁹²

Seafaring in the *Metamorphoses* is strongly linked not only to human craftsmanship and endeavour in general, but also to the creation of poetry specifically. The first lines of the poem compare Ovid's activity in beginning the poem to the activity of beginning a sea journey. Ovid's proem declares:

*In noua fert animus mutatas dicere formas
corpora; di, coeptis (nam uos mutastis et illa)
aspirate meis primaque ab origine mundi
ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen.* (1.1-4)

(My mind compels me to speak of forms changed into new bodies; gods, inspire my beginnings (for you changed them too) and draw forth, from the very beginning of the world to my own times, a perpetual song.)

⁹⁰ The reference to the ship's ropes as *frena* in fact refers the simile back to the original context: *frena* can mean the reins of a horse as well as the ropes of a ship.

⁹¹ Anderson, *Books 1-5*, 249.

⁹² See Janette Richardson's valuable article on formal imagery in the *Metamorphoses* for a catalogue of all the metaphorical references to the sea and seafaring in the poem. Janette Richardson, "The Function of Formal Imagery in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," *The Classical Journal* 59 (1964): 167. Other appearances of seafaring imagery particularly worth noting include Byblis (9.589-94), Ulysses (13.366) and Pythagoras (15.176). All three of these make direct comparison between ships and the human capacity for intellectual thought and creation.

Wheeler explains that “the metaphor behind ‘adspirate’ [*aspirate*, Tarrant] is nautical: the poet asks for fair winds at the beginning of a poetic voyage.”⁹³ A. G. Lee extends this comparison to the verb *deduco* in line 4, writing that it “carries on the nautical metaphor, for *deducere* can mean ‘bring a ship into port’.”⁹⁴ Poetry, then, is associated with the activity of sailing, the activity that Ovid himself directly connects to the sinful decline of man away from the Golden Age. Creation, whether artistic or natural, is only possible in the *Metamorphoses* once mankind has fallen away from the Golden Age, and yet it involves the artistry of the original demiurge. By associating his own poetic creation with the activity of seafaring, Ovid draws a symbolic connection between his craft and the *discors concordia*. Poetry, he indicates, can only exist in this tenuous balance of sin and piety, harmony and discord. Ovid’s own art thus possesses the same dangerous as well as productive power as seafaring: the poet steps outside his given limits at the same time as he attains the greatest heights of human endeavour.

d. Ovid as Poet

As this association of Ovid’s own poetry with seafaring suggests, the *discors concordia* of the world after the flood is the principle of artistic creation not only within the poem, but also without: it is, in other words, the principle of Ovid’s own poetic creation. It is thus important to connect the *discors concordia*, and the image of the Golden Age, to Ovid’s own poetic voice as he presents it throughout the poem. A great deal of recent scholarship on Ovid has focused on the poet’s emphasis on his own

⁹³ Stephen M. Wheeler, *A Discourse of Wonders: Audience and Performance in Ovid’s Metamorphoses* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 30. See also Anderson, *Books 1-5*, 151.

⁹⁴ A. G. Lee, Explanatory notes to *Metamorphoses* 1, by Ovid (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1953), *ad loc.*

creative voice.⁹⁵ The multitude of perspectives within the text, several commentators have noted, calls attention not to one particular way of understanding the world, but instead to the poetic voice that has an unlimited capacity to bring together multiple interpretations and viewpoints. Galinsky writes of Ovid's work: "If all that matters is the various ways in which a myth can be told, the emphasis is *a priori* on the *telling* of it and not on the exploration of the deep problems and preoccupations which it might reflect. It is not the substance of the myth that matters, but the way it is told."⁹⁶ Many scholars since Galinsky's 1975 work on the *Metamorphoses* have taken up a similar focus on the poetic voice, although many of these scholars place a greater emphasis on the 'substance' as well as the telling of myth; Denis Feeney, for example, writes that "The *Metamorphoses*' challenges to our belief in its fictions are relentless, for Ovid continually confronts us with such reminders of his work's fictional status."⁹⁷ In a comparable consideration, E. J. Kenney explains that the *Metamorphoses* is "an exercise on a vast scale of literary metamorphosis, a demonstration of the poet's power to shape an amorphous mass of material into a work of literary art."⁹⁸ This prevalent understanding of the *Metamorphoses*, which examines the prominence of Ovid's own voice, is at the heart of a number of recent works on the poem; among the concerns of current scholarship are the effects of contemporary circumstances on the poet himself as they are

⁹⁵ See Introduction, 14-16.

⁹⁶ Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 5.

⁹⁷ Feeney, 229. Feeney makes particular note of *Met.* 10.301-3, Orpheus' warning to his listener: *desit in hac mihi parte fides, nec credite factum, / uel, si creditis, facti quoque credite poenam* ('May your faith in me be absent from this part. Do not believe the deed, or, if you do believe it, believe also in the punishment for the deed'). Many Ovidian scholars have taken up similar questions of poetic credibility in the *Metamorphoses*, considering the many instances in which Ovid asks his own reader or observers within the poem to question the believability of the storytelling and thus draws attention to his own role as poet.

⁹⁸ Kenney, 145.

revealed in the text,⁹⁹ the intrusion of the author's voice in his transitions between tales,¹⁰⁰ and the combination of poetic sources through which Ovid draws attention to his own ability to manipulate tradition.¹⁰¹ At every stage of the poem, Ovid reveals his own voice as poet and creator; as Solodow explains, "it is [Ovid] himself more than anything who holds together the world of the poem."¹⁰²

The prominence that Ovid gives to his own voice in his work is well worth examining alongside the preceding analysis of the way in which *discors concordia* forms the principle behind creation in the flood and in each *locus amoenus*. Solodow suggestively remarks that *discors concordia* is the principle behind Ovid's own creation, writing that the *Metamorphoses* "clearly strives for order, and in many different ways, but it never consistently achieves it: the poem might claim as a motto its own phrase, *discors concordia*."¹⁰³ The poem does, as Solodow suggests, reflect this contradictory principle in its content; that which seems orderly disintegrates, while seemingly disconnected pieces come together in strange amalgams.¹⁰⁴ However, this is not the only way in which the creation of the poem reflects the *discors concordia* of the world after the flood, as the use of the morally-ambiguous idea of seafaring as a symbol for poetry intimates. *Discors concordia*, we have seen, is the principle of creation in the post-deluvian cosmos and the *locus amoenus*, and this creation is inextricably linked to art. Within the poem, artistry is

⁹⁹ E.g. Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile*.

¹⁰⁰ E.g. Solodow, 41-46.

¹⁰¹ E.g. Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone*. See also Alessandro Barchiesi, *Speaking Volumes: Narrative and Intertext in Ovid and Other Latin Poets*, ed. and trans. Matt Fox and Simone Marchesi (London: Duckworth, 2001).

¹⁰² Solodow, 2. See also Sara K. Myers, *Ovid's Causes: Cosmogony and Aetiology in the Metamorphoses* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 20.

¹⁰³ Solodow, 34.

¹⁰⁴ Many scholars also consider the way in which Ovid both draws on and rejects the ideas of Callimachus with the first lines of the poem. See, for example, Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone*, 19: "In the very act of repudiating Callimachean principles, Ovid seems to let them in again by the back door." Ovid's initial outline of his own project is therefore paradoxical.

dependent on this paradox. In fact, as we will see, through his own poetic playfulness and competitiveness Ovid delineates the conditions necessary for art not only within the poem, but also without: the art of the poet writing the verses of the *Metamorphoses*. In so doing, Ovid describes the unsettling principles upon which his own art depends.

The first way in which this idea, that the *discors concordia* is the principle behind Ovid's own art as well as artistic creation within the poem, is seen in the poetic artistry with which the poet describes the 'pleasant places' themselves. Charles Segal writes, "By transforming some of the eroticism into symbolic scenery and by making that scenery the symbolic vehicle for some of the sexual overtones, Ovid keeps the artistic intent in the foreground. The violence is sublimated into poetry."¹⁰⁵ When Ovid represents both the beauty and threat of the setting through the poetic symbol of the *locus amoenus*, the Golden Age idyllic location and its inherent violence become joined through poetry itself. This same unifying activity is at work in Ovid's use of Golden Age imagery within the flood: by using this idyllic image as a symbol of destruction, the poet draws together the harmony of the demiurgic creation with the discord of the cataclysm. Art depends on the amalgam of the *discors concordia*, as we have seen: it uses both the harmonising power of the demiurge and the chaos of the post-deluvian world. Ovid's ability to unite beauty and violence, Golden and Iron Ages, through his poetry indicates not only that is the *discors concordia* the principle on which his art depends, but also that art brings about its own *discors concordia*. By sublimating violent destruction through beautiful poetry and using the language of the Golden Age to describe catastrophe, Ovid draws together the Golden Age and its chaotic opposite. Emerging from the principle of *discors concordia*,

¹⁰⁵ Segal, *Landscape*, 12.

art has its own ability to hold together harmony and chaos, thus producing a kind of *discors concordia* of its own.

Just as Ovid emphasises his own poetic voice in the *locus amoenus* through his sublimation of violence into poetry, as Segal indicates, he also emphasises it by his continual re-situation of himself within and in opposition to poetic tradition. E. R. Curtius, a seminal figure in the definition of the *locus amoenus* for modern scholars, observes that Ovid's depiction of the *locus amoenus* is more about the poetry of the scene than the nature it describes. He writes: "In Ovid . . . poetry is already dominated by rhetoric. In his work and that of his successors, descriptions of nature become bravura interludes, in which poets try to outdo one another. At the same time they are reduced to types and schematized."¹⁰⁶ Although Curtius takes this as a negative characteristic of Ovid's poetry, his observation is in fact extremely valuable to the current study. Because this setting was already such an integral part of the poetic tradition, Ovid's employment of the familiar location could not help but point to the poet's own place within this tradition. Rather than making Ovid's scenes merely clichés, the conventionality of these descriptions makes them particularly clear examples of the poet's understanding of his relation to his forerunners.

In fact, what Curtius passes over in his explanation of Ovid's 'bravura interludes' is that the *locus amoenus*, for Ovid a medium for intertextual competition with his poetic forerunners, is the very setting in which poets, most markedly in Virgil's bucolic poems but also in a tradition stretching far back into Greek literature,¹⁰⁷ competed with one

¹⁰⁶ Curtius, 194-95.

¹⁰⁷ See, for example, Theocritus, *Id.* 7; Plato, *Phdr.* 230b-c.

another. The setting and competition are most clearly linked in Virgil's third *Eclogue*, in which Palaemon initiates the contest between Menalcas and Damoetas by declaring:

Dicite, quandoquidem in molli consedimus herba.

et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,

nunc frudent silvae, nunc formosissimus annus.

incipe, Damoeta; tu deinde sequere, Menalca.

alterna dicetis; amant alterna Camenae. (Ecl. 3.58-59)

(Sing, since we sit on the soft grass. Now every field, now every tree blossoms, now the trees leaf out, now the year is most beautiful. Begin, Damoetas, then you follow, Menalcas. You will sing in turns, for the Camenae love alternating verses.)

The beauty of the setting is thus tied to the competition; their singing is the result (*quandoquidem*) of the soft grass beneath them. The setting that Ovid absorbs from tradition, which makes up such an important part of his own poem, is therefore defined by its relation to human creativity, particularly in a competitive form. It is this setting, an idea which Curtius notes but the implications of which he does not enter into, that becomes the place for Ovid's own competition with his predecessors. The intratextual competition so prevalent in Virgil's *Eclogues* becomes intertextual as Ovid strives to reshape the *locus amoenus* to make it a symbol of his own poetic voice. The rhetorical nature of the scenes draws attention to this interaction between Ovid and the poetic tradition.

The *discors concordia* has yet another role in defining Ovid's poetic art in the *Metamorphoses*. The question of Ovid's narrative technique is one that has puzzled many

scholars, and has inspired a multitude of works. The connections between the diverse stories of Ovid's work have been interpreted in many ways; while some see a careful structure to the *Metamorphoses* that can be broken down into groups of books,¹⁰⁸ others see the main thread of the book instead as the idea of artistic creation¹⁰⁹ or of mythology.¹¹⁰ Stephen Wheeler, in his study of narrative in the *Metamorphoses*, makes an observation about the structure of the poem that is crucial to the present study; he observes that the poem involves continual re-creation. He writes that "Ovid clearly thematizes the tension between order and disorder, fixity and flux."¹¹¹ There is, Wheeler explains, a cyclical movement from order to chaos that is emphasised in the first book and continues through the work: "Similarly, later episodes and longer sequences of narrative periodically reach points of stability but new instabilities arise, as the end of one story becomes the occasion for the beginning or continuation of another."¹¹² As we have seen, the Golden Age is continually destroyed in the form of the *locus amoenus*, and this setting becomes the condition for creation both within the stories and without. Drawing on Wheeler's understanding of the poem's narrative structure, then, Ovid's project is prolonged by the cyclical structure of his narrative.¹¹³ This continual cycle of the work, with the re-creation and re-destruction of the Golden Age, means that the poem does not find a moment of finality or even cadence, but continues restlessly and relentlessly

¹⁰⁸ E.g. Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1970), especially Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁹ E.g. Solodow.

¹¹⁰ E.g. McKim, 97: "the poet assumes the role of the philosopher in a spirit of irreverent irony, and . . . his purpose is to expose philosophy as inferior to myth in its understanding of man and his world."

¹¹¹ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 4.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 108.

¹¹³ We will return to this question of the cyclical structure of the narrative in Chapter 4, comparing it to Virgil's understanding of the Golden Age in both his bucolic poems and the *Aeneid*. Virgil's understanding of this ideal age is ostensibly a linear one in which the Golden Age is both the past and future of the narrative of the *Aeneid*. See also Chapter 3, 56-62.

through sometimes similar and yet always shifting stories.¹¹⁴ The *topos* of the *locus amoenus*, the Golden Age and the *discors concordia* thereby propels the narrative structure; Ovid's art consists not of one steady movement toward harmonious creation but instead of a cycle of creation and destruction.

Ovid thus makes the motif of the Golden Age and its destruction a focus not only of the stories of the *Metamorphoses*, but also of the mode by which he discloses his own poetic project to his reader. The Golden Age and the *locus amoenus* reveal the way in which perfection and violence are brought together into human art, which is dependent on this *discors concordia* even as it brings forth an artistic *discors concordia* of its own by uniting chaos and harmony. It is within the Golden Age setting of the *locus amoenus* that Ovid's own poetic competition takes place; instead of Damoetas and Menalcas, the reader sees Virgil and Ovid in a poetic contest in which Ovid demarcates his own unique place in the tradition. Finally, the *locus amoenus* is a tool of narrative perpetuation, an integral part of a cycle by which Ovid's poem continues in its distinct way. It is through the *locus amoenus* and the image of the Golden Age, then, that Ovid's own voice as poet most clearly emerges. Within this setting, transformation, closely linked to artistic creation, takes place. In the hands of its creator, the setting becomes the *topos* of the poet's distinct, new voice within the poetic tradition.

¹¹⁴ See Feldherr, "Metamorphosis," 169: "In deciding whether each metamorphosis marks an ending, or merely a transition, readers are continually confronted with the question of what kind of work they are reading."

CHAPTER 3. ORPHEUS' SECOND SONG: ART AND THE RE-CREATION OF THE *LOCUS AMOENUS*

As the preceding examination of the *topos* of the Golden Age and the *locus amoenus* reveals, Ovid represents human art in the *Metamorphoses* as inherently cyclic; both within the poem itself and in Ovid's writing of it, art depends on a cycle of chaos and harmony. The *locus amoenus*, as we have seen, is Ovid's poetic symbol of this cycle, demonstrating the dependence of art, or metamorphosis, on the continual reconstruction and disintegration of perfection. The world of *discors concordia*, which holds together harmony and chaos, is thus essential to art; art requires both the harmonising power of the artistic demiurge and the chaos out of which it may create form.

This understanding, whereby the motif of the *locus amoenus* suggests the conditions of artistic creation, leads the present study to an investigation of art as Ovid explicitly represents it within the poem. Ovid tells the stories of a number of the archetypal artists of ancient tradition, focusing most intently on Orpheus, whose history and two songs Ovid deems worthy of more than an entire book of the *Metamorphoses*. A consideration of Orpheus allows us to more fully understand the role of art in the poem, because Ovid explores not only the content of Orpheus' songs but also their contexts and audiences, as well as the very nature of the music itself. At the same time, the tale of Orpheus permits a more thorough understanding of the Golden Age motif in Ovid's poetry; the mythical bard's second song, performed after his return from the Underworld, takes place in a *locus amoenus* that Orpheus' own music plays a vital part in creating (10.86-147). As Chapter 2 suggests, the Golden Age *topos* of the *locus amoenus* is part of Ovid's disclosure of his own poetic project. Orpheus' own physical creation of the ideal

setting, in conjunction with this previous understanding of the setting as a poetic and rhetorical symbol, elucidates Ovid's conception of the creation of art, particularly poetry.

In the account of Orpheus' second song, the *locus amoenus* as a symbol of poetic creation becomes clearer. The bard's creation of the setting reflects the way in which the poet creates his own context by placing himself within the poetic tradition while simultaneously manipulating and transforming this tradition, bringing it into concert with his own passions and concerns. Ovid also clarifies the relationship between art and nature through the motif of the *locus amoenus*; the human realm permeates the natural through the continual metamorphoses of humans, while art infiltrates and redefines the natural world by imbuing it with story and meaning. The *locus amoenus*, the second song of Orpheus reveals, illustrates the way in which the poet redefines both the artistic tradition and the natural world, bringing harmony to chaos and giving new form to old.

a. *Modus* and Harmony in Orpheus' Song

The cycle of chaos and harmony inherent to art, suggested by the poetic symbol of the *locus amoenus*, is apparent in Ovid's depiction of Orpheus' second song. Ovid emphasises the activity of artistic creation in the *Metamorphoses*, rather than simply describing completed works of art. The poet's most explicit statement of this is in the tale of Arachne, where he writes that the nymphs love to watch the weaver create her tapestries: *nec factas solum uestes, spectare iuuabat / tum quoque cum fierent* ('it was a pleasure to see the garments not only when they had been made, but also while they were coming to be,' 6.17-18). Stephen Wheeler's analysis of the cosmic creation as an artistic endeavour identifies this focus as essential to Ovid's distinctive ecphrastic style even in

the creation of the universe. Wheeler compares Hephaestus' construction of Achilles' shield in the *Iliad* to the demiurgic creation in the *Metamorphoses*, writing that both scenes "exploit the paradox between the dynamic process of creation and the static quality of the finished product."¹¹⁵ In his descriptions of poetic performances, Ovid also emphasises the creative process of art, stressing the character of the performance in addition to describing the content of the song. Patricia Johnson defines both the creation of song and the creation of other more tangible arts in the *Metamorphoses* as "performative ekphrasis"; this means, she explains, that "the context and audience are carefully sketched, and the artwork is revealed as it emerges in performance."¹¹⁶ It is this focus on the production of art that provides the backdrop for Orpheus' songs. The audience of the *Metamorphoses* is, from the very first lines of the poem, particularly aware of the activity of artistic creation as it unfolds, rather than simply the outcome.

The story of Orpheus is the longest of Ovid's depictions of artistry, and it is in this account that Ovid gives his most complete exposition of the nature of poetic creation. The audience is privy not only to the content of Orpheus' two songs, but also to their settings, audiences and the nature of their artistry. Johnson's definition of Orpheus' song as "performative ekphrasis" compares the bard's art particularly to the competition between the Muses and Pierides in Book 5 as well as the competition between Minerva and Arachne in Book 6. In parallel to these previous narratives, Ovid's description of Orpheus emphasises the poet's setting and audience as he sings his tales first to the inhabitants of

¹¹⁵ Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 106.

¹¹⁶ Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile*, 96-97.

the Underworld and then to the natural beings in the world above.¹¹⁷ Ovid portrays Orpheus with the same kind of performative detail as he does the two competitions, but his explanation of the nature of art is even more explicit in his account of the bard.¹¹⁸ When Orpheus sits down to sing his catalogue of divine and illicit loves (10.152-54), Ovid describes the very nature of the music:

*ut satis impulsas temptauit pollice chordas
et sensit uarios, quamuis diuersa sonarent,
concordare modos, hoc uocem carmine mouit. . . .* (10.145-46)

(When he had touched the strings that were struck by his thumb, and had heard the varied modes harmonise, although they sounded different, he set his voice in motion with this song. . . .)

As Orpheus begins to sing, he checks the tunefulness, the harmony, of his lyre. Although the strings sound on different pitches, there is a harmony to the whole. Music thus brings together a plurality into a harmonious unity. Ovid uses the word *modus* here to illustrate this character of music, thus defining the nature of the art. The ‘modes’ are both varied and concordant, revealing the power of music to draw together diverse and discrete tones into harmony. Anderson observes that *modus* “can be used not only of rhythms but of what we still today call ‘musical modes’.”¹¹⁹ The word thus suggests two ways in which separate, distinct elements—either tones or the long and short syllables of metre—come together in concord through poetic performance.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 96-98. In the tale of Orpheus, Johnson focuses on the importance of the audience to the fate of the artist; Orpheus has a perfect understanding of his audience in the Underworld, she argues, but he does not recognise the hidden audience, the Ciconian women, in his later song (98-121).

¹¹⁸ Orpheus is, Segal notes, “an artist sensitive to the technical aspects of his craft.” Charles Paul Segal, *Orpheus: The Myth of the Poet* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989), 25.

¹¹⁹ William S. Anderson, *Commentary to Metamorphoses, Books 6-10*, by Ovid, ed. William S. Anderson (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 487.

The ability of art to bring discrete elements into harmony recalls the power of the original demiurge; Ovid's description of the *modus* of Orpheus' music thus further emphasises the argument of Chapter 2.¹²⁰ Feeney, considering Orpheus' tuning of his lyre, notes this connection between the Thracian bard and the divine creator: "Ovid . . . aligns the poetic craft of Orpheus with the action of the demiurge, as they each make a concord out of discordant elements (1.25, 10.146-7)."¹²¹ The comparison between human artistry and divine creation from the previous chapter, then, holds true in specific representations of artists within the poem, not only in the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha and in the idea of *ars* in more general terms. Orpheus is not the only artist whose power is akin to the demiurge; Feeney also discusses Arachne, whose "superlative craftsmanship is described in terms which not only establish her credentials as a mistress of neoteric art, but also (at first) align her with the *mundi fabricator*."¹²² A similar allusion to the creation of the cosmos is apparent in Ovid's description of Daedalus; the poet describes the craftsman as *opifex*, a term used elsewhere only at 1.79 to describe the divine creator.¹²³ The description of Orpheus tuning his instrument, then, reveals the singer's connection both to other artists within the poem and to the original cosmic creator. Here, Ovid's comparison of human art to the demiurgic power is most explicitly stated in terms

¹²⁰ See Chapter 2, 25-28.

¹²¹ Feeney, 191n9. Feeney references the line in Book 1 in which the *fabricator* ties elements together *concordi pace* (see below). See also Segal, *Orpheus*, 25.

¹²² Feeney, 191. See also Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 105-06, 113-14. Wheeler's argument takes some emphasis away from Arachne's demiurgic powers, as he argues that it is Minerva's tapestry rather than Arachne's that most closely resembles the creation of the cosmos. However, he draws a direct linguistic comparison between Arachne and the *opifex*, describing the way in which the word *glomero* applies to the activity of both. Wheeler writes, "Feeney . . . concludes from the verbal echo that Ovid casts Arachne as a demiurgic figure. But the converse is also true: the demiurge engages in an activity characteristic of Arachne" (106). If Ovid intends this similarity to paint the *opifex* in human artistic terms, however, the comparison is all the more pointed: human artistic skill and the demiurgic power possess the same capacity.

¹²³ See, for example, Riemer Faber, "Daedalus, Icarus, and the Fall of Perdix: Continuity and Allusion in *Metamorphoses* 8.183-259," *Hermes* 126 (1998): 85. Faber sees this term as meant not only to draw a comparison between Daedalus and the divine *fabricator*, but also to suggest that Daedalus is attempting to reach beyond his human limitations in dangerous fashion.

of harmony. The *fabricator* joins things that are separated: *dissociata locis **concordi** pace ligauit* ('He ties things that are separate in place into a concordant peace,' 1.25). In the same way, Orpheus *sensit uarios, quamuis diuersa sonarent, / **concordare** modos*.

The word *modus*, used to explain the power of music to harmonise multiplicity, appears again at the end of Ovid's account of Orpheus, when the bard's song, setting and life itself all come simultaneously to an end at the hands of the destructive, vengeful Ciconian women. For a time the bard's song holds out against the women, because its harmony has the power to overcome their attacks: *alterius telus lapis est, qui missus in ipso / aere concentu uictus uocisque lyraeque est* ('another weapon was a stone, which, thrown in the air, was conquered by the harmony of voice and lyre,' 11.10-11). When their attacks grow too strong, however, the *concentus*, or *modus*, disappears: *temeraria crescunt / bella **modusque** abiit insanaque regnat Erinys* ('the rash war grew, measure¹²⁴ disappeared, and mad Erinys reigned,' 13-14). The *modus* that defines the beginning of the song disappears as the song and its maker are destroyed. This upheaval of harmony also occurs in the women's destruction of the setting that Orpheus has created for his own song: the women first tear apart the wild animals who have been listening to Orpheus. In their attack on the bard himself, they then tear apart the rest of the natural setting: *hae glaebas, illae dereptos arbore ramos, / pars torquent silices* ('these hurl clods of earth, those hurl branches torn from trees, and some hurl stones,' 11.29-30). The whole natural world that was drawn together by Orpheus' song is torn apart by the Bacchic frenzy of

¹²⁴ The connotations of this term have not been recognised by translators, who primarily think of the term in relation to the activity of the Ciconian women, focusing on the word's meaning of 'moderation'. Raeburn, for example, translates this phrase: "restraint had fled". Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. David Raeburn (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2004), 422. It is clear, however, that *modus* is never present in the women's activity: they attack Orpheus immediately and without any moderation. It is thus important to relate this phrase back to the *modus* present in Orpheus' own music. My translation of *modus* as 'measure' here is meant to suggest both the musical term and the idea of control.

the Ciconian women. This setting, as we will see in further detail below, mirrors the nature of the music itself: diverse elements come together in harmony within a newly-created *locus amoenus*. *Modus*, which held together both the song and its context, thus disappears from both with Orpheus' destruction.

Orpheus is thus an archetypal artist in the *Metamorphoses*; a consideration of *modus*, or harmony, in this account reveals explicitly the way in which art draws together discrete elements into concord. As we saw above in Chapter 2, art thus continually recreates, forming and reforming chaos. Orpheus' creation of song illustrates the way in which art depends upon the *discors concordia* of cyclical chaos and harmony.

b. The Aetiology and Chronology of the *locus amoenus*

As this consideration of the nature of Orpheus' art suggests, the mythical bard serves an important role in Ovid's definition of artistic creation within the *Metamorphoses*. The Golden Age and the *locus amoenus* were seen in Chapter 2 to be closely linked to artistry. The appearance of this motif as central to Orpheus' tale is thus well worth investigating in detail in relation to Ovid's representation of the artist. When Orpheus sits down to sing, he does not merely choose the *locus amoenus* as his performative setting, but in fact creates it. The hill that Orpheus selects for his performance initially sounds like the 'pleasant place' of poetic tradition. The opening phrase, *collis erat* (10.86), suggests a variation on the common *erat locus*, the traditional opening of the *locus amoenus* description.¹²⁵ The grass, *herbae* (87), also insinuates that

¹²⁵ Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone*, 36-42. See also Hinds, "Landscape," 126.

Ovid is about to begin one of these landscape depictions.¹²⁶ However, a distinctive aspect of the *locus amoenus* is missing: *umbra loco deerat* ('shade was absent from the place,' 88).¹²⁷ Shade is essential to the character of the *locus amoenus*, not only as a refuge but also as a suggestion of the ominous nature of the setting; Segal identifies shade as ubiquitous in these settings, explaining that "like other parts of the landscape, shade pertains less to human comfort than to more-than-human power."¹²⁸ He goes on to write, "The submerged and enclosed quality of these shady forest glades heightens the sense of the vulnerability of the human victim within."¹²⁹ It is this definitive aspect of the pastoral setting that Orpheus himself creates: *qua postquam parte resedit / dis genitus uates et fila sonantia mouit, / umbra loco uenit* ('after he had seated himself in this spot, the bard, born of the gods, moved his sonorous strings, and shade came to the place,' 88-90).¹³⁰ The *locus amoenus* is, of course, the traditional space for poetic performance. Orpheus' song has an essential role in the creation of this space, because it completes the setting; the bard thus has the power to transform and create his own performative space. As studies of the *topos* such as that of Segal show, Orpheus provides the final element for a traditional *locus amoenus*.

Orpheus' creation of the *locus amoenus*, Stephen Hinds argues in his study of landscape in the *Metamorphoses*, acts as an aetiology of this traditional setting. Rather than seeing this appearance of the ideal landscape as merely Ovid's nod to the poetic tradition of the setting, Hinds writes: "Orpheus' fictive status as humankind's originary

¹²⁶ See Segal, *Landscape*, 10, 67. Segal notes the ambiguity of the term *herbae*: it is used to describe soft grass but also dangerous magical plants.

¹²⁷ Anderson, *Books 6-10*, 483: "to complete the pastoral landscape, trees and shade are necessary."

¹²⁸ Segal, *Landscape*, 16.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹³⁰ Bömer notes the way Ovid emphasises shade with *umbra loco uenit*: "Fast wörtliche Wiederholung zweier Halbverse, ein rhetorisches 'Spielwerk'." Franz Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen, Kommentar Buch X-XI* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1969), *ad loc.*

bard opens up a novel way of reading his virtuoso creation of shade at *Met.* 10.86–90: not as a belated play upon a well-established poetic *topos* or commonplace, but as an account of the *first invention* of the ideal landscape.”¹³¹ According to this explanation, Ovid suggests that this is the original ‘pleasant place’ of pastoral tradition; the poet thus hints that the traditional *locus amoenus* points back to the tale of Orpheus, rather than vice versa. In an ingenious manner, Ovid thus reverses his relationship to his predecessors, giving himself the role of originator.¹³²

Orpheus’ re-creation of the *locus amoenus* is not the only instance in which Ovid explores the origins of this setting; Hinds explains that Ovid’s use of the motif in general has “a strong in-built aetiological dimension: not only does [Ovid] play with the stereotype, but . . . he shows a marked and repeated interest in locating and exploiting its mythic archetypes.”¹³³ In the second book of the poem, as we saw in Chapter 2, Jupiter restores his homeland, Arcadia, after Phaethon’s disastrous chariot ride leads to the conflagration of the world.¹³⁴

*Arcadiae tamen est impensior illi
cura suae; fontesque et nondum audentia labi
flumina restituit, dat terrae gramina, frondes
arboribus, laesasque iubet reuirescere siluas.* (2.405-8)

¹³¹ Hinds, “Landscape,” 127. See also Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile*, 110.

¹³² Fabre-Serris’ study on the story of Pan and Syrinx (*Met.* 2.668-719) is another interesting consideration of aetiology within the *Metamorphoses*, particularly with regard to the pastoral genre: “Le fait que le récit de l’invention de la syrinx soit raconté en tant que motif de la poésie pastorale et substitué au combat attendu entre un dieu et un monstre, autrement dit à un motif de la poésie épique, engage, me semble-t-il, le lecteur à remettre en question le classement traditionnel des genres à la fois chronologique et hiérarchique selon lequel la poésie pastorale apparaît comme un genre mineur d’origine récente.” Jacqueline Fabre-Serris, “Ovide et la naissance du genre pastoral. Réflexions sur l’ars nova et la hiérarchie des genres (Mét 2, 688-719),” *Materiali e discussioni per l’analisi dei testi classici* 50 (2003): 192.

¹³³ Hinds, “Landscape,” 128.

¹³⁴ See Chapter 2, 30. See also Introduction, 8-9.

(But his own Arcadia was a greater care for him; he restored the fountains and rivers that did not yet dare to flow, he gave grass to the land and leaves to the trees, and ordered the injured trees to become green again.)

Hinds explains that the conflagration “allows Jupiter to recreate, as something both familiar and new, the archetypal Arcadian *locus amoenus* in which he will visit his erotic violence upon the nymph.”¹³⁵ Just as Orpheus is the “originary bard”, Arcadia is the definitive pastoral landscape, and so both accounts suggest aetiologies of the *locus amoenus*. Hinds goes on to relate Jupiter’s creation to that of Orpheus, with an argument important to the present analysis: “As with Orpheus, Jupiter’s manipulation of ‘real’ space tends to read as mimicry of the ecphrastic manipulation of rhetorical space, rather than vice versa.”¹³⁶ Ovid is, in his creation and re-creation of the Golden Age *topos* in the form of the *locus amoenus*, acutely aware of the significance of the motif in the poetic tradition. He thus emphasises the traditional account to the point of schematization deliberately, foregrounding the rhetorical nature of the *locus amoenus*, the poetic symbolism of the setting.¹³⁷ These aetiological accounts of the setting, then, suggest Ovid’s awareness of his own transformation of his poetic setting. As Hinds observes, these aetiologies reveal Ovid’s self-conscious relation to the tradition; by picking up on a long-established motif and creating new accounts of its origin, the poet highlights and intentionally distorts his place in the literary tradition. Rather than accepting his place at the end of a long-established history of poetry, the poet artfully situates himself at its very beginning.

¹³⁵ Hinds, “Landscape,” 128-29.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹³⁷ E.g. Curtius, 195.

The idea that Ovid is playing with the aetiology of the *locus amoenus* in the *Metamorphoses* has even more nuanced implications in the scene of Orpheus' second song than Hinds suggests. Ovid's tale makes Orpheus' creation of the setting aetiological, but the newly-created poetic space is not the only *locus amoenus* in this scene; by juxtaposing different descriptions of the idyll, Ovid hints at other, conflicting accounts of the setting's origins. The poet weaves together multiple versions of the 'pleasant place', confusing its chronology and emphasising the cyclic nature of the motif within the poem. Just as Ovid distorts his own place in the poetic tradition by creating a new origin for the *locus amoenus*, so he manipulates the chronology of his own poem to suggest multiple origins and variations even within this one account.

The beginning of Orpheus' second song directs the reader's mind back to another particularly definitive appearance of this ideal setting. When Orpheus begins his account of boys beloved of the gods and girls with forbidden passions (152-54), he sings: *Ab Ioue, Musa parens (cedunt Iouis omnia regno), / carmina nostra moue* ('From Jove, my mother Muse, move our song (for all things proceed from the kingship of Jove)', 148-49). This invocation of Calliope, the bard's mother, recalls the Muse's song, the tale of Proserpina, on Mount Helicon. It thus evokes Helicon itself, an archetypal *locus amoenus*. Ovid writes of Minerva's arrival on the mountain:

*siluarum lucos circumspicit antiquarum
antraque et innumeris distinctas¹³⁸ floribus herbas,*

¹³⁸ It is worth taking note of the term *distinctas* here. The word is one used to describe the dying of wool for weaving: see the construction of Minerva's tapestry at 6.86. Because of the traditional association of weaving and poetic creation, Ovid perhaps hints at the artistic creation, particularly the poetic creation, of the setting. This provides an interesting link between Mount Helicon and Orpheus' creation of the *locus amoenus*. In his tale of the Muses, too, Ovid emphasises the *locus amoenus* as a "rhetorical space", as Hinds describes it.

felicesque uocat pariter studioque locoque

Mnemonidas. (5.265-69)

(She looked about at the groves of ancient forests, the caves and the grass tinted with countless flowers, and called the daughters of Memory blessed equally in their work and their place.)

The Muses inhabit a *locus amoenus*, the traditional setting for poetry. Here too is the suggestion of shade in the ancient forests that surround the mountain. The association of the setting with these goddesses emphasises the connection between the ideal landscape and art.¹³⁹ Indeed, Johnson remarks that Ovid accentuates this relationship: “This lovely setting is directly linked with the practice of poetry by Minerva’s subsequent comment: *felicesque uocat pariter studioque locoque / Mnemonidas*, ‘and she calls the daughters of Mnemosyne (Memory) fortunate in both their vocation and their location’ (5.267-68).”¹⁴⁰ This firm connection of setting and art suggests another aetiology for the landscape, one that Hinds does not remark upon: the description of Helicon as *locus amoenus* intimates that the traditional poetic setting owes its origin to the home of the Muses, and every poetic competition thus looks back to this for its source just as every human poet looks to the Muses for inspiration. Orpheus’ allusion to Helicon, a place which Ovid has already defined as a quintessential *locus amoenus*, thus suggests another aetiology of the setting. Because Helicon is an archetypal example of a poetic setting, it is not a stretch to suggest that Ovid wishes his reader to recall the previous *locus amoenus* at this later point. Just as Hinds explains Orpheus’ creation of the ideal place as particularly aetiological because

¹³⁹ See Segal, *Landscape*, 53 for an enumeration of Helicon’s characteristic details of the ideal landscape.

¹⁴⁰ Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile*, 43.

the singer is “humankind’s originary bard,”¹⁴¹ so the first words of Orpheus’ song indicate another aetiology, this one a result of a reference to the gods’ own ‘originary bards’, the Muses.

At the same time as the suggestion of Mount Helicon reminds the audience of other aetiologies of the *locus amoenus*, the reference to the Muses encourages the reader to see the essential connection between art and the ideal landscape in the story of Orpheus. The invocation of the Muses naturally draws attention to the artistic nature of the scene; Hinds declares, for example, that any appearance of the Muses in literature acts as “a moment for the poet to turn in on himself . . . so as to contemplate more obtrusively than elsewhere the nature of his own craft.”¹⁴² The reference to the Muses, because of the unity of place and craft in this previous scene, suggests that Orpheus’ creation of the *locus amoenus* is not simply a nod to the poetic pastoral tradition, but is in fact another opportunity for Ovid to reflect on the “nature of his own craft”. Whereas Minerva arrives on Helicon in a complete and archetypal ‘pleasant place’, with Orpheus the audience is privy to the creation of this setting. Ovid, recalling his previous connection of poetry and the *locus amoenus* on Helicon, reinforces and builds upon the significance of this association with his strange story of the Thracian bard drawing together the trees into an idyllic setting. It is art itself that brings nature into harmony in this Golden Age *locus*. The allusion to the Muses and their *locus amoenus* encourages the reader to see this creation as an occasion for Ovid to “turn in on himself”, as Hinds phrases it, and reflect on the creative process of poetry.

¹⁴¹ Hinds, “Landscape,” 127.

¹⁴² Hinds, *Metamorphosis*, 3.

Ovid weaves another layer of complexity into his aetiological account of the *locus amoenus* through the tale of Cyparissus, the youth loved by Apollo who becomes a cypress tree in his grief over the death of his deer. The boy's beloved deer appears in its own *locus amoenus*, characterised particularly by shade. Ovid writes: *fessus in herbosa posuit sua corpora terra / ceruus et arborea frigus ducebat ab umbra . . .* ('exhausted, the deer placed its body on the grassy earth, and was enjoying the cool of the arboreal shade . . .' 128-29). Here, as with Orpheus' own setting, the focus is on *umbra*.¹⁴³ It is this protective, cool refuge that most defines the space, reminding the reader that Orpheus is correcting the absence of such shade by enticing Cyparissus himself, among other trees, with his song. This embedded story of Cyparissus, alongside Ovid's reference to Calliope and thus to the Muses' own *locus amoenus*, draws the reader's attention to the multiplicity of accounts and aetiologies of the ideal setting. The scene thus highlights the cyclical and at times distorted chronology of the *Metamorphoses*. As Hinds remarks, Orpheus' creation of his own ideal setting is meant to be aetiological.¹⁴⁴ However, within this aetiology is a scene showing a *locus amoenus* that exists before Orpheus' own. Even as he depicts one account of the location's origins, then, Ovid reminds his reader of the endless re-creation of the *locus amoenus* within the poem.

By weaving a complex account of the *locus amoenus* into this archetypal poetic context, Ovid emphasises the cyclical role of the setting in his poem, intimating again the importance of the Golden Age motif to his understanding of art, particularly poetry, within the *Metamorphoses*. As we have seen, the continual reappearance and dissolution of the *locus amoenus* within the poem suggests the character of human artistic creation by

¹⁴³ See Bömer, *Buch X-XI, ad loc.*

¹⁴⁴ See above, 59; Hinds, "Landscape," 127.

drawing a connection between art, the *locus amoenus*, and the creation and dissolution of the world in Book 1 of the poem. Here, in the hands of Orpheus, the quintessential singer, the *locus amoenus* has a new origin, one that emphasises the connection between the ideal setting and art at the same time as it insists on an impossible chronology for the location. In Chapter 2, we considered the *locus amoenus* as a *topos* of Ovid's understanding of his own voice within tradition and continual reworking of this place.¹⁴⁵ The prominence of this *topos* in the story of Orpheus indicates that the setting has a similar role to play in this scene. As we will see, Orpheus' *locus amoenus* establishes and elucidates the way in which the idyllic setting acts as a symbol of a poet's craft and relation to his forerunners; the poet situates himself within the tradition by re-creating a world in which his own concerns are the centre.

c. Natural Sympathy and Poetic Allusion

The stories of the trees that compose Orpheus' musically-created *locus amoenus* further elucidate the character of the setting, both as the particular location of Orpheus' song and as a *topos* of the *Metamorphoses* in general. Cyparissus is not the only tree in Orpheus' *locus amoenus* to have a story of his own. Ovid gives a detailed catalogue of the trees under Orpheus' spell, many of which have already been subject to metamorphosis out of human form.¹⁴⁶ Cyparissus' tale takes up the longest part of this catalogue, and his story, as well as those of several others of the trees in Orpheus' grove, gives a human dimension to the setting of Orpheus' song. Hardie writes of this account: "The presence of the cypress . . . includes Orpheus in the class of the *dolentes*. The tree

¹⁴⁵ See Chapter 2, 40-47.

¹⁴⁶ See, for example, Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 90-91.

itself, as a kind of metamorphic memorial to Cyparissus, is an example of the absent presence of a monument to the dead, and so a doubly apt member of the audience for the Song of Orpheus.”¹⁴⁷ The other trees that come to Orpheus’ hill also create a symbolic setting, Galinsky explains: “The trees of Chaon and Cyparissus, which form the beginning and end of the catalog, are reminders of the fate of Eurydice; the second and next to last trees—the poplar (Heliades) and the pine (Attis)—are reminders of Orpheus’ grief.”¹⁴⁸ When Orpheus creates a *locus amoenus* with his song, he lures not simply trees but metamorphosed humans with their attendant passions and histories. Orpheus’ setting, then, is in sympathy with the human bard. The singer not only gives himself an ideal physical space for performance, but also creates a space that illustrates of his own suffering. The outer world, transformed by the poet’s own art, reflects his inner passions.

Orpheus’ newly-created *locus amoenus* thus opens a way to understanding the poetic project of the mythical bard and, by extension, of Ovid himself. Several scholars in addition to Hardie and Galinsky, most notably Johnson and Segal, have taken such an approach to this scene, considering the ways in which the composition of the bard’s setting allows the reader a greater insight into the role of the poet. Johnson, also noting the affinity between Orpheus and the trees he enchants, considers what this tells the reader about the place of the audience in poetic creation. The trees, she explains, come to surround Orpheus as audience members of a concert, and are “as safe, and as captive, an audience as a poet could imagine.”¹⁴⁹ However, the bard “tragically miscalculates the nature, or rather the extent, of his audience” by failing to notice the wrathful Ciconian

¹⁴⁷ Philip Hardie, *Ovid’s Poetics of Illusion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 66.

¹⁴⁸ Galinsky, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses*, 183.

¹⁴⁹ Johnson, *Ovid Before Exile*, 110.

women.¹⁵⁰ Orpheus' *locus amoenus*, for Johnson, represents the importance of the audience to the poet's work. Just as each 'pleasant place' in the poem conceals danger, so the poet's complacent and harmonious audience may contain unwanted and threatening figures.

Segal makes another connection between the *locus amoenus* and poetry; he writes that Orpheus "uses his magical art of song to create his own symbolic context of poetry."¹⁵¹ Segal's work compares the Orpheus of Virgil's *Georgics* with that of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. He explains that the "cosmic order is a major theme in the *Georgics*, and the story of Orpheus itself is part of a larger frame that exemplifies that order."¹⁵² Orpheus' task as bard in the *Georgics*, then, is to work in harmony with the greater cycles of nature: "Through him animate nature, given a voice, renders back the nature-centered, not the man-centered view of things."¹⁵³ Ovid's Orpheus, on the other hand, inhabits a world in which "there is no sure and stable divine order, or, if there is, its orderliness and objectivity are highly questionable."¹⁵⁴ He thus draws nature together into harmony with himself, rather than himself into harmony with nature. Orpheus' creation of his own *locus amoenus*, particularly one so sensitive to his own grief and suffering, suggests the poet's ability to 're-create' the world through his art. The poet thus, Segal indicates, makes a performative space for himself in which he, his loves and his art are at the centre.

Segal's ideas about Orpheus' *locus amoenus* may be extended to an understanding of poetic symbolism in general. As we have seen, the trees that Orpheus charms have their own stories and passions that allow the setting to have a deep sympathy with the

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 112.

¹⁵¹ Segal, *Orpheus*, 25.

¹⁵² Ibid., 55.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 46.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 56.

bard. This demonstrates, as Segal writes, the poet's ability to draw the world together in harmony with his own love and suffering; in other words, the poet makes the world symbolic of his own passions. However, as the trees' previous histories intimate, the poet cannot create his own 'symbolic context,' or *locus amoenus*, from an untouched world. Despite Orpheus' ability to make himself the centre of his setting, he must work with nature as it exists, with each tree already possessing its own story and traditions. The poet, similarly, does not take up an untouched world in his art. The existence of a poetic tradition means that symbolic associations and artistic conventions already exist that the poet cannot entirely escape. Certain quintessential characteristics of the *locus amoenus*, in particular, have associations with human passions and actions. Water may, for example paradoxically be a symbol of both chastity and sexuality, Segal observes, while shade serves a protective function and yet also hints at hidden danger.¹⁵⁵ The activity of poetic symbolism is such that associations like these may be reinterpreted in countless ways and yet cannot be entirely escaped. Even when the poet consciously defies traditional associations, he cannot help but refer to these original definitions.

This aspect of poetic craft, the way that the artist makes himself and his own concerns central to his context while simultaneously negotiating the poetic tradition, is also evident in the poet's interactions with particular literary sources. As we have seen, Orpheus' creation of the *locus amoenus* acts as a moment for Ovid to comment extensively on the role and craft of the poet. As we have seen, one of the ways in which the *topos* of the *locus amoenus* operates is as a space for intertextual competition between Ovid and his poetic forerunners; just as the *locus amoenus* provides the space for poetic competition within the poetry of Virgil, for example, in the *Metamorphoses* it provides

¹⁵⁵ Segal, *Landscape*, 23-33, 17.

the space for poetic competition between Ovid and his poetic models.¹⁵⁶ Our current examination of Orpheus' *locus amoenus* should take up this same idea, considering the way in which Orpheus' creation is a reflection on the poet's interactions with his predecessors.

Ovid's description of the trees entranced by Orpheus' song is densely allusive, suggesting that Ovid is here in part contemplating the poet's ability to draw on tradition and bring it into new patterns, investing it with new meaning. The description of the pine directly preceding the tale of Cyparissus is particularly full of allusions. The pine, the reader discovers, was once Attis, consort of Cybele:

. . . *succincta comas hirsutaque uertice pinus,*
grata deum Matri; siquidem Cybeleius Attis
exiit hac hominem truncoque induruit alto. (10.103-5)

(. . . the pine, girded with foliage and prickly crown, dear to the Mother of the gods; since Cybelean Attis here left his humanity behind and hardened with a high trunk.)

Ovid's incorporation of the tale of Attis alludes to Catullus 63, the neoteric's tale of Attis' transformation from man to woman. In Ovid's account, Attis' transformation is not from male to female but from human to pine; the poet holds together the idea of the pine as the sacred tree of Cybele¹⁵⁷ with the tale of Attis in a story that is, Anderson notes, unknown in other literature.¹⁵⁸ Anderson also suggests, however, that Ovid acknowledges his debt to Catullus' poem: "Ovid's phrase *exiit hac hominem*, nowhere else paralleled in the *Metamorphoses*, may serve a double purpose: to describe metamorphosis and to refer

¹⁵⁶ See Chapter 2, 44-45.

¹⁵⁷ See, for example, Cybele's plea for Aeneas' ships, made of pine: *Aen.* 9.80-92.

¹⁵⁸ Anderson, *Books 6-10*, 484.

playfully to Attis' well-known loss of manhood."¹⁵⁹ Ovid draws on Catullus as a source while at the same time transforming this reference to serve his own purpose in this catalogue of trees. He demonstrates his ability to entirely rework Catullus' story and its meaning, while reminding his audience of his poetic source.¹⁶⁰

Although Anderson acknowledges this allusion, *exiit hac hominem*, to Catullus' account of Attis, another aspect of Ovid's debt to his predecessor appears to have gone unobserved. Ovid describes the pine in the very terms used to depict the same tree in Catullus 64. Catullus begins poem 64 thus: *Peliaco quondam prognatae uertice pinus / dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas* ('Pines, once born on Pelion's peak, are said to have swam through the clear waters of the sea,' 64.1-2).¹⁶¹ Ovid draws on this very first line in describing Attis; the *Peliaco . . . uertice* of Catullus becomes the *hirsuta . . . uertice* of the pine itself, so that both lines end with *uertice pinus* and yet define *uertex* differently. While Catullus employs the word to mean the peak of a mountain, Ovid uses it to describe the top of the pine tree itself. With his reference to Catullus 63 in line 103 and this quotation (and transformation) of the first line of Catullus 64, Ovid alludes to two of the most substantial poems of Catullus' work, drawing a connection between them while redefining the terms of both; he metamorphoses the entire story of 63 and transforms the meaning of a single word in 64, while at the same time holding the two

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. Although *homo* is of course a gender neutral noun, Ovid's association of Attis and Cybele intimates that we are to here understand this phrase as a nod to the Catullan Attis' loss of his natural human identity as male.

¹⁶⁰ For an analysis of the Catullan allusions in Ovid's Narcissus story, see David Wray, "Ovid's Catullus and the Neoteric Moment in Roman Poetry," in *A Companion to Ovid*, ed. Peter E. Knox (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 262-63: "Ovid's reappropriation of Catullus is a reference in the strictest sense, in that it invites us to refer back to Catullus' poem, reread it carefully, and ask the deepest and broadest questions we can muster. . . ."

¹⁶¹ Catullus, *The Poems of Catullus*, ed. and trans. Peter Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

poems together in a new way. Ovid's brief account of Attis is a self-conscious, ingenious reworking of his forerunner.¹⁶²

These transformative allusions to Catullus' work are not merely ornamentation to Ovid's writing or erudite references meant to catch the attention of an educated and well-read audience. In making reference to his predecessor while also demonstrating his ability to transform this model, Ovid points to another way of understanding Orpheus' creation of the *locus amoenus* in terms of what it reveals about the art of poetry. As we saw above, Orpheus brings together elements of the natural world that have already been transformed; in other words, the audience of his song consists of beings with their own histories. When Orpheus draws together these trees, he brings their various stories into a new order, one in which his own concerns are central. While the tale of Attis alludes to two poems of Catullus, many of the trees' stories also suggest the accounts that permeate the preceding books of the poem, descriptions of nymphs and humans transformed into trees, stones and other natural beings. With his music, Orpheus draws together the stories of Ovid himself into harmony with his own suffering. Just as the scene describes the nature of music by explaining how diverse notes come together in harmony, it also suggests the nature of poetry by showing, through physical example, the way that the poet produces and transforms his own performative context. The poet cannot work in the context of pristine trees that have never been anything but trees; however, it is his power that attracts and unites these transformed trees, and it is in accordance with his own passions that they are assembled. Orpheus' *locus amoenus* thus symbolises the poet's interaction with the tradition; the poet works within the context of a world that has been shaped and re-shaped by countless voices, and yet he has the power to transform this

¹⁶² See also Chapter 4, 103-104.

world again, creating a setting that has at its centre his own desires. Segal, as we have seen, suggests that Ovid creates an Orpheus whose individual concerns, rather than natural laws or epic grandeur, are at the centre of his art.¹⁶³ The reflection on the artist's interaction with tradition that we see in this scene reveals a similar idea. Just as Orpheus is the founder of the *locus amoenus* even as his story is permeated with contrasting aetiologies, so the poet is the creator of a world of meaning and symbolism even as he is the inheritor of a long tradition.

Ovid's double allusion to Catullus 63 and 64 may even, in addition to suggesting the poet's power to create his poetic context within tradition, add another layer to our understanding of chronology within this scene and the *Metamorphoses* in general. The chronology of the epic, many scholars have observed, is never consistent, despite the poet's request at the beginning of the poem: *ab origine mundi / ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen* ('draw out a continuous song from the origin of the world to my own times,' 1.3-4).¹⁶⁴ Coleman points to such examples as Atlas, who takes on the weight of the earth at 4.632, and yet has already been seen carrying the world at 2.296.¹⁶⁵ This kind of chronological distortion is also integral to the structure of Catullus 64. Weber, taking up an observation made by Moritz Haupt in the nineteenth century, observes that, although the Argo is described as the first ship ever to sail (*illa rudem cursu prima imbuat Amphitriten*, 'that [ship] was the first to touch untried Amphitrite,'

¹⁶³ See above, 67.

¹⁶⁴ For discussions of chronology in the *Metamorphoses*, see in particular Wheeler, *Discourse*, 117-39; also Robert Coleman, "Structure and Intention in the *Metamorphoses*," *The Classical Quarterly* 21 (1971): 461-77. As we observed in Chapter 2, Ovid's use of the *locus amoenus* and Golden Age motif lends a cyclical character to the *Metamorphoses* that allows for narrative continuity, permitting a certain overcoming of chronological concerns (see 45-47).

¹⁶⁵ Coleman, 463-4.

64.11), reference is made to Theseus' ship on Thetis' coverlet.¹⁶⁶ Theseus' ship must have sailed before the Argo, and yet the Argo is paradoxically the first ship. Gaisser adds a layer of complexity to this chronology by noting that Prometheus, famously the creator of the ship for humans in *Prometheus Bound*, is also present at the marriage feast, bearing the *uestigia* (64.295) of his punishment on Caucasus. These scars, Gaisser suggests, emphasise Prometheus' role as the inventor of ships by pointing toward his punishment for giving craft to humanity.¹⁶⁷ Catullus thus triply confuses the chronological order of the poem.

In his twofold allusion to Catullus' work, Ovid perhaps also intimates a similarity between his own chronology and that of his predecessor. Ovid's description of the transformation of Attis into a pine, coupled with his allusion to the first line of Catullus 64—where the ship is called a *pinus*—aligns the figure of Attis with the ship, particularly the role that the ship plays in the epyllion of Peleus and Thetis.¹⁶⁸ In a way, Ovid gives a fourth aetiology for the ship of Catullus 64: the *pinus*, in Ovid's hands, is given a new history as the consort of Cybele. We have already seen that Orpheus' second song, as an aetiology of the *locus amoenus*, includes a certain manipulation of chronology. Here, as at the beginning of Catullus 64, there is an aetiological account: Orpheus creates the *locus amoenus*. However, as we have seen, Ovid points his reader to another aetiology of the setting through a reference to the Muses, suggesting the *locus amoenus* of Mount Helicon. He also reminds his reader that the appearance of the setting is cyclical by

¹⁶⁶ Clifford Weber, "Two Chronological Contradictions in Catullus 64," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 113 (1983): 263-4. See Moritz Haupt, *Opuscula* (Leipzig, 1875-76).

¹⁶⁷ Julia Haig Gaisser, "Threads in the Labyrinth: Competing Views and Voices in Catullus 64," *The American Journal of Philology* 116 (1995): 609.

¹⁶⁸ This is further emphasised by Ovid's frequent use of the same metonymy, *pinus* standing in for the ship, as in Catullus. See Chapter 2, 37-38.

incorporating the story of Cyparissus, who comes to form part of the same conventional setting in which he once lost his beloved deer. Ovid's allusions to Catullus 63 and 64 thus highlight the way in which he manipulates temporal order in the *Metamorphoses*; by referencing and even adding to Catullus' own chronological contortions, Ovid reminds his reader of the importance of such manipulations to his own poetic project.

This distortion of chronology is yet another way in which Ovid calls attention to his own poetic voice; without a strict temporal order, the audience's perception of the poet himself is heightened. Discussing other instances of Ovid's perplexing chronology, Wheeler asserts that these other contradictions "challenge the participants of the performance to revise their notions about the poem's chronology, to redefine the character of time itself, and to reconsider the purposes to which time is put."¹⁶⁹ He explains that this forces the continuity of the work to rest on the storytelling itself rather than the historical narrative.¹⁷⁰ Without a logical and temporal sequence of events to tie stories side-by-side in the structure of the poem, it is the poet's voice instead that joins the tales and gives them meaning. Like Orpheus, the poet draws the world into harmony with himself, making himself the source of all order.

Orpheus' creation of the *locus amoenus* thus acts as a symbol for the art of poetry itself, particularly the ways in which the poet creates his own context and meaning, using and transforming tradition while making his own voice and passions the centre of his work. The *locus amoenus*, as the archetypal poetic landscape, here represents not only the physical performance space but also the symbolic and traditional contexts which the poet takes up, manipulates and re-creates. The Thracian bard's creation is thereby a symbol for

¹⁶⁹ Wheeler, *Discourse*, 139.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 117-18.

the *Metamorphoses* as a whole: the poet's ability to bring harmony to a myriad of diverse stories; the dense allusions and their often-extreme distortion in the hands of Ovid; the poet's use and ambiguous transformation of symbolic meaning; and the way in which Ovid draws attention to his own voice, holding this above chronological or thematic considerations. These aspects of Ovid's poetry, here symbolised by the mythological bard's creation, bring Ovid to conclude his work with his own ascension and deification: *parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis / astra ferar* ('but I will be borne by my better part, eternal, above the high stars,' 15.875-76). It is the voice of the poet that ultimately triumphs.¹⁷¹

d. The Ciconian Women

The ending of Orpheus' second song, despite the complete destruction of the poet, his harmony and the idyll he has created, suggests this ultimate triumph of art. The Ciconian women, who tear apart the *locus amoenus* that is held hypnotised by Orpheus' song (11.29-30) themselves become trees, part of the landscape (11.67-84). Solodow notes this transformation, writing that "the extensive account of Orpheus ends not with his transformation, but with that of the Bacchantes, who, after tearing him apart, become trees fixed in the forest."¹⁷² Solodow makes this observation in passing, demonstrating that the central character is not always the one who is subject to transformation. Galinsky, however, observes: "Orpheus had the power to summon the trees, many of them products

¹⁷¹ For further discussion of Ovid's ending, see the Conclusion. As we will see, this ending is itself densely allusive, further suggesting the way in which the poet's power consists not in creation out of nothing but in the reworking of tradition in such a way as to bring harmony to a multiplicity of varied and conflicting ideas.

¹⁷² Solodow, 26.

of transformation. . . . It is a final tribute to this power that Bacchus transforms the Maenads into trees. . . . , a metamorphosis that Ovid seems to have invented.”¹⁷³ This idea warrants further consideration. As Galinsky writes, with this final transformation Ovid draws a connection between the original trees of Orpheus’ *locus amoenus* and the metamorphosed women. The Ciconian women thus become part of the very setting they destroyed. Just as Attis, Cyparissus and the other trees, all with human histories of their own, become part of the *locus amoenus*, so the transformed women take their place in the forest.

The metamorphosis of the Ciconian women therefore continues the cycle of the *locus amoenus*, the cycle of chaos and harmony that is essential to the very activity of human art. Ovid implies that as trees they are, as perhaps Galinsky intimates, now subject to the powerful force of harmonious poetry that they themselves destroyed. In this way, their metamorphosis is not, as Solodow suggests, incidental to the main activity of the story. Instead, they symbolise the central idea of the tale of Orpheus and his musically-created *locus amoenus*: they illustrate the way in which the artist creates his own performative setting, a setting that is destroyed and re-created by art, taking on new symbolism with each regeneration. Although Orpheus is torn apart, the power of artistic harmony to overcome chaos is illustrated by the Ciconian women, now figures of a natural world that may be again transformed by art.

¹⁷³ Galinsky, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses*, 90.

CHAPTER 4. SATURNA REGNA: OVID AND THE VIRGILIAN GOLDEN AGE

As we saw in Chapter 3, the ways in which Ovid draws in and transforms his many poetic inspirations have important implications for our understanding of the Golden Age motif in his work. As the most substantial poetic influence on the *Metamorphoses*, the work of Virgil is central to this investigation. Ovid draws on his predecessor's writing throughout, most explicitly in his 'Little *Aeneid*', the principal tale of Books 13 and 14 of his epic. The Golden Age, as we have explored, is essential to Ovid's poetic project, and so, since it is a major *topos* of Virgil's own work, it is important to consider the relationship between the two poets in terms of this theme. Virgil's *Aeneid*, of course, looks forward to new *aurea saecula* in the reign of Augustus Caesar (*Aen.* 6.792-93), even as it looks back to a mythical Golden Age world in Italy. Aeneas' journey and the *fatum* of the Roman people are thus defined in relation to the idea of the Golden Age. As we will see, Virgil's approach to this mythical era, both within the *Aeneid* and throughout his corpus, is complex and at times paradoxical. It is important to consider Virgil's treatment of the Golden Age if we are to understand Ovid's own. In a number of ways, Ovid takes up the paradox inherent to Virgil's account and redefines it, making his treatment of the Golden Age a central *topos* of his interaction with his predecessor.

Ovid's engagement with his poetic forebear opens up a kind of dialogue between his own work and that of Virgil. Ovid accentuates the ambiguity of Virgil's account of the Golden Age while simultaneously transforming it into a distinctly Ovidian motif. He draws his reader's attention to the paradoxes of Virgil's corpus, alluding to his own work and that of his predecessor at the same time so as to create his own distinctive interpretation of the Golden Age. The relationship between Ovid's and Virgil's

interpretations of the Golden Age is essential to our understanding of the *topos* as it relates to Ovid's poetic project. By referring to and yet reinterpreting his predecessor's motif, Ovid makes what is a teleological and historical image in the *Aeneid* into an illustration of his own poetic project. He transforms a motif of Virgil's work that, as a *topos* of his own work, comes to symbolise this very activity of poetic metamorphosis.

a. The Virgilian Golden Age

Ovid's interaction with the Virgilian model of the Golden Age is multifaceted, not least because Virgil's understanding of the Golden Age is an apparent paradox in itself. Virgil presents this idyllic era in several places in his work, making it a central illustration of Roman stability and peace. However, he appears to contradict his own understanding of the age in multiple places, both between his works and within them. His most famous depiction of the Golden Age is arguably that of the fourth *Eclogue*, which depicts a period of peace characterised by the absence of the human activities of seafaring, war and agriculture:

*cedet et ipse mari uector, nec nautica pinus
mutabit merces; omnis feret omnia tellus.
non rastros patietur humus, non uinea falcem;
robustus quoque iam tauris iuga soluet arator. (Ecl. 4.38-40)*

(The traveller of the sea himself will disappear, and the nautical pine will not exchange payment; the earth will bear all things. The ground will not suffer rakes, nor the vine the sickle; the hardy ploughman will release the yokes from the bulls.)

This, Virgil asserts, will be the *Saturnia regna* (*Ecl.* 4.6). His image follows the Hesiodic model of the Golden Age, in which the earth, under the rule of Saturn, provides all things of its own accord for its inhabitants: ἐσθλὰ δὲ πάντα / τοῖσιν ἔην· καρπὸν δ’ ἔφερε
 ζεῖδωρος ἄρουρα / αὐτομάτη πολλόν τε καὶ ἄφθονον (‘They had every good thing; for the life-giving land of its own accord bore much bounteous fruit,’ *Works and Days* 116-18).¹⁷⁴ Virgil’s great debt to Hesiod in this *Eclogue* is, of course, well-attested.¹⁷⁵ Virgil’s chief departure from the Hesiodic theme, Patricia A. Johnston explains, is a chronological one; Johnston writes that the poet “envisions a chronology surrounding the golden age which would allow for the possibility of recurrence.”¹⁷⁶ The first Virgilian image of the Golden Age, then, is Hesiodic, but while Hesiod only looks back to a long-past age of luxury, Virgil looks forward to the restoration of such an era in Rome.

In stark contrast to this non-agricultural Golden Age, but with a similar emphasis on the regeneration of the idyllic era in Rome, is the example of the *Georgics*. In the second *Georgic*, Virgil again describes a Saturnian realm; Italy is the *Saturnia tellus* (*G.* 2.173), recalling the *Saturnia regna* of the fourth *Eclogue* (4.6). This is not the spontaneously productive land of the fourth *Eclogue*, however, but its opposite; far from being defined by the absence of agriculture, this idyllic age is precisely characterised by farming. The farmers of the *Georgic* are the happy, Golden Age inhabitants:

at securo quies et nescia fallere uita,

diues opum uariarum, at latis otia fundis,

¹⁷⁴ Hesiod, “Opera et Dies,” in *Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum, Fragmenta Selecta*, ed. F. Merkelbach Solmsen and M. L. West, Oxford Classical Texts (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1983).

¹⁷⁵ See, for example, Inez Scott Ryberg, “Vergil’s Golden Age,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 89 (1958): 112-13; Patricia A. Johnston, *Vergil’s Agricultural Golden Age*, 8-9, 43-44.

¹⁷⁶ Johnston, *Vergil’s Agricultural Golden Age*, 8.

speluncae uiuique lacus et frigida Tempe
mugitusque boum mollesque sub arbore somni
non absunt. . . . (G. 2.466-71)

(. . . but safe rest and a life that does not understand deception, a wealth of varied treasures, repose in broad farms, caves, natural lakes and cool Tempe, the lowing of cattle and soft sleep under a tree; these things are not wanting. . . .)

These farmers live in the natural, peaceful manner of those pictured in the fourth *Eclogue*, but they do not exist in a passive relation to their livelihood; as farmers, they must instead strive to accomplish this peaceful existence. Johnston considers the fourth *Eclogue* and second *Georgic* in light of this contrast, explaining that Virgil's new position in the latter is his expression of a Golden Age that has the potential to be realized in his own lifetime.¹⁷⁷ Although the image of the *Eclogues* suggests the return of the Golden Age in the future, it offers no process by which this transformation may occur. In the *Georgics*, however, Virgil offers a concrete method for this revival through the image of the farmer: "the farmer, by working in concert with the cycles of nature, can bear at least some responsibility for bringing about a new golden age for himself and for Rome."¹⁷⁸

The distinction between these two images of the Golden Age emerges from three major conceptions of the Saturnian age upon which Virgil draws.¹⁷⁹ First among these tales of Saturn is the Hesiodic one represented in the fourth *Eclogue*: Saturn's reign prior

¹⁷⁷ Patricia A. Johnston, "Virgil's Conception of Saturnus," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 10 (1977): 61.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 50. There is, of course, some ambiguity in the nature of this new Golden Age as well. See Monica Gale, "Virgil's Metamorphoses: Myth and Allusion in the *Georgics*," in *Virgil's Georgics*, ed. Katharina Volk (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 94-95.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 57-69. See also J. J. L. Smolenaars, "Labour in the Golden Age as a Unifying Theme in Virgil's Poems," *Mnemosyne* 40 (1987): 391-405.

to the reign of Jupiter, who brings on the Silver Age. This is, of course, the non-agricultural understanding of the Golden Age, defined by the absence of human craft. The second definition of the Saturnian age at work in Virgil's work is that of Aratus, who picks up Hesiod's definition, but adds agriculture to the Golden Age: the people of the age have no ships, ἀλλὰ βόες καὶ ἄροτρα καὶ αὐτὴ πότνια λαῶν / μυρία πάντα παρεῖχε Δίκη, δώτειρα δικαίων ('but oxen and ploughs, and the queen of men, *Dikē*, giver of just things, provided everything in plenty,' *Phaen.* 112-13). In his commentary on the *Phaenomena*, Douglas Kidd observes that Aratus "deliberately disagrees with Hesiod in allowing agriculture to be one of the activities of the Golden Age."¹⁸⁰ Johnston, and Smolenaars in agreement with Johnston, attribute the agricultural activity in Aratus' Golden Age to *Dikē* herself; agriculture is necessary, Johnston explains, but the farmer is Justice herself, rather than the people.¹⁸¹ The final major conception of the Saturnian age that appears in Virgil's work is one that alludes, according to Johnston, to Euhemerus and thus to Ennius' translation of this predecessor; there, Saturn is exiled to Italy after Jupiter assumes power.¹⁸² This is a second reign of Saturn, then, one that takes place after the metallic Ages of Man found in Hesiod or Aratus. With these three conceptions of the Saturn era—the Hesiodic, in which Saturn permits the world to give its inhabitants their livelihood freely; the image of Aratus, in which Saturn is the farmer who provides his people with their livelihood; and the second, Italian Saturnian age of Euhemerus—Virgil creates his own complex vision of the Golden Age.

¹⁸⁰ Douglas Kidd, Introduction to *Phaenomena*, by Aratus (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 222.

¹⁸¹ Johnston, *Vergil's Agricultural Golden Age*, 31-33; Smolenaars, 395-6.

¹⁸² Johnston, "Vergil's Conception of Saturnus," 60-65.

The *Saturnia tellus* of the second *Georgic* rejects the Hesiodic image of a Golden Age without agriculture. It picks up on Aratus' idea of a technical Golden Age, but puts the effort of agriculture into the hands of the inhabitants, at the same time suggesting the idea of Saturn apparently found in Euhemerus. Smolenaars writes that "Vergil does not distinguish the Hesiodic Kronos from the Italian god of agriculture, but merges the Hesiodic ruler of the golden age with the Italian farmer-god."¹⁸³ This is, Johnston suggests, a reworking of Euhemerus' Saturn, who in Virgil's hands becomes a beneficent farmer-god in Italy after the fall of the Golden Age.¹⁸⁴ Thus the second reign of Saturn, in the works of Virgil, becomes a productive, peaceful time of exile; Saturn is not himself the farmer, as he is in Aratus, but is the source of an agricultural peace.¹⁸⁵ At the heart of the conflict between the fourth *Eclogue* and second *Georgic*, then, is this difference between the models Virgil uses in his depictions of the Golden Age. Far from wanting to disguise the apparent transformation in his understanding, Virgil highlights the difference by employing similar language in both. In the fourth *Eclogue*, for example, just after he writes about the disappearance of agriculture, the poet proclaims: *nec uarios discet mentiri lana colores* ('the wool will not learn to feign varied colours,' *Ecl.* 4.42). Juxtaposing this with the account of the fourth *Georgic*, we can see the contrast between the two works; just following his praise of the farmers, Virgil writes that *alba neque Assyrio fucatur lana ueneno* ('white wool is not dyed with Assyrian poison,' *G.* 2.465). The peace and natural lifestyle of both accounts is the same, yet their architects differ; in the *Georgics*, human effort takes responsibility for what was divinely created in the

¹⁸³ Smolenaars, 396.

¹⁸⁴ Johnston, "Vergil's Conception of Saturnus," 60-65.

¹⁸⁵ Smolenaars, 396: "the life of the farmers of today is not compared with that of man during Saturn's golden age (i.e., the golden race), but with the active life of Saturn himself during the same period."

Eclogue. The correspondence between Virgil's language in the two poems accentuates this distinction.

It is in the *Aeneid*, however, that Virgil's Golden Age becomes most openly paradoxical. Up to this point, the different conceptions of the fourth *Eclogue* and second *Georgic* could conceivably be the result of a development in Virgil's thought, although the way in which Virgil linguistically connects the two seems to controvert this claim. Johnston, in fact, argues for a development in Virgil's thinking: "Vergil's conception of Saturnus thus unfolds, so that the Hesiodic ruler of heaven in the *Eclogues* becomes, in the *Georgics* and the *Aeneid*, a former king who once lived the life of a farmer, and who brought about a golden age in Italy."¹⁸⁶ This idea of an evolution in thought does not, however, give due consideration to the paradox of the Golden Age in the *Aeneid*, a complexity of the text that has received surprisingly little scholarly attention. The Golden Age is, of course, a dominant motif of Rome's unfolding fate. Aeneas' descendants, his father Anchises reveals to him in the Underworld, will culminate in Augustus, whose destiny is to re-establish the Golden Age:

*Augustus Caesar, diui genus, aurea condet
saecula qui rursus Latium regnata per arua
Saturno quondam, super et Garamantas et Indos
proferet imperium. . . . (6.792-94)*

(Caesar Augustus, offspring of a god, will found a Golden Age, and he will extend his power in Latium, through the lands where Saturn once ruled, and beyond both Garamant and India. . . .)

¹⁸⁶ Johnston, "Vergil's Conception of Saturnus," 58.

The peace that Aeneas' descendants will create in Italy is a central image of Aeneas' *fatum*. Jupiter's speech to Venus in the first book of the *Aeneid* ends on a similar note of Golden Age peace: *dirae ferro et compagibus artis / claudentur Belli portae* ('the gates of War, harsh with iron and dense joints, will close,' 1.293-4). Peace, new *aurea saecula*, will be at the heart of Roman *imperium*. This idea of a Roman revival of the Golden Age recalls, of course, the claim of the second *Georgic* that human effort will effect a new age of peace. Ryberg explains that "the picture of Rome's legendary past is also the image of its future, and Saturn's reign of peace and law is to be embodied in the new Golden Age to be established by Aeneas' great descendant."¹⁸⁷ By looking forward to the *saecula aurea* of Augustus' reign, Virgil also invokes a Golden Age of the mythical past. The character of this past idyllic age, however, is called into question by the various accounts the poet gives of Italy's past, and the linguistic parallels Virgil draws between his different reports emphasise the contradictions between them. The diversity of these legends thus also calls into question the character of the longed-for future peace.

The attentive reader of Books Seven and Eight of the *Aeneid* will find it difficult to navigate the contrasting accounts of the Golden Age given by Latinus and Evander, respectively. The two rulers' accounts conflict in a striking way. First is Latinus' vision, which is that of the Hesiodic Golden Age: *neue ignorete Latinos / Saturni gentem haud uin clo nec legibus aequam, / sponte sua ueterisque dei se more tenentem* ('know that the Latins are the race of Saturn, equitable not by chains or laws, but because they keep themselves of their own accord by the custom of an ancient god,' 7.202-4). This recalls the spontaneous production of the Hesiodic, metallic Golden Age: the image of the fourth *Eclogue*. Just as there the *sandyx* will dye the lambs *sponte sua* (*Ecl.* 4.45), and the earth

¹⁸⁷ Ryberg, 127.

will bring forth *omnia* (39), here the race of Latinus is equitable of its own accord, *sponte sua*. This story of Latinus' people is not, Rosivach points out, the only one that would have been available to Virgil; instead, the multiple accounts of Latinus' genealogy in the tradition suggest that "Virgil's inclusion of this particular genealogy rather than another—indeed, the inclusion of any genealogy at this point in his tale—is the result of his own artistic choice."¹⁸⁸ Virgil's deliberate decision to put Latinus in the line of Saturn's descendants, and to make him speak the language of the Golden Age, makes it of crucial importance to investigate the character of the Golden Age as the poet presents it elsewhere in the *Aeneid*.

As a first complication of the character of the Golden Age, there are suggestions of a contradiction within Latinus' account. Zetzel gives the following analysis of Latinus' story of the Golden Age:

According to this version, it is clear that Aeneas and the Trojans are not saviours, but a disruptive influence in a peaceful and harmonious world. At the same time, the version given by the poet and by Latinus is itself undercut: the effigies of military figures in Latinus' palace, the military exercises of the population, and the fact that the Latins are at war with Evander's Arcadians call this idealistic vision into question.¹⁸⁹

The warlike nature of these people whom Latinus calls peaceful is also attested to by their genealogy, Rosivach observes. While Latinus' connection to Saturn links the king and his people to the Golden Age, his connection to Picus links him to Mars, whose sacred bird is

¹⁸⁸ V. J. Rosivach, "Latinus' Genealogy and the Palace of Picus (*Aeneid* 7.45-9, 170-91)," *The Classical Quarterly* 30 (1980): 140.

¹⁸⁹ James E. G. Zetzel, "Rome and its Traditions," in *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, ed. Charles Martindale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 191.

the woodpecker.¹⁹⁰ Rosivach writes of this double ancestry: “The earlier genealogy emphasized Latinus’ peaceful rural roots. The later genealogy emphasizes war.”¹⁹¹ Virgil thus suggests a certain inconsistency in Latinus’ account, leading his reader to question the idea of the Golden Age as it appears in Book 7.

Another, and even more serious, complication of Latinus’ account is Evander’s version of his own people’s history, described in Book 8. Originally, Evander tells Aeneas, his ancestors were a hard people, *duro robore nata* (‘born of hard oak,’ 8.315):

*quis neque mos neque cultus erat, nec iungere tauros
aut componere opes norant aut parcere parto,
sed rami atque asper uictu uenatus alebat.* (8.316-18)

(Who had neither custom nor culture, who did not know how to yoke bulls, nor how to store their resources, nor how to preserve what they produced, but twigs and game, hard to capture, fed them.)

Evander’s claim about the primitive, unhappy state of his race, a people without *cultus* or agriculture, strongly recalls Latinus’ claim about the current state of his people. This connection between Evander’s primitive and uncultured ancestors and Latinus’ present Golden Age existence is heightened by a strong verbal link between *Aeneid* 8.316 and Virgil’s fourth *Eclogue*. Just as Evander’s people were once without the knowledge of how to *iungere tauros*, so the *Eclogue* looks forward to an age in which *tauris iuga soluet arator* (‘the ploughman will release the yokes from the bulls,’ *Ecl.* 4.41). The link between the words *taurus* and *iungo* (or *iuga*) suggests that Virgil intends his reader to recall the image of the Golden Age as he himself presents it in the fourth *Eclogue*: the

¹⁹⁰ Rosivach, 142.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 151.

Hesiodic Golden Age, strikingly similar to the age that Latinus describes in the previous book of the epic.

The present state of Evander's people adds to the contrast between his account and that of Latinus. The Arcadian king explains how his people emerged from this 'dark age' of their past:

*primus ab aethereo uenit **Saturnus** Olympo
arma Iouis fugiens et regnis exsul adeptis.
is genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis
composuit **legesque dedit**, Latiumque uocari
maluit, his quoniam latuisset tutus in oris.
aurea quae perhibent illo sub rege fuere
saecula: sic **placida** populos in **pace** regebat. (8.319-25)*

(Saturn first came from aetherial Olympus, fleeing the arms of Jove, an exile, his lands stolen. He brought together an indocile people, dispersed over the high mountains, and gave them laws, and chose for this to be called Latium, because he had hidden safely within these borders. They say that the generations under him as king were golden; he ruled the people in such calm peace.)

The peace that Evander extols, then, is directly opposed to that of Latinus' people, for it is based on the giving of law rather than on a kind of spontaneous justice in the absence of law. However, strikingly, both reigns are characterized by their relation to Saturn; it is Saturn who is responsible for the lawless justice of Latinus' people, and it is Saturn who is responsible for bringing law and therefore peace to Evander's race.

Caught between these two Saturnian accounts, one defined by its relation to law and the other by the absence of this very law, how is the reader of the *Aeneid* to interpret the future Golden Age of the Roman Empire? Anchises claims *aurea . . . saecula* for Augustus in the Underworld (6.792-93), and these same golden generations emerge in Evander's account (8.324-25). Between these two, however, lies Latinus' story of a justice that exists without laws; this version, with its strong connection to the Hesiodic Golden Age of the fourth *Eclogue*, cannot be passed over. Rosivach, without taking up Evander's version in any detail, favours an interpretation that looks at the similarities between the two accounts; he notes that Latinus, like Saturn in Evander's story, rules *urbes placidas in pace* (7.45-46). He thus writes: "The fruitfulness of the earth, then, is a common theme in both versions of the myth of the Golden Age, the earth either naturally fruitful or made fruitful by the cultivating hand of man. A second theme is that of peace."¹⁹² Smolenaars, on the other hand, takes up only Evander's account, arguing that the Golden Age in the *Aeneid*, as in the *Georgics*, is a "synthesis of the descendent metallic myth and the ascendent agricultural view," taking on the peaceful qualities of the Hesiodic myth and the human endeavour of the agricultural Saturnian age.¹⁹³ Johnston, also treating Evander but not Latinus, favours a similar reconciliation of versions: "Vergil recognized the inconsistencies in the various traditions and reconciled them, thereby establishing a new Roman tradition."¹⁹⁴ All three scholars attempt to make Virgil's accounts congruent, suggesting a final version of the Golden Age in which the Hesiodic age and human effort come together.

¹⁹² Rosivach, 144.

¹⁹³ Smolenaars, 399.

¹⁹⁴ Johnston, "Vergil's Conception of Saturnus," 69.

What all three writers pass over, however, is the stark contrast between the accounts given by Latinus and Evander in Books 7 and 8, respectively; neither Johnston nor Smolenaars even considers Latinus' conflicting version. When the two kings' versions are held side-by-side, it is apparent that Virgil achieves something more complex than a mere reconciliation of versions. Bringing Latinus' account into the analysis, we should perhaps revise Johnston's idea that Virgil reconciles these traditions, instead suggesting that it is Aeneas, Augustus and the Roman Empire that will, looking past the end of the *Aeneid*, bring these traditions together. By marrying Lavinia and taking Latinus as father-in-law, Aeneas associates the Roman people with Latinus' professed Hesiodic Golden Age. By establishing Rome itself on the site of Evander's city, the Roman people create a connection between themselves and the 'farmer-god' tradition of Saturn. What is held as a contradiction within the *Aeneid* itself—both within Latinus' account and between this version and that of Evander—will become the *saecula aurea* of the Augustan era. Zetzel's judgement, although he does not directly juxtapose the two accounts, is perhaps the only possible one: "early Italy has more than one history, more than one truth."¹⁹⁵

The *Aeneid*, as Ryberg writes, looks simultaneously ahead to the *saecula aurea* of Rome and back to the conflicting, incongruent *saecula aurea* of Italy's past.¹⁹⁶ The future of the Roman Empire must, of course, be founded in war even as it promises peace. There must be a drawing together of the Hesiodic Golden Age, Saturn's reign as farmer, as well as the warfare necessary for the creation of an empire. Virgil's insistence on a many-sided and internally conflicting history for his people means that the nature of the Golden

¹⁹⁵ Zetzel, 190.

¹⁹⁶ Ryberg, 127.

Age under Augustus can only be left as a question of the text. It is not possible that Latinus' and Evander's accounts can be reconciled, nor is it possible for them to exist together in the future Roman Empire without tension. Even within the story of Latinus, it is impossible to reconcile the apparent warfare with the professed peace of the people. Tension, then, cannot be explained away from the future *saecula aurea* of Rome, nor from the differing accounts found in the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. The poet leaves this as an unresolvable question of his corpus.

The way in which the *Aeneid* looks both forward and back to the Golden Age also brings into question the possibility of an eternal peace. While Jupiter promises *imperium sine fine* (*Aen.* 1.279) to Aeneas' people, the *Aeneid* reveals that "golden ages had existed in the past, but they had not lasted."¹⁹⁷ Thus, Zetzel writes, the "possibility that peace will endure is by no means a certainty."¹⁹⁸ We cannot, as Johnston claims, assert that "Vergil never imagines a golden age which will be permanent,"¹⁹⁹ without entirely dismissing Jupiter's account of *fatum*, of Rome's *imperium sine fine* (*Aen.* 1.279). It is possible, however, to agree with Zetzel that the very idea of a past, destroyed Golden Age must introduce uncertainty to the idea of permanent peace. Michael Putnam connects this uncertainty to the cyclical movement of souls in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*; if souls move in a continuous cycle of purification and rebirth, it is perhaps suggested that there is a "cyclicality of history" wherein the Golden Age returns and fades in turn.²⁰⁰ Virgil's Golden Age, then, is multifaceted and paradoxical; it is only by holding the paradoxes of

¹⁹⁷ Zetzel, 200.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Johnston, *Vergil's Agricultural Golden Age*, 12.

²⁰⁰ Michael C. J. Putnam, *Virgil's Aeneid: Interpretation and Influence* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 290-91. Putnam writes that the "historical dialectic of Virgil's poem . . . warns against too trusting a belief in the capability of Aeneas-Augustus to renew a golden age, which means against the possibility of the renewal of any aspect of perfection or perfectibility."

his account together in tension that the possibility of the Roman *saecula aurea* may be imagined. Virgil leaves his reader with a question, rather than resolving the contradictions of his manifold account; he refuses to give his reader a clear or easy vision of the Roman Golden Age.

b. Ovid's Interpretation of Virgil: *Saturnus, sero* and the *discors concordia*

Through its depiction of an ambiguous and many-sided past, then, Virgil's *Aeneid* looks forward to an Augustan Golden Age that cannot be easily defined. With his *Metamorphoses*, because the epic is firmly situated in the context of the *Aeneid*, Ovid cannot help but pick up and transform the Golden Age imagery that plays such a central role in Virgil's work. The centrality of the Golden Age in Ovid's own work suggests an important connection between the two poets. As we have seen, Ovid's Golden Age is also defined by its paradoxical nature; the central image of artistic transformation in the *Metamorphoses* is a *discors concordia* in which the Golden Age and chaos are inextricably linked and together foster nature and human creativity. This *discors concordia* picks up and develops the Virgilian idea, suggesting a way of holding together the two sides of the Golden Age that appear in the *Aeneid* while maintaining the paradox inherent in the double narrative.

The first image of the Golden Age in the *Metamorphoses*, the traditional account within the Ages of Man in Book 1, is ostensibly the pure Hesiodic image of the age. As we have seen, Ovid's portrayal of the Golden Age here picks up on the language of Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*, the most Hesiodic account of the age in Virgil's work. Ovid's image of a spontaneously producing world is strikingly similar to Virgil's account. Ovid

uses, for example, the phrase *per se dabat omnia tellus* ('The earth gave all things of its own accord,' *Met.* 1.102), suggesting the non-agricultural nature of Virgil's Golden Age: *omnis feret omnia tellus* ('The whole earth will bear all things,' *Ecl.* 4.39).²⁰¹ Ovid's Golden Age, like Virgil's, is a negative account; the age of idyllic peace is described in reference to the later Ages of Man, depicted in terms of what it is not rather than what it is.²⁰² There can be no doubt that Ovid wishes to remind his reader of the account in Virgil's *Eclogue*, thus portraying a non-agricultural, Hesiodic image of the Golden Age, one in which there is no need for human effort.²⁰³

Even in this first account of the Golden Age, however, there are already signs of a tension between accounts of the age, a tension that is, as we have seen, played out in the Virgilian corpus, particularly in the *Aeneid*. With a choice of words that can only be intentional, Ovid introduces his Golden Age: *aurea prima sata est aetas* ('The Golden Age was the first to be sown,' *Met.* 1.89). The Golden Age, an age characterised by the absence of agriculture,²⁰⁴ is 'sown' as a seed would be by a farmer.²⁰⁵ Baldry writes that Ovid's "initial 'aurea prima sata est aetas' (89) is a clear echo of Hesiod's χρόσειον μὲν πρότιστα γένος. . . ."²⁰⁶ If Ovid does indeed draw on Hesiod's language in the introduction to his Golden Age, his choice of the verb *sero* to describe the beginning of the age is all the more distinctive; while following Hesiod's model in other ways, he

²⁰¹ See Introduction, 2-3.

²⁰² See Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 23.

²⁰³ Although Ovid, of course, looks back in mythical time at the Golden Age, while Virgil looks forward.

²⁰⁴ *ipsa quoque immunis rastroque intacta nec ullis / saucia uomeribus per se dabat omnia tellus* ('The earth herself, free, touched by neither rake nor plough, gave all things of her own accord,' *Met.* 1.101-102).

²⁰⁵ The verb *sero* is frequently used in Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*; especially because of the proximity of this use of the verb and other references to Virgil's *Bucolics* within the following description, this line evokes the image of farming particularly strongly. See e.g. *Ecl.* 8.99, *G.* 1.253, 2.275, 2.229, 4.144.

²⁰⁶ Baldry, 89.

introduces the language of agriculture to the Greek poet's picture of the Golden Age.²⁰⁷ Not only is the Golden Age 'sown', but it also 'cultivates' its virtues: *sine lege fidem rectumque colebat* ('without law, it cultivated trust and virtue,' 90). Bömer notes that both of these phrases are distinctive, further indicating the intentionality of Ovid's choice of words. *Sero* as a synonym for *oriri* is not found in Virgil, Bömer explains, and so "Ovid hat für den Anfang dieser Schilderung eine besonders präziöse Wendung geschaffen." *Colo* is unusual in poetry: "*colere* ist vorwiegend prosaisch."²⁰⁸ These two verbs, *sero* and *colo*, make a surprising contrast to Ovid's description of an age in which agriculture will indicate a diminution of goodness.

Ovid's use of agricultural language to describe an age defined precisely by the absence of agriculture suggests that the poet is here looking back to his models in Virgil's works. Virgil plays on the tension between a non-agricultural Golden Age and an agricultural one both between his works and within the *Aeneid*, where he offers the two side-by-side. While Virgil fully expresses both versions of the *aurea saecula* through the figures of Latinus and Evander, Ovid merely adumbrates this tension; while drawing a picture of an outwardly Hesiodic Golden Age, he nods to the conflicting account with his use of the verbs *sero* and *colo*. The predominant image is that of both the fourth *Eclogue* and Latinus' account: just as Latinus says that his people are just *haud uinclo nec legibus* (*Aen.* 7.203), Ovid's first Golden Age is faithful and virtuous *sine lege* (*Met.* 1.90). However, lurking in Ovid's account is that of Evander, whose Saturnus is the one to give the people laws and agriculture. Frederick Ahl, picking up on Varro's account of the

²⁰⁷ Anderson, *Books 1-5*, 161, notes that this is a surprising word choice, but ignores the agricultural implications of the term: ". . . this verb is unusual with *aetas*: it implies the natural abundance characteristic of the age but does not specify the sower."

²⁰⁸ Bömer, *Buch I-III*, *ad loc.*

etymological connection between *Saturnus* and *sero*, writes of Ovid's account that "the governing image of the . . . age is not so much its golden nature as the fact that it is *sown* (*SATa*) into being. And its god is, of course, *SATurnus*."²⁰⁹ While Ovid's interest in the etymological connection is certainly apparent, his use of this verb seems to be not so much an independent suggestion of this etymology as a remark upon Virgil's own use of the Golden Age motif. Even in the first appearance of the Golden Age, the reader's awareness of its alternatives is heightened; while the age is, on the surface, the pure Hesiodic Saturnian age, its 'sowing' hints at other, contrasting possibilities. Ovid thus alludes to Virgil's paradoxical image while also prefiguring the complexity his own predominant image of the Golden Age in the *Metamorphoses*.

The primary tension in Virgil's account of the Golden Age is, as we have seen, the conflict between an era of peaceful leisure and one of peaceful productivity. The importance of these two human states—passive and active—to Virgil's paradoxical Golden Age recalls in an interesting way the *discors concordia* that we have seen at work in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Two things, we have seen, are necessary for human creativity: a divine ability to bring about harmony and a fall away from the Golden Age. The Golden Age and its chaotic opposite are both integral to the activity of human creation. Recall also that this account suggested that the human artist can only possess the ability to create, this divine harmonizing power, when he no longer inhabits a Golden Age world, for in this idyllic world the power of creation exists only in the hands of the divine *opifex*.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Ahl, 115. Ahl considers Varro's statement *ab satu est dictus Saturnus* (*Ling.* 5.10), suggesting that Ovid takes up this ancient understanding of the name's etymology.

²¹⁰ See Chapter 2, 24-28.

In the *Metamorphoses*, then, Ovid suggests the need for both of Virgil's Italian Golden Ages: Latinus' people, just without laws, and Evander's, to whom Saturn himself gave laws. Where Virgil suggests a synthesis of these two contrasting ideas in the *saecula aurea* of the Roman people, but does not define the terms of this synthesis, Ovid draws the two sides together in the *discors concordia* necessary for the creation of human art. His use of agricultural terminology to describe the original Golden Age places him firmly in the context of Virgil's double Italian history, while his continued use of Golden Age imagery indicates a *discors concordia* that takes up the tension of the double Virgilian account, holding the two sides in a paradox that fosters human creation.

Despite the ambiguity of the Golden Age in Italy, the *Aeneid* looks forward to the establishment of new *aurea saecula* under Augustus. As we have seen, Aeneas' *fatum* thus looks back at the mythical past while anticipating its return in the Roman Empire.²¹¹ The language of *concordia* is associated with this movement toward stable peace in Virgil, just as *concordia* evokes the idea of the Golden Age in Ovid. The *Aeneid* can be thought of as a movement in the direction of *concordia*, although it never fully achieves this peace within the boundaries of the epic itself: ". . . Books 10-12 are in essence an account of how concord is established among gods and men through the actions of Jupiter. But at the beginning of Book 10 Juno is still opposed to Jupiter, and Jupiter admits that the time is not yet ripe for divine, and hence human, concord: *nec vestra capit discordia finem* (106)."²¹² There is, then, in Virgil's epic the movement from *discordia* to *concordia*, from an Iron Age toward a restoration of the Golden Age. Virgil's reader would be reminded of the *Concordia Nova* and the *Concordia Augusta*, historical

²¹¹ Ryberg, 127. See above, 81.

²¹² Francis Cairns, *Virgil's Augustan Epic* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 103.

justification of the movement from discord to concord within the epic.²¹³ However, as we have seen, Virgil's image of the Roman future requires that Latinus' and Evander's opposing Golden Ages be drawn together. While Virgil looks back and forward to Golden Ages, he does not allow the movement from *concordia* to *discordia* and back to *concordia* to be a simple one; instead, he both suggests that Augustus' Golden Age is not as simple as it first appears and also intimates that it may be merely a part of a greater historical cycle, rather than Jupiter's *Roma aeterna*.

Ovid, in taking up the Virgilian model, draws upon his forebear's paradoxical Golden Age imagery and transforms it into something that is very distinctly his own. Wheeler sees Ovid's original account of the Golden Age as a rejection of Virgil's model: "the main thrust of Ovid's statements is that the golden age will never return."²¹⁴ By this interpretation, Ovid turns against Virgil's model, consigning the Golden Age to a mythical past and not allowing it the possibility of recurrence. However, as we have seen above, the language of agriculture that Ovid employs in describing the Golden Age reminds the attentive reader of Virgil's idea of an agricultural Golden Age with the very real possibility of recurrence. And, indeed, the Golden Age returns again and again in Ovid's narrative: it appears in the form of an illustration of chaos in the flood, the sheep swimming with the lions; it is the central image of the *locus amoenus*, in which form it appears continually; and it also has a role as a symbol of harmony in the depictions of artistic creation and metamorphosis throughout the work. Ovid, then, presents his reader not with a linear movement from *discordia* to *concordia*, or even the suggestion of a

²¹³ Ibid., 89-90.

²¹⁴ Wheeler, *Discourse*, 106.

great historical cycle of these two, but instead with a world of *discors concordia*, the continuous cycle and paradoxical union of the Golden Age and chaos.

Galinsky suggests this cyclical idea when he explains that Ovid's world is one of flux, not eternal stability and concord as in Virgil's *Roma aeterna* (*Aen.* 1.278-79).²¹⁵ However, as we have seen, Virgil himself brings this stability and concord into question in his own work, both by setting disparate backgrounds of the mythical Golden Age side-by-side and by suggesting that there is a cyclical quality to the age. The distinction that Galinsky draws between the two poets, however, has important implications for our understanding of the Golden Age in both. Galinsky connects Virgil's Rome and Ovid's poet, explaining that in the *Metamorphoses* "the idea of the eternal state, *Roma aeterna*, is supplanted by the idea of the eternal achievement of the creative individual."²¹⁶ Virgil ostensibly, if ambiguously, depicts an eternal Rome as the future of the *Aeneid*, while Ovid leaves his reader with the primacy and permanence of the human poet: *super alta perennis / astra ferar* ('I will be borne, eternal, above the high stars,' *Met.* 15.871-79).²¹⁷ The *Metamorphoses*, then, suggests that Ovid as poet possesses the eternal nature of Virgil's Rome. In fact, Ovid draws this connection explicitly with his qualification of his own power; he will, he writes, be spoken of *quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris* ('wherever Roman power extends to the subdued lands,' *Met.* 15.877). His name will be as widespread as the Roman Empire, but it is to his work, rather than the Empire, that he gives the distinction of eternity.

Ovid's comparison of his own poetic power and the Roman Empire is significant in relation to the preceding discussion of the Golden Age. Although Galinsky claims that

²¹⁵ Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 44.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

²¹⁷ We will, however, take up the ambiguity of this statement in the Conclusion.

Ovid applies the eternity and stability of Virgil's own Golden Age to his own voice as a poet, it seems that instead, Ovid draws on the paradox and instability that lurks in Virgil's account and brings it to the surface. In taking up this instability, he reveals the impossibility of such a vision of the Roman Empire. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil looks forward to the Golden Age of Augustus' reign, and suggests that it must somehow draw together the two contrasting mythical accounts of Italy's past. In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid picks up this ambiguity and calls attention to it into his account of the *discors concordia*. Just as Virgil's Golden Age is definitive for his account of Roman history, Ovid's is definitive for his account of human poetic creation. Strikingly, just as Galinsky says that Ovid replaces Virgil's *Roma aeterna* with the eternity of his poetic voice, the Golden Age is the central image for both Virgil's portrayal of Rome and Ovid's portrayal of his own artistic creation. Ovid makes the ambiguity inherent to Virgil's *saecula aurea* explicit, and completely rejects this vision of a future Golden Age; instead, in the *Metamorphoses* the pure Hesiodic Golden Age collapses again and again to admit its chaotic opposite, and the *discors concordia* emerges as the foundation of human creation.

Ovid thereby reveals to his attentive reader that the *saecula aurea* of Virgil's Augustus are impossible, and replaces them with the *discors concordia* that, he suggests, emerges as a replacement. It is only within this paradoxical state that human effort is able to participate to some degree in the harmony of Golden Age existence, and so the image that Virgil presents in the *Aeneid* inevitably falls apart. Thus we see the same attention to the individual poet's voice, the same centrality of the individual passions, that is revealed in the scene of Orpheus' *locus amoenus*. Segal, recall, differentiated between the Virgilian and Ovidian accounts in terms of the place of human passions in relation to

nature: Virgil's Orpheus puts himself into harmony with nature's order, while Ovid's forces nature into harmony with himself.²¹⁸ Virgil, by presenting a paradoxical Golden Age, perhaps asks whether stable order is truly possible, suggesting the instability that lies under the surface of the proclaimed Golden Age of the Roman Empire. Ovid, entirely rejecting this possibility of stable order, places himself at the centre of his poem; working in a world of *discors concordia*, the poet is the one who creates order and deals with both chaos and harmony. Drawing out what is ambiguous within the Virgilian account, Ovid makes artistic creation the only activity in which the Golden Age finds a kind of rebirth.

c. Aeneas' Ships: *cognata litora* and Transformation

Ovid's 'Little *Aeneid*' in the final books of the *Metamorphoses*, because of its explicit relation to Virgil's work, warrants consideration in light of this comparison between the poets. While Ovid's *Aeneid* takes on a life of its own, it follows Virgil's precedent throughout, constantly reminding the reader of the definitive source for Aeneas' journey.²¹⁹ As is fitting to the upheaval of Virgil's teleological approach that we have seen thus far in Ovid's work, the later poet draws focus away to the *fatum* that is at the heart of Virgil's story: "neither Aeneas nor the events have the same spirituality, grand destiny, or relation to the supernatural as they have in Virgil's epic."²²⁰ Solodow explains that there is a shift in focus in Ovid's narrative; the detailed account of the Sibyl's personal history, for example, shows Ovid "suppressing that which bears on

²¹⁸ Segal, *Orpheus*, 25, 55-56.

²¹⁹ See Solodow, 143; Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 217ff.

²²⁰ Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 246.

national history and favoring instead the private and personal.”²²¹ As with the preceding discussion of the two poets’ approach to the Golden Age, here again Ovid moves away from a teleological understanding of *fatum* as driving toward a return of the *saecula aurea*. With this in mind, it is well worth considering the appearances of Golden Age imagery within the ‘Little *Aeneid*’ itself, with an eye to revealing the contrast between the two poets in terms of this central motif.

As we have explored previously, the image of the ship has an important place in Ovid’s exploration of Golden Age imagery; because of the absence of naval exploration in the Golden Age (1.94-95) and emergence of seafaring after the fall away from this age (133-34), the appearance of ships has important ramifications for any discussion of Golden Age imagery.²²² The association of the ship with the post-Golden Age world is of crucial importance to our understanding of the final books of the *Metamorphoses*, as well; in a way that has not been explored in the scholarship, the sea voyage of Aeneas in Ovid’s ‘Little *Aeneid*’ is connected to the first book of the poem. There, we saw that the salvation of Deucalion and Pyrrha on a ship reverses the traditional, sinful associations of seafaring, indicating the *discors concordia*, including a mixture of moral categories, of the post-deluvian landscape. The voyage of Aeneas near the end of the *Metamorphoses* alludes back to the first book of the work, suggesting a continuation of this paradox in the imagery of Aeneas’ voyage, and therefore an emphasis on the cyclical nature of the Golden Age within the work.

The response of the Apollonian oracle that Aeneas receives during his visit to Anius has been regarded exclusively in relation to its poetic precedent in Virgil’s *Aeneid*,

²²¹ Solodow, 141.

²²² See Chapter 2, 35-39.

but has important connections to the rest of Ovid's poem. The Trojan sailors rise in the morning, *adeuntque oracula Phoebi, / qui petere antiquam matrem cognataque iussit / litora* ('and they approached Phoebus' oracle, who commanded them to seek their ancient mother and kindred shores,' 13.678-79). While Hopkinson refers to the passage as merely "a quotation from the oracle given by Apollo to Aeneas,"²²³ Papaioannou explains two aspects of this reference: "Ovid's *petere antiquam matrem* recasts nearly verbatim the Vergilian *antiquam exquirite matrem*, while the *cognata litora* paraphrases the reference to the *prima tellus* in *Aen.* 3.94-96."²²⁴ The same oracle in the *Aeneid* is longer than its reinvention in the *Metamorphoses*:

*'Dardanidae duri, quae uos a stirpe parentum
prima tulit tellus, eadem uos ubere laeto
accipiet reduces. antiquam exquirite matrem.'* (*Aen.* 3.94-96)

('Strong Dardanians, the earth which first bore you from the stock of your parents, this same earth will receive you, led back to its joyful breast. Seek out your ancient mother.')

In Virgil's account, Anchises misinterprets this prophecy, leading the ships to Crete rather than Italy (3.102-17). Ovid, on the other hand, merely writes: *Inde recordati Teucros a sanguine Teucris / ducere principium, Creten tenuere* ('Then, recalling that the Teucrans derived their origin from the blood of Teucus, they landed on Crete,' 13.705-6). This Casali takes as Ovid's major departure from the Virgilian model; Ovid

²²³ Neil Hopkinson, Introduction and commentary to *Metamorphoses*, Book XIII, by Ovid (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), *ad loc.* Raeburn, in the notes to his translation, simply states that "the oracle comes directly from Virgil's *Aeneid*." David Raeburn, notes to *Metamorphoses*, by Ovid, trans. David Raeburn (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2004), *ad loc.* Solodow also remarks on this oracle, describing it as "anticyclimactic" in the way that Ovid takes emphasis away from the original. Solodow, 144-45.

²²⁴ Sophia Papaioannou, *Epic Succession and Dissension: Ovid, Metamorphoses 13.623-14.582, and the Reinvention of the Aeneid* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 75.

“completely censors Anchises’ mistake.”²²⁵ These scholarly perspectives are illustrative of the general tendency in the literature; readers of Ovid have examined Phoebus’ oracle only insofar as it draws upon, condenses and redefines its Virgilian precedent.

This consensus of scholarship on the Virgilian reference in the Apollonian oracle has led to the neglect of the prophecy’s intratextual side. Two aspects of the briefly-reported prophecy in fact suggest lines from Book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*, drawing the reader back to other accounts of seafaring. The *cognata litora* (13.678) of the oracle recalls the first reference to ships in the Golden Age: pines had not yet been cut down and made into ships, *nullaque mortales praeter sua litora norant* (‘humans knew no shores but their own,’ 1.95). It refers at the same time to the first appearance of the ship in the Iron Age: *quaeque diu steterant in montibus altis / fluctibus ignotis exsultauere carinae* (‘keels, which stood at length on high mountains, leapt in unknown waves,’ 1.133-34). The sin of the Iron Age, then, was the building of ships to investigate unknown shores. The voyage of Aeneas reverses these degenerate associations of seafaring; now, ships search for *cognata litora*, unknown shores made familiar.

This familiarisation of the shores of Italy recalls the sublimation of seafaring in the flood, where the impious ship becomes the vehicle of preservation for Deucalion and Pyrrha. The *cognata litora* may suggest Virgil’s *prima tellus*, as Papaioannou claims, but Ovid makes this allusion in the language of Book 1; this intratextual reference indicates that Ovid is not only rephrasing Virgil in his own words but also reinterpreting Virgil in the language of the *Metamorphoses*. To further this connection to Book 1, in the context of the *cognata litora* Ovid’s *antiquam matrem*, although it appears to be simply a

²²⁵ Sergio Casali, “Correcting Aeneas’ Voyage: Ovid’s Commentary on *Aeneid* 3,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 137 (2007): 196.

quotation of Virgil, also seems to allude to the scene of the flood. Themis' injunction to Deucalion and Pyrrha is: *ossaque post tergum magnae iactate parentis* ('and throw the bones of your great parent behind your backs,' 1.383). The connection between *cognata litora* and *antiquam matrem* in Book 13 suggests that this 'ancient mother' is also meant to remind the reader of Deucalion and Pyrrha's *magna parens*. Like Deucalion and Pyrrha, Aeneas regenerates his race out of his parental land. Like them, the Trojan hero's great piety gives the craft of seafaring positive moral associations. Thus Aeneas does not explore degenerate *incognata litora* but paradoxically reaches *cognata litora*, the familiar and pious territory of the Golden Age, in a ship.

The transformation of Aeneas' ships into sea nymphs in Book 14 must also be discussed in the context of the current investigation. This scene is, like the prophecy of Phoebus, a modification of a scene from the *Aeneid*. Cybele, Ovid writes, transforms Aeneas' ships into nymphs, *memor has pinus Ideao uertice caesas* ('remembering that these pines were cut from the top of Ida,' 14.535). Here, Ovid alludes to the conversation between Jupiter and Cybele that Virgil presents as the background to the transformation of ships (*Aen.* 9.77-106): "Ovid first cuts out the conversation between Jupiter and Cybele, which had formed an entire scene in the Aeneid. He replaces it with a single phrase. . . ." ²²⁶ Again, we see the way in which Ovid alludes to and transforms the work of his predecessor. However, more tellingly for our current analysis, Ovid returns to his own description of the lack of seafaring in the Golden Age: *nondum caesa suis, peregrinum ut uiseret orbem, / montibus in liquidas pinus descenderat undas* ('the pine did not yet, cut from its own mountains, descend into the clear waters,' 1.94-5). The

²²⁶ Solodow, 131.

scene of Cybele thus reminds the reader of the original falling away from the Golden Age, emphasising the degeneration inherent to the act of seafaring.

Although this phrase recalls this degeneracy, in the transformation of the ships this sinfulness is in a certain sense rectified. Hélène Vial's discussion of the scene points out that the transformation saves the ships not only from fire, but also from the perversion of their natural state as pine trees:

. . . il s'agit . . . de soustraire à l'incendie le pin, essence sacrée, dont sont faits les bateaux, et de compenser un sacrilège bien antérieur, celui d'avoir abattu des pins pour construire le premier navire. Deux fois réparatrice, la métamorphose sera par conséquent d'une double nature: elle devra transformer les navires simultanément en corps féminins, pour rendre la vie aux arbres autrefois sacrifiés, et en eau, pour que l'incendie soit évité.²²⁷

We see in this passage, then, a kind of sublimation that recalls the *cognata litora* discussed above. Just as the exploration of *incognata litora* is associated with the sinful ways of the Iron Age, so the image of trees cut from their original mountains recalls this first fall away from the Golden Age. In the transformation of the ships into nymphs, we have, as Vial indicates, the compensation for this original sin. Just as Ovid suggests the correction of the sin through the image of the 'kindred shores', so he makes a certain reparation here for the trees cut down from their mountains.

With these two images, the *cognata litora* and the ship-nymphs, we see a kind of compensation for the sin associated with a fall from the Golden Age. There is, therefore, in the 'Little *Aeneid*' a certain return to the Golden Age that echoes the prophecy of the

²²⁷ Hélène Vial, *La métamorphose dans les Métamorphoses d'Ovide: étude sur l'art de la variation* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2010), 320.

saecula aurea in Virgil's *Aeneid*. This concurs with Elaine Fantham's suggestion that this transformation of the ships begins to move the *Metamorphoses* in a different direction: "this miracle is the first of a great series of positive transformations that will lead toward the ultimate metamorphoses of Julius and Augustus Caesar."²²⁸ By alluding to his own first book, Ovid reminds his audience of the Ages of Man and thus suggests a movement upward towards another Golden Age. In this, perhaps he reflects Virgil's progression toward a return of the Golden Age.

However, this allusory framework simultaneously makes the opposite claim. Ovid, as we have seen, in several ways casts Aeneas as a second Deucalion and Pyrrha, a *pius* figure whose seafaring is sublimated and justified. While the imagery associated with the Trojan hero evokes the Golden Age, it also evokes the salvation of mankind through the figures of Deucalion and Pyrrha. It thereby reintroduces to the *Metamorphoses* the world of *discors concordia*, the world in which piety and sinfulness are intermingled. It also reminds the reader of the continual re-creation that takes place within the poem, and is particularly prominent in the first book of the work.²²⁹ Recall that above we recognised the need for both peace and industry in Virgil's account of the Golden Age; Virgil holds together in uneasy tension the contrasting accounts of Evander and Latinus, and suggests that a return of the *saecula aurea* must hold these sides together. Ovid's account implies this same idea; Aeneas' journey involves the activity of the sinful post-Golden Ages at the same time as it involves a kind of return to this peaceful imagery. However, by bringing together his references to his own work with his

²²⁸ Elaine Fantham, "Nymphas . . . e navibus esse: Decorum and Poetic Fiction in 'Aeneid' 9.77-122 and 10.215-59," *Classical Philology* 85 (1990): 118.

²²⁹ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 4. See Chapter 2, 45-47.

allusions to Virgil, Ovid presents us with the by-now familiar world of *discors concordia*, in which human creativity emerges.

A single allusion, one that emphasises the cyclic world of the *Metamorphoses*, remains to be discussed in reference to the preceding discussion; Catullus' poem 63, which we last found in Orpheus' *locus amoenus*, appears yet again in the transformation of Aeneas' ships.²³⁰ Through this allusion, Ovid forces his audience once again to recall the cyclical nature of his work. The goddess who rescues Aeneas' ships from burning is Cybele, whose appearance in Book 14 of the *Metamorphoses* takes a prominent part of the narrative of Aeneas' ships:

*sancta deum genetrix tinnitibus aera pulsi
aeris et inflati compleuit murmure buxi
perque leues domitis inuecta leonibus auras. (14.536-38)*

(The holy mother of the gods made the air resound with the ringing of struck bronze and the murmuring of the pipe, and through the light air was carried by her tamed lions.)

This epiphany is, as Solodow recognises, more dense in imagery than the briefly-sketched advent of Cybele of the *Aeneid*, where she appears with a *noua lux* (*Aen.* 9.110) and *Idaei . . . chori* (112). In fact, Ovid's introduction of Cybele's chariot of lions recalls Catullus' poem 63 and thus Ovid's own narration of Attis' story in *Metamorphoses* 10, where Attis becomes the pine tree that figures as part of Orpheus' *locus amoenus* (10.103-105). Strikingly, Ovid thus reminds his reader of the association he himself has made of Attis with the *pinus*: Cybele is, as we have seen, *memor has pinus Ideao uertice*

²³⁰ See Chapter 3, 66-71.

caesas (535).²³¹ Ovid thereby recalls to his reader's mind this prior transformation within the epic. Aeneas' ships were certainly once trees, transformed by human craftsmanship. Were these trees themselves once, however, human? In a similar vein, Galinsky notes the metamorphosis of a human, Venulus, into a tree just prior to the episode of Aeneas' ships (14.512-26), explaining that the tale "is a clever link to the next, where the process is reversed as structures made of trees . . . are metamorphosed into nymphs."²³² The story of Venulus, placed directly before the transformation of ships, as well as the suggestion of the story of Attis, remind the reader of the cyclic pattern of transformations within the *Metamorphoses*. Nothing ever remains eternally in one state, Ovid reveals.

By weaving Golden Age imagery into his *Metamorphoses*, particularly into his 'Little *Aeneid*', Ovid reminds his reader of Virgil's most explicit vision of the Golden Age in the *Aeneid*, suggests the tension underlying this vision. Never content to merely allude to other texts without making these allusions into something new and distinctly his own, Ovid thus creates a distinct new place for the Golden Age within his own work. By casting Aeneas' journey in the language of 'kindred shores' and suggesting a reparation for the original crime of seafaring with the transformation of the ships, Ovid reminds his reader of the movement toward new *saecula aurea* in the *Aeneid*. By alluding to his own first book, however, Ovid emphasises the cyclic nature of his own poetic world; there may be a sublimation of the wickedness of mankind, but Ovid reminds us that this has happened before with Deucalion and Pyrrha. Not only this, but the new sea-nymphs are themselves the product of a seemingly endless cycle of transformation; perhaps they

²³¹ This passage, with its juxtaposition of *uertice* and *pinus*, seems also to recall again Catullus 64.1 and Ovid's allusion to this line in his description of Attis (*Met.* 10.103). The line thus appears to accentuate the connection between the tree and the ship, as well as to perhaps again hint at the cyclical and confused chronology of Orpheus *locus amoenus* and of Catullus' own poem. See Chapter 3, 66-71.

²³² Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 237.

rectify the sinfulness of seafaring, but the pines out of which these ships were made may once have been human. If this is, as Fantham writes, the beginning of a series of upward transformations, we may only read it thus with Ovid's voice always reminding us that this upward movement is part of an endless cycle: although the ship may become a nymph, the nymph may be transformed again into a tree.

Ovid's account of Aeneas thus reminds the reader of the *Metamorphoses* that Virgil's vision of the Roman *saecula aurea* is inherently uneasy. However, the cyclic *discors concordia* of Ovid's epic leaves the question of a permanent Golden Age not as a question but as an impossibility. Although Virgil may suggest a great cycle of history, his epic looks, as Ryberg suggests, both backwards and forwards to the Golden Age, whatever the nature of this coming *saecula aurea* may be.²³³ Ovid's epic, in contrast, reveals through the endless *discors concordia* of the poem, the continuous cycle of chaos and harmony, that the Golden Age is one side of a great succession of transformations. This *discors concordia*, the poet reveals, is at the heart of human artistic transformation. Galinsky's observation that Ovid replaces Virgil's *Roma aeterna* with the "eternal achievement of the creative individual," then, has significant implications in terms of our discussion of the Golden Age.²³⁴ Virgil leaves both the character and possibility of Jupiter's *Roma aeterna* as a question of the text through his accounts of the Golden Age; the tension between Evander's and Latinus' versions of the age, as well as the suggestions of a cyclic Golden Age, make the idea ambiguous. Ovid proposes a solution to this question of permanence, but does so not by imagining an eternal Golden Age, but instead by making the Golden Age part of an endless cycle of harmony and chaos. It is

²³³ Ryberg, 127. See above, 85.

²³⁴ Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 45. See above, 99.

only in this cycle that human creativity emerges; and so, Ovid reveals the enduring nature of his own voice, the poet made eternal by the ceaseless cycle of the *discors concordia*.

CHAPTER 5. POETIC AND COSMIC CREATION: LUCRETIUS AND VENUS IN THE *METAMORPHOSES*

Virgil is not, of course, Ovid's only model for the ideas of artistic, particularly poetic, creation that permeate the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid draws upon manifold poetic inspirations in his epic, but certain features of the poet's relationship to Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* make this influence a particularly important one for the present study. The originality of Lucretius' own project—bringing the ideas of Epicurus into the Latin language—makes the Roman Epicurean particularly self-conscious in his understanding of his own role as a poet. The medium of poetry is considered antithetical to Epicurean philosophical thought, and so Lucretius must believe poetry to be not only innocuous but in fact a particularly expedient mode of communication in order to employ it as a vehicle for his philosophy. Indeed, as we will see, poetry in the *DRN* mirrors cosmic order and as such allows an avenue for the mind to understand what is beyond sensible comprehension. Ovid's deep interest in poetry and the place of art in the universe, as well as his self-awareness of his own role as an artist, suggests certain parallels to the Epicurean, and the many allusions to Lucretius throughout the *Metamorphoses* indicate that Ovid did have an abiding interest in the philosopher-poet.

Having arrived at an understanding of the Golden Age motif within Ovid's epic, a consideration of Ovid's Lucretian imagery can now help us to understand the fundamental place that this motif and its concomitant ideas of artistic creation hold in the cosmic order of the *Metamorphoses*. The importance of poetry and human endeavour to the structure of the cosmos in the *DRN* has a strong impact on the world of the *Metamorphoses*; drawing on Lucretian language and ideas, at some times using these

words and principles against themselves and at others availing himself of their original sentiment, Ovid creates a similar union of cosmic and poetic principles. Lucretius' influence plays an important part in Ovid's treatment of poetry as a cosmic concern. The *discors concordia*, the principle of the world after the flood, in its union of human and natural fecundity as well as the union of both forms of fertility and their destructive opposite, draws strongly on the Lucretian unity of similar principles in the form of Venus. The priority that Ovid places on poetry, however, making the cosmos a mirror of art rather than art a mirror of the cosmos, reverses the Lucretian poetic philosophy. Drawing on and transforming the concerns of Lucretius' work and setting Lucretian ideas side-by-side with their mythological and poetic opposites, Ovid creates a universe in which poetry is not only central but is in fact prior.

a. L'anti Lucrèce chez Lucrèce Within the *Metamorphoses*²³⁵

The originality of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as we have seen, involves not only independent innovation but also, and more strikingly, the transformation of the poetic tradition. Ovid's claim to a new kind of poetry is evident from the first lines of the epic, in which the poet places himself in relation to Callimachus and yet against him, as a creator of a *carmen deductum* and yet also an epic that stretches *ab origine mundi . . . ad*

²³⁵ M. Patin described Lucretius' use of mythology as "l'anti Lucrèce chez Lucrèce," wherein "the use of religious imagery in the *DRN* . . . betrays an unconscious fascination with, even attraction to, the theism which the poet rejects." Monica R. Gale, Introduction to *Lucretius*, edited by Monica R. Gale, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3. See M. Patin, *Études sur la poésie latine* (Paris: Hachette et cie, 1914). Patin's idea of Lucretius' mythology working against his philosophy, although widely discredited, seems a particularly apt way to describe Ovid's use of Lucretius in the cosmogony and speech of Pythagoras in the *Metamorphoses*; Ovid forces Lucretius' words to speak against themselves, putting back into a mythological context what Lucretius explains philosophically.

mea . . . tempora ('from the origin of the world to my own times,' 1.3-4).²³⁶ Ovid's self-awareness with regards to his poetic project, his assertion of a distinct, new place in the tradition, makes the influence of Lucretius on the epic of particular note. The *De Rerum Natura*, in its drawing together of Epicurean philosophy and poetry, requires a new form of art as its vehicle, and Lucretius is self-conscious throughout his work of his own artistic ingenuity. The use of poetry to describe Epicurean principles is a radical activity; Diogenes Laertius reports, for example, Epicurus' belief that μόνον τε τὸν σοφὸν ὀρθῶς ἄν περί τε μουσικῆς καὶ ποιητικῆς διαλέξεσθαι· ποιήματά τε ἐνεργεῖα οὐκ ἄν ποιῆσαι ('only someone wise could correctly discuss music and poetry, but he will not, in reality, write poems,' 10.119.17-18).²³⁷ The *De Rerum Natura*, with its poetic form and rich mythological fabric, defies this injunction against poetry. Lucretius emphasises the originality of his project, writing, for example: *avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante / trita solo* ('I pass through the untrodden places of the Pierides, never before worn down by a foot,' *DRN* 1.926-27 = 4.1-2).²³⁸ He also claims: *et hanc primus cum primis ipse repertus / nunc ego sum in patrias qui possim uertere uoces* ('and I myself have been discovered as the very first who can transform this [nature of things] into my native speech,' 5.336-37). Both in exploring Epicurean ideas in poetry and in expressing them in Latin, Lucretius views himself as a pioneer.

²³⁶ See Richard Tarrant, "Ovid and Ancient Literary History," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ovid*, ed. Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 20-23; Wheeler, *Discourse*, 8-30; Bömer, *I-III*, *ad loc.*

²³⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, ed. H. S. Long (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964). See also Plutarch, *De Audiendis Poetis*, 15d. For a discussion of Epicurus' rejection of poetry, and a defence of the position that the Epicurus did in fact subscribe to this negative view of poetry, see Monica Gale, *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 14-18, 129-55. See also Pierre Boyancé, *Lucrece et l'épicurisme* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963), 4: "L'originalité la plus profonde de Lucrece est sans doute là: elle est d'avoir parlé d'épicurisme en termes de poésie."

²³⁸ Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, ed. William Ellery Leonard and Stanley Barney Smith (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979).

The overwhelmingly mythological content of the *Metamorphoses* means that Ovid's relation to Lucretius' work is ambivalent. While Ovid frequently alludes to the *DRN*, and Lucretius' self-awareness of his poetic project suggests a logical connection to the *Metamorphoses*, the Epicurean's theory of myth contradicts the very framework of Ovid's epic. However, Lucretius' rejection of mythology is not simple or absolute. Far from asserting Epicurean philosophy—which urges ridding the soul of false belief in intercessory, personified gods—by a prosaic disavowal of the gods of tradition, Lucretius weaves traditional imagery in throughout his work. He calls attention to the conflict between this mythology and his philosophy by making use of conventional mythological imagery while simultaneously assuring his reader that this imagery is false. Monica Gale states: “Lucretius presents himself as both a critic of and a successor to Homer, Ennius and the other poets, assuming their authoritative position while correcting the false ideas which they spread.”²³⁹ The tension between Epicurean philosophy and mythology is clear from the very beginning of the poem, Lucretius' invocation of the goddess Venus: *Aeneadum genetrix, hominum diuomque uoluptas* ('Mother of the race of Aeneas, pleasure of men and gods,' *DRN* 1.1). In contrast to this invocation is the poet's following declaration that *nil posse creari / de nilo* ('nothing can be created out of nothing,' 1.155-56), and so all things are created *opera sine diuom* ('without the work of the gods,' 157). The gods, far from being personified, intercessory divinities like those of poetic tradition, are detached from the world and endowed with perfect peace. Lucretius' invocation of Venus, which accords with traditional poetic invocations, thus ostensibly

²³⁹ Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 114.

conflicts with his intent in writing Epicurean philosophy.²⁴⁰ Mythological imagery, then, appears side-by-side with rational explanations for such language: “Lucretius is always careful to underline the artificial nature of these personifications and make it quite clear that *natura*, Venus and Mother Earth are in no sense divine.”²⁴¹ However, the presence of such divinities pervades the work even as Lucretius disabuses his reader of belief in their literal existence.

Despite the clear discord between Lucretius’ interpretation of mythology and the content of the *Metamorphoses*, set as it is firmly in the framework of the mythological tradition, Ovid not only alludes to Lucretius, but in fact exploits the irreconcilable conflict between his own poetry and that of his predecessor. Lucretius’ language springs up again and again in the *Metamorphoses*, and in many of these cases Ovid makes Lucretius’ language speak against the Epicurean’s own philosophy. It is with the words of the *DRN* that Ovid begins his description of chaos in Book 1: *ante mare et terras et quod tegit omnia caelum / unus erat toto naturae uultus in orbe, / quem dicere Chaos; rudis indigestaque moles* (‘before the sea, and the earth, and the sky that touches everything, there was one appearance of nature in the whole cosmos, which they call Chaos: a rough and confused mass,’ 1.5-7). This chaos consists, Ovid writes, of *non bene iunctarum discordia semina rerum* (‘the discordant seeds of things not well joined,’ 9). In the *DRN*, Lucretius writes that before the atoms coalesced into the world:

nec mare nec caelum nec denique terra neque aer

nec similis nostris rebus res ulla uideri

²⁴⁰ See *ibid.*, 57: “Lucretius’ proem, when taken in isolation, is to all appearances a perfectly conventional opening invocation (except, perhaps, that the poet asks the ‘Muse’ to be his *sociam . . . scribendis versibus*, rather than actually *telling* him what to say).”

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

sed noua tempestas quaedam molesque coorta

omne genus de principiis, Discordia quorum. . . . (DRN 5.434-37)

(Neither sea, nor sky, nor even the earth, nor the sky, nor anything like our own things [could be] seen, but [there was] a new storm, and a certain mass arose, the whole origin of first principles, whose discord. . . .)

Ovid's enumeration of the parts of the cosmos and his description of chaos as a *moles*, as well as his idea of this state as *discordia*, all suggest the Lucretian vision of chaos.²⁴² The *discordia semina* of Ovid's version also echo Lucretius' *semina*, one of the terms that the Epicurean poet uses for the *primordia*, or atoms; just after this description of the cosmic disorder, for example, Lucretius explains that the parts of the cosmos come to be *e leuibus atque rutundis / seminibus* ('out of light and round seeds,' 455-56).²⁴³ Ovid's *non bene iunctarum* also evokes Lucretius' statement, just following the above description of the chaotic *moles*, that *non omnia sic poterant coniuncta manere* ('not all things were able to remain joined,' 444).²⁴⁴ Ovid's creation of the world, then, is closely aligned through its language with Lucretius' own.

However, at the same time as the later poet takes up the language of his predecessor, he manipulates Lucretius' intent. First, these are not Lucretian atoms, Stephen Wheeler points out, but the four elements, and Ovid's "initial picture of *discordia semina rerum* is not dynamic; it is a static mass of elements piled up in the

²⁴² See Bömer, *I-III, ad loc.* See also Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 14.

²⁴³ *Semina* are both sexual and atomic in the *DRN*. For a discussion of the role of *semina* as an analogy for atoms in the *DRN*, see Schrijvers: "Le point d'origine de l'assimilation particules élémentaires / semences se situe dans une circonstance commune: c'est à leur existence première que tout doit son origine (*ex illis sunt omnia primis* I 61)." P. H. Schrijvers, "Le regard sur l'invisible," in *Lucrece: huit exposés suivis de discussions*, ed. Olof Gigon, Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 24 (Geneva: Fondation Hart, 1978), 80.

²⁴⁴ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 14.

same place.”²⁴⁵ More strikingly, Ovid employs his forerunner’s language to describe precisely the opposite ideas; Wheeler notes, for example, that Lucretius mentions the *solis rota* (‘wheel of the sun,’ *DRN* 5.432), intimating the chariot of Phoebus, and “Ovid takes the hint and explicitly personifies the sun (Titan), moon (Phoebe), and sea (Amphitrite), and so mythologizes Lucretius.”²⁴⁶ And, even more clearly, Ovid directly challenges his predecessor by using a Lucretian description of chaos in his prelude to the demiurgic, divine creation of the world, thus contradicting Lucretius’ own philosophical explanation for the cosmogony, an account that entirely excludes divine participation.²⁴⁷ Lucretius’ account, intended specifically as a refutation of mythological stories of divine creation, here becomes part of Ovid’s own demiurgic cosmogony, the very kind of fable against which Lucretius rebels.

The way in which Ovid uses Lucretius’ own language against itself is echoed again at the end of the *Metamorphoses*. The Lucretian terminology at work in Pythagoras’ speech (*Met.* 75-478) has been thoroughly discussed in the scholarship. As many have observed, in this passage “Lucretian language is used to express the very opposite of Lucretian thought.”²⁴⁸ Pythagoras’ insistence on the transmigration of souls argues for the immortality of the soul, in direct opposition to Lucretius’ claim for its mortality.²⁴⁹ In particular, Pythagoras’ claim to have seen the Trojan War in another one

²⁴⁵ Ibid. See also Myers, 42-43: “Although Ovid describes these [elements] in Lucretian atomistic terms as *semina rerum* (1.9), Lucretius had, of course, attacked Empedocles’ theory that the elements were the actual primary matter (*DRN* 1.705-829).”

²⁴⁶ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 15. It is also worth considering Fabre-Serris’ arguments about the story of Pan and Syrinx; she argues that Ovid picks up on the “une présence-absence du mythe de Pan dans ce passage du *De rerum natura* [5.1379-87],” and remakes the myth of Pan out of this passage. Here, in other words, is another example of Ovid making explicit the language of mythology that permeates Lucretius, and thus making the Epicurean speak against his own philosophy. Fabre-Serris, 189.

²⁴⁷ Wheeler, *Discourse*, 30.

²⁴⁸ Solodow, 167.

²⁴⁹ Myers, 143-44.

of his soul's incarnations (15.160-64) contradicts Lucretius' criticism of such accounts in Ennius' poetry (*DRN* 1.110-35).²⁵⁰ Galinsky explains: "Overall, the passage is a final demonstration of Ovid's inversion of Lucretius by Lucretian means."²⁵¹ Just as Ovid uses Lucretius' language against Lucretian principles in his description of Chaos, so he does in the speech of Pythagoras.

These two appearances of Lucretius, at the beginning and end of the *Metamorphoses*, reveal that Ovid's use and transformation of the Epicurean is an important part of his poetic project. Far from attempting to minimise the opposition between himself and Lucretius, or criticising his forerunner directly, Ovid draws the language of the *DRN* into his work and compels it to work against itself. Ovid thus calls attention to the difference between his own poetry and that of his forerunner, giving prominence to his own voice, which has the ability to metamorphose the words of Lucretius to the extent that they even speak against their own author. Myers holds that Ovid juxtaposes philosophical and mythical accounts in the *Metamorphoses*: "[H]e ultimately is more interested in drawing attention to the narrative strategies traditionally employed to create authentication and verisimilitude than in maintaining his own authority."²⁵² Myers thus argues that Ovid's relation to Lucretius is part of his preoccupation "throughout the poem with proclaiming the freedom of the poet to create poetic illusion," his interest in exploring different kinds of authoritative voices.²⁵³ As we have seen, Ovid's allusions to and transformations of Catullus 63 and 64 in his account of

²⁵⁰ Charles Paul Segal, "Intertextuality and Immortality: Ovid, Pythagoras and Lucretius in *Metamorphoses* 15," *Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici* 46 (2001): 79.

²⁵¹ G. Karl Galinsky, "The Speech of Pythagoras at Ovid *Metamorphoses* 15.75-478," *Papers of the Leeds Latin Seminar* 10 (1998): 322.

²⁵² Myers, 158.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 58.

Attis (*Met.* 10.103-5) suggest that Ovid's poetic references are strongly connected to his own understanding of his poetic project, showing his ability to bring his predecessors into a harmony, however uneasy, with his own poetry.²⁵⁴ Just as he draws Catullus' words into this scene and transforms them, so he draws Lucretius' ideas and terminology into his original cosmogony and the speech of Pythagoras and gives them a new, opposite meaning.²⁵⁵ In doing so, Ovid draws attention to his own power as poet to take up the work of other poets and subvert it. In taking the words of a self-professed poetic innovator and himself transforming them, Ovid insists on his own, even greater artistic originality.

b. Venus and the *discors concordia*

It is clear, then, that Ovid's transformation of Lucretius' language and anti-mythological stance makes Lucretian echoes in the *Metamorphoses* an important element of Ovid's poetic project. By taking up and metamorphosing the intent of his predecessor, Ovid calls attention to the different ways in which an idea may be conveyed and to one poet's ability to completely reshape the words of another. In addition to making Lucretius' words work against themselves in order to demonstrate his poetic power and new place in the tradition, however, does Ovid take up Lucretius' own poetic philosophy in any way? This question is a particularly important one because of Lucretius' own awareness of and interest in his own poetic identity. Specifically, given the prominence of

²⁵⁴ See Chapter 3, 65-71.

²⁵⁵ For a consideration of Ovid's appropriation and transformation of Lucretius in the Narcissus story, see Philip Hardie, "Lucretius and the Delusions of Narcissus," *Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici* 20/21 (1988): 71-89. Hardie argues at 72 that "Ovid's mythological narrative of Echo and Narcissus pointedly reverses the rationalism of Lucretius' materialist account of the world; this reversal, or inversion, of the model in itself represents a continuation of Lucretian imitative practice, but turned against Lucretius."

love and erotic themes in the *Metamorphoses*, it is worth considering whether the ambivalent Lucretian conception of Venus has any influence on Ovid's image of the cosmos and the place of poetry within it.²⁵⁶ Ovid's playfulness with a remarkable variety of poetic and philosophical sources in the *Metamorphoses* has led a number of scholars to believe that he intentionally separates himself from true engagement with any of them. Due, for example, writes of Ovid's cosmogony that "there is no trace of any deeper interest in the scientific, philosophical, and theological aspects of the problem."²⁵⁷ Galinsky takes the same approach in his discussion of Pythagoras' speech: "it belongs in the general context of [Ovid's] endeavour to distance himself from philosophical creeds."²⁵⁸ Galinsky observes that Ovid inverts Lucretian principles such that they work against themselves and contribute to scenes of transformation at which Lucretius would have recoiled: ". . . Lucretius . . . had rejected the possibility of metamorphoses of humans into trees; in the *Metamorphoses*, the transformations of Daphne and of Phaethon's sisters figure prominently near the beginning of the poem."²⁵⁹ In the post-deluvian landscape of the *Metamorphoses*, however, the union of natural and human creation, along with the union of creativity and destruction, suggests that Ovid is not only appropriating Lucretius' philosophy for poetic effect, but is giving some credence to Lucretius' understanding of the natural principles that drive productivity.

The image of Venus is central to Lucretius' expression of his poetic project. The Epicurean poet's initial invocation of the goddess therefore provides important clues as to the relation between the *Metamorphoses* and the *DRN*. Lucretius' proem begins:

²⁵⁶ For the importance of love in the *Metamorphoses*, see Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, especially 30-31; and Segal, *Orpheus*, 72.

²⁵⁷ Due, 97.

²⁵⁸ Galinsky, "The Speech of Pythagoras," 322.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 322-23.

*Aeneadum genetrix, hominum diuomque uoluptas,
alma Venus, caeli subter labentia signa
quae mare nauigerum, quae terras frugiferentis
concelebras—per te quoniam genus omne animantum
concipitur uisitque exortum lumina solis. . . . (DRN 1.1-5)*

(Mother of the race of Aeneas, pleasure of men and gods, life-giving Venus, you who, under the signs of heaven that glide past, fill the ship-bearing sea, the fruit-bearing earth: since it is through you that the whole race of living things is conceived and, having coming forth, sees the light of the sun. . . .)

The Venus of the *DRN* is not, as we have already noted, the personified goddess of tradition that this invocation initially suggests, but the principle of generation, the sexual force that moves the natural world to reproduce itself. Eva Thury compares Lucretius' redefinition of Venus to the reconstruction of a broken vessel: "Lucretius does not destroy the original Venus picture but 'locates' its components in an accurate, full picture of reality."²⁶⁰ Lucretius hints at this de-personification, Gale suggests, with his description of Venus as *uoluptas*: a natural principle of pleasure.²⁶¹ Venus is not only the natural impulse of reproduction, but also the source of the creative process at the beginning of the poem. Lucretius entreats her: *te sociam studeo scribendis uersibus esse* ('I desire you to be my comrade in writing verses,' 1.24). Human creativity is intertwined with natural growth and fertility from the first lines of the *DRN* through the figure of

²⁶⁰ Eva M. Thury, "Lucretius' Poem as a Simulacrum of the Rerum Natura," *The American Journal of Philology* 108 (1987): 291. Gale emphasises the systematic nature of this process: "[Venus'] attributes are gradually stripped from her, and given instead to the blind forces of inanimate nature." Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 212. Sedley takes a more negative view of this process: "It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that [Lucretius] spends the remainder of the poem undoing the damage done by the first forty-three lines." David Sedley, "The Empedoclean Opening," in *Lucretius*, ed. Monica Gale, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2007), 66.

²⁶¹ Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 212.

Venus. The goddess is not swayed by entreaty, but “can move Lucretius’ reader: to the point where it becomes possible for him to realize that what is truly divine can be moved neither by a sense of gratitude, nor anger, nor precedent.”²⁶² Puzzlingly, this movement, apparently inspired by a traditional divinity, impels the reader beyond the traditional conceptions of the gods. The natural world and the poet are both moved to creativity by the productive force represented by the goddess Venus. Although both kinds of creativity will be redefined apart from their relation to the goddess, the invocation in Book 1 brings sexual and artistic creation together and suggests that they are necessarily related within the cosmos.

This connection between art and natural fecundity is, interestingly for our current study, suggested in Lucretius’ first lines through his description of Venus as the one who fills the *mare nauigerum*. Venus’ power works in the sea as well as on land, but rather than being connected to fish or water plants, the goddess is linked to seafaring. The use of the two adjectives in line 3, *nauiger* and *frugiferens*, has been connected to Empedocles’ use of such compounds; Garani explains that these adjectives suggest “that Lucretius is here translating into Latin a verse directly drawn from Empedocles’ poem.”²⁶³ However, Lucretius’ choice of the compound adjective *nauiger*, rather than *pisciferens*, perhaps, connects the passage to the realm of human creation rather than natural reproduction. The role of Venus in human craftsmanship is linked to Lucretius’ invocation of the goddess as a Muse for his poem, particularly because of the traditional connection between poetry

²⁶² Diskin Clay, “The Sources of Lucretius’ Inspiration,” in *Lucretius*, ed. Monica R. Gale, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2007), 29.

²⁶³ Myrto Garani, *Empedocles Redivivus: Poetry and Analogy in Lucretius* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 40. See also Sedley, 76. Sedley explains that the doubling or tripling of compound adjectives is characteristic of Empedocles’ poetry, and so Lucretius here is “consciously seeking to capture and reproduce in Latin an actual Empedoclean line.” Sedley even invents a line of Greek hexameter like one Lucretius might have reproduced: πόντον ναυσίπορον καὶ γαίης καρποφορούσας.

and seafaring. Venus may indeed be stripped of her initial personified characteristics as the poem progresses, but the proem links natural creation and human craftsmanship through the figure of the goddess. Her attributes may be redefined and separated through the rest of the *DRN*, but this initial invocation not only draws the reader in with a familiar mythological image, but also suggests the way in which art or craft and natural fecundity are inseparable.

In contrast to this doubly creative side of the Lucretian Venus, the Epicurean poet describes the goddess in opposite, destructive terms. The association of peace and destruction in the figure of Venus is suggested even in the proem, many scholars have pointed out, by Lucretius' description of the love affair between Mars and Venus (*DRN* 1.31-40). Edmunds describes the general scholarly approach thus: "The two gods are held to be refigurations of [Empedocles'] Love and Strife, who in his system are the two fundamental forces in the universe."²⁶⁴ Thury also observes that Venus' epithet, *Aeneadum genetrix*, implies the Roman character of the goddess, and this "connection between Romanness and passion and violent action prepares for the association of Venus with war."²⁶⁵ The 'demythologised' version of this myth is illustrated in detail in Book 4 of the *DRN*, where the destructive side of sexuality becomes apparent and the peaceful Venus no longer prevails:

nam uitare, plagas in amoris ne iaciamur,

non ita difficile est quam captum retibus ipsis

²⁶⁴ Lowell Edmunds, "Mars as Hellenistic Lover: Lucretius, "De rerum natura" 1.29-40 and its Subtexts," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 8 (2002): 345. While agreeing with this philosophical interpretation of the passage, Edmunds goes on to suggest that the particular image of Mars in Venus' lap takes its cue from Hellenistic art and erotic literature. See also Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 41-42, who says that this Empedoclean understanding of the passage "is strengthened by the fact that Lucretius was not the only ancient author to make the association between Empedocles' cosmic forces and the liaison between the two divinities."

²⁶⁵ Thury, 289.

exire et ualidos Veneris perrumpere nodos. (4.1146-48)

(For to shun the snares of love, lest we be cast into them, is not so difficult as, having been captured, to leave those nets and burst through the strong knots of Venus.)

This is the warlike Venus: the lover is described as *Veneris qui telis accipit ictus* ('he who receives the blows from Venus' weapons,' *DRN* 4.1052).²⁶⁶ This oppressive, destructive side of Venus balances the generative side that is the subject of the proem of Book 1. Gale explains: "Nature has a destructive as well as a creative side, and the acceptance of this truth is an important prerequisite for the attainment of *ataraxia*."²⁶⁷ This double-sided character of Venus, or *natura*, is an important aspect of Lucretius' assertion that there is no beneficent divine will overlooking the world. The human mind must accept the destructive side of Venus along with the creative one, or it will live in a state of fear, unable to grasp the workings of nature or to understand that the gods cannot be moved to pity or to anger (*DRN* 1.49).

The natural world in the *DRN*, then, has both a destructive and a productive side, and the latter consists in both fertility and artistic creativity. Although these aspects of nature are, as Gale explains, "redefined, or fragmented", they are all united in the figure of Venus in the proem of Book 1.²⁶⁸ The interdependence of these attributes of Venus should recall our previous discussion of the post-deluvian world of the *Metamorphoses*.

The *discors concordia* that acts as the principle of the re-creation of the world has, as we

²⁶⁶ In describing the wounds inflicted by love, Lucretius explains: *haec Venus est nobis* ('this is our Venus,' 4.1058). These terms echo the ones Lucretius uses to describe the true source of human fears of the Underworld. He writes of Tityos in similar terms to those he uses of Venus in Book 4: *sed Tityos nobis hic est, in amore iacentem / quem uolucres lacerant* ('Tityos, whom the birds tear as he lies dejected in love, and anxious torment consumes, is with us,' *DRN* 3.992-93). The demythologising of Venus in Book 4 is very similar to that of the Underworld in Book 3. See Clay, 29.

²⁶⁷ Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 223.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 212.

have discussed, been linked by many scholars to the Love and Strife of Empedocles.²⁶⁹ However, Ovid's clear allusions to Lucretius' language here and throughout the *Metamorphoses* suggest that we ought to read this passage as alluding to the *DRN*, rather than looking for a direct connection between Ovid and Empedocles.²⁷⁰ The fecundity of the natural world as it reemerges from the soil is clearly linked to Lucretius' account of the coming to be of the cosmos and the origin of living creatures. Lucretius writes: *tum tibi terra dedit primum mortalia saecla; / multus enim calor atque umor superabat in aruis* ('then the earth first gave you the generations of mortal things; for great warmth and dampness were abundant in the fields,' *DRN* 5.805-6). Ovid takes up Lucretius' *umor* and *calor*, and describes the spontaneous generation of animals in similar terms: *quippe ubi temperiem sumpsere umorque calorque, / concipiunt et ab his oriuntur cuncta duobus* ('for indeed, warmth and dampness became mixed, and all things began and sprang up from these two,' *Met.* 1.430-31). Even Ovid's narrative style here is reminiscent of Lucretius; Anderson remarks that *quippe ubi* (*Met.* 1.430), for example, is a scientific phrase characteristic of the *DRN*.²⁷¹ *Semina* (419) here, it seems, although they are not Epicurean atoms, are no longer the non-Lucretian elements (as they are at 1.9) but instead take the form of sexual seed, another common meaning of the word in the *DRN*.²⁷² This introduction of Lucretian *semina* is particularly striking because, as we have seen, this is a new kind of natural fecundity: plants in the Golden Age were *sine semine* (1.108).²⁷³ In the image of animals springing up from the earth, as well as the specific terminology used

²⁶⁹ Ibid. See also Nelis, 248-67; Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 16; Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 12-47.

²⁷⁰ As many scholars have analysed in detail, the *DRN* is itself in many ways Empedoclean. Garani gives a thorough account of the Empedoclean nature of the *DRN*.

²⁷¹ Anderson, *Books 1-5, ad loc.* He connects this phrase to *DRN* 1.167, 182, 242, etc.

²⁷² E.g. *DRN* 5.852.

²⁷³ See Chapter 2, 23.

to describe the scene, Ovid draws clearly upon his Lucretian model to illustrate the newness of the principles at work after the flood and the creative power of the reborn earth.

The implications of these references are worth pursuing; the difference between Ovid's allusions to the *DRN* at 1.5-9 and in the scene after the flood reveal Ovid's changing relationship to his Lucretian model in the first book of the *Metamorphoses*. While the allusions to the *DRN* in the original cosmogony use Lucretian language against Lucretian philosophy, the re-creation of the natural world after the flood involves not only linguistic allusions to the Epicurean but also something very similar to Lucretian sentiment. Indeed, the principle of *discors concordia*, while not a Lucretian phrase, is similar to the strife and peace, destruction and creation, that Lucretius understands to be the two sides of the natural world, symbolised in the figure of Venus. The natural world of the *Metamorphoses* is no longer, as it was in the original cosmogony, a place of pure *concordia* (*concordi pace*, 25), but involves discord and concord in unity. It is only out of this unity that the world becomes fecund and reproduces itself without divine aid.

It is also, compellingly, at this point in the *Metamorphoses* that the principles of love and sexual passion first emerge. As we have already noted, it is here that sexual reproduction appears in the *fecunda . . . semina rerum* (1.419).²⁷⁴ After the re-creation of the world, sexual passion also appears as the force that drives, first of all, Apollo to pursue Daphne. Ovid begins his account of this scene: *primus amor Phoebi Daphne Peneia* ('the daughter of Peneus, Daphne, was the first love of Apollo,' 452). Although *primus amor* is used to describe Daphne herself, it perhaps also suggests the first occurrence of love as a principle. While Anderson suggests that "Ovid slyly emphasizes

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

‘first,’ because Apollo was no more ‘monogamous’ than the other gods,” it seems that Ovid also ‘slyly emphasizes’ the abstract noun here, indicating the new appearance of this concept to the world of the *Metamorphoses*.²⁷⁵ Wheeler, commenting on the Empedoclean overtones of the *discors concordia*, also believes that love appears at this point: “Ovid introduces the Hesiodic (and Ovidian) theme of the universal power of love in programmatic fashion after the great flood.”²⁷⁶ The *semina* that allow the natural world to reproduce now also appear in the human realm with the many stories of gods seducing or raping mortals and the consequent offspring of these unions: *nunc Epaphus magni genitus de semine tandem / creditur esse Iouis* (‘now Epaphus was believed to have been borne from the great seed of Jove,’ 1.748-49).²⁷⁷ Love and sexual passion become powerful forces within the landscape of the *Metamorphoses*.

The prominence of love within the epic has been identified by a number of scholars. Galinsky claims that the *Metamorphoses*, like the *Amores*, operate on the principle of “*reductio ad amorem*—love is the chief agent everywhere, almost everything can be attributed to love.”²⁷⁸ Segal takes a similar approach: “In Ovid’s world love, not law, is the measure of existence.”²⁷⁹ Wheeler not only comments on the emergence of love after the flood, but also observes that the natural regeneration is linked to the love affairs of the gods: “The *discors concordia* of fire and water is transmuted into scenes of river nymphs pursued by gods burning with love.”²⁸⁰ As this connection between the

²⁷⁵ Anderson, *Books 1-5, ad loc.* Bömer only notes that Ovid intends a person here, rather than the abstract idea of love: “homo amatus.” Bömer, *Buch I-III, ad loc.* Nicoll suggests that “Ovid is here looking towards elegy rather than epic” with the idea of the “anti-love figure” who must be brought around by Cupid. W. S. M. Nicoll, “Cupid, Apollo, and Daphne (Ovid, *Met.* 1.452 ff.),” *The Classical Quarterly* 30 (1980): 177.

²⁷⁶ Wheeler, *Imago Mundi*, 116.

²⁷⁷ See Chapter 2, 27-28.

²⁷⁸ Galinsky, *Ovid’s Metamorphoses*, 30.

²⁷⁹ Segal, *Orpheus*, 72.

²⁸⁰ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 36.

discors concordia and the rape scenes of the *Metamorphoses* suggests, Ovid's Venus, or *amor*, is as destructive as she is creative. While the *discors concordia* and sexual reproduction are fruitful, they are also the forces behind the great violence of sexual passion in the *Metamorphoses*. It is this passion that most frequently disrupts the *locus amoenus*, usually resulting in rape.

Just as sexual desire results in violence again and again within the epic, so Venus is herself associated with militaristic power. Venus' role in the rape of Proserpina—an archetypal example of the *locus amoenus* and its destruction—is particularly illustrative of the destructive side of the goddess and of sexuality. Venus urges her son to shoot at Dis, telling him that he already controls Jove and the sea with his powers, and it remains only to take the third region of the cosmos, the underworld: *Tartara quid cessant?* ('Why is Tartarus wanting?' 5.371). Johnson explains that there is here "a correlation between imperial, divine, and sexual power."²⁸¹ Not only does Venus speak of taking over the realms of the cosmos, but she also makes use of weapons in order to do so: "Cupid's *arma, tela, and sagittas* have become Venus' literal weapons in a struggle to extend her empire over the 'third realm'."²⁸² Two references to the *Aeneid* within the goddess' speech to her son heighten the sense of militarism in the scene. Venus addresses Cupid: *arma manusque meae, mea, nate, potentia* ('arms and my hands, my power, my son,' 5.365). The line clearly echoes two passages of the *Aeneid*: Venus' entreaty to Cupid, *nate, meae uires, mea magna potentia* ('child, my strength, my great power,' *Aen.* 1.664), and the very first line of the epic, *arma virumque cano*. . . .²⁸³ Johnson interprets Ovid's double allusion to the *Aeneid* thus: "Vergil's Venus is undoubtedly ambitious, but

²⁸¹ Patricia J. Johnson, "Constructions of Venus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* V," *Arethusa* 29 (1996): 126.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 128.

²⁸³ Anderson, *Books 1-5, ad loc.*; Johnson, "Constructions of Venus," 133-34.

allegedly on behalf of the Rome of the future, and particularly her grandson Ascanius. Ovid's Venus, by contrast, is ambitious for her own empire of love; her only concern is the extent, and extension, of her own territory."²⁸⁴ Ovid's Venus is as destructive as that of Lucretius; the militaristic language with which he depicts the goddess recalls Lucretius' own *Veneris . . . telis . . . ictus* ('blows from the weapons of Venus,' 4.1052). Ovid's 'Venus', or the principle of love that emerges after the flood in the *Metamorphoses*, is both creative and destructive.²⁸⁵ These two sides of love and sexual passion are inextricably bound up with one another in the *discors concordia* of the post-deluvian cosmos.

c. Venus, Art and the Golden Age

In the proem of the *DRN*, as we have seen, the figure of Venus represents the power that moves both natural and human creativity: she is the force that fills the *mare nauigerum* (*DRN* 1.3) and the Muse who comes as a *socia* (24) to Lucretius' endeavour, as well as the impulse that drives the natural world to reproduce itself. Lucretius' Venus, then, is an apt figure for the post-deluvian world of the *Metamorphoses* not simply because she holds together productivity and destruction in a kind of *discors concordia*, but also because natural fecundity and art are united in her domain. As we have discussed, Deucalion and Pyrrha's re-creation of the human race out of stone, a process that is described as an *ars* (1.380) and mimics the activity of sculpting, is linked to the

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 135.

²⁸⁵ This is also vividly apparent in the erotic motif of the hunt that permeates the *Metamorphoses*. *Venatio* and *amor* have a strong but nevertheless troubled relationship within the epic. See Davis. See also Parry, 270: "Weapons, violence, assault are the implements of desire in the world of the *Metamorphoses*."

fertility of the natural world, the fruitful *discors concordia*.²⁸⁶ This very Lucretian idea of nature, or Venus, as both creative and violent, and of art as bound up in this two-sided fecundity, warrants further consideration.

As we have analysed in detail, the motif of the Golden Age in the *Metamorphoses* has important implications for Ovid's understanding of his own role as a poet; art, in the epic, participates in the world of the *discors concordia* in the way in which it emerges only when the Golden Age is destroyed and yet takes on something of the harmonising power of the demiurge.²⁸⁷ Because of the traditional depiction of the Golden Age as devoid of all human craft, from agriculture to seafaring, the image has a place of great importance in any poet's understanding of human creativity and therefore of poetry itself. Indeed, despite Lucretius' refusal to align himself with a traditional, mythological image of the Golden Age, his account of the origins of humanity has much in common with the conventional first age of man.²⁸⁸ He writes of the first humans, for example: *quod sol atque imbres dederant, quod terra crearat / sponte sua, satis id placabat pectora donum* ('that which the sun and showers gave, that which the earth created of its own accord: this gift was enough to please their hearts,' *DRN* 5.937-38). Lucretius, however, also explains the less-than-ideal *curae* (982) of these people: *saecla ferarum / infestam miseris faciebant saepe quietem* ('the races of wild beasts made rest dangerous for those unfortunate people,' 982-83). Despite certain idyllic features of the primitive landscape, then, this existence is far from the Hesiodic paradisaic state. Gale writes: "This

²⁸⁶ See Chapter 2, especially 24-28. See especially Solodow, 204.

²⁸⁷ See Chapter 2.

²⁸⁸ See Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 161-82: Gale gives a thorough analysis of the various aspects of Lucretius' 'Golden Age'. See also Kenneth J. Reckford, "Some Appearances of the Golden Age," *The Classical Journal* 54 (1958): 81-82. Reckford explains that "the spontaneous nourishment of the first men by the earth and her creation then of a larger, stronger species are reminiscent of the Golden Age."

combination of partial acceptance and partial contradiction of the Hesiodic myth is made more effective by the careful juxtaposition of apparently idyllic and harshly realistic sections. . . .”²⁸⁹ There is no period of divine harmony, despite Lucretius’ clear references to the tradition of the Golden Age, for hardship and trouble subsist at every stage of human existence.

Lucretius’ depiction of Venus, then, has much to do with his ambivalent view of the ‘Golden Age’. Venus, as we have seen, is *uoluptas*, the ‘pleasure of men and gods’ (*DRN* 1.1). She is not, however, purely soothing pleasure, but instead encompasses also the powerful fire of sexual passion, in which pleasure and pain, creation and destruction are mixed. Gale makes several observations about the character of Venus that suggest intriguing links between the goddess and the ‘Golden Age’ of the *DRN*. First, Gale remarks on the persistent association between human art and reproduction, observing that in the proem to Book 4 of the *DRN*, images of flowers and springs of water are central to Lucretius’ depiction of the *auia Pieridum . . . loca* (4.1): “This association renews the analogy between natural and poetic creativity suggested by Lucretius’ appeal to Venus in the proem.”²⁹⁰ She goes on to explain: “Perhaps more significantly, both flowers and springs/streams are symbols for pleasure. The *locus amoenus* which is the setting for the simple Epicurean meal in 2.29-33 and the music-making of early man in 5.1392-6 features a stream and spring flowers.”²⁹¹ Gale later connects this Golden Age imagery specifically to the figure of Venus: she is “a kind of spirit of spring” and all the natural beauty and pleasure this implies.²⁹² As these associations suggest, Golden Age imagery

²⁸⁹ Gale, *Myth and Poetry*, 170.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 147.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 147-48.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 217-18.

in the *DRN* is closely connected to fertility through the figure of Venus and the account of the origin of humanity, the spontaneous production of humans out of the earth; Lucretius thus takes over the traditional imagery of the Golden Age and associates it not with divine harmony but with sexual fertility. As the proems of Books 1 and 4 illustrate, this Golden Age fruitfulness is artistic as well as natural. In keeping with Lucretius' portrayal of the gods as non-intercessory and devoid of all care, the 'Golden Age' of humanity involves natural, and not divine, pleasure. In the figure of Venus, then, he takes up both Golden Age imagery and its opposite: she is an image of fertility, of human art and seafaring, and of destructive violence.

The imagery that Lucretius associates with Venus and with the origin of humankind is highly evocative for our present discussion of Ovid and his poetic project, in light of the connections we have already made between the *DRN* and Ovid's *discors concordia*, as well as the way in which Ovid links creativity and the Golden Age. Lucretius' 'Golden Age', through its associations with Venus and its ambivalent appearance in Book 5, is akin to the *discors concordia* of the post-deluvian cosmos in the *Metamorphoses*. In fact, the Lucretian earth's production of sustenance *sponte sua* (*DRN* 5.938) for the original humans is echoed in Ovid's depiction of the earth producing *cetera . . . animalia* after the flood *sponte sua* (*Met.* 1.416-17). The *discors concordia* after the flood is fecund, both naturally and artistically, and this state is both a kind of Golden Age, in its spontaneity, and its opposite, in its fertility, appearance of discord and emergence of art. The way that Ovid draws on Lucretius' cosmogony here and at 1.5ff calls attention to the conspicuous difference between the first creation of the world in the *Metamorphoses* and the re-creation after the flood; he thus accentuates the new, doubly-

creative capacity of the post-deluvian world by comparing it to the order of the original cosmos. Art, he suggests, is only possible in this second creation, where the Golden Age is present and yet radically transformed.

This connection between Golden Age imagery, art and destruction is present to every occurrence of the *locus amoenus* within the *Metamorphoses*; the idyllic imagery of the Golden Age is linked to sexual passion, and as such the *locus amoenus* is host to destructive violence. In the image of the *locus amoenus*, ubiquitous to the world of the *Metamorphoses*, the Golden Age landscape and its violent disruption are both related in a certain way to the cosmos of the *DRN*; the lushness of the natural world, the violent sexual passion of the intruder and the art or metamorphosis that results from this destruction are all aspects of the fertile power of Lucretius' Venus. 'Venus', in the *Metamorphoses*, is in a certain way both the imagery associated with the *locus amoenus* and the power that destroys it. The fertility of human artistry, Ovid seems to argue through his recourse to a Lucretian cosmos, cannot exist in a world of divine harmony. The Lucretian principles at work in the *discors concordia* and the *locus amoenus* suggest an inevitable connection between fertility, destruction and artistic creation.

This relationship between art and sexual passion is present not only figuratively in the *topos* of the *locus amoenus*, but also through the personified figure of Venus in the *Metamorphoses*. Segal, who, as we have already seen, argues that love is a central theme of Ovid's epic, claims: "Art and love . . . fuse as means of reaching truth and bringing happiness into human life."²⁹³ The connection between art and Venus is made most explicit in the episode of Pygmalion (*Met.* 10.243-97). At the festival of Venus, Pygmalion prays to the goddess to give him a woman *similis* (276) to his own statue, and

²⁹³ Segal, *Orpheus*, 72. See above, 128-29.

Venus brings the *eburnea uirgo* (275) to life. Solodow writes: “The aid rendered by Venus may represent several things: direct divine participation in the creation of art, or an inexplicable superhuman element, or the need for love to be present in addition to skill.”²⁹⁴ Whatever this divine intervention specifically represents, there is a clear association here between Venus—the power of sexual love—and human creativity. Simultaneously, however, Ovid evokes the dangerously destructive capacity of Venus through the story that directly precedes that of Pygmalion. It is Venus, in the story of the Propoetides (*Met.* 10.220-42), who punishes the women by turning them into stone. The two passages contrast starkly: in the first, Venus takes away life from the Propoetides and transforms them into stone, while in the second, she gives life to the marble of Pygmalion’s statue. The source of creative power may also be the source of destruction; the two are here linked, as they are in the *DRN*, but in strikingly anti-Lucretian, mythological manner.

All this is not to claim, of course, that that *Metamorphoses* is converted to a Lucretian worldview after the scene of the flood. The world of the *Metamorphoses* is clearly distant from the Epicurean’s philosophy: far from being redefined as natural principles, the gods of the epic are fully personified and anthropomorphic, possessing all the qualities that Lucretius is horrified to imagine belonging to the gods, who instead enjoy *summa . . . pace* (*DRN* 1.45) and are *privata dolore omni, privata periculis* (‘deprived of every sorrow, deprived of dangers,’ 47). Even in the regeneration of the world, Ovid seems to deliberately dispute Lucretian principles even as he makes these principles an integral part of the re-created cosmos. Although he links art and natural fertility in the post-deluvian chaos, he suggests artistic creation in the regeneration of

²⁹⁴ Solodow, 219.

humans, a particularly anti-Lucretian account of divine intervention and metamorphosis. The Python, as well, is the kind of monster whose existence Lucretius specifically denies (*DRN* 5.837-48). These episodes, Wheeler states, create “a pointedly anti-Lucretian scenario, in which humans are produced by divine metamorphosis and mythological creatures by the scientifically understood causes of spontaneous generation.”²⁹⁵ Metamorphosis and poetic *portenta*, antithetical to Lucretian principles, are the cornerstones of Ovid’s epic. This is true as well of each *locus amoenus*; while the essential unity of creation—both artistic and natural—and destruction strongly evokes Lucretius, the entire idea of metamorphosis, as well as the mythological creatures and divinities for which these Golden Age groves are the settings, contradicts Lucretian philosophy.

Rejecting any possibility of philosophical intent in the *Metamorphoses*, however, is to neglect an important aspect of Ovid’s poetic project. Myers’ claim that Ovid is “drawing attention to the narrative strategies traditionally employed to create authentication,” while it may hold true at times, does not give full credit to the way in which Ovid takes up the ideas that emerge in the *DRN* about the nature of creation. Ovid’s *discors concordia*, the cyclic unity of creation and destruction that pervades the *Metamorphoses*, is a strongly Lucretian theory. By creating a cosmos that operates according to these Lucretian principles, in which human art and natural fertility are united to each other and to their destructive opposite, Ovid treats the activity of artistic creation as a cosmic concern. The close linguistic connections between the post-deluvian regeneration of the cosmos and the cosmogony in the *DRN*, as well as the relationship between this *discors concordia* and the motif of the *locus amoenus*, connects Ovid’s

²⁹⁵ Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 36.

poetic philosophy in the *Metamorphoses* to Lucretius' account of the cosmos and its creation. Through this allusive framework, Ovid illustrates that art is an integral part of the workings of the cosmos as a whole: artistic creation is essentially connected to the natural world.

d. Art and the Cosmos in Parallel²⁹⁶

Despite the way in which Ovid takes up Lucretian philosophy in his suggestions about the nature of art, Ovid reverses Lucretius' ideas not only by juxtaposing them with the mythological images that Lucretius specifically rejects, but also by inverting Lucretius' ideas about the priority of the cosmic order over poetry. The relationship between natural fecundity and poetry that is suggested in the invocation to Venus in Book 1 is the beginning of an extended and complex connection between cosmic and poetic structure over the course of the *DRN*. Boyancé remarks, in fact, that it is insufficient to view Venus “comme la nature créatrice, comme la force fécondante de la création”; instead, we should also regard Venus, as Lucretius instructs us, as “celle qui fait tout venir aux rivages de la lumière.”²⁹⁷ Not only do nature and Lucretius' poetry have the same inspiration, but they have the same effect: just as nature lifts living beings to the light, so this poetry illuminates the mind of its reader.²⁹⁸ The same parallel is suggested in Lucretius' account of language, where *natura and utilitas* drive humans to speak: *uarios linguae sonitus natura subegit / mittere, et utilitas expressit nomina rerum* ('nature

²⁹⁶ This section is partially based on a paper, “The Philosophy of Poetics in the *De Rerum Natura*,” that I delivered at the 11th Annual Independent Meeting of the Ancient Philosophy Society in Sundance, Utah.

²⁹⁷ Boyancé, 65. See *DRN* 1.5 cf. 1.146-8 (where Lucretius compares his philosophy to the sun).

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 64: “Les craintes qui dévastent la vie des hommes sont toutes pareilles à celles des enfants qui, pour un rien, tremblent dans les ténèbres, et c'est à dissiper ces craintes et ces ténèbres que doit s'attacher le système, *naturae species ratioque*. . . .”

compelled them to utter the various sounds of the tongue, and utility formed the names of things,' *DRN* 5.1029-30). These same principles explain the workings of the whole cosmos, the *omnem / naturam rerum ac . . . utilitatem* ('the whole nature and utility of things,' 4.24-25).²⁹⁹ When music and poetry come to be, they arise out of imitation: *liquidas avium voces imitarier ore / ante fuit multo quam levia carmina cantu / concelebrare homines possent aurisque iuvare* ('imitating the clear voices of the birds with their mouths came far earlier than filling light songs with singing and pleasing the ears,' 5.1379-81).³⁰⁰ Language and poetry share principles and structure, then, with the cosmos as a whole. Poetry, Lucretius begins to suggest, corresponds in a certain way to the order of the universe, and has the power to elucidate this order to its reader.

Lucretius' descriptions of his own poetry in the *DRN* suggest further ways in which poetry imitates cosmic order. In an image that pervades the *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius connects the letters that he uses to write and the atoms that make up the cosmos, using letters as an analogy for atoms. As words cannot exist without letters, so the physical world cannot exist without atoms: *ut potius multis communia corpora rebus / multa putes esse, ut verbis **elementa** videmus, / quam sine principiis ullam rem existere posse* ('you could more easily think that many bodies are common to many things, as we see letters are to words, than think that anything is able to exist without first principles,' 1.196-97). This term *elementa*, which Lucretius here uses to signify letters, is also used as

²⁹⁹ Friedländer makes note of this natural origin of speech. P. Friedländer, "Pattern of Sound and Atomistic Theory in Lucretius," in *Lucretius*, ed. Monica R. Gale, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2007), 351-52.

³⁰⁰ Poetry as a form of imitation is similar, for example, to the development of agriculture: *specimen sationis et insitionis origo / ipsa fuit rerum primum natura creatrix* ('nature herself, the creator of things, was the first model of sowing and the origin of grafting,' *DRN* 5.1361-62).

a term for atoms.³⁰¹ The fundamental components of written language, and thus poetry, are therefore analogous to those of the universe itself. Friedländer shows that this analogy is at also work in the wordplay that pervades the *DRN*; Lucretius establishes “an image of the world of atoms through the sounds and the order of words.”³⁰² By aligning the ‘atoms’ of language with those of the universe, and illustrating this connection further through wordplay, Lucretius creates in his poetry a mirror of the organic whole of the cosmos.

This mirroring is apparent also beyond the atomic level. The way in which words are woven reflects the weaving together of cosmic structures. Lucretius writes, for example: *sed nunc ut repetam coeptum pertexere dictis* (‘but now I will seek once more to weave in words what was begun,’ 1.418), echoing the way in which the particles of the universe are held together (e.g. *texta tenentur*, 1.176). In the weaving together of both words and the cosmos, a necessity for order arises. Each being in the universe has its own limits and capacities, according to the laws of nature. Lucretius explains that each species has particular limits that govern its appearance and activity; the markings on birds, for example, appear in order (*in ordine*, *DRN* 1.589) according to these limits. Poetry, too, must remain *in ordine* if it is to retain its meaning: *quin etiam refert nostris in versibus ipsis / cum quibus et quali sint ordine quaeque locata*, ‘it even matters in our verses themselves with which and in what order they are placed,’ 2.1013-14).³⁰³ The order and structure of poetry thus mirrors that of the cosmos as a whole. The poetic form of the

³⁰¹ Snyder in fact finds that Lucretius associates the term *elementa* more with atoms and less with letters as the *DRN* progresses, and in Book 6 uses the word exclusively for atoms. Jane McIntosh Snyder, *Puns and Poetry in Lucretius’ De Rerum Natura* (Amsterdam: Grüner, 1980), 46. See also Thury, 279.

³⁰² Friedländer, 366.

³⁰³ See Thury, 278, for the way in which this connection suggests that the poem acts as a kind of *simulacrum*.

DRN, Lucretius suggests, thus gives the reader access to what is otherwise invisible to him: the atoms and the way they are joined.³⁰⁴ Through his sensible encounter with the poem, the reader is able to reach beyond what is available to his senses and experience the atomic structure of the world.

For Lucretius, then, poetry offers a window into the unseen truth of the cosmic structure, because it mirrors the workings of the natural world. As we have seen, Ovid's allusions to Lucretius seem to reveal a connection between art and the cosmos in the *Metamorphoses* as well, wherein art and nature are linked through a kind of *discors concordia*. However, in a striking way, Ovid reverses the priority of art and nature in his own epic. Solodow's work on the *Metamorphoses* is perhaps the most thorough in its discussion of this surprising reversal of art and nature: "art becomes the norm, the prime creator or definer of reality."³⁰⁵ Art in the epic gives, Solodow explains, a way to understand the world: "Art/metamorphosis transmutes what was personal or individual into a monument for all, and these monuments give us our bearings, identifying and representing and even creating for us notions such as ferocity. Without art, Ovid says in effect, the world would be not so much unlovely as unintelligible."³⁰⁶ Like Lucretius, Ovid suggests that art gives a means of understanding the world. Unlike his predecessor, however, he claims priority for art rather than the world.

This reversal of the conventional, and particularly the Lucretian, ordering of art and nature is also evident in the way that Ovid depicts the initial cosmic creation. The cosmogony suggests the idea of art through the use of particular terms, including *opifex* and *iners*, and the division of the cosmos into a tripartite form that alludes to the creation

³⁰⁴ The atoms are, for example, often spoken of as *caecus*, e.g. *DRN* 1.328.

³⁰⁵ Solodow, 210. See also Ahl, 236; Feldherr, "Metamorphosis," 176.

³⁰⁶ Solodow, 213-14.

of Achilles' shield in the *Iliad*.³⁰⁷ The creation reminds the reader of art not only because of this language, but also because of the way in which Ovid brings in "as many forms of tradition as possible" in explaining how the cosmos comes to be.³⁰⁸ In his description of the cosmogony, Ovid alludes not only to Lucretius, but to Homer, Hesiod, Callimachus, Horace, Virgil and others.³⁰⁹ This great multiplicity of sources also suggests to the reader that creation has a poetic nature; as he describes the demiurge bringing harmony to chaos, Ovid himself pulls together myriad sources and compels them into harmony with his own voice. Galinsky also remarks that the poetic nature of the cosmogony is brought out by Ovid's description of the demiurge as *melior natura*, a phrase which the *melior pars mei* (15.875) of the poem's *sphragis* seems to echo, thus aligning Ovid's own voice as poet with the creator of the universe.³¹⁰ The cosmic order of the *Metamorphoses* is, as it is in the *DRN*, parallel to the order of the poem itself. However, Ovid reverses the way that the analogy operates in the *DRN*; in the *Metamorphoses*, in contrast, the structure of the cosmos mirrors the structure of poetry. Thus Ovid simultaneously takes up the principles of Lucretius and inverts them; art, which is in the *DRN* an imitation of cosmic order, becomes instead the reality that the cosmos imitates.

Suggestions of the *DRN*, both linguistic and philosophical, thus permeate the *Metamorphoses*, and are integral to Ovid's poetic project. In certain instances, Ovid compels Lucretius' words to speak against themselves, illustrating Ovid's own power of poetic transformation. Further, by forcing Lucretian ideas into an unsettling union with

³⁰⁷ Wheeler, "Imago Mundi," 106; Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 30; Wheeler, *Narrative Dynamics*, 13; Chapter 2, 25-26. Solodow explains: "The language here, tellingly placed, suggests that as the world became recognizable in form and occupied increasingly by animals, plants, and objects whose names and characteristics are known to us, it was evolving in the direction of greater artfulness." Solodow, 213. See also Kenney, 145-47.

³⁰⁸ Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 22.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 22-26.

³¹⁰ See also the Conclusion, 141.

opposing mythological and metamorphic images, Ovid emphasises the power of his own voice as a harmonising force in the poem. In the way that the pervasive theme of the *discors concordia* recalls Lucretian principles, however, Ovid makes the philosophy of the *DRN*, particularly the association of creation, both human and natural, and destruction, a central theme of his poem. It is through this *discors concordia* that Ovid suggests the conditions of artistic creation, the union of harmony and chaos out of which art emerges. The way in which this *discors concordia* reflects the cosmos of the *DRN* suggests a Lucretian connection between cosmos and art, nature and poetry; Ovid's many allusions to the *DRN* thus make artistic creation a cosmic principle, drawing poetry and the universe into parallel structure. Lucretius' philosophy, therefore, has a valuable role to play in the world of the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid nonetheless never allows one philosophic or poetic model to speak clearly or exclusively in his poem, and refuses Lucretius' conception of poetry as a mirror of cosmic structure. Instead, the truth of the *Metamorphoses* is a poetic one, and cosmic creation only a mirroring of this truth.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

At the ending of the *Metamorphoses*, as at the beginning, Ovid reveals himself as a master of poetic allusion and metamorphosis. In the poem's *sphragis*, he declares:

*Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iouis ira nec ignis
nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere uetustas.
cum uolet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi;
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum. . . .* (8.871-76)

(And now I have completed this work, which neither the anger of Jove, nor fire, nor the sword, nor devouring age will be able to efface. Let that day, which has no right over anything except this body, finish the course of my uncertain life when it wishes; I, enduring, will nevertheless be borne by my better part above the high stars, and my name will be imperishable. . . .)

This statement of poetic immortality, this image of the perennial poet soaring, alone, beyond the stars, is a forceful coda to a poem rich in illustrations of poetic virtuosity and artistic creativity. The *sphragis* is an even stronger declaration of the poet's imperishability than Ovid's predecessors had made; Anderson notes that while Virgil and Horace "suggested that their poetry would live only as long as Rome," Ovid intimates that the *Roma aeterna* is impossible by "his juxtaposition of rising Rome to the fallen

cities of the past.”³¹¹ Segal also observes that the appearance of this conclusion in an epic poem is “far more of a shock than would be the case at the end of a more personal poem or at the end of a collection of separate personal lyrics.”³¹² Despite the great impact of Ovid’s statement, however, his words make it clear that he is not, in fact, alone in his flight to the heavens. It is the words of Horace that carry him into the sky: in these few lines, Ovid echoes Horace’s *Carmina* repeatedly.

Ovid’s professions of immortality are distinctly connected to Horace’s own claims of poetic innovation and imperishability. Ovid’s *ferar*, as well as the flight imagery of the *sphragis*, echo Horace’s *Carm.* 2.20: *non usitata nec tenui ferar / penna . . . / vates* (‘I, a *vates*, will be borne on wings neither familiar nor delicate. . . ,’ 1-3).³¹³ The first lines of Ovid’s epilogue, with the verb *exigo*, along with the poet’s claim to be *perennis*, recall Horace’s *Carm.* 3.30: *Exegi monumentum aere perennius* (‘I have completed a monument more enduring than bronze,’ 3.30.1).³¹⁴ The words *parte . . . meliore mei* also evoke Horace’s *multa . . . pars mei* (‘great part of myself,’ 3.30.6).³¹⁵ At the same time, Ovid recalls the opening poem of the *Carmina* and surpasses Horace’s sentiment: *sublimi feriam sidera vertice* (‘I will strike the stars with my uplifted head,’ *Carm.* 1.1.36) becomes *super alta perennis / astra ferar*. Ovid’s poetic flight will carry him beyond the stars on which Horace will strike his head. Moreover, Tarrant argues that

³¹¹ William S. Anderson, “Multiple Change in the *Metamorphoses*,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 94 (1963): 27. See Chapter 4, especially 109-111 for a discussion of the cyclic movement implied at the end of the poem.

³¹² Charles Paul Segal, “Myth and Philosophy in the *Metamorphoses*: Ovid’s Augustanism and the Augustan Conclusion of Book XV,” *The American Journal of Philology* 90 (1969): 290.

³¹³ See Franz Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen, Kommentar Buch XIV-XV* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1986), *ad loc.*

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, *ad loc.* Feldherr notes that Ovid’s *iam* “has emulated and updated” the claim of Horace, emphasising Ovid’s position as successor. Andrew Feldherr, *Playing Gods: Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Politics of Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 79.

³¹⁵ See Galinsky, “The Speech of Pythagoras,” 326; Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 24; Bömer, *Buch XIV-XV*, *ad loc.*

Ovid's line *si quid habent ueri uatum praesagia* ('if the presages of the *vates* have any truth,' 15.879) is "probably intended to signal the allusion to [Horace's] prediction"; in other words, Ovid here hints that the *praesagia* are Horace's own professions of poetic immortality.³¹⁶ The final moment of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is strikingly rife with allusions to his forerunner; the poet's genius flies above the stars carrying with it the poetic tradition and not its own voice alone.³¹⁷

Ovid's epic is thus framed with images of artistic creation: in Book 1, his invocation and the cosmogony—which is, as we have seen, recounted in the language of artistry—and in Book 15, the flight of the immortal poet to the heavens. The ending and the beginning share a pronounced allusiveness, both steeped in the poetic projects of Ovid's predecessors. While Ovid in his proem refutes Horace's project of the *Ars Poetica* by beginning his epic *ab origine mundi* (*Met.* 1.3) and not *in medias res* (*Ars P.* 146-48), in his conclusion he aligns himself with his forerunner's endeavour in the *Carmina* and then surpasses it.³¹⁸ The first book of the *Metamorphoses* is in fact, as we have seen, densely allusive, forcing numerous accounts of the poet's craft, the cosmogony and the origin of humankind to come into a tenuous harmony held together only by Ovid's pen. In the flood, we see dolphins in the trees (1.302) and a boar in the waves (305), the very images that Horace proscribed (*Ars P.* 29-30), alongside Horace's own image of fish caught in an elm tree (*Met.* 1.296 cf. *C.* 1.2.9); Ovid thus twists his predecessor's words

³¹⁶ Richard Tarrant, "Ancient Receptions of Horace," in *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*, ed. Stephen Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 277.

³¹⁷ Ovid also evidently echoes Ennius in his conclusion, or at least alludes to those aspects of Horace's claim to immortality that are themselves inspired by Ennius. See Galinsky, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Chapter 1 n38; for Ennius' influence on Virgil and Horace, see Steele Commager, *The Odes of Horace: A Critical Study* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 308-310.

³¹⁸ For the relationship between Ovid's proem and the *Ars Poetica*, see in particular Fantham, *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 5.

so as to make them speak against their author.³¹⁹ The *sphragis* of the epic echoes the first book, as Ovid compels Horace's voice to sing not the earlier poet's own immortality but that of Ovid himself. Just as Orpheus sings the *locus amoenus* into being by drawing shady trees into a harmonious grove, Ovid brings his many poetic sources, including Horace, into his epic so that their allegiances shift to their new author. The poet's conclusion recollects not only his invocation but the cosmogony itself; Ovid is drawn upward *parte . . . meliore mei* ('by my better part,' 15.875), which recalls the demiurge, the *melior natura* (1.21).³²⁰ Ovid reminds us even in the final lines that the art of creating poetry is similar to cosmic creation and that, in fact, the former is prior to the latter.³²¹ Art is definitive of truth in the *Metamorphoses*; the many voices that play roles in the epic come to speak not their original philosophies and poetics but the passions of Ovid himself.

Ovid's epic ends with the medium of his immortality: *ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama / (si quid habent ueri uatum praesagia) uiuam* ('I will be spoken of by the mouths of the people, and I will live in fame through all generations, if the presages of the *vates* have any truth,' 15.877-78). A. J. Boyle observes: "It is neither Jupiter nor the princeps who guarantees immortality: it is poetry, or more specifically, the reader of poetry, who will ensure the truth value of *Metamorphoses*' final claim."³²² Ovid's poetic voice will endure so long as it is spoken. The presence of Horace's words within this final claim, however, suggest the danger as well as the power of this mode of immortality. Horace's own claims to eternal life appear here, *spoken* in the words of

³¹⁹ See Introduction, 5-6.

³²⁰ See Galinsky, "The Speech of Pythagoras," 326.

³²¹ See Chapter 5, 132-37.

³²² A. J. Boyle, "Ovid and Greek Myth," in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, ed. Roger D. Woodward (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 376.

Ovid. The final lines of the *Metamorphoses*, then, illustrate not only the completion and enduring power of Ovid's own project, but also the principles of poetic creation as they appear throughout the epic. Art is not creation *ex nihilo*, but part of a perpetual cycle of form and formlessness, harmony and chaos, that persists in the epic through the imagery of the Golden Age and the *locus amoenus*. The poet takes up the tradition and reshapes it, causing it to sing in harmony with his own endeavour. The same principles that allow for the creation of art are capable of its destruction; not only can the poet be destroyed by the viciousness of his audience, like Orpheus by the Ciconian women, but he can be transformed in the speaking of his successors.³²³ Just as Horace's fame here endures as part of Ovid's own claims to immortality, so Ovid himself will be metamorphosed in the cycle through which poetry is made possible.

The importance of these many interactions between Ovid and his poetic forerunners to the *Metamorphoses* suggests, of course, myriad questions that could extend and develop the present study. Any account of the Golden Age naturally lends itself to questions about the role and importance of human craft; even within Hesiod's *Works and Days*, the poet juxtaposes his conception of work and the two kinds of strife with his depiction of the idyllic first Age of Man. By limiting ourselves to Ovid's epic, and to its relationship with particular poetic precedents, we have been unable to explore here the degree to which the Golden Age is associated with views of artistic endeavour in the works of other poets. As just one example, to return to Ovid's relationship with Horace's *Carmina*, Horace too in *Carm.* 1.3 presents a tension between humankind's

³²³ See Feldherr, *Playing Gods*, 79-83 for a consideration of Ovid's *sphragis*. Feldherr notes the complex relation between substance and immortality in this passage: Ovid's work "is most powerful when it is nothing, when it lives only on breath and the shifting doubleness of *fama*." 81. This existence, however, is by its very nature a kind of nothingness. In a similar way to what we have suggested above, the perpetuity of Ovid's name is linked to its insubstantial nature; what makes it endure is also what threatens it.

audacity, symbolised especially by seafaring, and its achievement. While ostensibly presenting a criticism of the daring that drives humans to venture onto the sea, Horace's suggestion of a connection between this temerity and the creation of poetry hints that human greatness, including art, is only possible in a world where man has transgressed the *non tangenda . . . vada*.³²⁴ Such appearances of seafaring and Golden Age imagery in the poets who precede Ovid may elucidate the use of this language in the *Metamorphoses* and help to clarify the self-aware Roman understanding of poetic creation and allusion in a more general way.

The philosophy of language itself at work in the epic may also prove valuable in understanding the relationship between art and nature and between symbol and object in the *Metamorphoses*. As we have seen, Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* involves an intricate relationship between poetry and cosmos, such that the language of the poem reflects the cosmic structure at every level, from particular letters to the order of its verses.

Friedländer observes that wordplay in the poem allows words to imitate cosmic structure; thus Lucretius explains that wood, *lignis*, and fire, *ignis*, must share elements or wood could not burn (1.891-906).³²⁵ Frederick Ahl has studied in depth the relationship between words and the physical world of the *Metamorphoses*, discovering that Ovid "accompanies his descriptions of change in physical shape with changes in the shape of

³²⁴ For a negative reading of human audacity in *Carm.* 1.3, see e.g. David West, *Horace Odes 1: Carpe Diem. Text, Translation and Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 16; Joseph Pucci, "Horace and Virgilian Mimesis: A Re-Reading of 'Odes' 1.3," *The Classical World* 85 (1992): 667; Michael C. J. Putnam, *Poetic Interplay: Catullus and Horace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 30. For a positive reading of this daring, see especially J. P. Elder, "Horace, C., I, 3," *The American Journal of Philology* 73 (1952): 144; David A. Traill, "Horace C. 1.3: A Political Ode?" *The Classical Journal* 78 (1982-1983): 135; Matthew S. Santirocco, *Unity and Design in Horace's Odes* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 30.

³²⁵ Friedländer, 366. See Chapter 5, 134.

the words with which he describes those changes.”³²⁶ Such linguistic investigation could prove highly valuable in understanding the role of art and nature; indeed, Solodow argues that “language, . . . far from distorting or merely reflecting reality, in fact creates it.”³²⁷ To more fully understand Ovid’s engagement with Lucretius, it would be valuable to determine the extent to which Ovidian wordplay echoes that of the poet’s predecessor.³²⁸ How, in other words, does Ovid indicate the parallel structure of the cosmos and his own art? Does he, on the level of orthography and wordplay, indicate that the physical structure of the poem, with its great cycle of chaos and harmony, is reflective of poetic art just as Lucretius indicates the opposite? A more thorough consideration of Ovid’s language and plays on words, in relation to the preceding discussion of the Golden Age and Lucretius’ role in the epic, may reveal a more complete bridge between the cosmos and artistic creation in the *Metamorphoses*.

Metamorphosis, in Ovid’s epic, is simultaneously destructive and creative: it deprives the human subject of his most essential characteristics, and yet at the same time gives shape to the world as it is. It deprives the victim of his voice, but also fixes the essence of its object.³²⁹ The *Metamorphoses* is an aetiology of the natural world on a vast scale, endowing nature as it exists with human history and passions. As Ovid gives shape to the cosmos of his poem, illustrating the unity of chaos and harmony in each

³²⁶ Ahl, 51.

³²⁷ Solodow, 214.

³²⁸ It would also be intriguing to investigate the appearance of Lucretian wordplay and poetic ideas in other poets in between Lucretius and Ovid, to see the effects on this poetic philosophy on the Roman understanding of the place the poet holds in the cosmos and the role poetry plays in allowing its audience insight into the workings of the universe.

³²⁹ See Segal, *Orpheus*, 28 (“Over against the ever-present possibility of human degradation to bestiality in this world of sudden, arbitrary change and unstable identity, therefore, stand[s] Apollonian-Orphic poetry and its upward movement from matter to spirit, from lifeless stone or tree to human sensitivity.”) vs. Solodow, 213 (“We are invited to see metamorphosis as not only clarifying a character, activity, or emotion, but also by that effort encapsulating and defining it.”).

transformation of the epic and each *locus amoenus*, he reveals the principles and activity of artistic creation. It is this artistry that is the true world of the *Metamorphoses*. The ubiquity of the Golden Age in the epic, then, is central not only to the physical cosmos of the poem but also to the poetic reality that this cosmos reflects. The cycle of Golden Age harmony and chaos that permeates the *Metamorphoses* illustrates the *discors concordia* that is at the centre of the poem's structure: the union of divine harmony and formlessness that is the basis of poetry and also created by poetry. Ovid's *sphragis* to his epic reminds us that the poet's song arises from and is perpetuated by this discordant concord; the very principles from which Ovid's creation stems are those that will, through the mouths of the poet's successors, recreate and metamorphose his words.

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