

Commentary notes on 1-42

1–22. Ausonius does not begin his poem in the Moselle valley, but imagines himself making a journey, or relives and extensively retouches one that he actually made, from Bingen on the Rhine over the wooded Hunsrück to the Moselle, which presents itself dramatically at Neumagen. He is thus able to create a set of striking contrasts—between Nahe and Moselle, Hunsrück and Moseltal, desolation and civilization, darkness and light—and to enhance the impact of the river when it suddenly appears. The impression is heightened by clear recollections of Vergil, and in particular his description of Aeneas' arrival at Cumae. The passage has a clear structure: four lines describe the uncongenial environment in which the journey starts, then seven lines the actual journey; ll. 12–17 give his first impressions, and are followed by an ingenious summary of the poem, and an almost cheeky comparison with his *patria*.

1. *Transieram* ...: A. launches his longest and most elaborate poem with a personal and almost casual narrative. This is a carefully calculated opening, comparable to that of *De Rosis* (App. A. 3) and Wordsworth's famous poem on daffodils; it is certainly not the result of scribal omission, as suggested by Fuchs. If in fact he made this journey he would surely have travelled in an official capacity and with a military escort; it is inconceivable that such an important person should be unaccompanied, in view of the danger of bandits (cf. Amm. 28. 2. 10) and the proximity of the Rhine frontier.

The verb *transieram* is used in the narrative of a journey in Ov. *M.* 1. 216, with *ingredior* (cf. l. 5) three lines later.

celerem: in contrast with the Moselle (cf. ll. 22, 35).

nebuloso: probably 'misty', because of the emphasis on clear skies later in this section, rather than 'murky' (though this would contrast with ll. 28, 55–60, and would have a parallel in *M. Cap.* 1. 14). The word refers to the ambient atmosphere of the Euxine in Amm. 22. 8. 46. Hosius and Marx (375) supposed that morning mists were meant and that the journey occupied a single day, but even with the advantages of the public post it would be a very long day's haul (see Jones, *LRE* 402–3, and O. Perler, *Les Voyages de saint Augustin* (Paris, 1969), 31–2 for relevant data). Although there is a reference to evening in ll. 192–3 it is most unlikely that the poem purports to describe the experiences of a single day; other vignettes apply to various times of day, or to none in particular.

flumine: there is a partial parallel to this in Verg. *A.* 2. 305 *rapidus montano flumine torrens*, which seems to be echoed here. The figure was referred to by Postgate as 'disjunctiveness'; see Nisbet-Hubbard on Hor. *c.* 2. 3. 12 and Sh. B., *Propertiana*, 33–4 (including examples from Prudentius). Scaliger's *lumine* (cf. *Cup.* 8) would detract from the contrast between the two rivers: the light of the Moselle is revealed only gradually. Mommsen's *flamine* is too strong, and awkward with *nebuloso*.

The notable alliteration of *m* and *n* in this line is typical.

2. *addita*: this was probably done by Julian in 359 after a barbarian attack (Amm. 18. 2. 4), and the walls will subsequently have been part of Valentinian's frontier defences (Amm. 28. 2. 1). In *miratus* there might be a reference to an official inspection of the frontier, as suggested by Marx.

veteri nova moenia Vingo: elsewhere the place-name usually ends in *-ium* or *-io* (*TLL* ii. 1992. 59–69), but *Bingum* is found in Ravennas 227. 7; *Vinco*, suggested by the historian Minola, would be unique. The confusion of *c* and *g* is common (cf. ll. 359, 423). Its epithet *veteri*, besides contrasting with *nova*, prepares the reader for the historical detail of l. 3. In *nova moenia* there could be a very apt reminiscence of Ov. *M.* 14. 82, *F.* 2. 481, which refer to the walls built by Aeneas and Romulus respectively; it is one of the poet's aims to present the area as the new centre of the Roman world (cf. ll. 378–80).

3. The battle of Bingen took place in ad 70, when Julius Tutor, leader of the Treveri, was defeated by Sextilius Felix, one of Vespasian's commanders (Tac. *H.* 4. 70). In spite of the martial reputé of the Treveri (Caes. *BG* 2. 24. 4, 5. 3. 1; cf. l. 382), the battle involved neither fierce fighting nor large

numbers, and Tutor's defeat was a small step towards the return to stability in the Empire. There may be an undercurrent of local feeling here—the defeat was certainly a shock to morale at the time—but the exaggeration is not untypical. Ammianus used the comparison more aptly of the battle of Adrianople (31. 13. 19).

4. A. borrows words rich in pathos from similar descriptions in Vergil: *infleta* (A. 11. 372) and *inops* (A. 6. 325) stress the misfortune of improper burial. In using this topos A. shows less restraint than Vergil (G. 1. 493–6) and Prudentius (*Symm.* 2. 718–20), who refer to recent battles; his exaggeration is exceeded by Sidonius, who in *Ep.* 1. 5. 7 imagines that the river Metaurus still ran red with Punic blood.

5. unde iter ingrediens: similar to Sil. 15. 503 and Juvenc. 2. 99; the similarity to Verg. A. 3. 507 *unde iter Italiam*, suggested by Görler, is less striking.

iter ... solum: this road was in fact an important artery. It can still be traced: see J. Hagen, *Die Römerstraße der Rheinprovinz* (Bonn, 1931), 330–45.

6. humani ... vestigia cultus: cf. Curt. 5. 6. 13 *omnia vasta atque sine ullo humani cultus vestigio*. There is some archaeological evidence (Wightman 163–4) that the countryside was inhabited at the time; but settlement was sparse (so H. Merten in Heinen 427).

arentem sitientibus: cf. Ov. M. 14. 277 *arenti sitientes*.

8. Dumnisum: this form, given by GBF, is the most likely one; the readings of XR are close. There is no other evidence except in the Peutinger Table, which has *Dumno*. The place is to be identified with Kirchberg, on a waterless ridge (Wightman 130, 137).

Tabernas: not mentioned in other ancient sources; there is a lacuna in the Peutinger Table at this point. It is certainly not modern Bernkastel (Jasinski and EW), for the river has not yet been reached; either Belginum near Wederath (Heinen 54–5 (with map), 131) or a settlement on the site of the modern Heidenpütz (A. Haffner, *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, 10 (1970), 203–21; Wightman, 130–1) is more likely. In *perenni fonte* there is a contrast with Dumnisus, and also a euphemism: the ground is marshy (Wightman 131).

9. It had long been Roman policy to promote settlements of invading tribes such as the Sarmatians (Heinen 287); the date of this one cannot be determined. In 334, according to *Anon. Vales.* 6. 32, 300,000 of this tribe were settled in Thrace, Macedonia, and Italy, and the *coloni* might conceivably be a small detachment of these (*nuper* does not tell against this, given the wide time-scale of the opening paragraph). A more likely context is the reign of Constantius, who was called *Sarmaticus* for the second time in 358 (Amm. 17. 13. 25); a panegyrist refers vaguely to his *Sarmaticae expeditiones* (*Pan. Lat.* 8(5). 5. 1). Ammianus' account of the tribe's recent history is confused: see A. Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia* (London, 1974), 286–90. If Mócsy is right to link this settlement with the disturbances of 365 (Amm. 26. 4. 5), there could be a passing compliment to Valentinian here. The location cannot be established exactly; Hosius briefly presents the toponomastic evidence and earlier suggestions.

metata colonis: cf. PN c. 28. 88; this is one of very few passages recalled by Paulinus in later life.

10. Evidently the narrator here leaves the province of *Germania Prima* and enters *Belgica Prima*; there is no exact evidence to the contrary (*RE* iii. 206 and Heinen 130–1), and it is not implausible. The language bears a notable similarity to Verg. A. 6. 2 *et tandem Euboicis Cumarum allabitur oris*; according to Görler (112–13) this is part of a consistent attempt to reproduce the landscape and associations of Campania as presented by Vergil. The rhythm of Verg. A. 3. 131 is also similar.

11. Noiomagum: for *Noviomagum*. For X's corruption cf. *Prof.* 4. 7. The word is emphatically placed; the line ends impressively with a spondeiazon. Neumagen, at the confluence of Dhron and Moselle, may have become a major stronghold during Constantine's campaigns in the area, but an earlier date is more likely (Wightman 173).

divi: this posthumous title was awarded to the earlier Christian emperors, as to pagan ones: *ILS* 706–7, *Symm. Rel.* 40. 2, Eutrop. 10. 18. 2.

12–13. The first impression of the Moselle valley is conveyed with the help of Vergil's description of Elysium in A. 6. 640–1 *largior hic campos aether et lumine vestit purpureo*. Vergil's *aether* has

become *aer*; *campos* is retained although less appropriate to the environs of Neumagen.

Mythological allusions, not common in this poem, are used to enhance the effect.

These lines were imitated by Walafrid Strabo in *De Cultura Hortorum* 4. 26: *purior aura diem cum iam reserare serenum*.

14–15. In Verg. *A.* 11. 187 (*conditur ... caligine caelum*) the sky is hidden by the smoke of funeral pyres; Görler also notes the similarity of Ov. *M.* 10. 53 *per muta silentia trames* (the context is Orpheus' ascent from Hades), which is followed in the next line by *caligine*. In Rutil. 1. 193–200, probably an imitation, Rome is distinguished by a similar brightness, undimmed by smoke. The picture of the dark woods is confirmed by the observations of R. Pilkington, *Small Boat on the Moselle* (London, 1968), 53.

16. iubar et rutilam ... aethram: cf. *Ephem.* 3. 12, where the words *iubar et rutilus ... Eous* illuminate a theological doctrine.

17. For *aura*, cf. *Ephem.* 3. 43 and Verg. *A.* 6. 204.

18–19. 'Indeed everything affected me with its charming prospect after the manner and appearance of my own fatherland, sparkling Bordeaux.' The manuscripts' *cum* seems impossible; in this inverted usage it should indicate a sudden happening, which can hardly be intended here. *quin* (Peiper) is very neat; whereas *tum* (Boecking) and *iam* (Ottmann) are rather too flat. *nitentes* of most manuscripts is an error due to the common confusion of *i* and *e*. The epithet *nitens* is used of Bordeaux by Paulinus in *c.* 10 [= App. B. 3]. 240–1), perhaps with this passage in mind. There is no need to adopt Vollmer's *nitentia*, with synizesis as in *Ep.* 3. 28; Vollmer's objection to the awkward use of two adjectives with *Burdigalae* disappears if *patriae* is taken as a noun.

The use of *in speciem* has expanded from 'so as to give the impression of' in classical Latin (e.g.

inque chori ludunt speciem, Ov. *M.* 3. 685) to 'in the same way as', 'like' (e.g. *in speciem alicuius numinis votis excipitur*, Amm. 22. 9. 14); the addition of *cultum* creates quite a harsh zeugma, but this is not unusual in A., and the words *species* and *cultus* were commonly combined in other contexts (Stat. *S.* 2. 2. 41, 3. 5. 89, Sen. *Dial.* 9. 9. 7). Görler's *cultuque* would be a colourless qualification of *nitentis*. For *pepulerunt*, cf. Cic. *Cael.* 36, Liv. 30. 14. 3.

Vollmer's observation that this is the opposite of a compliment to the Moselle is of course true, but not a valid objection to the text as it stands. There are similar comparisons in ll. 160, 483.

20–2. A concise preview in three finely ordered lines of the contents of the poem, which are given in reverse order: 'the roofs of villas thrust up from the overhanging banks' (cf. ll. 283–348); 'the hills green with vines' (cf. 152–99), and 'the beautiful stream of the Moselle gliding beneath with quiet murmur' (cf. ll. 23–54).

culmina villarum: cf. Sil. 15. 534 and the imitation in Ven. *c.* 10. 9. 17 *inter villarum fumantia culmina ripis*.

pendentibus edita ripis: cf. *pendentes saxis* (of villas) in l. 284, whence B's *saxis* here, which is an attempt to fill a lacuna or else a correction of *villis* in the exemplar of BR. Görler, like Markland before him, supported *saxis*, but the archetype clearly read *ripis*. This refers as in l. 26 and elsewhere to the whole gorge; the word is qualified by *pendens* in Ov. *AA.* 1. 620.

22. subterlabentis ... Mosellae: for the verb cf. Verg. *G.* 2. 157. The rare *rumor* may be inspired by Verg. *A.* 8. 90. It is an impressive line to end the opening section: the name is postponed as in hymns and various other contexts.

23–54. In this section Ausonius summarizes the virtues of the Moselle. As Servius said of Vergil's *laus Italiae* (*G.* 2. 136), *exsequitur secundum praecepta rhetorica: nam dicit eam et habere bona omnia et carere malis universis*. A hymnic note (also present in Verg. *G.* 2. 173) is added by *salve*—though this is also a greeting—and by the repeated *tu*, which is used to distinguish the river's laudable features. The poet mentions in ll. 23–32 various general qualities: in ll. 33–8, its even flow; in ll. 39–44, its usefulness for travel and transport; and in ll. 45–54, its clarity. The two central sections have six lines each, the outer ones ten, and there is a notable elaboration of structure, especially in the outer parts. After ll. 23–6 have given an ascending tricolon with variation between vocatives and a relative clause, the comparison is carefully constructed so that ll. 31–2 repeat the

five elements of ll. 27–30 in almost exactly the reverse order (cf. *Hered.* 21–3). In the last section five lines contrasting nature and luxury are enclosed within five lines of description.

23. laudate agris: the river irrigates, and indeed sometimes floods, the fields (cf. l. 327 and *Pater ad Fil.* 4). The expression suggests personification (Ternes), as does the enthusiasm of the tributaries in 351–4.

25. odorifero ... Baccho: cf. Verg. *G.* 4. 279, Ov. *F.* 3. 301 (both with *odorato*). **iuga ... consite:** not a common construction in A., but cf. *ripam praetexeris* (45) and *Epit.* 3. 3 *lacerata comas. iuga* is commonly used for the higher parts of the Moselle gorge.

26. consite: cf. ll. 196–7 for the repetition, which is one of many Vergilian features in this poem. From Vergil's *viridissima gramine ripa* (*G.* 3. 144), and perhaps Stat. *Th.* 9. 492 (used in l. 322), A. forms a line full of significance, *ripas* stresses that even the firm banks (45) may be cultivated, and *gramineas* suggests their suitability for vines (cf. Verg. *G.* 2. 219), while *viridissime* points forward to the passages which describe the clarity of reflections (cf. l. 28, and especially ll. 189–99).

27. devexas pronus in undas: for *devexas* (BLF's *devexus* is a palpable corruption), cf. Verg. *G.* 4. 293. The rest of the phrase echoes Lucan 3. 40 *pronus in undas* (of the sun); but for *pronus* of a river cf. Verg. *G.* 1. 203, and its less violent imitation in Rutil. 1. 339. Ammianus combines two of the words in (*iugum*) *prona humilitate devexum* (15. 10. 4).

28. vitreoque: used here, and in l. 55, to express the river's purity. See M. L. Trowbridge, *Illinois Studies in Language and Literature*, 13 (1930), 297–307 and D. B. Harden, *GR* 3 (1934), 140–9.

imitate: the mixture of nominative and vocative is found throughout this passage and elsewhere (e.g. 102–3, *Par.* 3. 2n.); it is quite unlikely that B's difficult *imitante* is the correct reading, as suggested by Prete in his *apparatus*.

29. rivos trepido: an apt reminiscence of Hor. *c.* 2. 3. 12.

potes: Gronovius' suggestion *potis* has been accepted by many editors; such a rare word would be easily corrupted. It is used by A. in a formulaic phrase in *Mos.* 298 and the 'Lucilian' *Hered.* 18. But, as Hosius pointed out, its use here is anomalous, and *potes* does not impair the sense or structure. The river can be fast (depending on the season), but is usually gentle (see on l. 35).

30. gelidos: the conventional epithet (e.g. Verg. *E.* 10. 42) indicates a quality more welcome in southerly climes; here the river's purity, not its coldness, is the major point.

31. omnia solus habes: there are, as Görler notes (106 n. 1), hymnic and rhetorical overtones. The phrase recurs in Venantius (*c.* 7. 7. 4).

32. bivio refluus manamine pontus: the elaborate sentence ends with an elaborately constructed phrase, designed to anticipate ll. 43–4. The rare adjective *bivio* has more point than it had in either Verg. *A.* 11. 516 (*bivias ... fauces*) or (if it should be read here) Val. Fl. 5. 394. Its application to the sea may have been suggested by Verg. *A.* 9. 238 *qui patet in bivio portae quae proxima ponto*, which is creatively adapted.

Gronovius' conjecture *manamine*, though a *hapax legomenon*, should be accepted without reservation, for such nouns are typical (cf. *luctamina* (34), *simulamine* (228)). Schissel's defence of *munimine* as *via bis munita* (*Rh. M.*, nf 75 (1926), 127) is unconvincing, and a reference to the *portus Iulius* (Görler 107: cf. Verg. *G.* 2. 161–3) would be out of place in this concise catalogue of general qualities; *molimine* (Heinsius) would also be inappropriate.

33. murmura venti: this is not contradicted by *placidi ... venti* in l. 58; *murmura* denotes a louder sound than English 'murmur'.

34. luctamina: 'opposition', a usage probably derived from Verg. *A.* 8. 89 *remo ut luctamen abesset*, where it means, more normally, 'exertion'.

35. non spirante vado: inspired by Vergil, or at least A.'s text of *A.* 10. 291, where the reading *qua vada non spirant* has considerable support, and was known to Servius. The reading *sperante* (for the corruption cf. *Ephem.* 3. 43) is impossible.

properare: this reading of G is confirmed by *rapidos*; for the redundancy cf. ll. 12–17, 38. and 40. It was corrupted to *preparare* (X), then to BR's *reparare*, which gives no sense, and to *remeare* in LF because of the following word.

Venantius had a different experience of rocks in the Moselle (c. 10. 9. 7–10), but further up the river, near Metz; A. confines himself to the stretch between Trier and Koblenz.

36. Cf. Lucr. 4. 397 *exstantesque procul medio de gurgite montes*. As in ll. 100, 197 there is an implicit comparison with the sea, with which the river is directly compared in ll. 27, 350.

37–8. For a similar conceit, cf. Sil. 4. 645, Plin. *Ep.* 5. 6. 12; in *Ep.* 4. 22 A. says that the broad squares of Bordeaux 'lose their name' because of the crowds. For *demat honorem*, cf. Ov. *M.* 13. 16.

38. exclusum: this reinforces the idea of *dividat*, as *concita* reinforces *feriant* in l. 40. There is an imitation in Ven. c. 10. 9. 15 *inde per exclusas cauta rate pergimus undas*.

39–40. amne ... defluis: cf. Verg. *G.* 3. 447, *A.* 8. 549 *secundo defluit amni*.

40. celeres ... remi: the use of *remi* here (*remis* of LF is an error) is a good example of the way in which A. avoids a personal subject: cf. *vestigia* in l. 47. Fuchs suggested *feriunt* for *feriant*, but the subjunctive is not a difficulty.

42. malorum: the manuscripts' reading is illustrated, and supported, by a stone relief from Neumagen (Wightman, pl. 16b; see also L. Casson, *JRS* 55 (1965), 36–7). There are verbal echoes of Stat. *S.* 3. 2. 26–7 *tendite mali vincula*, and Verg. *A.* 2. 236–7 *vincula collo intendunt*. In Hor. *S.* 1. 5. 18 *retinacula mulae*, which Schenkl cited in favour of *mulorum*, offered by J. Scheffer in his *De militia navali veterum* (Uppsala, 1654), 326, there is no verbal similarity.

Green 1991 on Ausonius *Mosella* 318–369

318–48. The following description of individual villas is quite similar in its method and structure to the review of fishing techniques in ll. 240–9: first there is an enumeration, then more detail, and finally a specific picture, introduced by *vidi ego* (341). Today's reader is reminded of the medieval castles that dot the banks of the Moselle and the Rhine; the houses that stood there in the fourth century may have been less imposing. For plans of some of the ancient villas in the vicinity see Wightman 139–72.

319–20. scaenas ... domorum: cf. Symm. *Or.* 2. 20 *scaena murorum*, and 169 n. With the rare *decoramen* (Sil. 16. 268), deployed in the familiar form of apposition (cf. l. 70), it provides an impressive introduction.

321. 'This one is naturally placed high on an outcrop of rock'; it is not itself a tall building. Markland's *stat*, stronger than *est*, receives support from *stabat* in Statius' line quoted on l. 322; but *nativi* has less point than *natura*.

322. Modelled on Stat. *Th.* 9. 492 *stabat gramineae producta crepidine ripae*.

323–4. Villas of similar shape existed at Nennig (Wightman 145–7), Aquincum, and elsewhere, though these were not so close to the river. These lines echo Vergil to good effect, and without undermining the basic realism: *refugit* recalls Verg. *A.* 3. 536 *refugitque ab litore templum*, and *qui plurimus imminet amni* *A.* 1. 419–20 *collem, qui plurimus urbi imminet* (Carthage).

326. The point of *utque* is that the rich panorama may be enjoyed even though it is not part of the property; R's *atque* is much weaker. *dives* is a bold epithet for *speculatio* (cf. Amm. 26. 10. 4, 27. 2. 4), which continues the military metaphor in *tenens* (324); G's *felix* is less effective, and may have originated as a gloss.

327. illa: the manuscripts' *quin*, a natural addition to *etiam*, seems out of place, for it gives no indication that we are turning to a new villa; all the others are introduced by *haec* or *illa*.

pede: 'plot of land', as in Sen. *Dial.* 9. 10. 4 *quamvis angustam pedem* (cf. Varro, *LL* 5. 95), or perhaps 'foothill' as in Amm. 14. 8. 10.

330. altam: B's *aliam* is pointless, and an obvious error.

331–2. 'This one has the special advantage of catching the fish trapped in its enclosed weir, among the sunny fields on the rocks.' There are echoes of this passage in Avitus' account of the world's creation: *clausi vasto sub gurgite pisces* (l. 35), and perhaps in Sedul. *CP* 5. 394 *gurgite clauso*.

331. proprium: although *est* has good manuscript authority, it should be omitted on stylistic grounds.

332. scopulorum ... novales: there is a parallel in *Ep.* 3. 4 *scopulorum ... lacunis* ('rock pools'); the sense is given by the model in *Stat. S.* 2. 2. 98–9 *pontoque novalia ... iniecta. canales* (Heinsius) could not denote pools, and is no less difficult. The strange expression is used to stress the intensive cultivation of the entire banks (e.g. l. 162).

334. despectu iam caligante: cf. *Sil.* 3. 492–3 *caligat in altis obtutus saxis*.

335. assita: 'next to'; cf. *Apul. Flor.* 2 *neque longule dissita neque proxume assita*.

336. innumerisque ... columnis: cf. *Stat. S.* 1. 2. 152.

337–40. 'Why should I tell of the baths constructed on a jutting rock in the river, which steam when Vulcan, pouring from the hot interior, rolls the panting flames through the hollow walls, concentrating the compressed steam with its radiating heat?' In less luxuriant language: the fire is distributed from the furnace (*operto*) through ducts in the wall (*tectoria* can be applied to walls: cf. *RE* ix. 334–5 for pipes in the wall), to create a steamy atmosphere (*aestu exspirante*) in the *calidarium*. The first line is derived from *Stat. S.* 1. 3. 43–4 *an quae graminea suscepta crepidine fumant balnea et impositum rivis argentibus ignem* (cf. *Th.* 9. 492, quoted on l. 322); cf. also *Sil.* 5. 513–14 *torquet Vulcanus anhelos cum fervore globos flammaram*, 14. 450 *glomerabat Mulciber aestus*. In *anhelatas* (339) A. uses a favourite metaphor of Ovid (*M.* 7. 115–16, *Her.* 12. 15, *F.* 4. 492). The subject was later developed in *Epigr. Bob.* 48 and *Sid. c.* 19. **337. substructa:** a variation of Statius' *suscepta* (cf. *comunt* for *servant* in l. 286). The closest parallel seems to be *Liv.* 6. 4. 12 *Capitolium quoque saxo quadrato substructum est*, but A. does not imply engineering.

340. exspirante: cf. *Lucr.* 6. 640 *exspirent ignes*, and *Verg. A.* 3. 580 *flammam exspirare*; it gives a typical contrast with *inclusum*, which describes the heat exuded by the pent-up steam. Heinsius' emendation is not called for.

342. The echo of *Hor. Ep.* 1. 3. 11 *fastidire lacus* and the unusual ending make an impressive line, in which A. once more stresses a preference for what is natural.

343. vivis ... aquis: cf. *Varro, LL* 5. 123, *Tert. Pudic.* 5. 10.

344. plaudenti: cf. *Stat. S.* 1. 3. 73–4 *natatu plaudit*.

345–6. The line and the idea are derived from *Stat. S.* 1. 5. 60–1 *nec si Baianis veniat novus hospes ab oris, talia despiciet*. The comparison was trite, but still topical: cf. *Eunap. VS* 459. 2, *Cassiod. Var.* 9. 6 (recommending them in the year 527). For *Euboicas* see l. 216n.

346. exilia: 'on a small scale', for *parva* in Statius' comparison (*S.* 1. 5. 62); A. still has in mind private buildings and not a large public one, such as the *Barbarathermen* in Trier.

347–8. tantus ...: this qualification, required because of the notoriety of Baiae (*Sen. Ep.* 51), recalls *Stat. S.* 1. 3. 92–3 *sanusque nitor luxuque carentes deliciae*; cf. also *Il.* 18, 158 for *nitor*.

Mommsen's *tantum* could also qualify the clause *et nullum ... luxum* which is otherwise left hanging, but the loosely attached phrase is paralleled in l. 388, and *tantus* is found in this position in l. 373.

349–80. His series of pictures complete, Ausonius launches into his conclusion. The river is glorified by its many tributaries, eager to join and replenish the Moselle, which is compared once more to the sea. The larger rivers Sauer, with its own tributaries, and Saar enclose the list; prominence is given also to Kyll, Ruwer, and Elz. The climax points to the confluence of Moselle and Saar at Contionacum, where the poem may have been written.

349. qui ... finis: cf. *Verg. A.* 12. 793 *quae iam finis erit?* The infinitive after *finis* is perhaps unique: it is transmitted in *Liv.* 25. 11. 10 but not certain.

glaucia fluenta: the similarity to *rauca fluenta* (*Verg. A.* 6. 327) has haunted recent scholars and elicited various explanations. Posani (41) sensed a feeling of foreboding, Görler (103) a return to the underlying contrast of Elysium and Hades. But these interpretations are difficult to reconcile with the context, and the phrase may be used without any such purpose, as in *Cypr. Exod.* 52. For *glaucia* cf. l. 189 and *Ordo* 158 (the Garonne); the phrase is borrowed by *Sedul. CP* 3. 227 *glaucisque fluentis*.

350 *Mosellam GBLF*, *Mosella R*

350–2. These lines include some notable sound-effects: alliteration in l. 350; internal rhyme of *te* and *late* in l. 351; repetition of *in-* at the beginning of ll. 351 and 352.

350. dignandumque: the river has masculine gender in ll. 381 and 469, as here, and feminine gender in ll. 73, 148, 374, 467. For the variation cf. Ov. *F.* 2. 389 and 4. 68 (*Albula*).

Mosellam: R's vocative could well be correct, but the reading of the archetype is not precluded by the pervasive use of the second person.

352. differre meatus: Pastorino's translation 'seguire altra direzione', though similar to the sense required in l. 368, is less suitable here than the commoner meaning 'delay'; there is a contrast with *celerare* (353), *properat* (355), and *festinant* (360).

353. The infinitive is used with *celerant* in Sid. *Ep.* 9. 9. 8 and perhaps Coripp. *Iohann.* 6. 39. For the notion of tributaries losing their name in a larger river, cf. Ov. *F.* 4. 338, Lucan 4. 23, Sil. 3. 454, Amm. 23. 6. 73.

354. Promeae Nemesaeque: the Prüm and Nims. This passage is the only evidence for their names in antiquity. The reading Promeae seems certain (see RE xxiii. 650–1), but the later development of the name indicates short vowels in the first two syllables. Though Bergk's Promae is unlikely, his aquis (cf. Amm. 22. 15. 10 Nilus ... aquis externis adiutus), with anapaestic Promeae, should be considered. But the variatio of aquis and meatu is a little surprising, and A. is prepared to do occasional violence to proper names (cf. Prof. 15. 4n.).

355. non degener: the Sauer is 'no mean river' but is not being compared with the Moselle.

357. The only line in this poem to end with two monosyllables.

358. patri confunderet ostia ponto: for this use of *ostia*, cf. ll. 351, 369, 473; the verb is used in Amm. 16. 3. 1 *Mosella confunditur Rheno. patri ... ponto* is a variation on Vergil's *Oceanumque patrem* (G. 4. 382).

359. Further downstream are the Kyll and Ruwer, which join the Moselle on opposite sides. The form *Celbis* is more probable than G's *Gelbis*: there is a pun or even a *figura etymologica* in l. 361. For the confusion of *c* and *g* in proper names, cf. ll. 2, 423. The form *Erubrus* (BLF) is probably due to homoeoteleuton with *clarus*; it is less likely that the ending has been wrongly assimilated to that of *Celbis*.

marmore clarus: since there was no local supply of marble—the statement in the *Gesta Treverorum* 132. 24 (see l. 316n.) is again valueless—it could have been imported for buildings such as those already described. But another kind of stone may be meant, such as the *candidus lapis* found among the Belgae (Plin. *NH* 36. 159), or a local greenish basalt (Heinen 308).

360. famulis ... lymphis: based on Ov. *F.* 1. 286 *tradiderat famulas iam tibi Rhenus aquas*.

allambere: used of water also in Paul. Petr. 6. 73, a passage which may be based on the *Moselle*; cf. *naviger* in l. 76, *Mos.* 27, *divortia* in l. 77, *Mos.* 432.

361. celebratur: more likely than *celebratus*, because of *audit* in l. 364.

362. praecipiti ... rotatu: echoed by Vict. 2. 264. For *cerealia saxa* (millstones), cf. *cerealiaque arma* in Verg. *A.* 1. 177. Traces of ancient mills have been found near the Moselle (Heinen 305); Hosius notes that mills were numerous up to his time.

363. stridentesque ... serras: cf. Lucr. 2. 410 *serrae stridentis*. Sawmills are meant here: see RE iia. 1738–42, and in particular Ö. Wikander, *Opuscula Romana*, 17 (Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Rom, 46; Stockholm, 1989), 185–90, who discusses their exact location, explains how they worked, and surely puts an end to the debate about the authenticity of the passage.

370–1. This distich is manifestly out of place in the manuscripts, for the Saar is certainly the main tributary, and A. presents it as such. Hosius cites Symmachus' description of the Neckar as *par maximis* (*Or.* 2. 24) but there is no point in magnifying the Alisontia here; nor is it likely that A. is misinformed. In the new order, created by my transposition, A. dismisses minor rivers (of which the Alisontia is certainly one) before reaching a climax with the Saar, as in his earlier treatment of lesser fish and the *silurus*; and *tacitum* (cf. *Ephem.* 3. 55 for the form) contrasts with *rapidus* (359) and *tumultus* (364).

The Alisontia has been identified as either the Alzette or the Elz. The Alzette is not a tributary of the Moselle, but of the Sauer, whose tributaries have been already mentioned; the Elz, or Elzbach, flows into the Moselle (not far from Koblenz), and is therefore more likely. Boecking and Hosius support the claims of the latter with a reference to the *Chronicon Gottwicense* (*Prodr.* iv. 750). The

geographical details given here do not help: *sola pingua* could refer equally well to parts of Luxemburg or to the Maifeld. The identity of the river does not affect the case for the transposition. **nec minor hoc:** cf. Lucan 2. 416 *non minor hic Nilo*, 418 *non minor hic Histro*, both referring to the Po.

365. Drahonum: G's reading is close to the modern name Dhron, and the others are easily explained as corruptions. The Lieser and Salm join the Moselle from the opposite side, also near Neumagen.

366. fastiditos: this reinforces *nec usurpo* (cf. ll. 38, 40). Even if A. had some reason to scorn it this would hardly be relevant here.

fluores: cf. 446, and Apul. *Flor.* 10.

367. A. excuses his haste; his attention is drawn by the Saar (impressively introduced with poetic adjectives and alliteration), which recalls him to the neighbourhood of Trier. A similar excuse is made, again with *dudum*, in *Ordo* 28, as he turns to Trier.

mole: cf. Verg. *A.* 1. 134, 5. 790, of a raging sea; the Saar was a turbulent river (cf. l. 92 *fremunt*).

368. tota veste vocat: cf. Verg. *A.* 8. 712, of the Nile.

distulit: the meaning is not so much 'prolong' (EW), which would suggest an unbecoming sluggishness, as 'divert'—its windings (cf. l. 91) give some point to the conceit—as in Hyg. *Fab.* 63, Claud. 2. 27.

369. fessa is certainly right as against *festā* of R; there is a significant echo of Ov. *M.* 1. 582 *fessas erroribus undas*, of the rivers of Thessaly.

369. Augustis ... muris: probably Contionacum, where Valentinian resided from July to September 371 (*C. Th.* 2. 4. 3, 4. 6. 4, 9. 3. 5, 11. 1. 17), no doubt with A. in attendance. This place is generally identified with a villa at Konz (see Wightman 167, Matthews 53 n. 3, Heinen 289), where the rivers join. Heinen (289 n. 10) suggests that Trier was meant, but the confluence was familiar to A. (91–2), and imprecision or 'dichterische Umschreibung' is unlikely.

volveret ostia: the verb should not be emended to the easier *solveret* (cf. l. 473, *Epigr.* 4. 5, Lucan 3. 231); the phrase is no more difficult than *confunderet ostia* in l. 358, and arguably indeed a fitting word, which would neatly describe its final flourish at its destination. Venantius also used it of the Saar, albeit in an easier construction (*c.* 10. 9. 18).

Green 1991 on Ausonius *Mosella* 438–83

438–68. This section includes a *sphragis*, or personal signature, reminiscent of that in Verg. *G.* 4. 559–66, and goes on to suggest further and higher themes; the final elaborate and powerful sentence (461–8), replete with Vergilian expressions, forecasts that the Moselle will then be supreme among Gallic rivers.

438. Vivisca: this correction, which according to Scaliger's own testimony was first made by Vinet, gives the tribal name (usually *Bituriges Vivisci*) mentioned in Ptol. 2. 7. 7, Plin. *NH* 4. 108, Strabo 190, and numerous inscriptions. Together with *haec ego* (the verb follows six lines later), it creates a sudden and short-lived change in tone. There is a Vergilian echo in *origine gentem* (*G.* 3. 122, 3. 473).

439. non per nova foedera: cf. *nec novus hospes* (Stat. *S.* 3. 2. 123). A. had spent about five years in the region by this time.

440. Ausonius, nomen Latium: the manuscripts read *Latius*, but *Latium* is needed: cf. *Ecl.* 3. 15, *Ordo* 81, *Ep.* 9b. 76 *Ausonius, nomen Italum*.

441. Pyrenen: the scansion of Lucan 4. 83 rather than that of Lucan 1. 689 (and *Ep.* 24. 79).

442. temperat ingenuos ... mores: 'mixes honourable character', not 'mellows the native temper' (EW), since A. would hardly wish to imply that the Aquitanian, or even the Gallic, character was naturally harsh.

Aquitonica: this form, used of the province, is read by VPH in *Ordo* 80. The scansion is unusual: Tibullus (1. 7. 3, 2. 1. 33) and A. elsewhere (*Par.* 24. 7, *Ordo* 103) treat the first *i* as long; Sidonius follows A. here in *Ep.* 2. 10. 4, v. 17.

443. audax: an echo of Verg. *G.* 4. 565, which refers to the *Eclogues*.

fas mihi ...: understand *est*, not *sit*; cf. Hor. *c.* 2. 19. 9, Sil. 1. 19, Grattius, *Cyn.* 99. The combined authority of Muses and imperial court (hinted at in *sacrum*) makes him bolder than he was in ll. 80–1 and 187.

444. libamine Musae: 'an offering of poetry', as in *Par.* 3. 24; cf. Nemes. *Cyn.* 76 *libabunt carmina Musae*.

445. nec ... peto: cf. Ov. *Tr.* 1. 7. 31 *et veniam pro laude peto* (of his poetry); Hor. *Ep.* 2. 1. 78 *non veniam antiquis, sed honorem et praemia posci*.

446. alme: cf. *Ordo* 157 (the Divona at Bordeaux) and Lucr. 2. 390.

446–7. The tone of *sollicitare* (cf. Stat. *S.* 1. 5. 20) and *totam* is somewhat pejorative, and the colourless *solent* makes a contrast with the unpremeditated paths of true inspiration. The poet is critical, but the criticism covers himself too and he does not dissociate himself entirely from this school of poets; they may be imitators, or even pupils who at his bidding wrote exercises on the theme.

448. The clause that begins with *quanta* is unusual; cf. *ego enim, quantum auguror coniectura, quantaque ingenia in nostris hominibus esse video, non despero* (Cic. *De Or.* 1. 95), where, however, the preceding *quantum*, which is less rare (e.g. Sall. *BJ* 31. 22), makes the sentence easier.

mihi: better than the manuscripts' *mei*, which seems at variance with *se dederit*. Avantius saw the problem, but his *meri* has little point.

vena liquoris: used similarly in Hor. *c.* 2. 18. 10, Ov. *Pont.* 4. 2. 20 and *Tr.* 3. 7. 16 *fecundae vena ... aquae*, which may have suggested the unique *liquoris*.

449. nidumque senectae: cf. Plin. *Ep.* 6. 10. 1 *senectutis suae nidulum*.

450 Augustus pater et nati *codd.*, Augustus pater et natus *Avant.*, Augusti pater et natus *La V. de Mirmont*

450. Augustus pater et nati: to emend is unwise. If the poem was written before the birth of Valentinian II in July 371 A. might well have tactfully ('prophylaktisch' in a phrase of Thraede (*Rh. M.*, nf 111 (1968), 260–1 n. 1)) included more than the one son Gratian in his reference to the future—a possibility which also frustrates any attempt to derive an exact date from this line. The word *Augustus* should be retained, although Gratian had been Augustus as well as his father for some time; it may be taken with *nati* as well as with *pater* even though a second son would be unlikely to take the title for many years.

mea maxima cura: cf. *Ep.* 23. 39 (= 24. 111) of his pupil and protégé Paulinus, and *Cento* 8. The expression is Vergilian (*A.* 1. 678, of Ascanius). A. would have had good reason to assume that he would be tutor to any new sons as he had been to Gratian, but the phrase is not specific.

451. A. looks forward to a consulship, referring to it as usual by its insignia (cf. *Protr.* 91–2, *Ep.* 18. 4) and making the familiar pun on his name. It seems that his designation had been made well in advance; cf. *Prec.* 2. 41–2, *Fasti* 4. 5–6; Sulp. *Chron.* 2. 41. 1 (as here, in recognition of a special task); Symm. *Or.* 5. 4 (a praetorship). Alternatively, as Ternes suggested following H.-G. Pflaum and A. Chastagnol, A. may mean *adlectio inter consulares*, a regular reward for retired *palatini* (Jones, *LRE* 541 and n. 48); this would be less honorific. Perhaps his confidence is justified by the fact that he had enjoyed a suffect consulship; there is no evidence for this, but the honour is regularly ignored if followed by an ordinary consulship.

452. tempora: this gives better sense than *munera*, and the phrase is paralleled to some extent by *Ad Patrem* 32 *supparis haec aevi tempora*. G's *munera* could be due to *Protr.* 82, *Augustae pia munera disciplinae*.

453. Arctoi: the Moselle is here seen from the point of view of Mediterranean writers, who used the adjective of the Rhine (Lucan 1. 371) or of rivers in the same area (Mart. 4. 11. 8, Stat. *S.* 5. 2. 133). A. used it of Thracian Haemus in *Ordo* 134, Claudian of the Danube (8. 629, preceded by *largius*, which suggests imitation). The word does not imply that he regarded himself as exiled 'dans un pays lointain et terriblement nordique', as Martin states (251).

454. addam urbes: an echo of Verg. *G.* 3. 30, which refers to cities conquered by Augustus. In this case, they are cities protected by Roman power; if the point is pressed, the reference must be to the

old cities in the Moselle valley, such as Neumagen, and perhaps those in the rest of Belgic territory. Four cities from Belgica I are noted by the *Notitia Galliarum* (5. 1).

subterlaberis recalls *fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros* (Verg. *G.* 2. 157), also an important context, and l. 22.

456–7. Fortifications set up in time of crisis serve as granaries now that the danger is past. A. refers to numerous fortifications in the area (Wightman 172–3) which offered shelter to troops and travelling officials and safe storage for supplies (Wightman 175; Heinen 281–2, 297; G. E. Rickman, *Roman Granaries and Store Buildings* (Cambridge, 1971), 264–70).

458. felices ripa ex utraque colonos: including barbarian settlers such as the Sarmatians of l. 9. These were known as *laeti* (*RE* xii. 446–7); the word is originally German. In *felices* there is a seriously intended pun or a *figura etymologica*. A. may be seeking to match Vergil's line *bisque triumphatas utroque ab litore gentis* (Verg. *G.* 3. 33), with peace (cf. l. 454) again emphasized.

459. hominumque boumque labores: from Verg. *G.* 1. 118.

460. The river receives the special compliment of a whole line from Vergil (*A.* 8. 63); one, moreover, that described the Tiber.

461. Liger: the Loire, Gaul's longest river, begins the list.

Axona praeceps: the Aisne, a tributary of the Seine, which rises not far from the Moselle, in the Vosges. Caesar noted its shallows (*BG* 2. 9. 4); Venantius its turbulence (*c.* 7. 4. 13).

462 *finis Pulm.*, *fines codd.*

462. Matrona: the Marne, another tributary of the Seine. The topography of the frontier is confirmed by Amm. 15. 11. 3, following Caes. *BG* 1. 1. 2, and by the distribution of the cities mentioned later in *Notitia Galliarum* 6.

finis: so Poelman, for the manuscripts' *fines*.

463 *refluus Lugd.*, *profluus codd*

463. ipse: not even the Charente, 'flowing back with the surging tides from Saintonge' (cf. *Ep.* 4. 13–14, where the Garonne confronts the sea), which emptied into the Garonne and might expect A.'s patriotic support, could vaunt itself above the Moselle. The tidal Garonne is described in his own way by Claudian at 5. 113–14. The manuscripts' reading *profluus* (common in late Latin) is not metrically impossible (cf. *Protr.* 71 and Green, *Paulinus*, 123), but *refluus* (Vinet) recalls his description of the river near his home (*Hered.* 26), and is more suitable with *aestu*.

464. Durani: genitive, as in e.g. *Eridani ... amnis* (Verg. *A.* 6. 659). There is no call for Scaliger's *concedes* (accepted by Peiper without any note in his *apparatus* and by Prete). The Dordogne flows from the Puy de Sancy, France's highest mountain outside the Alps, to join the Charente not far from Bordeaux.

465. auriferum: there is no other evidence that gold could be found in the Tarn. E. Desjardins (*Géographie de la Gaule romaine* (Paris, 1876), i. 148 n. 2) suggested that the nearby Ariège derived its name from *aurigera*, but did not explain the sound-changes, or why anyone but a poet should have given it such a name in the first place. Strabo mentions gold-mines among the Tarbelli (190) and Diodorus gold in unspecified Gallic rivers (5. 27. 1).

Tarnem: or perhaps *Tarnim* (cf. *Ep.* 20b. 32). Pliny has *Tarne* (ablative) in *NH* 4. 109, Sidonius *Tarnis* (genitive) in *c.* 24. 45, *Ep.* 5. 13. 1. The word is not used by Greek writers.

466–8. For the River Adour, cf. *Par.* 4. 11. Here, at his climax, A. lavishes Vergilian phrases upon it: *insanus* (*E.* 9. 43; cf. *Ep.* 3. 39, *Cup.* 70); *saxa rotantia late* (*A.* 10. 362); *mare purpureum* (*G.* 4. 373, of the Po; cf. 427).

468. nomine: here the choice between *nomine* and *numine* (Vinet), perennially confused, is difficult. The manuscripts' reading *nomine* receives some support from Claud. 10. 278 *nomen adorabunt* and Prud. *Symm.* 1. 495 *nomen adoravit*; A. uses *numine* with *adorato* in *Epiced.* 54, but of the Godhead revered by his father.

Tarbellicus: cf. *Prof.* 16. 7 and *Ep.* 23. 45 (= 24. 117); *Tarbellus* is used elsewhere (*Praef.* 1. 6, *Par.* 2. 2, 4. 12), but not *Tarbellius* of the manuscripts.

469–83. Ausonius ends the poem on a very elevated note by addressing the Moselle, clad in the full regalia of a river-god, and promising it fame if his poetry is heeded. More rivers of Gaul are introduced, and the poet ends patriotically and rather impishly with the Garonne.

469. corniger: used by Vergil of the Tiber (*A.* 8. 77; cf. *G.* 4. 371 of the *Po*). It must be followed by the masculine *celebrande* (BR).

470. fonte supremo: 'at your furthest source'. A. emphasizes its length; G's *superno* would be much less relevant.

471. The line is a compound of Verg. *G.* 4. 371 *et gemina auratus taurino cornua vultu*, Ov. *F.* 6. 197 *taurinae cornua frontis* (of the constellation), and Stat. *Th.* 9. 705 *frontis ... honorem*. The reference is to ornaments on the horns of a sacrificial bull, and not to gold in the river (which would have been mentioned in the poem if it had been thought to be present).

472. This is one of only two lines in the poem that mention the Moselle's meanderings (cf. l. 285); *sinuosa* is unexpectedly used of the curved outline of the fields adjoining the river. *trahis ... meatus* (cf. l. 140) points to the same feature.

473. Germanis sub portibus: since the Moselle does not end at Koblenz (418–33), this means the mouths of the Rhine (cf. l. 433), or rather the Moselle-Rhine or *bicornis*. *Germanis* may refer again to the Franks (cf. 435); for *portibus* cf. Ov. *Her.* 14. 107, *Am.* 2. 13. 10. For *ostia solvis*, cf. *Epigr.* 4. 5, Lucan 3. 231.

474. volet: supported against R's *valet* by sense, syntax, and stemma.

477. vivique lacus: lakes of fresh water, as in Verg. *G.* 2. 469.

478. veteres, pagorum gloria, luci: cf. Stat. *Th.* 12. 51–2 *lucorum gloria, magnae ... trabes*; Juv. 7. 118 *virides, scalarum gloria, palmae*. There is a hint of what was later called pagan religion.

479. sparsis ... ripis: cf. Lucan 10. 310 *spargens facilem tibi cedere ripam*. The Durance, now dammed, was notorious: Livy (21. 31. 10–11) and Silius (3. 468–76, where it is masculine) tell of the havoc it created in Hannibal's army, and Ammianus (15. 10. 11) describes it as *gurgitibus vagis intutum*.

480–1. A. finishes with the Rhône and its great city of Arles, which he also described in *Ordo* 73–80. Both there and in *Ep.* 24. 73 he uses the adjective *duplex*, which probably refers to a suburb across the river (L. A. Constans, *Arles antique* (Paris, 1921), 332–8). The words *dextrae ... ripae* hardly warrant the suggestion of J. Rougé (*Recherches sur l'organisation du commerce maritime en Méditerranée sous l'empire romain* (Paris, 1966), 155) that *duplex* refers to two ports, one on each side of the bridge. Although there is no evidence for the actual name given to the right bank between the settlement of *Rhodanusia* several centuries before and that of *Trencatalias* in the Middle Ages (Constans 332–3), *dextra ripa* should probably be understood as the current name (as in Narbo, *CIL* xii. 4398); it was given by the Rhône in the same way as the Seine now gives its name to the 'Left Bank', the Jordan to the 'West Bank', and the Thames to the 'South Bank'.

482. magnumque sonoris ... amnibus: cf. Verg. *A.* 12. 139 *stagnis ... fluminibusque sonoris*; for *magnum*, cf. 137n.

483. To conclude the poem A. commends the river to his beloved Garonne; *aequoreae* is literally 'tidal' (cf. *Ep.* 8. 1 and *Ordo* 82n.), but also implies that it is in no way inferior. The *Moselle*, like the *Ordo Urbium Nobilium*, thus ends with his *patria*.