

Time Management in the *Medicamina Faciei Femineae*  
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This paper examines the depiction of time in the *Medicamina Faciei Femineae*. I argue that time is at first a free flowing entity, then harnessed by the poet's mirror to do his bidding, and finally conquered by the cosmetic recipes in the poem. I further suggest that the use of cosmetics to control the effects of time should be viewed in relation to Augustus's attempts to regulate time.

In the *Medicamina*, time is at first an unrestrained entity. Good character may be able to withstand its onslaught, but beauty certainly cannot (45-46). In order to persuade the *puella* that she is in need of cosmetic help, Ovid plants an image in the mirror of a wrinkled old woman (47-48). This is what the *puella* look like in the future if time is allowed to continue its destructive rampage. The use of the mirror to provide a glimpse into the future also demonstrates how easily the poet can manipulate time for his own purposes. The cosmetic recipes in the poem are the ultimate solution to mitigating the effects of time, and Ovid promises that their effects will be long lasting (97-98).

The use of cosmetics to rein in the effects of time should be seen as a humorous affront to Augustus's efforts to control time. I draw upon the work of Denis Feeney<sup>1</sup> and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill<sup>2</sup> by noting that the horologium complex in the Campus Martius was a monumental display of the emperor's ability and authority to regulate time, but I also argue that the public face of the emperor and his wife was further proof of this power. The imperial couple appeared untouched by the effects of time. In the *Medicamina*, Ovid suggests that the *puella* can achieve the same effect simply with the right make-up.

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<sup>1</sup> Denis Feeney, *Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Times and the Beginnings of History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, "Mutatio Morum: The Idea of a Cultural Revolution," in *The Roman Cultural Revolution*, ed. Thomas Habinek and Alessandro Schiesaro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 3-22.