

The Colonial Subject in Ovid's Exile Poetry

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excudent alii spirantia mollius aera
 (credo equidem), uiuos ducent de marmore
 uultus,
 orabunt causas melius, caelique meatus
 describent radio et surgentia sidera dicent:
 tu regere imperio populos, Romane,
 memento
 (hae tibi erunt artes), pacique imponere
 morem,
 parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.
 (*Aeneid* 6.847-853)

Others will hammer out more subtly
 breathing bronzes (I am sure of this), will
 mould living faces from marble, will plead
 cases better, and will mark out with a
 pointer the paths of heaven and predict
 stars' risings: you, Roman, remember to
 rule the nations with your power, (these will
 be your arts), and to add custom to peace
 and to spare the conquered and crush the
 arrogant in war.

Bella terra et mari ciuilia externaque toto
 in orbe terrarum saepe gessi uictorque
 omnibus ueniam petentibus ciuibus
 peperci. Externas gentes, quibus tuto
 ignosci potuit, conseruare quam excidere
 malui. (*Res Gestae* 3.1-2)

On land and sea I often waged wars, civil
 and foreign, throughout the entire world and
 when victorious I spared all citizens who
 asked for mercy. Foreign nations, which
 could safely be forgiven, I preferred to
 preserve rather than destroy.

Omniū prouinciarum populi Romani,
 quibus finitimae fuerunt gentes quae non
 parerent imperio nostro, fines auxi. Gallias
 et Hispanias prouincias, item Germaniam
 qua claudit Oceanus a Gadibus ad ostium
 Albis fluminis pacauī. Alpes a regione ea,
 quae proxima est Hadriano mari, ad
 Tuscum pacificaui nulli genti bello per
 iniuriam inlato. (*Res Gestae* 26.1-3)

I increased the territories of all the
 provinces of the Roman people which had
 neighbouring peoples who were not subject
 to our power. I brought peace to the
 provinces of Gaul and Spain, likewise
 Germany, the region enclosed by Ocean
 from Cadiz to the mouth of the Elbe. I
 pacified the Alps from that region next to
 the Adriatic to the Tuscan sea waging war
 unjustly on no people.

Pannoniorum gentes, quas ante me
 principem populi Romani exercitus
 nunquam adit, deuictas per Ti. Neronem,
 qui tum erat priuignus et legatus meus,
 imperio populi Romani subieci protulique
 fines Illyrici ad ripam fluminis Danuui.

The Pannonian peoples, whom the army of
 the Roman people had never approached
 before I was princeps, subdued by Tiberius
 Nero, who was then my stepson and legate,
 I subjected to the power of the Roman
 people and I extended the border of

Citra quod Dacorum transgressus exercitus
 meis auspiciis uictus profligatusque est, et
 postea trans Danuuium ductus exercitus
 meus Dacorum gentes imperia populi
 Romani perferre coegit.
 (*Res Gestae* 30.1-2)

Illyricum to the bank of the river Danube.
 An army of Dacians which had crossed
 beyond this was defeated and crushed under
 my auspices, and afterwards my army was
 led across the Danube and compelled the
 Dacian peoples to endure the commands of
 the Roman people.

nondum tradiderat uictas uictoribus artes
 Graecia, facundum sed male forte genus:
 qui bene pugnabat, Romanam nouerat
 artem;
 mittere qui poterat pila, disertus erat.
 (*Fasti* 3.101-104)

Greece, an eloquent but not a strong race,
 had not yet handed over her conquered arts
 to the conquerors; the man who fought well,
 knew the Roman art; the man who could
 throw javelins, was an orator.

uix ope castelli defendimur, et tamen intus
 mixta facit Graecis barbara turba metum.
 quippe simul nobis habitat discrimine
 nullo
 barbarus et tecti plus quoque parte tenet.
 quos ut non timeas, possis odisse uidendo
 pellibus et longa pectora tecta coma.
 hos quoque, qui geniti Graia creduntur ab
 urbe,
 pro patrio cultu Persica braca tegit.
 exercent illi sociae commercia linguae:
 per gestum res est significanda mihi.
 barbarus hic ego sum, qui non intellegor
 ulli,
 et rident stolidi uerba Latina Getae;
 meque palam de me tuto male saepe
 loquuntur,
 forsitan obiciunt exiliumque mihi.
 (*Tristia* 5.10.27-40)

We are barely defended with the fort's help,
 and yet, within, a barbarian crowd mixed
 with Greeks causes fear. Of course, without
 distinction, the barbarian lives with us and
 occupies more than half the dwellings. Even
 though you might not fear them, you could
 hate them through seeing their breasts
 covered with skins and long beard. These
 too, who are thought descended from the
 Greek city, wear Persian trousers in place of
 their ancestral dress. They hold
 communication in the language they share: I
 have to indicate meaning by means of
 gesture. Here I am the barbarian, understood
 by no-one, and the stupid Getae mock my
 Latin words; often they malign me openly in
 safety, perhaps they reproach me with my
 exile.

inter Sarmaticas Romana uagabitur
 umbras
 perque feros manes hospita semper erit.
 (*Tristia* 3.3.63f.)

A Roman will roam among Sarmatian
 shades and will always be a stranger among
 savage ghosts.

materiam quaeris? laudes: de Caesare dixi!
adiuta est nouitas numine nostra dei.

Nam patris Augusti docui mortale fuisse
corpus, in aetherias numen abisse domos,
esse parem uirtute patri qui frena rogatus
saepe recusati ceperit imperii,
esse pudicarum te Vestam, Liuia, matrum,
ambiguum nato dignior anne uiro,
esse duos iuuenes, firma adiumenta
parentis,
qui dederint animi pignora certa sui.

(*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.13.23-30)

You ask about the subject matter? Praise: I told of Caesar! My innovation was assisted by the god's presence. For I explained that the body of father Augustus was mortal, that his presence had gone to the heavenly halls: that he, who when asked, had taken up the reins of the empire he had often refused, was equal in virtue to his father: that you Livia, are the Vesta of chaste mothers, that it is unclear whether you are more worthy of son or husband: that there are two young men, staunch supports of their father, who gave sure pledges of their spirit.

atque aliquis 'scribas haec cum de
Caesare' dixit

'Caesaris imperio restituendus eras.'

(*Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.13.37f.)

And one of them said: 'Since you write this about Caesar, you should be restored to Caesar's power'.

redditus est nobis Caesar cum Caesare
nuper,

quos mihi misisti, Maxime Cotta, deos,
utque tuum munus numerum quem debet
haberet,
est ibi Caesaribus Liuia iuncta suis.
argentum felix omnique beatius auro,
quod, fuerit pretium cum rude, numen
habet!

non mihi diuitias dando maiora dedisses
caelitibus missis nostra sub ora tribus.

(*Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.8.1-8)

Recently a Caesar together with a Caesar was restored to me, Cotta Maximus, the gods you sent to me. And so that your gift should have the necessary number, Livia is there joined with her Caesars. Happy is that silver, more blessed than any gold, which, though once rough money, holds the divine presence. Not by giving me wealth could you have given a greater gift than the three divinities sent to our shore.

Rebus idem titulo differt, et epistula cui sit
non occultato nomine missa docet.

Nec uos hoc uultis, sed nec prohibere
potestis

Musaque ad inuitos officiosa uenit.

(*Epistulae ex Ponto* 1.1.17-20)

The same in subject matter, different in title, the letter sets out its recipient without concealing his name. You do not want this, but you cannot stop me and my importunate Muse comes to you against your will.

huic ego quam patior nil possem demere
 poenae,
 si iudex meriti cogerer esse mei.
 (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6.9f.)

I could remove nothing from the
 punishment which I suffer, if I were
 compelled to be the judge of what I deserve.

Iuppiter in multos temeraria fulmina
 torquet
 qui poenam culpa non meruere pati.
 obruerit cum tot saeuis deus aequoris
 undis,
 ex illis mergi pars quota digna fuit?
 cum pereant acie fortissima quaeque, uel
 ipso
 iudice delectus Martis iniquus erit.
 At si forte uelis in eos inquirere, nemo est
 quin se quod patitur commeruisse neget.

Jupiter hurls random thunderbolts against
 many, who have not deserved through crime
 to suffer punishment. Though the god of the
 sea has overwhelmed many with savage
 waves, how small a part of them deserved to
 drown? When all the best perish in battle,
 by his own judgement Mars' selection will
 be unjust. But if by chance you should wish
 to question them, there is not one who
 would deny he deserves his suffering.

(*Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6.27-32)

Forsitan haec domino Busiride iure
 timeres
 aut solito clausos urere in aere uiros.
 (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6.41f.)

Perhaps you would rightly fear this under
 Busiris' tyranny or under the man whose
 practice was to imprison men in bronze and
 burn them.

restituit multos aut poenae parte leuauit
 Caesar et in multis me precor esse uelit.
 (*Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.6.37f.)

Many has Caesar has restored or eased of
 part of their punishment, and I pray he may
 want me to be among the many.