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TRISTIA · EX PONTO

Translated by

A. L. WHEELER

Revised by G. P. Goold

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WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

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REVISED BY G. P. GOOLD

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
LONDON, ENGLAND

First published 1924
Reprinted 1939, 1953, 1959, 1965, 1975
Second Edition 1988
Reprinted with corrections 1996
Reprinted 2002

ISBN 0-674-99167-2

Printed in Great Britain by St Edmundsbury Press Ltd,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, on acid-free paper.
Bound by Hunter & Foulis Ltd, Edinburgh, Scotland.

PREFACE

THIS second edition of volume VI of the Loeb Ovid continues the principles on which I have revised earlier volumes. Numerous alterations of the text and translation became imperative in view of much excellent work published in the last sixty years, foremost among which rank Georg Luck's editions. Moreover, especially since the Second World War, a juster appreciation of Ovid's exile poetry has won acceptance, and this is now reflected by the inclusion of various studies in a thoroughly revised *Bibliography*. Professor Wheeler's fine introduction has been left intact apart from a small amount of abbreviation at the end, but I have ventured to rewrite (without, however, suppressing his judgement) the note on the cause of Ovid's exile which originally appeared on pages xxiv f. Finally, I gratefully acknowledge several debts to a lecture by Professor John Richmond and even more to Dr. J. B. Hall, who at the proof stage of this second edition generously made available to me three unpublished articles of his on the textual criticism of these poems.

YALE UNIVERSITY
March 1988

G. P. GOOLD

INTRODUCTION

THE works of Ovid himself, and especially the autobiography (*T.* iv. 10), supply most of the material for a sketch of his life. His fame, however, caused him to be mentioned often by later writers, and these, taken together, add not a little to the information derived from his own poems.

His full name was Publius Ovidius Naso, and he was born on March twentieth, 43 B.C., at Sulmo, the chief town of the Paeligni, about ninety miles by road east of Rome. The family was of old equestrian rank, and inscriptions prove that the name Ovidius was common only in the region of Ovid's birthplace. In Sulmo, now Sulmona, the tradition of the poet still flourishes. The townspeople point out to the infrequent tourist his statue in the court of the Collegio Ovidio, the chief school of the town, and the remains of his villa, the Villa Ovidio, on the slopes of a neighbouring mountain. The main street of the town, the Corso Ovidio, preserves his name, and the letters S.M.P.E. ("Sulmo mihi patria est," *T.* iv. 10. 3) are inscribed on the façades of monuments and at the head of public documents. In folk-lore also and popular song his name survives.

But though the statue is mediaeval, though the ruins are probably not connected with him, and the traditions are fancy, the beautiful country on which

Ovid must have looked is true to his description. Sulmona lies in one of the loveliest vales of Italy, surrounded by towering mountains and watered, as Ovid himself says, by cold streams. As one views it from the mountain slopes the valley, carefully tilled and dotted with vineyards and fruit trees, is like a vast garden. Here lay those paternal fields of which the poet speaks, and here he passed the years of his boyhood.

Ovid's father, like the father of Horace, was ambitious for his sons and destined them for an oratorical career. While they were still very young Ovid and his brother, who was exactly one year older than the poet, were taken to Rome to receive a proper training. The brother displayed a decided gift for pleading, but Ovid found the legal grind distasteful. He tried to conform to his father's practical advice but the inborn impulse was too strong. "Whatever I tried to write," he says, "was verse," and the quaint anecdote told in one of the late *Lives* probably hits off the situation very well. Once when Ovid was being chastised by his angry father, says the *Life*, the squirming boy cried out (in verse!), "Parce mihi! numquam versificabo, pater!"

But though "he lisped in numbers," he nevertheless persisted half-heartedly in his preparation for a practical career until he held certain minor offices which were preliminary to the quaestorship. He became a *triumvir capitalis*, *i.e.* one of the board of three officials who had charged of prisons and executions and possessed judicial powers in petty cases. Ovid was probably not over twenty-one at this time. He also speaks of having been a member of

the centumviral court (which dealt with questions of inheritance) and of having served as a single judge, *i.e.* as a sort of referee in private lawsuits. As a triumvir he was directly in line for the quaestorship and seems to have had a right to quaestoral privileges, but his tastes and frail constitution led him to renounce a public career.

Ovid's thorough education under such distinguished teachers as the rhetoricians Arellius Fuscus and Porcius Latro was not wasted, although it was not applied to the end which his hard-headed father had urged. Rhetoric and literature formed the major part of the training of those who were qualifying themselves for public life, and the young poet, as we learn from Seneca the Elder, became a brilliant declaimer. Poetry was much studied in the rhetorical schools of the day, and the training which Ovid received undoubtedly laid the foundation of that wide familiarity with myth and literature which he displays in his work. In fact Seneca tells us that Ovid transferred to his own verse many of the pointed remarks of his teacher Latro. Even his legal training was not entirely wasted, for there are traces of it in his work.

Ovid studied at Athens, as Horace and many other young Romans had done, and travelled in Sicily and in Asia Minor. It is probable that his sojourn in Athens occurred while he was still a student, but it is not certain that the other journeys belong to the same period.

Even before his education was finished he had won fame as a poet of love. He was giving public recitations of his *Amores*, he tells us, when his "beard had been cut but once or twice" (*T.* iv.

10. 55 f.). Undoubtedly the popularity of these youthful poems did much to establish the conviction which he often expresses that his bent was erotic elegy; he considered himself the lineal successor of Gallus, Tibullus, and Propertius, and posterity has accepted him at his word. Thus the foundation of that fame which he was destined to deplore so bitterly was laid in his early youth.

In these youthful days Ovid made the acquaintance of many poets. His relations with Vergil and Tibullus were apparently not intimate, but he was only twenty-four when these poets died (19 B.C.), and it is probable that for some years before that date both had been in poor health and had seldom been seen in Rome. Ovid admired Horace but does not assert that he knew that poet personally. Propertius, however, he knew well, and he mentions him, together with Aemilius Macer, Ponticus, and Bassus, as a member of his own circle. He names besides a large number of fellow poets, many of whom were friends. To us they are hardly more than names, but they serve to illustrate the breadth of Ovid's literary interests, for these men worked in all departments of poetic composition. Ovid was always a generous critic, but in his remarks during his exile about these contemporaries there is the additional reason for generosity that he naturally wished to speak well of anybody who might help him.

Apart from literary men, professional or dilettanti, Ovid had a very wide acquaintance with Roman society in general. He came from a country town and he was not noble, but his rank was inherited and his fortune was considerable. With these ad-

vantages it was easy for a man of his brilliant talent and agreeable personality to know everybody worth knowing, and the poems from exile contain the names of many statesmen, officials, and soldiers—fewer, certainly, than he must have known since he is careful not to name any to whom seeming connexion with an exile might have brought offence. Moreover, many of those whom he must have known in his youth had died before the period of his exile, and these are mentioned as a rule only when they are connected in some way with the living to whom he made his appeals.

To the members of Rome's great families Ovid stood rather in the relation of a client to patrons, although this relation did not preclude intimacy. Among these patrons the most distinguished man was Marcus Valerius Messalla Corvinus, the statesman, general, and orator, whose house was the centre of a literary circle in which the most prominent member was Tibullus. To this circle Ovid also undoubtedly belonged. Messalla died not long before Ovid was exiled, perhaps in the very year of his exile (A.D. 8), and he had probably been incapacitated by illness for several years before his death. It was Ovid's appeal to the great man's sons that led him to mention the father. To the house of Messalla he had been devoted from his earliest years, and Messalla himself had been the first to encourage him to publish his verse—undoubtedly some of those erotic poems which later helped to ruin the poet. Messalla was, in Ovid's phrase, "the guide of his genius," and the poet wrote a tribute to him at his death.

Messalla had been one of Augustus' right-hand

men, but neither of his sons inherited his ability. Nevertheless both were prominent enough to attain the consulship. The elder, M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus or Messalinus (usually called merely Messalinus), had some reputation as a soldier and an orator, and was consul 3 B.C. Tacitus shows that he was guilty of fawning on Tiberius. Ovid addresses to him *P.* i. 7 and ii. 2, perhaps also *T.* iv. 4, and it is clear that the poet did not feel sure of the footing on which he stood with him. He has no doubts, however, of the loyalty of the younger son, who had been adopted by his maternal uncle and was called M. Aurelius Cotta Maximus or simply Maximus (or Cotta Maximus). He was born not earlier than 24 B.C. and became consul A.D. 20. He was something of a poet and an orator, but he is condemned by Tacitus for his luxurious and extravagant life and his servility. He seems, however, to have possessed good traits of character and he was loyal to Ovid; indeed he was rather a friend than a patron. Six of the *Pontic Epistles* are addressed to him (*P.* i. 5 and 9; ii. 3 and 8; iii. 2 and 5; *cf.* iv. 16. 41-44), and probably two *Tristia* (*T.* iv. 5 and v. 9).

Another Maximus—Paullus Fabius Maximus, a member of the famous Fabian family—is addressed *P.* i. 2 and iii. 3, possibly also iii. 8, *cf.* iv. 6, in which Ovid mourns his death. He was born not later than 45 B.C., and so was about Ovid's age. The poet's third wife had been a member of Fabius' household and intimate with Marcia, Fabius' wife. Ovid wrote a wedding-song for Fabius, had listened to his literary efforts, and had sat at his table, but his tone is more restrained in writing to him than

that which he adopts in his letters to Cotta Maximus. Fabius was a good orator, held the consulship 11 B.C., and was a trusted friend of Augustus. Such a man was in a position to make a plea for Ovid, and the latter asserts that this was only prevented by Fabius' death which occurred A.D. 14, not long before that of Augustus.

Sextus Pompeius, who was descended from an uncle of Pompey the Great, is addressed in four letters of *P.* iv. (Nos. 1, 4, 5, and 15). He was consul A.D. 14, was very wealthy, and Ovid assumes towards him an attitude of extreme humility. Although he is not addressed, so far as can be proved, before the last book of the *Pontic Epistles*, he must have been friendly to Ovid, for the poet thanks him for safeguarding his journey into exile. Ovid's hopes of him were probably based on the fact that he was a friend of Germanicus. Pompeius suffered death at the hands of Caligula *c.* A.D. 39.

Three letters are addressed to P. Pomponius Graecinus, who was *consul suffectus* beginning in May A.D. 16 (*P.* i. 6, ii. 6, iv. 9), and one to his brother L. Pomponius Flaccus who immediately succeeded Graecinus as consul, January A.D. 17 (*P.* i. 10). Graecinus was a soldier who took an interest in literature. If, as seems probable, he is the Graecinus mentioned *Amores* ii. 10, Ovid's acquaintance with him was of long standing. The brother, Flaccus, held some command in Moesia about A.D. 16 (*P.* iv. 9. 75 ff.), and he was intimate with Tiberius. Ovid probably did not know him well and addressed him chiefly because he was Graecinus' brother.

With the exception of Cotta Maximus Ovid's really intimate friends were naturally men of much

the same station in life as himself, and many of these are named in the *Pontic Epistles*. Since at the time Ovid was writing the *Tristia* he did not venture to name his friends, the question arises whether it is possible to identify any of the unnamed recipients of the *Tristia* with friends who are named in the *Pontic Epistles*.[1] These are seventeen poems of the *Tristia* which are addressed to friends or patrons. Three of these, as the tone shows, are addressed to patrons, *i.e.* to men who were superior to Ovid in rank, twelve to friends of his own status or of such status that they were at least not his superiors, which in the case of two the tone supplies no good evidence for placing them in one class rather than the other. Now Ovid asserts several times that "only two or three" of his friends showed themselves really faithful at the time when disaster befell him (*T.* i. 5. 33, "vix duo tresve"; cf. iii. 5. 10; v. 4. 36, etc.). Examination of the *Pontic Epistles* shows that these few faithful ones were probably Brutus, Atticus, Celsus, and possibly Carus. To these we should add his patron-friend Cotta Maximus. By comparing the *Pontic Epistles* in which these men are addressed or named with the seventeen *Tristia* we may assign to Brutus *T.* iii. 4 (*cf. P.* i. 1, iii. 9, iv. 6); to Atticus *T.* v. 4 (*cf. P.* ii. 4 and 7); to Celsus *T.* i. 5, iii. 6 (*cf. P.* i. 9); to Carus *T.* iii. 5 (*cf. P.* iv. 13); to Cotta Maximus *T.* iv. 5, v. 9 (*cf. P.* i. 5 and 9, ii. 3 and 8, iii. 2 and 5, iv. 16. 41 ff.); to Messalinus *T.* iv. 4 (*cf. P.* i. 7, and ii. 3). The reproach, *T.* i. 8, is very possibly addressed to Macer (*cf. P.* ii. 10). Even if these identifications are accepted there remain eight

[1] *Cf.* G. Graeber, *Untersuchungen* (Part II), Elberfeld, 1884.

poems whose recipients have not been satisfactorily identified. Of these eight six (*T.* i. 7, iv. 7, v. 6, 7, 12, 13) are addressed to men who were apparently friends, two (*T.* i. 9, iii. 14) are uncertain, though the tone of *T.* i. 9 is perhaps better suited to a young man of rank, and that of *T.* iii. 14 to a poet-friend of greater age than Ovid.

Numerous other friends and acquaintances—poets, rhetoricians, officials, soldiers—appear in the *Pontic Epistles*, but among them there is nobody whom we may regard as the probable recipient of any poem among the *Tristia*. About some of them we know only what Ovid tells us, about others we can glean a few meagre facts from other sources. It is particularly unfortunate that, with the exception of Cotta Maximus, the poet's best friends, Celsus, Atticus, Brutus, and Carus, are known only from Ovid. All efforts to identify them with men of the same names mentioned elsewhere have proved unavailing.

There is no good evidence that Ovid had ever been intimate with any member of the imperial household. The approval of the Emperor to which he alludes (*T.* ii. 89 and 98, *cf.* 542) consisted merely in allowing Ovid to retain his rank as a knight. In his references to Augustus the poet assumes the tone of an abject suppliant appealing to a deity immeasurably removed. Even if there had been any former intimacy it would have been difficult to harmonize it with such an attitude as this and it would have been carefully suppressed. The references to Tiberius and his son Drusus, to Germanicus and his sons, permit the same general inference: that Ovid had probably never been intimate with any of them. The character of Germanicus was

so affable and kindly that if Ovid had ever known him well one might expect a reference to the fact. But the passages in which Germanicus is addressed or mentioned show that Ovid's hopes in this direction were based upon the intercessions of mutual friends—Salanus (*P.* ii. 5), Sextus Pompey (*P.* iv. 5), Suillius (*P.* iv. 8), etc.

The method of appeal to the Empress Livia Augusta is similar. Ovid hoped to influence her through his wife and through Marcia, wife of Paullus Fabius Maximus, who was Augusta's close friend. Another possible approach to Augusta lay in the fact that Ovid's wife knew intimately the Emperor's maternal aunt, Atia Minor. This seems to have been the only real link between the poet's household and the palace.

At the time when Ovid was ordered into exile (A.D. 8) the only members of his immediate family who were in Rome were his wife and step-daughter. His own daughter, who must have been the daughter of his first or second wife, had married a second time and was absent in Libya, but we know neither her name nor that of her husband at the time. His only brother had died years before when he had just turned twenty, *i.e.* in 24 B.C. Both of the poet's parents also had passed away, his father at the advanced age of ninety.

Ovid himself was married three times. He speaks of his first wife whom he married when he was "almost a boy," as "unworthy and useless." The marriage lasted but a short time and may have ended in divorce. The second wife was "blameless," but this marriage also was broken off by death or divorce. The poet does not tell us the

names of these ladies, but he indicates that one of them came from Falerii (*Am.* iii. 13. 1). Ovid's third wife was "from the house" of the Fabii (*P.* i. 2. 136), but it is not certain that her name, which Ovid does not give, was Fabia. She may have been a poor relative (or a relative who had lost her parents) who had lived in the protection of the Fabian household. She was a widow (or divorced ?) with one daughter, Perilla, when Ovid married her, but the marriage seems to have been childless.[1] Upon her devolved the care of the poet's property after he was exiled, and upon her efforts he rested in large measure his hopes of pardon. Many passages bear witness to his tender love for her; he draws a most affecting picture of their mutual despair at parting, and if at times after years of exile he became somewhat peevish, we must pity rather than condemn. The poor lady seems to have been always faithful to his interests and no doubt she did all within her power to secure a mitigation of his sentence.

But neither family connexions nor influential friends were able to save Ovid from his fate. After more than thirty years of popularity, at the age of fifty, he was suddenly ordered to leave that Rome which was the very breath of life to men of his stamp and take up his abode on the very edge of the wilderness in a little town of which he had probably never heard. The order emanated from the authority of the Emperor and was never brought before the Senate or a court. Ovid was not called an *exul*,

[1] Perilla married Suillius (*P.* iv. 8). In view of the absence from *Tr.* of addressees' names, and of *Tr.* ii. 437, Perilla is probably a pseudonym. (G.P.G.)

but was "relegated" (*relegatus*).[1] *Relegatio* was milder than the *exilium* of the late republic in that the poet's property was not confiscated and his civic rights were not taken from him, but it was harsher, in Ovid's case, in that he was ordered to stay in one designated locality. The *exul* of the republican period might wander where he would provided he kept beyond a prescribed radius from Rome. On the other hand, to judge from Cicero's case, the friends of an exile of that period subjected themselves to penalties if they aided him, whereas Ovid's friends freely assisted him and wrote to him. Even the fear of being publicly known as his friends, which prevailed at the time he was writing the *Tristia*, had vanished from the minds of all but one or two when the *Pontic Epistles* were written, and Ovid himself states openly (*P.* iii. 6. 11 f.) that the Emperor forbade neither mention of him nor correspondence with him.

The sins which led Augustus to banish Ovid have been endlessly discussed. The poet himself refers to them again and again, but his references are so vague that it is impossible to arrive at the whole truth, and of course the lips of his contemporaries were sealed. He was constantly hoping that his penalty might be revoked or at least mitigated by permission to change his place of exile, and he left no stone unturned to effect one or the other of these results. If we had his prose correspondence with friends in Rome and elsewhere—a correspondence to which he frequently refers—it would be easier to solve the problem, but in the poems from exile we have only such evidence as could be made public

[1] *T.* ii. 131 ff.; iv. 4. 45 f.; 9. 11 ff.; 5. 7; *P.* ii. 7. 56.

without injuring the exile's chances of pardon or involving his friends. In weighing this evidence it is necessary to allow for a double distortion—an over-emphasis on the charges which could be publicly argued and a corresponding reticence about those which it seemed impolitic to discuss in public. Moreover, the poet based his hope of pardon very largely on confession of guilt; he threw himself on the mercy of the court which consisted, in this case, of a single judge, the Emperor. Naturally, therefore, he did not argue his case as completely as he could have done if he had been free to use all the arguments at his disposal. He was aware that the mere presentation of evidence could avail him nothing. There was no appeal from the judge's verdict, but the judge himself might be induced to relent.

Ovid asserts that there were two charges against him, a poet and a mistake (*T.* ii. 207, "Duo crimina, carmen et error") of which the poem was the first in time. In many passages he makes the same distinction between his sins, and it will be advisable, even though they may have been connected, to discuss them separately in order to determine the poet's own attitude.

The poem was the *Ars Amatoria* which was published *c.* 1 B.C. This *Art*, as the poet often calls it, is no more immoral than other erotic works, among which Ovid mentions those of Tibullus and Propertius, but it is explicitly didactic. It gathers up and systematizes the erotic precepts which had gradually been developed (largely under Greek influence) by the Roman poets, especially Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid himself. It