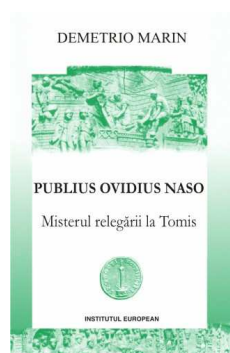


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Demetrio Marin, *Publius Ovidius Naso. The Mystery of the Relegation at Tomis. Theses and Hypotheses*

Institutul European, 2010. 272 pagini.



A valuable monograph, dedicated to Publius Ovidius Naso, was published, in 2009, at the “European Institute” Press of Iasi. The author of the book is the classical philologist of Romanian origin, Demetrio Marin, former professor at the University of Bari (Italy). The preface of the tome is signed by the classicist Traian Diaconescu, professor at “Al. I. Cuza” University of Iasi.

In the first chapter, Demetrio Marin presents the stages of the debate of the problem up to the present. Hypotheses of moral, religious and political nature are analyzed. Among the hypotheses of moral nature, there is an analysis of Ovid’s guilt of facilitation of the impermissible love between Decimus Iunius Silanus and Iulia Minor, the grand daughter of Emperor Augustus. In the category of hypotheses of religious nature, it is mentioned the guilt of profanation, by the poet, of the mysteries of Isis’ cult. In the category of the hypotheses of political nature, Ovid’s implication in a plot hatched against the emperor Augustus is foregrounded.

In the second part of the study, the author re-examines the whole problem of relegation, offering new hypotheses or consolidating the old ones. There are examined the key-words of Ovid’s exile: *carmen* (poetry) and *error* (mistake), with a focus on the second one. The author insists on the poet’s confession concerning his own guilt. Ovid declares that this guilt is only a *culpa*, a mistake due to folly, to naivety; it is not a *scelus*, a *facinus*, that is a very serious felony, a wrongdoing. The true guilt of the poet would have been - according to the testimony in his verses – that he had seen unwillingly, that he had been an eye witness to the perpetration of an offence by another person.

Moreover, the author affirms that Ovid had probably offended the emperor directly, that is he had probably committed the crime of lese-majesty (*crimen laesae maiestatis*). In fact, it is demonstrated that the Latin poet had always manifested opposition, hostility, revolt, even hatred against Augustus, before and during his exile, although, apparently, in his Pontic epistles, he wants to convince those remained in Rome of his loyalty towards the emperor.

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