

EXILE – AFTER OVID

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Abstract: *This paper re-examines three Metamorphoses tales to argue the crucial importance of factoring in the en-gendering (in Teresa de Lauretis’s terms) of the banished figure not just as the criminal deservedly punished for their hubris – so that exile translates a spatial (re)configuration of nemesis – but especially as the subaltern other already deemed expendable and thereby chosen as the exemplar of audacity worth giving a lesson to. My exilic examples, which I also contrast in gender terms, are Marsyas, Echo and Arachne. In all three cases, “exile” metaphorises a “not-that” or “not-oneself” as “not-here,” an ontological transmutation reconfigured spatially, so that exile from oneself looks like exile from one’s country. My overall argument unravels unthought-of aspects of exile in the Metamorphoses; however, the three tales echo artistically not only Greek mythography but also the condition of individuals in the ancient polity, on the one hand, and seem to furnish a template for future social developments regarding both gender and the subaltern other, on the other.*

Keywords: *Ovid, the Metamorphoses, Marsyas, Echo, Arachne, exile*