

20.03.09

Written by Jean-Yves Maleuvre  
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Today, the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, let's celebrate Ovid's anniversary ! Ovid was born in the year 43 B. C. : *Trist.* IV, 10, 13, and he died in the reign of Tiberius, who hated him (16 ? 17 ?). He was 50 when the emperor Augustus banished him, just as Vergil was 50 when the Sun (*sic*) stroke him to death. The poet tells us how gloomy his birthdays were at Tomis (*Trist.* III, 13, 1-4) :

*Ecce superuacuu – quid enim fuit utile gigni?-*

□□□□ *Ad sua natalis tempora noster adest.*

*Dure, quid ad miseros ueniebas exulis annos ?*

□□□□ *Debueras illis imposuisse modum ?*

“So is my Anniversary back and punctual, and superfluous too – for what's the good of living ?- You cruel, why do you add to the wretched years of an exile ? You ought to put an end to them”.

He compared exile to death (*ibid.* 21-22):

*Funeris ara mihi ferali cincta cupressu*

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□□□□ *Conuenit et structis flamma parata rogis*

“What fits me is a funerary altar wreathed with funeral cypress, and the flame prepared for and erected pyre”.

What crime had he committed to deserve such a punishment ? Was the whole affair in relation with the murder of Vergil ? This Forum is open to all discussions.