

TIBULLUS AND THE PASTORAL DESIGN

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(ANALYSIS OF I, I, 3, 5)

* Tibullus has been recognized as one of the famous elegists of the Roman world, and also has been known as the most original of the elegiac love - Poets. His favourite themes are romantic love and the pleasures of country life. The two domains of Tibullus art, love and the country and the country life are not separate, for life in the country is twice as attractive in Delia's company. His best poems represent a blend of the pastoral and the elegiac romance⁽¹⁾.

The applicability of the term pastoral to the elegies of Tibullus has been much discussed. It is an inappropriate as some say, others has warned that Tibullus is not lightly to be associated with the pastoral tradition⁽²⁾. But Tibullus is often descried as a great pastoral poet, he shows a true peasant's feeling for the Italian country side⁽³⁾.

We will try to emphasize a larger design characterized by the basic pastoral impulse to retreat from a complex, dangerous and morally debased society in serch for simpilcity, security,

* I read this paper in the International congress of 'Alexandria and the Hellenistic. Roman world' Alexandria 1992.

1-Luck, G., *The latin Love Elegy*, London, 1969, p 71f, Cairns f., *Tibullus : A Hellenistic Poet At Rome*, Cambridge, , 1979, p. 228f.

2- Solmsen, F., *Tibullus as an Augustan Poet*, *Hermes* 90, 1962, p.302 ff., Rosenmeyer, Th., *The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric*, Berkely and Los Angeles, 1969, p.v11,109

3- Quinn, f., K., *Latin Exploration*, London, 1963, p. 136. cf. Bulloch, A., W., *Tibullus and the Alexandrians*, *PCPS* 199, 1973, P.85.

love and happiness. The retreat for Tibullus, at least in book 1, never becomes an actual journey from the city to the country, but takes place only in his imagination and daydreams. The withdrawal is never complete, the ideal never achieved and the poet is repeatedly drawn back to become a participant in the real world around him. The pastoral in Tibullus, poetry seems as a confrontation between a misty dream world and actual world of Rome, and the key to pastoral poetry lies in the implied Arcadian world of goodness and the actual world of virtues and vices⁽¹⁾.

The first elegy of Book One introduces the design of typical pastoral and establish the major moral and psychological oppositions of the elegy book. This poem, as the tenth, gives the poet's philosophy of life. The two poems serve as introduction and conclusion of the book, and discuss the semantic opposition of war and peaceful life in the country⁽²⁾.

At the very beginning Tibullus rejects two forms of the active life as led by the Romans of his day, neither pursuit of wealth

1-Lawall, G., *The Green Cabinet and the Pastoral Design: Theocritus, Euripides and Tibullus* (In *Ancient Pastoral, Ramus Essays on Greek and Roman Pastoral poetry*, edited by Boyle, A. J., Australia, 1975) p. 11f, cf. Elder, J., P., *Tibullus: Tersus atque Elegans*, (in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature, Elegy and Lyric*, edited by Sullivan, J., P., Cambridge 1962) p. 79, Tibullus 1.1.5-48, 1.5-48, 1.5.21-34.

2-Lee, G., *Tibullus Elegies*, Cambridge 1982, p. 13., Steidle, W., *Das Motiv der lebenswahl bei Tibull und Propertius*, WS 75, 1962, p. 100, Maltby, R., *Latin Love Elegy*, Bristol, 1985, p. 105f.

nor warfare has any attractions for him. He invites the others to gather wealth for themselves in yellow gold and occupy great acres of cultivated land⁽¹⁾. The service in the army was one way in which Roman horsemen "equites" might with luck become rich. For him this was a hard work and the world "labor" combines the idea of duty. He describes himself as a poor asking to let his general poverty transfer him to inaction as long as fire glows always in his hearth. The metaphor has the effect of personifying the relative term "paupertas"⁽²⁾. A roman "eques" who calls himself poor, as Tibullus says, is not exactly on the bread-line.

The connection between war and wealth is made frequently by Tibullus⁽³⁾. These passages clearly echo contemporary view concerning the progressive corruption of Rome's originally upright peasant society by the luxury resulting from her foreign wars of expansion. It is in order to get money that all wars are made as Plato said⁽⁴⁾. For all these he would retreat to his ancestral farm, fleeing from real world and begins to picture the ideal life he would like to lead, life of frugality, rustic piety, security and happiness. Tibullus' ideal of life is Epicurean in the best sense of the word⁽⁵⁾.

1- Tibullus, I.1.1-2: "divitias alius fuluo sibi congerat auro // et teneat culti iugera magna soli",

2- Tibullus, I.1.3-6. cf. Bulloch, p.88, Cairns, p.145.

3- Tibullus, 1.2.65f, 1.10.7f, 2.3.37f.

4- Plato, Phaedo 66c.

5- Luck, p. 72, Rosenmeyer, p.68f.

The detailed portrayal of this daydream existence concludes with a scene of erotic contentment as Tibullus rests inside the farmhouse with his mistress in his arm⁽¹⁾. He declares that "Spes" Hope, personified as goddess, would never fail him but deliver him an abundance of produce⁽²⁾. The success of Tibullus' harvest will depend on adherence to traditional rites and customs which seems to reflect genuine sympathy for the ancient religious traditions of Rome⁽³⁾.

The list of deities is put carefully in order of importance. He begins with primitive cult objects "Stipes..... lapis" tree trunk or stone, perhaps represented boundary god such as "Terminus" .

He begins with "nam" pointing to a causal connection between the success of the harvest and the fulfilment of religious duties. Vergilius advises the farmer: 'above all worship the gods', and he can succeed with the help of the god of the country side. Also he mentions the unnamed rustic god, "agricolam" *deum* for whom the first of every fruit the new season raises is placed at his feet. He uses the noun "agricola" adjectivally for the first time in Latin⁽⁵⁾.

1-Tibullus, 1.1.7-48.

2-Tibullus, 1.1.9-10: "nec Spes destituit, sed frugum semper acervos // praebeat et pleno penguia musta lacu .

3-Tibullus, 1.1.11-24

4-Tibullus, 1.1.11-12, Vergilius, Georg. 1.338: in primis venerare deos, cf. Ovidius, Fasti, 2.64f, Bulloch, p.85.

5- Tibullus, 1.1.13-14, cf. Maltby, p.108.

After that , he mentions the gods and the goodesses by their names. He will bear a crown of wheaten spikes to hang on the temple door of the goddess of harvest, the Golden Ceres⁽¹⁾. He follows with **Priapus**, the fertility god with his huge phallus, although he was not a native Italian divinity, but came from Asia Minor via Greece . He will use the red -pointed figures "ruber custos", of the god of fertility and garden as scare-crows "saeva falce" for the birds⁽²⁾.

Finally , he invoke's **Lares Custodes**", who guarded fields near crossroad , rather than the house hold god "**Lares familiares**". He asks them to receive gifts as guardians of property and after that he invoked them to grant him good harvest and good wine⁽³⁾.

It is difficult, after that to interperit if he has been forced to live in this way, or he had been compelled to undertake military service ? Did he chose it as an alternative to the ideal he now proposes? He says that now, finally, he may live content with little and will not handle himself to the neverending road⁽⁴⁾ . The soldier always had to travel and it is the hardship of the military life. The security of home is central to his ideal⁽⁵⁾,

1-Tibullusm1.1.15-16.

2-Tibullus,1.1.17-18.

3-Tibullus,1.1.19-24.

4-Tibullus,1.1.25-26; iam modo,iam possim contentus vivere parvo // nec semper longae deditus esse viac.

5-Tibullius,1.1.6,44.cf Cairns, p.105,145.

while the soldier, constantly on the move, has continual insecurity. The following details of his dream world are much vaguer, but he is aiming to an effect of simple country tasks are to replace for him the more demanding hardwork : **labor**" of the soldier, and such tasks would not normally be undertaken by one in his position⁽¹⁾.

The thieves and wolves are the enemies of the country life, an image re-inforced by the military term "**praeda**" booty, but unlike to those of the soldiers are amenable to prayer. He refers to the annual festival **Parilia** and its ritual in honour of the ancient Italian pastoral deity. This ritual associated with purity and simplicity and symbolise the simple piety of early times⁽²⁾.

The detailed portrayal of this dream existence, which in some part agricultural and in the other pastoral, concludes with a scene of erotic contentment, as the poet rests inside his farmhouse with his mistress in tender embrace. Tibullus, unlike the soldier, will be protected from the winter gales and icy rain and the summer heat. There is contrast between the violence of the outer world and the security of home. The first mention to the mistress "**dominam**" marking the transition to the contrast between the soldier and the lover⁽³⁾.

1-Tibullus, 1.1.27-32, cf. Bulloch, p.85.

2-Tibullus, 1.1.33-40.

3-Tibullus, 1.1.45-48, Lawall, p.12, Maltby, p.110, Cairns, p. 145f.

After his mention to his mistress as "**dominam**", he refers to his patron, **Messalla**, by his name. The first introduction of Tibullus' patron emphasize that the war is now associated not with greed but with glory. He declares his real situation as the prisoner or slave, bound by the chains of love before the door of his mistress as a doorkeeper. Love like the country holds him in one place, and thus prevented from leading the ideal life of his agricultural-pastoral dream⁽¹⁾.

At the end of the elegy a compromise is formulated. While rejecting real warfare, he declares that he is love's "leader and good soldier", and thus the themes of love and war are united⁽²⁾. The last two lines are the concluding image. He neither withdraw into his nebulous agricultural-pastoral daydream nor yet held ignominiously as love's slave. He refers again to rustic ideal, and the security, his basic ideal. He asks to live at peace with his mistress in harvest heap looking down on both riches and hunger⁽³⁾.

In the third elegy of book one, Tibullus develops a specific autobiographical episode. while accompanying Messalla on official business to the East, he has fallen sick on the island of

1-Tibullus, I.1.55-56: me retinent vinctum formosae vincla puellae // et sedeo duras ianitor ante fores. cf. Cairns, p.148.

2-Tibullus, I.1.75: hic ego dux milesque bonus.

3-Tibullus, I.177-78: ferte et opes : ego composito securus acervo // dites despiciam despiciamque famem.

Phaacia, Coreyra, and is to be left behind the rest of the party. This episode represents in a starkly unresolved form the opposed pulls which shape the pastoral design observed in elegy one. The poem consists of smoothly connected series of thoughts, dreams, wishes and prayers evoked by the situation in a sharp contrast. Faced with a soldier's death in distant land, Tibullus, thought turn to Rome and to his love for his mistress, Delia.

His vision was moving, as a sick man, between realities and dream-world fantasies. On one hand Messalla embodies the active life of the warrior in search of wealth and glory, and Delia, on the other hand, represents an ideal love life free from danger but also void of riches and glory⁽¹⁾.

The Structure of the elegy thus may be summarized. Lines 1-10, I am dying, 11-22 I should never have left home, the gods should have prevented me, 23-28 but since I did leave and they didn't stop me, at least now Isis should help, 29-34 so that I may come home, 35-48 there was a time when I couldn't have left, 49-56 but that time is gone, this is why I am dying, 57-66 but I will continue to live and love in the Elysian Fields 67-82 but the enemies of love are punished in Hell, may enemies be so punished, and 83-94 but you be chaste Delia, I will come to you⁽²⁾.

1- Cf. Lawall, p. 12f, Maltby, p. 113, Lee, p. 112, Bulloch, p. 85, and Campbell, C., Tibullus: Elegy 1.3, YCS 23.1973, p. 147 ff.

2- Campbell, p. 149-151, Maltby, p. 114.

Tibullus is to be left behind sick in Phaeacia . Prayer to death to spare him. There would be no relatives, no Delia to give him proper burial if he were to die there. Although the fear of dying in a distant land is a common theme, this dread was particularly acute for Tibullus who give's so much importance in home and family⁽¹⁾. Tibullus use of the name Phaeacia rather than Corcyra recall the Odyssey 6 and 7 when Odysseus was shipwrecked in the land of Phaeacians. By using this name, Phaeacia,he recalls Homeric precedent, perhaps suggesting a parallel between himself and the wandering Odysseus, and by implication between Delia and Penelope⁽²⁾. Death in Phaeacia will deprive him of a proper burial attended by relatives and friends. By the anaphora, "**non hic mihi mater....!..... non soror !.... Delia non usquam**" , the pathos is hightend. Delia is the third and last of the mourners,her name comes as a climax in emphatic position at the begenning of the line. With the mention of his mistress his thought turn back toRome and his departue⁽³⁾.

At his departure from Delia, he wavered between the opposite pulls of love and adventure,Messalla and Delia.

He repeatedly sought superstitious excuses for delay. Finally

1-Tibullus,1.3.3, cf.1.1.61-68, Vergilius, Aen.9.485ff.'

2-cf.Luck,p.73f,Putnam,C.,J.,Tibullus,ACommentary,Norman,Oklahoma,1973,p.74,Brig-ht ,D.,A.,ATibullun Odyssey,Arethusa 4,1971,p.197and Maltby, p.115.

3-Tibullus,1.3.5-9, cf. Luck,p. 78.

the outward impulse toward Messalla and adventure overcame centripetal desire to remain with Delia⁽¹⁾. Tibullus prays to Delia's favourite goddess, the Egyptian goddess of fertility, to cure him. But he himself would prefer to worship the traditional "Penates and Lares"⁽²⁾. In the last two lines of this scene, 33 - 4, Tibullus carefully constructed transitional Roman gods. But the Lares and Penates are associated in his mind with home, so that the couplet forms a prayer to Isis for his return. Finally, the ancient "antiquo" and simple form of worship leads smoothly to his dream of Saturn's Golden Age in the following lines⁽³⁾.

The contrast between the Golden Age and Iron Age permits Tibullus to clarify his attitude toward Messalla. He divides man's history into two periods, Golden Age of Saturn and the Modern Age of Jupiter, and stresses the Golden Age's superiority before men were captured by the invention of trade and warfare⁽⁴⁾. The passage begins with an exclamation over the happy lives under Saturn "Saturno rege" before the earth was opened up into long roads. Absence of travel, a traditional feature of Golden Age, is emphasised here because of its relevance to Tibullus' plight. The invention of sea-faring, motivated by greed

1- Tibullus, l.3.10-22, Maltby, p.115f.

2- Tibullus, l.3.23-34.

3- Tibullus, l.3.33-34; at mihi contingat patrios celebrare Penates // reddereque antiquo menstrua Lari, Maltby, p.117.

4- Tibullus, l.3.35-48 and 49-59, Campbell, p.150ff, Luck, p.73ff.

for gain,traditionally initiated the decline from the Golden Age. It was a sin for men to take the sea. There was no ploughing in the Golden Age and agriculture was unknown as the earth brought forth produce of her own accord. There was no need of horse for transport and men travelled little and on foot⁽¹⁾.

House had no doors, because there were no robbers and, by implication, he indicates that lovers were not shut out. No stones were fixed in the fields to mark out the arable land with definite boundaries. The man of the Golden Age did not have to worry about providing for himself because nature fulfilled his need. Tibullus applies the adjective "securis" carefree,46,to himself in his dream of the ideal rustic life. Anger and armies and war were not yet known in the Golden Age. The last two lines of the passage, are description of the violence of the present age. The threefold, *nunc.....| nunc.....nunc* brings the reader back with a jolt from the dream of the Golden Age to the violence of the present⁽²⁾. These details have a direct application to Tibullus, recent experiences, for in embarking on Messall's Eastern expedition,he was entering on an active life involving typically Modern Age activities, such commerce, warfare and traveling. His implicit moral condemnation of these activities that is formulated in the contrast between the Golden and Modern Age constitutes a rejection of both the active life and its representative,

1-Tibullus,1.3..37-42.

2-Tibullus,1.3.43-48and49-50.; *nunc Iove sub domino caedes et vulnera semper // nunc mare,nunc leti mille repente viae.*, Mulby,p.118 f.

Messalla⁽¹⁾.

Tibullus prays to Jupiter, addressing him a "Pater", to spare him because he has committed no perjury or blasphemy, indicating the idea that his present sufferings may result from divine anger⁽²⁾. He is afraid, but his fear is not the result of a guilty conscience. The epitaph that he composes for himself contains no reference to Delia. He deliberately omits reference to himself as love elegist and puts emphasis on the other side of his character as man of action, stressing his adherence to the warlike values of the Modern Age. The epitaph is also intended as a compliment to Messalla as he have followed him over land and sea "terra.....mari". It seems to a soldier's epitaph, not a lover's⁽³⁾.

The following passage in which after death, Tibullus is led to Elysium by Venus gives open expression to that yearning for a life of simplicity, erotic satisfaction, and happiness associated with pastoral escapism. The dream of Elysium is in some respects parallel to the dream of the Golden Age. Now his service to love will bring him eternal happiness after death after he has stressed his achievement as a man of action. He seems initially

1-cf. Lawall, p.13, Campbell, p.150.

2-Tibullus, 1.3.51-54, cf. 1.3.21f.

3-Tibullus, 1.3.55-56: hic iacet immiti consumptus morte Tibullus // Messallam terra dum sequiturque mari, Lawall, p.13, Cairns, p.145, Bright, p. 202.

confident that Venus will reward him because he is always welcomed tender love "facilis tenero amori" and will lead him to the Elysian fields⁽¹⁾. All those whom Death raped while they were lovers "amanti" and wearing a myrtle wreath "myrtea sarta" deserve this lovers Elysium. If death comes to Tibullus now, it will not come to him as lover, nor wearing the wreath of Venus but rather a deserter of Delia and follower of Messalla over land and sea. In leaving Delia behind against the will of love "invito Amore, 21, and with the god standing in his way prohibente deo, 22, he has forfeited his right to Elysium. Death will come to him in an isolation and loneliness for which he has blame only himself and Messalla. He can experience the journey of escape to Elysium only vicariously in his day-dream⁽²⁾.

A contrasting description of Tartarus follows as a place of punishment for sinners against love, especially those who have violated Tibullus' love and pray for his long service in the army⁽³⁾. Although Tibullus fears that his expedition was the result of a wish or curse from a rival, but the reference remains general and unspecific and does not veil an actual person back in Rome who has seduced Delia in his absence⁽⁴⁾. In his description of Tartarus' picture, he mentions the giant "Tityos" who

1-Tibullus, 1.3.57-66. Campbell, p. 150, 155.

2- cf. Lawall, p. 14.

3-Tibullus, 1.3.67-82.

4-Tibullus, 1.3.81-82: illic sit quicumque meos violarit amores // optarit lentas et mihi militias, cf. Wimmell, W., *Der Friibe Tibull, Studia et Testimonia Antiqua VI*, Munich, 1968, p. 212 f

is first mentioned by Homer in the *Odyssey* and also the punishment of **Tantalus**⁽¹⁾. Is there any equation of Tibullus with *Odysseus* ? or any allusion to the suitors pressing *Penelope* in the absence of *Odysseus* ? Looking for the elegy with its opposite pulls of *Messalla* and adventure, on the one hand, and *Delia* and love, on the other, we might think of *Messalla* himself. It is *Messalla* who wish's him to accompany his expedition and so departed from *Delia*. This wish has violated Tibullus love by taking him away from his mistress⁽²⁾.

The final scene is an appeal to *Delia* to remain faithful and vision of his happy homecoming to her. Tibullus would arrive a suddenly as a portent of omen, and *Delia* again is assigned the role of a faithful *Penelope*⁽³⁾.

The third elegy may be described as a poem about voyages. Beside the physical voyage of the poet from Rome to *Corcyra* and the voyage of *Messalla* on eastwards, there are also Tibullus, spiritual voyage which take him back in time to the Golden Age of Saturn, away to lovers *Elysium* and downwards into *Tartarus*. The poet cannt help but be affected emotionally, intellectually and spiritually by these voyages.

1-Homer, *Odyssey*, 11.576-81 and 582-92.

2-Lawall, p.14, cf. 1.3.3.

3-Tibullus, 1.3.83-94, Campbell, p.151, 155f.

They have for example, changed his attitude toward Messalla. First there is friendship, then an intellectual rejection of his way of life and finally an emotional curse for having spoiled his love life by wishing the military expedition upon him. Tibullus has come to see his departure from Delia as violation of love. It is his fault. Having repudiated Messalla, he is ready for the final imaginary journey back to Delia. It is the final journey as the final visionary dream. Delia will be an ideal wife as Penelope, spending her evening at home guarded by an old woman who will spin and tell stories to entertain her. Before she is a conventional elegaic mistress⁽¹⁾.

Tibullus, elegy 5 of the first book ultimately proves to be a Komos. In the very beginning, line 1, the poet states his former views "I was angry and proclaimed that separation did not hurt". In line two he recants them, whom they concern separation from his beloved. "but such heroics now are far beyond me." In lines 5-6, he implies that madness was the cause of his former views", twist and sear my pride with torture till I never fancy grandiloquence again tame my ranting speech⁽²⁾.

Tibullus in this elegy attempts a bold integration of three previously separate worlds of his agricultural-pastoral dream, Delia, and Messalla. He would cultivate his fields and Delia would

1-Lawall, p.14f., Cairns, p.176ff., Putnam, M.C.J., Essays on Latin Lyric, Elegy and Epic, Princeton Univ. Press, 1982. p. 173 f.

2-Cairns, p.169, Tibullus, 1.5.1, 5-6, cf. Bulloch, p.8.

be there to guard the grain⁽¹⁾. His patron Messalla would come to see them. Delia will pick him delicious apples and in his honour attend to all his needs, prepare a dinner and wait on him herself. These were my dreams, he announce's⁽²⁾.

In elegy 3, Delia and Messalla stood at opposite and irreconcilable poles of the poet's consciousness. In elegy 1, she is a mistress, "domina 46" and a part of the world of activity in which he cannot be fulfilled. The contrast of the two worlds of activity and dreams, gives the elegies their distinctive tone of melancholy resignation.

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1-Tibullus, 1.5.21 "rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos", cf. 21-30, Luck p.73f.

2-Tibullus, 1.5,31-35.