

TIBULLUS 2.3 AND VERGIL'S TENTH ECLOGUE

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It is the purpose of this paper to identify literary allusion as an essential component of Tibullus' technique and to demonstrate that Tibullus 2.3 is an imitation of the *Tenth Eclogue* of Vergil.¹

Although Tibullus wrote in a period characterized by adherence to literary conventions, he seems, at first glance, to have avoided or rejected some of the most typical features of Latin and Augustan poetry. Unlike his contemporaries and neoteric predecessors, he never mentions the name of any poet, living or dead. He almost never says anything about the craft of poetry or his own place in it. His elegies are singularly devoid of explicit mythological allusion.

The avoidance of these conventional themes and techniques—which ornament and complicate the work of the other Augustans—gives Tibullus' poetry an uncluttered, deceptively simple appearance. Tibullus is a poet notoriously refined in language and style; his evident omission of favorite and familiar subjects has contributed to the impression that he was refining content as well as form to the extent that he had little left to say, although he said it elegantly.

This impression, of course, is a false one, and rests on a misunderstanding of Tibullan technique. The reason that these conventions are not apparent in his poetry is not that they are absent—indeed no poet of his age could have completely ignored or sidestepped them. Instead of avoiding such conventional elements Tibullus has absorbed and mastered them in a kind of assimilation that precludes overt and merely ornamental reference. Literary allusion is the keystone of his

¹ I wish to thank Professors Agnes K. Michels and Myra Uhlfelder, as well as the Association's anonymous referee, for their helpful comments on this paper.

technique; by a subtle and complex use of this device he draws mythological parallels, demonstrates his ideas about poetic genre, and reveals his own position with regard to other poets.

1.7 provides a good introduction to his method; the elegy begins with an allusion to Catullus; echoes from Callimachus appear throughout. These allusions are all significant in various ways and complimentary to Messalla. Taken together they provide a "literary" and festive atmosphere appropriate to this occasional poem, and prepare the way for the identification of Messalla with Osiris that lies at the heart of the elegy.² In 1.3 Tibullus uses a single literary allusion to shape an entire elegy. The word *Phaeacia* in the third verse is the indication that what follows will be an elegiac "Odyssey," with Tibullus as Odysseus and Delia a most improbable Penelope.³ The climax is Tibullus' imaginary journey to the underworld in a vision of Hades worthy of Odysseus himself—except that Venus is the psychopomp and Elysium and Tartarus are populated by lovers. Throughout 1.3 Tibullus has transposed the epic into the elegiac, exploiting the incongruities between the two modes for ironic effect.

2.3 provides a more complex example of Tibullus' use of literary models.⁴ Nemesis has gone to the country with her new lover, and Tibullus, for once adopting an anti-rural stance, asserts that he must follow her even if hard agricultural labor is the price of seeing his beloved. At this point he introduces the story of Apollo's servitude to Admetus as a *paradeigma* for his own projected slavery.⁵ The parallel is developed at length, as Tibullus explores what the *servitium amoris* entails for Apollo, and, by implication, for himself. Apollo is not at

² On Callimachean allusions see G. Luck, *The Latin Love Elegy* (Edinburgh 1969²) 87–92. The point has been reasserted by A. W. Bulloch, "Tibullus and the Alexandrians," *PCPhS* 199 (1973) 76–77. On Catullus see J. P. Elder, "Tibullus, Ennius, and The Blue Loire," *TAPA* 96 (1965) 104. On Messalla and Osiris see J. H. Gaisser, "Tibullus 1.7: A Tribute to Messalla," *CP* 66 (1971) 221–229.

³ This was apparently first pointed out by H. Eisenberger, "Der innere Zusammenhang der Motive in Tibulls Gedicht 1, 3," *Hermes* 88 (1960) 188–97.

⁴ 2.3 has received very little attention. But see J. P. Elder, "Tersus atque Elegans," in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature* (J. P. Sullivan, ed.) Cambridge, Mass. 1962, 92–94. Also J. K. Newman, *Augustus and the New Poetry* (Brussels 1967) 388–91.

⁵ Apollo's servitude has an erotic basis. See K. F. Smith, *The Elegies of Albius Tibullus* (New York 1913) *ad loc.* and Call. *Hymn* 2.48–49. F. O. Copley ("Servitium Amoris in the Roman Elegists," *TAPA* 78 [1947] 286–87) gives further references and discusses the use of Apollo's slavery in the development of the *servitium amoris*.

home in the countryside. His traditional arts of singing and medicine are unavailing; his beauty, as represented by his unshorn locks, is destroyed. In the end, of course, it will all be for nothing—Apollo will not win his Admetus.

All of this, as well as sunburn and blisters, is implied for Tibullus in his slavery to Nemesis. But behind the Apollo *exemplum* lurks another parallel which shapes and directs the poem as a whole. Apollo was introduced as follows:

Pavit et Admeti tauros formosus Apollo. (Tib. 2.3.11)

As the commentators have noted, the line is an echo of another *exemplum*, that of Adonis in Vergil's *Tenth Eclogue*:

et formosus oves ad flumina pavit Adonis.⁶ (*Ecl.* 10.18)

This easily recognized imitation invites us to recall the eclogue just as the word *Phaeacia* in 1.3 deliberately evoked the *Odyssey*. In the eclogue, of course, the principal figure is the poet Gallus, deserted by his Lycoris, who has followed another soldier lover to his Alpine camp. The general parallel to Tibullus' present situation is obvious.

Gallus has come to the pastoral world to die of love, but before submitting to his fate, he toys with the idea of escaping from his twin passions for Lycoris and war by a permanent retreat into the life of the shepherds. He dwells on the details of this new life at some length before rejecting it. Whatever the charms of the pastoral life, they provide no remedy for Gallus' passion, and the lover submits to the inevitable:

Omnia vincit Amor, et nos cedamus Amori. (*Ecl.* 10.69)

For Tibullus the inevitable is not "dying of love," but loss of self in the *servitium amoris*. Like Gallus, he contemplates an escape into another, simpler world; translating Gallus' pastoral haven into his own terms, he longs for a return to the golden age⁷ and its values, only to discover

⁶ In addition to the obvious points of similarity between the two verses, it should be pointed out that the form *pavit* occurs only in these lines in either Vergil or Tibullus. The perfect of *pasco* is found elsewhere in Vergil only at *G.* 4.152 (*pavere*) and in "Tibullus" 3.4.67 (*pavisse*), a recollection of Tib. 2.3.11.

⁷ The term is used for convenience. Tibullus never uses the adjective "golden" to qualify this paradise, as W. Wimmel has observed (*Der frühe Tibull* [Munich 1968] 127-28). In 1.3.35 Tibullus identifies the age with the reign of Saturn (*Saturno . . . rege*); elsewhere it is not given a name.

that such a retreat is impossible. Like Gallus, Tibullus pulls himself up abruptly and submits to his fate:

Non ego me vinclis verberibusque nego. (Tib. 2.3.80)

When Tibullus used Odysseus and Penelope as models for himself and Delia in 1.3 the result was ironic—with much of the effect produced by the patent disparity between the epic and elegiac worlds. Transposing the bucolic into an elegiac context, however, is a different matter. Superficially, at least, the worlds of bucolic and elegiac poetry are not too far apart. If Tibullus casts himself in the role of Gallus we are not immediately struck by any glaring incongruity in stature or situation between the poet and his exemplar. Indeed, the distinction between the worlds and their heroes, Gallus and Tibullus, is blurred at the outset because Gallus is also an elegiac poet and because Vergil has deliberately evoked elegiac conventions and vocabulary in his description of Gallus' predicament.⁸ In imitating the eclogue, then, Tibullus set himself a difficult and intriguing task. He could not rely upon obvious incongruities between the genres to make an effect; indeed, whatever effect he produced would necessarily be subtler and more complex than the irony of 1.3. His task was complicated further by the fact that Vergil's eclogue itself not only was an imitation of the death of Daphnis in *Idyll* I of Theocritus but also contained elements of the lost poetry of Gallus.⁹ Thus, Tibullus' own version, while using the eclogue as its principal model, was conceived as part of a larger tradition, which it would both imitate and attempt to surpass.

The nature of Tibullus' imitation of Vergil and its poetic effect can be understood best through a detailed comparison of the two poems.

⁸ M. C. J. Putnam, *Virgil's Pastoral Art* (Princeton 1970) 342–94.

⁹ Vergil's use of Theocritus is discussed by Putnam (above, note 8) 332–57. For Gallus see the notorious remark of Servius on *Ecl.* 10.46: *Hi autem omnes versus Galli sunt, de ipsius translati carminibus.*

It also seems clear that Prop. 1.8 is modeled on Gallus' poem; see P. J. Enk, ed., *Propertius, Elegiarum Liber I: Monobiblos* (Leiden 1946) II 75. The question of Gallus, Vergil and Propertius is discussed further by D. Ross, *Backgrounds to Augustan Poetry: Gallus, Elegy and Rome* (Cambridge 1975) 85–106.

There is little possibility of Tibullan imitation of Gallus in 2.3, for Servius' comment seems quite clearly to refer only to *Ecl.* 10.46 and the lines immediately following, in which Gallus expresses his concern for Lycoris' safety on her Alpine journey. These lines also have a counterpart in Prop. 1.8.5–8, but not in Tibullus.

Let us again juxtapose the verse in which Tibullus indicated his imitation of the eclogue to its Vergilian counterpart:

Pavit et Admeti tauros formosus Apollo. (Tib. 2.3.11)
et formosus oves ad flumina pavit Adonis. (Ecl. 10.18)

On a superficial level the verses perform the same function—each reconciling an essentially urban figure to a rustic environment. Gallus must not be ashamed of the sheep, and Tibullus cannot complain of blisters. But there are important differences as well. The Vergilian line is in accordance with the whole bucolic tradition and seems to be an imitation of Theocritus:

ὠραῖος χῶδωνις, ἐπεὶ καὶ μῆλα νομεύει. (Id. 1.109)

The beautiful shepherd Adonis, used by Daphnis in his taunting of Aphrodite, becomes in Vergil an effective model for Gallus, for he was a shepherd and his death (though not of erotic causes) was pathetic. Apollo the cowherd, although formally similar to Adonis the shepherd, stems from a different, non-bucolic tradition. Unlike Adonis he is not at home in the country; his rustic activities are contrary to his divine status and habitual conduct, and belong to the *servitium amoris*. Discomfort and humiliation are hallmarks of love's slavery, and Apollo is subject to both, but this is not the only reason that Tibullus emphasizes Apollo's abasement and his alien status in the rural landscape.

It is Gallus who is Apollo's real counterpart in the eclogue. He, like Apollo, is alien to the countryside, for he is an elegiac poet sojourning in the bucolic world—a world which, however alien, is nevertheless sympathetic to his plight and responsive to Vergil's celebration of it:

non canimus surdis; respondent omnia silvae. (Ecl. 10.8)

Even though he is on the crags of Maenalus the very trees and stones weep for his suffering.

illum etiam lauri, etiam flevere myricae;
pinifer illum etiam sola sub rupe iacentem
Maenalus et gelidi fleverunt saxa Lycaei. (Ecl. 10.13-15)

The sympathy of nature, however, is explicitly rejected by Tibullus, both for himself and for Apollo (whose story is a *paradeigma* of Tibullus' own situation). In the elegy nature is hard and unresponsive; Tibullus

will be sunburned; Apollo's songs will not be echoed, but interrupted by lowing cattle. The description of their situations is a catalogue of hardships—the good looks of both will be destroyed by toil; the arts of Apollo are useless and unappreciated.¹⁰

This is a deliberate contrast of bucolic with elegiac convention, a contrast that is emphasized by the many pastoral references in the Apollo *exemplum*, for the deceptive but formally accurate parallel between Apollo and Adonis is only the first evocation of the *Eclogues*. They are recalled again in the account of Apollo's tasks, which have obvious affinities with the activities of Vergil's shepherds:¹¹

Et miscere novo docuisse coagula lacte,
Lacteus et mixtus obriguisse liquor.
Tum fiscella levi detexta est vimine iunci,
Raraque per nexus est via facta sero. (Tib. 2.3.14b–16)

Moreover, Tibullus' description of Apollo's visitors (sister, would-be consulters of his oracles,¹² mother) recalls the visitors to Gallus (*Ecl.* 10.19–30) and Daphnis (*Id.* 1.77–98). In spite of these pastoral touches, however, the world in which Tibullus and Apollo find themselves is not the bucolic world. It is a place in which personal sensibilities and the power of song have no effect. Let us contrast Apollo's visitors, for example, with those of Gallus and Daphnis. The visitors to Gallus and Daphnis are interested in the sufferers and their amatory plights; they ask questions, and they understand the importance of love.¹³

¹⁰ Note especially the failure of his medical skill against the power of love (13–14). The resemblance of 14 to *Ecl.* 10.60 may be a coincidence, for the thought is conventional (cf. Prop. 1.1.25–26; 1.2.7–8; 1.5.28; 2.1.57–58). Ross (above, note 9) 67–70 argues that *Ecl.* 10.60 and the Propertian passages are echoes of Gallus.

¹¹ A. Cartault, *Tibulle et les auteurs du Corpus Tibullianum* (Paris 1909) 118. Cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 2.71–72; *Ecl.* 10.71. I owe to the Association's referee the important observation that *fiscella*, an uncommon word, occurs in Vergil only at *Ecl.* 10.71 and in Tibullus only at 2.3.15.

¹² 21–22. These come to his shrines and temples and do not actually visit him in the country, but they belong formally, if not logically, to the series of visitors. An impression of their parallel status with Diana and Latona is created by their appearance midway in the series of four couplets introduced by anaphora: *O quotiens . . .* (17), *O quotiens . . .* (19), *Saepe . . .* (23).

¹³ See, for example, Hermes' question to Daphnis: *τίς τυ κατατρύχει; τίνος, ὠγαθέ, τόσσον ἐράσαι*; (*Id.* 1.78), Priapus' sympathy, and even Cypris' scorn (97–98). In the eclogue: the herdsmen's question: "unde amor iste," *rogant*. "tibi?" (21); Apollo's question: "Gallus, quid insanis?" (22); and Pan's "philosophic" comments on love (28–30).

Apollo's mute visitors are no more sympathetic than his agricultural environment; they do not understand his situation, and they depart in embarrassment or disappointment. This lack of sympathy on every level is an intentional denial of the pastoral convention. The landscape of Apollo's and Tibullus' sufferings, in fact, belongs far more to the *Georgics* than the *Eclogues*. Hear, for example, the georgic ring in the description of Tibullus' labor:

. . . quam fortiter illic
Versarem valido pingue bidente solum
Agricolaeque modo curvom sectarer aratrum,
Dum subigunt steriles arva serenda boves.¹⁴ (Tib. 2.3.5-8)

Indeed, Tibullus has evoked the bucolic world only to reject it, or rather to contrast it with the fate he pictures for himself and Apollo. The agonies of Gallus were echoed by a sympathetic landscape, but Tibullus explicitly refuses to allow bucolic romanticism to mitigate his own sufferings and those of Apollo. Deprived of the radiant glow of sympathetic nature, a sunburnt Tibullus and a bedraggled Apollo find themselves in the cold light of day—man and god alike inadequate, out of place, and faintly ridiculous. Humor lies very near the surface in the Apollo passage (11-30). With artistic relish Tibullus destroys the effect of Apollo's songs—in advance, as it were—by juxtaposing them with the preceding onomatopoetic mooing:

Rumpere mugitu carmina docta boves.¹⁵ (Tib. 2.3.20)

The god's sister experiences acute social embarrassment when she meets him carrying a calf through the fields,¹⁶ and Latona suffers maternal distress over his unkempt hair. The woes of Tibullus himself are similar in tone, and emphasize the perils of agricultural labor for a basically effete poet:

Nec quererer, quod sol graciles exureret artus,
Laederet et teneras pussula rupta manus. (Tib. 2.3.9-10)

¹⁴ The lines contain some Vergilian echoes: *pingue . . . solum* (cf. *pingue solum*, G. 1.64, *Aen.* 4.202), *subigunt . . . arva* (cf. *subigebant arva*, G. 1.125).

¹⁵ Other aspects of the couplet 19-20 are discussed in some detail by M. C. J. Putnam, "Simple Tibullus and the Ruse of Style," *YFS* 45 (1970) 24-25.

¹⁶ "Any country boy knows that neither gods nor men can carry a calf, much less drive one, and retain their dignity," K. F. Smith (above, note 5).

Both pastoral poet and elegist had started from the same premise: the departure of the mistress with a new lover. From that point the response of the abandoned lover (Gallus, Tibullus) was inevitable and determined by the conventions of poetic genre: Gallus must languish in the bucolic tradition of Daphnis; Tibullus must follow his mistress and be her slave in the fashion of Apollo with Admetus. Tibullus' imitation of Vergil, however, is not merely a one-for-one transposition of the events of the eclogue into elegiac terms. We must expect not only important differences of emphasis but also inclusion of characteristically Tibullan motifs and preoccupations. In particular, Tibullus' inevitable *servitium* looms much larger in the elegy than the corresponding death of Gallus in the eclogue, and it is associated with a theme that has no counterpart in the eclogue at all—the deterioration of human affairs from the Saturnian period to the age of iron.¹⁷

The theme first appears in the lines that conclude the description of Apollo's servitude:

Felices olim, Veneri cum fertur aperte
 Servire aeternos non puduisse deos. (Tib. 2.3.29–30)

The nostalgic *olim* places the slavery of Apollo firmly in the distant past, which is soon to be contrasted with the degenerate iron age. It is important to note that this era of Apollo's slavery is not the golden age,¹⁸ for as Tibullus will reveal later in the elegy (67–76), the golden age was neither agricultural nor characterized by the kind of erotic complications that result in *servitium*. Rather, the time of Apollo's slavery is a third era, an intermediate period between the pre-agricultural golden age and the urban age of iron, and spiritually closer to the former.

Tibullus' description of the iron age is directed to Nemesis' new lover, whom he addresses employing the military metaphor so common to the *sermo amatorius*:¹⁹

At tu, quisquis is est, cui tristi fronte Cupido
 Imperat, ut nostra sint tua castra domo. (Tib. 2.3.33–34)

¹⁷ Similarly, an account of the Saturnian age is added to Tibullus' "Odyssey" in 1.3 (35–48).

¹⁸ I cannot agree here with M. C. J. Putnam, *Tibullus: A Commentary* (Norman 1973) *ad loc.* "Vision of an elegiac golden age when the immortal gods were not only epiphanic but were also slaves of Venus for all to see." Apollo is epiphanic, but the age is not golden.

¹⁹ E.g., Tib. 1.1.73–75. Also see *ThLL* III 563, 47, s.v. *castra*.

The rival is a soldier under the command of Love, but Tibullus is also using the metaphor as an artful way to remind us of Lycoris' soldier lover in the *Tenth Eclogue*:

... "tua cura Lycoris
perque nives alium perque horrida castra secuta est."²⁰ (*Ecl.* 10.22-23)

Whether or not we assume a lacuna after 33-34,²¹ the function of the couplet is clear. In addition to continuing the parallel with the *Tenth Eclogue*, it also performs a structural role, for it both returns to the starting point of the elegy (which had been left in abeyance during the long description of Apollo's servitude) and introduces a new section of the poem, Tibullus' thoughts on the age of iron.

Tibullus' depiction of the iron age occupies the long central portion of the poem (33-62). The passage consists of two corresponding sections of equal length (35-46 and 49-60), whose symmetry is marked by anaphora. The sections themselves are separated by a couplet whose opening words are similar to those of the distichs that introduce and conclude the passage as a whole.

<i>At tu</i> . . . (33)	ADDRESS TO NEMESIS' LOVER
<i>Praeda</i> . . . (36)	THE IRON AGE
<i>Praeda</i> . . . (37)	AND
<i>Praeda</i> . . . (39)	ITS LONGING
<i>Praedator</i> . . . (41)	FOR BOOTY
<i>At tibi</i> [<i>mihī</i> ?] . . . (47)	ASSERTION OF GOLDEN AGE VALUES
<i>Illa</i> . . . (53)	NEMESIS
<i>Illi</i> . . . (55)	AND
<i>Illi</i> . . . (57)	HER LUXURIES
<i>At tibi</i> . . . (61)	CURSES ON NEMESIS' LOVER

The careful symmetry of the passages invites juxtaposition and contrast of its two component sections.

²⁰ The parallel provides another contrast between eclogue and elegy. Nemesis' lover does not confine his campaigns to Alpine regions, but pitches his camp in the very *domus* of the poet.

²¹ Smith and Putnam assume a lacuna; see their commentaries *ad loc.* F. W. Lenz (*Albii Tibulli aliorumque carminum libri tres* [Leiden 1964²]) does not: "Post *tu* subaudi scito, ut apud Prop. II.25.21; ergo non est quod post 34 lacuna indicetur." His further remarks on the passage are less persuasive: "poeta alloquitur non divitem rivalem puellam donis corruptentem, sed alterum amatorem non minus se ipso pauperem et aequae miserum, i.e. socium malorum." There is no trace of this impoverished lover elsewhere in the poem.

The first section (35–46) is a description of the iron age. Tibullus has several ways of characterising this era; here he emphasizes its association with *praeda*, booty or ill-gotten gains, especially the spoils of war. Lust for booty drives men to many dangerous acts and the money itself is spent on ridiculous or excessive luxuries.²² The hallmark of the age, however, is not desire for booty alone, but the substitution of booty for love as the goal of existence:

Ferrea non Venerem, sed praedam saecula laudant. (Tib. 2.3.35)

This is in explicit contrast to the priorities of the intermediate period exemplified by the *servitium* of Apollo:

Felices olim, Veneri cum fertur aperte
 Servire aeternos non puduisse deos.
 Fabula nunc ille est, sed cui sua cura puella est,
 Fabula sit mavolt quam sine amore deus. (Tib. 2.3.29–32)

The opposition is heightened by the ironic echo of *cura* (. . . *sed cui sua cura puella est*, 31) in the description of iron age luxury: *Cui lapis externus curae est . . .* (43).²³ The man who adheres to the standards of Apollo's age would gladly trade divinity itself for love, but *cura* to the *praedator* of the iron age is centered on a slab of stone.

Tibullus caps his catalogue of iron age vices with an appeal for simplicity:

At tibi laeta trahant Samiae convivia testae
 Fictaque Cumana lubrica terra rota. (Tib. 2.3.47–48)

The textual problem in 47 is acute. Most of the manuscripts read *tibi*, but *mihi* is also found, and has been defended with some eloquence by Schuster.²⁴ But whether the lines are to be read as advice to Nemesis'

²² Danger: . . . *hinc caedes mors propiorque venit* (38); *pericula* (39); *dubiis . . . ratibus* (40). Folly: see especially 42: *Ut multa innumera iugera pascat ove*. "How many acres, what measureless fields does a greedy owner need to foster one sheep, when even that one cannot be counted?" Putnam (above, note 15) 26.

²³ *Cura* can be any object of concern, but especially the loved one. Cf. Prop. 1.1.36; 2.25.1; 2.34.9, and other examples in R. Pichon, *De sermone amatorio apud Latinos elegiarum scriptores* (Paris 1902) s.v. *cura*. Tibullus does not elsewhere use *cura* to refer to a *domina* or *puella* (too Propertian?) and may be echoing the eclogue (*tua cura Lycoris*, Ecl. 10.22).

²⁴ *tibi* Lenz, Smith; *mihi* Schuster, Postgate, Luck; M. Schuster, *Tibull Studien* (Vienna 1930) 144–46. As Schuster observes, Tibullus is fond of contrasting his own preferences with those of others in this way. See 1.3.33 (*at mihi*), 1.10.11 (*tunc mihi*).

lover (*tibi*)²⁵ or as a statement of Tibullus' own preferences (*mihi*), they register an assertion of the values of the golden age in a world dominated by the pursuit of luxury. The protest is brief and ineffectual, a mere interruption, or rather a punctuation, of the description of the iron age and its follies.

The evocation of the golden age is thus summarily abandoned, and Tibullus quickly passes into the second section (49–60), a catalogue of the luxuries he will provide for Nemesis.

Heu heu divitibus video gaudere puellas:

Iam veniant praedae, si Venus optat opes. (Tib. 2.3.49–50)

Primitive simplicity is not what girls like, and it is cynically rejected in favor of luxury, which they do. But simplicity and luxury are not self-contained entities in Tibullus' thinking; they are inextricably associated with the ages of gold and iron. To admit luxury into one's world, therefore, is to admit the iron age itself; rejection of simplicity is a rejection of the golden age and all it stands for.

The iron age has been sketched in such detail precisely to lead up to this climax. The inversion of values entailed in Tibullus' acceptance of luxury is a far worse fate than the slavery of Apollo, and represents a sacrifice of principle more galling than the discomfort and humiliation of agricultural toil. Indeed, such a sacrifice of principle is a kind of moral servitude, the appropriate *servitium* of the iron age.²⁶

The association of luxury with the iron age is emphasized by the word *praeda* in line 50, for *praeda* was the distinguishing characteristic of the iron age in the preceding passage (*praeda* 36, 37, 39; *praedator* 41). On the formal level, the repetition of *praeda* emphasizes the symmetry between the two catalogues—the one of the qualities of the iron age, the other of Nemesis' luxuries. The catalogues are also formally related through their parallel use of anaphora, as we have seen.

Though formally and thematically symmetrical, the sections are nonetheless different in attitude. The direction of the change can be seen by comparing the lines introducing the two sections:

Ferrea non Venerem, sed praedam saecula laudant. (Tib. 2.3.35)

Iam veniant praedae, si Venus optat opes. (Tib. 2.3.50)

²⁵ *tibi* surely cannot refer to Nemesis, who has not been mentioned since v. 5 (*dominam*).

²⁶ The connection of *servitium* with gifts for Nemesis, not explicit in 2.3, is the subject of 2.4, which in many ways can be read as a comment on the present elegy.

Tibullus' first position is that *praeda* and Venus are mutually exclusive, but by line 50 he has decided that they are not incompatible after all; in order to attain the one he will cultivate the other. But the Venus who longs for wealth is different both from the one served openly by the gods in the time of Apollo's slavery (29–30) and from the goddess whose generosity to lovers was a feature of the golden age:

Tum, quibus adspirabat Amor, praebat aperte
Mitis in umbrosa gaudia valle Venus. (Tib. 2.3.71–72)

We have, then, three Venuses, or rather Venus in three aspects, corresponding to the ages of gold and iron, and the intermediate era of Apollo's slavery. The poet's acceptance of the iron age stems from the realization that his is an iron age Venus. But this Venus is not only a goddess or a mere abstraction, as we can see at the beginning of the poem:

Ipsa Venus latos iam nunc migravit in agros. (Tib. 2.3.3)

She is Nemesis herself.²⁷

Tibullus banishes the vision of his iron age Venus and her luxuries with a characteristic return to reality, which accomplishes the transition to the final section of the poem (61–80):

Nota loquor: regnum ipse tenet quem saepe coegit
barbara gypsatos ferre catasta pedes.²⁸ (Tib. 2.3.59–60)

Reminded that Nemesis is in the country with another,²⁹ Tibullus curses

²⁷ "a compliment to (the still unnamed) Nemesis" (Putnam *ad loc.*). The relative qualities of Tibullus' three Venuses are underlined by two important verbal echoes in the couplet 71–72. *Aperte* (71) recalls 29–30. In the age of Apollo the gods served Venus *aperte*, but in the golden age it was Venus who provided joy to lovers *aperte*. *Praebat* (71) echoes *praebere* (57) in the catalogue of Nemesis' luxuries. The Venus of the golden age provided joy to lovers, but Africa and Tyre compete to *provide* luxuries for Nemesis, the Venus of the iron age.

²⁸ The indicative *tenet* (59) is in striking contrast with the subjunctives in the catalogue of Nemesis' luxuries: *incedat* (52), *gerat* (53), *sint* (55), *certent* (57). It may also be intended as a reminder of the opening line of the elegy: *Rura meam, Cornute, tenent villaeque puellam*.

²⁹ The starting point of the elegy. Compare the structural function of 61–62 with that of 33–34.

the crops of the rival and passes quickly if somewhat illogically to a rejection of farm products in general:

o valeant fruges, ne sint modo rure puellae. (Tib. 2.3.67)

Without crops we would be in the pre-agricultural era, when men lived on acorns and love was easily come by.³⁰ In fact, this is the golden age itself, and it is this description of the golden age that corresponds on the formal level to Gallus' dream of escape into the pastoral world. There are important differences, however, in the treatment of these two poetic havens.

The first is the matter of emphasis. Escape is far less important in the elegy than in the eclogue, while the poet's inevitable fate is given relatively more prominence. This reversal of emphasis results from translation of the events of the eclogue into elegiac terms, but at the same time it constitutes an effective *riposte* to the eclogue, an assertion of the preoccupations and priorities of the elegist in contrast to those of the pastoral poet. The elegist cannot escape love by forgetting it or dying of it; the former is impossible by definition, the latter too easy. Rather, he must live and suffer; exploration of this amatory suffering will be his central theme.

Of equal importance is the impersonal quality of Tibullus' description in comparison with the fantasy of Gallus. Gallus participates enthusiastically (if unrealistically) in every detail of his imagined pastoral life; he can almost see himself in the bucolic world:

iam mihi per rupes videor lucosque sonantis
ire . . . (Ecl. 10.58-59)

Vividness of this kind is lacking in Tibullus' presentation. His description of the golden age is general and impersonal; not once does he include himself in it as actor or participant, although he comes closest in line 74:

. . . si fas est, mos precor ille redi.

³⁰ Cf. Lucr. 5.962-65. There can be no doubt that Tibullus is referring to the golden age in this passage; cf. Tib. 1.3.35-50, (esp. 41-44), where the golden age is clearly meant (*Quam bene Saturno vivebant rege . . .* 1.3.35).

The apparent half-heartedness of the prayer may be due to the lacuna in 75, but there can be no doubt that Tibullus has deliberately pictured a golden age that is impersonal and remote. The picture corresponds to the reality, for the golden age belongs to the irretrievable past, and neither Tibullus nor anyone else can enter it. Tibullus does not even dismiss the picture of the golden age before he submits to his fate, for it is too obviously unattainable to require dismissal. Here again we must contrast Gallus, who bids an elaborate farewell to the creatures of his dream:

iam neque Hamadryades rursus neque carmina nobis
ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite silvae. (*Ecl.* 10.62–63)

Tibullus does, however, preface the submission to his inevitable *servitium* with a rejection:³¹

Nunc si clausa mea est, si copia rara videndi,
Heu miserum, laxam quid iuvat esse togam? (*Tib.* 2.3.77–78)

The renunciation of luxury is rather surprising at first sight, for Tibullus has never described himself as infatuated with expensive indulgences,³² but it makes sense in terms of the content and structure of the elegy as a whole. A renunciation of luxury amounts to the same thing as renouncing the iron age and its values. Moreover, the substance of the final verses, 76–80, is almost a restatement of the opening lines of the elegy.³³

The two passages may be summarized as follows:

Verses 1–6

1. Tibullus must leave the city since Nemesis is in the country. (*Ferreus est, heu, heu, quisquis in urbe manet* (2).)
2. Tibullus would toil on the land if he could only see Nemesis (5–6).

Verses 76–80

1. Luxury is rejected if it provides no opportunity of seeing Nemesis.

³¹ The loss of line 75 is irritating at this crucial point; whatever its content, Tibullus evidently used it to lead his argument in a slightly new direction—to replace the distinction between the agricultural and pre-agricultural eras with the more familiar (and not incompatible) one between simplicity and luxury.

³² Elsewhere the loose toga belongs to Tibullus' rival: see 1.6.40.

³³ "Finally we find the poet ready once more to become a ploughboy, as at the start of the poem. Thus the piece is enclosed and rounded off by Callimachean ring-composition." Newman (above, note 4) 391.

2. Tibullus gives himself up to agricultural labor.³⁴

Tibullus has used Vergil's eclogue as the framework for the exploration of his own dilemma; shifts in emphasis and additions of content emphasize the difficulty and complexity of his situation. For Gallus the choice was relatively simple: to change his whole way of life (and poetry) or die of love, but Tibullus' alternatives are less clearly defined. His inevitable *servitium* corresponds to Gallus' death, and formally, at least, retreat into the golden age would be the analogue of escape into the pastoral world. Indeed, the golden age is the only alternative to *servitium*, for only in that far off time was love available without hindrance or complication (71-74), but the golden age is past and provides no escape. Tibullus must make his decisions in the world of the present where *servitium* is inevitable, and the only choice is between different forms of slavery. Apollo's servitude represents one form, giving in to the ways of the iron age is another: neither will win Nemesis.

Tibullus' dilemma has no solution: he cannot belong to the golden age, and will not belong to the iron; slavery is inevitable, but unavailing. The poet's behavior in these conditions is predictable: his choices (such as they are) will bring him as close to the ideals of the golden age as the present age of iron permits. The first such choice appears in the first lines of the elegy: the man who would remain in the city while Nemesis is in the country would be *ferreus* (2). The word dictates his decision: he will follow Nemesis and accept the inevitable and unpalatable consequences. His second and more important choice is related to his slavery. Giving in to Nemesis' demands for luxury would involve submitting to the requirements of the iron age. The possibility is rejected—but not entirely for reasons of principle. Tibullus' ironic genius is at its height in this passage. He has established his distaste for the iron age in order to prepare us for the great sacrifice of principle involved in submitting to it, but the sacrifice turns out first to be relatively painless (see his sensuous enumeration of Nemesis'

³⁴ The cyclic structure is based largely on repetition of thought rather than of individual words, the obvious exception being *heu* (78), which echoes *heu, heu* (2). The idea of seeing Nemesis is present in both passages (*cum adspicerem dominam*, 5; *si copia rara videndi*, 77), as is that of Tibullus' agricultural *servitium*. In both passages this toil is preceded by an implied rejection of characteristics of the iron age—the city (cf. *ferreus* in 2) and luxury (77-78).

luxuries) and then to be unnecessary, for Nemesis' rich lover is firmly in possession and Tibullus' gifts are not required.

The alternative *servitium* is that of Apollo, whose agricultural tasks were humiliating and uncomfortable, but demanded no renunciation of principles. It is this that Tibullus finally accepts (. . . *ad imperium dominae sulcabitur agros*, 79), for the type of slavery represented by Apollo is a kind of compromise between the unattainable bliss of the golden age and the intolerable spiritual bondage of the iron.

Tibullus' position with regard to this complex of eras, each with its appropriate form of Venus and *servitium*, is the principal concern of the elegy. The idea is a complicated one, and Tibullus has chosen to give it interest and structure by casting it in the form of the *Tenth Eclogue* with himself as Gallus. At the root of the imitation is the poet's exploitation of the incongruities between pastoral and elegiac convention. Through this ironic juxtaposition of conventions Tibullus at the same time acknowledges his imitation of Vergil and asserts his own position as an elegist. The result is an effective comparison and critique of the two genres.