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Golden Age, its Projections, and the Image of Boundary in Tibullus

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Abstract

The image of primary antiquity which is opposed to the present as a friendly and not yet spoiled state of things or unfriendly and not yet improved one is an important part of the poetic world of Tibullus. In these oppositions, a particular role is given to the idea of boundary, destructive and disintegrating or constructive and integrating, respectively. Thus, in this paper the images of primary antiquities are described and classified in accordance with how the idea of boundary is manifested in them. Specific realizations of the image of the primary antiquities bear marks of different poetic, philosophic or political traditions and systems. In this paper, the author does not discuss the origin of images as well as possible traces of Tibullus' changing ideology in them. However, the correlation of the image with the type, general pathos, and genre model of every specific poem is traced instead.

Keywords

Tibullus; Latin elegy; Golden Age; image of boundary; aetiological motif; escapism; Augustan ideology

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Introductory notes

1. Various cultural situations leave room for both positive and negative mindsets – that is, for accepting or denying actual reality or its particular aspects. When they crystallize into a system, both standpoints give place for creating certain aetiological mythology. A negativist will try to find where and why everything went wrong and a "positivist", on the contrary, will look for the origins of happy state of things. Correspondingly, both approaches presuppose the modelling of a certain state of things that would be an antipode to the present condition and considered as a primary condition – not spoilt yet, or not improved yet, respectively.

The classical examples of such antipode images are the image of Golden Age[1] in case of the negative attitude, and the image of primary chaos, wild nature, primitive disorganized society etc.[2] in case of the positive attitude.

2. When we follow the implementation of both dichotomies in the classical literature, we may notice that in both cases some particular role is given to the idea of boundary (literally or figuratively), its imposition and overcoming. The tendency is to depict the Golden Age as a free world that knows no restrictions or delimitations, violence or rejections, while the end of the Golden Age is depicted as an act of imposing boundaries. And as regards the chaotic, wild version of the primary condition, the tendency is to present it as a disorderly, unorganized, uncomfortable, and dangerous world. That world, on the contrary, needs normalization and organization – the imposition of cultural boundary, the introduction of laws, rules, and cultural practices, the restriction of arbitrary behavior etc. Thus, in the former case, the boundary would disintegrate and distort the primary homogeneous harmonious world, and in the latter case, the boundary would give shape to the initial chaos.

3. Certainly, the literature knows not only dichotomous but also more complicated systems. The space between the ultimate poles may be filled with the transitional states, and thus the models of gradual degradation / progress appear. The Hesiodian model, from which the history of Ages motif in the Western literature, actually, began,[3] is exactly of such "complicated" type. Multi-member models often keep the signs of primary two-member division.[4] However, the later two-member models sometimes also expose the influence of the multi-member tradition, as we will see it in Tibullus.[5]

1 Here I will not dwell on the problem of terms *Golden / Kronos' (Saturnus') age / race* etc. For that, see Baldry (1952).

2 Cf. *h. Hom*. 20.3–4, A. *Pr.* 447sqq., D.S. 1.8.5–6, Lucr. 5.925–1010 etc.

3 See Smith (1995: p. 69). But cf. Baldry (1952: p. 85), who believes that the myth of the Kronos Age also had its own tradition in the Greek literature, independent of Hesiod.

4 In Hesiod, the Golden Age ruled by Kronos (Hes. *Op*. 111) is actually opposed to the rest of the Ages under the power of Zeus (Hes. *Op*. 138; 143 etc.); the classical Latin sample of multi-member model (Ov. *Met*. 1.89–112 *vs* 113–150) shows this opposition even more clearly. Baldry (1952: p. 91) believes that Hesiod created his five-member system proceeding from the initial folk two-member opposition.

5 See the revision of major appearances of the Ages theme in comparison with Tibullus in Maltby (2002: p. 194).

4. The negativist version of the modelling of the initial condition, in addition to the aetiological motivation, has also the escapist one. In the initial state, one looks not only for the origins of the actual condition but also for the place of escaping from the actual condition. Actually, here we face what M. Bakhtin (1975: p. 297) called the "historical inversion" – when "mythological and artistic thinking places such categories as purpose, ideal, justice, perfection, balanced state of humans and society etc. in the past".

In the political discourse, this escapist component of the localized-in-the-past ideals gives place to what I would call "re-inversion": the restoration ideologies promise implementation in the future of the programs that are oriented at these localized-in-the-past ideals.

5. The myth of the precultural good old times as ideal careless existence (the Golden Age) was a product of agrarian society[6] while the urban civilization gave birth to the myth of ideal simple rustic (agricultural) antiquities, not spoiled by the vices of urban civilization. Both myths basically have the same nature that leaves room for their mutual superposition.

The restoration tendencies in politics, the idea of the restoration of Republic based on *mos maiorum*, the idealization of the old rustic way of life – all those ideas were in the air in the last years of the Republic and they became the key motif in the political program of Augustus.[7] The major impact on formation of the "Augustan ethos" was made by (or via) the then poets. First of all it was Vergil,[8] who probably made the greatest contribution to connecting the image of the virtuous Italian village with Hesiod's myth of the Golden Age. According to Smith (1995: 70), in Vergil "the Golden Age came closer to the experience of contemporary man", as it was "taken out of mythical time and reduced to the "good old days", to bucolic scenes of the rustic, simple life".[9] That is how, in particular, the motif of the New Golden Age appeared.[10]

Almost fabulous Italy (Verg. *Georg.* 2.138–176 etc.) in the image of the blessed *Saturnia tellus* (173), the moral village (458–502; 513–531) as an afterlight of Aratus' Golden Age where *extrema [...] Iustitia excedens [...] vestigia fecit* (473–474) (in contrast with vicious urban military civilization that has properties of the Iron Age /495–512/), the legendary beginning of Rome (532–535), the mythical Saturnus' Age (536–540) – Vergil made all these images the representations of the same ideal, which was presented in the most concentrated and programmatic way in *Georgic* 2.

6 Cf. Baldry (1952: pp. 85, 91).

7 See Galinsky (1996: pp. 58–59, 288), cf. also Ryberg (1958: p. 128).

8 See Galinsky (1996: p. 121).

9 Galinsky (1996: p. 93) points out that "one of the most significant changes in the Golden Age concept at Augustus time is that the Golden Age comes to connote a social order rather than a paradisiac state of indolence". Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 52) speaks about "Nationalisierung des Weltordnungsbegriffs" in Vergil's "Goldzeitkonzeption".

10 For the first time in Vergil (*Ecl.* 4.3–45, then *Aen.* 6.791–794). The other poets have similar prophetism but without the Golden Age terminology: cf. Hor. *Carm. saec.* and Zanker's (2010) discussion on the problem of identification of new happy times with the Golden Age.

6. It is not difficult to notice that all these ideas also had their impact on the image system of Tibullus. And, probably, the above-mentioned set of almost identified images from *Georgic* 2 influenced him most of all.[11] In this respect, it has been noticed a lot of times that Tibullus provides different versions of all these images (in particular, of the Golden Age image) in different elegies with different versions of the interrelation between them. The scholars proposed various explanations of this inconsistency including those of chronological character.[12]

7. In this paper, leaving aside the problems of chronology, I would rather like to provide a typological description of above-mentioned images of initial conditions (the Golden Age and the wild chaos) and of those related to them (their "projections"). I will describe them through the category of boundary and differentiate in accordance with how this boundary is manifested: whether it is constructive, or destructive, or ambivalent, or not manifested at all.

As a result, I hope to demonstrate how the character of initial condition image depends on the basic value oppositions of a particular poem, on a *persona* taken by the poet, on the type of pathos, and on the genre model of each particular text.

1. Absolute Golden Age (1.3)

The classic image of the fabulous Golden (Saturnian) Age is presented by Tibullus in Elegy 1.3 (35–48), where it is depicted as an absolute, self-sufficient harmonious world that has everything to satisfy the Man's natural needs and shares everything with Man, without any coercion or conditions. As usual, this idea is realized via the conventional motif of spontaneity (with its characteristic markers: *ipse, ultro, securus*):

> *Ipsae mella dabant quercus, ultroque ferebant*
> *Obvia securis ubera lactis oves* (1.3.45–46)[13]

Among the seven distichs dealing with the image of the Golden age, only this one presents it in a positive way. The rest of the passage is built from the contrary, by means of the "*nondum*" formula: the poet describes the Golden Age through the minus-attributes, naming the features incompatible with it.

Both plus- and minus-attributes are represented by actions. In the former case, nature (the world of the Golden Age) is the very subject of acts; in the latter, this is (explicitly or implicitly) Man. In the former case, it is emphasized that nature is not separated from

11 See some observations on this issue in Weiden Boyd (1984: pp. 274–275).

12 Similar inconsistency was noticed in Vergil (see Ryberg 1986; Johnston 1977, 1980; Wifstrand Schiebe 1981). Galinsky (1996: pp. 90–91) points out that the concept of the Golden Age, like all the other key concepts of the epoch, was not stable but evolutionized over the whole period: he accepts Johnston's chronological approach. Based on a similar evolutionary vision of the concept in Vergil, Wifstrand Schiebe tries to see the reflection of the same development stages in Tibullus.

13 The text cited is that of Lenz & Galinsky (1971).

Man and provides him with everything he needs. In the latter case, Man himself challenges nature: not satisfied with what is sufficient, and striving for excess, he *discovers the limits* of his idyllic world and *violates them*. The discovering and violation of limits are connected with the idea of the end of the Golden Age and (self)-expulsion from paradise (cf. Biblical motif of the tree of knowledge): the world of manifested and transgressed boundaries is no longer the world of the Golden Age.

The act of manifesting and transgressing (or manifesting through transgressing) the limits is represented by three conventional motives: seafaring (35–40), tilling (41–42), and "privatization" (43–44). Each of them represents the manifestation of the *external* and *internal* boundaries of the world, and of the *social* (interpersonal) boundaries, respectively.

Transgressing the **external boundary** seems to be expressly accentuated: it is not only described in the largest number of distiches, but also serves as an opening for the entire passage and, moreover, as a representation for the general characterization of the Golden Age in the introductory couplet:

> *Quam bene Saturno vivebant rege, priusquam*
> *Tellus in longas est patefacta vias!* (1.3.35–36)

Having started from the generalized concept of the roads, the poet moves specifically to the theme of seafaring which is clearly presented as the crossing of the border, as an audacious collision with the boundary of the outside world, as the contempt for the natural order of things:

> *Nondum caeruleas pinus contempserat undas,*
> *Effusum ventis praebueratque sinum,*
> *Nec vagus ignotis repetens conpendia terris*
> *Presserat externa navita merce ratem* (1.3.37–40)

The contempt (*contempserat*), challenge (*effusum ventis praebuerat sinum*), violence (*presserat*), externality and uncertainty of the world (*externa, ignotis*), the desire for profit as the reason of transgression (*repetens conpendia*) are the key motifs in this part.

Violent boundaries are also imposed by Man **inside** his world:

> *Illo non validus subiit iuga tempore taurus,*
> *Non domito frenos ore momordit equus* (1.3.41–42)

Iugum and *frena* are conventional symbols of taming and restricting freedom. *Validus* and *domito ore momordit* emphasize the unnaturalness and forcibility of the act of imposing boundaries.

When nature satisfies all the needs of people and people do not seek for the excessive, there is no need for private property and society lives in a state of primitive communism (cf. Verg *G.*, 1.126–127, Ov. *Met.*, 1.135–136, [Sen.] *Oct.* 403 etc). But the striving for the

excessive gives rise to competition for excessive possession that causes **social division**, which is also a sign of the destroyed harmony of the Golden Age:

> *Non domus ulla fores habuit, non fixus in agris,*
> *Qui regeret certis finibus arva, lapis* (1.43–44)

Now we observe the image of the boundary in the literal sense: not only the houses with the doors,[14] but also the fields divided with the border stone. The firm, volitional "spirit" of the vocabulary rendering the act of boundary imposition (*figere, regere, certus, finis, lapis*), strengthens the violent component of the image. In addition, the image of violence is contributed to by Tibullus' quasi-etymological play[15] in the quasi-anaphoric 42–43, where *non domito frenos* reverberates in *non domus ulla fores* and seems to activate the quasi-etymological potential of the violence imagery in it (*domus*, after *domito*, – as taming; and *fores*, after *frenos*, – as a bridle).

The last and most radical minus-attribute is saved by Tibullus for the end of the passage: the Golden Age did not know **war**. War can be understood as the further development of social division: when people not only compete with one another in violating nature (and separate their achievements in this competition from one another), but also practise *mutual violence* (and transgress their own social divisions):

> *Non acies, non ira fuit, non bella, nec ensem*
> *Inmiti saevus duxerat arte faber* (1.3.47–48)

The theme of war accomplishes the description of the Golden Age and prepares a transition to the Iron Age, where war is a primary feature:

> *Nunc Iove sub domino caedes et vulnera semper,*
> *Nunc mare, nunc leti mille repente viae* (1.3.49–50)

The image of road in an overtly military context picks up the initial images of the passage giving it circular structure and recalling poet's actual reality and anxieties. With these changes in focus, the agency of Man also changes: from this point Man is no longer a destroyer and violator of the idyll, but himself is a victim of the new order which replaces the Golden Age.

2. The Golden Age and ancient *simplicitas* (1.10)

Both elegies – 1.3 and 1.10 – are organized by the opposition "unfriendly present vs ideal antiquities" and the escapist tendency.

14 The love elegy context inevitably adds up a *paraklausithyron* implication (cf. 2.3.73–74) – see e.g. Murgatroyd (1980: p. 114).

15 Maltby (2002), who records etymological plays so thoroughly, does not notice this case.

Tibullus begins Elegy 1.10 with the Iron Age image built with the same details as the Iron Age in the end of the Ages passage in 1.3,[16] thereby definitely integrating the oppositions of 1.10 into the Ages system similar to 1.3. However, after conventional aetiological discussion about what is responsible for the rise of the Iron Age (sword or gold), he, finally, describes a different version of the ideal antiquity – not so fabulous as in 1.3 but a more realistic one. The ideal antiquity in 1.10 is the world that has already revealed its boundaries, the world where nature has refused Man its friendliness and "spontaneity".

In 1.3, the sword is mentioned as a tool of war, and, consequently, as an attribute of the Iron Age. Conversely, in 1.10 Tibullus redeterminates it as a cultural tool, as a tool for protection from wild nature. Thereby he actually places a certain intermediate condition between the military Age of Jupiter and fabulous Age of Saturn:[17] this intermediate condition already knows unfavourable nature but still does not strive for excess. In such a detailed system, not only does the sword reveal its initial – constructive and cultural – function, but also the plowman's work stops being an instrument in obtaining the *excessive* things (like it used to be in the simplified system of 1.3):[18] when nature refuses to offer the sufficient things to Man spontaneously, the cultural instruments serve to harness nature for human needs. The sufficiency has its price now: the labour (self-taming, self-violence)[19] and the fight against the wild animals (separation from the agressive wild world, the creation of a cultural oasis).[20] The idea of excessiveness is modified and is now symbolized by the gold. Correspondingly, it is in chasing after the excessive things that Man crosses the boundary of the already compromised modest cultural post-Golden-Age idyll and plunge himself into the non-idyllic world of the Iron-Age war (or, in other contexts – of venal and treacherous urban love).

Thus, if we consider 1.3 and 1.10 as the elegies of one cycle and representing basically the same vision of the world (the beginning of 1.10 written in the form of discussion with the ideas of 1.3.47–50 inclines us to do so),[21] we may say that the opposition between the Iron Age and the ideal antiquity was extended by Tibullus in 1.10 with the transitional stage. In the complicated (more then two-member) Ages system, this transitional stage

16 It is not uncommon for Tibullus to "couple" the elegies in such a way when a certain motif of a particular elegy serves as a starting point for more detailed elaboration in the other. Cf. the *paraklausithyron* motif just briefly outlined in 1.1 to receive full elaboration in the following 1.2, or the festival ending of 1.10 that may be considered as an announcement of fully festival 2.1 etc. Cairns (1979: pp. 209–211) analyses 2.3 and 2.4. as "complementary poems" written "to be read against each other".

17 If we treat the opposition of 1.10 as an elaboration of the opposition of 1.3, but not its correction.

18 Besides 1.3, cf. the similar definition of plowing in passage 1.9.7–10 which I do not take into consideration here because of its secondary role in that elegy. Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 78) considers that passage as homogenous with 1.3 and on this basis qualifies both 1.3 and 1.9 as Tibullus' early elegies.

19 Cf. how hard labour is associated with fatigue in 1.7.39–40 (*magno confecta labore pectora*). Cf. also the motif of fatigue in 1.10.42.

20 Beyond the Ages context, the motif of separation from wild nature can be seen in 1.1.33–34, 2.1.17–20, 2.5.88 (all are in the context of religious ceremonies).

21 Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 89) pays attention to that: "Der ganze erste Abschnitt der El. 1.10 dient der Richtigstellung und Verdeutlichung der Stellungnahme im Verhältnis zur früheren Fassung, d. h. zur El. 1.3". Earlier, this connection was noticed by Wimmel (1968: p. 196).

would correspond to the agricultural Silver Age like later in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.[22] Having complemented the system with the new member, the poet shifted his accent into it. He left the fabulous ideal in 1.3 to direct his escapist intentions into this compromise ideal in 1.10. This compromise version better suits "reinversion" and projection onto the present and even onto the future of the poet's private village.[23] He actually makes this reinversion in 1.10.

Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 89) points out that in 1.10, Tibullus builds the image of antiquity in two approaches: 7–12 and 17–24. The first one is quite in line with the standard Golden Age vision: the absence of cares or fears (*securus*), the absence of boundaries in the form of typical military edifices (*arces, vallus*), unity with nature (*inter oves*),[24] and natural non-selected "set" of sheep (*varias*):[25]

> *Non arces, non vallus erat, somnumque petebat*
> *Securus varias*[26] *dux gregis inter oves* (1.10.9–10)

However, there is some difference from the pastoral passage in 1.3. In particular, it is stressed by the word *securus.* Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 90) notes that in 1.3.46 *securis* means the people who were *free from concerns* about obtaining food (unlike in the present age when Man has to care about everything and get it by labour), while in 1.10, *securus*

22 It is worth noting that Ovid's detailed four-member system, in fact, looks like being built on the basis of the two-member system similar to the "Age of Saturn vs Age of Jupiter" system in Tibullus 1.3. Note that in Ovid, it is Jupiter who, after the Golden Age, limits the friendliness and spontaneity of nature, and thus forces Man to apply cultural instruments in order to adjust unfavourable environment to his needs (cf. the role of Jupiter in Vergil's "theodicy" in *Georg.* 1.121 sqq.). It is interesting that Ovid (*Met*., 1.89–112) also describes the Golden Age partially in a positive way and partially from the contrary (like Tibullus in 1.3 does). However, unlike Tibullus, after the Golden Age, Ovid does not move directly to the Iron Age, but, so to speak, specifies what particular minus-attributes appear at what stage of Jupiter's era. If we compare this specification with Tibullus' set of minus-attributes, we may see that farming corresponds to Ovid's Silver Age (1.113–124), and navigation, setting of boundaries in the field (privatization) and war – to the Bronze (just mentioned in 1.125–127) and Iron (described in detail in 1.127–150) Ages. As a result, Tibullus' account in 1.3 may be considered as a contracted version of account similar to that of Ovid in *Metamorphoses*, and thus leaves room for detalization – if not in the main story (1.3) like in Ovid, then in another text, for example in 1.10.

23 Cf. Ryberg (1958: pp. 122–123), who, speaking about possible reason for the change in the Golden Age image in Vergil's *Georgics*, points out that "a life of idle innocence could hardly be idealized in a poem on farming".

24 Murgatroyd (1980: p. 284) notes that the word order stresses here that "the *dux gregis* is surrounded by his *varias ... oves*". Under *dux gregis* the philologists unanimously understand here not a more usual bellwether, but a shepherd (like in *Culex,* 175). Yet if we understood *dux gregis* as a bellwether, the image of free and untamed nature would look even more vivid.

25 Lenz & Galinsky's (1971) reading here is *sparsas*. For the arguments in favour of *varias* and possible interpretations of both adjectives, see Murgatroyd (1980: pp. 284, 323–324). Whether we understand here that each individual sheep "is of a different colour to her fellows" (as in the foretold Golden Age in Verg. *Ecl*. 4.42–45 (Murgatroyd 1980: p. 284), or that the sheep are "speckled" (Maltby 2002: p. 344) or "spotted", or that they are "scattered" (Murgatroyd 1980: pp. 323–324) – in any case we have an image of naturality, freedom, unregulatedness (reference to *paupertas* and picking up lines 7–8 /Murgatroyd 1980: p. 324/ are a separate question).

26 Here I depart from Lenz & Galinsky's (1971) reading. See the previous footnote.

means a shepherd who is *free from fears* that he (and his herd) may be threatened by wild animals or "falsch gebrauchten Schwertern in der Hand von Dieben und Räubern"[27] (unlike warrior of the Iron Age, *quem,* in words of 1.1, *labor adsiduus vicino terreat hoste*). And the role of shepherd can be comprehended here already as a cultural one. The shepherd does organize the herd even though he does not conduct too much selection work that would be the attribute of the Iron Age.

After generalized complaints about the Iron Age and fantasies of the ideal antiquities, Tibullus gets back to present time to specify what the Iron Age means personally to him in this particular moment of time (*nunc ad bella trahor* 13). This specification, along with the localization of *mise-en-scène* in his own village, also modifies the image of antiquities (as they appear in the second approach, 17–24), making them closer to the present setting.[28]

The main motif that describes these antiquities is a modest sacrifice offering to simple peasant gods in simple vessels (*pietas* and *simplicitas*). Judging from the subjects offered (*uva* 21, *spicea serta* 22), one can see that it is already a full-fledged agricultural peasant society and by no means just pastoral one, as it is presented in 9–10. Thus, we have a typical image of the ancient Italian village with beech cups and wooden gods here.

One may think that in 7–12 and in 17–24 Tibullus depicts different images of different antiquities. But the motif of beech cup (*simplicitas*) in the first passage does evidently combine those two passages into one:

> *Divitis hoc vitium est auri, nec bella fuerunt,*
> *Faginus adstabat cum scyphus ante dapes* (1.10.7–8)

Thus, in conclusion we may say that in 1.10 the ideal alternative to modernity is represented by Italian rustic antiquities, but at the same time, Tibullus inscribes this alternative in the system of the Ages oppositions identifying it with not yet spoilt morally but already more severe and not so unconditionally happy age, similar to Ovid's agricultural Silver Age.

3. Ancient *simplicitas* and Rome (2.5)

Another elegy, where the image of Italian antiquities occurs, is 2.5. It is written entirely from other viewpoints; thus, the image of antiquities is inscribed into a completely different system of relations. 1.10 and especially 1.3 are the elegies of escapist type, where the private, anti-civilizational pathos prevails (civilization is associated with war and the

27 Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 90).

28 It must be because of the different *mise-en-scène*, that in 1.3 Tibullus presented a non-agricultural version of the Golden Age and did not dwell in detail on the image of his own village (although he did make reference to it in 1.3.33–34). In 1.3 his *mise-en-scène* coincided with the absolute representation of the Iron Age world – that is why the escapist vector was directed radically into the *absolute* Golden Age.

Iron Age). Instead, in 2.5, Tibullus appears on the opposite side of the opposition. He puts on a *persona* of an official poet, a poet of civilization.

2.5 is an encomion on the occasion of the induction of Messallinus as one of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*[29] written in the form of hymn to Apollo, containing a *ktisis*, a passage celebrating the founding of a city. The general topos of *ktisis* is an "archaeological" motif: a description of the area before the city was founded.[30] In 2.5, the image of the Italian (pre-Roman) antiquities comes into view exactly in the archeological passage (19–38).

Following the logic of the ktistic archeology, the passage is based on the topographic contrast of states (layers) before and after founding Rome, on a kind of insight into the past of the place, into its old spirit. And it is important for us that this opposition, like the opposition "Iron Age vs Golden Age", can also be clearly reduced to the opposition of "presence / absence of boundaries". But this time, an important nuance appears: since the general pathos of this elegy is civilization-asserting, the act of imposition of boundaries is celebrated in solemnity. The founding of the city in *ktisis* can only be described as a cultural, civilizational victory. Meanwhile, it is also evident that Tibullus depicts the primary "archeological layer" with sympathy and even compassion. As a result, the act of boundary imposition becomes evaluatively (ethically) ambiguous: the boundary establishes a great civilization, but at the same time it destroys, violates the ancient pure idyll.

In general, the structure of the discussed passage can be represented in the following way. There are three main topographical points: two hills (Palatine and Capitol) and a valley (Velabrum). In his description, the poet leads us from top to bottom. The whole passage is divided into two symmetrical parts: the general view of the hills (25–26) with the collision of the pre-foundation and post-foundation layers and then going into greater detail about their archeology (marked with *illic*, 27–32), and later the same contrasted general view of the valley (33–34) and again – its detailed archeology (marked with *illa*, 35–38).

Tibullus expectedly starts with the Palatine, where the tradition locates the founding of Rome.[31] Then he moves to the Capitol:[32]

> *Romulus aeternae nondum formaverat urbis*
> *Moenia, consorti non habitanda Remo,*
> *Sed tunc pascebant herbosa Palatia vaccae,*
> *Et stabant humiles in Iovis arce casae* (2.5.23–26)

29 Maltby (2002: p. 430).

30 See Cairns (1979: pp. 69–70, 79–82).

31 Cf. Richmond & Strong (1970: p. 770).

32 Murgatroyd (1994: p. 185) notes that *Iovis arx* is Tibullan coinage.

The formed space of the city (*formaverat urbis moenia*[33] tunes the further image rhythm) contrasts with the free, "unformed" wandering[34] of cows for which there is no more place in the city; the mighty, high *Iovis arx* suppressed humble, low, peaceful peasant huts. The greatness and power of the urban, military civilization is contrasted with the modesty and freedom of a peaceful ancient village.

After a more detailed description of the pastoral life (27–32), with wooden gods (*lignea Pales*) and simple sacrificial gifts (recognizable attributes of the pictures of peasant antiquities: cf. 1.10.8, 1.10.19–24, 1.1.37–40), the poet introduces a new contrast:

> *At qua Velabri regio patet, ire solebat*
> *Exiguus pulsa per vada linter aqua* (2.5.33–34)

– the fluidity of the floodplains[35] is restrained by the "ice" of the city square.

And then follows another detailed description of pastoral life, this time with a love motif and also simple love gifts:

> *Illa saepe gregis diti placitura magistro*
> *Ad iuvenem festa est vecta puella die,*
> *Cum qua fecundi redierunt munera ruris,*
> *Caseus et niveae candidus agnus ovis* (2.5.35–38)

While the outer voyage in 1.3 separates Tibullus from Delia or traditionally destroys the Golden Age, the inner floating here connects the lovers. But a city will arise in the place of this space of unimpeded love[36], and this city will again separate the lovers, as it separates Tibullus from Nemesis in this elegy (109–114). The contrast is even more distinct due to the collision of this pre-civilizational small boat *(exiguus linter)*, which floats in the inland waters, with ships *(rates)* of Aeneas' (a hero of the outer world) (39–40), whose arrival will ultimately lead to the rise of Rome and the civilization celebrated in the hymn.

The same collision of two worlds is reiterated below:

> *Carpite nunc, tauri, de septem montibus herbas,*
> *Dum licet: hic magnae iam locus urbis erit* (2.5.55–56)

This time it is not just peering into the place's past: now we have a direct image of the violence of a new world over the old one *(carpite dum licet)*. In these lines, the most ambiguity is concentrated: here are both the greatest sympathy for the old, simple free

33 Note that the verb *formare* is first used concerning city walls here: see Murgatroyd (1994: p. 183).

34 Cf. below *vagus pastor* (29).

35 As we know *Velabrum* originally was "a swamp open to Tiber floods" (Richmond 1970: p. 1111).

36 Cf. the unlocked houses in 1.3.43 with the possible *paraklausithyron* implications, and especially the image of free love in the Golden Age in 2.3.

world and, at the same time, the solemn glory to the new great world: *hic magnae iam locus urbis erit* and the following –

> *Roma, tuum nomen terris fatale regendis,*
> *Qua sua de caelo prospicit arva Ceres,*
> *Quaque patent ortus, et qua fluitantibus undis*
> *Solis anhelantes abluit amnis equos* (2.5.57–60)

The close, modest, intimate space is overlaid by the mighty unlimited panoramic one that extends to the whole world. And this also contains some ambivalence: on the one hand, the new world imposes boundaries on the old one, but on the other hand, it extends itself infinitely. The primitive, close freedom of the world, which has not yet grasped its limits, is replaced by the powerful domination of the world, which has recognized its infinity. Natural freedom is replaced by the freedom of civilizational majesty and power. The timeless infinite fluid cyclicity is replaced by immutable fatal (cf. 57) eternity (cf. 23).[37]

*

In general, the way how Tibullus clashes these two worlds – peasant antiquities and urban civilization – resembles the motif of the end of the Golden Age. Despite the fact that the very archaeological image is definitely an image from another system, it is clear that Tibullus here again associates it with the Ages imagery. First of all, this assotiation is due to the structure of the collisions, based on the opposition "presence / absence of boundaries",[38] but there are also some other points by which Tibullus imposes such associations (like he did in 1.10).

First, in the very introductory address to Apollo, we observe a reference to the theme of the exile of Saturn (9–10).[39] Later, the elegy has other reminders that the new world is the world of Jupiter: either when the Capitol is described as *Iovis arx* (26), or when Aeneas receives the possession of [once free] land from Jupiter (41).

Finally, we should not forget the traditional image of how Romulus gave rise to Rome: *plowing the border* around the Palatine (Plu. *Rom*. 11) – an image that explicitly refers to the history of the end of the Golden Age and the onset of the agrarian one. Wimmel (1961: p. 241) also observes that all this "archaeological" antiquity is depicted as pastoral one, therefore, it seems to be truly preagricultural unlike the symmetrical passage of the future village later in the same elegy (79–104).

37 Note that it is the first occurence of the famous frase *urbs aeterna* here – see Maltby (2002: p. 440).

38 Cf. Thomas (2005: p. 122), who states that *Aeneid* can be reduced to the opposition of the Golden and Iron Ages: "The dominant cultural metaphor throughout Vergil's poetic corpus, inherited from the Greek and Roman anthropological and poetic traditions, frames human change in a movement from Saturnian to Jovian, from an age of gold to one of iron. Whether the metaphor is mythological or metallic, what is figured is a transition from primitive to civilized, with all the complexity implied in that transition".

39 Cairns (1979: pp. 84–85) claims that unlike in 1.3, Saturn "represents disorder" here and that this indicates "a change of view and an acceptance of present as an age of peace and reason". In fact, I think, the image of expulsion of Saturn carries the same ambiguity as the images considered above – falling in resonance with them.

Thus, Tibullus does portray his archaeological image in such a way as to associate it with the image of the Golden Age. However, the foundation of Rome is not so much associated with the advent of the Iron Age (although the moment of violence and brutality is present), as with generally positive images of cultural establishment.

4. Rome and *exotica* (1.7)

Elegy 1.7 is written from the similar civilization-asserting standpoint, but without the nationwide scope of 2.5. Rome is represented personally by Messala, and *pax Romana* is glorified through glorifying Messala's military conquests and cultural benefactions.

Elegy 1.7 has the form of *epinikion* (with some elements of *genethliakon*) on the occasion of the Messala's triumph.[40] Whereas for *ktisis* it is natural to contrast layers before and after the foundation, *epinikion* clashes the conquered against the conqueror.[41] As we shall see, the image of conquest reveals itself again as an image of imposing boundaries, and it will again be evaluatively ambiguous and associated with the Ages motifs. The ambiguity is again based on the fact that, despite the *persona* of official poet and the glorification of Messala's civilizational (military) conquests, Tibullus describes the conquered land with sympathy.

So, quite in accordance with the genre conventions, Tibullus portrays the conquered lands in order to celebrate Messala's victories (9–22). However, the general spirit of this passage is rather "romantic", thus a reader finally finds himself plunged in an idealized exotic fabulous country,[42] ready to feel escapist or nostalgic sentiments.

In the passage, we observe the image of immense free spaces (from west to east and from north to south,)[43] full of purity and virginity (*intacta alba sancta columba* 17–18), peace and security (*ratem ventis credere docta* 20), lightness and clarity (the countries are represented mostly by water images, which respectively affects the entire picture), the grace and favour of nature (*Taurus alat Cilicas* 16*, Nilus abundat aqua* 22), fabulous and ethically non-stigmatized wealth.[44]

Gradually this fabulous image acquires the signs of the Golden Age. Paradoxically, in this fairy-tale context, not only quite natural for Golden Age spontaneity and favour of nature (*alat, abundat*), but also the images, which usually serve as markers of the end of the Golden Age, act as signs of the Golden Age:[45] the image of cities which do not touch

40 Murgatroyd (1980: p. 209). For more discussion on genre structure of this elegy see: Luck (1960: pp. 77–78), Cairns (1979: p. 171), and Gaisser (1971).

41 In 2.5.39 sqq., we could observe the inverted version of this motif: there external conqueror Aeneas set foot on Italian land.

42 Cf. analysis of this passage in Gaisser (1971: pp. 224–225).

43 Cf. similar immensity from east to west regarding the Roman (i.e. conquered by civilization) world in 2.5.57–60.

44 In a fabulous context, wealth becomes free of usual negative ethical connotations.

45 Moore (1989: pp. 225–226) sees here the examples of what he calls "reconciliation through conflict".

the sacred dove (17–18), the image of the first navigation, in which there is no search for enrichment, and trust and care (*credere docta*)[46] instead of danger.

Having guided the reader through this "geography", Tibullus brings him to its central place – Egypt represented by the Nile. Whereas, until now, the motifs of cultural establishment have been only mentioned sporadically, here Tibullus introduces a hymn to Osiris identified with the Nile, where the motif of cultural inventions gets a leading role.

It is easy to notice that all these establishments are also presented ambiguously: the cultural role of Osiris seems to resonate in its ambiguity with the civilization role of Messala, with whom, after all, he is identified to some extent: Messala conquers the fabulous and pure world to extend the great civilization over it, and similarly, Osiris "rapes" the primitive virgin nature to give birth to culture.[47]

The ambiguity is noticed by scholars already in the first couplet, dedicated to the Nile, which is presented in the role of a cultural god:

> *Qualis et, arentes cum findit Sirius agros,*
> *Fertilis aestiva Nilus abundet aqua?* (1.7.21–22)

The ambiguity is based on the paradox that, in the Egyptian tradition, *Sopdet* (Egyptian goddess of Sirius) was considered both responsible for the canicular heat, and for the floodings of the Nile,[48] which eliminated the effects of the heat.[49]

Further, the theme of the Nile's benefactions is developing, and its beneficial role is even opposed to Jupiter's unfriendliness (here the Nile is like the creator of a Golden Age oasis in Jupiter's domain):

> *Te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres,*
> *Arida nec pluvio supplicat herba Iovi* (1.7.25–26)

Finally, we reach the praise of the cultural establishments of Osiris (29–42), which were mentioned above. This passage needs to be discussed in more detail.

46 Cf. entirely different, violent image in 1.3.37–40.

47 Bright (1978: pp. 60–61). In this connection Bright (p. 60) characterizes 1.7 as "in a sense a hymn to Messalla in the guise of a hymn to Osiris". Cf. also Gaisser (1971: pp. 227–228).

48 See Moore (1989: p. 426). Bright (1978: p. 59), who is also inclined to see the "disturbing undercurrent" in the images of "apparently placid progress", understands the ambiguity of the Nile in a less sophisticated way: "Nile ... brings about the fertility and prosperity ... only after a dangerous and potentially ruinous inundation".

49 Cf. the ambiguous role of Jupiter in Verg. *G.* 1.121sqq., where the god terminates the carefree Golden Age, thereby stimulating Man's creativity in order that he may cultivate already unfriendly nature. Zanker (2010: p. 502) speaks of this ambiguity in the following words: "this benefaction is [...] an extremely dubious one [...] and it is hard to see Jupiter's depriving mankind of his paradise as entirely desirable. There is still room in this account for a degree of wistfulness for a world in which all of man's desires are met without the need for labor".

The ambiguity of these cultural establishments has also been noted. Moore (1989: pp. 427–428) discussed it in more detail.[50] Thus, in the image of plowing (29–31), he sees a hint of rape: a violent *sollicitavit* (especially combined with *tenera humus*), the corresponding implication in *conmisit semina* etc. It can be added that the sharpness and brutality of the image is reinforced by the deflorative implications (*primus inexpertae*).

Primus aratra manu sollerti fecit Osiris
Et teneram ferro sollicitavit humum,
Primus inexpertae conmisit semina terrae (1.7.29–31)

The same contrasts are present in the image of viticulture:

Hic docuit teneram palis adiungere vitem,
Hic viridem dura caedere falce comam (1.7.33–34)

The tenderness of the tamed nature (*tenera vitis*) is again emphasized; iron tools like weapon are applied to gentle nature (*dura falx*, cf. above *ferrum*). Again, we see the organization of space, moulding into the framework, introducing order, imposing the boundaries: in 29–31, the ground was furrowed by the plow, here, the vine is *shaped* by the cutting sickle and is tied to the stick to *restrain* its free growth.[51]

Traditionally, the image of violence is also present in the winemaking segment (*expressa incultis uva... pedibus* 36).

Similar images of forming, organizing, imposing frames are present in the motif of the birth of song and dance art:

Ille liquor docuit voces inflectere cantu,
Movit et ad certos nescia membra modos (1.7.37–38)

Thus, Osiris shapes, arranges the precultural space, imposes boundaries on it, submits to the cultural matrix. And all this contains the image of violence, cutting, crushing, and so forth, but, simultaneously, these descriptions have no condemnation. It is just a statement. Tibullus praises culture and civilization, and the motifs of the loss of virginity, freedom and so on just name the inevitable price. Bright (1978: p. 59) properly notes that the establishment of civilization or culture is always "an act of violence to innocence of nature". This is the eternal tragic ambivalence of culture, civilization, progress etc.

Finally, via the theme of wine, Tibullus touches upon another side of Osiris' ambiguity: the back side of the cultural order is the need for labour, but the very culture gives wine for entertainment and rest (cf. the motif of singing and dancing above) and the oblivion of labour sorrows:

50 See also Putnam (1973: p. 123).

51 Putnam (1973: p. 123) cites here a parallel from Cicero, who uses the phrase *ad palum alligati* (Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.11.7) "of condemned criminals ready to pay the penalty".

Bacchus[52] *et agricolae magno confecta labore*
Pectora tristitiae dissoluenda dedit.
Bacchus et adflictis requiem mortalibus adfert,
Crura licet dura conpede pulsa sonent[53] (1.7.39–42)

The Bacchic, festival motif connects not only the inventor antiquities with the present (it is in the Bacchus segment where after a long series of perfects the first *praesens* appears: *adfert* 41), but also *exotica* with Italy: Osiris invited by Tibullus as a guest to the village to celebrate Messala's birthday is precisely a god of this kind – festive, carefree, open to free love.[54] In this theoxenic motif, Tibullus seems to present his alternative, "reconciling" way of bringing the conquered civilization to Italy – not as a chained participant of the triumphal procession of Messala the General in Rome, but in the Bacchic procession in honour of Messala the Cultural Hero[55] in the village. In these final lines, Messala transforms from a conqueror of civilizations into a cultural hero who brings the ancient civilization to Rome, to Italy.[56] After the long list of Messala's military victories, he is eventually praised as a peaceful benefactor who restored *Via Latina*[57] (57–58): as if the most valuable outcome of his conquests were the improvement of (or bringing order onto) the Italian countryside. Symbolically, all these civilizational conquests eventually serve to build a road that returns Man from the city to the countryside:

Te canit agricola, a magna cum venerit urbe
Serus inoffensum rettuleritque pedem (1.7.61–62)

5. Absolute *rus* and the beginning of culture (2.1)

Another aetiological passage can be found in 2.1, but the system of oppositions, in which it is inscribed, is different. In fact, 2.1 contains no conflicting oppositions. It has neither escapism like in 1.3 or 1.10, nor solemn assertion of civilization like in 2.5 or 1.7. This elegy is *culture*-asserting. We will find here neither the problem of uncomfortable (or endangered comfortable) environment nor the program for restoration of the ancient ideal or nostalgia for that ideal. In fact, the world of 2.1 is fully confined to the world of rustic life with its system of values which is quite comfortable and homogenous with the

52 It makes no much difference to the present discussion whether Bacchus here is one of the traditional manifestations of Osiris (cf. Hdt. 2.42; D.S. 1.13.5, 1.25.2 etc.) or just a metonymy for wine: for more details see Klingner (1951: pp. 125–129), Gaisser (1971: p. 225), Murgatroyd (1980: pp. 226–227).

53 In 41–42, Tibullus probably picks up the image of captives in the triumphal procession (6), thereby closing the structural circle in a mood of reconciliation (as T. Moore would say) between the conquered and conquering worlds.

54 *Non tibi sunt tristes curae nec luctus, Osiri, / Sed chorus et cantus et levis aptus amor* (1.7.43–44).

55 Not without a subtle hint of his divinity (cf. Bright 1978: pp. 60–61). Cf. below 2.1.33–36.

56 Considering the fact that the mentioned inventions are located outside Rome, one can grasp a kind of hint of the secondariness of the Roman civilization as compared with "exotic" (Egyptian etc.) antiquities.

57 Gaisser (1971: p. 228).

poetic *ego*. There is no going into extra-rural, urban, civilizational scale and concepts. The elements from the external world (Messalla with his triumphs 31–36 and Cupid with his elegiac *militia amoris* 67–86) do not bring their world in with them: they get fully integrated into the rural festival space – on a par with the peasant gods who are celebrated in the festival described in the elegy: the militant Cupid should put aside his arrows and burning torch (81–82) to cover the space with *peaceful love*, and the triumphant Messalla, like one of the gods,[58] should inspire Tibullus to a *peaceful hymn* for peasant gods (31–36).

The major part of this hymn (37–66) is what may be called the aretalogy of the praised gods.[59] It is here that we find the above-mentioned aetiological invention passage of 2.1.

Motifs of cultural inventions always have the potential for the image of violence (plowing as raping, yoking as enslavement, winemaking as crushing etc.); the collision of precultural and cultural always has the potential of violence of the latter over the former. However, as it was noticed above, in non-conflicting culture-asserting systems the same images may get this potential absolutely shaded, so the positive and improving aspect of the imposition of cultural boundary comes to the foreground. That is the case in this elegy. The introduction of culture does not resonate with the civilizational oppositions, present in Elegies 2.5 or 1.7: we stay in self-sufficient agrarian space, and the introduction of culture is almost free of that evaluative ambiguity. The poet and the reader have no reasons to identify themselves with the lost world and there are no grounds for the escapist sentiments. The poet praises the origins of comfortable and not endangered rustic world.

Furthermore, even in the image of precultural world, its unfriendly points are not emphasized. We can see no wild animals, no coldness and no other attributes of unfriendly nature. In fact, Tibullus does not dwell on the precultural world itself, but he gives it just passing characteristics in two lines only: 38 (*vita... desuevit querna pellere glande famem*) and 43 (*tum victus abiere feri*). Thus, all the description actually comes down to those *feri victus*. That is, there is no fundamental contrast of the worlds *before* and *after*. The rural gods just improved the old world.

Consequently, the process of cultivation has the signs of putting in order, of the imposition of cultural boundaries, but almost without any accent on violence. The motif of violence may only be recognized in the conventional images of yoking (*illi ... tauros primi docuisse feruntur servitium* 41–42) and crushing of grapes (*aurea tum pressos pedibus dedit uva liquores* 45).

But for the rest, the victory over the old way of life is presented in peaceful images, actually, as a willing act: under the patronage of rural gods (*his magistris* 37) the life itself forgot (*desuevit*, 38) about old way to satisfy hunger, the rough diets left (*abiere* 43) by themselves, the land itself "puts down" its "hair" (*deponit ... terra comas* 48) during the harvest time,[60] the bees themselves make their beehives full (49–50), the garden itself drinks the piped water (*tum bibit inriguas fertilis hortus aquas*, 44), the peasant is not so

58 Cf. Bright (1978: pp. 62–63).

59 Murgatroyd (1994: p. 41).

60 Which is also described as an act of spontaneity: *rura ferunt messes* (47).

much tired from his work but rather *satiated*[61] (*agricola adsiduo primum satiatus aratro*, 51), and the woman is singing while working (63–66).[62]

Thus, in general, the whole passage is written rather in the key of the Golden Age – with almost spontaneity, willingness, absence of fatigue and with the domination of festivity and idleness. As a result, it is even difficult to connect these images with the idea of boundary imposition.

6. Peace and the beginning of culture (1.10)

A brief culture-asserting passage in the end of 1.10 is written in a similar tone. After initial oppositions and escapism (see Chapter 2 above), Tibullus is finally distracted from his *Weltschmerz* and gets involved in the rural world to finally pay tribute to *Pax* in the form of a hymn with the same aretalogical culture-invention motif (1.10.47–52) as in 2.1.

In comparison with 2.1, the discussed passage is much shorter and the "precultural" image is given here no attention at all (there is rather no point in connecting the motif of wild animals in the beginning of the elegy (6) to this place). But in general, a similar to 2.1 tone can be felt. There is also no accent on violence, which may only be seen again in the image of the oxen which *Pax duxit araturos sub iuga* (46).

In the rest of the details (whatever few they are), the accent is made not on taming of the initial chaos or liberty, but on benefactions: *Pax aluit vites*; *Pax... sucos condidit uvae* (47). The *inventrix* does not even teach. She acts by herself: the Golden Age spontaneity can be felt in this imagery again.

The final lines of 1.10 (53–68) – with all that integration, reconciliation, rejection of *militia amoris* etc. – are also close in tone to 2.1. With this final part of the last elegy of his first book, Tibullus seems to anticipate the first elegy of the second book.

7. Inversion of Tibullus' world (2.3)

It can be said that Tibullus has made a combination of rustic themes in the spirit of *Georgics* with elegiac conventions his recognizable original technique. In the programmatic elegies of the both books he presents himself as a poet of rustic elegy who integrates elegiac *topoi* with the rustic landscape and values. In some cases, he really provides an integrated image by subordinating love and official motifs and characters to the rustic rhythms (like in 2.1 and in the end of 1.10), but in the others, he reveals his inability to

61 This is the only case when Tibullus uses *satiatus*. In other cases (five times in two books: see Della Casa 1964: s. v.) *fessus* is used in the meaning of "fatigued" (including "fatigued from labour": 1.3.88, 1.10.42).

62 Here, like in the other places (particularly with the similar inventor motifs: cf. 1.7.29–42, 1.10.47 sqq.), Tibullus unnoticeably switches from perfects to presents (cf. Bright 1978: pp. 59–60) on Tibullus' "flexible use of time focus"), as if stressing that the contemporary countryside belongs to the unified time and space continuum with the "epoch of establishment". Musurillo (1967: p. 255) notes that Tibullus is characterized with "a kind of blurring of the distinction between past, present, and future".

surrender to this peasant ideal (it is most noticeable in 1.1 where the rustic half (1–50) of the poem with naturally integrated Delia (45–48) is followed by something like an alternative version with conventional elegiac *topoi* (51–74), which sounds like a declaration of the powerlessness of any philosophy and life choices before the love;[63] the same point can be seen in 1.5 where we again have a passage with "elegiac" Delia and "epic" Messalla incorporated into an idyllic countryside scene[64] (19–34), but, in fact, the passage is not more than unrealized fantasy built in (and therefore subordinated to) conventional elegiac *paraklausithyron*). Finally, 2.3 looks like a poem where Tibullus parodies himself by carring his own recognizable combination to absurdity.[65]

Up to this point, the elements from the elegiac world used to be purified and integrated into the world of Tibullus' private rustic ideal, or remained separated while bringing no harm to Tibullus' rural world and sparing the countryside as an escapist oasis where he could flee: if not in reality, then at least in his imagination. But in 2.3, Tibullus constructed a situation when the world of elegiac conventions, usually placed in the city, has "camped" (34) in the poet's village, thus depriving him of his usual escapist trajectory. Contrary to normal genre scheme, the place of his mistress' residence or "imprisonment" is the village, and the poet suffers without her in the city: Tibullus wrote a rustic *paraklausithyron*. While in other poems, the countryside was his self-sufficient ideal, and Tibullus dreamed about taking his mistress from the city to the countryside, in 2.3, Tibullus seems to ridicule his previous figures and would like to snatch his mistress away from the countryside (50–52), but having realized hopelessness of all his appeals, he is himself ready to go to the "occupied" village for love slavery (while the usual vector of Tibullus' *servitium amoris* figure was the opposite: after realizing the hopelessness of dreams about mutual love in the countryside – to go and serve the mistress in the city).

In spite of this inversion of conventional trajectory and the negative image of the countryside, Tibullus' values remain the same. He still complains about the greedy Iron Age (35–46)[66] and dreams about a modest banquet with clay cups (47–48).

Thus, while under the normal conditions, the city used to be a place of unfaithful and venal love, and it was enough for Tibullus to contrast a corrupted city with a virgin village that was built on the sample of simple rustic antiquities, now the Iron Age spread to the countryside too, occupying and corrupting it with its customs. Therefore Tibullus is now compelled to direct his escapist vectors not even toward the *Italian* antiquities which were the model for now corrupted countryside, but straight toward the *precultural*

63 Finally, the last couplets (75–78) make a kind of synthesis of both versions, and so the programmatic dualism becomes even more emphasized. The problem of the discrepancy of different genre conventions and their reconciliation in 1.1 and 1.10 is discussed by Weiden Boyd (1984).

64 On Messalla's integration into pastoral vision in 1.5 cf. Moore (1989: p. 423); The whole Moore's discussion is focussed on how Tibullus "incorporates Messalla into his own pastoral world" (Moore 1989: p. 425).

65 Miller (2012: p. 22) notes that 2.3 "features an ironic overturning of many the thematic commonplaces that characterize the poetry of Book 1".

66 He complains again in the images and formulas, similar to those in 1.10 and 1.3 (*ferae acies, arma, caedes, mors propior, pericula vagi ponti, dubiae rates*), and again, not without the images of boundary imposition and taming (*cingere, claudere indomitum mare*). The place of gold in 1.10 is here taken by *praeda*.

antiquities. Now the cultural benefits of the countryside are seen by Tibullus as responsible for the moral degradation (like *aurum* or *praeda* in more conventional circumstances). One can say that in his escapist fantasies Tibullus tries to reach those antiquities that existed before the cultural inventions of 2.1:

> *O valeant fruges, ne sint modo rure puellae:*
> *Glans alat, et prisco more bibantur aquae.*
> *Glans aluit veteres, et passim semper amarunt:*
> *Quid nocuit sulcos non habuisse satos?*
> *Tum, quibus adspirabat Amor, praebebat aperte*
> *Mitis in umbrosa gaudia valle Venus.*
> *Nullus erat custos, nulla exclusura dolentes*
> *Ianua; si fas est, mos precor ille redi.*
> * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
> *Horrida villosa corpora veste tegant* (2.367–376)

Here Tibullus provides a little more details about this initial precultural condition than in 2.1, but again, does not make a particular stress on its negative features[67] – he only states the simplicity and rudeness of life and the lack of cultural advantages (*prisco more bibantur aquae; sulcos non habuisse satos; glans aluit; horrida villosa corpora veste tegant*) but, in fact, there are no references to discomfort in this picture, unlike in Lucretius' famous account (cf. e.g. Lucr. 5.950–954). An important positive aspect is stressed instead: there were no restrictions for love (*nullus custos; nulla ianua; praebebat aperte*[68] *gaudia Venus*).[69]

Thus, in this version too, the main attribute of the Golden Age is the absence of boundaries, in the relevant – love – aspect. Besides, there is the same spontaneity (*glans aluit*), but in a more modest version (and certainly, a more realistic one: not so fabulous as in 1.3).

8. Ancient *simplicitas* and *divitiae patrum* (1.1)

Finally there remains Elegy 1.1, which is interesting for our discussion as the only poem with two versions of antiquities presented and contrasted:[70] not only the peasant anti-

67 The scholars usually stress that in this place, Tibullus means not Hesiodian Golden Age like in 1.3.35–48, but "the primitive pre-agricultural age of Epicurean tradition e.g. Lucr. 5.925–987" (Maltby 2002: p. 413).

68 Cf. passage above that also refers to the Golden Age: *Felices olim, Veneri cum fertur aperte / Servire aeternos non puduisse deos* (2.3.29–30).

69 According to Smith (1913: p. 429), here, "Tibullus grants the primitive condition but makes it idyllic". In these love accents of the Golden Age life and in *Venus* vs *praeda* opposition in 35–46 (cf. also pp. 29–32) Smith (1913: p. 420) sees "a far-off echo of the theory of Empedocles that Aphrodite not Kronos was the ruler of the Golden Age" (see Emp. *fr.* 128). Cf. also Elysium "for lovers" in 1.3.57–66, associated with Venus (1.3.58) – whereas the Greek tradition viewed Kronos as a ruler of Elysium (and Hermes as a psychopomp) (cf. Pi. *O.* 2.70–72, [Hes.] *Op.* 173a): this issue was touched upon by Cairns (1979: pp. 47–54).

70 In Wifstrand Schiebe's (1981: p. 63) words, «die Vergangenheitsauffassung der El. 1.1 ist doppelschichtig».

quity of clay (=beech) cups, but also a closer and more private one – that of Tibullus' parents. In 1.10, Tibullus complicated his personal life opposition "*militia* vs *rura (=vita iners)*" with the ethical motif (military service as a consequence of the fight for gold etc.) and generalized it in the opposition "Iron Age vs Golden Age"; then he associated that Golden Age with the Italian antiquities of beech cups and after that extrapolated these antiquities to his present village (attributing the respective ancient pre-Iron-Age virtues to it). In 1.1, this life opposition is realized with rather different accents.

There are no Age generalizations and actually no ethical complications in 1.1: the choice in favour of *rura* (=*vita iners*) is motivated in a very pragmatic way.[71] Instead of discarding and rebuking *divitiae* as a cause of all modern misfortunes and a cause of the end of virtuous epoch (as he does it in 1.10), Tibullus rejects this benefit, without unnecessary ethical pathos, only because tranquillity has more value to him: he is ready to exchange *divitiae* for *paupertas* – if it is a necessary price for the exchange of *militia* (=*labores*) for *rura* (=*vita iners*). Thus, *divitiae* in 1.1 are actually not an ethical category as they are in 1.10 and in all the elegies where the contrast of the Ages and complaints about the Iron Age are present. Correspondingly, *militia* is not an ethically negative category which (along with *divitiae*) Tibullus concedes to "more deserving" Messalla (53–54) readily and with proper respect.[72]

Thus, instead of contrasting the chosen *paupertas* (associated with the Italian antiquity of clay cups) with the Iron Age (usually associated with *divitiae*), Tibullus associated *divitiae* with a different version of the past, and, as a result, contrasted the modest Italian antiquity with the rich past of his family.

> *Vos quoque, felicis quondam, nunc pauperis agri*
> *Custodes, fertis munera vestra, Lares* (1.1.19–20)

> *Adsitis, divi, neu vos e paupere mensa*
> *Dona nec e puris spernite fictilibus.*
> *Fictilia antiquus primum sibi fecit agrestis*
> *Pocula, de facili conposuitque luto.*
> *Non ego divitias patrum fructusque requiro,*
> *Quos tulit antiquo condita messis avo:*
> *Parva seges satis est, satis requiescere lecto*
> *Si licet et solito membra levare toro* (1.1.37–44)

Thus, Tibullus' declaration comes down to rejecting his family tradition[73] of leading an active military (and political) life (with all its rewards and disturbances), to rejecting

71 Wifstrand Schiebe (1981: p. 64) notices that and makes a conclusion on this ground that 1.1 represents a transition stage between 1.3 and 1.10 in the evolution of Tibullus' conception.

72 Therefore, in spite of the escapist tone of the elegy, one may say that the lenient treatment of the attributes of civilization (*divitiae* and *militia*) is inherently closer to civilization-asserting pathos of the elegies like 1.7 than to anti-military pathos of elegies like 1.10, although 1.1 has very much in common with the latter.

73 Unlike Messalla who continues the ancient tradition of his family (cf. 2.1.34: *magna intonsis gloria victor avis*).

claims on restoring the past status of his family – rejecting it in favour of deeper and not so private values. Actually, by this opposition Tibullus makes his usual individualistic position sound contrarily as a renouncement of his family traditions and values for the sake of more general, more ancient and more socially important ones... And these associations do eventually attach unobtrusive ethical tone to his choice.

The excursus into Italian antiquities in 1.1 (37–40) is comparable with another one in 1.10 (17–20): both are made in the context of offering and with the same intention, i.e. to legitimate Tibullus' modest life choice by the ancient prototypes. The only difference is that 1.1 lacks the ethical aspect present in 1.10:

> *Tum melius tenuere fidem, cum paupere cultu*
> *Stabat in exigua ligneus aede deus* (1.10.19–20)

Basically, it is a usual image of Italian antiquities with aetiological component (*primum*). But, because of the lack of ethical and evaluational points in the elegy oppositions, because of the absence of Ages generalizations, there are no corresponding collisions of civilizations and epochs. Thus, we will not find a motif of boundary imposition here (it is only in the very image of *militia* where one may try to find it out).

Conclusions

Thus, the type of the image of antiquities or primary condition in each particular elegy depends, first of all, on the type of each elegy: on its individualist or official pathos, acceptance or non-acceptance of reality, and, finally, on the genre matrices.

First of all, one should differentiate between the elegies with negativist and positivist (affirmative) positions regarding the reality.

In the **negativistic** elegies, the poet discards the current state of things and builds an alternative one to escape into. In this alternative, the freedom from boundaries is particularly underlined. It is closest to the classic image of the Golden Age as the condition free from boundaries and destroyable by imposing destructive boundaries.

The uncompromised virgin Golden Age as an ideal and friendly space that has not revealed the boundaries yet is presented in 1.3. The modest peasant antiquity as a compromised agricultural version of the Golden Age is presented in first half of 1.10. Rude precultural life free from love restrictions, which is comprehended as the Golden Age of love, is presented in 2.3.

In the **positivistic** elegies, the poet accepts the current state of things and builds an aetiological basis under it in order to make it more legitimate and significant. He sings a hymn and celebrates this current state according to the laws of genre by using appropriate hymnic conventions (aretalogy etc.).

There are two types of positivistic elegies: culture-asserting and civilization-asserting. In both types, the main intention is to demonstrate the origins of culture or civilization, respectively. In both types, the boundary would be rather presented as an element of

construction, not destruction, but in practice, the situation turns out to be rather more complicated.

In *culture-asserting* 2.1, with its absolutized rural world and neutralized civilizational oppositions, there are no conflict contrasts, and the image of cultivating the precultural antiquity is presented with the violent potentials shaded as much as possible. In the scene of cultural ordering the image of boundary is effaced. The same can be said about the final part of 1.10, where the initial oppositions of the poem seem to recede into background and lose their significance.

In *civilization-asserting* elegies 2.5 and 1.7, Tibullus, under the *persona* of official poet, celebrates that side of the opposition which, in the negativistic poems written under the *persona* of poet-individualist, would evoke his negation. But though Tibullus celebrates this civilization as finally leading to the establishment, strengthening and expansion of simple rural values congenial with him, the images of these elegies are still marked with internal ambiguity. It is not only the image of the founding of Rome in place of once free pastoral space which gets associated with the boundary imposition and rape of the Golden Age in 2.5: similar associations are established in connection with the image of conquering the exotic lands in 1.7; and even the image of Osiris' cultural inventions which would be of the same type as the image in 2.1, in fact, resonates with the civilizational oppositions of the elegy and thus the motifs of rape and boundary imposition can be clearly seen in it.

Finally, in individualistic 1.1, Tibullus not so much complains about the current state of things as justifies his life choice without going into the Age generalizations. Thus, aetiological digressions into the past, made in order to justify the life choice, are not associated with the Age images and therefore the image of boundary has no impulse for development in this context.

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