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A Study of the Political and Social Conditions of Rome as Reflected in the Poetry of the Four Great Lyricists, Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Horace.

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM

In general, when studying political and social conditions as reflected in the literature of an era, it is customary to consider history, letters, and biography in prose, and drama, epic, and satire in poetry.[1] It is the purpose of this study to show that the political conditions and social customs of the day colored as well the lyric poetry of the late Republic and early Empire of Rome. This statement is substantiated by a study of the poetry of the four great lyricists of Rome - Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace. These poets at times present an unconscious reflection of the mode of life and the attitude of mind of the time, while at others they make a conscious use of details of existing customs for literary effect.

"Nobody, I think," says Nathaniel Hawthorne, "ought to read poetry, or look at pictures or statues, who cannot find a great deal more in them than the poet or artist has actually expressed."[2] What, then, does Catullus offer aside from his rhapsodies on the notorious "Lesbia"; Tibullus, except his plaints to "Delia"; Propertius, other than his lyrical elegies to "Cynthia"; and Horace, besides his

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1 cf. Tenney Frank, Life and Literature in the Roman Republic, pp. 1-6

2 Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Marble Faun, ch. 41

interpretation of the beauties of the Sabine Hills?

For the purpose of this study, all of the 116 poems composing the writings of Catullus, the four books of elegies composing the Tibullan Corpus, the four books of elegies by Propertius, and the Odes and Epodes of Horace have been read. Latin references are to the following editions in the Loeb Classical Library: Catullus by F.W. Cornish, Tibullus by J.P.Postgate, Propertius by H.E. Butler, and Horace by C.E.Bennett. Most helpful suggestions were found in the Commentary on Catullus by Robinson Ellis; Tibullus, the Elegies by Kirby Flower Smith; Propertius by H.E. Butler and E.A. Barber; Horace by Joseph Currie; and Catullus and the Traditions of Ancient Poetry by A.L. Wheeler.

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CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND

Part 1. Historical Background

Before taking up specific allusions in the poetry, it seems wise to give a brief resumé of the historical background of the time and the attitude of mind which it produced.

Rome, destined to be the mistress of the world, started as a tiny settlement on the Palatine Hill. Other settlements on nearby hills finally joined with the Palatine settlement to form the "City of the Seven Hills", with common laws, social organization and religion. At first, Rome was a kingdom, ruled, according to tradition, by the descendants of Romulus, and later by Etruscan kings.[1] In 508 B.C., the last king was expelled and Rome became a republic.

This city-state republic, a Latin outpost in Etruscan territory, carried on for two centuries a struggle for existence against the neighboring tribes of Italy, the

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1 cf. M. Rostovtzeff, A History of the Ancient World, Vol.II, p. 19

invading Gauls from the north, and the Greek colonists from the south. The foreign warfare was accompanied by internal conflict - the outcome of the efforts of the plebeians to wrest from the hands of the patricians political, economic, and social equality. With the fall of Tarentum, in 272 B.C., Rome established herself as mistress of all Italy and one of the five great Mediterranean states.

Then began the conflict for Mediterranean supremacy, which ended in the defeat and utter destruction of Carthage. The ensuing foreign entanglements opened the way to world dominion, as one conquest led to another in rapid succession. These constant wars paved the way for the rise of military leaders, whose armies, not votes, were to determine the course of events from then on.

The first two military leaders of importance were Marius and Sulla. Their careers inaugurated that century of revolution and civil war, known as the late Republic, which ended in the downfall of the Republic and the establishment of the Empire. Marius and Sulla were rivals in war and also in politics. Marius was head of the democratic party, and Sulla became the leader of the aristocratic cause and the champion of the Senate. Their struggle resulted in civil war with its accompanying reign of terror, and the dictatorship of Sulla. Rome, then, for the first time since 508 B.C. came under the control of one man, and the Roman

Republic passed another stage in its decline. This was 81 B.C.

Political life in Italy was not so much tranquillized as stunned by the massacres and proscriptions of Marius and Sulla." From this time on, the fear of proscription and confiscation recurred as a possible consequence of every political crisis. The legacy of hatred and discontent which Sulla left behind him was a constant source of disquiet and danger. In the children of the proscribed, every agitator found willing allies." The veterans whom Sulla planted on the confiscated lands soon became bankrupt and swelled the growing ranks of the discontented." Land confiscated, but never allotted, ran to waste." The country was ravaged by brigandage, in which the herdsmen slaves played a prominent part." The revolt in 73 B.C. of the slaves and gladiators under Spartacus, and the Catilinarian Conspiracy in 63 B.C. are "significant commentaries" on Sulla's work.[1]

"The Sullan system, which had stood for nine years, was overthrown, as it had been established, by a commander with his soldiers behind him. This was Pompey." Pompey got his start in Spain, where he crushed a rebellion against Roman rule. He returned to Italy in 71 B.C. to help

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1 H.S. Jones, "Rome", Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, XXIII, p 640
cf. also Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. IX, ch.VI

Crassus, "the social equivalent of a modern munitions profiteer",[1] put down the gladiators' revolt, led by Spartacus. Then he was brilliantly successful in a war against the Mediterranean pirates. Later, the Manilian Law gave him sole command of the war against Mithridates in the East. "In a remarkably short time he had crushed Mithridates and had established Roman authority in Cilicia and Syria. Returning to Italy in 62 B.C., he was acclaimed the greatest general of his time."

In the meantime, in Rome, one Gaius Julius Caesar, nephew and champion of Marius, was rising to power as leader of the popular party. He won the support of the populace by his fiery apeeches, bribes, gifts of food, and splendid shows. His alliance with Crassus secured him the money to finance his political career. On Pompey's return, a coalition was formed between Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar. Webster says, "To this 'ring' Pompey contributed his military reputation, Crassus his wealth, and Caesar his influence over the Roman mob. Supported by the people and by the army, these three men were really masters of Rome."[2] Then Caesar was appointed Governor of Gaul. While he was engaged in his wars there, Crassus was leading an army against the Parthians, in an

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1 H.G. Wells, The Outline of History, p. 436
2 H. Webster, Early European History, p. 183
cf. also Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. IX, ch. XI, XII, XV

effort to rival Caesar and Pompey in military glory. But, in 54 B.C., Crassus' army was almost annihilated and Crassus himself was slain. The world now belonged to Caesar and Pompey. Then followed the inevitable conflict between Caesar and Pompey, which ended in the latter's defeat at Pharsalus, and his death in Egypt. Caesar was virtual dictator until 44 B.C., when he was assassinated by a group of his own friends and supporters.

For thirteen years more, the struggle of personalities went on. Mark Antony, Octavian, and Lepidus formed the second Triumvirate, whose rule was inaugurated by a proscription of which Cicero became the foremost victim. Octavian took the West; Antony, the East; and Lepidus, Africa. Rivalry arose between Octavian and Antony. In 32 B.C., Antony challenged the hostility of Octavian by divorcing his sister, Octavia, in favor of Cleopatra. Octavian took up the challenge, and had Antony deposed from his Eastern command by the Senate. The issue between the two was decided by the naval battle of Actium in 31 B.C. Antony fled to Alexandria and committed suicide. Cleopatra, when she found that her charms were powerless over Octavian, followed Antony's example. After he had made Egypt an imperial province, Octavian returned in triumph to Rome. Here, in 27 B.C., he formally laid down his extraordinary powers, and was created "Augustus" and "Princeps".

"In this manner Roman republicanism ended in a princeps or ruling prince, and the first great experiment in a self governing community on a scale larger than that of tribe or city collapsed and failed. - - - - - The essence of its failure was that it could not sustain unity. - - - - - The bond of the Roman people had always been a moral rather than a religious bond. - - - - - As the idea of citizenship failed and faded before the new occasions, there remained no inner, that is to say no real, unity in the system at all. Every man tended more and more to do what was right in his own eyes. Under such conditions there was no choice between chaos and a return to monarchy, to the acceptance of some chosen individual as the one unifying will in the state."[1]

In appraising the use which the four poets - Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace - made of their life experiences, the historical events of their times, and the life that went on around them, it is necessary to fit them into their environment. It is natural that their poetry should

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1 H.G. Wells, Op. Cit. p. 446 f.
The facts upon which this brief resumé is based are presented in detail in:
M. Rostovtzeff, Op. Cit.
Albert A. Trever, History of Ancient Civilization, Vol. II
James H. Breasted, Ancient Times, ch. XXII-XXVII
Cambridge Ancient History, Vols. IX and X
A.E.R. Boak, A History of Rome.

reflect the political and social conditions of their times.[1] This will appear in themes, but chiefly in incidental allusions. Furthermore the spirit of the poetry that they all wrote is largely personal. It was inspired by their own experiences, their relations with friends and associates, and especially in the case of Horace by his close contacts with prominent political figures, principally Augustus, Maecenas, and their coterie of political leaders. Catullus lived during the period of the late Republic and was a product of that age. Therefore, his outlook and experiences were tinged by the historical situation which existed at that time. He came from Cisalpine Gaul, which was a part of Caesar's province. He therefore took a great interest in Caesar's activities toward securing for himself the supreme command in Italy. "Lesbia" (Clodia) was the wife of Quintus Metellus Celer, who was "a perfect example of an old Roman aristocrat"[2], a conservative soldier and politician. He had crushed the armed forces of Catiline in 63 B.C., was governor of Gaul in 62 B.C., and consul in 60 B.C. That Catullus was concerned with the political situation is shown

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1 cf. F.A. Wright, Three Roman Poets, p. 93
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Republic, pp. 408 f and 449 f.
K.P. Harrington, Catullus and His Influence, ch. I.

2 cf. F.A. Wright, Op. Cit. p. 131

by his epigrams of attack upon Caesar and his policies.[1]

On the other hand, Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace belonged to the later period - the Empire. By that time, conditions had changed, and therefore these three reflected the political conditions, the spirit, and the attitude of the first period of the Principate. Their patrons, Maecenas and Messalla, were closely associated with Augustus. We shall see later how references to these occur in their poetry. Some discussion of how they reflect political conditions is contained in the editions of their works that have been used in preparing this thesis.[2]

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1 cf. A.L. Wheeler, Catullus and the Traditions of Ancient Poetry, pp. 44f and 103

2 Kirby Flower Smith, Tibullus, the Elegies
H.E. Butler and E.A. Barber, Propertius
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace

Part 2. Social Conditions.

The historical events reviewed above had their counterpart in the social conditions which existed at the time when these four men wrote their poetry.

Rome's conquest of the Mediterranean world effected a radical change in the economic, and, therefore, in the social structure of the Republic. World conquest brought not only wealth and foreign art treasures, but also a changed outlook. The various ideas of government, religion, and philosophy necessarily influenced the Romans, provincial and conservative though they were. Roman soldiers brought home as spoils from eastern wars art treasures of Greece and the Orient, and also a curiosity about other cultures, if not an appreciation of them.

The Romans of the old school, as they were called, had been provincially conservative, scornful of all luxury and ostentation, distrustful of any non-Roman ideas as enervating and harmful. They were patriotic and self-sacrificing, centering their concern and their aspirations upon service to the state. Their moral integrity and respect for state and family were accompanied, however, by little cultural or creative interest. The Greek ideal of a harmonious and well rounded education was unknown to them. The chief characteristics of this civilization were equality and homogeneity.

The entire structure of conservative nationalism broke down under the stress of foreign contacts. Soldiers, returning from the East, brought home tales of unheard-of luxury and of Oriental splendor. These tales were backed by the immense wealth and the trophies which had been seized as spoils of war. By using this wealth, victorious generals and financial magnates bought up the land of countless small farmers, converted it into huge estates, and replaced the native peasantry by foreign slave labor.[1] The growing importation of foreign produce, especially wheat, bankrupted the small Italian farmers, who could not compete with the products of cheap Eastern farm labor. Many free-born citizens left their ancestral farms and moved into Rome. Here, they helped to swell the growing mob of foreign artisans, freedmen, and malcontents. The newly-created millionaires used their wealth to build splendid villas, which they decorated with statues and paintings. Here they entertained their friends at sumptuous banquets, feasting them on delicacies unheard of before.

But the effects of foreign conquests were not all evil. Wealth brought leisure, the pre-requisite for cultural development. Contact with Greece stimulated the Romans to an appreciation of the Greek language and culture, especially

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1 cf. Tenney Frank, Roman Life and Literature, p.22 f; M. Rostovtzeff, Op. Cit., pp.97-99 and ch.XIII

as modified by the developments of the Hellenistic Age. Greek teachers and scholars flocked to Rome and opened to the Romans the storehouses of Greek literature - poetry and philosophy - which the Alexandrian and Pergamene scholars had preserved. No longer was the study of rhetoric and oratory sufficient for a young Roman who expected to attain political prominence. He must round out his education with a year or two abroad, preferably at Athens, studying philosophy and Greek literature.

Nowhere is the effect of the expansion of the Roman world seen more patently than in the change in family life. The weakening of the old ideals of family integrity and of purity in marital relations was a decisive element in the subsequent decline of Rome.[1] The Roman matrona, unlike the Greek woman, was the intellectual companion of her husband and took an interest in politics which frequently equalled his own. At first, custom confined her activity to that of an interested and well informed spectator. She remained at home, the honored head of her house and the teacher of her children, highly respected by all. Gradually, however, contact with foreign ideas, foreign slaves, and foreign luxury brought a love of novelty. Among the women, this took the form of revolt against conventions and restrictions, and

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1 cf. F.A. Wright, Op. Cit., pp. 126-128

they began to take a more active part in political and social life. Not only did the wives of prominent officials, like Clodia, the wife of Metellus and the "Lesbia" of Catullus, meet and entertain their husbands' friends in their homes, but they went into the Forum to hear cases argued and to listen to speeches from the rostra.[1] According to Cato, the demonstration of the women in the Forum was responsible for the repeal in 195 B.C. of the Oppian Law. Often, women accompanied their husbands on official tours of inspection of the provinces.[2] Clodia, as others, held open court for the popular young litterateurs at her home on the Palatine, while her husband was away on diplomatic and governmental tours, just as when he was in Rome.[3] This growing freedom was accompanied by a lowering of popular respect for the position of the matrona, by an increase in the number of divorces, and by a rapid decline in private as well as public morality. During the Empire, even an unmarried woman could take part in the intellectual and social activities of

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1 cf. Livy Bk. XXXIV, Chapts II - IV

2 F.A. Wright, Op. Cit., pp. 102 and 132
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 12
K.P. Harrington, Op. Cit., p. 8
J.W. Duff, A Literary History of Rome, p. 313
Ludwig Friedlander, Roman Life and Manners Under the Early Empire, Vol. I, p. 251

3. Catullus, LXXXIII
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, pp. 15 and 25-27
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 313
W.B. McDaniel III, Catullus, p. xv f.

her father's or guardian's house. Sulpicia, the niece of Messalla, was a prominent member of his literary coterie. She must have been a familiar and forceful personality to the other members of this circle, judging by her own poetry and by that of Tibullus to her.[1] On the other hand, the rigidity of Roman marriage laws, which forbade the marriage of a patrician with a freed-woman or her legal equivalent, gave an excuse for the rise of the courtesan class, the members of which were often intelligent, talented, and well educated. This class had famous representatives in Tibullus' "Delia" and Propertius' "Cynthia".

Towards the end of the Republic, religious faith began to decay and foreign cults to flourish. These brought with them oriental superstition, mysticism, and many forms of orgiastic revels. In respect to these, the establishment of the Empire brought some change for the better. As a part of his general policy, Augustus endeavored to revive the old faith and the ancient virtues. To this end, he rebuilt and beautified temples and restored the ancient shrines. For a time at least, decay in private morals and in public religion was checked.

The majority of the political and social trends which had developed during the late period of the Republic

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1 cf. Tibullus, IV, ii-xii (III, viii-xviii)

carried over into the Empire, with one important exception. Throughout the former, there had been a general feeling of political unrest and the constant apprehension of a recurrence of the Sullan regime, with its murders and confiscations. In contrast to this, the feeling of security and peace was the strongest appeal of the Augustan Empire.[1]

These social conditions affected inevitably the viewpoints and the attitudes of the poets whose works we are studying. Catullus reflects the spirit of the earlier age, with its political and social unrest. Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace reflect the later age; the period of peace, security, and national enthusiasm.

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1 cf. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, pp. 117-122
Monuments and Men of Ancient Rome, p. 286
M. Rostovtzeff, Op. Cit., Vol. II, p. 198
Cambridge Ancient History, Vol. X, pp. 384 f.

CHAPTER II

CATULLUS

In this and successive chapters, it will be shown how these general conditions, both historical and social, are reflected in the lyric poetry of the late Republic and in that of the Augustan Age. The lyric of the former age is represented by Catullus; that of the latter by Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace. An effort has been made to group the references as far as possible under the following headings: politics, social activities, literary activities, private relations, city and provincial life, travel, and philosophical and religious interests. However, these topics so overlap that they must all, to a certain extent, be taken up together as the story of the poets is developed. The plan of a connected narrative is, in general, followed.

The poems of Catullus "give a very vivid image of various phases of the poet's life, and of the strong feelings with which persons and things affected him. They throw much light also on the social life of Rome and of the provincial towns of Italy in the years preceding the outbreak of the second civil war. In this respect, they may be compared with the letters of Cicero."[1] But there was a very

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1 cf. W.Y. Sellar, "Catullus", Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th edition, V, 543
Cf also K.P. Harrington, Op. Cit., ch. I
F.A. Wright, Op. Cit., Catullus, ch. I
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, chs. III & IV

decided difference in the approach of these two men. Cicero was interested in Roman life primarily as it affected the state; Catullus was interested only in the political events and social customs with which he came into direct contact. Therefore, in dealing with social conditions as reflected in Catullus' poetry, it must be from the viewpoint of a financially independent young man-about-town, who held the entrée to the best Roman society, social and intellectual, and to whom the vices of a wealthy city and the haunts of courtesans were not unknown.

Caius Valerius Catullus was born in Verona in 84 B.C. (according to St. Jerome 87 B.C.). His father was a citizen prominent enough to entertain Julius Caesar when military duty and politics brought the latter into Cisalpine Gaul. He was well-to-do, as is proved by the fact that there was a home at Sirmio, and that the son owned an estate at Tibur.[1]

Catullus must have had the best education which the town of Verona afforded. Sometime during his early life, he came in contact with poetry, as he says,

> "Tempore quo primum vestis mihi tradita pura est,
> Jucundum cum aetas florida ver ageret,
> Multa satis lusi: non est dea nescia nostri
> quae dulcem curis miscet amaritiem." [2]

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1 Poems XXXI and XLIV, 1
cf. also J.W.Duff, Op. Cit., p. 312
W.Y.Sellar, Op. Cit., p. 418

2 Poem LXVIII, 15-18

He went to Rome in 61 B.C., either to continue his poetic studies or to take an advanced course in rhetoric and philosophy. There, he joined the circle of brilliant young poets and orators of that literary school led by Valerius Cato and Philodemus, called "οἱ νεώτεροι", who swarmed around Clodia, the wife of Quintus Metellus Celer.[1]

Clodia is typical of the new Roman woman who mistook freedom for licence, counterbalancing her beauty and charm and her intelligent interest in politics and literature with flagrant and shameless immorality. Catullus says she combined all beauty and grace and wit.[2] But he also says there was nothing so low that Clodia did not stoop to it.[3] This he says, however, after she proved faithless to his love for her.[4] For several years, from about 61 to 57 B.C., there was a liaison between Catullus and Clodia, or "Lesbia", as he calls her. Many of his finest poems were rhapsodies on his love for her or reproaches for her unfaithfulness. They are

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1 For an excellent review of the life of Catullus and the revelation of his life in his poetry, cf. A.L. Wheeler, Op. Cit., ch. IV
F.A. Wright, Op. Cit., Catullus
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, chs. I-IV
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., pp. 311-323
K.P. Harrington, Op. Cit., chs. I and II
W.Y. Sellar, Op. Cit., ch. XV

2 Poem LXXXVI, 5 f.

3 "nunc in quadriviis et angiportis
glubit magnanimi Remi nepotes." LVIII, 4 f.

4 cf. A.L. Wheeler, Op. Cit., pp. 92 and 94

lyrically lovely, but outside the realm of this study. Catullus had either met Clodia before going to Rome or he carried a letter of introduction which threw him into the group.[1]

Literary Activities

In this literary circle, marked by the assiduity with which its members followed the tenets of the Alexandrian school of Greek poetry - in material, style, and metre - Catullus stands easily foremost. He used a variety of Greek metres: hendecasyllabic (e.g. IX, XII, XIII), iambic (e.g. IV, XXIX), choliambic (e.g. XXXIX, VIII), priapean (e.g. XVII), sapphic (e.g. LI, XI), and elegiac couplet (e.g. LXV–CXVI). The Attis (LXIII) is written in galliambics, the epithalamium for Manlius Torquatus (LXI) in glyconics and pherecratics, and the Peleus and Thetis (LXIV) in dactylic hexameters. From Callimachus came the form of the Peleus and Thetis, the epyllion or short epic, and the device of the tale within a tale. The extensive use of mythological allusions (e.g. the story of Theseus and Ariadne in the Peleus and Thetis) is due also to the Greek influence. The poem to "Lesbia",

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1 For an account of the "Lesbia" episode in his life, cf. A.L. Wheeler, Op. Cit., ch. IV
F.A. Wright, Op. Cit.
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., pp. 313-317
W.Y. Sellar, Op. Cit., pp. 422-438
K.P. Harrington, Op. Cit., pp. 23-44
Frederick Plessis, La Poesie Latine, pp. 148-158

which begins -

"Ille mi par esse deo videtur,
Ille, si fas est, superare divos,
qui sedens adversus identidem te
spectat - - - - - -" 1

is a translation of Sappho. The Coma Berenices is a translation of an epyllion by Callimachus. The epithalamium with the contest of song between the chorus of youths and that of maidens and the refrain -

"Hymen o Hymenaee, Hymen ades o Hymenaee!" 2

is typically Greek.

These facts in regard to Catullus' work, in themes, literary forms, and poetic devices, show the deep interest in Greek literature which existed among the cultured circles of Roman Society.[3]

Relations to Friends

Many allusions in Catullus' poetry give an idea of the characters and pursuits of the friends who composed the literary circle to which he belonged. Their pastimes were typical of the life in general of the "modern", young, Greek-loving literary group of Rome.

The first friend whom we may mention was Cornelius Nepos. He was the author of a history of the world, and took an interest in Catullus' nugae. To him Catullus dedicated

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1 Poem LI
2 Poem LXII
3 cf. F.A. Wright, Op. Cit., pp. 148-153
Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, pp. 163-166

his "pretty little book". [1]

Gaius Licinius Calvus, another friend, was a famous poet and orator, whose speech against Vatinius, the tool of Caesar, was notable.[2] Catullus tells of a comment flattering to Calvus, which he overheard one day at the courts:

"di magni, salaputtium disertum!" [3]

Catullus and his friends must have gone quite often to trials, as it was at the courts, too, that Catullus noticed Egnatius' perpetual grin:

" - - - - - - - - - si ad rei ventumst
subsellium cum orator excitat fletum,
renidet ille. - - - - - - - - " [4]

The poem which starts -

" Hesterno, Licini, die otiosi
multum lusimus in meis tabellis," [5]

pictures a method of entertainment which must have been frequently practiced. Catullus says that he and his friend Calvus spent the day drinking and writing poems, each taking his turn, experimenting with first one metre and then another.

Caelius Rufus is mentioned by Catullus as the friend who supplanted him in the affections of Clodia.[6] Cicero defended Rufus on the charge of attempting to poison that lady.[7]

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1 Poem I
2 "odio Vatiniano" - XIV, 3
"per consulatum perierat Vatinius" - LII, 3
3 Poem LIII, 5
4 Poem XXXIX, 2 f.
5 Poem L
6 Poem LXXVII
7 cf. Cicero, Oration Pro Caelio Rufo

Perhaps, for helping his friend, Catullus called Cicero

"Dissertissime Romuli nepotum". [1]

There was a certain Cornificius whom Catullus reproached for not coming to cheer him up [2] - a poet and soldier who was killed in Africa, deserted by his "hares in helmets". [3] These young men frequented the baths, as did all the fashionables of Rome. Catullus mentions the clothes stealers at the public baths. [4]

Catullus and his friends often loitered in the Forum. Catullus says that Varus caught him loafing there and took him to see his mistress. She talked politics with them (ladies were up on that) and asked for his litter to go to the temple of Serapis. [5] This temple, like that of many other Eastern cults, was located in the Campus Martius, and was much frequented by the ignorant and superstitious, who attributed great healing powers to the priests. [6]

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1 Poem XLIX
cf. F.A. Wright, Op. Cit., p. 143
W.Y. Sellar, Op. Cit., p. 432 and note

2 "Malest, Cornifici, tuo Catullo,
- - - - -
qua solatus es allocutione?" - XXXVIII, 1 and 5

3 cf. Robinson Ellis, Commentary on Catullus, p. 105

4 Poem XXXIII

5 Poem X
There was an ordinance prohibiting the use of carts or carriages in the city during the day.

6 cf. Robinson Ellis, Op. Cit., pp. 24 and 28
T.E. Glover, The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire, ch. I, esp. pp. 20-23

Love affairs were de rigueur among the young literati. While love-making in many of its details was a literary device well known in Alexandrian poetry, much of it as Catullus tells it must have been a real experience. The poem describing the affection of Acme and Septimius[1] follows in form the Alexandrian convention, but it could easily be based upon an actual fact. The invitation to Fabullus to come to dinner and bring his lady,[2] and the visit to Varus' mistress[3] were certainly actual incidents. Aside from these conventional love affairs, numerous allusions in Catullus' poetry show that there was at that time in Rome very little sentiment against sexual immorality.[4]

Catullus ridicules Suffenus, the polished and urbane gentleman who published such elegant editions of such bad poetry, giving a detailed picture of the "imperial paper, new rolls, new bosses, red ties, and parchment wrappers; all ruled with lead, and smoothed with pumice".[5]

Catullus knew about theatres and plays, especially the mimes, for he says that the lady who stole his writing tablets laughed like a "chorus girl".[6]

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1 Poem XLV
2 Poem XIII
3 Poem X
4 Poems LVII, CXIII, XXIX, CXIV, CXV, XCIII
5 Poem XXII
6 Poem XLII, 8

While complaining of a theft of some napkins, Catullus says that they were brought to him by Fabullus and Veranius from Spain, where these two friends had gone in the train of Piso.[1] Here we have an allusion not only to a playful incident, but to the common practice among the young men of good family, hopeful of a political career, of going abroad in the train of prominent officials.[2]

A favorite way of spending the evening in Rome was in banquets and drinking bouts. References in Catullus' poetry to banquets are indicative of prevailing Roman customs as well as use of a popular Greek type. In poem XIII, he invites Fabullus to come to dinner and to bring food, wine, wit, and a pretty girl. He, Catullus, will supply heavenly perfume. Poem XXVII calls upon the slave boy to make the Falernian stronger, as Postumia, mistress of the revel, has decreed. There was always one person who, as master of the revel, decided upon how much wine should be drunk, and how strong the wine should be.[3] Catullus says, too, that his greediness in running after "sumptuosae cenae" has brought on a cough.[4]

Catullus' love affair with Clodia, the "Lesbia" of

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1 Poem XII
2 cf. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, pp. 112-115
W.B.McDaniel III, Op. Cit., p. xvii
3 cf. Robinson Ellis, Op. Cit., p. 70
4 Poem XLIV

his poems, is of course the outstanding example in his poetry of the part that love affairs played in the social life of Catullus and his group. It is not the purpose of this study to treat in detail the poems to "Lesbia", as they are more important from the emotional standpoint. However, incidently, they reveal the idea of womanly beauty held by Catullus' generation:

> "Quintia formosa est multis; mihi candida, longa,
> recta est. haec ego sic singula confiteor,
> totum illud formosa nego: nam nulla venustas,
> nulla in tam magno est corpore mica salis." 1

the popularity of pets:

> "Passer, delicae meae puellae,
> quicum ludere, quem in sinu tenere,
> cui primum digitum dare appetenti
> et acris solet incitare morsus". 2

> "Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque,
> et quantum est hominum venustiorum.
> passer mortuus est meae puellae,
> passer, deliciae meae puellae,
> quem plus illa oculis suis amabat:", 3

the belief in the evil-eye:

> "dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
> conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
> aut ne quis malus invidere possit,
> cum tantum sciat esse basiorum." 4

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1 Poem LXXXVI
cf. also Poem XLIII as the comparison may possibly be to Clodia.
2 Poem II, 1-4
3 Poem III, 1-5
4 Poem V, 9-13

and Catullus' Epicurean philosophy:

> "soles occidere et redire possunt:
> nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,
> nox est perpetua una dormienda". 1

City Life

Catullus' interest in the varied aspects of city life is revealed in many of the allusions found in the passages previously cited, which are concerned with references to his friends. However, the most detailed allusion to a social custom common to city life found in the poems appears in the epithalamium which Catullus wrote to celebrate the marriage of Manlius Torquatus and Vinia Aurunculeia.[2] Though the poem is primarily Greek in form and metre, the customs pictured are essentially Roman. Catullus pictures the wedding procedure step by step, and describes all the necessary accessories. Hymen wears the flammeum and the yellow slippers, and he sings and dances. The bright flame streams from the pine torch. The chorus of integrae virgines is heard singing,

> "O Hymenaee Hymen, O Hymen Hymenaee".

The door opens and the bride comes. She is weeping symbolically.

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1 Poem V, 4-6
2 Poem LXI

"Claustra pandite ianuae,
virgo adest. - - - -
flet, quod ire necesse est."

The torches flare up in the boys' hands and the procession moves on toward the house of the bridegroom. This is the signal for the boys to chant the Fescennine Songs.[1] At last, the procession reaches the home of the bridegroom, and the bride is lifted over the threshold lest she stumble:

"Transfer omine cum bono
limen aureolos pedes," [2]

The bridegroom reclines on a couch awaiting her arrival:

"Aspice, intus ut accubans
vir tuus Tyrio in toro
totus immineat tibi." [3]

The matrons - "bonae senibus viris cognitae bene feminae" - place the bride on the marriage bed and summon the husband. Then the maidens sing the epithalamium proper.[4] Finally,

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1 Poem LXI, 122-150

The Fescennine Songs, in Saturnian metre, originated at the ancient Italian celebrations to the gods of the soil and fields, of the harvest and fertility. Their ancient origin is further attested by the mention of Talassius (line 130), an old agricultural god associated with Italian marriage ceremonies. The songs were rude and coarse and survived as a protection against possible jealousy of the gods. Boys chanted the Fescennine Verses during the wedding procession to the house of the bridegroom and the soldiers shouted them at the triumphant general in his progress along the Sacred Way.

cf. J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 80 f.

2 Poem LXI, 162 f.

3 Poem LXI, 167-169

4 Poem LXI, 199-223

the wedding party and guests depart, the door is shut, and the lovers are left to themselves:

"Claudite ostia, virgines:
lusimus satis. - - - - " [1]

Political Activities

As far as politics were concerned, these young men were interested in personalities rather than in principles. They were frightened out of the popular party by Caesar's autocratic control.[2] Catullus wrote a number of scurrilous poems attacking Caesar, the combine of Caesar and Pompey, and Mamurra, Caesar's chief engineer. There was certainly no censorship of press under the Republic if the publication of such poems were allowed.[3]

Travel

Under the Republic, there was no efficient civil service to supply well-trained and experienced men to govern the provinces. Men who had held the highest offices in Rome became the provincial governors. They rarely had any interest in the wellfare of the country or of the people whom they governed. Robbery of provincials became a customary method of augmenting the personal finances of the governor. Such

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1 Poem LXI, 227 f.
2 cf. J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 318
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 32
3 Poems ~~LX-XVIII~~, ~~XXVII~~, ~~G~~, LIV, LVII, XXIX

wealth as he may have overlooked was immddiately appropriated by one of the numerous members of his greedy train.[1]

In 57 B.C., after the final break with "Lesbia", Catullus joined the staff which went to Bithynia with Memmius, the Provincial Governor. One of his chief objectives was obviously to get money, as he mentions Memmius only in terms of abuse for the poor pickings his satellites found.[2] Either there was no wealth in an already ravaged province, or Memmius was one of those rarities - an honest governor. Catullus gives us no details of his trip to Bithynia, but he does of his return. He tells us how he purchased the fastest pinnace afloat and sailed across the Adriatic, from Thrace and Pontus home to the limpid lake near Sirmio.[3]

Love of Home and the Countryside

Although Catullus left Italy for Bithynia with high hopes, he was eager to return home in his little sailboat to Sirmio and happy to reach there once more:

> "o quid solutis est beatius curis,
> cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino
> labore fessi larem ad nostrum
> desidatoque acquiescimus lecto?" [4]

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1 cf. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, pp. 112-115
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 70
W.Y. Sellar, Op. Cit., pp. 444-446

2 "provincia quod mala incidisset", X, 19
cf. Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 70

3 Poem IV

4 Poem XXXI, 7-10

Although the main interests in Catullus' life as he reveals them were centered in Rome, he gives also some pictures of life in the country towns of Italy. Verona, his birthplace, was the chief town of Cisalpine Gaul. Here he spent his youth, and, after his brother's death and his parting with "Lesbia", he returned to Verona to be with his family. Around Verona, there were many coloniae, of which the one described in poem XVII was typical. Catullus tells about the dilapidated bridge on its rickety piles, over the river and the swamp:

" - - - inepta crura ponticuli axulis stantis in rediviis" [1]

On this bridge, the "Salisubsili" performed the sacred dance to Mars.[2] The townsman, "municeps", whom Catullus has chosen to describe, was doltish, unimaginative, and stolid. Catullus says, "insulsissimus est homo - - - stolidus - - -

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1 Poem XVII, 2 f.

2 Poem XVII, 6
Among the earliest native Italian religious colleges was that of the Salian priests. Annually, in March, the priests carried the sacred shields of Mars around the town, and chanted their litanies, "Carmina Saliaria". These litanies were in the old Saturnian metre, and the dance with its pronounced rhythm, which accompanied the singing, earned them the title of the "jumping priests". This worship antedates any Greek influence, when Mars was still associated with the fertility of the fields and had not been confused with the Greek god of war.
cf. Tenney Frank, Roman Life and Literature, p. 11
W. Warde Fowler, The Roman Festival, p. 38 f.
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 77

iste stupor - - supinum animum - - ".[1] He was no doubt a close relative of the municeps of an Atellan Farce or a fabula togata.

Another poem connected with the country follows the ancient prayer form familiar to early Italian ritual. This is the hymn to Diana, who is called by the various names of "Latona", "Juno Lucina", "Trivia", and "Luna":

"Dianae sumus in fide
Puellae et pueri integri;
Dianam pueri integri
Puellaeque canamus." [2]

Throughout these years of turbulence and change, and even during the long succession of emperors, there was one thing which persisted in a Roman's heart - love of the country and appreciation for the beauties of nature. Every Roman whose means permitted bought a farm or an estate outside of Rome. Catullus has expressed this feeling in his description of his Tiburtine farm and of beautiful Sirmio on the Lake of Garda:

"O funde noster, seu Sabine seu Tiburs,
(nam te esse Tiburtem autumant, quibus non est
cordi Catullum laedere: at quibus cordist,
quovis Sabinum pignore esse contendunt)
sed seu Sabine sive verius Tiburs,
fui libenter in tua suburbana
villa, - - - - - - - - - "

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1 Poem XVII, 12, 21, 24, 25
2 Poem XXXIV, 1-4

"Paene insularum, Sirmio, insularumque
ocelle, quascumque in liquentibus stagnis
marique vasto fert uterque ~~laetus invise~~ Neptunus," 1

Family Relations

Catullus says nothing about any member of his family except his brother who died and was buried in the Troad while Catullus was in Rome. At his brother's death, Catullus mourned him deeply and went home to be with the family:

"sed totum hoc studium luctu fraterna mihi mors
abstulit. o misero frater adempte mihi,
tu mea tu moriens fregisti commoda, frater," 2

At some time during the Bithynian trip, he visited his brother's tomb, and paid the last rites to the dead. Catullus' love for his brother is best revealed in the famous poem which describes this visit:

"Multas per gentes et multa per aequora vectus
advenio has miseras, frater, ad inferias,
ut te postremo donarem munere mortis
et mutam nequiquam alloquerer cinerem,
quandoquidem fortuna mihi tete abstulit ipsum,
heu miser indigne frater adempte mihi.
nunc tamen interea haec, prisco quae more parentum
tradita sunt tristi munere ad inferias,
accipe fraterno multum manantia fletu,
atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale." 3

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1 Poems XLIV and XXXI
2 Poem LXVIII, 19-21
3 Poem CI

CHAPTER III

TIBULLUS AND PROPERTIUS

In studying the allusions to personal experience and to contemporary life found in the poetry of the Augustan Age, two factors must be taken into consideration, both of which influenced strongly the form and content of the poetry, and the outlook and interests of the poets. These two factors were: first, the need of conformity to conventions established by the Greek literary types which served as models; and second, the association which bound each of the great writers of the age to a particular patron and his circle.[1] Tibullus and Propertius were alike influenced in their writing by the fact that they must follow certain accepted conventions which had been long established with regard to the nature of elegiac poetry. This fact accounts for the similarities found in the productions of both poets. On the other hand, the difference between the personal characters and political sympathies of Messalla, the patron of Tibullus, and those of Maecenas, the patron of Propertius and Horace, accounted for as many differences in the attitudes and interests of the two men.

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1 cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, pp. 210, 212-215
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, Virgil, pp. 21-31

The elegy as composed by the Romans was developed from the erotic elegy of Mimnermus, the great Greek lyricist of the seventh century, who first made use of the elegiac metre to express his passionate devotion to the flute girl, Nanno.[1] From then on, the elegiac couplet was a recognized medium for the expression of love. Two of the outstanding characteristics of the elegy were the picturing of a love story in all of its details and the extensive use of myths as a decorative device. The poetry of the Alexandrian Age was influenced greatly by the growing importance of women, and, under the treatment of the poets of the period, the elegy gained in sentimentality and romanticism. Along with the erotic spirit went a tnrenodic element which took the form of a plaint to the disdainful sweetheart. Finally, the influence of Theocritus' idylls added a frequent pastoral setting to enhance further the romantic atmosphere.[2] The outstanding Alexandrian masters who influenced the Romans were Callimachus, Euphorion, Philetas, and Parthenios.[3]

With reference to the use of the Greek type of elegy by the Romans, Kirby Flower Smith says, "Indeed the

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1 cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, p. 205
Kirby Flower Smith, Op. Cit., p. 215
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., pp. 546-550

2 Kirby Flower Smith, Op. Cit., pp. 14-23
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, pp. 204 and 208

3 Mentioned by Propertius, I,ix; II,xxxiv; III,i,

ordinary Graeco-Roman life of the Augustan Age was much the same as that of the Alexandrian Age. So far at least as the elegy is concerned, the different classes of society and their relations to each other, the occupations and ambitions of the jeunesse dorée, the entire mis-en-scene of polite verse dealing with contemporary existence harmonize with one almost as well as with the other. Antique life was very conservative, especially in the conduct of a love affair a la mode. The lover and his friends, his mistress and her friends, his rival (always either a soldier of fortune, or a rich parvenu, or both), the 'husband', the lena, all are stock characters, whether in comedy, elegy, epigram, or actual life. They can be depended upon to appear in regular order, and, after some experience, the resulting situations, moods, and observations can usually be predicted in advance."[1]

Social Interests - Love

As Tibullus and Propertius were writing elegy, the love interest is naturally the most important feature of their poetry. Much of it is strictly conventional. Such are incidents like the plaint to the house door or the use of magic spells to win the lady. Many of the incidents and allusions which these poets introduce do, however, reveal their own experiences or picture what might actually have

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1 cf. K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., pp. 26 f.

happened in a typical love affair of the time. The lady in the case was usually a courtesan. There generally was a rich rival. The imaginary or proposed funeral rites which generally occur somewhere in the development of the love story reveal actual Roman customs. It should be pointed out as a further important fact in understanding the age that such conventions are indicative of close familiarity with the Alexandrian elegy on the part of the public for whom the poets were writing.

According to Alexandrian convention, the following details always are to be found in a group of elegies:[1]
(1) The lady involved in the liaison is a courtesan or the legal equivalent. Tibullus says of Delia,

" - - - - quamvis non vitta ligatos
impediat crines nec stola longa pedes." [2]

showing that she did not have the status of a Roman matrona.[3]
Propertius says of Cynthia,

"et simulare virum pretium facit: - - " [4]

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1 cf. K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., pp. 26-28
2 Poem I, vi, 67 f.
3 That there were many women of this position in Rome is well known.
cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, p. 213
Frederick Plessis, Op. Cit., p. 346
However, some of the sweethearts of the elegists were of higher position.
cf. J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 550
K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., p. 44
4 Propertius, IV, iv, 29

(2) The poet complains to the closed door of his mistress' house,

"ianua difficilis domini te verberet imber,
te Iovis imperio fulmina missa petant." 1

"Ianua vel domina penitus crudelior ipsa,
quid mihi iam duris clausa taces foribus?" 2

(3) The rich rival, aided by the lena, destroys the poet's bliss,

" - - - quod adest huic dives amator,
venit in exitium callida lena meum." 3

"Praetor ab Illyricis venit modo, Cynthia, terris,
maxima praeda tibi, maxima cura mihi." 4

(4) The lady is urged to come to the country where all will be peaceful and happy:

"rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos," 5

(5) Pacifism always attracts the poet, because war will take him away from his lady:

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1 Tibullus, I, ii, 7 f.
2 Propertius, I, xvi, 17 f.
3 Tibullus, I, v, 47 f.
4 Propertius, II, xvi, 1 f.
5 Tibullus, I, v, 21. Here we note the introduction of the pastoral spirit and of the note of simplicity. For this as one of the characteristics of the age, cf. Eclogues of Virgil
Grant Showerman, Monuments and Men of Ancient Rome, pp. 214-217
236-239
252-267
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, Virgil, p. 35 f.

"non ego laudari curo, mea Delia; tecum
dum modo sim, quaeso segnis inersque vocer." 1

"Pacis Amor deus est, pacem veneramur amantes:
sat mihi cum domina proelia dura mea." 2

(6) When his mistress proves unfaithful, the poet tries in vain to drown his sorrows in wine:

"saepe ego temptavi curas depellere vino:
at dolor in lacrimas verterat omne merum." 3

"Nunc, O Bacche, tuis humiles advolvimur aris:" 4

(7) Finally, the poet resorts to magic spells to aid his suit:

"haec mihi composuit cantus, quis fallere posses:
ter cane, ter dictis despue carminibus." 5

(8) The lady invariably falls ill and recovers only through the intricate sacrifices and ceremonies performed by the poet:

"ipseque te circum lustravi sulpure puro,
carmine cum magico praecinuisset anus;

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1 Tibullus, I, i, 57 f.
Propertius, III, v, 1 f.
Note here the emphasis upon peace in the thinking of the Augustan Age.
cf. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, p. 143 f.
K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., p. 41
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, Virgil, p. 8 f.

3 Tibullus, I, v, 37 f.

4 Propertius, III, xvii, 1

5 Tibullus, I, ii, 53 f.
Belief in magic and in spells was frequent among the Romans of the time.
cf. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, pp. 147 and 262; 88 f.
Horace, Epod. V, xvii
Serm. I, viii
L. Friedlander, Op. Cit., Vol. I, p 183 f.

ipse ego velatus filo tunicisque solutis
vota novem Triviae nocte silente dedi." 1

"tu quoniam es, mea lux, magno dimissa periclo,
votivas noctes et mihi solve decem." 2

(9) In the end, the poet dies, and is honored with the most elaborate funeral rites, and his mistress comes and weeps over his tomb:

"flebis et arsuro positum me, Delia, lecto,
tristibus et lacrimis oscula mixta dabis." 3

"tu vero nudum pectus lacerata sequeris,
nec fueris nomen lassa vocare meum,
osculaque in gelidis pones suprema labellis,
cum dabitur Syrio munere plenus onyx." 4

These quotations suffice to show the inweaving of conventional themes with what were for the poet, or at least for lovers in general, actual experiences.

Social Life - Patronage

Under Augustus, there grew up among men of high birth a close bond of union between social rank and literary genius. Those who under the Republic would have concentrated upon a political career were debarred from active politics under the principate. Many possessing social position,

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1 Tibullus, I, v, 11 f. and 15 f.
The woollen filet around his head and loosened tunic were the customary costume for performing a sacrifice.
cf. K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., nn.p.294 f.
2 Propertius, II, xxviii, 59 and 62
3 Tibullus, I, i, 61 f.
4 Propertius, II, xiii, 27-30

education, refinement, wealth, and leisure, now turned their attention to intellectual pleasure, and became the patrons of literature. They gathered around themselves circles of brilliant young writers to whom they furnished a congenial atmosphere in which to work, encouragement and intelligent criticism, and leisure for writing through financial support, often in the form of an estate or a farm. The three most famous patrons of letters at this time were Maecenas, Asinius Pollio, and Messalla. Each of the three contributed magnificently to promoting the general taste and culture of the age.[1]

Under this system of patronage, two tendencies developed in literature. The first of these, fostered by the literary circle of Messalla, aimed at arousing personal emotion and producing intellectual pleasure through perfection of form, softness of melody, and artistic expression - "art for art's sake". The other, encouraged by Maecenas, aimed at elevating the national character and creating popular enthusiasm for the new Empire.[2]

Tibullus

M. Valerius Messalla was a Roman gentleman of

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1 cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age. Virgil, p. 28

2 W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, pp. 214 f., 22-24
K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., p. 39

assured social and financial position, possessing all the poise, graciousness, refinement, and "unconventional ease"[1] of a true aristocrat. He fought at Philippi under Brutus and Cassius, and later joined Antony. Alienated by Antony's association with Cleopatra, he went over to the side of Octavian, and finally became reconciled to the necessity for a one man rule. Nevertheless, although he served under Octavian as soldier, governor, diplomat, and public official, he did not identify himself with the state policy and fortunes of Augustus as did Maecenas. Because of this attitude on the part of their patron, the interests expressed in the poetry of the literary circle of Messalla, as exemplified by Tibullus, lie in the incidents of private life rather than in imperial politics or in the creation of an attitude of mind favorable to imperial policies.[2]

All of the information that can be secured about the life of Albius Tibullus, even his name, is purely conjectural. He was probably the scion of a family which lost its wealth during the confiscations of Octavian, and was, also probably, a member of Messalla's staff on his mission to Aquitania in 30 or 29 B.C.[3] In the references to him

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1 cf. K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., p 37

2 W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, p. 214

3 K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., pp. 30-58
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, pp. 225 f. and 234-236
Frederick Plessis, Op. Cit., pp. 336-340
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., pp. 551-555

made by other poets and in the reflections within his own poems, relating to the life of Messalla's circle, lies the only real knowledge of Tibullus that we possess.

Politics and Travel

Tibullus' only references to politics are to those events which brought distinction to Messalla. He alludes to a Roman triumph in a congratulatory poem upon Messalla's triumph granted for victories in Aquitania:

> "- - - novos pubes Romana triumphos
> vidit et evinctos bracchia capta duces;
> at te victrices lauros, Messalla, gerentem
> portabat nitidis currus eburnus equis." 1

In this same poem, while praising Messalla's work on the Via Latina, Tibullus gives some hints of the manner in which a Roman road was built:

> "namque opibus congesta tuis hic glarea dura
> sternitur, hic apta iungitur arte silex." 2

Under the principate, Roman officials were still going to the provinces or on diplomatic missions with their

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1 Poem I, vii, 5-8
A more detailed description is that of the future triumph of Messalinus:
"at tu, nam divum servat tutela poetas,
praemoneo, vati parce, puella, sacro,
ut Messalinum celebram, cum praemia belli
ante suos currus oppida victa feret,
ipse gerens laurus: lauro devinctus agresti
miles "io" magna voce "triumphe" canet.
tunc Messalla meus pia det spectacula turbae
et plaudat curru praetereunte pater." - II, v, 113-120

2 Poem I, vii, 59 f.

staffs of lieutenants and friends.[1] Tibullus tells of the mission of Messalla to the Orient, on which he was to have accompanied him, He happened, however, to fall ill at Corcyra, which incident serves as the setting for the third elegy of Book I:

> "Ibitis Aegaeas sine me, Messalla, per undas,
> o utinam memores ipse cohorsque mei!" [2]

The most patriotic in spirit of Tibullus' poems is the one which he wrote when Messalinus assumed his first public duties:

"Phoebe, fave; novus ingreditur tua templa sacerdos;" [3]

Messalinus, Messalla's son, had just been elected to the board of the "XV viri sacris faciundis", which had the custody of the Sibylline Books.[4] As the Cumean Sibyl was supposed to have been inspired by Apollo, Tibullus naturally addressed the prayer to that god. In this poem, too, Tibullus refers to Aeneas, to his journey from Troy to Latium, to his visit to the Cumaean Sibyl, and to the founding of Alba Longa by Ascanius. He predicts that Rome will rule the world.[5] He describes the omens foretold by the Sibyl which were those seen at the murder of Julius Caesar:

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1 cf. Grant Showerman, Eternal Rome, p. 118
2 Poem I, iii, 1 f.
3 Poem II, v, 1
4 cf. K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., nn.pp. 443-445
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 554
5 Poem II, v, 19-64

"haec fore dixerunt belli mala signa cometen,
multus ut in terras deplueretque lapis.
atque tubas atque arma ferunt strepitantia caelo
audita et lucos praecinuisse tepentes
fataque vocales praemonuisse boves.
ipsum etiam Solem defectum lumine vidit
jungere pallentes nubilus annus equos." [1]

Elsewhere, Tibullus exhibits no interest in state policy or in the glory of the reign of Augustus.

Love of Country-side and Country Worship

Tibullus was, however, deeply imbued with love of the Italian country side and of the fields, and with reverence for the old gods and the ancient ceremonials of religion. There are in the elegies numerous references to the household gods and to the country gods.[2] The most detailed of these is Elegy I, of Book II, where the festival of the Ambervalia is described.[3] The ceremony is conducted for the purpose of summoning Bacchus and Ceres to purify the crops according to age-old rites.[4] The list of daily tasks which must cease furnishes a good commentary upon the farmer's work.

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1 Poem II, v, 71-78
cf. also Virgil, Georgics, I, 463-468
Plutarch, Lives of Illustrious Men, Caesar.
Horace, C. I, ii, 1-20

2 Poems I, x, 17-24
I, iii, 33 f.
I, i, 19 f and
66 f.

3 cf. J.P. Postgate, Tibullus, p. 253 n.
W. Warde Fowler, Op. Cit., pp. 124-128

4 Poem II, i, 1-4

There must be no ploughing, the oxen must rest, no spinner shall touch the wool.[1] For the ceremony, each participant must come in clean raiment, with clean hands and with head bound with olive, in order to carry the lamb to the altar.[2] Next follows a prayer to the "di patrii"[3] to protect the crops from weeds and the lambs from the wolves, and to bring prosperity to the household. The arts of civilization, Tibullus says, were taught by the country gods - Bacchus, the Lares, Minerva, and even Cupid - to men of the country. Therefore, he will sing "rura rurisque deos".[4]

For Tibullus, the true gods are the Lares and Penates, Pales, Pan, and the field sprites. In Elegy III of Book I, lines 33 f., he prays for a long life in which to sacrifice to the Penates and to the Lar of his home:

> "at mihi contingat patrios celebrare Penates
> reddereque antiquo menstrua tura Lari."

In olden days, he says, men worshipped "Pan, beneath the holm-oak's shade, and Pales, shaped from wood by rustic knife".[5] Pales was the shepherds' god:

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1 Poem II, i, 5-10
2 Ibid 10-16
3 Ibid 17
These gods were Bacchus, Ceres, the Lares, and Mars.
cf. K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., n. p. 396 and n. p. 117
4 Ibid 37
5 Poem II, v, 27 f. Translated by J.P. Postgate, Tibullus, p. 273

"ac madidus Baccho sua festa Palilia pastor
concinet" 1

and also

"hinc ego pastoremque meum lustrare quot annis
et placidam soleo spargere lacte Palem." 2

Tibullus prays to the Lares to protect him from war and incidently describes the little statues and the ceremony in their honor at the home:

"neu pudeat prisco vos esse e stipite factos
- - - - -
- - - - - - - - - - - paupere cultu
stabat in exigua ligneus aede deus,
hic placatus erat, seu quis libaverat uvam
seu dederat sanctae spicea serta comae;
atque aliquis voti compos liba ipse ferebat
postque comes purum filia parva favum." 3

May the Lares watch over his estate:

"vos quoque, felicis quondam, nunc pauperis agri
custodes, fertis munera vestra, Lares." 4

and may Priapus, "Bacchi rustica proles" [5], in the garden scare away the birds with his billhook:

"pomosisque ruber custos ponatur in hortis
terreat ut saeva falce Priapus aves." 6

He will worship the spirits of the land wherever he sees in field or at some crossroad a tree stump or a boulder

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1 Poem II, v, 87. cf. also K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., p. 472 f.
W.Warde Fowler, Op. Cit., pp. 79-85

2 Poem I, i, 35 f.
3 Poem I, x, 17-24
4 Poem I, i, 19 f.
5 Poem I, iv, 7
6 Poem I, i, 17 f.

decorated with wreaths of flowers:

"nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris
seu vetus in trivio florida serta lapis;" [1]

Life in the country held the same charm for Tibullus that the excitement and spectacles of the city did for Propertius. He knew the "trivial round, the common task" of the farmer - ploughing, making cheese,[2] hoeing, driving the oxen home with a goad, or carrying a baby lamb or goat,[3] planting orchard trees and vines,[4] treading the grapes,[5] shearing the sheep, spinning and weaving. All of these duties and his heartfelt appreciation of the peace and joy of country life, Tibullus summed up in his dream of life in the country with Delia.[6]

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1 Poem I, i, 11 f.
He pictures the old Italian worship of sacred trees and rocks.
cf. Virgil, Aeneid, VII, 59-62
Propertius, I, iv, 23 f.
Ovid, Fasti, II, 641 and notes by J.G. Frazer, V,ii, pp. 481-499
K.F. Smith, Op. Cit., p. 188
W.Warde Fowler, Op. Cit., p. 334
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 197

2 Poem II, iii, 6-8
Ibid 14 a and b and c

3 Poem I,i

4 Poems II, v, 85 f
I, v, 23 f
II, i, 45 f.

5 Poem II, i, 59-67

6 Poem I, v, 21-35

City Life

As for life in Rome, there are some disconnected references to articles used in the home and to activities pursued there. Tibullus mentions bed (lecto)[1] and soft mattress (molli toro), Tyrian cushions (Tyrio toro), pillows (plumae)[2], embroidered coverlet (stragula picta), and a round table (mensa in orbe).[3] He tells how an old man in love waylaid his lady's maid in the forum - "puellae ancillam medio detinuisse foro"[4]; dyed his hair - "coma - - mutatur viridi cortice tincta nucis"[5]; and had his face lifted - "et faciem dempta pelle referre novam".[6] In the evening, the Roman lady sat at home with her nurse and her maids, spinning.[7] Tibullus' soldier friend dined with him, and, after dinner, talked of war, and drew the plan of the camp on the table in wine - "et in mensa pingere castra mero".[8] Evidently there were auction sales, as Tibullus complains that Delia is so greedy that he may have to sell even his household gods - "ite sub imperium sub titulumque Lares".[9]

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1 Poem I,i,43
2 Poem I, ii,54,76
3 Poem I, vi,20
4 Poem I, ii, 93
5 Poem I, viii, 43 f.
6 Poem I, viii, 46
7 Poem I, iii, 83-94
8 Poem I, x, 32
9 Poem II, iv, 54 The titulus was the label attached to objects to be sold at auction.
cf. J.P. Postgate, Tibullus, p. 271 n.

In connection with religious practices in the city, four methods of divination are mentioned by Tibullus: Augury - "augur scit bene quid fati provida cantet avis";[1] sortes;[2] haruspicina - "per te (Apollo) praesentit harus-pex, lubrica signavit cum deus exta notis";[3] and the Sibylline Books - "Sibylla abdita quae senis fata canit pedibus".[4]

While Tibullus pictures the charm of the old Italian worship of the countryside (cf. pp. 46-48), he mentions also another type of religion popular with the ladies of Delia's station in Roman society. This was participation in the Oriental cults which had become established in Rome, particularly that of Isis.[5] While he is sick on the island of Corfu, whither he had gone with Messalla, Delia is participating in the rites of Isis.[6]

An unhappy feature of city life was the prevalence still under the Empire of the sexual immorality of which we have seen that Catullus wrote. Tibullus makes two allusions to the influence of wealth on women and on

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1 Poem II, v, 11 f.
2 Ibid 13
3 Ibid 13 f.
4 Ibid 15 f. For popular methods of foretelling, cf. L. Friedlander, Op. Cit., Vol. III, 126-130
5 cf. L. Friedlander, Op. Cit., Vol. I, 255 f.
6 Poem I, iii, 23-26
7 Poems I, viii
I, ix

ex-slaves.[1]

The picture of quite another side of Roman life and of life within Messalla's circle is given to us by the group of elegies comprising Numbers ii - xii of Book IV, which are incorporated into the Corpus Tibullum. They are generally believed to have been written by Sulpicia's lover, Cerinthus, or more probably by Tibullus himself assuming the character of Cerinthus and by Sulpicia herself. Sulpicia, Messalla's niece and ward, is typical of the personality into which any gifted Roman girl might develop under similar circumstances. She was pretty,[2] carefully watched over by her mother,[3] and eagerly petted and spoiled by her uncle.[4] She was frank,[5]

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1 "nota loquor, regnum ipse tenet quem saepe coegit
barbara gypsatos ferre catasta pedes. -
II, iii, 59 f.

- - - - -

o pereat quicumque legit viridesque smaragdos
et niveam Tyrio murice tingit ovem.
addit avaritiae causas et Coa puellis
vestis et e rubro lucida concha mari
haec fecere malas;"
II, iv, 27-31

2 "illam, quidquid agit, quoquo vestigia movit
componit furtim subsequiturque Decor."
III, viii (IV, ii) 7 f.

3 "praecipit et natae mater studiosa quod optet:"
III, xii (IV, vi) 15

4 "iam, nimium Messalla mei studiose, quiecas:"
III, xiv, (IV, viii) 1

5 "Tandem venit amor, qualem texisse pudori
quam nudasse aliqui sit mihi, Fama, magis.

- - - - -

sed peccasse iuvat, vultus componere famae
taedet: - - -"
III, xiii, (IV,vii) 1 f., 9

unaffected,[1] and proud,[2] miserable one minute - when she thought her birthday would be spent away from Cerinthus[3] - and blissful the next - when she found she could stay in Rome.[4] Here we have presented a clean, healthy love affair which must have been typical of those which went on between the fine, carefully nurtured young men and young women of the Roman world.[5]

Incidently, from the poems about Sulpicia, or those written by her, come descriptions of two birthday celebrations - one for Cerinthus and one for Sulpicia:

> "magne Geni, dape tura libens votisque faveto,
> - - - - -
> at tu, Natalis, quoniam deus omnia sentis,
> adnue: - - - "[6]

> "Natalis Iuno, sanctos cape turis acervos,
> quos tibi dat tenera docta puella manu.
> tota tibi est hodie, tibi se laetissima compsit,
> staret ut ante tuos conspicienda focos.
> - - - - -
> adnue purpureaque veni perludida palla:
> ter tibi fit libo, ter, dea casta, mero,
> praecipit et natae mater studiosa quod optet:
> illa aliud tacita iam sua mente rogat."[7]

The fact that Tibullus or someone in Messalla's circle knew

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1 "ne tibi sim, mea lux, aeque iam fervida cura
ac videor paucos ante fuisse dies -
III, xviii (IV,xii) 1 f.

2 "sit tibi cura togae potior pressumque quasillo
scortum quam Servi filia Sulpicia:" -
III, xvi, (IV, x) 3 f.

3 Poem III, xiv (IV, viii)

4 Poem III, xv (IV, ix)

5 cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, p. 260

6 Poem III, xi, (IV, v) 9 and 19 f.

7 Poem III, xii (IV, vi) 1-4 and 19 f.

Sulpicia and her poetry well enough to write the intervening verses shows that a noble Roman girl was not shut away in her own apartments, but freely met the friends of the household.

Propertius

Maecenas was more closely associated with the aims and activities of the new Empire than was Messalla. He collaborated with Augustus in the endeavor to build up a national literature, to advance state policies, and to enhance the national glory.[1] Hence, the poets who were connected with the circle of Maecenas - Propertius, Horace, and Virgil - show a more nationalistic stamp in their poetry and a closer tie-up with imperial policy than those who were associated with Messalla. Although Propertius, due to his own character and to his particular poetical genre, was affected less by this than were Horace and Virgil, nevertheless his poetry shows the impress of the group in the revival of deeds from Roman History as political themes and in the glorification of the existing regime,[2]

Sextus Aurelius Propertius is supposed to have been born in Assisi between 54 and 43 B.C. He was of equestrian

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1 cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, pp. 22 and 215

2 Poems IV, iv, the story of Tarpeia
III, xi, Cleopatra
IV, vi, Cleopatra
IV, x, Roman heroes

rank and studied for the bar, which profession he later deserted for poetry. He lived in Rome with his mother and sister, and, following the pattern of the fashionable young Roman, fell in love with a courtesan - Hostia. His poems to her, under the name "Cynthia", brought him recognition and an introduction to the literary circle of Maecenas.[1]

Politics

Pro-Augustan sentiments in the elegies of Propertius took the form either of allusions to some victory or war, or of long odes in honor of Augustus. The favorite theme with all the writers of the time upon which to compliment Augustus were the victory at Actium and the establishment of peace. Propertius,in Poem vi of Book IV, lines 15-66, gives a detailed description of the battle of Actium. He tells how the ships of Cleopatra and those of Augustus faced one another across the bay; how Apollo fought on Augustus' side with his bow and arrows; how Rome conquered; how Cleopatra, trusting to her swift sloop, fled up the Nile, only to find death; how Julius Caesar from his star[2] hailed the victor

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1 cf. H.E. Butler and E.A. Barber, Op. Cot., pp. xviii - xxiv
W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, pp. 262-290
Frederick Plessis, Op. Cit., pp. 379-388
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., pp. 561-564

2 The "Iulium sidus"
cf. Ovid, Fasti, nn. by J.G. Frazer, Vol. ii,p. 199
L. Friedlander, Op. Cit., Vol. III, p. 118

in the words, "Sum deus; est nostri sanguinis ista fides"; and how when the battle was over:

> " - - - citharam iam poscit Apollo,
> victor et ad placidos exuit arma choros". [1]

Propertius compares Augustus' greatness with Antony's baseness:

> "cerne ducem, modo, qui fremitu complevit inani
> Actia damnatis aequora militibus:
> hunc infamis amor versis dare terga carinis
> iussit et extremo quaerere in orbe fugam.
> Caesaris haec virtus et gloria Caesaris haec est:
> illa, qua vicit, condidit arma manu". [2]

He also says that, were he an epic poet, he would sing of Caesar and his deeds.[3] Besides Actium, Propertius mentions the wars in India, Arabia, and against the Parthians.[4] Poem ix of Book III is an ode addressed to Propertius' patron, Maecenas, "the hope and envy of every Roman youth."[5]

City Life

Propertius infinitely preferred the city of Augustus with its triumphs passing along the Sacra Via, its temples, its theatres, the slave market, the Tiber with its boats and barges, the colonnades, and the historic monuments to the country that Tibullus loved:

> "Hoc quodcumque vides, hospes, qua maxima Roma est,
> ante Phrygem Aenean collis et herba fuit;

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1 Poem IV, vi, 69 f.
2 Poem II, xvi, 37-42
3 Poem II, i, 27-36
4 Poems II, x; III, iv; II, xiv
5 Poem II, i, ~~1-16~~ *73*

atque ubi Navalá stant sacra Palatia Phoebo,
Euandri profugae concubuere boves.
fictilibus crevere deis haec aurea templa,
nec fuit opprobrio facta sine arte casa;
Tarpeiusque pater nuda de rupe tonabat,
et Tiberis nostris advena bubus erat.
qua gradibus domus ista Remi se sustulit, olim
unus erat fratrum maxima regna focus.
Curia, praetexto quae nunc nitet alta senatu.
pellitos habuit, rustica corda, Patres.
bucina cogebat priscos ad verba Quirites:
centum illi in prato saepe senatus erat.
nec sinuosa cavo pendebant vela theatro,
pulpita sollemnes non oluere crocos.
- - - - -
nil patrium nisi nomen habet Romanus alumnus:" 1

In his elegies, Propertius has furnished not only a guide to the city, but a picture of its activities as well. He might go to the theatre to flirt with bejewelled beauties of stage and audience:

"o nimis exitio nata theatra meo,
sive aliquis molli diducit candida gestu
bracchia, seu varios incinit ore modos!
interea nostri quaerunt sibi vulnus ocelli,
candida non tecto pectore si qua sedet,
sive vagi crines puris in frontibus errant,
indica quos medio vertice gemma tenet." 2

or to see a play of Menander:

"sed potius mundi Thais pretiosa Menandri,
cum ferit astutos comica moecha Getas." 3

Standing on the Sacred Way, he could watch the triumphs of Augustus:

" - - - videam spoliis oneratos Caesaris axes,
ad vulgi plausus saepe resistere equos,
- - - - -

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1 Poem IV, i, 1-16 and 37
2 Poem II, xxii, 4-10
3 Poem IV, v, 43 f.

- - - -titulis oppida capta legam,
tela fugacis equi et bracati militis arcus,
et subter captos arma sedere duces!
- - - - -
mi sat erit Sacra plaudere posse Via." 1

If he did not care for Pompey's colonnade with its shady columns, the broad avenues, and fountains:

"scilicet umbrosis sordet Pompeia columnis
Porticus, aulaeis nobilis Attalicis,
et platanis creber pariter surgentibus ordo,
flumina sopito quaeque Marone cadunt,
et leviter nymphis tota crepitantibus urbe
cum subito Triton ore recondit aquam." 2

he might seek the Forum, where Cynthia is the talk of the town:

"Tu loqueris, cum sis iam noto fabula libro
et tua sit toto Cynthia lecta foro?" 3

where slaves with chalked feet are being sold:

"aut quorum titulus per barbara colla pependit,
cretati medio cum saluere foro." 4

or where a defendant is hurrying to answer bail:

" - - - - te, qui ad vadimonia curris,
non moror:" 5

He could walk past the casa Romuli on the Palatine:

" - - - - - - - - - - et ipse
straminea posset dux habitare casa!" 6

to the Tiber, where, as he drank his Lesbian wine, he might

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1 Poem III, iv *passim*
2 Poem II, xxxii, 11-16
3 Poem II, xxiv, 1 f.
4 Poem IV, v, 51 f.
5 Poem IV, ii, 57 f.
6 Poem II, xvi, 19 f.

watch the swift boats and slow barges:

"Tu licet abiectus Tiberina molliter unda
Lesbia Mentoreo vina bibas opere,
et modo tam celeres mireris currere lintres
et modo tam tardas funibus ire rates;" 1

Perhaps he might stop to see the opening of the golden colonnades surrounding the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine:

"tanta erat in speciem Poenis digesta columnis,
inter quas Danai femina turba senis.
- - - - -
et duo Solis erant supra fastigia currus;
- - - - -
deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem
Pythius in longa carmina veste sonat.
- - - - -
atque aram circum steterant armenta Myronis," 2

Propertius' mistress, Cynthia, had many points in common with the modern society girl. Propertius' description of her presents the Roman woman of her class. She was a first-class gold-digger:

"et modo pavonis caudae flabella superbae
et manibus dura frigus habere pila,
et cupit iratum talos me poscere eburnos,
quaeque nitent Sacra vilia dona Via."

"Cynthia non sequitur fasces nec curat honores,
semper amatorum ponderat una sinus." 3

She spent her money on clothes, perfume, and jewelry:

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1 Poem I, xiv, 1-4

2 Poem II, xxxi. The temple was of Carrarra marble topped by two chariots of the sun. The colonnade was decorated with statues of the forty daughters of Danaeus and their husbands, and with oxen carved by Myron. Inside, stood statues of the triad of Apollo, his mother Latona, and sister Diana.
cf. S.B. Platner, Topography and Monuments of Ancient Rome, pp. 144-146

3 Poem II xxiv, 12-15; II, xvi, 11 f

"Quid iuvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo
et tenues Coa veste movere sinus?
aut quid Orontea crines perfundere murra,
teque peregrinis vendere muneribus;" 1

She used too much make-up; and blondined her hair:

"Nunc etiam infectos demens imitare Britannos,
ludis et externo tincta nitore caput?
ut natura dedit, sic omnis recta figura est;
turpis Romano Belgicus ore color.
illi sub terris fiant mala multa puellae,
quae mentita suas vertit inepta comas!
- - - - -
an si caeruleo quaedam sua tempora fuco
tinxerit, idcirco caerula forma bona est?" 2

She gambled and drank too many cocktails:

"lenta bibis: mediae nequeunt te frangere noctes?
an nondum est talos mittere lassa manus?" 3

She was forever on the go, traveling in her chariot to Praeneste, or to Tibur, or along the Appian Way to Lanuvium:

"nam quid Praenesti dubias, o Cynthia, sortes,
- - - - -
cur tua te Herculeum deportant esseda Tibur?
Appia cur totiens te via Lanuvium?" 4

Finally, the attitude towards the life of the time which Propertius presents shows the impress of the coterie of Maecenas. He decries the growing luxury and immorality of the Empire and praises the old days when Rome was young and virtuous:

"at nunc desertis cessant sacraria lucis:
aurum omnes victa iam pietate colunt.
auro pulsa fides, auro venalia iura,
aurum lex sequitur, mox sine lege pudor." 5

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1 Poem I, ii, 1-4
2 Poem II, xviii, 23-28 and 31 f.
3 Poem II, xxxiii 25 f.
4 Poem II, xxxii, 3,5,6.
5 Poem III, xiii, 47-50

CHAPTER IV

HORACE

Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius all belonged by birth to the upper ranks of Roman society. They therefore naturally participated in the activities of the élite social group of the city. Horace, on the other hand, was the son of a freedman. Therefore, although, because of his close friendship with Maecenas, he was admitted to the highest circles of Rome, his outlook upon life was marked by a wider acquaintance with all phases of society and a familiarity with life outside his own small literary clique.

Horace was born in 65 B.C., in Venusia, an important trading post on the Appian Way as it approached the harbor town of Brundisium. "There was enough Greek spoken in the city for children of his day to acquire the language and some interest in the manners of the Greeks. Perhaps it is due to early associations in the trading town that we find in all of Horace's writings an un-Roman interest in merchants and men of affairs."[1] Perhaps he possessed an inate curiosity about his fellow man, in spite of his protestation:

"Odi profanum vulgus et arceo;" [2]

On the other hand, his friendship with Maecenas gave him an intimate association with the political and literary

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1 Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 135
2 C. III, i, 1

leaders of the court of Augustus. Thus he not only felt a vital concern for the objectives of the new regime, but participated actively in promoting the policies of the new era in government. Horace's poetry, the lyric as well as the satiric, furnishes us a true cross-section of life in Rome and Italy.

When Horace was twelve years old, his father took him to Rome in order that he might receive the best education possible. After about eight years, he went to Athens for further study. Here, he formed a lasting friendship with Messalla.[1] Here, too, the circumstances of his birth had a great influence upon his developing genius; for he could concentrate upon Greek poetry and other literary studies without concerning himself with oratory and rhetoric. A political career was not open to a freedman's son.

After fighting in the army of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi, Horace returned to Rome in 41 B.C. His property had been confiscated, so he entered upon a civil career in the position of quaestor's clerk. In his leisure time, he wrote poetry. It was during this period that he made the acquaintance of Virgil and Varus, and through them, of Maecenas. His increasing political interest and

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1 C. III, xxi

nationalistic concern were due to this association with the famous confidante and advisor of Augustus. Maecenas also gave to Horace the beloved Sabine farm, which not only supported him during years of study and writing, but added greatly to his enjoyment of life.[1]

Relations with Friends

Many of Horace's poems to his friends "reflect the character of the recipient".[2] The poem to Pollio[3] pictures scenes from his recently published history. Asinius Pollio[4] combined quite successfully a literary and legal career with a military one. To this Horace refers:

> "paulum severae Musa tragoediae
> desit theatris: mox, ubi publicas
> res ordinaris, grande munus
> Cecropio repetes cothurno,
>
> insigne maestis praesidium reis
> et consulenti, Pollio, curiae,
> cui laurus aeternos honores
> Delmatico peperit triumpho." [5]

In Ode vii of Book II, Horace invites Pompey, "the first of

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1 cf. W.Y. Sellar, Roman Poets of the Augustan Age, ch. 1
Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, Horace
Frederick Plessis, Op. Cit., pp. 301-315

2 Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 220

3 C. II, i

4 cf. Pauly-Wissowa, Real Encyclopädie, II, ii, pp. 1590-1602
Harper, Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities, p. 1282
J.W. Duff, Op. Cit., p. 612 f.

5 C. II, i, 9-16

his comrades", to celebrate their escape from Philippi, and to pay to Jupiter the banquet which they had vowed on that fatal day:

> "Pompei, meorum prime sodalium,
> cum quo morantem laepe diem mero
> fregi, coronatus nitentes
> malobathro Syrio capillos?
> - - - - -
> ergo obligatam redde Iovi dapem," 1

In Ode xxi of Book III, he teases his friend, Messalla, and pictures his philosophic tendencies when he says:

> "non ille, (Messalla) quamquam Socraticis madet
> sermonibus, te (wine) negleget horridus:" 2

The friendship of Horace for Maecenas has crept into every line of Ode xvii of Book II,[3] From the allusions in this poem, we get the picture of Maecenas as rather a pessimist and a fatalist.

Political Interests

Maecenas was more successful in inculcating in Horace enthusiasm for imperial propaganda than he was in the case of Propertius. It was one of the policies of Augustus to foster the conception of himself as the savior of the state, and, in furtherance of this idea, to identify himself with certain of the old deities of Rome who had traditionally cherished

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1 C. II, vii, 5-8 and 20
2 C. III, xxi, 9 f.
3 cf. also C.I, i; IV, xi; I, xx; III, viii; III, xvi
Epod. IX

the Roman race. Pre-eminent among these deities were Apollo, who had aided the Romans through the advice of the Sibyl; Venus, who typified the divine origin of the Julian family; and Mars, the Avenger, who aided Augustus to avenge the death of Juliua Caesar. To bring this conception before the Roman people more vividly, Augustus built the temple to Apollo on the Palatine, the temple of Venus, and that of Mars Ultor. The genius of Augustus now stood beside the Lares, Roma (the incarnation of the spirit of the state), and Vesta. All of this served as a prelude to the ultimate worship of Augustus as identical with that of the State. In the East, especially, Augustus was regarded as the incarnation of divinity. Horace, in many of his Odes, glorifies Augustus as divine. In so doing, he followed the precedent of the Greek hero-cult rather than the eastern idea of divinity. In Ode XII of Book I, he puts Augustus in the same category as Orpheus, Leda's sons, Romulus, Numa Pompilius, Cato, Regulus, Camillus, and Fabricius - heroes of legend and history:

"dicam et Alciden puerosque Ledae,
- - - - -
Romulum post hos prius an quietum
Pompili regnum memorem an superbos
Tarquini fasces, dubito, an Catonis
nobile letum."

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1 cf. Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 201
L. Friedlander, Op. Cit., Vol. III, pp. 114-118

"te multa prece, te prosequitur mero
defuso pateris, et Laribus tuum
miscet numen, uti Graecia Castoris
et magni memor Herculis." 1

Even more than this, he conforms to the deification idea advocated by many of Augustus' adherents when he identifies the Emperor with Mercury:

"sive mutata iuvenem figura
ales in terris imitaris almae
filius Maiae, patiens vocari
Caesaris ultor:" 2

The greatest blessing and the most universal appeal of Augustus' reign lay in the long peace, and the freedom from fear of civil war and proscription which it brought. Rome, says Horace, longs for Augustus when he is away:

"custode rerum Caesare non furor
civilis aut vis exiget otium,
non ira, quae procudit enses
et miseras inimicat urbes."

"Divis orte bonis, optime Romulae
custos gentis, abes iam nimium diu;
maturum reditum pollicitus patrum
sancto concilio redi.

lucem redde tuae, dux bone, patriae:
instar veris enim vultus ubi tuus
adfulsit populo, gratior it dies
et soles melius nitent." 3

With peace came prosperity and the restoration of decency and law, which would last as long as Caesar guarded the State.

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1 C. I, xii, 25 and 33-36
C. IV, v, 33-36
2 C. I, ii, 41-44
3 C. IV, xv, 17-20
C. IV, v, 1-8

However, the social evils which had been gaining ground during the Late Republic had by no means been suppressed, nor was excessive luxury unknown:

"fecunda culpae saecula nuptias
primum inquinavere et genus et domos:
hoc fonte derivata clades
in patriam populumque fluxit."

" - - - - - nescit equo rudis
haerere ingenuus puer
venarique timet, ludere doctior,

seu Graeco iubeas trocho,
seu malis vetita legibus alea,
cum periura patris fides
consortem socium fallat et hospites

indignoque pecuniam
heredi properet. - - - "

"Iam pauca aratro iugera regiae
moles relinquent, undique latius
extenta visentur Lucrino
stagna lacu, platanusque caelebs

evincet ulmos; tum violaria et
myrtus et omnis copia narium
spargent olivetis odorem
fertilibus domino priori." 1

Augustus, therefore, stressed a return to the old virtues of Rome, and Maecenas endeavored to foster this spirit in his circle of writers. Horace says,

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1 C. III, vi, 17-20
C. III, xxiv, 54-62
C. II, xv, 1-8

"iam Fides et Pax et Honor Pudorque
priscus et neglecta redire Virtus
audet," - - - [1]

The series of six national Odes at the beginning of Book III present the old virtues "which he (Augustus) regarded as forming the very foundation of the State"[2] - endurance, faith, justice and persistence, courage and honor and piety (in the Roman conception):

"Angustam amice pauperiem pati
robustus acri militia puer
condiscat - - - "

"est et fideli tuta silentio
merces : "

"Iustum et tenacem propositi virum"

"nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
curat reponi deterioribus."

"dis te minorem quod geris, imperas:" [3]

Augustus' campaigns in India and Arabia, in Dalmatia and Egypt, against the Parthians, Medes, Scythians, and Iberians furnished all of the poets with ample material for singing the Emperor's praises.[4] Tenney Frank says that it is noteworthy that Horace in his song of victory after

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1 C. S. 57-59
2 Geo. Howe and G.A. Harrer, Roman Literature in Translation, p. 362
3 C. III, ii, 1-3 and 25 f; III, iii, 1; III, v, 29 f; III, vi, 5
4 cf. C. II, xi; II,i; I, xxxvii; I,ii; III,iii; IV,v.

Actium emphasized the defeat of the Egyptian queen but avoided any mention of the defeat of the Roman Antony.[1]

City Life

Horace, more than the three other lyric poets with whom we have been concerned, was interested in the ordinary activities within the city as well as in the great public spectacles of the sacrifices, games, and triumphs in honor of Augustus.[2] He would often stroll along the Sacred Way, where he might meet a self-important freedman in his flowing toga - the scorn of every passerby -

> "licet superbus ambules pecunia,
> Fortuna non mutat genus.
> videsne, Sacram metiente te Viam
> cum bis trium ulnarum toga,
> ut ora vertat huc et huc euntium
> liberrima indignatio?" [3]

or might see the procession of Vestals and highpriest climbing the ascending street to the top of the Capitoline:

> " - - - - - - - - - dum Capitolium
> scandet cum tacita virgine pontifex," [4]

He would walk through the Forum, thronged with the noisy clients of some candidate for office:

> "descendat in Campum petitor - turba clientium" [5]

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1 cf. Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 191
2 C. I, ii, 49; II, i, 14-16; I, xii, 53 f; I, xxxvii, 30-32
3 Epod. IV, 5-10
4 C. III, xxx, 8 f.
5 C. III, i, 11-13

and watch the fickle mob:

> "hunc (iuvat) si mobilium turba Quiritium
> certat tergeminis tollere honoribus;". 1

Past the Regia and the temple of Vesta ("monumenta regis templaque Vestae"), he would go to the Campus Martius. Here, the young men might be drilling, riding horseback, wrestling, hurling the javelin and discus, or swimming in the yellow Tiber.[2]

If he wanted excitement, there was always a race at the circus:

> "sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
> collegisse iuvat metaque fervidis
> evitata rotis palmaque nobilis
> terrarum dominos evehit ad deos;" 3

where, according to Otho's law, the knights sat in the front row seats:

> "sedilibusque magnus in primis eques
> Othone contempto sedet." 4

In the evenings, there were elaborate banquets where friends gathered to celebrate some special event, or merely to pass the time.[5] One such special event was the

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1 C. I, i, 7 f.
cf. C. III,i,1;
C. III, v, 53
2 cf. C. I, viii
3 C. I, i, 3-6
4 Epod. IV, 15 f
5 cf. C. I, vi; III, viii;
III, xiv; III, xxviii;
IV, xii

applauding of Maecenas at the theatre.[1] At these banquets, an enormous quantity of wine was usually consumed, nor was it considered a disgrace to get exceedingly drunk.[2] Hence, Horace preached moderation in drinking as well as in other things.[3] Among the wines which Horace mentions as used on Roman tables were Massic,(C. III, xxi) Caecuban, Chian, Lesbian (Epod. IX), Sabine, Falernian, and Formian (C.I,xx). The wine jars were sealed and stamped with the name of the consul as a date.[4] The banquets were always accompanied by music of various kinds. Horace speaks of "Berecyntia tibia, fistula, and lyra" used at a banquet, and of Chia playing at a banquet on a cithara "doctae psallere Chiae".[5]

The city itself held a world of contrasts, which Horace pictures for us : "the smoke, the riches and the din of wealthy Rome"[6]; the Palatine and Capitoline with their beautiful temples;[7] the shady colonnades;[8] the sumptuous

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1 If a Roman were popular with the people, he was applauded and cheered when he entered the theatre or when the audience recognized some similarity between a character in the play and its popular hero.
cf. Joseph Currie, Horace, nn. C. I, xx, 3
2 cf. C. III, xxi; III, xix
3 C. I, xviii, 7
4 "consule Manlio", C. III, xxi, 1
cf. C. III, viii, 12; I, xx, 3;
Joseph Currie, Op. Cit., n. C. I, xx, 3
5 C. IV, xiii, 7
6 C. III, xxix, 12
7 C. I, ii, 16; II, xv, 20; III, xi, 6
8 C. II, xv, 16

palaces of the rich,[1] contrasted with the crowded Subura with its narrow streets, its tenements, and its mongrel dogs ('canes Suburanae');[2] the Tiber lined with wharves and granaries filled from Libyan threshing floors;[3] the Esquiline, the haunt of wolves, vultures, and witches, where the poor were buried or their bodies thrown into pits.[4]

The Romans were a highly superstitious people, as their belief in augury and portent showed, so charms and love potions were very popular and witches plied a thriving trade. Horace makes fun of these witches through the person of Canidia. He tells of the awful rites among the tombs - how she caught a young Roman boy and buried him to his chin so that, after he starved to death, she might use his liver to make a love potion. In the magic flames, she burned "sepulcris caprificos erutas, - - cupressus funebres et uncta turpis ova ranae sanguine plumaque nocturnae strigis herbasque quas Iolcos atque Hiberia mittit venenorum ferax,"[5] ~~Colchicis~~. In Epod. XVII, however, he makes a mock recantation and says that she never performed her rites among the tombs.

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1 cf. C. III,i, 45 f; II, xv, 13-16
2 Epod. V, 58
3 C. I, i, 10
4 Epod. V
Epod. XVII
5 Epod. V, 17-24

Everyday Occupations and Incidents

The lyrics of Horace are filled with allusions to the occupations, incidents, and scenes of everyday life.

Loans were collected on the Ides or Kalends of the month:

> "omnem redegit Idibus pecuniam,
> quaerit Kalendis ponere." 1

The law courts flourished and blackmail was not unknown:

> "quam si clientum longa negotia
> diiudicata lite relinqueret"
>
> "Quid immerentes hospites vexas, canis
> ignavus adversum lupos?" 2

There was a great deal of speculation in crops, especially wheat and olives, by the financial magnates of Rome. So Horace says that on the Isles of the Blest,

> " - - - - - - - - - - -arva, beata
> petamus arva divites et insulas,
> reddit ubi Cererem tellus inarata quotannis
> et imputata floret usque vinea,
> germinat et numquam fallentis termes olivae,
> suamque pulla ficus ornat arborem," 3

Common punishments for slaves were flogging for minor offenses, and crucifixion for major ones. While the slave was being flogged, a crier rang a bell and called aloud the offense:

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1 Epod. II, 69 f.
2 C. III, v, 53 f.
Epod. VI, 1 f.
3 Epod. XVI, 41-45

"sectus flagellis hic triumvitalibus
praeconis ad fastidium" [1]

The homes of the wealthy, often built out over the water of the Tiber or at Baiae,[2] were decorated with panels of ivory, or gilded wood, or Hymettian marble.[3] They were filled with silver vessels and art treasures brought from Greece.[4]

Perfumes and ointments were very popular and were kept in onyx boxes, as these were believed to ~~best~~ preserve them best.[5]

Certain foods were considered delicacies - Horace refers to Lucrine oysters, turbot, and pheasant.[6]

At the banquets, wine was diluted in the individual goblets, according to the decree of the master of the feast, who was chosen by the winning throw of the dice, the Venus throw.[7]

Papyrus books were familiar in Augustus' time, as

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1 Epod. IV, 11 f.
2 C. II, xviii, 20
III, i, 33
3 C. II, xviii, 1-5
4 C. IV, viii, 1-4
III, i, xxxiii
5 C. III, xx; III, xxix; IV, xii
Epod. XIII
6 Epod. II, 49-55
7 "quem Venus arbitrum dicet bibendi"
C. II, vii, 25 f.

" - - - quo simul mearis,
nec regna vini sortiere talis,"
C. I, iv, 17 f.

Horace says "ad umbilicum adducere",[1] meaning to bring to an end, for papyrus books were rolled on sticks called 'umbilici' and were unrolled as read.

Wools dyed with Tyrian purple were popular among the Romans. Horace says that manhood once lost can no more be regained than can wool once dyed be restored to its original color:

> " - - - neque anissos colores
> lana refert medicata fuco.
> nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
> curat reponi deterioribus" [2]

The Romans often had estates outside of Rome. Catullus mentions his own Tiburtine one,[3] and Horace refers to the Venafran fields:

> "quam si clientum longa negotia
> diiudicata lite relinqueret,
> tendens Venafranos in agros
> aut Lacedaemonium Tarentum" [4]

Horace alludes to various occupations among the Romans: legal affairs,[5] horse racing, political careers,[6] farming, trading, warfare, hunting, and money lending.[7]

Literary and Philosophical Interests

Horace, just as the other three poets of this study,

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1 Epod. XIV, 8
2 C. III, v, 27-30
cf. also C. II, xvi, 35-37
3 Catullus XLIV
4 C. III, v, 53-56
5 Ibid 53
6 C. I, i, and II, xvi
7 Epod. II, 67-70

shows constantly his contact with Greece. He borrowed freely from Alcaeus and from Sappho, and perhaps from Pindar (e.g. C.III, xxx) for metres and types,[1] always, however, giving the poem a tone distinctly Horatian. Thus, the poem commonly explained as a dialogue between Horace and Lydia, is truly Greek in spirit and in metre (Second Asclepiad). Yet Horace added his own peculiar touch by letting Lydia win the argument and by changing the stock Greek ending from 'open soon or I shall die' to 'open soon or I shall go away'.[2] The address to Mercury (Ode xi of Book III) is in sapphic metre, while Ode iii of Book III is Alcaic. Ode xix of Book III, which is an invitation to a drinking bout, is very similar in sentiment to certain of the poems of Anacreon.[3] In Ode ix of Book IV, Horace says that his words sung to the lyre will not perish, for

> "non, si priores Maeonius tenet
> sedes Homerus, Pindaricae latent
> Ceaeque et Alcaei minaces
> Stesichorique graves Camenae;
>
> nec si quid olim lusit Anacreon
> delevit aetas; spirat adhuc amor
> vivuntque commissi calores
> Aeoliae fidibus puellae." [4]

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1 cf. Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, pp. 232-239
C. II, xiii, 25-28; C. III, xxx

2 C. III, ix
cf. Tenney Frank, Catullus and Horace, p. 217 f.

3 cf. Anacreon, Odes XXXVIII, XXXII, XLV, XLVII, LII, translated by Erastus Richardson, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1928

4 C. IV, ix, 5-12

Horace's philosophy was, in the main, Epicurean. Epicurus' system of ethics was based upon the theories of the natural philosophers, Democritus and the atomists, who maintained that there was nothing lasting or permanent in life, nor any hope of a future beyond this life. Epicureanism, therefore, taught that the ultimate aim in life was pleasure. In a life ruled by Dame Fortune, this goal was attained by living each day to its fullest, building no lasting hopes or ambitions for the future. Another consideration was that excessive pleasure brought resulting pain, extravagant wealth and ambition brought greater poverty and ruin. Hence, it behooved men to live temperately in all things, and to cling to the golden mean.

"Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume,
labuntur anni, nec pietas moram
rugis et instanti senectae
adferet indomitaeque morti;"

" auream quisquis mediocritatem
diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
sordibus tecti, caret invidenda
sobrius aula."

" Aequam memento rebus in arduis
servare mentem, non secus in bonis
ab insolenti temperatam
laetitia moriture Delli". 1

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1 C. II, xiv, 1-4
C. II, x, 5-8
C. II, iii, 1-4
cf. also C. IV, vii; I, ix; I, xi; I, xviii; I, xxiv; II, xviii

These Epicurean tenets in Horace's philosophy were accompanied by two of the Stoic doctrines - the idea of an omnipotent god who ruled the world, and the emphasis upon certain virtues which must be practiced for happiness, such as courage, simplicity, endurance and fidelity, justice, wisdom, religion, and purity:

> "Angustam amice pauperiem pati
> robustus acri militia puer
> condiscat - - - "
>
> "Iustum et tenacem propositi virum
> non civium ardor prava iubentium,
> non vultus instantis tyranni
> mente quatit solida neque Auster,"
>
> "vis consili expers mole ruit sua:
> vim temperatam di quoque provehunt
> in maius; - - - "
>
> "nec vera virtus, cum semel excidit,
> curat reponi deterioribus." 1

Love of the Country-side

Finally, a real appreciation of the beauties of nature and a love for the country-side, always so prevalent in Italy, are most beautifully portrayed by Horace:

> "O fons Bandusiae , splendidior vitro,
> dulci digne mero non sine floribus,
> - - - - -

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1 C. III, ii, 1-3; III, iii, 1-4; III, iv, 65-67; III, v, 29 f.

fies nobilium tu quoque fontium,
me dicente cavis impositam ilicem
saxis, unde loquaces
lymphae desiliunt tuae."

" - - - - domus Albuneae resonantis
et praeceps Anio ac Tiburni lucus et uda
mobilibus pomaria rivis."

"libet iacere modo sub antiqua ilice,
modo in tenaci gramine.
labuntur altis interim ripis aquae,
queruntur in silvis aves,
fontesque lymphis obstrepunt manantibus,
somnos quod invitet leves." 1

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1 C. III, xiii,1 f. and 13-16
C. I, vii, 12-14
Epod. II, 23-28
cf. also C. I, i, 20-22; I, ix; I, iv; II, v;
II, ix; IV, vii; IV, xii; IV, xiv,
25-35

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As was stated in the introductory chapter, lyric poetry is not a primary source for the study of either the political or the social characteristics of an age. By its very nature the lyric is subjective and emotional. It reveals the personal reactions of the composer to emotional situations rather than aspects of the life which surrounds him. Yet the lyric poet is a child of his age. His attitudes and ideas are deeply affected by his personal experiences. He must present his emotions against the background of the life with which he is acquainted. To be sure the treatment of his themes and the imagery that he uses must conform to a norm established by past generations of poets for the particular type of lyric that he has chosen as his medium of expression. This is peculiarly true of the Roman poets, for the influence of Greek literature was firmly implanted in Roman literary technique and the poets of Rome were expected to conform to the conventions of the Greek types which served as their models. In fact, essential criteria of their excellence as artists were their successful use of these conventions, and the amount of originality in treatment and freshness in imagery which they succeeded in introducing, within the bounds of established conventions. Thus in all Roman poetry we find an intermingling of borrowings from Greek predecessors

with fresh material which is incorporated from national tradition and every-day experience. It is the glory of the Roman poets that, in spite of the handicap of having to follow the inherited standards of their age, they were able to infuse into their poetry the vital spark of the national spirit and genius of Rome. This study has illustrated one important way in which even the lyric poets were able to do this.

Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace are great because, working as they did in Greek poetic forms, they yet produced living art. The times in which they lived had as much to do with this as their own personal talents. The years of Catullus' life covered, as has been said, the last ones of the Republic, a period of great political upheaval, economic unrest, and social insecurity. There was an opportunity for keen interest and active participation in vital political affairs, as well as in social and literary activities. The expression of personal prejudice and partiality, of individual sentiment and feeling was totally unrestrained. Such an atmosphere naturally bred in Catullus the vitality, spontaneity, and freshness which characterize his poetry. Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace, on the other hand, lived during the security and peace of the Augustan Age. Life was no less spectacular, but it had become more conventional. Domination of the state by an individual ruler encouraged

conformity to fixed national policies and ideals, and emphasis upon perfection of form rather than originality. The interest of the lyric poets, as illustrated in the poetry produced by the three outstanding men with whom our study has been concerned, centered upon past glories or the general round of present happenings of which they were a part. Great political issues were left in the hands of Augustus. The grandeur, luxury, and artificiality of the city brought the inevitable reaction. Men turned to the peace, simplicity, and sincerity of the country. Still the poets enjoyed and pictured the life in Rome with its activity, its spectacles, its idealism, and its very artificiality.

The vital and exciting life, both political and social, in which the poets were not merely spectators but active participants, supplied them as has been shown with themes and picturesque details. These themes and details, through their application to a conventional framework, caused the old established poetical forms to become, in the hands of the poets, truly Roman. A summary of what has been developed in detail in this study will present a clearer picture of the breadth of interests which inspired and illuminated the writing of Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace. In the sphere of politics, these poets reveal Julius Caesar in his struggle for power, his allies, and his minions; and Augustus in his victories and reforms, his aims and ideals. In the

world of letters, they show the widespread acquaintance with Greek literary types, and the influence of intelligent and cultured patrons upon their circles of writers. In religion, they present the sincere reverence for the native country gods and the attempt to revive at Rome the worship of the national deities. They tell of the spread of Greek philosophical doctrines, and the conversion of the innately Stoic Roman into an Epicurean. They describe the social activities among the élite, and the daily occupations and pastimes of the ordinary Roman. They extoll the virtues and decry the vices of the cosmopolitan city. They picture the culture and refinement which wealth and leisure were able to purchase, and the misery and superstition which poverty bred.

Catullus was pre-eminently a society poet, and therefore revealed political, social, and literary activities only in so far as they affected his own small circle. From him is derived an understanding of the élite group which made up unconventional, Bohemian Rome, whose lodestar was Clodia, the Marquise de Rambouillet of Rome.

Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace, all three, portray the life of the Augustan Age; but each one presents a particular phase of this life.

Tibullus was the gentler of the two elegists. His interest and love were for the country of Italy, with its simplicity, peace, and escape from the turmoil of the city.

He shows more clearly than the others how deep into the hearts of the country folk went the roots of honest reverence for the native gods and the protective spirits of woods and fields. Even the unrest and cynicism of the Republic could not destroy it.

Propertius, on the other hand, was first and last a lover of the city. He enjoyed the sights and spectacles and varied activities which went on within Rome itself. The country held little charm for him. Therefore, he furnishes the most detailed descriptions of the city and its buildings, and the most numerous side-lights upon life there.

Horace presents most clearly the political aspects of the period. He was more closely associated with Augustus than were the elegists, and therefore was able to give a more comprehensive picture of the imperial program. He tells of battles won, of peace and prosperity secured, and of virtue and morality revived. In his poetry is met the Roman Epicurean, who believed that the fullest enjoyment of a short life could be attained through living in the present, curtailing high ambitions for the future, and avoiding extremes in all things.

Thus in the poetry of Catullus and in a composite formed from that of Tibullus, Propertius, and Horace a picture complete in many details has been painted of the two significant periods in Roman history known as the late

Republic and the early Empire. The poets with whose work we have been concerned are not of antiquarian interest alone, as revealing certain aspects of Roman literary genius to the student of the history of literature. They belong to the entire world. The inspiration of their poetry has been a living factor in literature ever since they wrote and is still affecting literary production today. It is hoped that this study will serve to explain and illustrate one important element in their work which made it vital for their own age, and which has helped to maintain its interest and its living quality through the centuries which have passed since it was produced.

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