LATIN LYRIC AND ELEGIAC POETRY

AN ANTHOLOGY OF NEW TRANSLATIONS

EDITED BY DIANE J. RAYOR AND WILLIAM W. BATSTONE
INTRODUCTION BY WILLIAM S. ANDERSON

LATIN LYRIC AND ELEGIAC POETRY

An Anthology of New Translations

edited by

David J. Rayor
William W. Batstone

with an introduction by

William S. Anderson

GARLAND PUBLISHING, INC.
New York & London / 1995

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Latin lyric and elegiac poetry : an anthology of new translations , edited by Diane J. Rayor and William W. Batstone.
p. cm. — (Garland reference library of the humanities ; v. 1425)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 0-8153-0087-5 (hardcover). — ISBN 0-8153-1540-6 (paperback)
1. Latin poetry—Translations into English. 2. Elegiac poetry, Latin—Translations into English. 3. Rome—Poetry. I. Rayor, Diane J. II. Batstone, William Wendell. III. Series: Garland reference library of the humanities ; vol 1425.
PA6164.L38 1995
871'. 0108—dc20 94-37902
CIP

Paperback cover art: Flora. Fresco from Stabia. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy. By permission of Art Resource.

Paperback cover design by Patti Hefner.

Printed on acid-free, 250-year-life paper
Manufactured in the United States of America

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Seth Schein for sending this project my way. I warmly thank Patricia Clark, William Levitan, and Connie Rayor for their suggestions on the Appendix epigrams, and Helen Deutsch and Stanley Lombardo for their help on the Note on Translation. Garland Publishing's general editor, Kennie Lyman, provided valuable assistance throughout. I am also grateful to Ron Dwelle and Nancy Brown in the English department at Grand Valley State University for technical support. My husband, David Hast, gave me the gifts of time and encouragement, which made completing this book possible.

DJR

The debts we acquire over even a few years in academics rapidly exceed our ability to enumerate or recall. Even if I could trace down and acknowledge every influence from every book or article I have read, I would still be left with an essentially unpayable debt to those teachers, friends, and colleagues whose conversations inside and outside of the academy have helped shape my sense of how to read and of what we are doing. I suppose that in the long run we repay this debt by being the best teachers, friends, and colleagues that we can be, trying to offer to others what was so generously given to us. However, at the inevitable certainty of leaving out several important influences, I would like here to acknowledge two classicists whose influence on my work might, but cannot, go without saying: The first is the author of our Introduction, William S. Anderson. As a scholar and teacher he has done more (whether he likes it or not) to shape my understanding of Latin literature than anyone else in the profession. Others certainly in individual cases have had greater influence over my understanding of a particular point, but as the teacher who raised me from a second-year Latin student to a Ph.D., his influence has been the most consistent, and now I discover that the standards he represents as a teacher and reader continue to appear stronger and better with time. The second, appropriately enough, is a student of William S. Anderson, W. Ralph Johnson, that inimitable poet/teacher/scholar who has been the inspiration for many of my generation. I would also like to thank my assistant Bart Brown for his particularly close attention to details of all kinds.

WWB

Introduction

The six poets whose works comprise the material of this volume represent the sudden flowering of lyric poetry in Rome at the end of the Republic and in the first decades of the Augustan principate. All six poets, though by birth separated by a generation or two, composed what we have in a period of approximately fifty years, from 60 to 10 B.C.E. All but Horace and Ovid were dead by 10 B.C.E., most of them prematurely. Horace died in 8 B.C.E., but Ovid, who turned away from these short poems before he was thirty, had a long productive career ahead of him in other forms (e.g., the tragedy *Medea*, *The Art of Love*, and the *Metamorphoses*), before his exile brought him back to an impressive series of personal meditations on his banishment.

It is tempting to speculate as to why lyric poetry appeared, almost like a meteor, in Roman literature, dazzling the talented writers and their cultivated audiences, then passing on into the darkness after Ovid. Was it some last assertion of personal freedom? Was it the result of the chaotic political times? Was it the beginning of personal freedom in a social class that heretofore had not been privileged to speak out? Was it one of the last creative surges of the Hellenistic culture? Or had there been a steady, perceptible growth of personal awareness in Rome that at last secured its moment to flower in the heady instability of the First Triumvirate and the half-century that followed? I leave such speculations to the reader. There are numerous other tempting possibilities and all sorts of combinations, I am sure.

Lyric poetry assumes the value and interest of personal experience and highly personal responses to situations. The characteristic voice of such poetry is the first person, I myself. Our earliest Greek poetry gives expression to an individual viewpoint and often allows it to express itself; but it conditions it against the views of the community or the family. Thus, in Homeric epic, we study the clash of the self-assertive hero Achilles with the purposes and needs of the Greek army to which he has responsibilities; and we watch the slow maturation of the self-serving Odysseus to the status of a husband, father, and householder who at last deserves home and family. In Greek tragedy and comedy, we watch the actions and listen to the self-centered words of heroes who challenge, sometimes magnificently but fatally or ridiculously, the public responsibilities that belong to them. But it was not until the dawn of lyric verse in the seventh century B.C.E. that the personal voice was allowed to express itself without the limitations of a defined community voice that qualified or negated it. Then, we encounter

such strong personalities and personal viewpoints as those of Archilochus, Sappho, Alcaeus, Anacreon, Theognis, and others.

The Romans did not lack subjectivity or personal awareness, but they were far behind the Greeks in developing its literary expression. It was not until they came into contact with the Hellenistic world during the third century B.C.E. and observed and admired the achievements of Greek poets in the representation of personal feelings that Roman literature even came into existence. Before the first Latin writers began to borrow the forms and manner of Greek poets, there was no Roman poetry that we can discover. The principal media for self-expression and personal assertion set very definite constraints on what could be properly said. Public speeches, in the Roman Senate or before the voters or in court, inscriptions that commemorated the public achievements of military victors or benefactors, and the epitaphs that were carefully carved on funerary monuments to assess the life of the dead person—these were the conventional forms of personal presentation before Greek poetry liberated the fuller personality. During the late third and much of the second century, the early poets who now appeared in Italy and found patronage in Rome experimented with the major genres of epic and drama. In the late second century lived a unique man who developed the genre of satire, Gaius Lucilius. He made satire very much the medium of outspoken personal expression, and he certainly influenced the subsequent experiments of Catullus and his generation. But satire was not lyric poetry: it was a pronounced assertion of personal importance, not as an individual of rich and sensitive feeling, but as a moral judge of others. And so it was another fifty years before Catullus would claim pride of position in extant Roman lyric. (His contemporaries, many of whose names we know, survive today only as tantalizing words and broken lines.)

If we go back to the third century, when Roman poetry had its start adapting Greek techniques and genres, we realize that that poetry arose as part of a general public movement to celebrate the steady expansion of Roman power into the Greek world and to signal the appropriation of its art. Roman poets followed in the train of conquering commanders and wrote epic poems, in Greek hexameter, on their victories. Roman poets adapted Greek tragedies and comedies for the festivals in Rome that collected the Roman populace in the Roman Forum and later in stone theaters to enjoy Roman prosperity. No doubt there were some feelings of dissent at the militant policies of the Roman Senate, but the obvious profits which were accruing to Rome and Italy during the third and second centuries encouraged poets to share in the public celebration of Roman success. But that unanimity of patriotic optimism did not survive the second century. Factionalism developed at the political level, and the first omens of the civil war appeared when the Senate crushed and killed the Gracchi for daring to challenge traditional class advantages. Some historians, indeed, like to describe the next century, from the death of Tiberius Gracchus in 129 to the

battle between Antony and Octavian at Actium in 31 B.C.E., as a period of intermittent civil war.

As political unity degenerated, other aspects of culture and individualism, both bad and good, came to the fore. The first century B.C.E. is the age of individualism in Roman history. We easily think of the great dynasts, Sulla and Marius, Caesar and Pompey, Antony and Octavian, who tore Rome apart for their own personal advantage and dubiously creative purposes. We think of an ambitious lawyer like Cicero whose oratorical skills allowed him to become a significant figure even though he did not come from a ruling family. Many men of the business (equestrian) class were able to make fortunes and to affect policy quietly with their riches for their private advantage. Some men from famous families even started to turn their backs on politics, once the only way to go, and instead adopted the foreign ways popularized by Epicurus of living in comfortable and pleasurable "obscurity." And the poets, too, found themselves alienated or liberated from ties to the senatorial self-interest, from politics, and from confidence in the rightness of Roman policies—so alienated that they began to explore Hellenistic poetry in a new way and discovered a new common ground with its themes and its writers. The large public genres and their grand schemes lost reality for the poets, who instead found the private experiences of themselves and their apolitical friends of primary significance. What was important to the poets of Alexandria two centuries earlier—art, love, poetic craftsmanship, and personal feeling—dominated in the considerably different environment of first century Rome, the attention of the poets of the 60's and 50's, who were called, perhaps derisively by the conservatives, neoterics (Greek and hence contemptuous for "new poets"). These, then, are the subjects of Catullus, the earliest of our six poets, who must represent for us the revolutionary developments of lyric poetry in Rome in the era of Julius Caesar, especially during the tensions of 60-50 before Caesar crossed the Rubicon and started the worst stage of the civil war.

Lyric poetry has its own personal subjects, which openly reject or quietly ignore traditional public themes. It also has its own style and form. The grandiose events of epic and drama required a large expanse and spacious meters; the events that affect the lyric poet are often ordinary and everyday and, even though viewed with much personal feeling, do not want the heavy hand of the epic writer but the light touch of the sophisticated poet. The principal critical values of the new poets put emphasis on lightness, delicacy, smallness, self-awareness that could even be self-ironic as well as self-admiring, and sheer delight in wit, in small crafted images, in suggestion rather than total description. Catullus and his fellow poets experimented with many new Greek meters and started the process of Romanizing them, a process which in the next generation Horace furthered.

The topic which later Roman and modern readers most closely associate with Catullus is that of love, and this selection properly emphasizes

that aspect of his creativity. I shall, accordingly, give most of my attention to Catullan love lyric. However, this selection also duly recognizes that the personal range of Catullus was not limited to amatory situations and the pathos of largely unsuccessful, unrealistic passion. At least eight focus on the various interests of what we might call neoteric society, the seemingly idle but eagerly engaged activities of young men and women whose life was not political but interpersonal. (cf. poems 6, 9, 10, 13, 32, 50, 55, and 95.) Catullus likes to expose himself and his friends in "embarrassing situations," likes to play with the intricacies of friendship, is intent on showing how writing poetry and thinking of poetry form a necessary part of daily, normal activity. There are poems which are about poetry (cf. 50), about the self–conscious poet (cf. 49), or exhibit the experimentation of the neoteric interest (cf. 4, 34, 46). Other poems adopt a satiric vein, mocking men and women for trivial faults like halitosis or self-confidence, or even advertizing contempt for Caesar and his corrupt friends (cf. 29, 39, 41, 43, 57, 93). In other words, Catullus projects a personality that seems bright, friendly, irreverent, and anti-political. It is very easy to feel sympathetic to the neoterics and assimilate their modern interests to those of our day.

The trend of Catullus's successors will be to abandon most of these wider interests and subjects and to concentrate on the one topic of love, which Catullus had explored so impressively. (Horace alone is an exception: he will continue to write of broader social concerns, though deliberately changing the Catullan point of view.) What does Catullus contribute to love lyric that his successors were impelled to develop? Catullus situates himself (that is, his lyric speaker) in a love affair that has struck his audience as powerfully real and has evoked deep sympathy from generation after generation. He loves a beautiful and thoroughly entrancing woman whom he calls Lesbia. The name is Greek and invented, for the woman is Roman, almost surely an aristocrat, wealthy, educated, and talented, but very "modern" in her own way, much more interested in her own pleasure than in her responsibility to her class, her husband, or to her Catullan lover. She has usually been identified with a sensational beauty of the old family of Appius Claudius, who allowed her aristocratic name of Claudia to be given an everyday pronunciation of Clodia, whom Cicero attacks in one of his famous orations for her degenerate self-indulgences. It is, however, less important to identify Lesbia than to recognize the qualities which Catullus put into this woman in his poetry and how he made the two characters in the love relationship, the personal male "I" and the loved and hated female, interact. That was what preoccupied Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid.

From the start (cf. 5 and 7), Catullus focuses on rendering his own feelings exclusively. How Lesbia feels, how much she really loves him, is not a subject for consideration. Catullus declares at the start of 5 that love should be the essence of living, that he and Lesbia should ignore everything else, calculating only the countless number of their kisses. Counting kisses also is

the subject of 7, though now with a flourish in the direction of Alexandrian Callimachus (of Cyrene) and an open admission that the lover Catullus is "demented." The various flourishes in defiance of public opinion and practical numbers, even in the face of time, are bold and attractive, but they simultaneously invite our critical distance. Is the lover's dementia simply heroic, or is it dangerously unrealistic even about the beloved? Does she want to spend her life kissing this young man, talented and impetuous though he may be? (I suppose he was handsome, too, but that never comes up for discussion.) The very next poem, 8, reveals to us a lover who is totally disillusioned and trying to talk sense into himself, to escape from his dementia. He insists that he has been an extraordinarily devoted lover, yet she isn't interested any more. He is suffering intensely; she is apparently not at all, and so he turns from his self-pity and self-urging to address Lesbia, angrily, but also wistfully, as a "sorry bitch." It is not hard to read between the lines that, while Catullus fumes, his once-loved Lesbia is actively involved with new lovers.

Here then is the essential drama of this Catullan love affair, real or invented or at least touched up, that the poet so masterfully evokes in many variations in poem after poem: a love that is largely one-sided and fed by illusion and disillusion. The impetuosity of the male speaker/lover attributes to Lesbia the same passion that he feels, erroneously, and he never troubles to understand her—what she needs and demands. She could be passionate at times, and tell him things that he loves to hear at the time, but later holds against her (cf. 72, 92). But I think that she was the kind of woman that did not want to be tied down, especially to a poet of no social status, and I don't doubt that she told him so. However, everything we learn about Lesbia is focalized in the impetuous passion and disillusion of the poet, and so is flawed and emblematic of the lover's hopelessly unreal demands. Poem 85 in two perfect lines epitomizes that situation as excruciatingly painful hate and love over which the lover has no rational control, and we sympathize with that condition, but perceive it, too, as one for which the irrational lover is himself finally responsible. Poems 11 and 58 show that tormented love/hate far more dramatically.

I would like to emphasize Catullus less as a pathetic self-conscious lover than as a brilliant self-conscious artist who represented a disastrous love relationship in this utterly striking and convincing manner. Thus, although he wrote mostly brief lyrics, he also produced some haunting longer poems, and this collection includes two of them (cf. 63 and 68). In 68, Catullus is frankly subjective, and the speaker is the lyric lover, "I Catullus," once again engaged with passionate memories of mutual love with Lesbia in the past and with the desperate contrast now of her sovereign indifference to his love and anger. But now the poet introduces an added dimension, seeing the affair in the perspective of a famous Greek myth in which passionate Laodamia loses her beloved husband, the first Greek casualty in the landing

at Homeric Troy. Because of the elaboration of the lover's disappointment through this mythical distancing (note the sexual inversion) scholars often describe Catullus 68 as the "first Roman love elegy." We will see why later in the works of his successors. I wish here to emphasize the distancing of subjectivity and the aesthetic control that is implicit in 68. In 63, that distancing is even greater. The poet narrates the experience of a young Greek he calls Attis, who sails across to the coast of Asia Minor, plunges enthusiastically into the rites of Cybele, and, at the height of dementia, castrates himself. Only at the very end does the poet enter personally and pray to Cybele that no such madness ever possess him. As we now realize, Catullus here is presenting his favorite topic objectively through the myth of Attis. Attis is an image of the irrational, self-destructive lover devoting himself to a woman of impossible confidence, who therefore dominates him and their relationship. It does not take much effort to interpret the symbolism of castration.

Catullus seems to have died before hostilities broke out in 49 B.C.E. between Caesar and Pompey. Horace, Tibullus, and Propertius were each, in different ways, involved in and affected by the troubled period of the civil wars, the five years that led up to Caesar's victories over his opponents and then to his assassination in March, 44; and the thirteen years of chaos which were finally resolved by the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra at Actium in 31 and the amazing sole rule of Caesar's great-nephew Octavian, who was awarded the honorary name of Augustus by vote of the Roman Senate in 27. Horace, born in 65, was just starting his university education in Athens when Caesar was murdered. A patriotic radical at that age, he joined the forces of Brutus and followed him to defeat at the battle of Philippi. From defeat and financial loss, he rose to be the special kind of Augustan poet we meet here. Tibullus, a decade younger, had active military service under one of Octavian's most trusted generals, Valerius Messalla, who then became his patron. Propertius was about the same age as Tibullus, born in northern Italy, probably at Assisi. His region favored the family of Antony against Octavian, and during the war around nearby Perugia, he lost a close relative. He never entirely forgot this trauma and never exhibited much warmth for Augustus and his political order.

Chronologically, then, Horace comes next, but thematically and generically the closest successors to Catullus are the other four, of whom Tibullus and Propertius, born in the mid 50's, will be my concern now. They are masters of what we call Roman love elegy. That means that, unlike the more versatile Catullus, they write exclusively in elegiac meter, a system of alternating couplets well exemplified in the present translations. (It has become conventional in English to use rhyming couplets, but the Romans did not rhyme, their couplets working quite satisfactorily for them without this additional element.) And they give up his broader canvas to concentrate solely on his wonderfully-developed topic of disillusioning love.

We saw how Catullus represented his disillusioned lover: he was an impressionable young man, of modest status but striking poetic ability, who falls in love with a somewhat older woman, of aristocratic status, lovely, independent, imperious, and selfish. He gives everything to the relationship, he claims; she gives while it diverts her—which, unfortunately for Catullus, is not very long. He expected too much without understanding her limited purposes and moral limitations. In the next generation appeared a poet named Cornelius Gallus, a friend of Vergil and of Octavian, who seems to have been the intermediary between Catullus and the love elegists. Gallus's work has been lost, but his reputation is assured both by Vergil and the canon of elegy that becomes recognized: he is the true founder of love elegy because he wrote in the meter and he modified the patterns of Catullus in a way that others follow. The principal modification came from the transformation of the beloved woman from an aristocrat, who was superior to the male lover by right of status, to a courtesan, who was by definition inferior to the lover. Whereas Catullus seems to portray an adulterous liaison, Gallus represented the kind of permissible, if not altogether approved, relation between a young man and a prostitute that had been dramatized for at least three centuries in New Comedy and had been known in actual Greco-Roman life.

The romance of two freeborn Italians could, of course, result in legitimate marriage, and so the Catullan lover had some reason to hope for happiness from Lesbia (if he had not so badly misjudged her intentions). But the romance between a freeborn Italian and a prostitute could not eventuate in marriage, only in concubinage (which meant a permanent taint on children). So the male poet/lover could not indulge in the romantic illusions of the Catullan lover. Loving his woman, whom he called Lycoris, Gallus projected himself not into the heady world of aristocratic self-indulgence, but into the environment of courtesans, who make their living from "love," if you want. But no lover like Gallus could impetuously say to his courtesan, as Catullus said to Lesbia, "Let's live and love, forgetting everything else." The male lover might indeed feel strong love for his girlfriend, for she might be as beautiful and talented as Lesbia was (the model for Lycoris was apparently a very famous actress of the time), but she needed money from him to live, usually more than he alone could afford, so she had to have multiple lovers, rivals of the poet. All of this introduces, then, obvious anti-romantic elements—commercialization and plural lovers—which make enduring love impossible. Although the poet/lover may then wax passionate and think himself profoundly in love, the audience of Roman love elegy stands at an ironic distance from this lover, his beloved, and his so-called love, knowing that this love cannot, and indeed should not, last. (Horace uses an ironic stance in some of his *Odes* to mock conventional elegiac love.)

Gallus moved into politics and won and lost favor with Octavian, dying in disgrace a suicide, having long given up poetry for troubled power. Tibullus and Propertius took up his kind of love situation and developed it in different directions shortly after Actium ended the civil war and Octavian (hailed as Augustus in 27 B.C.E.) gained sole power. Tibullus had a short decade of productivity: he has left us sixteen poems of modest size but considerable originality. In the mixture of fact and fiction which emerges from his poetry, almost our sole source of information about the poet, we learn that he was closely associated as a friend with his patron, Valerius Messalla. He accompanied Messalla on one campaign in Aquitania (France); and he may have started out on another trip with him to the East to help restore order after the defeat of Antony, but had fallen sick before getting too far from Italy. Tibullus mentions Messalla and includes him in the amatory settings of I 1 and I 10; he makes him central to I 7 and II 1. In spite of that, contemporary politics is of almost no interest to this poet: his lover is so utterly unrealistic that he cannot stay focused on the present time, whether of politics or of his love. He is a dreamer, fondly wishing for the impossible.

The dream of the Tibullan lover takes two main directions:

1. He loudly proclaims aversion to war and the acquisition of wealth by warfare, and so peace is his passionate ideal. That is not irrelevant in this age, for Augustan propaganda increasingly stressed the achievement of peace (i.e., the definitive end of civil war) after Actium, and the blessings of peace for the Italian peninsula were basic themes of coins, reliefs, and public worship, to say nothing of other poets. But the larger Roman world did require constant military intervention, so that total peace remained a dream; the Roman army became a magnificent permanent element of the empire that Augustus founded. Tibullus seems to use the anti-war theme to define his poetic distance not from Augustus, but from Messalla, to imply his personal nonpolitical status.
2. Much more pronounced is the Tibullan love of the Italian country, not of the bustling excitement of Augustan Rome. The very first elegy longs for the country and talks with considerable ardor of a small family farm that has seen better days. Poem I 10 seems planned as a reminder and corrector of that wishful dream, and II 1 places us in a rustic religious ceremony. The ideal of this lover is to be with his girlfriend Delia in a rural setting, snugly cradled in her arms while the wind howls and the rains beat down on their roof. I daresay that most of us can respond to that picture, but what we should be doing is smiling at its unreality. Delia is no country girl. As a courtesan, her talents are exclusively urban, and it doesn't take much effort to realize that her life-style, indeed her very existence, depends on a steady income from various affluent

> lovers in Rome. The dreamy Tibullan lover is always in conflict with reality, with the fact that Delia cannot, and does not want to, leave Rome for the farm. You would never catch her, in her high heels and tight skirts, stumbling through the straw and manure of a barn or farmyard. Never. The art of Tibullus, then, invites us to indulge ourselves briefly with his dream, then return, amused, to our reality. None of the Tibullan dreams is ever realized in his verse.

Propertius is of tougher, more exciting substance. Though he, too, by definition is doomed to failure, and indeed repeatedly suffers disappointment, misery, and outrage, he faces his troubles squarely and struggles to overcome them. Not by coming to his senses, of course, but by straining every effort to combat difficulties or to find reason to boast of the troubles that this love costs him. At least, he claims, this misery has more value than the goals to which most young Romans commit themselves: he rejects the political career pursued by Tullus in I 6, and he mocks the epic poetry that Ponticus doggedly composes in I 7 and I 9. His Cynthia, whom he introduces in her powerful mastery in his first poem, has totally inverted the everyday relationship of superior Roman male and inferior courtesan: she has such power over him by her multiple attractions and personality that he responds to her (or feels he does) like a helpless slave to his owner. She is in Roman terms his *domina*, his legal mistress (entirely different from our contemptuous word for the so-called "kept woman"). He cannot gain his freedom from this amatory slavery. Aware of his public status, he resents his humiliation and simultaneously exults in it. It is the only way to live, the only "reality" worth experiencing. The excitement with which Propertius explores the various possibilities of this variant on the amatory situation devised by Gallus emerges in the seven poems from his first book of elegies that he published about 28 B.C.E. Cynthia and her wildly passionate, impetuously unrealistic lover are indeed a marvelous pair. The passionate engagement with Cynthia, rivals, and friends engages Propertius's audience more immediately than do Tibullus's dreams, and so our awareness of his self-destructive contradictions also acts more strongly and humorously.

Later stylists valued Tibullus for his smoothness: that goes well with his dreamy manner. Propertius, on the other hand, has a nervous, irregular style that enhances his wild diversity of feeling. Propertius also uses mythological allusion where Tibullus largely ignored the device. In the very first poem, for instance, the eight lines of personal introduction are immediately followed by a sudden eight-line narrative about Milanion and Atalanta. Propertius tells the myth as a success story of lover's devotion: Milanion finally won Atalanta. But then he bemoans the fact that in his own case such devotion produces no results: he is worse off than Milanion, or, he implies, his love is grander, more tragic than that of the myth. This is a highly artful, self-conscious use of myth, along the neoteric and Alexandrian

lines. In I 3, the poem starts with a triple mythical allusion which we are invited to explore. Among other things, it implies the drunkenness of the lover as he arrives and his erotic interest in the sleeping Cynthia. But self-irony also has its expression, as in the subsequent comparison of the unsteady male to hundred-eyed Argus. In I 19, Propertius retells the story of Laodamia and Protesilaus that Catullus had used so skillfully in poem 68: now, the lover asserts, passionately but without proof, that love will impel him to come back even from the dead in his total loyalty to Cynthia. And I 20* displays Propertius's finesse as a modern poet by narrating the complicated story of Hylas and the lustful nymphs, who robbed unwary Hercules of his boyfriend.

The final poems of Book I are I 21 and I 22: I 22 gives an important self-presentation of Propertius, not as a lover, but as a man whose boyhood was scarred by the effects of civil war on his native region of Perugia in northern Italy. It is assumed that the poet in fact came from the nearby town of Assisium (a small hill town of little importance before the life of St. Francis), but the whole region suffered badly when it sided with the enemies of Octavian. One of Propertius's close relatives died at the time. (That is the subject of I 21, in which the dying soldier acts as speaker.) When asked about his origins, then, he does not boast or tell some fabulous story about the Muses' blessing of his birth; he ignores everything except the fact that Umbria was his homeland, Umbria the victim of war. It is more than fifteen years since those terrible times, but Propertius still cannot hail Octavian or celebrate his victory in the civil war (even though it provides favorable conditions for his poetry and his affair with Cynthia). At this point, he has no prominent patron.

Propertius never does become much of an Augustan. By the time he publishes his second book of elegies about three years later, he can address Augustus's closest advisor, Maecenas. But the relationship is not intimate, and Maecenas appears in none of the other thirty-three poems of the large book. The connection does not resemble that of Tibullus with Messalla or of Horace, as we shall see, with Maecenas. The poet essentially uses the great man as a foil, representing political issues and epic themes, to set off the elegist's choice of Cynthia, a subject worth many *Iliads*, and an Alexandrian manner modeled on Callimachus. Propertius now is more overtly a love poet than a poet/lover. He is writing Cynthia, artfully constructing scenes of love; and, as he admits in II 10, he can foresee the day when "his girl will have been written," and he then can begin on a more "noble" epic theme. Meanwhile, however, he mainly concentrates on various situations that allow him to dramatize his reactions to Cynthia the courtesan (cf. II 4 and II 5). He has one rare night of erotic happiness in II 14, but even that trails off with an imaginary picture of the excluded poet dying on Cynthia's doorstep.

In another three years, Propertius had produced a third collection of twenty-five poems; it appeared just after Horace published his magnificent

three-book volume of *Odes*, and the elegist borrows some of Horace's proud claims in his opening elegies (cf. III 1 and III 2). It should be noted that the poet does not mention Cynthia by name in any of the four poems translated. He is more concerned to talk of himself as an Alexandrian poet or, as in III 4, to point up the clash between love and war, between himself and Augustus. Only in the last elegies does Cynthia appear, in contexts where, by calling a determined end to the relationship, Propertius is obviously concluding his preoccupation with love elegy of Gallus's kind. He has set the stage for the major transformation and masterful poetry of Book IV.

Five of the eleven poems from the new book are given here, good representatives of its achievement. We can see that the love theme has been changed, sometimes obliterated by pseudo-patriotism (cf. IV 6), refined by marriage (IV 11), or assigned to a myth about early Rome (IV 4). Even when in two poems (in fact, the only ones in the book) Cynthia does play a role, the situations do not parallel those of traditional love elegy. In IV 8 Cynthia has gone off with her latest lover to be an ironic spectator of a rite connected with virginal maidens, and Propertius tries to comfort himself with two local prostitutes—not very successfully. Even more ironically, imperious and self-righteous Cynthia storms in and utterly routs her rivals and cows Propertius. The ordering of that elegy makes an ironic comment on the previous one, where the poet imagines Cynthia coming back from the dead and accusing *him* of perfidy, then confidently describing her assignment in death to the Elysian Fields, where utterly faithful lovers have their final reward! The new art of Propertius has left the formulae of love elegy behind; no longer does the personal "I" who speaks have to be identified with the male poet, because he creates female speakers who become dominant. The feelings of IV 4, IV 7, IV 8, and IV 11 are all focalized in the different female characters. Although the narrator argues that Tarpeia in IV 4 is a sinner and traitor, she makes a powerful case for herself; and significantly, Propertius has attenuated her traditional guilt by making it spring from love, not simple greed. I encourage the reader to compare IV 7 and IV 11 and try to decide whether we are to favor the persuasive liar Cynthia or the piously arrogant matron Cornelia in their self-presentations after death. Keeping in mind Propertius's childhood experiences near Perugia, his continuous alienation from the Augustan program, and his earlier advocacy of dramatically passionate love, I hope you will choose Cynthia, as I do.

I move next to the six poems of Sulpicia and to the three that are listed under Tibullus as the "Garland of Sulpicia." Both groups of elegies come from the manuscripts of Tibullus, part of a third book, but are considered to have been the work of other writers in the circle of Messalla (Tibullus's noble patron). Sulpicia identifies herself as the speaker of her poems in III 16; and she connects herself with Messalla in III 14. One likely possibility is that she is Messalla's niece, daughter of his sister and Servius Sulpicius; and that after her father's death she has become Messalla's ward.

What is especially interesting about these six short poems, which come only to forty lines in all, is that they not only dramatize a woman's personality, but are presumably the authentic voice of a female lover, the first such Roman voice to survive. As an aristocratic woman, still unmarried, Sulpicia lacked the freedom of a pleasure-loving, irresponsible woman like Catullus's Lesbia, and she could not operate in public like the courtesans of Tibullus and Propertius. Yet the situation that is assumed in her poems is that she passionately loves a young man named Cerinthus and that she risks her good name to communicate with him by these elegies, as though by letter.

If we follow the order of the elegies as given in the manuscripts, the love affair goes downhill: in III 13 Sulpicia defiantly proclaims her sexual success, regardless of reputation. In III 14 and III 15, she encounters difficulties over where her birthday will be celebrated. Like Delia, she has no wish to go to the country, and she ends by staying in Rome, where Cerinthus is. In III 16, Cerinthus is proving disloyal, and Sulpicia proudly compares herself, an aristocratic catch, with the whore, her rival. In III 17, she wonders, when sick, whether health without Cerinthus is of any value. And in III 18, she lets us glimpse a scene in which she was burning with passion, in response to his, but she ran away (out of modesty or perversity?) and now she bitterly regrets it. We don't have to adopt the chronology suggested by the manuscript order, and older Victorian critics liked to place the first poem last, to make a happy ending. Nor do we have to assume that these poems offer a little chronicle. Readers today find most interesting the open passion of this woman, her defiance of the typical Roman constraints on free women, and the persistence with which she woos her silent Cerinthus. Now, it seems, the delusions of love are experienced by a young woman. The "Garland of Sulpicia" is a little group of six poems which may have been inspired by the Sulpicia collection, and so they deal with the same person on several of the same occasions. The speaker is a friendly third individual who favors both the girl and Cerinthus. We hear about the birthday in III 12, about the sickness in III 10; and III 8 admiringly describes Sulpicia on the occasion of March 1, when Roman women received special presents.

The last elegiac love poet of this fertile era was Ovid. He came to Rome as an adolescent from his home town of Sulmo just as Tibullus and Propertius published their first collections, and he quickly set out to apply himself to their fascinating genre. Immensely gifted and highly productive, Ovid had a large quantity of poems that he could publish when he was not much older than twenty. That would have been not long after 23–22 B.C.E., the years when Horace and Propertius appeared with new poems. A decade or so later, Ovid revised the collection, cutting it from five to the three books that we possess today. It is a fair guess that some of the present poems were added at the time and that the poet then worked out the arrangement for this edition. What we have now is the representation of a typical male Lothario who confidently launches himself into the "game of love" with some success

at first—until the game starts to go against him. Then he flounders for a while and ends up, I think, discredited. If so, that should mean that Ovid has seen through (and makes us see through) the glib and witty facade of the male lover of elegy to suggest that what the men have been talking about, with the exception of Catullus, has been a pretty shoddy, self-serving kind of "love." The silence of the beloved amid these verbal effusions of the male poets has indeed been meaningful: the men want little but sexual pleasure, not the mutuality of friendship and real love. The very outrageousness and insouciance of the Ovidian lover, then, can earn smiling admiration for a while, but his shallow opportunism ultimately condemns him, as, I think, the perceptive Ovid planned.

To start his first book, the poet claims that he has been prevented from writing epic by the forcible intervention of Cupid, who laughed at his grand efforts, then stole a foot from his second hexameter. The result was that the second line turned into a pentameter and a standard elegiac couplet appeared. Trapped in a meter without the appropriate material, the poet complained and, lo and behold, Cupid struck him with an arrow and so subjected him to love (the conventional topic). Does that sound like the usual lover, impelled to write of his beloved by passion? Not at all, and so we encounter here a witty poet making a game of love. In I 4, the Ovidian lover tries to control the game in a triangular situation, where he is currently the loser. His girl is going with another man, and all three are to attend the same dinner party. He attempts to arrange ways of communicating during the party, ways of reducing the success of his rival, but he can't win despite his cleverness. In the end, he merely requests that the girl lie to him tomorrow about what she did when she went home with the rival. He prefers deception to the bitter truth. What emerges, then, is that this kind of love thrives and depends on dishonesty and deception—which everyone practices.

The long monologue of the Ovidian lover drowns out and ignores the words, feelings, and personality of the woman. In I 5, we get the narration of a rare moment of erotic bliss, told exclusively from the male viewpoint. The girl, named Corinna, arrives at his room during the noon siesta. He sees her only as a sex object (that is the implication of the allusions) and proceeds to rip off her clothes. He says that she put up faint resistance and really wanted to lose, but that is a self-serving excuse with which we are all too familiar today. Once he has her naked, he briefly admires her (and enjoys recollecting the scene now), then moves wordlessly, lovelessly to the sexual act. He assumes that he describes love; to many in this audience, it will sound like date-rape at best. Or consider the self-serving rhetoric of I 10 and II 13. Our "fond lover" smoothly protests that the girl expects a tangible fee for her favors. Why shouldn't she? Since the man doesn't really love at all, but simply wants sexual gratification, he has destroyed the romantic relationship and its codes of behavior and replaced it