

TIBULLUS I 1, 48: AN EMENDATION

by

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ABSTRACT: The paper re-examines the text of Tibullus I 1, 48, *securum somnos igne [imbre] iuuante sequi*: besides briefly reviewing the choice between the manuscript variants *igne* and *imbre* (in favour of the former), it argues that *iuuante* cannot be right either and may be an error for *fouente*.

In the first elegy of book I, Tibullus presents his ideal of idyllic poverty; rather than facing the elements in pursuit of wealth (49 f.), he is content to experience bad weather from the safety of his humble home (45–48):

quam iuuat immites uentos audire cubantem
et dominam tenero continuisse sinu
aut, gelidas hibernus aquas cum fuderit Auster,
securum somnos igne iuuante sequi.

The passage hosts a well-known textual problem: at 48, the codex Ambrosianus (A) with the rest of the complete manuscripts read *igne*, but the Florilegium Gallicum offers *imbre* (the confusion between the two nouns can be paralleled at Lucr. I 784 f., Catull. 62, 7, Germ. *Arat.* fr. 4, 63, 70, and I believe *Dirae* 39, though it should be noted that the correct reading is in all these cases restored by conjecture)¹. While there are parallels for the notion that the sound of running water can be conducive to sleep, I agree with MURGATROYD and MALTBY (among others) in preferring *igne*². As conveniently summed up by PORTUESE, there are four arguments in its favour, which cumulatively appear compelling:

- (1) *igne* is the *lectio difficilior*, as contextual pressure can explain *igne* → *imbre* but not the other way round;
- (2) the perfect *fuderit* at 47 sounds awkward if the rain is still falling at 48;
- (3) the echo of 6 *dum meus assiduo luceat igne focus* is attractive;

¹ Cf. R.E.H. WESTENDORP BOERMA, *De Tibullo I 1, 48*, *Mnemosyne* IV (1951), pp. 308–313, at 313.

² P. MURGATROYD, *Tibullus I*, Pietermaritzburg 1980, p. 300; R. MALTBY, *Tibullus*, Cambridge 2002, p. 139.