

A. 1972

N. 2 - 3

# BERGOMVM

BOLLETTINO DELLA CIVICA BIBLIOTECA

## SOMMARIO

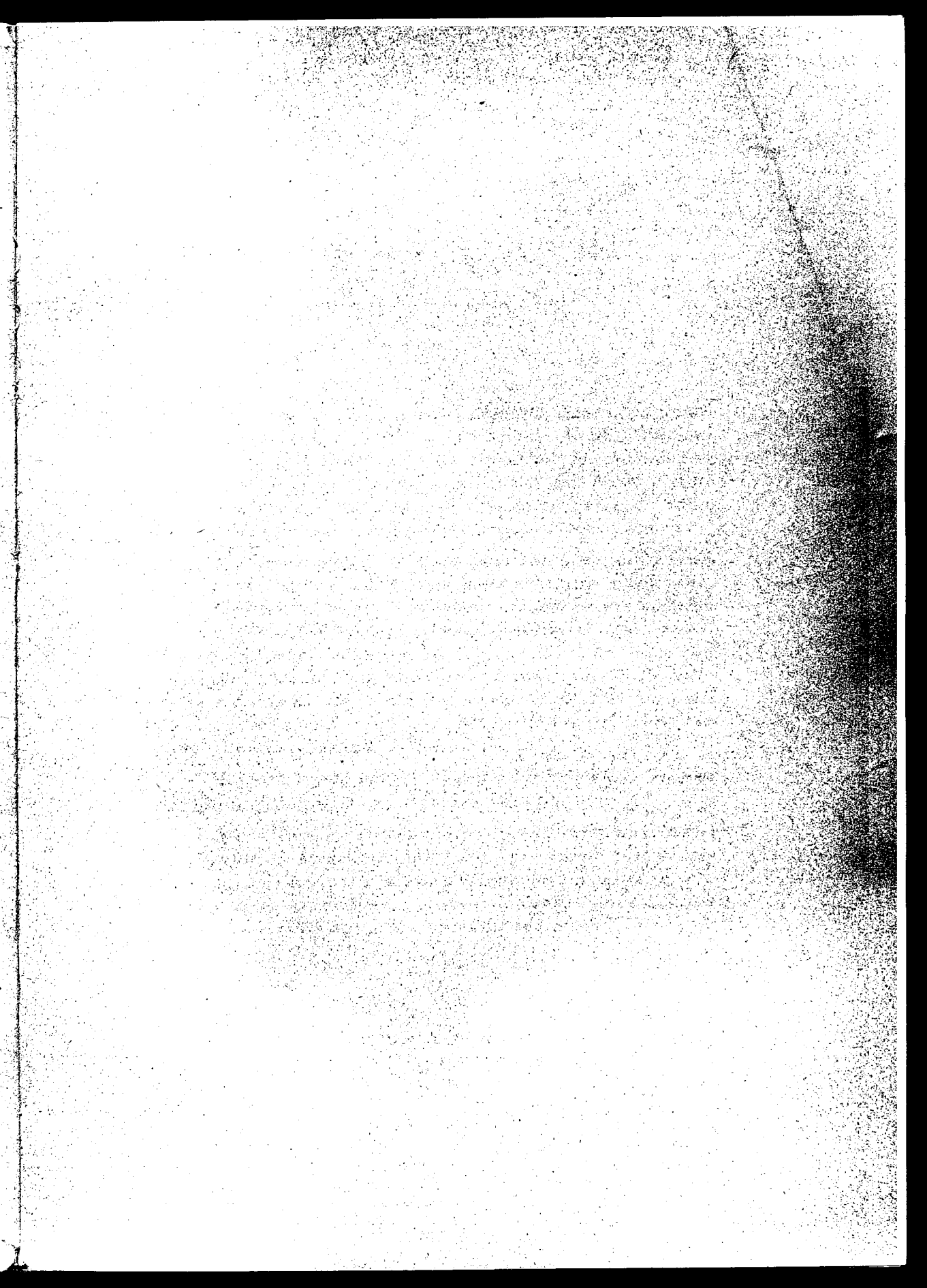
	Pagine
<b>SAGGI E STUDI</b>	
G. DA POZZO: <i>Il primo canto della Liberata</i> . . . . .	5-67
DOUGLAS RADCLIFF-UMSTEAD: <i>Structures of conflict in Tasso's pastoral of love</i> . . . . .	69-83
G. BALDASSARRI: <i>Storia del Gianluca</i> . . . . .	85-114
<b>BIBLIOGRAFIA</b>	
A. TORTORETO: <i>Rassegna bibliografica dei recenti Studi Tassiani (1970)</i> . . . . .	115-131
<b>MISCELLANEA</b>	
A. GAZZANIGA: <i>Un'ottava della «Gerusalemme» intonata in due canti popolari pubblicati da Giuseppe Baretta</i> . . . . .	133-145
L. ANGELINI: <i>I Tasso di Bergamo assuntori delle Poste europee</i> . . . . .	147-156
T. FRANZI: <i>Torquato Tasso a Bergamo</i> . . . . .	157-161
A. DI BENEDETTO: <i>Tasso, Pulci e due luoghi della Conquistata</i> . . . . .	163-168
<b>RECENSIONI E SEGNALAZIONI</b> (a cura di COSMA SIANI)	169-176
<b>NOTIZIARIO</b> . . . . .	177-180
<i>Bibliografia Tassiana di Luigi Locatelli Studi sul Tasso</i> (a cura di T. FRIGENI) . . . . .	1525-1652

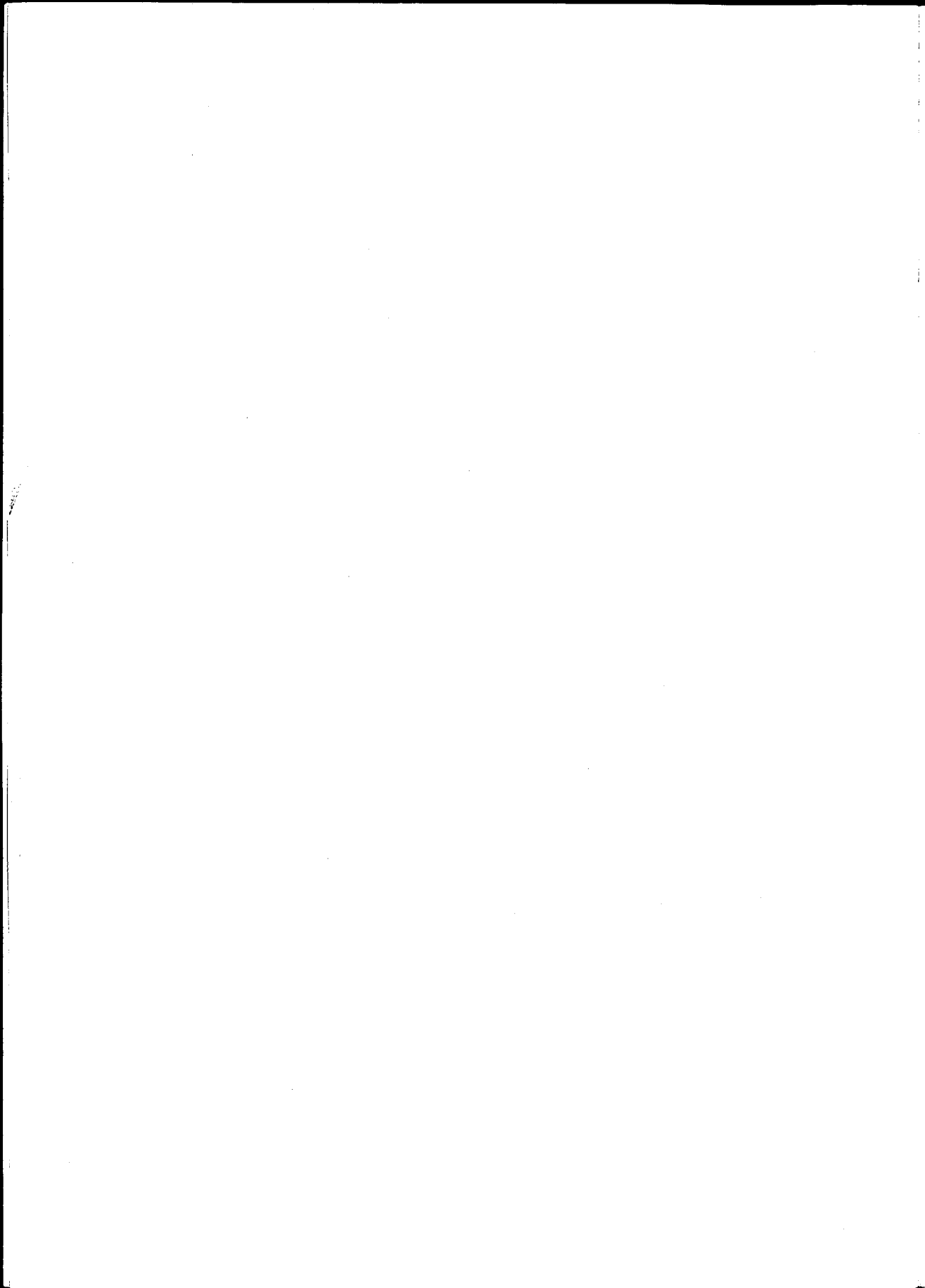
## PREZZI DI ABBONAMENTO A BERGOMVM

Associazione all'annata LXV . . . . .	Italia L. 2000 — Estero L. 3000
Prezzo di ogni fascicolo semplice . . . . .	Italia L. 750 — Estero L. 1000
Prezzo di ogni fascicolo arretrato . . . . .	Italia L. 1500 — Estero L. 2000

Per fare o rinnovare l'abbonamento si prega di far uso del C. C. Postale 17-1507 intestato: AMMINISTRAZIONE «BERGOMVM» — Bollettino della Civica Biblioteca

Piazza Vecchia, 15 — Bergamo





# STUDI TASSIANI

Anno XXII - 1972

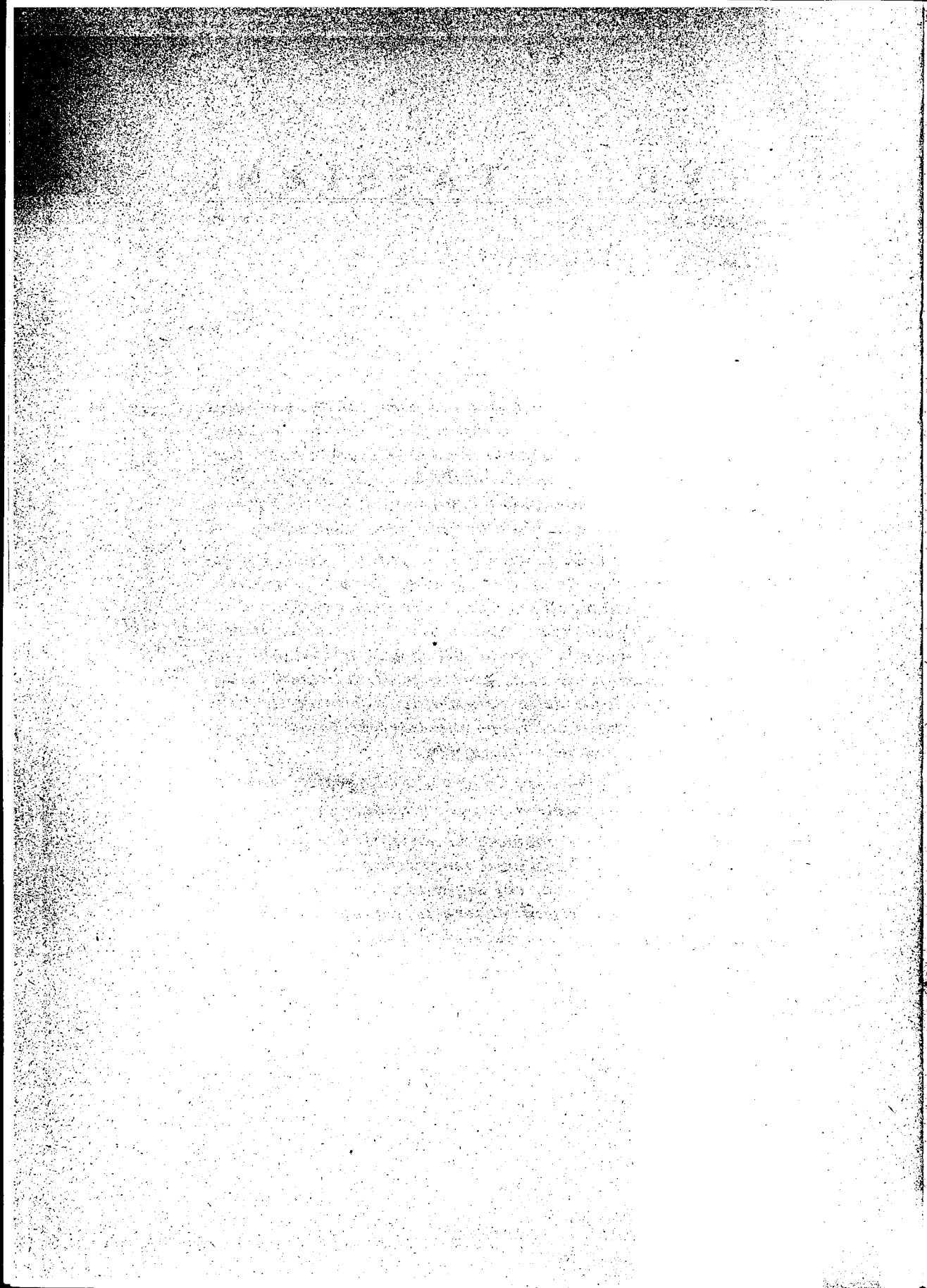
N. 22

*Al consueto appuntamento annuale, con la continuità dei contributi dei suoi collaboratori, Studi Tassiani dimostrano la sorprendente inesauribilità del mondo poetico, di umanità e di cultura dell'opera del Tasso e delle risonanze che essa ha avuto e continua ad avere di fronte all'indagine critica e nell'anima popolare medesima.*

*Anche nel nuovo fascicolo sono studi di analisi penetrativa dei testi e della loro strutturazione espressiva, studi di approfondimenti semantici, sintattici e comparativi, che portano all'evidenza i processi più intimi della genesi e degli sviluppi dello spirito del poeta inteso alla sua creazione. Accanto ad essi, altri aspetti, parimenti costitutivi e fondamentali della personalità e della cultura del Tasso, quelli connessi con i suoi interessi teoretici nel campo delle questioni poetiche e filosofiche.*

*Sempre pregevoli gli itinerari bibliografici, volti al passato e puntualizzanti il fervore attuale.*

*Studi Tassiani rinnovano ai sostenitori e agli amici del Centro di Studi Tassiani il ringraziamento per le sovvenzioni e l'interesse con cui seguono la sua attività, che costituiscono le condizioni stesse e la motivazione del suo perdurare e delle sue non esauribili iniziative.*



## STRUCTURES OF CONFLICT IN TASSO'S PASTORAL OF LOVE

Conflict lies at the core the pastoral tradition. Although pastoralism is an attempt to find meaning, order and purpose in Nature through a system of correspondences between the outer world of physical Nature and the inner world of the human spirit, it has never truly resolved the tormenting sense of alienation which haunts Man in his self-awareness as a creature who has fallen from a state of Paradise. While man seems doomed to suffer the frustrations of unrequited love and the disappointments of active involvement in the affairs of society, Nature stands apart in its placid indifference to human anguish. Although the pastoral myth would appear to offer a solution by promising mankind a faraway retreat from the world's strife, the very dream of withdrawal to an Arcadian idyl constitutes a confession of Man's failure to cope with a universe of conflicting realities. The varieties of pastoralism clearly indicate the impossibility of ever truly resolving through the myth of an untroubled shepherds' realm the fundamental discord between the demands of Nature and Culture, the yearning for a sphere of privacy and the necessity of assuming the burdensome roles of public life. For some pastoralists only the reaffirmation of a life of intense sensations can redeem human existence from the stultifying artificiality of social mores; other pastoralists have advocated the rejection of brute Nature in order to cultivate the beauty and purity of Man's spirit. Instead of maintaining a harmonious tension — the *concordia discors* — pastoralism has represented the structures of conflict in its endeavor to reconcile the underlying contradictions between natural impulses and the requirements of social conformity (1).

Few poets have responded to the pathetic and ill-fated contradictions of the pastoral myth with the sensitivity of Torquato

---

(1) Harold E. Toliver, *Pastoral Forms and Attitudes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 5, makes this observation on pastoral conflict, in speaking of *Robinson Crusoe*: «...we do not have the dialectical, tensive structure characteristic of all worthwhile pastoral.»

Tasso. The recurrent patterns of Tasso's poetic works are those of literary motives in polar opposition: pagan hedonism versus Christian abnegation, heroic enthusiasm versus defeatist disillusionment, resurgent light in contrast to mournful gloom, the need for solitude and the desire to join in the field of battle, loving dreams in collision with implacable realities. Although the structure of antithetical relationships is to be expected in Tasso's epic poem *Gerusalemme Liberata* with its contrasting themes of engagement in warfare and escape to a peaceful retreat, his pastoral play *l'Aminta* also displays a similar formal construction upon fundamental conflicts. This drama represents a mythic enactment of youthful love and the ordeal which must be suffered to realize the fulfillment of a dream for human happiness. Tasso's play should be viewed as one moment in a total Western mythology of love that includes star-crossed couples like Tristan and Iseult as well as solitary figures like Don Juan, and the proper methodology for interpreting this Italian pastoral drama should be a mythanalysis which studies the progressive stages of love in its four major characters: Aminta, Silvia, Dafne and Tirsi. The play can be seen as a conflict between the adolescent conception of love which motivates the hero Aminta in his desire for Silvia and the sophisticated accommodation with erotic longings that characterizes the two older confidants Dafne and Tirsi. Through the contrasting attitudes of these four archetypal characters one is able to trace in the play a steady inanition of the love myth from youthful idealism to mature cynicism and opportunism (2).

Tasso's pastoralism consists of a glorification of the affections of the heart, a gentle illusion of naive young shepherds in a world where Nature joins as a sympathetic participant in the joys and sorrows of love. Not only do wild animals cry aloud their surrender to a Springtime of sweet devotion but even inanimate Nature seems to proclaim the supremacy of love as plants sigh for each other:

---

(2) As the model for my methodology I have followed Denis de Rougemont, *Love Declared: Essays on the Myths of Love*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Pantheon, 1963) and its mythanalysis of the dialectic between *love* and the *person*. For a discussion of archetypal figures and pastoral symbolism see Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957; rpt. New York: Atheneum, 1970), pp. 99-100.



... amano ancora  
 gli alberi. Veder puoi con quanto affetto  
 e con quanti iterati abbracciamenti  
 la vite s'avvicchia al suo marito;  
 l'abete ama l'abete, il pino il pino,  
 l'orno per l'orno e per la salce il salce  
 e l'un per l'altro faggio arde e sospira.

Act I, vv. 241-247) (3).

To refuse to open one's heart to tender emotions in such a world of fervent rapture would appear unnatural. This realm of apparent bliss remains available to everyone, and part of Tasso's originality in constructing his play is that he avoided what was to become the commonplace pastoral opposition between rustic simplicity and courtliness when he situated his drama not in remote Arcadia or a pseudo-Theocritan Sicily but in a forested «*luogo di passo*» between the courtly environment of Ferrara and the Po river (4). The play functions as a masque where Estense courtiers can don shepherds' costumes in order to explore the mysteries of love. Instead of establishing a contrast between the inequities of structured social authority at the court and the superiority of love's authority in the green world, *l'Aminta* serves to reinforce the reigning order of society and to celebrate the values of a court that provides models of unsurpassed excellence. Criticism of the court as a sphere of counterfeit splendor, intrigue, malicious gossip, and human degradation is left to the false prophet Mopso, whose pettiness blinds him to the spiritual luminosity of aristocratic institutions. Tirsi as poet moves in both the pastoral and the courtier realms, affirming that by emulating the elegance and perfection of

---

(3) The edition cited is the one prepared by Bortolo Tommaso Sozzi (Turin: U.T.E.T., 1964); all subsequent quotations will come from that edition.

(4) Earl Wasserman, «Windsor Forest,» *The Subtler Language*, rpt. in *Pastoral and Romance*, ed. Eleanor Terry Lincoln (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 152, points out how the forest in Pope's *Windsor Forest* is both a place and a principle; the forest in *l'Aminta* signifies the principle of freedom from guilt and moral constriction. Also cf. Richard Cody, *The Landscape of the Mind* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 49, «What does landscape mean in the *Aminta*? ... Life in the woods means the acting out of certain inner states which for the Renaissance find their classic symbol in shepherdliness. These, however, are conceivable only as the mental states of courtly or urbane persons.»

his princely patron he has acquired a new eloquence to sing the praises of his native sylvan land. A delicate balance reigns between the freedom of the country and the formal restrictions of the court (5).

If tension does not arise on the plane of social inhibitions, why should there be resistance to the natural impulse toward love? Tasso's answer, as shown in *Dafne's* dialogue with Tirsi in the second scene of Act II as well as in the famous chorus to Act I, is that with the passing of Time the world loses the spontaneity of loving rapport which once made possible a primitive Age of Gold. This temporal factor with its emphasis upon the inevitability of decline should be considered one of the major keys to understanding the play, both on a universal level as the centuries pass and on a personal level as the downward movement across an individual's life: « Il mondo invecchia, / e invecchiando intristisce. (Act II, vv. 891-892) » As Time moves forward, individual conscience begins to succumb to a sense of modesty which eventually represses the instinctive need for affection that knew no curb in the prelapsarian paradise: « *S'ei piace, ei lice.* » Tasso exalts the Golden Age not for its peacefulness or freedom from labor and material want but for its submission to the natural law of sensual gratification without the gnawing remorse of conscience. The Tasseque Eden is not truly a realm of simple habits and needs — *Dafne* even ridicules the primitive age for its contentment with plain fare like acorns and water — but appears as a continual festival of erotic pleasure in all its naked splendor. That inhibiting *Onore* which simplicistically reduces *Amore* to a « base » instinct functions not so much as the restrictive voice of others who impose social morality but as the restraining voice of the Other which is

---

(5) Giovanni Getto, *Interpretazione del Tasso* (Naples: E.S.I., 1967), p. 128, refutes an earlier assertion by G. Petronio on the existence of an opposition between court and nature. B. T. Sozzi, *Studi sul Tasso* (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1954), p. 285, makes this observation on *l'Aminta*: « ...è opera che assomma in sé la cultura e la perizia estrema della civiltà rinascimentale e riflette l'ambiente elegante e artificioso della corte e il gusto raffinato di una società privilegiata che guarda con distaccata e divertita compiacenza alla naturalità primitiva, ingenua o rozza, della compagnia... »

man's conscience and sentiment of propriety (6). The sole hope which the poet envisions for overcoming all the elegiac melancholy for the lost loving nonchalance of the past is in the affections of the young who can at least for a brief instant renew the Age of Gold (7).

Passion among the young manifests itself as the condition of Need-love, an intense longing for the tenderness and concern of another (8). Aminta lives isolated in a state of unrelieved preoccupation for the beloved one who aggravates his passion by refusing to reciprocate the desperately needed affection. Plunged in the total irrationality of his anguished erotic imagination, this youth views himself as a martyr of love and yearns for the consummation of desire through the supreme sacrifice of his life:

Ahi, lasso,  
 ch'Amor satollo è del mio pianto omai,  
 e solo ha sete del mio sangue, e tosto  
 voglio ch'egli e quest'empia il sangue mio  
 bevan con gli occhi.

(Act I, vv. 352-356)

This association of love and sacrifice was to become typical to Tasso's writings. Aminta experiences that *amour-passion* which Stendhal in *De l'Amour* was to define as the one authentic form of love. Through love-passion one learns to appreciate the natural beauties of the pastoral universe with its flowery meadows and serene groves since the world reflects the charms of the beloved.

---

(6) This distinction between the pressure of other persons upon the individual and the imperative of the Other in our unconscious is made by the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. See Jacques Lacan, «The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious,» trans. Anthony Wilden, *Yale French Studies*, 36-37 (1966), 112-147.

(7) Renato Poggioli, «The Oaten Flute,» *Harvard Library Bulletin*, II (1957), p. 159, remarks how: «...the task of the pastoral imagination is to overcome the conflict between passion and remorse, to reconcile innocence and happiness, to exalt the pleasure principle at the expense of the reality principle.»

(8) For the terms Need-love, Need-pleasure and Gift-love see C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1960), passim, with the exception that I do not use Gift-love to refer to a human love which resembles divine *caritas* but to designate the dedication of one person to another's well-being.

Aminta's love-passion, in the Stendhalian sense, anticipates the self-devastating emotion of Werther, who on failing to model the world's realities upon his desires yields to the evils of despair and death. The chief difference between the situations of Werther and Aminta is that Tasso's hero dwells in the protective dream irreality of a pastoral realm where Nature safeguards him while Goethe's young protagonist is stifled by the mediocrity of a petty aristocratic and bureaucratic environment. Like all the heroes of love-passion Aminta seeks his ideal in the Inaccessible One, concentrating the ardor of his being on the elusive Silvia.

Having crystallized his beloved almost into a deity, the timid mortal Aminta hesitates to assert the masculine aggressiveness that characterizes the satyr who actually attempts to assault Silvia. This young shepherd feels alienated from both the world of action and from his own past when he used to accompany Silvia in games and hunting expeditions. On declaring his love to the nymph and suffering an immediate rejection, Aminta lost the naiveté of his childhood. Unwilling to substitute bold force and calculation for his former ingenuousness, the shepherd refuses to heed the advice of Tirsi and Dafne for him to seize the love which Silvia refuses to grant. Aminta plaintively caresses his soul-devouring passion without seeking to master the disorder of his emotions and direct them toward the conquest of his love. He seems to desire to be swept over the precipice of unrequited affections. The youth passively opens his heart to love's double-edged power which brings piercing pain and sweetness at the same time, like the trembling bee in Ortega y Gasset's *Estudios sobre El Amor* that bears both honey and sting. It is this extreme passivity that often causes critics to judge Aminta as an unheroic figure who does not deserve to win the love for which he lacks the strength of will to fight<sup>(9)</sup>. For such critics this youth exhibits an infantile and almost

---

(9) Walter W. Greg, *Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama* (1906; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1959), p. 189, dismisses Aminta in this manner: «...when we have described him as effeminate, sickly, and over-refined, we have said all that is necessary in view of the position he occupies with regard to Silvia.» Eugenio Donadoni, *Torquato Tasso, saggio critico* (1928; rpt. Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1963), p. 118, calls Aminta a «patito» and a «piagnone dell'amore». Benedetto Croce, *Poeti e scrittori del pieno e del tardo Rinascimento* (Bari: Laterza, 1945), I, 336, stresses the importance of love-passion to Tasso's play: «Nell'*Aminta* domina l'amore-passione, non quello filosoficamente sublimato e risolubile nell'idea di Dio, ma non più l'eroticismo puramente

neurotic need to be absolutely sure of Silvia's love for him before he can act decisively. But in this pathetic shepherd Tasso sought to portray a delicate love that turns upon itself with a suicidal fury, an emotion so tender that it could not resort to a satyr's bestial force, a sentiment of gentle devotion which can only beg for the beloved's sympathetic comprehension.

In contrast to the Pastoral of Love which inspires Aminta, it is a Pastoral of the Self which Silvia pursues. In the play's first scene the nymph resolutely affirms an ideal of moral freedom as Diana's huntress, wishing to live as an independent creature in full communion with that sylvan Nature from which she takes her name — names as always being the consequents of things:

Altri segua i dilette de l'amore,  
 se pur v'è ne l'amor alcun diletto:  
 ma questa vita giova, e 'l mio trastullo  
 è la cura de l'arco e de gli strali;  
 seguir le fere fugaci, e le forti  
 atterrar combattendo; e, se non mancano  
 saette a la faretra, o fere al bosco,  
 non tem'io che a me manchino diporti.

Act I, vv. 100-107)

Her moral code is the *onore* or *onestate* that shields her from the temptation of erotic license by rigidly enforcing chastity. That attitude of modesty might best be referred to by the French term *pudeur* as Rousseau uses it in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* to designate a physical and spiritual reserve which is achieved by the renunciation of desire, except for the fact that what is missing in Silvia is the tension of genuine sacrifice since even at the play's start this

---

sensuale; l'amore che come passione vuole il consenso d'anima della persona amata, e come passione umana, non soprumana né animale, rispettando l'essere che ama e ammira, protegge la propria purezza e nobiltà. E pur nondimeno è passione pronta allo sbaraglio e alla morte se non può conseguire il suo fine... » Getto, p. 137, n. 2, disagrees with Croce and affirms that love in the play is a sweet and new illusion of the soul. I maintain that Aminta's love with its quest for the inaccessible and acceptance of obstacles is a form of the Stendhalian *amour-passion*, especially in the Wertherian variation.

haughty adolescent is already beginning to respond to desire <sup>(10)</sup>. She thus figures as the work's sole dramatic character as she eventually becomes converted from the self-sufficiency of a young Amazon to the Need-love of adult womanhood, coming to know « quanto 'l foco d'amor possa in un petto. » This psychological process of self-revelation wherein Silvia discovers an unsuspected well-spring of love in her heart develops by slow degrees until she at last recognizes the limitations of her being and commits herself to the life of another. Love unknown is easily scorned, and the nymph's pitiless resistance to Aminta's supplications for her affection can be explained by the girl's fear of surrendering the autonomy which knowledge of love will demand of her. In this play Silvia is both the other who serves as the mediatrix of Aminta's desires and the object of those very desires. Her interior conflict will be to move from a self-centered pastoralism to a bucolic of erotic bliss.

Tasso discloses all the unconscious and conscious movements of Silvia's subterranean psychic drama through the eyes of a witness: Dafne, who attests to the feelings that her young companion tries to conceal. In speaking to her friend of the turbulent affair between the shepherd Elpino and the disdainful Licori, Dafne observes from Silvia's questions how the girl is no longer indifferent to the secrets of love and its special nonverbal language of communicating with the eyes: « Come risponder sol potè con gli occhi? » It is this same process of nonverbal communication that also suggests to Dafne that Silvia is not « semplicetta come pare » after she surprises the girl admiring her image in a lake and comparing her features with the colors of roses and privets. The nymph's embarrassed silence and her blushing at once indicate that the period of innocent unawareness has passed forever. Dafne perceives that the scene by the lake transcends the vain self-contentment of a Narcissus, for it is through the unspoken language of spontaneous expressions and gestures that Silvia reveals her awakening to love and its

---

(10) Aldo Scaglione, *Nature and Love in the Late Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), pp. 137-139, studies the *pudeur* of Rousseau's characters; the French term is even more restrictive than its Italian equivalent *pudore*. Cf. Greg, p. 189, « To Tasso is due that assumption of extravagant and conventional *pudor* which forms one of the most abiding features of the pastoral drama. »

enchantments<sup>(11)</sup>. Not only does Silvia admit to delight in her own physical beauty but she also demonstrates that she can understand the effects of her loveliness on other persons. In a similar manner the girl's taciturnity and flight from Aminta after he rescues her from the satyr should be attributed to modesty rather than ingratitude since the shepherd's lascivious pleasure in beholding her nakedness disturbs to the quick Silvia's chaste reserve. Only the news that Aminta has killed himself after a false report of Silvia's death causes the breakdown of the barriers of her modesty and the illusion of her self-sufficiency:

Sin qui vissi a me stessa,  
 a la mia feritate: or, quel ch'avanza,  
 viver voglio ad Aminta:  
 e, se non posso a lui,  
 viverò al freddo suo  
 cadavero infelice.

(Act IV, vv. 1809-1814)

At this moment of Silvia's conversion the poet has led his drama to a situation of apparent tragic irony where the heroine opens her heart to love only after death has deprived her of her devoted admirer. But in the chorus to Act III Tasso expressly proclaimed that pastoral love did not require a tragic solution:

---

(11) For an introduction to the language of gesture and signs see Abne M. Eisenberg and Ralph R. Smith, Jr., *Nonverbal Communication* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), passim; communication from the eyes is known as oculesic perception. In the final chorus to Act II the poet stresses Love's marvelous power to communicate best in a confused, clumsy style:

e spesso (oh strana e nova  
 eloquenza d'Amore!)  
 spesso in un dir confuso  
 e 'n parole interrotte  
 meglio si esprime il core  
 e più par che si mova.

(vv. 1166-1171).

Non bisogna la morte,  
 ch'a stringer nobil core  
 prima basta la fede, e poi l'amore.  
 Né quella che si cerca  
 è sì difficil fama  
 seguendo chi ben ama,  
 ch'amore è mercede, e con amar si merca.  
 E cercando l'amor si trova spesso  
 gloria immortal apresso.

(Act III, vv. 1470-1478)

Love is understood here in the terms of an economic transaction, and in the commerce of love the product of exchange must be love itself. The price of his own life that Aminta might pay for Silvia's love is too dear according to the poet, and in the comments of the chorus in Act IV Tasso rejects the false exchange of a life for love as a « prezzo inutile e infame ». Silvia's rebirth into the pastoral of love comes about as she breathes life into the dazed Aminta with a restoring kiss and revives him with tears of pity and remorse. Weeping represents the final sign of surrender as Silvia abandons her earlier pose of independence, exchanging her solitary existence for a life of dedication to Aminta's welfare. Virtue at last ceases to be an all-inhibiting sense of chastity and purity but appears as the Gift-love which frees the human heart from absorption in selfhood and elevates it to a redeeming spirit of generous concern for another.

If the amorous intrigue of Tasso's play remained on the level of the contest between Silvia and Aminta, then the triumph of their love would suffice to prove that *l'Aminta* with its victorious spirit of refined sensuality seemingly unclouded by any conflict with reality reflected a serene moment in the poet's troubled life. But there are other facets to this drama which show the love of the youthful couple to be only a transitory state. Of all the characters Dafne is the one who displays the greatest sensitivity to the power of Time to take away life's loveliness and joy. Her appeals for Silvia to seize opportunities while she may go beyond the traditional theme of *carpe diem* to acquire an intense personal poignancy as the older confidante recalls the forever lost « ben passato ». Dafne sees in the girl a mirror of her own youthful arrogance, and the distressful tone of her appeals « Cangia, cangia consiglio / pazzarella che sei » expresses an urgent awareness that



Silvia might repeat her friend's mistakes and fail to heed the lesson of Time. Having to face the « presente noi », Dafne reveals a depth of pathos in the second scene of Act II — perhaps the most significant scene in the play for its discussions on the conflicts of love — when she suggests to Tirsi that he become her lover, only to receive a half-bantering refusal. The sadness of her situation arises from Dafne's unwillingness to grow resigned to the loss that comes with Time's passing, and the wisdom that this woman demonstrates in her dialogues with Silvia is only a mask for the regret which torments her soul. Love for Dafne has become, rather than a passion, the most vital of principles, and the dread of no longer being able to participate in life's one genuine ideal explains the sense of urgency in her plea to Tirsi to renew the illusory promise of their youth for an existence of innocent sweetness and delight. This woman stands at the twilight of life but seeks to re-experience the exuberance of a dawn of unrestricted erotic pleasure. No longer possessing the instinctual spontaneity of her youth, she has developed a philosophy of love which substitutes rational design for ardent impulses. The fact that Dafne recognizes in Silvia so many of her own characteristics may presage for the nymph the future melancholy which her confidante suffers with the arrival of old age and the necessity to renounce all desire<sup>(12)</sup>.

Unlike Dafne, Tirsi deliberately disclaims nostalgia for past happiness since he hopes to attain a tranquility of spirit. His memories of past erotic frenzy hold none of the sweet sadness which continues to inspire Dafne; instead he views his former devotion to Amor as a period of madness when he permitted himself to lose a courtier's most precious possession — his dignity:

---

(12) Sozzi, p. 292, notes that both Tirsi and Dafne are conscious of the sense of Time. C. P. Brand, *Torquato Tasso* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 47, points out how with age Dafne no longer is the shy nymph of her youth and that such shyness is a dangerous waste of time and valuable opportunities for love. As is to be expected from their vantage point of Victorian morality both Greg and Donadoni consider Dafne to be no more than a procuress figure. Greg, p. 191, states, « ...Dafne's suggestion, that modesty is comely but a veil for lust, is nothing more than the cynical expression of the attitude adopted throughout the play. Love is no ideal and idealizing emotion, but a mere gratification of the senses — a *luxuria* scarcely distinguishable from *gula*... » Donadoni, p. 119, declares that, « ...mezzana in funzione, che è Dafne. »

forsennato egli errò per le foreste,  
 sì ch'insieme movea pietate e riso  
 ne le vezzose ninfe e ne' pastori?  
 Né già cose scrivea degne di riso,  
 se ben cose faceva degne di riso.

Act I, vv. 313-317)

Tirsi no longer wishes to invite ridicule by displaying the fury of a rejected lover. He too is following a Pastoral of the Self, which unlike Silvia's initial enthusiastic pursuit of the hunt in the forest's freedom constitutes a pastoral of solitude and melancholy since the main objective of Tirsi's withdrawal is to avoid further suffering:

Periglioso è cercar quel che trovato  
 trastulla sì, ma più tormenta assai  
 non ritrovato. Allor vedrassi amante  
 Tirsi mai più, ch'Amor nel seggio suo  
 non avrà più né pianti né sospiri.  
 A bastanza ho già pianto e sospirato.

(Act II, vv. 959-964)

His is the attitude of a defeatist who seeks out a pastoral retreat away from the warfare of love where victory comes only at the risk of intense anguish. Whereas Dafne considers love to be the one refuge from life's disappointments, Tirsi reduces it to the quest for pleasure without any deep interpersonal commitment. He has put every illusion of fond attachment behind him in preference for the gratification of a moment:

I diletta di Venere non lascia  
 l'uom che schiva l'amor, ma coglie e gusta  
 le dolcezze d'amor senza l'amaro.

Act II, vv. 947-949)

The fundamental distinction here is one between the Venus of sexuality and the Eros of sweet affection and bitter regret <sup>(13)</sup>. This

(13) For a discussion on the interplay between Eros and Venus see Lewis, pp. 132-141. Ortega y Gasset, *On Love, Aspects of a Single Theme*, trans. Toby Talbot (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), p. 188, also strongly distinguishes between sensual love and romantic love, which he sees as the prototype and summit of all eroticisms.

acceptance of carnal possession as a goal replaces Need-love with a fleeting Need-pleasure. The mask which Tirsi assumes is that of a retired courtier who searches only for the delights of an instant without becoming involved in a permanent and serious relationship. As part of his pretense to sophisticated indifference this courtier-poet flippantly defines women as « cosa mobil per natura / più che fraschetta al vento e più che cima / di pieghevole spica. » This pose of misogyny reflects much more a wounded male ego than an authentic lack of interest in women. In contrast to Aminta's voluntary surrender to a condition of impassioned bewilderment, Tirsi wishes to retain complete mastery over his emotions. This desire for absolute self-control derives less from cold and cynical egotism than from a sense of insecurity because Tirsi recognizes from his past errors just how vulnerable he remains to the pains of love. His « cold pastoral » results from extreme sensitivity rather than shrewdly calculating opportunism. Forever recalling how the scorn of his beloved and the mocking laughter of others once disturbed his mental equilibrium, Tirsi feels he must suppress his poetic receptivity to love. For a man who is less than thirty years old, he has yielded to a prematurely senescent bitterness. Under the veneer of courtier gallantry Tirsi conceals not so much the hedonism of a Don Juan as the longed-for « apatheia » of a Stoic <sup>(14)</sup>.

In its exterior structure Tasso's *l'Aminta* is dominated by the movement from the Pastoral of melancholy Solitude to the Pastoral of triumphant Love. Yet the true thrust of this drama rests not in the struggle between Aminta and Silvia but in the ideological contest between the youths' understanding of love as life's most intense sentiment and the sage recognition that in Time love loses its capacity to sustain illusions. Aminta and Silvia are separated merely by an accident of time. Three years before the play starts the shepherd first confessed to the strange passion which was begin-

---

(14) Poggioli, p. 161, speaks of « hedonism disappointed » which dwells in the frustrated heart of the pastoral poet who has been defeated in love. Donadoni, p. 110, calls Tirsi a « saggio gaudente » without recognizing the courtier-poet's sadness and sense of emptiness. Franco Pool, *Desiderio e Realtà nella Poesia del Tasso* (Padua: Liviana, 1960), p. 65, after observing that *l'Aminta* is not the product of a happy moment of Tasso's career goes on to analyze Tirsi's character, « L'assenza di dolore in Tirsi non ha il carattere di una vittoria, di una serena realtà conquistata: è una rinuncia che deriva da una vasta esperienza dolorosa. »

ning to dispossess him; by the play's close Silvia reaches the same level of amorous consciousness as Aminta. But the degree of mutual comprehension which the young couple eventually achieves cannot extend from them to their confidants, who repeatedly fail to communicate the lessons of disenchantment and compromise which life has taught them. While for the naive Aminta love requires an enthusiastic dedication even unto death, for Tirsi love must be enjoyed with a minimum of effort. Dafne perhaps remains in the most distressing situation in the play: even though she continues to share with the young a similar faith in the might of Love to give life its only enduring meaning, the anguished awareness of unavoidable loss which has come to her with advancing age is not accompanied with the desire for inner peace that motivates Tirsi's retreat from love's strife. In its ultimate structure a sense of solitary confinement prevails in Tasso's drama, creating the same atmosphere of isolation and oppressive incommunicativeness which prefigures the destiny of the heroic characters in the *Gerusalemme Liberata* (15).

Tasso's *l'Aminta* is a poem of love in a pastoral setting. Through the pastoral myth the poet examines various conceptions of love and the conflicts which arise from love's disappointments. In the play's final chorus the poet actually seems to identify with Tirsi's self-protective avoidance of love-passion:

... se più caro viene  
e più si gusta dopo 'l male il bene,  
io non ti chieggo, Amore,  
questa beatitudine maggiore ...

(Act V, vv. 1983- 1986)

---

(15) In the *Gerusalemme Liberata* Tasso especially concentrates on love's essential unhappiness, which results when reality destroys illusion and a consequent sense of fatigue oppresses the lovers. *L'Aminta* can be viewed as the myth of love's awakening while Tasso's tragedy *Torrismondo* might be interpreted as its total decline. Cf. Getto, p. 207, «...se *l'Aminta* rappresenta il fiorire della dolce illusione d'amore, custodito in una cornice di primaverile natura, il *Torrismondo* raffigura il crollare di cotesta illusione, riflesso su uno sfondo notturno tra nuvole e lampi...» The solitary position of Tasso's epic characters is analyzed by Getto, pp. 346-347. In contrast to the pastoral of companionship which the final love of Aminta and Silvia accomplishes, in *Gerusalemme Liberata* the escape of Erminia to a pastoral retreat represents the Pastoral of Solitary Peace.

Because of the pastoral atmosphere tragic realities like the hero's suicide and the heroine's death are nullified in the apparent victory of youthful amorous idealism. But a vague « non so che d'amaro » emerges as the drama's final impression as rapacious Time threatens to usher in an eternal night of sorrow and loneliness.

DOUGLAS RADCLIFF-UMSTEAD

*French and Italian Department, AIR 645*

*University of Pittsburgh*

*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213*