A Cockney Catullus: the reception of Catullus in the Romantic era

Thesis

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A COCKNEY CATULLUS:

THE RECEPTION OF CATULLUS IN THE ROMANTIC ERA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the reception of Catullus in Britain between 1780 and 1830. After a brief summary of attitudes towards classical culture in Romantic Britain, the first chapter begins by examining the key translations of Catullus in the English language, by John Nott and George Lamb. Chapter one ends with a discussion of the translations of Catullus 64 by Charles Abraham Elton and Frank Sayers. The second chapter addresses the Catullan receptions of Wordsworth, Byron and Thomas Moore. The third is focused on the “uses” of Catullus’ text by ‘the King of the Cockneys,’ Leigh Hunt. Chapter four returns to Romantic engagements with Catullus 64, identifying a symbolic allegory in the Cockney treatment of the Ariadne myth. The thesis ends with an exploration of the textual relationship between Catullus and John Keats.
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INTRODUCTION

Catullus’ poems about his lover’s dead sparrow (poems 2 and 3) and kiss poems (5 and 7) addressed to its mistress, Lesbia, had been in circulation in England, and English translation, since the arrival of his text in Britain some time in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century.¹ These poems, and a handful more, were well known among readers of English poetry because they were frequently presented in anthologies and other literary publications. The Roman poet Catullus was therefore by no means unknown in Britain before the late eighteenth century, when the first full translation of his work was available to the English reader, but the “Catullus” that was known represented only a fraction of the fuller perception gained from the appreciation of his whole body of work, which amounts to 113 poems of diverse form and widely diverse content.

It was not his obscenity alone that kept him from a prominent place next to Horace and Martial in the schoolroom, but also, as Julia Gaisser points out, his poetry’s lack of moral utility in the educational system.² It is important to remember that one of the primary aims of classical education in schools, particularly before the eighteenth century and, to a decreasing extent, throughout the nineteenth century, was to transform young boys into upstanding Christian gentlemen. To help achieve this goal Catullus’ often sexually explicit and morally challenging book was an unlikely choice of text for study. His “chaster poems”, on the other hand, were increasingly well represented in British classrooms throughout the eighteenth century, as is evidenced by the testimony of Coleridge in his Biographia Literaria, and, for example, the reviewer of The London Magazine (1821), who admitted that the “Dedication to Cornelius Nepos [poem 1],” was “an old cane acquaintance of ours at School.”³

² ibid. n.b. Catullan Latin was not considered “easy” to read, see Martin (1861) xxxi.
³ Coleridge (1834) 11; London Magazine (1821) 88. Also, Catullus 2 and 3 were included in Catullus, Juvenalis, Persius (1839) a set text of Harrow School.
It has long been suggested that it was in the Romantic era that Catullus' poetry came to the fore of the English classical canon. For example Wiseman writes:

For the mainstream of Catullan influence, what made the difference was a combination of Romanticism and the more scientifically philological scholarship of the nineteenth century. Both factors are crucial: the Romantic movement alone certainly revived enthusiasm for Catullus...  

These crucial factors have surprisingly, however, received little more than peripheral treatment. What exactly it was about the Romantic era in Britain that made it particularly receptive to Catullus is not an easy question to answer, and one aim of this thesis is to explore this question.

There is as yet no complete survey of those poets who engage with Catullus between the years 1780 and 1830. One of my aims in this dissertation is to identify the most important Catullan receptions of the period and to challenge some assumptions about them. I hope therefore that this study will begin to fill a space in scholarship left by the fact that very few scholars of Romanticism have done any work on Catullus, and very few Catullan scholars have done any work on his "influence" in the Romantic era. From 1923 to 1939 there are four major works on Catullus in English. These wide-ranging descriptive studies have been valuable to my project not least because they stake out an enormously broad field of study, which has helped me explore potential direct intermediaries between Catullus and the Romantic era poets and investigate the extent and manner of the diffusion of the Catullan influence, but they also provide me with a former reception of Catullan reception, offering a base against which I have been able to gauge my own findings.

Gaisser's *Catullus in English* (2001) shows a return in interest to the broader 20s and 30s-style study, through a reawakened interest in Classical influence and heritage.

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4 See e.g. Harrington (1923) 195-6.
5 Wiseman (1985) 213.
6 Studies of Catullan reception in the Romantic period, when poets appear to have been more interested in original composition than translation and imitation of and allusion to the classics, are thin on the ground. Recent scholarship has been more interested in later periods.
7 Harrington (1923), Duckett (1925), Emperor (1928), and McPeek (1939).
perhaps in tune with the rise in literary scholarship of reception studies. According to the aim and scale of this book Gaisser does not provide any comment or analysis of the poetry she presents other than by way of short prefatory comments about the imitating or translating authors. My study makes some significant additions to the Romantic section of Gaisser’s collection and offers extended critical analysis of the most important literary engagements so as to situate them in their wider literary and cultural historical context and give a fuller picture of Catullus in the period than could be gleaned from the texts alone.

Jeffrey Cox writes the most on the relationship between Catullus and the Cockney school. This amounts to fewer than ten pages in a chapter called “Cockney Classicism: History with footnotes”, in his influential book Poetry and Politics in the Cockney School (1998). I intend to both build on and challenge a number of Cox’s suggestions of a connection between Catullus and the Cockney school. In a paper entitled ‘Sleepless Poets: Catullus and Keats,’ A. J. Woodman provides a brief and intriguing comparative study focussing on a correspondence between Catullus 51 and a part of Keats’ Sleep and Poetry. He notes a number of comparisons, which he eventually attributes to coincidence. The final sentence of his paper, however, reads: “But if in the light of further literary correspondences an attempt were made to establish a relationship between Keats and Catullus, this parallel would surely take on a new significance.” This became the critical springboard of my early research.

In this thesis I focus on individual literary engagements, including instances of translation and allusion, between receiving poets and their Catullan texts. By way of close readings of the English and Latin poems and situating them within their wider social and cultural contexts I shall track the changes in perceptions of Catullus between 1780 and

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8 I follow Cox (1998) in his adoption of the term “Cockney School,” which I use to refer to those writers and artists who were associated with the politics and poetics of the poet and journalist Leigh Hunt.
1830. These years do not mark the beginning and end of the Romantic era, which cannot be dated with such precision, but are simply markers by which I limit the scope my study.

In chapter one I examine the translations of Catullus produced in the period, including the more or less complete translations of John Nott (1795) and George Lamb (1821), and two partial translations of poem 64 by Frank Sayers (1803) and Charles Abraham Elton (1814). Chapter two investigates the Catullan translations and imitations of William Wordsworth, Thomas Moore and Lord Byron, which show that by the end of the eighteenth century Catullus was, in a highly selected form, accessible in many British classrooms, and therefore able to play a part in the early poetic development of Romantic poets. By engaging with Catullus' poetry personally, in great depth and at slightly later stages in their poetic careers, each one expanded the former perception of Catullus as a poet of the classroom.

Chapter three focuses on Leigh Hunt's engagement with Catullus, which started still later in life and continued throughout his most prolific period of poetic activity. Here we find Catullus' text used in interesting ways by Hunt in his quest for political and social reform. Chapter four analyses the various creative engagements with Catullus' 64th poem by Robert Southey in *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), Thomas Love Peacock in *Rhododaphne* (1818), Keats in *Endymion* (1818), and Hunt in *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1819).

My involvement with this topic began as an undergraduate with a dissertation that examined various possible connections between the poetry of Catullus and that of John Keats. It is fitting then that I should return to the seed of my thesis and draw this dissertation to a close with a chapter on the reception of Catullus in the poetry of John Keats. I do not discuss the work of Walter Savage Landor, which has received attention in the work of both Wiseman (1985) and Fitzgerald (2000), not only because it has been
recently addressed but also because the majority of the literary results of his engagement with Catullus was made after my end date of 1830.11

Literary Engagement

My approach in each chapter is similar in that I have at all times striven to get as close as possible to the mechanisms of communication between the source text, new text, the writer and the reader. My analysis of literary engagement is influenced most strongly by the work of Hinds (1998), Martindale (1993, 2005), Fish (1980) and Conte (1986), whose studies have provided me with the critical and theoretical tools needed to investigate the complex arrangements between the writer, texts and readers involved in the collaborative process of allusive communication. I tend to use the term engagement to refer to any kind of detectable connection between texts. The term covers translations, allusions and references. The difference between an ‘allusion’ and a ‘reference’ in this thesis is that an allusion actively engages with the meaning of its source, which I refer to as ‘disturbing the surface’ of the source text, whereas a reference engages only superficially with a text, for example, by naming a text or recalling a character’s name, without operating at a textual level by importing into the new text meaning from its source.12

When searching for Catullus in Romantic poetry I have at times felt I could dimly perceive his influence, but there was no way I could prove the connection and therefore, more importantly, could not be sure that the connection was there for another reader to make. Influence does not only operate textually, but can manifest itself in, for example, the attitude, or what was once referred to as the ‘spirit’ of the poet. This can at some lower level of certainty be detected via the textual medium of poetry by, for example, a parallel succession of thought or imagery, or a similar use of language even if the exact words used

11 In Landor (1795) are English versions of Catullus 2,3,5,7 and 61.
12 n.b. In this thesis ‘target’ refers to the ‘new’ text, and ‘source’ the ‘original’ text.
are completely different. The varieties of influence are countless, but I have limited myself
to those that I can prove beyond reasonable doubt by building up a critical mass of
correspondences in order to avoid my reader’s repeated need to question my sanity.

In the early twentieth-century “influence studies,” such as those of McPeek (1939),
Harrington (1923) and Emperor (1928), it was permitted to write about detecting the
‘spirit’ or ‘temper’ of a poet. Those fuzzy engagements that shall forever remain uncertain
and highly reader-specific I call ‘associations.’ The concept of association takes over
where cases of allusion and reference are no longer compelling, but some sensation
remains that a vaguely perceivable ‘inertia’ from a Catullan reception is operating on the
poet. Another kind of association occurs when the reader is certain that the ‘source’ did not
act on the writer (for example, because it was created after the new or ‘target’ text), but it
still feeds into his or her reception of the text all the same.

Although an alluding poet writing an original poem is creating something quite
different from a translation, I have found it useful to treat allusion and translation in
broadly similar ways. The main differences are that the allusive engagement is often less
sustained and more prone to being snatched up and abandoned at any point; the connection
is very often ‘looser’ and more vague than in a translation, and tends not to be exclusive of
other sources, both literary and non-literary. Despite such differences it is often possible to
treat allusions and translations in a similar fashion. For example, with an allusion, firstly, it
is important to establish a plausible connection between texts; secondly, to see what
elements of the source and the new text might have stimulated the poet’s memory of his or
her reception of the source; thirdly, to see how the source may have affected the generation
of meaning in the new text for the reader; fourthly, to see what additions, suppressions and
omissions have been made; and, fifthly, and most importantly, to explore the reasons why
such changes have arisen.
A real problem with analysing the levels of engagement between a text and its source is that it is difficult to be positive in one’s own judgment because we are often dealing with the convergence of memories of texts, and memories are by their nature error-ridden and highly personal. This makes the process of detection problematic. I must first detect the presence of a source and, second, judge what kind and what level of effect it was likely to have had on a contemporary reader, which process is necessarily dependent, in the case of Keats, for example, on my playing the role of a classically educated Regency reader, which I am not.

Strictly Allusion

Reading poetry that engages with sources may be likened to a dance. You may spot a friend across the room and ask him or her to dance. They may dance with you in a variety of different ways even though the music is the same, or they may decline your offer. On closer inspection you may even realise that your dancing partner is not who you thought they were. As a reader there are few rules about with whom or how you dance, but as a critic it is important not to dance badly or with strangers. As I hope to show in chapter 5, Keats’ longer poetry especially may be likened to a particularly busy masked ball, in which you might have many partners at once and, despite your recognizing them, you cannot be sure how or from where you know them. This effect appears to have been an aesthetic ambition of Keats, which can be traced back as far as Sleep and Poetry (1817), where he prays that “some clean air” from the sanctuary of Poesy will bring to him:

... the fair
Visions of all places: a bowery nook
Will be an elysium – an eternal book
Whence I may copy many a lovely saying
...
And many a verse from so strange influence
That we must ever wonder how, and whence
It came. (Sleep and Poetry 62-71).
Keats' desire to deny the reader allusive satisfaction demonstrates the importance of literary engagement in the appreciation of his poetry. By simultaneously encouraging extra-textual reading and frustrating his readers' attempts to pin down his sources, Keats prolongs indefinitely the hermeneutic process, keeping the poetry fresh, and casting the reader in a similar role as the 'Bold lover' on his Grecian urn, who never can kiss, 'though winning near the goal' (*Grecian Urn* 17-18).

There are few historically successful poets who could contend with Keats in the complexity of his mode of allusion. I offer his example here only to highlight the potential problems of detection, and to show how flexible the analytical model must be that explores the more obscure depths of allusive art. Relevant context for each poet, poem and translation discussed is provided in the chapters where appropriate. Before embarking on the individual chapters, however, I shall foreshadow a number of important themes and areas of interest regarding contemporary attitudes towards classicism and the Cockney approach that will help provide a context for my research.
Romantic Quests for the Antique

A shift of interest towards Ancient Greece and away from Roman culture in the second half of the eighteenth century is well documented in recent scholarship.\textsuperscript{13} The shift indicates a growing preference for the mysterious over the familiar and the original over the derivative. It is less well known that such preferences also triggered interest in the lesser-known Roman authors and in lyric classical poetry rather than the more familiar genres of epic and satire. A little counterintuitively therefore the emergence of Catullus into wider popular consciousness at the turn of the nineteenth century may partly be seen as a result of an “Hellenizing” movement. The desire was not exclusively for the Hellenic, but for material with the equivalent cultural authority of the classics and without the associations of the increasingly commonplace, narrowly focused and ecclesiastically mediated classical education.\textsuperscript{14} Catullus’ Hellenizing poetry was in many ways ideal for a society that was obsessed with Greece, but still very much linguistically inclined towards Rome.\textsuperscript{15}

The Golden Key

In an essay called ‘The Wrong Sides of Scholarship and No Scholarship,’ Leigh Hunt took on the subject, still contentious now, of whether or not a knowledge of Greek and Latin is necessary to appreciate a classical text. First he acknowledges the false polarity of the argument and then calmly inveighs against those who held the view that “a man can have no idea of the ancient writers, without a deep intimacy with their language.”

\textsuperscript{14} On 18\textsuperscript{th}/19\textsuperscript{th} century classical education see, e.g., Stray (1998), Hall in Hardwick & Stray ed. (2008) 386-97, and Bowen in Clarke ed. (1989) 161-186. Such a formulation of the drive behind Romantic “Hellenism” allows room for the simultaneously growing interest in Oriental and Celtic literatures.
\textsuperscript{15} Latin linguistic competence was far more developed than Greek. See Hardwick (2000) 25. On Rome and Romantic Hellenism see Sachs (2010).
He has an over-estimation of his advantages, simply because they are his. He is as proud of his learning as another pompous man might be of his park and his mansion. Such is the case, when he really has anything like an intimacy with his authors; but in both instances he would fain make out his possession to be unapproachable, by all who have not had the same golden key. The common run of the class consists of men who really know nothing of their authors but the words, and who unconsciously feel that, on that account, they must make the best of their knowledge, and pretend it is a wonderful matter.¹⁶

Hunt’s “golden key” unlocks the door to a classical education and the upper echelons of society. He tells his readers that the majority of those who attend the public schools leave with a knowledge only of the classical languages, and calls into question their understanding of the texts they have the ability to read. He further satirizes the educated fool, whilst making important points about the current classical education:

He looks upon his learning as forming an additional barrier between him and the uneducated. He quotes Greek in parliament, and takes it for an argument... In short, you may describe him as a man who knows that there is another man living on the upper side of his town, of the name of Ancient; and a very wonderful gentleman he takes Ancient to be, because he is rich, and has a large library, and has given him access to it; but what sort of a man Ancient really is, what is the solidity of his understanding, the subtlety of his imagination, or the contents of the books in his library, except that they are printed in certain kinds of type,—of all that our learned friend knows nothing, and therefore he concludes, that nobody else can know.¹⁷

Hunt does not focus his indignation on the schools for delivering the wrong kind of education, but instead directs it at the attitudes held by a clueless, moneyed élite. When we look past the class bias we can see Hunt giving voice to the perception that the educational system of public schools equipped boys to understand only the letter and not the “spirit” of the classics. Hunt judges this perception still to be relevant in 1840, when it was reprinted in *The Seer*, which fact contradicts the idea that the age of revolution had a particularly significant effect on the classical education.¹⁸ It is remarkable that in spite of the dramatic

¹⁶ Hunt (1840) 32. n.b. essay originally in *Leigh Hunt's London Journal* (April 16th 1834). Hunt’s view closely matches that of his friend Peacock, who wrote: “The instructors of youth aim only at communicating the knowledge of the words and rules of the language, without exciting the taste of the student to penetrate into the beauties of the authors who have written it.” Peacock (1929) 8.429, quoted in Wallace (1997) 27.
¹⁷ Hunt (1840) 33.
¹⁸ n.b. Hunt’s position on classical education does not change significantly from 1818 to 1840.
social restructuring throughout the age of revolution, access to the upper echelons of society, including the classical curriculum, remained largely unchanged.  

The Lake School Response to 18th Century Classicism

In the early nineteenth century the adoption of classicizing expression, with its familiar tropes, had in many circles lost favour, especially among élite readerships. Overt classicism's gradual descent into cliche was actively addressed at "grass-roots" level at Christ's Hospital. The Rev. James Bowyer, who taught at the school from 1778 to 1799, is reported to have bullied the classical commonplaces from his pupils' English verse composition. Coleridge relates in his Biographia Literaria a presumably typical reaction of Bowyer to a classically infused composition:

Lute, harp, and lyre, Muse, Muses, and inspirations, Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hippocrene were all abominations to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming 'Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh aye! The cloister-pump, I suppose!'

Bowyer's pupils were forced to conform to their teacher's aesthetic by the very real threat of corporal punishment, not just verbal humiliation. Coleridge was grateful to Bowyer for his thorough and unconventional preparation for literary life.

Bowyer's preference for the Republican Roman poets Lucretius, Terence and Catullus over not only the post-classical poets, but the Augustan poets too, including Horace, Ovid and Vergil, indicates an apparently forward-looking literary taste for passion over polish, and poetry that makes relatively little use of mythology, and (especially in the case of the latter two) with an intimacy of expression and commitment to the portrayal of human emotions in extremes. Coleridge's early exposure to such strong "anti-classicizing" criticism gave him a different start to literary life from that of the majority of his peers,

19 For Romantic education systems see Iain Britain's chapter 'Education' in McCalman (1999) 96.  
20 Coleridge (1852) 1.145-6.  
21 ibid. 145.
who, he complained, “formed their taste, and their notions of poetry, from the writings of Pope and his followers; or to speak more generally, in that school of French poetry, condensed and invigorated by English understanding, which had predominated from the last century.”

Coleridge sets himself apart from that strand of poetic tradition and style of composition, which he characterizes as the translation of “prose thoughts into poetic language.” He suggests that such a style, at least in part, resulted from “the custom of writing Latin verses, and the great importance attached to these exercises, in our public schools.” He writes with disdain about the mechanical act of the schoolboy, who “pick[s] out, from Virgil, Horace, Ovid, or perhaps more compendiously from his Gradus, halves and quarters of lines.” The practice of verbal assembly appears to encourage a poetic mode quite out of keeping with “Romantic,” and indeed most post-Romantic, British poetry. Wordsworth, who was never made to compose verse in Greek or Latin, comments on this “un-poetic” practice in a similar way in his Prelude:

...In general terms,
I was a better judge of thoughts than words,
Misled as to these latter not alone
By common inexperience of youth,
But by the trade in classic niceties,
Delusion to young scholars incident —
And old ones also — by that overprized
And dangerous craft of picking phrases out
From languages that want the living voice
To make them a nature to the heart,
To tell us what is passion, what is truth,
What reason, what simplicity and sense.

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22 ibid 153. n.b. Bowyer’s ‘anti-classicizing’ does not make him opposed to the classics.
23 ibid 155. For evidence of this trade in “classical niceties” from the mid 18th to the late 19th century see Musae Etonenses (collections of verse compositions by Eton pupils) and Sabrinae Corolla (the Shrewsbury equivalent) referred to in Stray (1998) 69-74. The fact that Coleridge says ‘our public schools’ and not ‘our schools,’ may suggest that they did not teach verse composition at Christ’s Hospital as they did at the leading boys’ schools. Therefore Wordsworth’s and Coleridge’s attack on “picking out” seems to be in opposition to a practice they came across infrequently at university, at least for Wordsworth. See Clancey (2000) n.39.
24 ibid 155. n.b. “Gradus” is a “prosodial lexicon,” or a dictionary/thesaurus with the metrical quantities of each word occurring in the Greek or Roman poets, an invaluable tool for a schoolboy given such a task.
25 Letter to W. S. Landor, see Wordsworth (1939) 1.125.
26 Wordsworth Prelude (1805) 6.105-114.
In the preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) Wordsworth makes it clear that classicizing poetic diction was not welcome in his newly formulated, primitivistic poetical system:

The Reader will find that personifications of abstract ideas [i.e. mythological personae] rarely occur in these volumes; and are utterly rejected, as an ordinary device to elevate the style, and raise it above prose. My purpose was to imitate, and, as far as possible, to adopt the very language of men; and assuredly such personifications do not make any natural or regular part of that language.

The Lake School can therefore be seen to have sought to reinvigorate British poetry by “utterly rejecting” the most obviously exhausted features of it, turning away from the classical and towards a folk ballad tradition and an ironed-out version of “the very language of men.”

**Early Cockney Castalia**

Leigh Hunt, like Coleridge, was taught by Bowyer at Christ’s Hospital. He left, however, with an entirely different idea about his master’s educational proficiency, as his autobiography shows:

Coleridge has praised Boyer [sic] for teaching us to laugh at “muses” and “Castalian streams;” but he ought rather to have lamented that he did not teach us how to love them wisely, as he might have done had he really known anything about poetry, or loved Spenser and the old poets, as he thought, and admired the new.

The stern schoolmaster’s decision to expunge classical commonplaces from his classroom may have been an important influence on Coleridge and through him the Lake School, but it was not looked upon quite so kindly by Hunt, who believed that there was still space for classicism in poetry, just not as the preceding era had seen it. He continued to find pleasure in the poetry of the British Renaissance, which frequently engaged with myth and classical

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27 n.b. Traces of classically inspired rhetorical colouring, expressions and structures abound throughout the work of the ‘anti-classicizing’ Wordsworth and Coleridge.

28 Hunt describes Christ’s Hospital as “a medium between the patrician pretension of such schools as Eton and Westminster, and the plebeian submission of the charity schools. In point of university honours it claims to be equal with the best...” Hunt (1860) 54.

29 ibid. 108. n.b. A speech impediment denied Hunt passage to the upper “Grecian” form. He left school at 15, a “Deputy Grecian.” The reading of the Grecians extended to the Greek tragedians, the Deputies’ did not, see Hunt (1860) 64.
tropes in a more carefree way. The Cockney reaction against contemporary classicism, therefore, did not reject classicism but instead refreshed it, claiming an allegiance to an earlier classicizing British model, but also brushing aside altogether its external associations, as shown in this proem attached to Hunt’s 1832 version of Hero and Leander:

What matters it how long ago, or where
They liv’ld, or whether their young locks of hair,
Like English hyacinths, or Greek, were curled?
We hurt the stories of the antique world
By thinking of our school-books, and the wrongs
Done them by pedants and fantastic songs,

Or sculptures, which from Roman “studios” thrown,
Turn back Deucalion’s flesh and blood to stone.

Figure 1- Hero and Leander 5-13. 30

The Religious Objection to Classicism

The Lake School rejection of classical expression is also informed by contemporary religious debate. In the early nineteenth century, any non-Christianizing version of classical myth met with a religious objection just as heated as the current aesthetic and social objections of the educated nobility and aspirant classes, who felt their polite, expensive and morally filtered classicism to be under threat. In a letter to Sotheby in 1802 Coleridge equated classicism to ‘Fancy,’ which he defined as the non-creative subdivision of the mind. He also declared a preference for Hebrew over classical poetry. 31 Although his declaration of biblical poetry’s superiority over classical takes the form of literary criticism engaged in a purely aesthetic argument, Coleridge here clearly identifies himself with a

30 Hunt (1832) 123-4.
Christian movement seeking to undermine the growing religious scepticism in British Romantic society.\(^{32}\)

Nigel Leask explains that Romantic age colonialism allowed British society access to a wealth of different cultures and religions, which caused people to question how Christianity stood up against other religious traditions.\(^{33}\) The alternative classicizing aesthetic of the Cockney School poets should be understood to have been a subtle expression of dissidence, independent even of the content of their poems. Cockney classicism was not only a reaction against French School classicism, therefore, but also against the anti-classicism of the literary establishment, exemplified by the Lake School, that wanted to prohibit pagan representations of the classical world.

**A Cockney Answer to a “Classical Mistake”**

In *Foliage* (1818) Hunt offered his readers an alternative, accessible and celebratory view of classical culture. This publication was to be followed by a cluster of classically infused poems from Keats, Shelley, Horace Smith, Barry Cornwall and Thomas Love Peacock.\(^ {34}\) In his preface Hunt depicts a progression of British poetry from the Renaissance to the present, with a hiatus stretching from the mid seventeenth to mid eighteenth centuries, the age of the heroic couplet:

Certainly, with every due sense of its merit in other respect, it was a very "periwig-pated" age in all that regarded poetry, from Waller down to the Doctor [Johnson] inclusive…\(^ {35}\)

He claims to see the influence of the “French School” in decline, by which label he refers to most of the eighteenth century poets whose styles followed the prescriptions of French

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\(^{32}\) The implication of his Hebrew scholarship allows him to take an authoritative position – even beyond the contemporary linguistic hierarchy (of English, Latin, Greek).


\(^{34}\) Despite their varying positions in society, levels of education and quality of writing, the classical poetic productions of these men should all be seen as “Cockney classical” texts, because they approach their classical source material in a manner that follows a counter-cultural aesthetic brought to light in Hunt’s *Foliage* (1818).

\(^{35}\) Hunt (1818) 22.
critics such as Boileau. In *Foliage* he seeks in part to remedy the French School's "gross mistake about what they called classical, which was Horace and the Latin breeding, instead of the elementary inspiration of Greece."36 Hunt's proclaimed Hellenism was not, however, anti-Roman, which is evidenced by the predominance of Catullus in his translations; it was the poetic manifestation of a reaction against everything that the unfortunate Horace and "Latin breeding" had come to stand for, which was an exhausted poetic and a highly divided society in need of reform.

In the same year as the release of *Foliage*, Richard Payne Knight's *Discourse on the Worship of Priapus* was reprinted (in a chastened version). The first version had been withdrawn as much as a consequence of its perceived antagonism towards Christian values, as its sexual explicitness.37 The cluster of Cockney classic texts from 1818 to the mid 1820s was just one part of a dramatic increase in popular interest in classical culture and its use as a goad for an increasingly defensive literary establishment.38 As Cox puts it: "Myth was not some neutral aesthetic device; the Cockney turn to myth resulted... in their being charged with libertinism and epicureanism."39 I would like to expand Cox's "Cockney turn to myth" to the "Cockney turn to classical culture," because the translations that the Cockney School made of classical literature, and their responses to classical culture more generally, were equally important features of the Cockney invasion of polite British culture, as were their versions of myth.

Early nineteenth century polite classicism was not, of course, nourished solely by the public and grammar school educations but also by a growing culture of connoisseurship, influenced by such currently favoured artistic criticism as that of Winckelmann, which was widely read in England from its publication in 1764 and more so

36 ibid. 11.
38 For accounts of these Cockney classical texts see chapters 3, 4 and 5.
after its translation by Henry Fuseli in 1765. The aspect of Winckelmann’s aesthetic that complemented the social function of late eighteenth century British classicism was his idealization of Greek art. Classical art represented the untainted paragon of “noble simplicity and calm grandeur.” The Cockney classicism of Hunt, Keats, Smith and Cornwall (and in a different way of Moore, Shelley and Peacock) provided a stark contrast. It proudly bore allegiance to British Renaissance classicism and introduced contemporary subject matter into its classical frameworks. Polite classicism extolled a single pillar of classical culture; at its highest point of refinement it was thought to be perfect and pure. Cockney classicism on the other hand was different, and openly so. It did not conceal its identity as a reception, as something “derivative”, but flagrantly delighted in it.

The work of the Cockney school challenged the boundaries that separated those who were not traditionally educated from the classical world by re-engaging with it creatively in an inclusive and open form that could be read and enjoyed by readerships of varying educational and social levels. A battle of ownership ensued, which can be seen played out in the dramatic Blackwood’s attacks on “The Cockney School of Poetry”. For Hunt and his circle, classical mythology was part of their imaginative landscape. Hunt, who wanted to communicate with readers from all walks of life, worked to free the classical subject matter from the exclusive connotations of its original context.

It is a common misconception that the Cockney poets were not learned readers, that they had a second-rate grasp of Latin and Greek. This is largely the result of the conservative criticism of the time that was designed to deny them ownership of classical culture. In spite of this Hunt worked hard to spread a love of classical culture beyond the

40 For a full account of Winckelmann’s contribution see Potts (1994) with full bibliography.
41 Butler claims that Shelley and Peacock’s classicism becomes a celebration of paganism, which I do not think is the case for the other writers, (1981) 131.
42 This is not restricted only to their classicized poetry. Many of their poems, especially Keats’s, are written in response to some material stimulus, e.g. a Greek pot.
reach dictated by a classical education. He published in *Leigh Hunt’s London Journal* (1834) a series of articles entitled: ‘Letters to such of the lovers of knowledge as have not had a classical education’. In one of these letters Hunt derided contemporary French and German receptions of classical culture and located the finest modern classical reception in the heart of the Cockney School, and as exemplified by John Keats, who had in his lifetime been mercilessly attacked for his alleged lack of education and misunderstanding of classical culture.  

Hunt signs off the same article controversially by writing that to obtain a true feeling of the classical culture one must “become intimate with the poetry of Milton and Spenser; of Ovid, Homer, Theocritus, and the Greek tragedians; with the novels of Wieland, the sculptures of Phidias and others, and the pictures of Raphael, and the Caraccis, and Nicholas Poussin.” He continues: “But a single page of Spenser or one morning at the Angerstein Gallery, will make him better acquainted with it [classical culture] than a dozen such folios as Spence’s Polymetis, or all the mythologists and book-poets who have attempted to draw Greek inspiration from a Latin fount.”  

**Cockney Classicism**

In *Foliage* (1818) Hunt discusses the classicism of his literary hero, Shakespeare, and in doing so he reveals much about his perception of polite classicism and, by contrast, his own “Cockney” classicism:

> The truth is, he [Shakespeare] felt the Grecian mythology not as a set of school-boy common-places which it was thought manly to give up, but as something which it requires more than scholarship to understand, - as the elevation of the external world and of the accomplished humanity to the highest pitch of the graceful, and as embodied essences of all the grand and lovely qualities of nature.  

Hunt bravely attempts to undermine the power of “mere scholarship,” by implying that there is a “feeling” of Greek mythology that cannot be understood by scholarship alone;

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44 Hunt (1834) 60.
45 Hunt (1818) 23.
there is an essence that requires all the grace, humanity and sensitivity of a poet to appreciate. He implies that polite society saw the classics as something that one did at school, and according to the (now central) literary fashion of the Lake school, required that it be left there. He thus equates contemporary classics with the Lake School conception of "classic niceties," of translating prose thoughts into poetry.

Hunt's Shakespearean classicism is not bound up in the words and grammar of classical texts but engaged in the importation of an ineffable Grecian spirit into British poetry. Contemporary criticism on the other hand seems to be more interested in the tangible "letter" of the classics, and in particular how it was learned:

From his prototype Hunt, John Keats has acquired a sort of vague idea, that the Greeks were a most tasteful people, and that no mythology can be so finely adapted for the purposes of poetry as theirs. It is amusing to see what a hand the two Cockneys make of this mythology; the one confesses that he never read the Greek Tragedians, and the other knows Homer only from Chapman; and both of them write about Apollo, Pan, Nymphs, Muses, and Mysteries, as might be expected from persons of their education. 46

Lockhart undermines the legitimacy of Keats and Hunt's appropriations of classical myth. He uses Keats and Hunt's openness about their relationship with classical literature against them, deriding their understanding of Greece by inferring that it is an unfortunate consequence of a substandard education. The identification of alternative routes to access in large part may have been justified; it is clear that "short cuts" to the classics were used across the board by those who wanted to supplement their reading, or by-pass it. It was then, as it is now, impossible to read everything, but it was a faux pas on the part of the Cockneys to admit that this was the case. The admission of using alternative routes was all-important to their democratizing enterprise. Does it matter what the author has read, when he or she has made something of cultural value in its own right? The nineteenth century literary critic's answer to this would seem to have been yes.

46 Lockhart in Blackwood's "The Cockney School of Poetry iv." 1818.
In May 1823 Blackwood's launched a fresh attack on Cockney classicism following the publication of *The Flood of Thessaly* by William Proctor (a.k.a. Barry Cornwall).

We do think that this new sort of classical poetry is without exception the most exquisite trash that was ever attempted to be foisted down the throats of reasonable animals.

Taste and education, once again, take centre stage in this review, but politics are, as ever, visibly seething beneath the surface. The lengths to which the anonymous critic goes to associate Proctor's work with the Cockney school and to undermine his cultural credibility betray a literary establishment's eagerness to suppress every liberal ideal that the Cockneys represented. The anonymous critic interestingly attempts to devalue the Cockney text by exposing a contamination of his classicism by intermediary and illegitimate sources such as prints of Renaissance art. He brings his vituperative review to a close with a particularly powerful image drawing parallels between Cockney classicism and an exotic and erotically charged freak show:

Do let him oblige us so far as to give up his Greek, Latin, and Italian crudities. A Hottentot in top-boots is not more ridiculous than a classical Cockney.

The fetishistic element of this critic's assessment of Cockney Classicism is telling. At once it is both a comment on the impropriety of the connection of "cockney" and "classical," and a reflection of the sexualized style of much Cockney verse.

**An Erotic Turn**

A taste for intimate and erotic expression in British poetry did not rise to popularity in the post-Napoleonic era; but it did perhaps rise to popular acceptance due to the celebrity

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47 ibid. p.534.
48 ibid. p.541. By Hottentot, the critic refers to the tribal group of Saartjie Baartman, a south African slave who was brought to London in 1810 to entertain crowds by her exhibiting her unique and, to contemporary British tastes grotesque, bodily proportions. The image of a hottentot wearing top-boots represented a clash of crude, exotic primitivism with high Regency society.
status and cultural authority of its exponents, for example Byron and Thomas Moore.⁴⁹ There can be found key precedents in the sentimental poetry of the late eighteenth century, for example that of the Della Cruscans and Darwinians.⁵⁰ These two clusters of texts have not been historically successful (thus far) but enjoyed great popularity in the 1790s.

In 1806 in a letter to Mr. Pishey Thompson, Henry Kirke White (1785-1806) complained that “Literature has, of late years, been prostituted to all the purposes of the bagnio. Poetry,” he continued, “has been taught to exercise the arts of the Lena, and to charm only that she may destroy.”⁵¹ In his letter Kirke White points an accusing finger at Thomas Moore, whose Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little (1801) were, from his point of view as a devout Christian and Cambridge scholar, dangerously “voluptuous.” Even in the face of such opposition Moore’s poetry did much to legitimize the erotic love lyric in Britain. He had a particular skill for what Kirke White described as “insinuating and half-covered mock-delicacy, which makes use of the blush of modesty in order to heighten the charms of vice.” The erotic love lyric was a popular genre, but potentially dangerous to write, especially for those who were not members of the aristocracy.⁵² With subscription lists still playing an important role in poetry publishing, a poet in the Romantic era was made or ruined by their reputation.

In the same letter Kirke White also targeted Lord Strangford as a purveyor of poetic vice. Strangford was, like Moore, an Irishman, and his translation of the Portuguese poet, Camoens, was criticized for bearing more resemblance to Moore than it did to Camoens. These “dangerous” texts were not only united by their authors’ nationality but

⁴⁹ For Byron’s reception of Catullus see p.117f and for Moore’s see p.106f.
⁵⁰ For The Della Cruscans see most recently Robinson (2006), with full bibliography. For Darwin’s verse and its influence on the Romantic poets see King-Hele (1986).
⁵² For Moore’s Catullus see p.106f.
they also share a connection to Catullus. Strangford’s translation bares on its title page the epigraph:

Accipies meros amores ⁵³

As an epigraph the phrase functions as an apostrophe to the reader, identifying the book’s major theme as love. By its allusion to Catullus 13, however, we are to understand that this love is a festive, impassioned, and Bacchic love; one with an undiluted power to intoxicate. The epigraph also functions as a claim of allegiance to Catullus. In a literary climate that equated classical education to cultural taste, claiming descent from a Roman poet had the effect of adding a layer of legitimacy and protection from charges of obscenity. Catullus was, in this respect, the definitive “backstage pass” allowing British poets safe entrance into the potentially ruinous, yet seductively lucrative, area of erotic love lyric.

Kirke White equates Moore’s writing to “being a Catullus,” which demonstrates that in some circles the very idea of translating Catullus into English would still have been in 1806 unpopular to say the least:

Moore unhappily wished to be a Catullus, and from him has sprung the licentiousness of the new school. Moore’s poems and his translations will, I think, have more influence on the female society of this kingdom, than the stage has had in its worst period, the reign of Charles II. ⁵⁴

It was not only White who aligned the work of Moore and Strangford. Byron also places them side-by-side in his English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (1809):

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⁵³ See Catullus 13.9, which translates as: “You will receive full-strength love [if you come and dine with me and provide the dinner].” The adjective merus carries symposiastic connotations because it is commonly used to refer to unmixed wine.

⁵⁴ Kirke White (1823) 219.
"Tis Melville! young Catullus of his day,
As sweet, but as immoral in his lay!

... 

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,
To whom such glittering ornaments belong,
Hibernian Straford! ...

...

Mend, Straford! mend thy morals and thy taste;
Be warm, but pure, be amorous, but be chaste:
Cease to deceive; thy pilfered harp restore,
Nor teach the Lusian Bard to copy Moore.

Figure 2 55

The attitudes towards Catullus in the first decade of the nineteenth century are to some extent visible through the contemporary appreciation of Moore. From White's point of view "being a Catullus" is tantamount to running a brothel, whilst for Byron (separated from Kirke White by two generations) it is achieving the status of a poet as sweet as he is sinful, and therefore something to be celebrated. These two views of Catullus demonstrate the division of opinion surrounding the Roman poet. The reception of Catullus was still problematic in the Romantic era. But Byron's view, and those sympathetic to it goes to show that Britain was as ready as it needed to be for a fuller reception of Catullus.

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1. Catullan Translation 1780-1830.

This chapter explores the translation of Catullus between 1780 and 1830. The Romantic period saw Catullus emerge from the shadows of canonical minority and into the British classical literary mainstream. Both a product of this emergence, and a contributing factor to it, was the publication of the first two complete versions of Catullus in English translation.\(^6\) In the pages below I shall explore the roles of Nott’s and Lamb’s translations in the changing public perception of Catullus as well as analyse their engagement with their source.

Before 1795 the reception of Catullus in Britain had been limited to a small educated élite not only by the Latin-language barrier, but also by the stringent selection of his poems presented in English, by poets, translators and educators alike. First, I will focus on the translations by Dr. John Nott (1751-1825) and Hon. George Lamb (1784-1834), which have in recent years been discussed by Lawrence Venuti in his influential work The Translator’s Invisibility (1995/2008).\(^7\) By way of closely examining the translations, in conjunction with their critical heritage and what we know of the biographies of their translators, I hope to offer a more nuanced account of the two representations of Catullus than that already available. I shall then turn my attention to two translations of Catullus’ 64\(^{th}\) poem, presented in two very different publication contexts by Frank Sayers (1803) and Charles Abraham Elton (1814). From the analysis of these translations I intend to explore the ways in which Catullus was translated by English writers operating outside the Cockney school in order to further contextualize the Cockney reception of Catullus.

\(^6\) Nott (1795) presents all the poems of Catullus. Lamb (1821)
Pioneers and Settlers

As is well documented in recent scholarship, the trend of fluency and transparency in verse translation was at a high point in this period. Translations and original poems alike were praised most highly for their ease and fluency of reading. "Fidelity," or closeness to the source text, was also highly esteemed; but to produce a translation that was perceived faithful to the language and sense of its source at the expense of the aesthetic or moral correctness of the new text ran the risk of critical censure. It is important to understand that none of the four translators discussed below was writing at the same time and neither were they driven by the exact same goal in their undertakings as translators, which fact is implicitly divulged by the diversity of their modes of presentation, including layout and peripheral notation etc., and styles of translation. It is more explicitly set out in their prefaces, if they have them.

There are a great many variable factors acting on the production of each translation, and it is important to make these clear before identifying in them any signs of wider shifts in literary trends. While I compare these translations of Catullus I aim to avoid the temptation of analyzing their styles and achievements according to the same criteria. To do so, especially in the cases of Nott and Lamb, would be problematic not only because they are fundamentally different literary products, but also because the former translation strongly mediates the relationship between the latter and its source. To compare Nott’s and Lamb’s translations is not at all like comparing marram grass on a sand dune with the well-kempt grass of a bowling green, but I hope the analogy might at least be useful to show that the conditions of creation of the translations and their roles in literary history ought to be borne in mind throughout this treatment.

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58 Venuti in France ed. (2000).
Nott’s translation has a number of features of a pioneer translation due to the fact that it had to function in a potentially hostile cultural environment, without the support of an earlier edition. Nott saw fit to publish his book anonymously, presumably at some level as a defense against critical and perhaps even public censure. When a translator remains anonymous, whatever the reason, his or her hand is less visible. The text the reader is presented with appears to be the work of the original author rather than his translator. In Nott’s edition the presence of scholarly footnotes and the Latin text itself have the similar effect of clearly setting forth a primary intention of providing access to the source text. The overt show of scholarship may also be seen to play a part in the justification of the work and the protection of its translator. Such decisions may be seen as ‘pioneer’ features of a culturally problematic text.

It is important not to lose sight of the fact that with Nott’s translation we are dealing with a bilingual edition with explanatory footnotes. The whole two-volume book is designed to allow people to experience the poetry of Catullus. In his preface Nott makes no apologies for Catullus’ frequent ‘indecencies.’ He writes: “I have given the whole of Catullus without reserve” (xi). The word ‘given’ here gives the impression that he has simply and neutrally ‘handed over’ Catullus as he found him. In his preface he recognizes the fact that some readers will be troubled by his translation:

The chaste reader might think them [Catullus’ indecencies] best omitted; but the inquisitive scholar might wish to be acquainted even with the ribaldry, and broad lampoon of Roman times.

Both Venuti (2008) and the reviewer for the *British Critic* (Article 13, December 1797) find the same “fault” in Nott’s justification of printing a complete translation of Catullus. The eighteenth century reviewer responds to Nott by arguing that the inquisitive scholar

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59 The concept of pioneer and settler translations expressed here is my own, drawing on a fundamental understanding of sand dune formation.

60 Nott (1795) xi.
“will hardly seek for the ribaldry and broad lampoon of Roman times, in an English version of Catullus.”

The assumption shared by the two critics is that Nott’s ‘inquisitive scholar’ would have no need for an English translation, because he could read it perfectly well in Latin.\(^6^1\) This is likely, by and large, to be true. It does not, however, allow much breadth of meaning to the term ‘scholar,’ whom we are to assume needs no time for development, but simply wakes up one morning a finished scholar. It would also be incorrect to say that the scholar, who did not \textit{need} a translation in order to satisfy his curiosity about Roman ribaldry, would not benefit from the insights given by a translation such as Nott’s. The ability to read Latin does not mean that the schoolboy can read it in the same depth as the professor across the road, or indeed a translator who has studied the text and its commentaries at great length. A translation at the very least offers another point of view to inform another person’s reading of a classical text, the meaning of which is, of course, not always beyond dispute and often depends on knowledge beyond that of the classical language alone.

Nott’s books often carried a subscriptions list containing many Oxford academics, which suggests that his books were of interest and use to scholars.\(^6^2\) We may also safely assume that the students of those scholars at Oxford would have had access to the books through college libraries. It would seem that Nott foresaw the objections of his critics, and in the extract from his preface above attempted to sidestep them. He may have felt little need to justify his translation at all, which could have resulted in the somewhat lackluster justification he gave. It is entirely possible that Nott and his publisher simply wanted to extend the reach of the book by increasing its accessibility and thus its potential market. It does not have to have been published especially for a scholarly audience or a non-scholarly

\(^{62}\) See, e.g. Nott (1787).
audience, and I would argue that Nott successfully caters for both, and especially well for those who occupy the space between the scholar and the reader who knows no Latin.

A generation later Lamb brought Catullus into a not dissimilar cultural environment, but his book, as we shall see, is a more self-assured and "literary" species of translation. His more heavy-handed approach and frequent normalization of Catullus' poetry to contemporary mores and literary taste, may be seen as a feature of a secondary, or 'settler,' translation. It is a neat and fluent translation, bound in a handsome and fashionable way, but I mean not to suggest that it had no need to defend itself against the same charges of obscenity. Indeed Lamb may be seen to have gone to far greater lengths to avoid moral sanction since he omitted 31 of the 111 Catullan poems available to him and included extensive endnotes, at times scholarly, though mainly anecdotal and designed to entertain.

Romantic Translation

The critics of literary translation throughout the Romantic era tended to operate according to criteria drawn from and consistent with the views of the theorist Alexander Tytler (1747-1813). Tytler's popular and influential Essay on the Principles of Translation (1791) was in print well into the 1810s, and which informed debate long thereafter. Tytler's laws of translation granted the translator considerable license, but on the restrictive proviso that

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63 Further investigation of texts that meet the criteria of 'pioneer' and 'settler' translations may find that the stage of transmission of a problematic text into a new language affects its style as much as, say, the social and political inclination of the translator.

64 I number the Catullan poems available to him at 111 and not 116, or 113, (as we are accustomed) because poems 18, 19 and 20 are missing from MSS. The other two absent poems are 87 (Nulla potest mulier) which is taken as the first half of 75 (Huc est mens deducta... in Nott's ed: Nunc est mens adducta tua) by Nott (and translated as such by Lamb), and 94 (Mentula moechatur), which is taken as the ending of 89 (Nil nimium studeo) by Nott (which is omitted by Lamb). Lamb makes a few more substantial changes to the text. Aside from omitting 31 poems, he introduces 2 poems that appear in Nott's appendix entitled Poems which some attribute to Catullus (2.185f) into the gap at poem 17-21. These are the poems entitled Hortorum Deus (Hunc ego, juvenes, locum...) in Nott (1795) 2.210-13, and (Ego haec, ego arte fabricata rustica) Nott (1795) 2.214-6. Lamb explains that they were "preserved in the Catalecta of Virgil, but on the authority principally of Terentianus Maurus have been given to Catullus" (1.144). Lamb also makes the addition of a poem, which he entitles: To Some One, who spread rumours concerning himself and Lesbia, Lamb (1821) 2.97.

they and their texts conform to Tytler's ostensibly objective view of "correct taste" and "exquisite feeling."

In Tytler's formulation "ease" is very highly valued. But what happens if the original is dense and complex, and thus originally has little "ease"? Tytler's answer to any such question, we may conjecture, would have been either to recommend correction of its areas of "dis-ease," or perhaps to question whether the original is worth translating in the first place. The notion of ease therefore has implications not only for translation style but also canon formation. For Tytler, who celebrated Pope's "veiling" of Homer's "improprieties," the coarseness of some of Catullus' more violent or explicitly sexual turns of phrase would likely bar him from translation, unless in a highly expurgated form. Such an attitude would support the supposition that Catullus was esteemed a minor classical figure for such a long time in England because of his obscenity.

Seeing as this kind of attitude at least informed the dominant feeling in translation criticism during the time when Nott was preparing his translation for publication shows just how bold a move it was for him to translate Catullus in such an open way. It also reminds us to be careful of assuming that Nott's translation was more explicit because it came from a less polite age. Even if moral conservatism was on the rise (among the middle and upper classes) as the Victorian Age approached, Nott's translation was still the product of an age unwilling to receive such a noxious cultural artifact. In a review of Nott's edition of Catullus the writer for The Monthly Magazine (1798) said of it that it was "highly censurable as containing all the beastly and disgusting indecencies of the original." The Critical Review (1798) seems to have felt similarly:

66 I take 'ease' as interchangeable with 'fluency', and thus to represent a simple lucidity of expression that makes for an unchallenging and pleasurable read.
67 For Tytler's discussion of Pope's veiling see Tytler (1978) 79.
68 For the argument that the increased expurgation of Lamb is indicative of increasing moral conservatism see Gaisser (2002).
69 Monthly Magazine (15th July 1798).
The majority of these poems are worthless; and the chief excellence of those that have ranked Catullus so high among the Roman poets, consists in a peculiar happiness of expression, of which perhaps no translation could convey an adequate idea. Indeed, the man whose abilities should be equal to the task, would be inexcusable in so employing himself. In the present version, we have all the beastliness of Catullus.

A reviewer for The British Review (1822) reflected on the paucity of complete translations of Catullus thus:

The indelicacies of Catullus are scattered with so unsparing a hand over his writings, as to amount nearly to a moral prohibition against rendering him into a modern language. His fairest graces are for ever overshadowed by contiguous deformities.  

It is clear from the above samples of contemporary literary criticism that Catullus' obscenity was no inconsiderable preoccupation for the educated élite. It was, however, not the only reason for his minor status in the classical canon before then.

Tytler's laws of translation, however influential they were to the ways in which establishment writers and polite readers engaged with translation, bore little relevance for an author who was, for example, producing a crib that aided a schoolboy in reading a passage of Latin for an exam, or abridging a classical text, designed to provide children or young women access to classical mythology. Developments in educational practice, and the provision of a classical education to the middle-classes via schooling, educational publications, translations and abridgments, led to significant increases in size and social diversification of the reading public in the Romantic era. Such developments resulted in changes to the demands of readers and the aims of writers and bookmakers. We witness in the era a blending of the educational and literary impulses of writers and translators. The products of this mix are translations and classicizing texts of varying degrees of accessibility.

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70 The Eclectic Review (Article 4, June 1822).
"Acquainted only by halves"

The publications of Nott's and Lamb's editions of Catullus stimulated discussion about different sides of Catullus' poetic character that had formerly been overlooked or suppressed. We see an awareness of the formerly selective reception of Catullus emerging in 1822, expressed by a critic writing for the British Review, which was reprinted in full in both The Eclectic Review (1822) and The Museum of foreign literature, science and art (1822):

The unjust measure which has been meted to this charming Poet [Catullus] by that race of minor critics and commentators, who have successively echoed the blundering estimate of a writer with whom they were acquainted only by halves. He has, in fact, been considered, like Anacreon, as the minstrel only of wine and pleasure... It is astonishing how this character of Catullus has been banded from one to another, and received by each with the most indolent acquiescence... The Poet whom Virgil did not disdain to copy, whom Ovid, and even the philosophic Persius have plundered, belongs to a higher order.71

Catullus' poetry had for the most part unwittingly been shelved by critics, commentators, and schoolmasters for generations behind a spine that told only a small part of the story between its boards.

The public perception of Catullus as a poet, like that of Anacreon, of 'wine and pleasure' shows a side other than his giddy-lover side that was acceptable to contemporary English tastes. The publication of Moore's Odes of Anacreon (1800), which was dedicated to and thus endorsed by the Prince of Wales (soon to become Prince Regent), shows just how acceptable the notion of the sympotic bard was to early nineteenth century literary tastes. To acknowledge Catullus' ability, however, to write in the higher registers of the major classical authors was perhaps to risk promoting too wide a contact with his unchaste poems, which was still a very real threat for the more religious members of society, whose voice we hear, for example, through a reviewer from The Literary Gazette (1821), following the publication of Lamb's translation:

71 British Review and London Critical Journal (June 1822). n.b. this is an elaboration on Lamb's own interesting discussion of Catullus' reputation in his preface (xxxvi-xxxviii).
The evil is comparatively trivial while it is enveloped in a dead language; but no offence can be more serious than the transmission of those heathen impurities into the current of popular reading.

In the face of such criticism from the more sensitive end of the Christian church, the British Review critic in his article, and Nott and Lamb by way of their translations, effectively exposed in the Romantic Era the impoverishing limitation of Catullus' formerly restricted public perception. The continued translation of Catullus' work stirred up the potentially hazardous dust, which had been swept under the carpet by such limiting characterizations for centuries. The compilation of Catullus' whole oeuvre into a single work of English translation forced the literary communities to come face to face with each hazard posed by Catullus' presence in current literary consciousness. When the dust had settled again there were still very definite problems with Catullus' obscenity, but the full variety of Catullus' achievement was out there to be recognized, even if the 'intolerable' parts still needed fig leaves.72

What the critics had neither the desire nor the freedom to do, was to discuss Catullus' 'coarser' side in full. The contemporary critic's obligation, not only to pass comment but also to entertain and be seen to "preserve" the morals (as well as subscriptions) of their subscribers made for circumstances entirely unsuitable for the discussion of obscenity. This may be best shown by the fastidious words of one of the critics themselves:

[Nott's translation] should be sedulously removed from youth and from females... We do not, however, hesitate to pronounce, that the performance is, on the whole, ingenious and spirited. There was some difficulty, of course, in selecting a specimen for the common reader, but the following will certainly do no discredit to the author, or our pages.

The outspoken reviewers of Blackwood's Magazine (1821) could only grant themselves freedom for the following:

We observe Mr. Lamb has taken very considerable liberties with some of the less modest poems of Catullus; we mean particularly the Address to Aurelius and Furius. Now we should be very loth, most

72 Expurgation of Catullus continued as late as 1961; see Fordyce (1961) v.
assuredly, to have these poems exhibited to English eyes in all their native grossness; yet equally must we protest against such a method of translation, as in rendering them less offensive, totally changes their character.

The reference to poem 16 is comparatively bold and the protest against what is often now called 'Bowdlerization' is made effectively. But still 'the Address to Aurelius and Furius' in itself bears very little of the text to which it points, and the 'most assuredly' expressed loathness to exhibit Catullus' 'native grossness' to English eyes is a carefully crafted critical barge pole. We will come back to Aurelius and Furius later since poem 16 receives a good deal of limelight in the two most extensive modern investigations of Catullus' translations, those of Venuti (2008) and Gaisser (2009).

As we have seen, in the 1820s it was clear to the critics of Lamb's translation that only a small portion of Catullus' skill and personality had been communicated to the public. We can see from Nott's preface that he too shared their concerns:

In the voluptuousness of amatory verse he excelled; in the galliambic he was unique; but a clear and well-pointed satire was his fort, which he applied fearless, without distinction of persons: the monarch himself often felt the severity of his song, and did not resent it. (xxiii)

Before 1795 the strength of Catullus' satirical side was not recognized in any accounts of his poetry that I have seen. Nott appears here to congratulate Catullus for his boldness in directing his satires against those in the highest authority. His presentation of this boldness in positive terms may evidence an anti-establishment streak in Nott, which, as we shall see, is not reflected in his biography. We can assume from this section of his preface that Nott was an advocate for freedom of speech. His penchant for publishing poetry that was, for the time, on the edge of respectability may also be seen as a sign of his interest in the boundaries of censorship, as well as, of course, a sign of his preference for amorous and
more risqué poetry. From the evidence we have, whether or not these interests extended beyond the purely literary and into realms of political subversion, is hard to say.\textsuperscript{73}

Where Nott was most celebrative of Catullus, Lamb appears least comfortable:

The prior English translator observes, that "a clean, well-appointed satire was his forte;" it may however be thought, on the contrary, that his satirical poems, taken altogether, most of which may rather be termed invectives, are those that do him the least credit.\textsuperscript{74}

Lamb criticizes some of Catullus’ invectives as ‘ungoverned ebullitions of rage’ and either distances himself from Catullus when he perceives him to attack people without good reason, or defends him by way of calling to notice his victim’s personal defects. Perhaps it is the lawyer in Lamb that constantly attempts to defend Catullus, or, where failing, himself. Lamb’s attempts at translating Catullus’ invectives fall short of Nott’s, but he is perhaps more at home than Nott with what he calls Catullus’ ‘poetry of friendship and affection’:

The lines to Hortulan, the Epistle to Manlius, to Calvus on the death of Quintilia, and the Invocation at his brother’s grave, show how warmly his heart beat with this refined impulse. These are only the more touching compositions of this kind; on the other hand, in such poems as Acme and Septimius, and the Epithalamium on the marriage of Manlius and Julia, we behold with what pleasure he witnessed, and with what zeal he celebrated the happiness of his friends.

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One could be forgiven for thinking that this was written by a subscriber to Leigh Hunt’s Cockney philosophy of happiness. Lamb reveals a deep regard for Catullus’ values of

\textsuperscript{73} Aside from two scientific/medical publications (1793) and his early original poetry Nott’s publications tell the story of a scholar committed to providing access to neglected love lyric. n.b. He also partly edited Herrick (1810) not in print since 1648 and Decker (1812).

\textsuperscript{74} n.b. Lamb updates Nott’s archaic spelling of ‘fort’ to ‘forte.’

\textsuperscript{75} Lamb refers to poems 65, 68, 96 and 101; and then 45 and 61.
fraternity and kindness, which are those key aspects of Catullus’ poetry drawn out by Leigh Hunt in his politicized translations in the *Examiner* of the 1810s.\(^7\)

**Introducing Dr. Nott**

At the age of twenty-one, after studying medicine in Birmingham, London and Paris, Nott published his first original work, a poetic tale called *Alonzo; or the Youthful Solitair* (1772). Then in 1775 *Leonora* (Nott 1775) was published. It was written in mourning for a lover he lost in his early twenties: “Twice hath the SUMMER cloath’d these Meads with green, / And WINTER robb’d them twice of their Array; Since LEONORA chear’d this saddened scene, / And taught the fleeting MOMENTS to be gay” (stanza iv). This poem shows that Nott, as a young man, learned to wear his heart on his sleeve and subject his inner world to print, like those authors he most admired. In that same year Nott left England and travelled around Europe, mainly France and Italy, for two years as the physician to an elderly gentleman.

During these two years he perfected his Italian and on returning to Britain he published *Sonnets and Odes from the Italian of Petrarch* (1777). He lived in London for around five years, where he edited, wrote and translated prolifically, publishing his first collection in 1780, a *Heroic Epistle in Verse* in 1781 and an edition of Propertius in 1782. In 1783 Nott became surgeon on board an East Indiaman bound for China. He travelled for around three years in the East, presumably settling for a long while in the Middle East because when he returned home in 1787, he produced the bilingual verse edition of Hafiz. In this same year he embarked on another tour in Europe, this time with “the Pockocks” (who appear to be his friends). In May 1787 he saw the statues on top of the Palazzo del

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\(^7\) c.f. p.157f.
Consiglio in Verona (supposedly of Catullus and Nepos), William Blake's prints of which eventually make their way into his translated edition of Catullus as the frontispieces.77

By 1789 Nott had graduated and was an extra-licentiate member of the Royal College of Physicians. He then became physician to Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire (pregnant by Charles Grey) and her sister, Lady Duncannon, joining them in their tour/exile between 1791 and 1792.78 Harriet (Duncannon) suffered from partial paralysis and other less serious ailments, rumoured to have been a result of either a suicide attempt or an abortion (publically a miscarriage). They were joined in their exile by Elizabeth Foster, affectionately known as "Bess," who was simultaneously the Duke of Devonshire's kept mistress and the Duchess Georgiana's confidante (if not lover).79 The noble ladies lived and drank to excess. Venuti (2008) suggests that Nott's professional relationship with these women implies that Nott himself partook of the lifestyle of debauched nobility, for which there is no evidence. Nott's journals, which are admittedly concerned mainly with the weather, travel tips and geographical observations, show no trace of any socializing across the boundaries of class and profession.

At the age of forty-four Nott saw his new edition and translation of Catullus' poems in print. Although he draws attention to the fact that he made the translation ten years before he published it, he can hardly claim the defense of youthful exuberance, since he would still have written it when he was thirty-four.80 If he did write it ten years earlier


78 Cavendish [née Hervey; other married name Foster], Elizabeth Christiana, duchess of Devonshire (1757–1824).

79 n.b. "Bess" was also the mother of George Lamb's wife, Caroline Lamb (née St. Jules).

80 Nott (1795) xii.
he would have started work on it while he was away in the East working as a surgeon on board an East Indiaman.  

Introducing 'The Catullus of Whitehall'  

George Lamb, who is generally believed to have been the son of George IV, was educated at Eton and Cambridge. He practiced law from 1809, but not for long. His passion was for the theatre and in 1815 he joined the management committee of Drury Lane. He became a Whig MP, in 1819, winning the borough of Westminster. Politically speaking he was "the most radical member of his family." He lost the Westminster seat a year later, but was provided with an Irish borough "on the Devonshire interest." In his preface Lamb states that Catullus was:

Irascible but forgiving; careless and imprudent; affectionate to his kindred, warm in friendship, but contemptuous and offensive to those whom he disliked; grateful, but not cringing, to his patrons; and inclined to constancy in love, had his constancy met with return. He seems to have been as little sullied by the grossness of the age, as was possible for one invited to the pleasures of the times by the patronage of his superiors...

A certain amount of autobiography seems to mix into Lamb's biography of Catullus here. He was famously irascible, but according to Mitchell (2004) his, "Animal spirits were moderated by a genial good nature that made him for some 'a most agreeable man.'" Lamb was also very much a part of the establishment, but did not fear challenging it by championing such radical causes as setting up an inquiry into the Peterloo massacre. This relationship with his patrons may be reflected in his characterization of Catullus above. In allusion to the fact that Lamb's wife, Caroline, left him in 1816 and ran away to Italy with

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81 The dislocation from familiar society could have influenced Nott's translational style. He might of course have misled his readers, casually 'rounding up' to ten years, and in fact began work on Catullus when he was back from his Eastern travels in 1787. The publishing of old work may also be another protective distancing mechanism.

82 Lamb is derisively referred to as "the Catullus of Whitehall" in The London Magazine July 1821.


84 ibid. This relationship was presumably founded on family ties (i.e. he had married into the Devonshire's 'wider' family ten years earlier – details below).
Henry Brougham, complaining of drunkenness and neglect, Mitchell suggests that Lamb's reception of Catullus might be more than a little influenced by his own experience, seen in the quotation above when he speaks of Catullus' constancy. This certainly appears to be the case, and may in no small part account for his desire to defend his source against charges of vice and immorality.

The public scandal surrounding Caroline's affair with Brougham was considerable. It is interesting that such a scandal, Lamb's radical politics, immoderate consumption of alcohol, and general reputation for mischief (which leaps out from any account of his personality) do not appear in the description of Lamb's domestic bliss in Venuti's study (2008), which styles Lamb as a noble Bowdlerizer. Venuti states that:

The most public scandal in Lamb's family did not involve him: in 1812, Lady Caroline Lamb, his brother William's wife, was engaged in a notorious affair with Byron. George himself seems to have been happily married. His obituary referred to “the tranquility of his domestic life,” stating that with the “estimable” Caroline, “of a character entirely assorting with his own, he enjoyed the truest felicity” (Gentleman's Magazine 1834:438)... Lamb's life attests to the fact that the increasing moral conservatism of English society during this period was affecting not only the middle and working classes, but the aristocracy as well.

This shows the danger of using obituary to establish biographical detail. It is generally regarded that there was an increase in moral conservatism in British society during the period, which Lamb's translation may to some extent attest, but his domestic life certainly does not.

Lamb's connection with the Devonshires was not only political. Caroline, his wife, was the illegitimate child of the Fifth Duke of Devonshire, William Cavendish, and Elizabeth "Bess" Foster. As noted above Nott acted as physician to Georgiana and her

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85 Lamb was not involved in the same level of expurgation as Bowdler was in his Family Shakespeare (1818) as can be seen in his translation of c.11 (to the prostitute Aufillena), which would have made for an awkward few moments around the reading candle. For more on Bowdler see Perrin (1992).
87 Such a warning should be extended to our knowledge of John Nott's life, since much of his biography also seems to have been gleaned from an obituary in the same publication. In creating my biography of Nott I have been careful to challenge and find supporting evidence for the assertions made in the Gentleman's Magazine. Many of the bibliographic details in the obituary, for example, are misleading, some of which have been passed on to more modern accounts.
sister in the early 1790s. This places Nott a clear generation above Lamb. It also locates them within entirely the same social milieu, albeit in completely different stations. That Catullus was translated by two men connected to the Devonshires is, as it stands, no more than an intriguing coincidence. That Catullus found a receptive literary environment within a morally apathetic social milieu, or fun-loving community, is perhaps less of a coincidence.
To Aurelius and Furius (poem 16)

AD AURELIUM ET FURIUM. XVI.

PÆDICABO ego vos, et irrumabo,
Aureli patricie, et cæsae Furi ;
Qui me ex versiculis meis putatistis,
Quod sit molliculi, parum pudicum.
Nam easum esse decet pium poëtam
Ipsum; versiculos nihil necesse est:
Qui tum denique habent Salem, ac leporem,
Si sint molliculi, ac parum pudici,
Ex quod pruriat incitare possunt,
Non dico puerris, sed his pilosis,
Qui duro nequem movere lumbos.

VIII.

Pædicabo, &c.] This is a satirical menace of Catullus's, intended jestingly to upbraid his friends with their concupiscence. And here it will not be improper to remark, that the present may serve as some apology for most of the more indecent Carmina, where the obscenity frequently lies more in the words, than in the sense. See Lucius Apuleius on the subject of this poem, in Apologia.

Nam easum esse, &c.] The grave, and sententious Pliny has a reference to this passage, not a little remarkable: he is sending to his friend Pausias a collection of his verses (and apologizing for some, which he perhaps might think too wanton, /senectivorum/) he desires him to remember, that for greater writers than himself had used expressions still more warm, and undisclosed: /qua ne reprobis, /quia haec non quae notissime, non quae sint./

I'LL treat you as 'tis meet, I swear,
Lascivious monsters as ye are!

Aurelius, Furius! who arraign
And judge me by my wanton strain.
The learned poet, I agree,
Should in himself quite decent be:
But what has decency to do
With his rich board of numbers too?
Which then have truest wit and sense,
When season'd with so much impudence?
When they not only can excite
Your prurient boys to salt delight;

Ovid. Trist. 2.

Pueri neci occulto esse, &c.] Thus Ovid, to the same purpose:

Lascivious monsters as ye are!

Notorious pathics as ye are!

Whereas Venuti (2008) and Gaisser (2009) have commented on Nott's translation of poem 16. Gaisser quotes the first two lines of the 1795 text as it appears on the page in the standard edition:

I'll treat you as 'tis meet, I swear,
Lascivious monsters as ye are!

Whereas Venuti provides us with:

I'll treat you as 'tis meet, I swear,
Notorious pathics as ye are!

I have been unable to find the version printed in Venuti's study anywhere else. Both translations clothe the meaning of the original within a vague but knowing expression.
Venuti’s ‘notorious pathics’ correspond more directly to the words of the source text than Nott’s own ‘lascivious monsters’, but it still only alludes to half of Catullus’ original threat of anal and oral rape. In his notes below the Latin text Nott writes:

_Pedicabo &c._] This is a satirical menace of Catullus’, intended jestingly to upbraid his friends with their concupiscence. And here it will not be improper to remark, that the present may serve as some apology for most of the more indecent _Carmina_, where the obscenity frequently lies more in the words, than in the sense.

This “satirical menace” may be loosely compared to expressions like the Italian expletive _Va fan culo!_ or even the English _Go, boil your head!_ Neither needs to be taken as a literal direction for the recipient in order for the desired sense to be conveyed. But Catullus’ expression is not a direction; it is a ‘menace,’ a threat, the likes of which we might hear in the aggressive vernacular of the street when the pub closes, or in a whole host of movies with an 18 certificate. Vincent Klyn’s character, for example, in Kathryn Bigelow’s _Point Break_ (1991), moments before fighting Keanu Reaves’s character, says: “We’re just gonna fuck you up!” In this example the word ‘fuck’ has lost its sexual connotations to a greater degree than Catullus’ use of _pedicare_. The additional threat of irrumation not only emphasizes the sexual connotations of the threat of violence, but it does so to a comic level.88

I agree with Nott that the threat is not one of actual sexual violence but an edgily explicit joke, designed to poke fun at, rile and answer the criticisms of his addressees in a playful way. The inappropriateness of Catullus’ language in the public expression of poetry gives the poem an edge that raises it from familiar poetic expression; it supplies it with a vivacity and humorous twist that is lost in polite translation. The critic from the _British review_ (1822), presumably under the influence of Nott’s note, wrote:

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88 The use of _irrumare_ as a threat in modern application may be found in the opening sequence of Christopher McQuarrie’s _The Way of the Gun_ (2000), in which Ryan Phillippe (as Mr. Parker) tells the boyfriend of Sarah Silverman’s character to: “Shut that cunt’s mouth before I come over there and fuckstart her head.” In this instance the primitive pollution is by no means lost, but neither is it a real threat of what it threatens.
Catullus ... uses words which repel all literal translation, but which, it abundantly appears from the sense and context of the passages where they occur, had lost their primitive pollution, - had, in fact, ceased to be conjoined with the thing or image for which it stood.\(^9\)

Words that carry sexual connotations like *pedicare* and 'fuck', even if they are suppressed by their context, may still at some level, and especially in the context of poetry where people expect a great deal from words, communicate them in spite of a non-sexual surface meaning. In *Point Break* we never once think that Lupton "Warchild" Pittman is going to do anything to Johnny Utah other than fight him, since any sexual dimension is barred by the context and his delivery of the line. In poem 16, however, Catullus seems to play on the homoerotic connotations of the threats, whether or not they have in some contexts perhaps 'lost [some of] their primitive pollution,' and he does so in order to wittily challenge the way that that Aurelius and Furius have apparently criticized his poetry.

It is this kind of connotational spice that is so vulnerable in translation, and it is clear from the opinions expressed in contemporary criticism that such a coarse expression as *pedicabo ego vos et irrumabo* ('I will fuck you, and your mouths') was not going to be handled by eighteenth and nineteenth century translators with kid gloves. After recalling Boileau's commitment to calling a cat a cat (*j’appelle un chat un chat* – (1716) *Satires* 1.51), the British Review critic writes:

> The Bard of Verona carries the privilege of calling things by their names to its utmost boundaries. Words which common consent has long since banished from the polished intercourses of life. (ibid).

We might therefore expect a high degree of smoothing over from the translators. Lamb has:

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Dare ye, Profligates, arraign
The ardour of my spritely strain,
And e'en myself asperse.
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\(^9\) *The British Review* (1822).
A prose paraphrase of Lamb’s verse might aid comparison with the original, since some of the words are less familiar now: “Do you, debauched men, dare to charge the passion of my lively poetry with fault and even falsely accuse me of fault?”\textsuperscript{90} It is clear in these less dense and archaic terms that Lamb’s “translation” bears little resemblance to the original threat. It is indeed, as Gaisser puts it, an act of \textit{rewriting}. Instead of smoothing over Catullus’ provocative first four lines Lamb expurgates and reduces them to an obscure and archaic verbal knot. In response to Lamb’s \textit{rewriting} the reviewer in \textit{Blackwood’s Magazine} feels the need to:

Protest against such a method of translation, as in rendering them less offensive, totally changes their character. Let him pass them over in his translation; or, if he must meddle with them, let him place his imitations at the end of the book among his notes. The English reader will then learn to appreciate properly the value of Mr Lamb’s exertions, and to distinguish, with accuracy, between the translated morsels and the original repast which he provides.\textsuperscript{91}

This replacement of poem 16 with an expurgated version appears to have been as unsatisfactory a translational method in 1821 as it would be now. Although Lamb’s intentions appear to be honorable (he seeks only to protect innocence), this is one of the most brutal forms of translation and fully deserving of that harsher kind of Blackwood’s criticism:

Can we possibly imagine that such driveling vapidity as this has any resemblance to the original? Or is he blind to the fact that he is murdering, absolutely murdering, one of the finest poets of antiquity?\textsuperscript{92}

The frailty of Lamb’s translation method, which he describes in his preface as an attempt “to veil and soften” in order to avoid “entire omission,” is exposed in this poem. The intention, however, is still at some level a progressive one. By his chosen method of expurgation he wanted to give more of Catullus to the public. Lamb’s translation might be

\textsuperscript{90} It is perhaps telling that I feel the need to paraphrase Lamb’s poetry. The three lines are crowded with words that repel straightforward meaning. The verbs ‘arraign’ and ‘asperse’ are rarely found in poetry now or in the early nineteenth century. ‘Dare ye...’ is an archaic formula, ‘profligates’ is hardly common, and ‘strain’ is also an antiquated poetic term, even for 1821. The complexity is great in comparison to the original and therefore it appears to be an exercise in obfuscation.

\textsuperscript{91} \textit{Blackwood’s Magazine} (1821).

\textsuperscript{92} ibid. This comes from the reviewer’s criticism on \textit{An Address to Lesbia} in the paragraph before the one under discussion, but its vehemence is not directed exclusively on that poem.
seen therefore in some small part to stem the tide of increasing moral conservatism of the late Georgian era. He adopts a similar method in his stage adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Timon of Athens*, about which he wrote:

> The present attempt has been to restore Shakespeare to the stage, with no other omissions than such as the refinement of manners has rendered necessary.

The play was staged at Drury Lane on 28th October 1816. It is perhaps surprising that Leigh Hunt, as drama critic, praised the production, which was an adapted and expurgated version of Shakespeare’s play with significant moralizing additions and numerous minor roles cut out completely, which obviously changed the play a good deal. It becomes less surprising when we learn that the lead role was played by none other than the Cockney favourite, Edmund Kean, whose ‘electrical’ acting was perceived as a benevolent force for reform and the liberal cause. Despite Lamb’s heavy handling of Shakespeare’s text by modern standards his version is generally regarded as the first *Timon of Athens* performed on the stage that bore any semblance to Shakespeare’s play. Williams (1920) said that “the main changes of Lamb were textual; the play as a whole adhered to the original.” This understates the extent of Lamb’s alterations but indicates the extent of the changes made by his predecessors. We find George Lamb then in the curious position of someone trying to reveal the full extent of his source to the public, yet still significantly constrained by an overarching fear of showing too much.

The extent of the influence of Nott’s edition on Lamb can be seen not only in Lamb’s notes and preface, but also in his text. He must have used Nott’s edition closely since more than occasionally we find rhymes ‘borrowed’ directly from Nott. In the image above (p.41) the third and fourth lines of the English carry the ‘arraign, strain’ rhyme that

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93 It is largely the comparison with Nott that earns Lamb the charges of Bowdlerization. Translating Catullus was still an act of broadening access.

94 On Kean see Kahan (2006).

95 Lamb’s translation of 41 (1.74), and 42 (1.75-76) are highly amended, but they are not “Bowdlerized.” They were far from suitable for family reading.
Lamb also puts to use. If the word 'arraign' was not used so rarely as a transitive verb we might not be able to say quite so definitively that this was no coincidence.66 Nott's edition was a good, if not the best, edition of Catullus' text available. It is therefore quite normal for Lamb to have used it. What is odd is that he does not feel the need to conceal or acknowledge his debt. He does acknowledge the earlier edition very occasionally in his notes, but almost always in the act of criticizing "the anonymous translator." He challenges Nott when he feels that he is wrong but borrows freely from his text when they are in agreement. Lamb must have counted on the twenty-six year gap between their publications being big enough for people not to check back.

There is no reason why Lamb could not have attributed the 1795 translation to Nott, since his authorship had been commonly known since 1811, when it appeared in both The Quarterly Review and The British Critic:

We are obliged to our Constant Reader for his intelligence respecting Dr Nott of Bristol the ingenious translator of Catullus Petrarch &c. though we had met with the same intelligence in the Quarterly Review. His account however confirms and extends that information.97

It is possible that Nott did not wish to have his name attached to his work, perhaps for professional reasons, and he may have made that known to Lamb.98 Otherwise we may assume that Lamb did not want, or felt no need, to acknowledge his predecessor. In The Reflector (1811) Leigh Hunt did not seem to know who had translated the 1795 edition of Catullus, for he refers to him also as the anonymous translator.

One feature of Nott's edition that upset all the critics was its half rhyming, as in 'swear' and 'ye are' (16.1-2):

The translator's pronunciation may be supposed to be very bad, when we meet, in every page, with such rhymes as hate, intreat; dear, share; nature, creature; convey'd, Sped; sea, bay; &c. 99

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66 "Arraign, v.1". OED Online.
97 The British Critic (May, 1811).
98 n.b. His translation of Petrarch in 1808 was published anonymously, or by "the translator of Catullus," which shows that the choice of anonymity was not specific to his translation of Catullus.
It is clear from the frequency of half rhyming that its use was integrated in Nott’s method as a way by which he could maintain a verse form that fitted the source poem, but also allowed him to stay that much closer to the language and sense of Catullus than the restriction of full rhyming would have. The lack of regard for dominant contemporary poetics that Nott shows in his rhyming may be taken as a sign of his commitment to presenting the Roman poet’s work as a foreign text, i.e. as a non-English poetic text. We ought not to think that Nott simply did not have the skill to rhyme “properly.” In this respect Nott can be seen to have “foreignized,” in the sense that he is privileging the reception of the source over the reception of the target.

Nott’s rendering of the threat of sexual violence as “Treat you as ’tis meet” may play on the dual meaning of the word ‘meet,’ meaning both ‘aptitude’ and ‘submissive passivity.’ Such a pun allows, at some level, the reading of: “I’ll treat you two men as if you were sexually submissive,” which fits the sense of the violent act quite well, although it is of course dramatically softened and obscured. Grammatically the “’tis” rejects the appropriation of the adjective ‘meet’ to Furius and Aurelius, thus making it solely descriptive of the treatment of the pair, but there still remains the potential for the pun when read, as it was, with the Latin text alongside. The Latin word mitis, which carries the meaning of softness and submissiveness is the Roman equivalent of this now obsolete meaning of the word meet.

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100 Nott’s translation is comparable in style and closeness to the language to Guy Lee’s and G. P. Goold’s bilingual translations. They all retain a broadly poetic form, but could scarcely be said to stand up to scrutiny as poems in their own right, which suggests that the bilingual scholarly form of translation should not be expected to deliver the same poetic heights as verse translations printed without the text.

101 The now obsolete meaning of ‘meet’ was: “Accommodating; submissive, mild, gentle.” See "meet, adj. 2c." OED Online.
Nott's use of 'meet' offers the potential for a learned Latin wordplay ('tis meet/mitis). Whether or not Nott was interested in playing such games it is hard to say.\footnote{102} Were we to assume, however, that this reversible pun was left by design, then it would show Nott going to interesting lengths to enforce his reading of the original message to his more sophisticated readers. A reversible allusion to a word that by association to its context would shed more light on the 'untranslatable' original meaning, strikes me immediately as a little farfetched, but the reading is at least possible. The pun cannot be treated as a device by which Nott sought to facilitate the communication of the original message to the English reader, because in order to understand the pun the reader has to have a familiarity with the Latin language that enables him or her to be able not only to read and understand the Latin on the left hand side of the page, but also to understand a pun on a Latin word that does not even occur on the page.

**Dr. Nott’s Triangulation**

The more straightforward play on words of the double meaning of “meet” noted above, exposes one particular quality of Nott’s translation style. His method of bringing the full force of the original often relies on its playful relationship with its source. Since the original Latin text is placed on the facing page with some clarifying notes below it, Nott supplies his reader with all the material by which he or she can navigate to the sense of the obscenity without incriminating himself. He provides the three points of departure from the page (Latin text, English text and footnotes), and - by their content - controls the angle at which the attentive reader should let his or her developing sense of the text travel. The three lines of influence converge around the sense and sentiment that the reader takes from Nott’s text.\footnote{103} For example, in the notes Nott says: “This is...intended jestingly to upbraid

\footnote{102} I have found no other instances of such play, but that is not to say that no other may exist.\footnote{103} n.b. This does not imply that all readers arrive at the same reading.
his friends with their concupiscence." Combine this with the English: "I'll treat you as 'tis meet I swear, / lascivious monsters as ye are!" and the Latin (perhaps with the aid of a dictionary), and you get something fairly specific but at the same time quite distant from what you might experience in the Latin, without the accompaniment. The resultant reading suggested is that Catullus admonishes his friends for being *pathici* and *cinaedi*.

Nott privileges the epithets *pathicus* and *cinaedus* with a higher function than simply being insulting adjectives. The offence for which Catullus threatens punishment is their criticism of his poetry rather than their sexual deviance, on which Nott focuses. In this example therefore Nott offers a relatively small avenue of interpretation and chooses not to call attention to the obvious problem on the page. He avoids the verbal obscenities in his translation and does not comment on the Latin text, other than in guiding the reader to a fairly unsatisfactory reading of the Latin. The Latin is, however, always present and this he does not omit or change. This decision not to translate the text closely, or to leave its intolerable meaning open for interpretation through the translation, results from quite severe pressures to suppress the Latin. This Catullan poem was perhaps too blunt and too well known. Perhaps it was this pressure that called for the convoluted "mitis/'tis meet" encoding.  

**Odious parts**

Another less trodden example of where Nott and Lamb struggle with Catullan obscenity is found in their handling of poems 97 and 98. These poems are obscene invectives written in elegiac couplets directed against Aemilius and Vectius, or (more commonly now) Victius. 97 is dealt with by Lamb via complete omission, whereas Nott seems very comfortable

104 A similar and related example can be found in Nott's version of poem 21, or xviii in his numeration (1.58). In the notes he equates Catullus' threat of orally raping Aurelius, if he carries on seducing his lover, to saying: "I'll pay you in your own coin; if you attempt to seduce from me, by your artifices, my young favourite." Nott's translation of *irrumare* in the final line borders on innuendo: "I'll do a deed for thee" (18).
with such locker-room, or perhaps bath-house, profanities. Unlike 16 the vulgarity is not connected to such an inflammatory subject matter and Nott seems confident he can show Catullus' indelicacies in almost all their glory. Nott's version is full of playful expression and rich in evocative words and grubby images. The poem is a vitriolic scazon against Aemilius. In summary, the poem claims that Aemilius has such bad breath that Catullus sees no perceivable difference between sniffing his mouth or his anus. The anus is subsequently thought preferable since it has no disgusting teeth. Catullus then shows his incredulity at the fact that he manages to have sex with so many women, and remarks that any woman who touches him can no longer be thought unworthy of the "most base deed" he can imagine. So as not to beat around the bush I think it best to give Nott's version in full:

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**Catullus Carn. 91**

De Aemilio. Sce.

Non, ita me dt asent, quicquam referre putavi,
Ursumus os, an culum olfacerem Aemilio.
Nil immundius hoc, nihilque immundius illud.
Verum etiam culus mundus et melior,
Nam sine dentibus est; hoc dentes sequipiedales.
Gingivas velo plaxemi habet veteris.
Preterea ridum, qualem defessus in estu
Me cenitis muli eous habere soleat.
Hic futuit nullus, et se facit esse venestem,
Et non pristino traditur, aqua asino?
Quem sitq attingit, non illam posse putemus
__Egroti culum lingere carnificis?__

We are unacquainted with this Aemilius, whom commentators seem to think of no mean condition; the conjectures of Pershe-
nus respecting him are unaverted, as who he may; vanity, and odium attach to his character.

*Planum.* Quintilian informs us, *Persius, Orat. Lib. 2.* that the word *planum* was a Pedian provincial word: it is not clear what it means; some think a wicker vehicle, or chariot, from *wala,* because it was woven as it were with wales. Persius thinks it meant a worm-eaten coffin, which is the most apt con-
struction for the comparison to which it is applied.

*Defensio in aenea, c. 3.* Few are ignorant of what Scaliger here gravely says us *februm* *scierae salvis,* as lucem, Vastius rends, *defensae,* in a different sense.

_Aiso.* That the Roman mills were generally worked by asses, mules, or men, we know. *Aissae,* by *synechoche,* often implies the whole mill. *Xenophanes* used the word *aissae* for the mill-stones, which

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49
Nott avoids translating *culus* by alluding to it via: “That more odious parts which shame / Forbids me in my verse to name!” and then later, more simply: “You know where!” Even if the more chaste reader does, in fact, not know where – then all it takes is a quick look at the Latin and a dictionary.

In this poem Nott is uncharacteristically present. This is perhaps why it is a successful translation. He makes his readers complicit with Catullus’ obscenity by making them provide the naughty bits. This establishes a dialogue with delay, which parallels the unfolding revulsion provoked by Catullus’ original. Catullus’ mule simile gives Nott a similar challenge. Catullus writes that Aemilius’ mouth opening is as worn out, or tired, as the vagina of a pissing she-mule in summer. Nott does not shy away from this explicit close-up, but he does make a few alterations to filter the picture a bit. He transposes the *defessus* from the *cunnus* to the she-mule, so that she becomes *toil’d* and *chaf’d*. To translate the mule’s pissing vagina Nott dresses it with the technical terms *to stale*, meaning to urinate (esp. of horses and cattle),\(^1\) and the excellent *brine’s lax aperture*. Both these terms add a rich verbal texture to the poem by their faintly exotic rarity and strong sonic qualities. The second term is admittedly circumlocutory, but it does not avoid the direct translation.

In poetry we are used to reading “brine” in reference to the sea by a somewhat archaic and lofty synecdoche. Its reference here to mule urine is pleasantly debasing. Nott strays from the Latin meaning in the last two lines of his translation. Where Catullus says: If any woman touches that man, then she will, by my reckoning, not be worthy of tonguing the anus of a diseased executioner, Nott has: “Who’d kiss that wretch might kiss, I swear, / A pale-faced hangman you know where!” The meaning is fundamentally different, but

\(^1\) “stale, v.1.2”. *OED* Online.
the difference in the effect of the meaning is negligible. This kind of change shows the proximity of the translator to the subtext.

As if to counteract the playfulness of the texts above, Nott’s notes are deadpan:

We are unacquainted with Aemilius... 
Defessus in aestu, &c. } Few are ignorant of what Scaliger here gravely tells us: fessi muli strigare solent, ut meiant. Vossius reads, defissus...

The pages given to this poem show a man enjoying his work. I wonder whether this delight in Catullus’ dirty mouth might make us reconsider our opinion of his motives for making a full translation of Catullus. Does he let down his guard here and show himself as one who revels in such crudities?

Poem 98 was translated by both Nott and Lamb:

Nott:

FOUL-MOUTH’D Vextius! did any deserve the disdain
To conceit, and to talkative ignorance due.
’Tis thyself; whose rank tongue’s only fit to lick clean.
The most filthy of parts, or some hind’s stinking shoe.
If thou’rt anxious to blast ev’ry friend thou mayst meet;
Do but open thy lips, and the wish is compleat!

Figure 6 - Nott (1795) 2.155

Nott’s note:

“This epigram has a double sense, alluding both to the fetid breath, and vile language of the speaker.”

106 Nott (1795) 2.152-3. Scaliger’s Latin reads: “tired mules are accustomed to stop work as they urinate.”
Lamb:

What'ER is said that's rude and gross
To the most silly and verbose,
May well with meaning just and true
Be, foul-mouth'd Vettius, said to you.
Your rugged tongue might sound and whole
Lick e'en the ploughboy's filthy sole.

If all you know, 't would give you joy
To blast, to injure, and destroy,
But ope your mouth the wish to teach,
And no one can outlive the speech.

Figure 7 - Lamb (1821) 2.91

Lamb's note:

"The epigram alludes to his twofold foulmouthedness, if such a word may be coined, of breath and language." (2.156)

Lamb passes over the culus of the Latin. It is an omission that would have no doubt been praised by critics following Tytler's rules of translation because it corrects the source author in accordance to the manners and morals of the modern time by subtraction of an element, and it does so without leaving an awkward gap. It is however a reduction that changes the flavour and idea of the original. Nott, like in 97, alludes to culus by "the most filthy parts." With an eye skipping to the Latin, the original expression is only very lightly altered. The notes given by both translators are necessary in order to provide the double meaning of putidus. In Nott's edition the note is accessible on the page and can be called into the reception of the poem with ease. Lamb's on the other hand requires turning to the back of the book. There is no page reference to the notes from the translations, which might have discouraged the more casual reader from using them closely. This material
factor reminds us of the differences in audience and ambition of the two translations. Lamb’s dependence on Nott’s version is clear in his note, which we can see struggles to convey the same message without using the same phrasing.107

Nott’s translation of 98 is written in the form of a sextilla (ababcc), whereas Lamb uses the couplet. In general Nott uses the couplet more frequently than Lamb.108 In this instance Catullus’ short elegiac is more effectively rendered by Nott’s shorter and more complex rhyme scheme. Lamb’s decision not to use his favoured form of the sextilla is likely to have been influenced by the fact that Nott had already done it. Lamb tended to avoid using the same form as Nott on individual poems. This is seen throughout their works if read alongside one another, apart from in the section of longer poems (62-68), which he wrote in couplets, irrespectively of what form Nott used.109

The formal and stylistic variety of Catullus’ poetry is another factor that postponed the dawn of more complete attempts at Catullan translation. The translation of Catullus into successful English verse requires a versatility possessed by few poets.110 Although we see individual examples in both translations of where the English form matches well the form of the original, such as in the above example, Nott’s 98, neither translator decided to use a single form for the hendecasyllable and another for the iambic trimeter, or the elegiac couplet, for example. Roughly speaking the poems fall into three formal divisions. There are the hendecasyllables (1-60), elegiacs (65-116) and longer poems (61-64).111 The short are translated by a variety of couplets, quatrains and sextillas, and the long poems are predominately couplets and for the most part iambic, following contemporary English

107 Lamb’s coining of a term may be taken as a sign of his desire to make a mark on something that he is all too aware is not his own.
108 Nott uses the couplet for 47% of his translations, to Lamb’s 28.75%. Lamb prefers the sextilla (33.75%) and the quatrain (32.5%), which Nott uses 19% and 32.5% of the time respectively.
109 Nott used mainly couplets, and in large part heroic ones, but 65 and 68 in quatrains of iambic pentameter.
110 This versatility goes beyond the formal and stylistic to a versatility of taste and interest, since Catullus could and did address subjects from the gutter to the heavens in registers both appropriate and inappropriate, but the range remains the same.
111 This is very general, and there are, of course, a great number of exceptions.
literary convention. Lamb only translates 29 of Catullus' 50 elegiacs (n.b. 2 absent). Ten of these are quatrains and ten couplets. There are three more complex lyric forms (e.g. poem 110, ababcdcdee) and the remaining six are sextillas. Nott uses twenty-three quatrains, sixteen couplets, ten sextillas and one more complex lyric form (i.e. poem 73, aabccbdd). These figures suggest an inclination in Nott to translate the elegiacs with quatrains, which reflect well the rhythmic to and fro, of the Latin elegiac couplet, and the hendecasyllables in the simpler and more flexible form of the couplet.\textsuperscript{112}

\textbf{Figure 8}

Formal spread of Nott's translation of poems 65-116

\textbf{Figure 9}

Formal spread of Nott's translation of Catullus' hendecasyllables

\textsuperscript{112} The couplet does not reflect the form of the hendecasyllable, but with weak rhymes permitted it does allow the poet a broadly similar flexibility.
I would argue that Lamb’s apparent inclination towards quatrains and sextillas for the hendecasyllabic poems (Figure 10 above) has more to do with his desire to grant himself distance from the previous translation and to maintain variety in the form of the target text than any special regard for reflecting the style of his source.\footnote{\text{113}}

The two foul-mouthed poems discussed above and Catullus’ 16th poem demonstrate the difficulties inherent in the translation of the more explicitly obscene poems. Such poems are problematic for the translator because they have in them words and images that were likely to have caused offense to the infamous “chaste reader.” The bluntness of the obscenity in the lines calls for significant measures from both translators. Although Nott dances his way, in my view, very elegantly through the potential quagmire of 97.

\textbf{HomoSexuality; The Amiable Fair... Juventius}

Gaisser (2009) states that: “Nott entitles each of the four Juventius poems (24, 48, 81, 99) “To his favourite” and avoids any reference to gender.” This aligns Nott’s reaction to Juventius closely with Lamb’s, who it would seem only goes one step further by turning him into a woman. Nott, however, does not avoid reference to gender entirely. First, Nott’s Juventius poems are, like all the poems from his two volumes, printed with

\footnote{\text{n.b. Lamb played around within the sextilla form, which Nott very rarely did, e.g. poem 9 (hendecasyllable) is a sextilla formed: abccab; 29 (iambic trimeter) abacc etc.}
the Latin on the left. This means that every reader with even elementary Latin was able to identify the addressee of these poems as male. Secondly and more importantly, in Nott’s notes on 21 (1.66) he might not do so much as draw attention to, or apologize for, the sex of the recipient directly, but he certainly lets the curious reader know that Juventius is a man by directing him or her to page xix of the introduction, where lies the sentence:

I could wish that the history of his amours ended here, but truth obliges us to acknowledge his minion Juventius. —Nott (1795) xix.

By “minion” Nott meant homosexual lover. There are also connotations of subordination and youth implicit in the term.114

In his notes on 48 (1.134) Nott writes:

If we suppose the present composition addressed to our poet’s favourite Lesbia, it is elegantly gallant: but it has however the same reference as Carm. 21.

He does not make explicit the fact that Juventius is an adolescent male on the page, but through the notes, a channel is always open to the exposition of Juventius’ being Catullus’ minion.

In Nott’s note to poem 81 (2.130), for example, he offers:

The person whom Catullus thus reproaches is the same alluded to in Carmina 21, and 45.

Again in his note to 99 (2.156):

This little piece, which we will suppose addrest to some amiable fair, is a delicate composition, well deserving the epithet of venustus, given it by several commentators. It has however the same reference as Carmina 21, 45, & 78.

The “It has however the same reference as . . .” in this note is artfully delayed. The fact contained at the end of the note chain superficially cancels out the delicacy and venustas of the poem’s composition. It is comparable to a parent telling a child who hates vegetables

114 “Minion, n.1 b.” OED Online.
that there were vegetables in the dish he or she just enjoyed. Two other features of the first and somewhat discredited sentence support the idea that Nott wished to draw attention to the delicacy and charm, despite its homoerotic significance, and they are: the fact that the potentially spoiling homoerotic nature of the poem is both delayed and obscured, and the distancing Nott uses by use of “several commentators.” The first point makes the initial supposition (i.e. that it is addressed to Lesbia) stronger as it is read, and the second makes sure that when it is dwelt upon the current commentator is nowhere to be seen. If we accept that Nott wanted to make this potentially controversial point, then we must ask why he did so. Does he have a vested interest in the toleration of homoeroticism beyond a respect and admiration for its aesthetic potential? Nott’s journey to the East in his early thirties may possibly have been prompted by an interest in sexual as well as cultural exploration, in the manner of Byron. Nott did not marry, but I have found no evidence to suggest that he was homosexual.¹¹⁵

For the most part Nott’s edition provides all the ingredients of Catullus’ full meaning on the page in front of the reader. For the Juventius poems he has introduced another faint line into the “triangulation,” which if followed leads all the way back to the introduction and to a problematic meaning. It is, however, “faint” because it is only seen by someone looking quite carefully. The Latin might bring it closer to the attention of the reader who reads both the left and right sides. The reader who tends only to look to the right-hand (English) page might quite easily overlook it and see Catullus’ favourite as “some amiable fair.”

¹¹⁵ In his obituary a classicizing pedagogical tendency is alluded to via an anecdote that tells of his preference to have the boy of his servant read to him the Sunday service, when he (on account of his hemiplegia) could no longer do so himself.
Poem 61 and the concubinus

Between lines 126 and 145 of Catullus' 61st poem lies the nut-slinging concubinus. Lamb, in his notes at the back of the book, writes: "The personage who scatters the nuts in the original could not be endured in English. I have therefore transferred it to the bridegroom himself, to whom the task is given by Virgil in his eighth Eclogue." The personage to whom Lamb refers is the male ex-lover of the bridegroom. Catullus presumably introduces him into the epithalamium as a part of the Fescennine stories that traditionally were told on the day of the marriage. Catullus therefore describes this licentious luxury from Manlius' past, which he must leave behind him on entrance into married life. He jokingly suggests that Manlius may have become overly attached to his favourite slave. This scene would not be at all out of place in Roman comic drama. An element, however diluted, of Fescennine storytelling is present as part of the traditional British and American wedding day in the best man's speech, in which it is customary for some preferably licentious anecdote to humorously incriminate and embarrass the groom before his friends and family.

Catullus addresses the concubinus directly with a taunting kind of mockery that gives the scene both a comic and realistic colouring. Catullus hints towards a rivalry between himself and the slave, who — we are led to presume — by his status as master's favourite, had begun to act above his station. Catullus then teases the concubinus with the imminent threat of the cinerarius (the "bride's hairdresser"), who will shave his downy beard. Just at the marriage ceremony is for the husband a rite of passage from the homosocial life of a bachelor to the monogamous and more dignified life of a married man, the concubinus too is expected to "come of age."

Catullus disrupts the calm of this traditional arrangement by suggesting that these two had become a little too fond of each other. He jokes that the unguentatus (perfumed) Manlius would, given half a chance, refuse to give up his concubinus and the miser a miser concubine (despairing love slave) is not overjoyed to give up his position either in the
household, or his master's bed. The shaving of the *concubinus* is in this situation therefore more of a punishment than any glorious rite of passage. This reading is especially attractive with Nott's edition open, where we read a cryptic note containing quotations from the 16th century French scholar, Marc Antoine Muret, and Martial:

> Cinerarius] The word, peculiarly signifying a lady's hairdresser, or tireman, is exceedingly apt in this place; as the office here assigned to the bride's tireman would seem more particularly to belong to him; for Muretus says: *Cinaedi tondebantur, uxores ducentibus dominis, quod interdum munus novae ipsae nuptae obibant.*

He then quotes Martial, Epig. 78. Lib. II. for authority:

> *Tondebit pueros jam nova nupta tuos...*  

By "cryptic" I mean that no clear sense comes out of it, although we get the gist of it. The problem seems to lie in the third line, where 'her' must be read for the 'him'. The idea that the wife would carry out the shaving of the *concubinus* is intriguing. It certainly develops the trace of possible jealousy of the bride towards the *concubinus*, which in turn makes Manlius come across as more inappropriately attached to his manslave than he might otherwise be.

The evidence, however, consisting of a line from Martial and a speculation from Muret, who was imprisoned on the charge of homosexuality, is by no means watertight, since they both would have had grounds for partiality, one for comic effect (as, I would argue, is the same of the original Catullan hint), and the other for the sake of challenging prejudice by revealing classical precedents for homosocial behaviour. There may well be many a true word spoken in jest, but there is a difference between:

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116 "Men took wives, their male sexslaves were shaved -- which job the newly wed wives often undertook themselves."

117 "Your new wife will shave your boys."

118 Nott's notes are really useful but they contain a great number of spelling errors. A critic from the *The Monthly Review* (November 1797 Art. VII.) correctly pointed out: "The Greek quotations introduced into the notes are scarcely ever spelled rightly."

119 For evidence of a Roman joke about masters falling in love with their boys and vice versa see e.g. Petronius' *Satyricon* (§85-7).
a. Acknowledging that it was amusing in a Fescennine poem to suggest that the bride should be jealous of a slave’s relationship with her groom, and

b. Suggesting that such jealousy was widespread, and indeed that it was dealt with in such a way.

It seems fair to suggest that it was the idea of Manlius’s homosexual relationship that makes the personage of the *concubinus* unwelcome in Lamb’s English translation. As in other areas of “obscenity,” Lamb employs circumlocution, deviation and omission, and generally seeks to normalize the “unendurable” Catullan *mores* to those of his own day. The following stanza was omitted by Lamb:

Sordebam tibi, villice
Concubine, hodie atque heri.
Nunc tuum cinerarius
Tondet os. miser, ah miser
Concubine! nuces da.\textsuperscript{120}

Recently you’ve despised me,
villa-keeping rentboy,
Now the bride's barber
Is about to shave your face.
Ah wretched rentboy! Go on!
Scatter the nuts.

Lamb had to omit this particular stanza, and not just “materially alter” it, as he says in his notes he did the next one, because of the reference to the act of shaving facial hair, which indubitably specifies the gender of the *concubinus*. To make a clean job of the “expurgation” of pederasty he had to do what – to do him justice – he seems loath to do, i.e. to cut out a section of the original. In many instances he could have skirted the issue by simply not commenting on it, since in English a “shameless rival”, for example, indicates no gender - unlike *concubinus* in Latin. He elsewhere shades other forms of obscenity out in a similar fashion, e.g. his handling of Juventius. But Lamb’s moral, and perhaps

\textsuperscript{120} n.b. Modern texts read: *sordebant tibi vilicae.*
religious and political, compass on this occasion does not allow him to leave the gender of the rival ambiguous but urges him to actively turn Manlius's boy into a woman:

'Tis whispered, that the wanton's charms
Will yet allure thee to her arms:
Oh! Let no shameless rival's pride
Degrade and pain thy gentle bride.

Gaisser, in her discussion of Catullan pederasty in English poetic translation, Delicate Subjects, writes: “Lamb depicts Juventius as merely a friend in 24 and 81, but suppresses his name and changes his sex in 48 and 99, both on the subject of kisses. (In 99 Lamb's Juventius becomes “dearest maid of my soul”). Lamb's handling of the concubinus therefore matches that of poems 48 (1821.1.86) and 99 (1821.2.92). The act of changing Juventius into a girl is somewhat unsettling. It seems strange for a translator purposefully to deceive his reader. In his notes to the epithalamium Lamb points to his reader that something drastic has been changed and gives a fairly vague reason for it, but in the notes for these two Juventius poems he avoids the issue altogether. Without returning to the Latin, which is not encouraged by Lamb since he does not print it, the reader would not know that Catullus wrote poems that addressed a male lover. This act shows that Lamb's translational aim bears little comparison to Nott's aim of restoring history by providing a link in its chain. He feels a strong obligation to morally process Catullus' poetry for his modern readers.

The results of such heavy handling are stylistically severe. The Juventius poems lose much of their intrigue. One of the key factors that makes the tender verses something more than the stuff of Valentine's cards is that these delicate, coy expressions of desire are seemingly misdirected. Romance between two free men contravened traditional social

122 Nott (1795) xi.
codes of conduct as well as Roman law. The illegitimacy of the love is one of the key driving forces of the poems. To take away the male name from these poems is like taking the snap out of the Christmas cracker. In the epithalamium too this kind of editing causes the loss of a great deal of flavour. There is a clear lack of Catullan artistry here and the focus is uncharacteristically wide. The premarital sexual exploits of the husband are reduced to the vague and lifeless: "Joy's voluptuous day". Presumably in response to such reduction the critic from The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c wrote:

"Mr Lamb dilutes him [Catullus] without mercy from the first poem to the last."

He also described Lamb's translation unflatteringly as "the flatting-mill," relating not only to the flatness of the verse but also the loss of Catullus' concision. An interesting feature of Lamb's divergence from the text is his use of Vergil to support his straying from Catullus. He calls upon the fact that Vergil has a husband throwing nuts at a wedding in Eclogue 8 to justify, by that ancient poet's authority, his modern editorial decision. What is even more interesting is that it acts as evidence of just how closely Lamb was working not only from Nott's 1795 poetic translation - which he consistently raids for rhymes and expressions - but also his notes, where we find noted at this point:

Virgil gives the office of throwing the nuts to the husband himself.
Sparge marite nuces VIRG. Ecl. 8.

Even if Nott was not himself critical of the sexual status of Juventius, he felt sufficient social pressure only to discreetly hint towards a homosexual romance between

122 See Williams (2010) with full bibliography.
124 The Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Sciences, &c. Saturday 23rd June 1821.
125 Lamb: "Let pure, let bless'd Thassalus sway; Then throw the mystic nuts away"; Nott: "Hear how his name our hymns resound; Then throw thy mystic nuts around!" There is nothing of "mystic" in the original - they bear no epithet whatsoever. This therefore suggests that Lamb trusted and used, as can be seen throughout, Nott's translation a good deal. This might even suggest that Lamb, at times, took more notice of the right hand page than the left.
the youth and the poet. He behaves less coyly with the *concubinus* of 61. Perhaps this has
to do with the fact that in this instance Catullus himself is not implicated in any pederastic
liaison. However in the notes on the stanza cut by Lamb (136-139) he writes:

*Sordebam tibi, &c.*] This stanza I interpret thus. The poet says: "I was lately despised by thee, because
my friendship with Manlius excited thy jealousy; thou who wast so great a favourite with thy master,
that thou didst govern his whole house, wast his *villicus*, art now renounced by him, being only fit to
throw the nuts at his wedding.

By revealing his interpretation of the stanza thus he shows Catullus behaving in a far from
gentlemanly manner. Catullus is seen condescending to taunt this unfortunate youth. If his
friendship with Manlius excited the jealousy of the *concubinus* then what does this say
about the kind of relationship Catullus and Manlius had? It certainly leaves the door open
to varied interpretation. There is some veiling in Nott’s translation, but it is not nearly as
extensive as in Lamb’s.

Nott’s bilingual edition is a book that provides an English reader with an
experience of the Catullan text that had been previously preserved for those with advanced
Latin. For an intermediate or advanced reader of Latin the Catullan experience that Nott’s
book provides, via the translation, the clearly printed Latin text and the notes, is as full as
many Catullan texts available today.¹²⁶ The influence and importance of Nott’s edition can
be seen in the poetry, both original and translated, of a number of important writers of the
Romantic era, including George Lamb, Leigh Hunt and John Keats.¹²⁷ Nott stayed close to
the Latin and at some level reflected the metrical variation of Catullus.

Lamb provided a smooth and readable verse version of Catullus’ poems,
appropriate for and highly accessible to the blossoming market of male and female readers

¹²⁶ Bilingual texts (e.g. Lee (1990) and Goold (1983) tend to provide fewer notes than Nott’s, and they tend
also to be endnotes, which are less readily accessible than footnotes.
¹²⁷ c.f. Chapters 3 and 5. The list must extend to many more writers who engaged with Catullus because
Lamb by no means offered a replacement for it.
of classical poetry in English translation. It was perhaps Lamb’s experience of adapting plays for the stage that informed his freer, less reverential and practical approach to translation. His book approaches the status of an adaptation of Catullus’ Latin for the medium of contemporary English poetry. This writing project was facilitated by Nott’s earlier edition, the translation of which really only needed a smooth rewriting that fixed the “unsightly” rhymes, reconfigured his notes (by pruning and addition), and cut the obscenities. I do not mean to imply that Lamb did not make his own translations from Catullus’ Latin, I am merely stating that his translation was partially aided and mediated by Nott’s, which can be seen clearly by his numerous borrowings, examples of which have been discussed above.

This should not diminish too greatly Lamb’s achievement, it is after all a different literary achievement, but rather, I would hope, emphasize the importance of that of Nott, who was committed in all of his translated editions to the task of recreating for his English reader as close a reception of his source as he could manage. The two translations had different roles to play and different demands to supply. Although the English text on the right-hand page of Nott’s edition of Catullus might conform more closely to what Venuti calls a “foreignizing” translation, and Lamb’s conform more closely to a “domesticating” translation we must be careful not to treat them as if they, or their authors, are polar opposites in terms of either translation style or politics.

Nott provided unprecedented access to the whole of Catullus’ extant oeuvre and although it was ostensibly aimed at scholars, it had a far greater range of appeal and utility. Lamb provided access to a different Catullan experience for a different audience. Although this domesticating translation is supposed to conform to dominant values of taste as well as morality, the vast majority of the contemporary criticism indicates otherwise, e.g:
Lamb's Catullus was every thing that was wretched; neither faithful to the original nor elegant in the translation; it was mangled piecemeal, accompanied with some political, "lack-lustre" witticisms, as remote from the subject under discussion as the two Poles.128

or:

"We very much fear that the translator has entrusted the rendering of this little poem to the head butler, or one of the upper servants in his house; so very menially is it "done into English." A waterman, in the leisure of a hard winter, would make better lines on the bench at Westminster-bridge."129

Venuti states that "even though judgments were mixed... [they] tended to be much more favourable than Nott's."130 From my reading of the critical heritage I could not make the same claim. The London Magazine (1821) even harks back to Nott's translation after calling Lamb's a "weak and valueless publication":

There is considerable force and unaffected truth in the Doctor's version, that makes it very pleasant to the English reader; and to the scholar, the notes are pregnant with great classical knowledge, and the expression of a plain and vigorous judgment. The Doctor does not catch many of those sweet honied expressions, which are the charm of the love poems of Catullus; nor has he the general freedom, the soft grace, the curious felicity of his original; but he translates as nearly to the life as is, perhaps, possible..."

Despite Lamb's evidently poor critical reception, his translation does not seem to have been universally despised. Some of the poems are even reprinted in 1854 (along with those by James Grainger131) by Walter K. Kelly, as a supplement to his prose translation of Catullus, Tibullus and The Vigil of Venus under the title of Erotica.

Elton and Sayers' 64

There were four translations of 64 published in Britain between 1780 and 1830. Two of these are found in Nott's (1795) and Lamb's (1821) Poems of Catullus. These were both written in heroic couplets and closely follow the Latin.132 Nott's lines commonly end with

128 The Literary Speculum (1821).
129 The London Magazine (1821).
132 Nott added 80 lines to Catullus' 408 lines, Lamb added 109 lines.
his accustomed half rhymes, whereas Lamb's are stopped with "masculine" rhymes. The other two were made by Frank Sayers (1763–1817), published in 1803, and Sir Charles Abraham Elton (1778–1853), published in 1814. I shall examine and compare the two translations of Elton and Sayers, reflecting on how they present Catullus' text and, with reference to their contemporary critical reception, seeking to identify possible reasons for, and implications to be drawn from, their different approaches to translation.

Before looking at the texts in detail I shall briefly summarize Catullus' highly complex poem. The subject of Catullus' miniature epic is nominally the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, but this is easily forgotten amid the wealth of more developed, vivid and memorable elements of the poem. It begins as if it were an epic telling the story of Jason and Medea. In lines 16-18 the narrator of the poem, appears to be jolted from this grave undertaking by the unexpected and generically inappropriate erotic focus of the description of some sea nymphs: illa atque haud alia viderunt luce marinas/ mortales oculis nudato corpore Nymphas/ nutricum tenus exstantes e gurgite cano ('Then and only then did mortals see by daylight/ the daughters of Nereus all naked, standing/ up to their breasts in the whirling silver.'). Following an apparent attempt to return to an Argonautica (lines 22-4), where he claims that he will invoke the heroes of the Argo often in his song (vos ego saepe meo vos carmine compellabo - 24), which he conspicuously avoids doing, the narrator digresses again from the glorious deeds of heroic men to focus on love. As is well documented the competition between amores and virtutes is an important theme.


134 Lines 1-15 of 64 (e.g. 1958, 1795...) appear as an epic proem with well-documented allusions to Apollonius' Argonautica. There are also allusions to Euripides' and Ennius' Medea, which introduce elements of tragic prologue to Catullus' proem. The reader is encouraged to expect a high register poem that tells the story (at some point) of the lives of Jason and Medea. These expectations are not met.

135 Translation by Rabinowitz (1991) chosen because out of all modern versions it captures best the balance of Catullus' eroticized but not lewd expression. The eroticism is unexpected because the pan of the epic/tragic lens should pass over the bedazzled nymphs and cross-fade into the next scene, but here it sticks on the nymphs and even zooms in to their bare chests.
throughout the poem. In this instance the story of Peleus’ marriage to the goddess, Thetis, is the love that wins the poet’s focus over heroic deeds. Catullus then, in an apparently conventional passage seeming to hark back to a pre-agricultural Golden Age, but which in effect conjures an eerily post-apocalyptic scene, explains that the people of Thessaly put down their tools and flock to the palace of Peleus: *rura colit nemo, mollescunt colla iuvencis*... (no one tends the soil, the necks of the oxen go soft... - 38f). When the mortals arrive at the palace they admire the famous *pulvinar* (bridal couch) on the cover of which is depicted the tragic story of Ariadne, abandoned by her lover, Theseus, and later (or in another part of the embroidered cover) “rescued” by the god Bacchus. The mortals then leave, making way for the gods, who feast while the Parcae sing of the future events in the form of a partial and particularly ill-omened epithalamium. It is partial because there are many elements of a Roman wedding song not present, and ill-omened because the first part of the song consists of the gruesomely described “heroic” deeds of their unborn son, Achilles. The second half of the song is made up of the gloomy prophecy of a time (presumably recognized as the present day — i.e. Catullus’ day) when Justice has left the world and people can no longer differentiate between good and evil (*omnia fanda nefanda malo permixta furore* - 405).

The Crucible of Modern Taste - Sayers vs. Elton

Neither Frank Sayers nor Charles Abraham Elton attempted to cover the whole of 64, but both instead made extensive extracts from it. The selection of these extracts in both cases

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137 Catullus does not make clear whether or not the arrival of Bacchus bodes well for Ariadne, but it is a classic *deus ex machina* conclusion.
138 The Parcae are powerful goddesses who preside over the birth, life and death of mankind. They embroider the events of human lives from the first thread to the final cut.
139 See Konstan (1977) et al.
140 Elton ll.38-277 and Sayers ll.1-206.
prioritizes the dramatic episode of Ariadne, who wakes up to find herself abandoned on a foreign shore, but interestingly neither goes so far as to begin and end the episode within the borders of Catullus' ecphrasis (lines 52-264). These decisions of selection and presentation indicate a preference for the picturesque and highly pathetic lament of Ariadne over the poem as a whole, and simultaneously a willingness to reflect the artistic structure of Catullus' poem, to present an extract from a translation rather than an independent poem about Ariadne in an "After Catullus" style. The choice of making a sample of poem 64 rather than presenting the whole poem was no doubt informed by practical matters of space (it would exceed 400 lines in length) but the poem also lends itself to sampling because of its fractured form and unconventional unity.

Frank Sayers' version of Catullus 64 was published by a leading London publishing house, Cadell and Davies, under the title of Theseus and Ariadne. It appeared in a slender volume of poetry called Nugae Poeticae. In later editions and collections it is found under the name of ARIADNE, (From an Epithalamium by Catullus), but the text is identical. Sayers was the son of a successful Bristol merchant. He excelled at the newly opened Palgrave School, in Suffolk, run by the poet, radical essayist and influential teacher, Anna Lactitia Barbauld. When her husband was not teaching them Greek and Latin, Barbauld taught the boys in her care to write well in English by reading them "a fable, a short story, or a moral essay, to them aloud, and then sent them back into the schoolroom to write it out on the slates in their own words. Each exercise was separately

141 See Laird (1993) for discussion of Catullus 64 as an ecphrasis.
142 Versions of Ovid's Metamorphoses so often only present the stories without the structural context, e.g. After Ovid, Ed. Hofman & Lasdun (1996) and Hughes' Tales from Ovid (1997). This would have been easy to do also with the Ariadne episode – but both Elton and Sayers choose to expose at least one side of the narrative frame.
143 See Thomson (1961) and Knopp (1976) et al. on unity of 64.
144 37 pages. It was sold for 2s in 1803.
145 Sayers' lifelong friend and possible lover, William Taylor, described A. L. Barbauld as "the mother of his mind." Robberds (1843) 2.570.
overlooked by her; the faults of grammar were obliterated, the vulgarisms were chastised, the idle epithets were cancelled...

On leaving school Sayers went to Edinburgh as a general student, where he read philosophy (including that of Hume, Berkeley and Hartley), and classical literature. Taylor recalls that by 1787, after he had returned to Edinburgh as a medical student, Sayers had developed intellectually: "His imagination, always familiar with our best native writers, was now more classically adorned, and more exquisitely polished, by the perusal in their original languages of the chosen remains of Roman and Greek excellence." He took Greek lessons with Professor Dalzel and studied Greek with a passion that, according to Taylor, made him ill from lack of air and exercise. Sayers eventually graduated from Hardervyck (then Leyden's less rigorous cousin) with a thesis on the physical effects of the passions, all copies of which he later destroyed.

After a period of travelling Sayers reached what is considered his literary peak in 1790-92 with the publication of Dramatic Sketches of the Ancient Northern Mythology, which was well received in both England and Germany. In the revised second edition of this volume he pioneered in English the German poetic/dramatic form of the 'Solospiel' or 'monodrama'. The death of his mother in 1790, however, is said to have had a profound effect on him and, according to William Taylor's biographical comments in his Collective [sic.] works of the late Dr. Sayers (1823), he underwent a dramatic change of personality, turning from "atheism to dogmatic Anglicanism" and from political radicalism to a

146 Taylor (1823) xii.
147 Oxford DNB: David Chandler, 'Taylor, William (1765–1836)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004. Palgrave School was attended by William Taylor (1765–1836), a contemporary and close friend (possibly lover) of Sayers whose translations of German literature influenced the first generation of Romantic poets, and Thomas Denman (1779–1854), who drafted the Reform Act of 1832. There may therefore have been a liberal if not radical inclination to the education of the children there, perhaps similar to the "dissenting academy" (Nick Roe's (1997) term) of Enfield School, which Keats attended. Final quotation Taylor (1823) xxiii.
148 Taylor (1823) xxxi. We can read between Taylor's lines that Sayers seemed to experience some kind of breakdown, resulting in his mother and Taylor pulling him out of his medical studies and bringing him back to Norwich.
149 He read many of the key German examples of this form with Taylor as his guide. Taylor (1823) xxxviii.
Burkean whiggism. The conversion reported by Taylor (and emphasized in Chandler's account) may be usefully tempered and contextualized by comparison to the moves towards more conservative views over time of Coleridge, Wordsworth, or Southey.

ARIADNE first appeared in a collection of poems with a strong influence from Roman love poetry, displayed by a scattering of poems about or addressed to Cynthia (in homage to Propertius). Sayers is likely to have read the most popular of Catullus' poems at school as part of his classical education, but even if he did not he would certainly have come across him in Edinburgh, where he is reported by Taylor to have read many classical authors alongside his research into dissident philosophy. Sayers' version of 64 is written in heroic couplets, with a single triplet (lines 119-121) during Ariadne's impassioned lament. It is 171 lines in length and translates the first 206 lines of the Latin. There is therefore a certain amount of abridgement involved in his translation, which – as we shall see – does not attempt to replicate Catullus' mode of expression, yet adheres closely to the narrative sequence of the poem.

150 Oxford DNB: David Chandler, 'Sayers, Frank (1763-1817)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2006. I can find no evidence in the sources that support Chandler's suggestion that Sayers' political opinions "veered round to an extreme toryism." Taylor seems to go no further than to align him with Burke on the conservative side of Whig politics. Although Taylor's account seems even-handed and thorough, biographies of friends are notoriously untrustworthy, not least because the unbridled truth about the recently deceased might harm the interests of the living. He tells us that Sayers tightly controlled what papers he, as literary executor and biographer, was able to work from. There does not seem to be any way of reclaiming the information contained in what was left out. For a roughly contemporaneous example of this see the differing and mythologizing portrayals of Shelley's cremation, in particular, by Leigh Hunt and Edward John Trelawny, Whistley (2000). The biographical narrative, however, as we have it from Taylor (1823) and Taylor's second cousin and biographer, Robberds (1843), seems too clean and mannered to be entirely representative of the facts.

151 n.b. Coleridge concurrently (in the 1790s) - as the ideals of revolution slowly broke down - looked to the same teaching that principally informed Sayers' "new" thinking, i.e. Hartley's Observations (1749).

152 David Hume, whose thinking was highly influential on the likes of Byron and Shelley, was an admirer of Catullus. "If the merit of the composition lie in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the first line recalls the whole; and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus has its merit, and I am never tired with the perusal of him." 'Of Simplicity and Refinement in Writing', Works, III, 211.
The passages of 64 most frequently alluded to and imitated are the two most visually striking parts of the poem, located at the beginning and end of the ecphrasis: Ariadne standing alone on the beach (53-70) and the arrival of Bacchus (251-266). Due to the fact that these two passages have the most concrete visual guidance and description of realizable plastic art, they are the ones most often drawn on by visual artists engaging with the story of Ariadne and Theseus. Since both Elton and Sayers translated the earlier of these two passages I shall begin my comparison of their work here (53-70):

Namque fluentisono prospectans litore Diae
Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tue tur
Indomitos in corde gerens Ariadna furores...

There, staring out from Dia's surf-resounding shore
And watching Theseus sailing off with his fast fleet,
Is Ariadne, nursing at heart unmastered passions...

The first useful point of comparison may be drawn on the translators' reaction to fluentisono litore Diae (line 53) – 'Dia's surf-resounding shore'. A key feature of this part of Catullus' poem is the friction created between the ecphrastic form (the narrator's description of a visual artefact) and the impossible kinds of information apparently depicted on it, for example sound and speech. The narrator of 64 embellishes his description of the matrimonial bedspread, vestis; he advances beyond simple description of the embroidered images and reads from them the tragic myth of Ariadne. There is a level of interpretation implicit in the description of the ecphrasis that is never openly acknowledged as it is, for example, in Keats' Ode on a Grecian Urn – in which the narrator's engagement with the object of art (real or imagined) bears some resemblance to...

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153 Pictorially these sections are conflated in Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne, which was hanging in the Angerstein gallery, frequented by Hunt et al. They too are the sections most often described in Roman art.
154 Text taken from Nott (1795) as representative of the Catullan text at the time. The translation is Guy Lee's (1990) 83£
155 Laird (1993) called this 'disobedient' ecphrasis.
that in 64. In response to the *fluentisonum litus* Sayers writes: 'sea-dash'd strand,' which captures the general notion of Catullus’ description, that is: there is a sound made on the beach, presumably by waves. Sayers employs the alliterative combination of ‘s’ and ‘sh’ sounds surrounding the onomatopoeic ‘dash’, which to some extent emphasizes the harshness of Ariadne’s situation. “Alone, abandon’d, on the sea-dashed strand” is tougher and more dramatic than Catullus’ line, since *fluentisonus* conjures an idea more in line with ‘mellowsounding’ than the harder and more aggressive ‘sea-dash’d’, chosen to reflect the cruelty of Ariadne’s plight. Although there is sound in Sayers’ description it is in no way ‘disobedient’, to use Andrew Laird’s term, to the ecphrastic form, meaning that it makes noise that its reported plastic medium is incapable of representing.156 ‘Sea-dash’d’ can be depicted pictorially with an ease far greater than *fluentisonus*.

Entranc’d in woe, see Ariadne stand,
Alone, abandon’d, on the sea-dash’d strand;
Fresh from her couch, where floating dreams of night
Had spread their painted visions to her sight,
She fondly trusts that still they mock her view,
And scarce believes her misery is true;
Mean time her lover, hastening from the shore,
Skims the green waves, and plies the dripping oar;
Fix’d to the earth, she views, with streaming eyes,
The distant sail, and deeper pangs arise;
The glittering fillet of her golden hair,
Her thin-spun veil, light dancing in the air,
The slender zone, her snowy breast that binds,
Fall at her feet, the sport of eddying winds;
Nor veil, nor zone attract her fixed sight,
Deep plung’d in grief, she marks but Theseus’ flight;
With him her soul still strives the waves to ride,
Cleaves to his lips, and lingers by his side.

Figure 11 – Sayers’ *Ariadne*.

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Elton describes the shore as “long-echoing to the flowing sound of waves”. He, like Sayers, interprets fluentisonus, specifying the originally unspecified agent of the sound, but although ‘long-echoing’ and ‘flowing sound’ are by no means an economical rendering, their combination is a sensitive reflection of the line, which develops a sense/meaning close to that originally signified by Catullus. Elton’s line 21 is importantly just as disobedient to the ecphrastic form as Catullus’ line 52. This indicates a desire in Elton to reflect the manner as well as the matter of Catullus’ Latin.

52 SPECIMENS OF THE CLASSIC POETS.

The tapestried covering, wrought with antique forms
Of men, display’d heroic lore, in threads
Of wondrous art. For there upon the shore,
Long-echoing to the flowing sound of waves,
Stood Ariadne: casting a far look
On Theseus, as in rapid bark he pass’d away;
And pangs of furious wild despair
Master’d her throbbing heart. Nor yet believed
That she was Ariadne; while, scarce waked
From her deceiving sleep, she saw herself
Left wretched on the solitary sands.
The youth, who could forget her, flying, beat
The billows with his oars, and left his vows
Light-scatter’d to the winds and to the storms.
Him when the princess from the weedy shore
Discern’d remote, she bent her straining eyes,
In posture like the statue of a nymph
Madding in Bacchic orgies: troubled thoughts
Rush’d on her soul, like waves; nor suffer’d she
The slender mitre on her yellow hair;
Or the transparent scarf, that o’er her breast
Spread light its covering; or the girdle’s grasp
In that heroic age did Theseus leave
Piræus’ winding bay, and visited
The Cretan walls of that inhuman king.
For legends tell that Athens, erst constrain’d
By cruel pestilence, stoned the death
Of slain Androgeos; and a tribute sent
Of chosen youths, and maids in beauty’s bower,
To glut the monstrous Minotaur: When thus
The noble city underneath its curse
Groan’d heavily, the gallant Theseus chose
To perish self-devoted, in behalf
Of his dear Athens; rather than these maids
Find graves in Creto, yet need a funeral rite.

Figure 12 - Elton’s Ariadne.

Charles Abraham Elton (1778-1853) was the eldest son of Reverend Sir Abraham Elton (1755-1842), fifth baronet and heir to a large Bristol mercantile fortune. Charles was educated at Eton before embarking on a military career, which saw him rise to the rank of Colonel. He was a married man, who had published a book of poems (1804) and made
translations of Hesiod (1809) and Propertius (1810) by the time he started work on the successful and, for the most part, critically well-received *Specimens of the Classic Poets from Homer to Tryphiodorus*, published in 1814. Volume two of this colossal three-volume anthology represents Catullus' literary work by the following poems: 2, 3, 5, 8, 45, 86, 92, 31, 96, 101, 62, 64. This is a fairly representative selection of Catullus' poems, which shows that Elton had a deep familiarity with the Catullan corpus. It takes the reader on a journey through what might be identified biographically as Catullan phases, from the well-known Lesbia phase (2, 3, 5, 8, 86, 92,) with 45 (Acme and Septimius) thrown in - tangentially connected to the Lesbia poems by its concern with love. The Lesbia poems presented by Elton include the most famous poems, presenting Catullus the lover, first besotted then bitter; however, they advance beyond this with 86 and 92, portraying a more playful and stylized side of the relationship. 86 compares Lesbia with Quintia, who is supposed by many to be beautiful, but in comparison to Lesbia, Catullus concludes, she is merely pretty (candida), tall (longa) and straight (recta), lacking Catullus' essential venustas (charm). 92 is the poem in which Catullus explains that Lesbia must still be in love with him because she cannot stop speaking ill of him. Both these poems reveal a more humorous side to Catullus as Lesbia's lover.

Elton then gives 31 (Sirmio), recently translated by Hunt, which shows a more tender and domestic side to Catullus. This poem might be seen to herald the beginning of Catullus' sensitive phase. 96 and 101 then follow revealing Catullus' ability to respond with the utmost sensitivity to the deaths of his friend's wife and his own brother. 62 and 64 complete the selection giving the reader an example of Catullus' longer and more ambitious poetry. The march of poetic maturity is complete. The only styles

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157 ibid. *Specimens* was published by Baldwin for 11 16s, equivalent of around £65 in 2011.
158 On Hunt's translation see p.142f.
159 The idea of 'phases' problematically introduces a temporal element to the selection, which may also be seen as being collected according to theme. But the term also catches the selection's presentation of a very classical progression from immature lover to mature poet.
underrepresented by this selection are Catullus' invective poetry and his short and slanderous political swipes, both of which tend to contain sexual expletives that would have denied them inclusion. Aside from the problem of their obscenity, these sides of Catullus would not have fit into Elton's narrative of poetical progress, and even if they had fitted Elton would have found it hard to justify their presentation under the title of "Classic Poetry" and especially in a work explicitly intended to reach women as well as men.

Elton bravely challenged Tytler's theory of translation in his preface:

The author of the "Essay" has laid down an incontrovertible position, that "the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original:" but, in limiting this by a second, that "the translation should have all the ease of original composition," he has allowed the latter to encroach upon the former; and, in several of his illustrations, both in poetry and prose, has palliated, and even commended, a total departure from the principles of his first rule: so that the prominent characteristics of an author's style are given up without an effort to retain them, on the assumed impossibility of transferring them into a modern language, and on the loose and hazardous grounds of rendering the original pleasing. 160

He saw the approach to translation endorsed by Tytler as the act of melting down an author's characteristic peculiarities in "the crucible of modern taste." In this same vein he continued:

The varied and prominent originality of the classic ancients will in vain be sought in the languid or verbose generalities of what is called free imitation. Such writers please themselves with their own facility, and forget that, if to combine closeness with a luminous force [i.e. the poetic "ease" of the original] be a task of arduous attainment, it is not by escaping from it that they can lay a claim to the honours of industry or genius.

Between the polar extremes of a somehow purely "domesticating" translation and not translating at all there are many shades of translation, offering different kinds of reading experiences. The concept of accessibility in literary translation is problematic because it must always be asked what kind of access is needed for whom and to what end? In Sayers and Elton we see two different kinds of translator creating different cultural products with varying relationships both to their common source (i.e. Catullus) and to their readers.

Sayers turns 206 lines of Catullus' 64th poem into a fluent modern poem and

160 Specimens (1814) xviii-xix.
includes it among original poems, whereas Elton presents his text as a translation amid a vast store of other classical translations. In doing so he claims little creative merit for himself. However disparate their approaches, they do not represent opposites. Sayers may be seen to have provided greater access to Catullus’ telling of the story of Ariadne by normalizing more elements of his source than Elton. Elton on the other hand provides greater access to more (including the style and manner) of the original poem. The two different but not opposed approaches have appealed and will continue to appeal to different kinds of readers with different reading habits, abilities and goals.

We must not forget that pleasure is not and has not been the only reason for reading poetry and especially classical poetry, as Elton reminds us in his preface:

It is however a mistake, that the readers of translations read for amusement only... Translations are most in request with persons of cultivated understandings: with literary women, and with men of active inquiring minds, and an appetite for letters; but whose occupations in busy professional life have precluded them from the advantage of studying the classics in the original languages. Such persons do not read merely to amuse their fancy; they read for the purpose of placing themselves on a level, in point of literary taste and information, with finished scholars. To these persons a faithful version of a classic possesses a value, wholly independent of the gratification arising from elegant language or polished sentiment; and, with respect to them, the translator who improves his author improves not to delight but to mislead.

Elton explains the important role of classical translation as a route to scholarly taste and knowledge, as a form of cultural capital. He presents his *Specimens* as the abridged classical education for women and the professional man, a shortcut to legitimizing classical knowledge. Sayers published his *ARIADNE* as part of a book of poems, original and translated. He was therefore more interested in providing his reader with an entertaining reading experience of English verse, and in so doing took on a more involved creative role than Elton, who wanted to facilitate the reading of the classical texts he was selecting.

His selection, however, indicates a desire to entertain his readers, of both sexes. The relatively high number of poems concerning love and including female characters may reveal a desire in Elton to appeal specifically to the burgeoning market of female readers. It is difficult, however, to differentiate between poems chosen for their general appeals, as
classical highlights, or purple passages, and poems chosen to encourage more specific audience attraction.

Ariadne Waking

Necdum etiam seseque sui tum credit esse,
uptote fallaci quae tum primum excita somno
desertam in sola miseram se cernit arena. (64.55-7)\textsuperscript{161}

Nor yet did she even believe herself to be her own
because she, just then woken from deceiving sleep,
saw herself deserted, wretched on the lonely sand.\textsuperscript{162}

Lines 55-7 of poem 64 describe Ariadne’s situation in a highly wrought and impressionistic way. Ariadne is confused and the confusion is related to the reader at some level by, for example, the crowded effect produced by each line having an elision (which is uncommon in three consecutive lines in 64), the confusion of agency brought about by the transferred epithets of fallaci and sola (since it is Theseus that is deceiving and Ariadne lonely, not sleep and the sand) and the unresolved question of who is seeing what and how. Are we to imagine that Ariadne can see herself, in another part of the vestis, deserted on the shore?\textsuperscript{163} Elton has for these lines:

...Nor yet believed
That she was Ariadne; while, scarce waked
From her deceiving sleep, she saw herself
Left wretched on the solitary sands.

It is likely that Elton was working from the same text as Nott (even perhaps Nott’s text itself) since they seem to share the reading of line 55.\textsuperscript{164} He maintains Ariadne’s slightly strange out of body experience, where she sees \textit{herself} on the beach. It is possible that by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{161} Nott (1795), chosen as a contemporary edition. Nott’s line 55 reads \textit{credidit}, corrected to \textit{credidit}.
\item \textsuperscript{162} My literal translation.
\item \textsuperscript{163} Line 55 is particularly corrupt. Mynors OCT (1985 reprint) has: “necdum etiam sese quae usituisere credit”.
\end{itemize}
contemporary idiom Catullus' Ariadne simply 'found herself', or realized that she was, on the shore. In any case, the textually close rendering of this expression is true to the letter and no doubt faithful to Elton's reading experience, but we can never be sure whether or not it is true to the intention of the poet, or indeed his own reading of the line he wrote (which are not even necessarily the same). This highlights the problematic nature of *fidelity* in translation, since it provokes the question: faithful to what? Elton retains the ambiguity of the text and did not seek to solve its potential reading problems. Sayers, on the other hand, writes:

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        Fresh from her couch, where floating dreams of night
       Had spread their painted visions to her sight,
        She fondly trusts that still they mock her view,
          And scarce believes her misery is true;
   (Sayers Ariadne 3-6)
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Sayers' Ariadne also has difficulty with believing what she is seeing, but the translator expands the notion by introducing such external elements as 'floating dreams of night' and 'painted visions' that 'mock her view.' The additions made by Sayers are evocative, exhibiting a first generation Romantic's predilection for moments of transient consciousness; they do not dramatically change the meaning of source, but they do significantly change the way that the text means what it does. Sayers introduces a blending of dream and reality, a waking dream situation that does not appear in Catullus. We are to understand in Sayers' version that Ariadne had dreamt that Theseus had left her and when she wakes she hopes that she is still dreaming. This idea may well result from the presence of another source, Heinrich Wilhelm Von Gestenberg's monodrama *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1785), which his friend William Taylor translated as part of the second edition of his three-volume work, *Historic Survey of German Poetry*.

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165 Von Hofmannsthal seems, at least in title, to be in debt to this *Solospiel* of Gestenberg.
Last night my dreams were horrid. I imagin'd
That he I love was fled. I stretch'd my arms,
My vacant arms, to clasp his manly breast,
And grasp'd, alas! a yielding spectre-form:
It melted into air; I beckon'd it,
Call'd after it in vain; the winds dispers'd it.

This translation was printed long after Sayers' *Nugae Poeticae*, but due to Sayers' interest in the monodrama - which he introduced to England inspired by such German authors as Gestenberg - it is almost certain that he was familiar with Gestenberg's *Ariadne*. Its mediation in Sayers' reception of 64 is interesting because it is not a translation. The looser and more familiar connection with classical myth in late eighteenth-century Germany may be seen to have influenced Sayers' style of translation. It is suggested by Taylor that Sayers took elements from Gestenberg's tragedy *Minona* (1785) for his *Moina* (in *Dramatic Sketches* 1790), both of which learnedly compare and contrast different peoples and cultures: Gestenberg compared the Romans with Anglo-Saxons and Celts, Sayers contrasted the Gothic and Celtic. These examples demonstrate a direct influence of German Romantic classicism on British Romantic classicism.

Elton skilfully replicates the way that Catullus enhances Ariadne's description stylistically by using his line breaks to fragment the delivery of his blank verse. Sayers' Ariadne appears to be in some kind of comfortable delusion, in which she "fresh from her couch... fondly trusts" (my italics) that she is still dreaming. At this same point Catullus' heroine already shows signs of desperation. By this expansion of Ariadne's disbelief into a waking dream and the resultant digression from the Catullan text Sayers avoids representing the stylistic features of the Latin by offering not only two smooth and fluent English couplets, but also an example of "the crucible of modern taste" at work.

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166 Taylor (1830) 3.4.
167 ibid. 3.7.
As a final comparison of the translations of Sayers and Elton let us look at lines 61-5, in which Ariadne is likened to a statue of a maenad:

Saxe ut effigies bacchantis prospicit, evoe,
Prospicit et magnis curarum fluctuat undis,
Non flauo retinens subtilem vertice mitram,
Non contecta levi velatum pectus amictu,
Non tereti strophio luctantes vincta papillas,

Like some Bacchante's stone statue, watches, ah
Watches, and tosses inwardly on great waves of troubles,
Not keeping fine-spun snood upon her golden head,
Not covered by light raiment over veiled bosom,
Not tied about the heaving breasts with rounded band. 168

Elton's translation is of *saxe ut effigies bacchantis* is again specific and word-rich: “In posture like a statue of a nymph/ Madding in Bacchic orgies.” Like his interpretative addition above (“of waves” specifying the agency of *fluentisonus*) the use of “In posture” is as mundane as it appears to be innocuous. It has however a specificity that surpasses the letter of the text; it reduces the scope of the simile, limiting the parallel of Ariadne with the stone statue of a bacchant to the way she stands, rather than leaving the door of the reading experience open to other memories of statues, for example their facial expressions, costume etc. 169 It is a sensible and rational reading, but also prescriptive and limiting. His rendering of *bacchantis* (“of a nymph/ Madding in Bacchic orgies”) is also sensible and instructive. Elton identifies that the word ‘bacchant’ might be less than familiar to some readers (uneducated in the classics) and uses instead the more common word ‘nymph,’ which - when qualified as it is - communicates the same idea to a wider audience. 170 This is an example of Elton assisting his non-classical reader.

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168 Text: Nott’s, translation: Lee’s (1990) 85 with amendments (italicized) due to textual variation.
169 n.b. The memories of the statue, like the statue itself, need not be real or specific. They could be imagined, conflated and/or in any way mediated ideas of a statue, all of which help give meaning and visual texture to the words.
170 The English word ‘bacchant’ was in use meaning a celebrant of Bacchus, and its use as an adjective meaning ‘wine-loving’ is found in the poetry of Thomas Moore and Byron. “Bacchant, n. and adj.” *OED* Online.
Catullus' anaphoric climax in lines 63-5, beginning with *non flavo* and ending in *papillas*, is rendered by Elton:

The slender mitre on her yellow hair;  
Or the transparent scarf, that o'er her breast  
Spread light its covering; or the girdle's grasp  
Gainst which her bosom's struggling orbs rebell'd.

He does not adopt the anaphora but does employ the alliteration of 'g' to add a somewhat burlesque flourish as the content's eroticizing focus seems again to defy its high-tragic context. Elton's closeness to the text has brought him here into the potentially problematic realm of the erotic, and he omits nothing from the text. He avoids the scene becoming obscene by neutralizing the eroticism of the image with cold and abstract expression. Although *amictus*, like 'scarf,' denotes an outer garment, it was a less decorous and more essential piece of clothing. Elton's use of 'scarf' suppresses some erotic colour for his polite audience of both sexes. Rebellious and struggling 'orbs', even if they are identified as belonging to Ariadne's bosom, at most skirt the meaning of *luctantes papillas*. There is a technicality to the expression that obfuscates its meaning. It manages to communicate the meaning of the original but in so doing deactivates it. A comparison may be made with ruining the timing of a joke, Elton's obscure description of Ariadne's chest mysteriously clothes her. See by contrast Rabinowitz's version:

The seabreeze doffs her gauzy turban,  
her dress falls delicate down from shoulder,  
frees her firm little breasts,  
then everything slips from her body, and the waves roll up to touch.

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171 The use of 'struggling' is further evidence that Elton was working from the same text as Nott since it must be translating *luctantes* and not *lactantes*. Nott (1795) 2.14 n. "Many read *lactantes*, [meaning something like 'milk-producing'] which, though not improper, does not convey the forcible idea of *luctantes*." n.b. Modern texts read *lactantes papillas*. Also line 43: "White-foaming at her feet, broke over them" for *allidebat* (Nott following *P*) rather than *adludebant* (*O*) which is now commonly found, meaning "playing".

172 Elton's translation is similar with regard to the level of circumlocution to Nott's "tumid pride" and "struggling charms" (1795) 61.79-80.


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Although this translation loses a good deal of the urgency of its source, it effectively shows how Ariadne can be both elegantly and erotically naked in the English language.

Sayers gallops over this complicated section with ease by maintaining a safe distance from the text. *Saxea ut effigies bacchantis* is hinted at by “Fix’d to the earth”, which limits the possible importation of meaning and imagery from Catullus’ cross-media allusion to just one feature of a statue of a bacchant, its fixedness or stillness. He makes the fairly blunt addition of “streaming eyes” to emphasize the tragedy of Ariadne’s situation, which otherwise would scarcely come across since very little intensity has thus far been built. The heroic couplet is a relatively restrictive and unresponsive form, especially when it is as consistently timed and frequently end-stopped as this example by Sayers, who has not the formal mastery of Pope or Dryden. This makes distance from the source text essential, and as we see in these lines, the use of blunt emotional signposts attractive to Sayers.

It seems probable that Sayers, as well as Elton, was familiar with Nott’s edition of Catullus:

- *Fix’d to the earth, she views, with streaming eyes,*
- *The distant sail, and deeper pangs arise;*
- *The glittering fillet of her golden hair,*
- *Her thin-spun veil, light dancing in the air,*
- *The slender zone, her snowy breast that binds,*
- *Fall at her feet, the sport of eddying winds;*  
  (Sayers *Ariadne* 9-14)

- *Now like a frantic bacchanal she raves,*
- *And her fond soul is toss’d on sorrow’s waves!*
- *No slender fillet binds her yellow head,*
- *No shadowing veil is o’er her bosom spread,*
- *No modest zone confines its timid pride,*
- *Or longer strives its struggling charms to hide;*
- *But each gay ornament her beauty wore,*
- *Wet with the surge, lies scatter’d on the shore:*  
  (Nott 2.13.75-84)
A coincidence, or the use of the same dictionary, might explain the use of 'fillet' for *mitra*, 'veil' for *amictus* and 'zone' for *strophium*, but when more specific and complex connections reveal themselves such as Ariadne's garments here become 'the sport of... wind(s),' where 'wind(s)' also rhymes with 'bind(s)' and the Latin it translates makes no mention of wind – the probability of direct influence is too high to ignore. This is therefore another example of mediation in Sayers' version of Catullus 64. The levels of mediation are however low. The subtitle of the poem (*from an epithalamium by Catullus*) could either be meant to indicate that it does not call itself a translation, or that it is a translation of an extract from Catullus.

I have throughout this chapter used the term 'version' as a sign of its not attempting to be a translation, but as a version it is very close to the Latin. The *Poetical Register* (1804) and *Monthly Review* (Aug. 1804) both refer to it as a poem rather than a translation:


Both humour and poetical talents are exhibited in these *Nuga*. The poem of Theseus and Ariadne has considerable merit; and the other pieces will be read with pleasure.

In *the Jilted Lover,* page 31. *whom* is improperly made the nominative case to *was.*

These two small pieces represent all that remains in the British periodicals of the contemporary critical reception of Sayers' *ARIADNE*, which is a little surprising for a book sold by Chadell and Davies. For both critics the poem stood out from the rest of the slender volume. It is certainly the most ambitious poem in the book. It is interesting that the poem should again be referred to a 'trifle' (*nuga* - Catullus' own word for his poems in poem 1
line 4) when its relatively grand scale has been used in the argument against the extant *libellus* of Catullus being a single unified work selected and ordered by its author. The regularity of the form somehow denies Sayers' *ARIADNE* the gravitas of Catullus' poem. Despite the couplets' nominal heroic character their predictable rhythms and end-stopped neatness are a mismatch for the content and style of Catullus' delivery.

In combination with its being a selection that omits the grim prophecy of the Parcae, the style of composition does make Sayers' poem more nugatory than its source. Due to his 'compression' of 64 and his occasional additions to it, including the use of external and mediating sources, it does not sit centrally within the genre of translation. This said, its closeness to the line of the Latin, if not always the word, and its unwillingness to isolate and process the Ariadne scene into a neat vignette also makes it very difficult to call it an individual poem written in response to Catullus' poem. The influence of the classicizing *Solospiel* might well have developed in Sayers a particularly loose attitude towards or conception of this kind of translation/adaptation work, encouraging him to smooth over, normalize and/or “improve” the lurching registers of the source. More simply put, Sayers' priority was the final product, a functioning and elegant monodrama, rather than the 'restoration' of the source text. There is no way we can be sure of the reasons why Sayers engaged with Catullus' text as he did. He may even have found in a drawer and polished up an unfinished translation of 64 when he was preparing a collection from his unpublished poems, or as Coleridge would have put it – emptying his desk.

Elton on the other hand seems, like Nott, to have been in the business of *restoration*. If we were to follow the ideology of translation as set out by Venuti (1995/2008) we might be tempted to read Elton's “foreignizing translation” as evidence of

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174 64 as an epyllion (i.e. a miniature epic) can despite its relative grandness of style conform to the notion of *nugae*. 

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a more liberal sociopolitical inclination. Conversely, Sayers' "domesticating translation," which apparently obliterates the cultural other by granting unbridled license to the hegemony of English language and dominant poetic conventions, might be seen as evidence of his part in "ethnocentricism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism." On closer inspection these binary notions regarding the ethics of translation, however usefully they may be applied elsewhere, do not seem applicable here. England was at war with Napoleonic France (1803-1815) after the Revolution had failed, betraying the hopes of countless English liberals; there was widespread, bipartisan patriotism and a concomitant drought of continental translations. To various degrees cultural narcissism and imperialism are features of all classical translation, and especially of this period in Britain, but the relationship between the oppressors and oppressed is fundamentally different. For one, the "victims" of the supposed ethnocentric racism have not been alive for 2,000 years. They can neither be downtrodden nor emancipated.

Classical translators can only attempt to be more or less culturally sensitive in order to give their readers a less or more biased perception of the source text, usually for aesthetic rather than ideological reasons. The poles of translation between which fashion fluctuates are similar in terms of "distance from the original", for example, but the fluctuations are governed by reaction to the other school, whatever that school might represent. Sayers was brought up among dissenters and wrote a "free" translation, Elton was an old Etonian baronet and he wrote a relatively close translation. In Venuti's system "foreignizing" translation is culturally aware, liberal and (generally speaking) good; "domesticating", on the other hand, is imperialistic, illiberal and bad. As we can see in the

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175 Venuti (2008) 19-20. "The terms "domestication" and "foreignization" indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards a foreign text or culture... Foreignization does not offer unmediated access to the foreign - no translation can do that - but rather constructs a certain image of the foreign that is informed by the receiving situation but aims to question it by drawing on materials that are not currently dominant, namely the marginal and the nonstandard, the residual and the emergent."

following contemporary critical reception of Elton’s *Specimens* the significance of the
relationship between “foreignizing” and “domesticating” is turned on its head:

We shall therefore have recourse to some originals of a different kind, in order to
give Mr. Elton an opportunity of shewing that, if he be not gifted with the extraordinary powers of an epic poet, he is yet possessed of the attributes of neatness and facility; and that, at least on some occasions, his tory principles of passive obedience as a translator are commuted for a little more whiggism or legitimate freedom in poetry.

Elton, here is criticized for “his tory principles of passive obedience in translation.” The critic is clearly an advocate for smooth translation, for ‘active’, ‘whiggish’ – we might read - ‘radical’ translation. He claims for the translator “legitimate freedom” from the source. This shows liberty on the side of domestication. Foreignization is firmly in the tory camp. The reasons Elton gives in his preface for adopting the style of translation he did, however, were both progressive and democratizing. His desire to extend the experience of the classical authors, as obtained by classical scholars, to a body of people formally excluded from such an experience is an act of cultural leveling, of “democratization”. It helped the expanding professional, or middling classes, to place “themselves on a level, in point of literary taste and information, with finished scholars” and the landed gentry.

This goes to show that neither generalizing binary notion of translation politics tells us very much. Classical translation always allows wider access to cultural texts, which are inherently exclusive because of the linguistic barrier. There are more and less accessible translations – but the questions that must immediately follow any judgment of the accessibility of a translation is, ‘What does the translation provide access to and for whom?’ By virtue of its relative foreignness Elton’s text provides access to a more intricate knowledge of classical literature (including to a certain extent its style), whereas Sayers provides access to the experience of a classical poem in a style familiar to its
readers. In reality neither translation does these things in extreme degree. Elton's aim might better be served by an interlinear translation, for example, and Sayers' aim, I think is really to make an enjoyable English poem from a Roman poem.

In this chapter I have examined non-Cockney Catullan translation between 1780 and 1830. I have attempted to show that the decision to normalize a translated text according to dominant contemporary literary trends reflects more than the translator's personal or his or her community's ethical position on cultural colonization, by drawing attention to such aspects as the target text's publishing context, the translator's personal blend of literary and/or educational/scholastic ambition, and the source text's stage of transmission into the target language and culture. By comparison with these translations and with regard to similar contemporary "problems" of transmission, the engagements with Catullus' text by better known poets of the Lake, Demonic and Cockney schools may now be seen within their broader literary historical context.177

177 n.b. The "Demonic school" was a label occasionally applied to Byron and his imitators.
2. The Catulluses of Wordsworth, Moore and Byron

This chapter will examine the creative engagement of three poets with Catullus' poetry between 1786 and 1841. It will cover the journey of Catullan reception from the schools and universities into the mainstream of print media. I shall examine the different ways that William Wordsworth, Thomas Moore and Byron engaged with Catullus' poetry. First I shall investigate the availability of the Latin text and evaluate contemporary public perceptions of Catullus. Then I shall take a closer look at the individual texts that engage with Catullus' poetry and, by assessing the relationship between the new poem and its source, see if they confirmed or challenged contemporary perceptions.

Perceptions of Catullus

In mid-seventeenth to early eighteenth-century England a significant expansion occurred of the number of Catullan poems translated into English. This was almost exclusively produced by the publications of Richard Lovelace's posthumous collection, *Lucasta* (1659), in which thirteen Catullan translations appear, Abraham Cowley's posthumous collection, *The Works of Mr. Abraham Cowley* (1668), and the anonymous translation of Lachapelle's French novel *The Adventures of Catullus* (1707), containing over forty unattributed Catullan translations. Before Lovelace and Cowley's contribution the poems of Catullus that were translated and imitated were restricted to the heterosexual kiss poems (5 and 7), poem 8, in which Catullus abandons hope for Lesbia, the translation of Sappho

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178 These dates mark the earliest composition date of Wordsworth's reception of Catullus, and the earliest publication date of Moore's engagements with two Catullan poems, respectively. The dates of composition are likely to be earlier than 1841, since the other Catullan poems of Moore range between 1800 and c.1823.

179 See Gaisser (2001) xxxii. It is worth noting that there does not seem to be an identifiable textual connection between the poems of Catullus and the Libertine poets, although Rochester, e.g., would certainly have read him.
(51), and portions of his epithalamia (61 and 62). English readers therefore only knew Catullus by a handful of his love poems, and the occasional wedding song. The fact that they were published either posthumously or anonymously supports the idea that the limiting factor was fear of the reputation an engagement with Catullus might bring. This seventeenth century expansion seems to have been short lived. The majority of those new poems introduced by Lovelace and Cowley, which show other sides of Catullus' art, did not fall in line with eighteenth century classicism.

After 1684, when Isaac Voss' edition of Catullus was printed in London, the potential was there for a considerable increase in the number of Catullan poems accessed by English poets and translators. The fulfilment of this potential, however, did not come quickly. Voss' Catullus was a 380 paged, single-volume quarto, with extensive scholarly notes, written entirely in Latin, and it was expensive.\(^{180}\) This restricted access to scholars and the owners of wealthy libraries. The literary conditions of late seventeenth century Britain were not quite right for the translation and imitation of Catullus. But, in providing access for scholars, it provided access for schoolteachers, and the politer poems slowly made their way into the schoolroom. Around half of Catullus' poems had by now been translated into English and published,\(^{181}\) but these poems were not found in any significant collection, nor did they often appear in the same publication. Catullus was still, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, on the fringes of the classical canon; he was unilaterally characterized, as a passionate love poet, known to the reading public almost exclusively for his turbulent love affair with the sparrow-loving Lesbia, and the faint

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\(^{180}\) A second hand edition still cost 6s in 1790, the equivalent of 2 days' wages for a craftsman in the building trade. 3s was the equivalent of the daily wage of a builder according to the National Archive currency converter.

aroma of immorality. This public perception remained relatively unchanged through to the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{182}

Catullus Goes to School

By the time William Wordsworth was reading Latin at Hawkshead School (1778), the text of Catullus had become more widely distributed in a standardized form. There were by this time at least eight different editions of Catullus with very limited public availability, housed across England in private libraries and the wealthier educational establishments. The most common way to read Catullus outside school was still probably through the sharing of individual poems in commonplace books and notebooks.\textsuperscript{183}

There seems also to have been an invigoration of interest in Roman lyric poetry, evidenced by the printing of the 1772 and 1774 editions of \textit{Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius}. The 1774 Harwood edition is particularly interesting because it shows an attempt to make the text of these poets available at the significantly lower price of 3 shillings. Without an introduction, English translation or scholarly notes, however, it was only suitable for an experienced readership – and therefore can hardly be seen as a democratizing move. Its publication seems to have been aimed at those who were highly educated and had already come across Catullus at school, which in itself is a sign of growing public familiarity.

\textsuperscript{182} Lempriere (1809) Entry for Catullus: “A poet of Verona, whose compositions, elegant and simple, are the offspring of a luxuriant imagination... The best editions of his works, which consist only of epigrams are that of Vulpius, 4to. Patavii, 1737, and that of Barbou, 12mo. Paris, 1754.” n.b. No mention is made of Voss (1684), Nott (1795), or Harwood (1774).

\textsuperscript{183} Catullus (alone): Voss (1684), priced 6s; Volpius (1737), 15s; Wilkes (1788) printed privately (c.100 copies) and given away as gifts to various members of the aristocracy. \textit{Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius} (combined edition): Delphin (1685), priced 21 2s [c.175 days’ wages for a builder], “but to a scholar not worth twopence,” according to Harwood (1790); Cambridge (1702), 11 1s [c. 120 days’ wages for a builder]; Birmingham (1772), 11 1s; and Harwood (1774), published by J. Murray I (1745-1793) and costing only 3s [a day’s wage for a builder]). Above list collated from literary advertisements in various contemporary journals and Harwood (1790).
It is impossible to say exactly when Catullus entered the schoolroom, but by the mid-eighteenth century it seems the polite Catullan poems were a permanent fixture of most school curricula. It is for this reason that the sparrow (2 and 3) and kiss poems (5 and 7) abound in journals and anthologies. It is also for this reason that there is no longer the same difficulty in identifying Catullus as the primary source for poems that appear to us "Catullan."

With increasingly well-distributed and standardized Latin texts, inside and outside schools, came a greater public familiarity with the Catullan text. As soon as Catullus gained entrance to the educational canon, his work became involved in the elitist cultural practice of classical one-upmanship. Any public literary engagement with Catullan themes and images in this period would have been understood to derive directly from Catullus.

Wordsworth and Catullus

Richard Clancey suggests that Hawkshead Grammar School was ahead of its time in the way that it taught classics. During a time when an English grammar school was legally obliged only to teach students Latin and Greek grammar, in order that they could improve their reading of religious texts, Wordsworth benefitted from a liberal and wide ranging education in classical literature, which allowed him to become familiar with an astonishing quantity of classical authors. He was even encouraged to use and make good English translations, which not only made it easier for him to understand the texts he was reading, but also gave him a valuable and early insight into the art of translation and a highly textual approach to English verse composition. Wordsworth would later go on to translate

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184 See Clancey's "speculative list of authors that an able pupil at a good Grammar School like Hawkshead can be expected to have read, on the basis of what is known of the syllabus at other schools." In Appendix II of Wu (1993) 165-166.
187 Tompson (1971).
large sections of Vergil's *Georgics* and *Aeneid.* The friction amounting from his simultaneous admiration for and imitation of classical poets and famously professed preference for spoken English modes of expression is one of the key factors that gives rise to the necessarily complex view of Wordsworth's *oeuvre* that we have today. At Hawkshead School Wordsworth was isolated both geographically and culturally and was therefore unaware of wider popular attitudes towards classics emerging in the late eighteenth century. The Hawkshead cultural microclimate was energized, however, by an educational link with St. John's College, Cambridge, which was an intellectual powerhouse at the time. This connection to emerging scholarly approaches to classical culture seems to have been particularly favourable for the study of classical literature and the encouragement of a young and ambitious writer.

*The Death of the Starling*

Wordsworth's 1786/7 imitations of Catullus are schoolboy compositions; they are, however, valuable not only because they are well written, but also because they show that Catullus' text was known and engaged with creatively in the late eighteenth century. They also indicate that Wordsworth began his poetic career in a close textual relationship with classical culture, of which Catullus was an early and important part. The following poems bear certain traces of youth and poetic inexperience, but they are the work of a highly gifted fifteen year old struggling with the expression of challenging emotions, and committed to engaging with literature and, in so doing, producing his own. *The Death of the Starling* is visually rich and does not bend to its source, but rather bends it. Wordsworth ambitiously, albeit somewhat haphazardly, steers the poem to its own Christian resolution. The text I have chosen for Wordsworth's creative engagements is the

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190 In his preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) 438, Wordsworth explained that he wanted to portray "incidents and situations from common life" in a "language really used by men."
1772 Birmingham edition of *Catulli, Tibulli et Propertii Opera*, which Wordsworth is known to have owned in 1824:

Poem 3

Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque,
Et quantum est hominum venustiorum.
Passer mortuus est meae puellae,
Passer, deliciae meae puellae,
Quem plus illa oculis suis amat:
Nam mellitus erat, suamque norat
Ipsam tam bene, quam puella matrem,
Nec sese a gremio illius movebat;
Sed circumsiliens modo huc, modo illuc,
Ad solam dominam usque pipiabat.
Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum
Illuc, ende negant redire quenquam.
At vobis male sit, malae tenebrae
Orci, quae omnia bella devoratis:
Tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis
O factum male! o miselle passer!
Tua nunc opera meae puellae
Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

Sunt lacrimae rerum. ---
The Death of the Starling. Catull.
Lugete, [O] Veneres Cupidinesque. —
Pity mourns in plaintive tone
The lovely Starling dead and gone
Pity mourns in plaintive tone
The lovely Starling dead and gone
Weep ye loves and Venus weep
The lovely Starling fall’n asleep
Venus see with tearful eyes
In her lap the Starling lies
While the loves all in a ring
Softly stroke the stiffen’d wing.

Yet art thou happier far than she
Who felt a mother’s love of thee
For while her days are days of weeping
Thou in peace in silence sleeping
In some still world unknown remote
The mighty Parent’s care hast found
Without whose tender guardian thought
No Sparrow falleth to the ground.

*The Death of a Starling* has two Latin epigraphs.191 The first, from Vergil’s *Aeneid*, means: “There is weeping [for the sadness] of things.”192 Wordsworth knew this well for a boy his age because his father died when he was thirteen. A number of his Hawkshead compositions are underpinned by a teenager’s struggle with the expression of this mourning. The second epigraph is the first line of Catullus 3. Where the first epigraph is used to set the tone of the poem, the second epigraph simply identifies its primary source. Wordsworth “writes from” the Catullan source, and does not translate or closely imitate it. It has its own title, which reframes it at a distance from Catullus’, where there obviously is no starling. The poem also begins with an address to Pity, which is absent from the source. The dramatic set-up, however, is entirely Catullan. We have a weeping girl holding a dead

192 Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.462. Translation from ibid. 372n. (Less literally: there are things in life that make us cry).
house bird. The species of the bird is another indication of Wordsworth’s independence of his source.\textsuperscript{193}

There are many elements of Catullus’ poem on which Wordsworth does not draw. He also introduces many images that seem, by their specificity and abnormality, to come from elsewhere, which poses the question: could there be additional or intermediary sources? The apparent mediation could be the result of Wordsworth’s engaging with the poem from memory, but it could also conceivably be a memory of a painting or print of Lesbia, or some other classical scene altogether.\textsuperscript{194} The introduction of ‘loves’ into the dramatic scene of the poem suggests that at some level there is a visual source at play.

Catullus’ cupidines are mock-spiritual addressees, not creatures inhabiting the same space as Lesbia.\textsuperscript{195} This may therefore be an interesting example of the way that visual receptions of classical literature and myth can come into play during a literary reception of a specific text. The poem offers a highly visual and imaginative way of portraying the spiritual world. This lack of allusive specificity is reminiscent of later Cockney engagements with classical texts.\textsuperscript{196} There is an openness and flexibility of the composing mind that allows a deep blend of imagination and extratextual sources. The text is porous and allows a rich and diverse reception, which in turn reflects the original reception of composition. Whether or not this is a feature of youthful inexperience, which a more seasoned poet would have eradicated, is an interesting question.

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{193} It is not clear why Wordsworth has a starling instead of a sparrow; both birds are songbirds and have a history of domestication. It is perhaps possible that the poem was inspired by a real event, in which Wordsworth encounters a dead starling – but there is no evidence to refute or support this idea. For an example of a starling as pet in 19\textsuperscript{th} c. see Banim (1825) iii.5 and Osborn (1835) ii.185. The choice may indicate a deeper significance that draws on the sympathy expressed towards the caged starling in Sterne’s \textit{A Sentimental Journey} (1768). The starling appears to have been a relatively common symbol of confinement and oppression throughout the Romantic Era, e.g., see chapter 10 of Austin’s \textit{Mansfield Park} (1814).
\textsuperscript{194} The memory of the text is variable, almost always imperfect and potentially reactive with other textual and non-textual experiences.
\textsuperscript{195} It need not necessarily be a single painting. It could be the memory of many. The presentation of ‘loves’ as winged infants is abundant in neoclassical visual receptions of classical myth and literature. Therefore perhaps Wordsworth was drawing generally on his experience of neoclassical art.
\textsuperscript{196} More on this in the chapters to come.
\end{footnotesize}
exclusive allusive poems of this kind create a higher level of accessibility than closer and more rigid engagements because the poet behaves like a reader and follows his or her own compositional urges, rather than restricting them to the patterns of the source. It is telling that Wordsworth did not publish this poem. Its form is rigid and simple, and its rhythm lacks the nuances of variation. The sense of the couplets does not always flow effortlessly together, and so it shows a certain lack of control. It is not completely without literary merit, but it is notably weaker than his later work.

The two poems come closest in line three: “Weep ye Loves and Venus weep,” which is a rather singsong, but close translation of *Lugete o veneres, cupidinesque* (grieve o Venuses and Cupids). Wordsworth pulls away from his source by not mentioning the *hominum venustiorum* (the mortal lovers), and introduces yet another foreign element: the sleep / death metaphor, which is from Catullus 5, not 3. The presence of Catullus’ 5th poem in Wordsworth’s translation of poem 3 is an example of his “suturing” two Catullan poems together. Before the first four couplets come to an end there have been three changes in address. First addressed is ‘Pity’, then “ye loves and Venus”, then just ‘Venus’.

Change of address is a strong feature at the end of Catullus’ poem in his quick, accusatory turn to the shades of Orcus (line13), but Wordsworth does not manage it with the same precision. In line 9 there is an abrupt change of address to the dead starling, which has the same effect as Catullus’ turn to the *tenebrae Orci*. It is also possible, and I think likely, that it is informed by Catullus’ final lines: *o factum male! o miselle passer! / tua nunc opera meae puellae / flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli* (‘O what a shame! O wretched sparrow! / Your fault it is that now my girl’s / Eyelids are swollen red with crying’). The *tua opera* of line 17 is usually translated as: ‘by your effort’ (i.e. of the shades of Orcus, ll.13-14). By positioning, however, *opera* is easily taken as belonging to the dead sparrow,

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197 c.f. Keats’ mode of allusion p.7f.
which therefore lengthens the address to the dead bird. I think that this reading provides Wordsworth with the inspiration to write his apostrophe to the starling, in which he compares its suffering to that of the girl. The combination in Wordsworth's composing mind of death, happiness and the sparrow drives him towards his sparrow-related Christian apology.

Duncan Wu suggests that there are around twenty lines missing from the manuscript halfway though this poem.\(^{199}\) Between the first and second halves are neatly cut stubs of two pages. There also remains a page of less tidy writing facing the fair copy of the second half. On this page are scrawled largely illegible test lines, two fragments of which are: “And oft these eyes have seen it rest / Soft on her bosoms downy nest;” and: “Tis dead - and flits in lonely flight / A dismal journey – black as night –.” These lines clearly belong to *The Death of the Starling*. The first, which corresponds roughly to: *nec sese a gremio illius mouebat*, (line 8 – ‘and he would not move from her lap’), if it had been included, would enhance the erotic element, which is currently suppressed in the fair copy. The second begins to depict the *iter tenebricosum* (‘the dark journey’), locating the poem in its non-Christian context. Wordsworth, according to his faith, omits this and deliberately gives the poem a Christian context. The main argument for there being lines missing is that there is a harsh turn from the first to second half and an abrupt change of address. I do not think that this should be seen to support the case of the missing lines too strongly because the same argument could be levelled at the Catullan text. I think that if there are any lines missing it is because the author cancelled them, and not by chance or external interference.

The image of “loves all in a ring / Softly strok[ing] the stiffen’d wing,” allows potential for a somewhat morbid eroticism, which one does not expect in Wordsworth’s

\(^{199}\) Wu (2002) 87.
poetry. The dead bird lies in the weeping girl's lap, which alludes to Lesbia's *gremium*, of lines 8 and 9, where the living sparrow would cheep and move about, again exciting erotic undercurrents. The possibility of such a reading could be a result of Wordsworth's youthful delight in and adoption of a typically Catullan eroticism, or an innocent mistake. Due to the sensitivity of the context I think it would be unlikely that Wordsworth would have consciously brought erotic undertones into his poem, especially when he seems to have actively avoided it by rejecting the perfectly functional couplet ending in: "her bosoms downy nest." The establishment of an allusive dialogue with the source and the imported positioning of the bird in the lap of its owner seem to have allowed innocent passage of the source's much debated and, in my view, inconstant and non-specific, erotic analogies.\(^\text{200}\)

One element that is imported from Catullus' source, which could not be mediated solely by a piece of visual art, is the "mother's love" that the girl feels for the dead bird. This line can only have resulted from textual, or verbal, contact with the poem: lines 6 and 7: *norat / ipsam tam bene quam puella matrem* ('he knew her as well as a girl knows her mother'). This poem arose from a collage of experiences, poems and pictures, stimulated by the memory of Catullus' elegy to Lesbia's sparrow, and the desire to write a new poem, not a translation. It is in the end of the poem that Wordsworth strays furthest from Catullus' text. Instead of taking his starling on its: "lonely flight," and "dismal journey – black as night," and commenting on the finality and darkness of death, Wordsworth offers what must have been intended as a Christian consolation and comment on the omnipotence of God. In this sense it "corrects" Catullus' pagan view of the afterlife. The allusion to Matthew 10.29\(^\text{201}\) brings with it the idea that everything is part of God's great design, even a sparrow dying, when we humans are, according to Matthew 10.31, "of more value than

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\(^{201}\) "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Anonymous, *Holy Bible : King James Version* (London: Collins, 2007) 1 v.
many sparrows." In Catullus' poem the shift in address and focalization result in an erotically charged pseudo-lament. It is never about the bird but about the fact that his girlfriend is crying. In Wordsworth's poem, however, the mix creates the potential for a whole host of facetious misinterpretations to do with the value of birds, that is unless we realise that Wordsworth is no longer talking about birds, but has embarked on a serious comment about human mortality and its relation to divine power. The way that he attempts to mix mourning with images of love and abstract Christian musings shows Wordsworth's commitment in these lines not to the angst-ridden outpourings of a juvenile mind, but to the production of literature. In this poem Wordsworth engages with Catullus very much on his own terms, taking or leaving what he pleases. Wordsworth only becomes complicit with Catullus in his rejected lines. In his fair copy he shaves Catullus of his paganism and the majority of his eroticism, making him conform both to a Christian belief system as well as the traditional perception of Catullus.

**To Lesbia**

From 1798 to 1800, while Wordsworth and Coleridge were working on *Lyrical Ballads*, Coleridge was receiving a guinea a week from the editor Daniel Stuart for providing him with poems for his daily journal, *The Morning Post*. Despite Coleridge's later reference to his contribution to periodicals, in a letter to Thomas Wedgwood, as "merely the emptying of my desk," he seemed to not find it easy to keep up his side of the bargain. He only managed to hand over three poems in the first two months. Smyser writes that Wordsworth gave Coleridge permission to pass on to Stuart some of his own early poems from his old notebooks, helping his colleague fulfil his contract and thus freeing him up for their work on the *Lyrical Ballads*. However this understanding manifested itself, what is

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202 n.b. 'many' here must mean 'a large number', rather than 'the majority'.
203 October 1802.
certain is that it caused a good deal of confusion among editors and critics thereafter. It was not until 1950 that this small group of poems, including two Catullan “imitations,” were identified as the work of a young William Wordworth. They had been consistently attributed to the pen of Coleridge for well over a century.204

Although it was in the same batch of poems put to use by Coleridge, *The Death of a Starling* cannot be found in any extant edition of *The Morning Post*. There are a small number missing and it may be that the poem lies hidden in one of those. *Lesbia, or To Lesbia*, appeared in the journal on April 11, 1798, under the title: *Lines Imitated from Catullus*, and bearing the signature of “Mortimer.”205 It is a more successful poem than the previous one. The rhythm is energetic and the rhymes are handled almost entirely without the need to add to the text. It presents a higher level of verbal dexterity and follows the text more closely than *Starling*.

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**Poem 5**

Vivamus mea Lesbia, atque amemus,  
rumoresque senum seueriorum  
omenes unius aestimemus assis!  
soles occidere et redire possunt:  
nobis cum semel occidit breuis lux,  
nox est perpetua una dormienda.  
da mi basia mille, deinde centum,  
dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,  
deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.  
dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,  
conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,  
auf ne quis malus inuidere possit,  
cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.  

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**To Lesbia**

My Lesbia, let us love and live,  
And to the winds, my Lesbia, give  
Each cold restraint, each boding fear  
Of Age, and all her saws severe,  
Yon sun, now posting to the main,  
Will set, but ‘tis to rise again;  
But we (when our [...] light  
Is set) must sleep in endless night.  
Then come, with whom alone I live,  
A thousand kisses take and give,  
Another thousand, to the store  
Add hundreds, then a thousand more!  
And when they to a million mount  
Let Confusion take th’ account –  
That you (the number never knowing)  
May continue still bestowing;  
That I for joys may never pine  
That never can again be mine.

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204 Smyser (1950), 419-26.
205 Mortimer was a character in Wordsworth’s play *The Borderers*. The peace-loving chief’s name is frequently printed as ‘Marmaduke’. The signature of “Mortimer” may have been used by Coleridge to indicate to the initiated that it was Wordsworth’s and not Coleridge’s poem.
Wordsworth uses natural English expressions to translate the meaning and progression of Catullus’ poem. He does not keep the external threat of the lovers’ world of poem 5, rendering the rumores senum severiorum (‘[disapproving] gossip of severe old men’) as: “Each cold restraint, each boding fear / Of Age, and all her saws severe.” The ‘malus’ and his jealous propensity are omitted altogether. This is not an inelegant interpretation. The disapproving noises of Catullus’ severe old men have been internalised. By translating the rumores as the voice of old age, the cast of the poem is reduced to two, Catullus and Lesbia. Catullus urges Lesbia to forget the “reasons” for holding back and the fears that old people (who may or may not know better) might have - but to live for the moment and indulge in amorous excess. The expression ‘give to the winds’ is a simply understood and poetic contemporary expression. It may therefore be seen as an example of Wordsworth fulfilling his dictum (formalised over a decade later in Lyrical Ballads) of writing in the “language really used by men.” In any case it fits well into the poem of Catullus, who uses similar expressions elsewhere in his works; for example, in 64 Catullus writes: irrita uentosae linquens promissa procellae (59 – ‘leaving to the windy gales his unfulfilled promises’), and 70: sed mulier cupido quod dicit amanti, / in uento et rapida scribere oportet aqua (3-4 – ‘but what a woman says to a lusting lover, / should be written in the wind and swift waters’).

The central part of the poem has little room for interpretation and Wordsworth delivers the verse in a straightforward, lyrical and effective manner. Line 9 has in it the only significant addition to Catullus’ poem: “Then come, with whom alone I live.” This also happens to be the least smooth line, both grammatically and in terms of rhyme. Omitted is the addressee, Lesbia, to whom the ‘whom’ of the line refers. This slows down

206 As is ‘posting to the main.’ “Post 2. intr. a. To ride, run, or travel with speed or haste; to hurry, make haste. Freq. with along, away, off, etc. Formerly also trans. with it (obs.). Now rare.” OED Online.
the arrival of sense just as the poem accelerates through the kisses. Most importantly, however, this inconspicuous relative clause acts to legitimize the lovers’ encounter. For the extramarital and illicit meeting of Catullus and the married Lesbia is depicted by Wordsworth as an intimate scene of a cohabiting - and therefore presumably married - couple. Just as he did in Starling, Wordsworth here too suppresses the elements of Catullus’ poem that do not fit his moral framework. The cracks that make Catullus more than just a love poet are smoothed over, and again he is forced to conform to his pre-nineteenth century public perception.

At the end of the poem again Wordsworth shows his artistry. He adapts the reason for confusing the count of their kisses. Catullus has: ne sciamus / aut ne quis malus inuidere possit, / cum tantum sciat esse basiorum, ('so that we do not know / nor can any evil man be jealous, / when he knows the great quantity of our kisses'). Wordsworth again tightens the focus back to just Catullus and Lesbia, and gives them separate reasons of their own (both from a male point of view). The reason given for Lesbia not knowing is so that she will not stop, presumably because there is some number that would simply be too many. Catullus’ reason is more complex. He does not wish to know the number so that at some later date he will not be able to pine for joys that he can no longer have. The sense is not perfectly clear but the import is strong enough. Instead of threatening the lovers’ bubble, Catullus’ personal world, by external scrutiny fuelled by jealousy, Wordsworth anachronistically introduces the threat of the future, which he and his readers already know, i.e. that Catullus and Lesbia break up. He creates a dramatic irony by subtle anachronism. In this variation on the text, as in his use of ‘giving to the winds’ for unius aestimemus assis ('let us value at a single penny'), Wordsworth introduces into this relatively close translation of 5 knowledge of other Catullan poems, demonstrating his intimacy with those poems he knew of Catullus while still a schoolboy.
Acme and Septimius

ACMEN Septimius suas amores tenens in gremio 'mea' inquit 'Acme, ni te perdite amo atque amare porro omnes sum assidue paratus annos, quantum qui pote plurimum perire, solus in Libyadea tosta caesio ueniam obuius leoni.' hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante dextra sternuit approbationem. at Acme leuiter caput reflectens et dulcis pueri ebrios ocellos illo purpureo ore suariata, 'sic' inquit 'mea uita Septimille, huic uni domino usque seruiamus, ut multo mihi maior acrior que ignis mollibus ardet in medullis.' hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante dextra sternuit approbationem. nunca ab auspicio bono profecti mutuis animis amant amantur. unam Septimius misellus Acmen mauult quarr Syrias Britanniasque: uno in Septimio fidelis Acme facit delicias libidinisque. quis ullos homines beatiores uidit, quis Venerem auspicatiorem?

Septimius thus his [ ] love addressed
(His darling Acme in his arms sustained): 'My Acme, may I perish if my breast Burns not for thee with love to madness strained!
And more – if I am not prepared to give To thee such earnest love unchanged by time As any human heart can feel and live,
Then may I roam through Lybia's burning clime And meet alone the ravenous lion's roar.'
While thus the lover spoke his fervent love,
The God of love (as from the right before) Sneezed from the left, and did the vow approve. But Acme, lightly turning back her head, Kissed with that rosy mouth th'inebriated eyes Of the sweet youth, and kissed again, and said: 'My life, and what far more than life I prize,
So may we to the end of time obey
Love, our sole master, as a fiercer flame Burns at my heart with more resistless sway,
Thrills through my bones and melts away my frame!' She spoke, and Love (as from the right before) Sneezed from the left hand and the vow approved. Needing no other omen to implore, With mutual soul they love and are beloved: His Acme sole does Septimius prize All Syria and all Britain's wealth above; For sole Septimius faithful Acme sighs, And finds in him her only joy and love.
Who ere a more auspicious passion saw, Or any mortals under happier law?

It is thought that Septimius and Acme was written at a later date than the previous two poems because it is, "A more sustained and faithful rendering of the original." Bruce Graver also argues that: "The method of translation [used for poem 45] is more characteristic of his later work," because it engages more deeply with the Latin than his earliest translations. "Throughout the poem, Wordsworth is much truer to Catullus' vocabulary, syntax, and details than he was in Lesbia." Poem 45 is, indeed, a larger literary undertaking than the previous two poems. It requires greater skill to translate, and Wordsworth does it with a similar economy of expression to the original.

208 Graver (1983) 27.
The abab rhyme scheme (with final couplet) seems entirely natural, and there are more sophisticated stylistic elements, such as internal rhymes and vertical parallelism, words repeated in the same metrical position (less common in English than Latin poetry), e.g:

"Then may I roam through Lybia’s burning clime / And meet alone the ravenous lion’s roar."

and:

"With mutual soul they love and are beloved: / His Acme sole does Septimius prize."

Lines 18 and 19 allude to different works of Alexander Pope, whose works Wordsworth knew intimately and alluded to with surprising frequency throughout his life. “Fiercer flame” and “resistless sway” are used by Wordsworth to enhance the power and capture the non-amorous language with which Acme expresses her love in the lines: ut multo mihi maior acriorque / ignis mollibus ardet in medullis. (‘How much greater and fiercer [to me], burns the fire inside my soft marrow’). Wordsworth is sensitive to the need of a highly passionate rendering of maior acriorque. He draws on the penultimate line of Pope’s Summer: The Second Pastoral. or Alexis, which is an imitation of Vergil’s Eclogue 2: “On me love’s fiercer flames for ever prey, / By night he scorches, as he burns by day.”

This allusion acts to import the languid pain and yearning love of the pastoral. The allusion to Pope’s Iliad, via “resistless sway” brings a very different kind of pain to mind:

“At length Epēus dealt a weighty blow,  
Full on the cheek of his unwary foe;  
Beneath that pond’rous arm’s resistless sway  
Down dropt he, nerveless, and extended lay.” [23.798-801]

These lines are followed immediately by a metaphor that likens the winded Euryalus, bloody and paralysed by Epēus’ mighty blow, to a big fish stranded after a storm. To whatever extent this allusion “works” to kindle the specific memory of Euryalus’ painful paralysis depends on the reader; but what Wordsworth has achieved by using these loaded words is to extend the range of pain that Acme’s love is supposed to
inspire beyond its credible limits. Her pain is not bound to the lyric genre alone but extends to both pastoral and epic. By alluding to Pope, in imitation and translation of Vergil and Homer, he maintains a "classical" allusive palate, while at the same time drawing on experiences from his own English literary culture.

This may have been a choice made by Wordsworth because he knew his readers (if he bore them in mind by this point in his career) were better versed in translations of the classics than the classical texts themselves. I think it more likely that it would not have even occurred to him to allude to the text of Vergil and Homer directly. The words would have appeared from deep within his literary experience, triggered by the context of love and pain, and more practically by the need for an apt phrase to fit the metre and rhyme. Pope's work was much loved and read throughout the Romantic era, and his classical translations had long reached canonical status, hence their feeding into Wordsworth's Catullan translation. They further exemplify Wordsworth's flexibility and inclusivity in translation and imitation of the classics. He had a deep and intimate understanding of how Latin worked from the way that he was taught at Hawkshead, but the majority of his wider classical reading was done in translation. The three poems discussed above are not the fruit of a couple of weeks work in Autumn 1786, but evidence of a protracted literary relationship with Catullus throughout Wordsworth's early career. They are varied in regard to their quality, technical ability and literary ambition.

Wordsworth began his relationship with Catullus at school and left it, it seems most likely, at Cambridge, where he was drawn into a deeper and longer relationship with Vergil. He therefore did not challenge the common public perceptions of Catullus, as a love poet with whom one dabbles during adolescence and then drops in favour for higher registers and genres new. He does, however, engage with Catullus' text in a creative, interesting and intimate way within the conformist boundaries of a polite and religious young man.
Wordsworth's primitivistic turn, as marked particularly in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) does not necessarily conflict with the classicism implicit in translation of and engagement with classical texts because the *Lyrical Ballads* were just one project out of a long and productive poetic career. His preface to that work was designed for that work, which was inspired largely by ballads and other non-classical forms. Our view of Wordsworth as a poet whose style changed and developed over time (and not necessarily in any linear fashion) is complicated by a modern desire to find in *Lyrical Ballads* a keystone text for the beginning of "high Romanticism."
Thomas Moore and Catullus

Thomas Moore’s relationship with Catullus was more sustained and productive than Wordsworth’s. He made versions and translations of nine of Catullus’ poems (7, 8, 11, 13, 29, 31, 70, 72, 85). At the age of twenty-one Moore’s paraphrastic translation of the *Odes of Anacreon* (1800) was published. He wrote this at the end of his time at Trinity College, Dublin, where he extended an already thorough and creative classical education, received at Samuel Whyte’s Academy, also in Dublin.²⁰⁹ Where Wordsworth may be seen to have been wary of Catullus’ moral and religious particularities, Moore seems to have felt less need for caution in his engagement with Catullus.²¹⁰ What we find in Moore is much more of a collaboration between poets. Many of Catullus’ poems are driven by the personality behind the poem, and Moore seems to be the first poet in the English language to risk compromising his reputation in order to bring the convivial and adulterous side of Catullus into the public consciousness.

He did not, however, welcome all sides of Catullus’ personality; this would have necessitated a degree of political immunity and poetic flexibility beyond Moore’s means and capabilities. His lyrical skill, classical scholarship and inclination towards the erotic, made Catullus and Moore a particularly suitable partnership. Moore was able to claim a classical precedent for his “voluptuous” verses, which bought him a certain amount of protection in his promulgation of what critics clearly believed was socially harmful material. *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little*, for example stimulated bursts of outrage from the literary establishment. Coleridge likened it to *The Monk* (Mathew Lewis’

Gothic novel), and accused the two authors of selling: “provocatives to vulgar Debauchees, & vicious schoolboys.” It also prompted Robert Southey to write in the *Critical Review*:

The age in which we live has imposed upon him the necessity of employing decent language; but few ages have ever been disgraced by a volume more corrupt in its whole spirit and tendency ... *The Monk* had its spots; - this is leprous all over.

We might not expect to find any Catullan poems in a translation of Anacreon, but there was room enough for two in Moore’s extensive and “showy” footnotes. These examples do not show Moore at his literary best, but they are his earliest “translations” of Catullus in print, and demonstrate well certain features of his emergent translational style. First appears the extract from poem 7 that Julia Gaisser includes in her *Catullus in English*. It is found on page 58 of Moore’s *Odes*:

Poem 7 (7-10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox,</td>
<td>As many stellar eyes of light,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furtiuos hominum uident amores:</td>
<td>As thro’ the silent waste of night,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tam te basia multa basiare</td>
<td>Gazing upon this world of shade,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uesano satis et super Catullo est,</td>
<td>Witness some secret youth and maid,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who fair as thou, and fond as I,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In stolen bliss, enamour’d lie!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So many kisses, ere I slumber,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upon those vermil lips I’ll number.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moore takes eight lines for Catullus’ four, which is a consistent feature of his Latin translation. He takes as much space as he needs to manipulate the Catullan sense into regular, iambic (usually 4/4) rhythms. Not infrequently Moore allows the rhythm to lead him far enough away from the way the original text means, and into additions, that the scope of interpretation is limited. For an example of this reduction of scope via addition see: “stellar eyes of light,” for *sidera* (stars); ‘vermil lips,’ where there are none mentioned, and “ere I’ll slumber,” which introduces a temporal framework absent from the source.

211 Coleridge & Griggs (1956-71) 2:479.
Moore’s additions are more often than not highly sensitive to the narrative and emotional sense of the Latin, and are never entirely out of keeping with the Catullan context— but they do significantly alter the manner of delivery, including the amount of choice, or ambiguity, left to the reader. He turns Catullus’ delicate ambiguities and uncertainties into solved puzzles, charming but lacking the complexities and shades of meaning of the original text. This makes them more accessible, but at the same time they lose much of their finesse and overall appeal.

In a note on page 249 we find poem 85 translated:

Odi et amo, quare id faciam fortasse requiris,
Nescio sed fieri sentio et excrucior.

I love thee and hate thee, but if I can tell
The cause of my love and my hate, may I die!
I can feel it, alas! I can feel it too well,
That I love thee and hate thee, but cannot tell why.

This translation makes little attempt to replicate the economy of Catullus’ poem and reduces the possibilities of its interpretation, for example, Catullus does not write “I love thee and hate thee,” but simply: “I hate and I love.” It does not necessarily address the object of his hate and love.155 Quare id faciam fortasse requiris, (‘How do I do this perhaps you ask’) Moore renders as: ‘but if I can tell / The cause of my love and my hate, may I die!’ Pressured by his abab rhyme scheme, metre and the desire to reproduce Catullus’ intensity Moore uses a long and elaborate circumlocution, trying to replicate the understated and subtle poignancy of Catullus’ few words with a waltzing barrage of his own.

The pained and desperate expression of Catullus’ second line, where he writes: Nescio sed fieri sentio et excrucior, (‘I do not know, but feel it to be, and it is torture’) is spread thinly over two heavily padded lines. Moore does not mention the torture element

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155 This reading is supported by Catullus 72, which is a reported dialogue between Catullus and Lesbia, which expresses a similar emotional confusion.
of the *excrucior*, in favour of supplying a neat circular finish to the poem. The Latin poem
is composed in one highly elided elegiac couplet with a consistent conflict between stress
and metrical beat. Catullus slurs his chosen metre with elisions. Moore's singsong
regularity has almost the opposite effect to that of the Latin.

Moore's *Odes of Anacreon* achieved popular and critical success. Its royal stamp of
approval, given by the future Prince Regent, made it an immediately fashionable purchase
in the upper echelons of society, but it was its readability and overt sensuality that secured
its fame and consequent afterlife.\(^{216}\) It was very expensive (the first edition was 11 ls) but
people still bought it. His next publication, however, was cheaper (7s) and quickly gained
the reputation of being sensuous to the point of obscenity. In this volume Moore imitates
Catullus once, praises him at length in the preface and keeps his influence never too far in
the background.

**Thomas Little's Catullus**

In 1801 *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little* was published. It was presented to
the public by an anonymous 'editor' as a posthumous collection of poems by a 'Thomas
Little Esq.', who had supposedly died at the age of 21:

> The Poems which I take the liberty of publishing were never intended by the Author to pass beyond the circle of his friends. He thought, with some justice, that what are called Occasional Poems must be always insipid and uninteresting to the greater part of their readers. The particular situations in which they were written the character of the author and of his associates, all these peculiarities must be known and felt before we can enter into the spirit of such compositions. This consideration would have always, I believe, prevented Mr. Little from submitting these trifles of the moment to the eye of dispassionate criticism; and if their posthumous introduction to the world be injustice to his memory, or intrusion on the public, the error must be imputed to the injudicious partiality of friendship.\(^{217}\)

This excited the mind of many a young reader, who knew or wanted to know the illicit
passions Moore wrote about. They wanted to know more of the mysterious Thomas Little

\(^{216}\) By 1820 it had been through ten editions.

\(^{217}\) *Little*, Thomas Pseud Little, *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little Esq* (London, 1801) 8°., Preface: iii. The use of the word "trifles" aligns Little's work with Catullus' *nugae*. 

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in order that they might truly "enter into the spirit" of his poems. Moore, as anonymous editor, also puts to ironic use the argument, which had contributed and would continue to contribute to keeping the lewder poems of Catullus out of the British mainstream, i.e. that the erotic pleases only immature and debauched minds: "The judgment of riper years would have chastened his [Little's] mind, and tempered the luxuriance of his fancy." He clearly writes this in the mock-solemnity of a literary pedant.

By building up the mysterious and typically Romantic biographic story that we will never know fully but will always think important for the appreciation of his poetry, he creates similar conditions of the reception of Little to those of Catullus. Moore claims for Little's poems an authenticity and genuineness, explaining that they were written for friends rather than for publication (which was of course not true). That claim also presents a similar duality of the lives of many of Catullus' poems. They are at once addressed to individuals, and "overheard" by the public. The result is a group of texts that make up something like a fragmented, reality TV show, with the camera in tight focus on the poet's every move, and in both cases "the poet" (or his persona) is neither completely real nor completely unreal.

It is not easy to discern Moore's true critical opinions from the varying depths of irony on display in his preface to Little. I do not think we are to believe Moore, for example, when he writes that the author of Little did not find in the ancient amatory poets "that delicacy of sentiment and variety of fancy which are so necessary to refine and animate the poetry of love." I do not believe him because he quickly doubles back on himself with a fairly balanced appraisal of Tibullus and then an utterly positive one of Catullus (over three pages long). This praise for Catullus is prefaced by the statement: "But

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218 ibid: v.
in my opinion, the Poet of Verona possessed more genuine feeling than any of them." 219

Was Catullus then the exception to the rule? Are we to understand, as Vail seems to suggest, that Moore really saw the classical amatory writers as "insincere" in comparison to the early English poets, whom Moore claims to be the chief models of Little's poetic? 220 Can we name these English poets? Or is this view another example of his mimicry and ridicule of "those erudite men, the commentators, who find a field for their ingenuity and research in his [Tibullus'] Grecian learning and quaint obscurities?"

There is more than a little doublespeak in Moore's preface, which seems designed chiefly to confound the critics. In any case, he concludes on page xi: "From what I have had an opportunity of observing, the early poets of our own language were the models which Mr. Little selected for imitation." He writes this in full knowledge that the collection that follows contains a poem entitled "IMITATION OF CATULLUS," and many poems deriving exclusively from Roman lyrical sources.

Moore even uses the luxury of his fictional editor, with professed partial knowledge, to actively deny the influence of his classical sources. By rejecting the classics and the critical establishment in this way he privileged the judgment of the "common reader," i.e. largely young men and women. At the same time, however, his preface provided plenty of hints towards his real inspiration for such a book. I would argue therefore that Moore was both mocking that school of scholarly criticism, which delighted in obscure classicism, and offering an alternative, even clandestine version of classicism, which drew heavily on the Roman love poets in an erudite manner, but did not turn it into a feature, which might have distanced his target audience.

219 This mention of genuineness in itself draws a parallel between Little and Catullus.
Poem 8

Miser Catulle, desinas ineptire,
et quod uides perisse perditum ducas.
fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles,
cum uentitabas quo puella ducebat
amata nobis quantum amabitur nulla.
ibi illa multa cum iocosa fiebant,
quae tu uolebas nec puella nolubat,
fulsere uere candidi tibi soles.
nunc iam illa non uult: tu quoque impotens noli,
ne quaie fugiet sectare, nec miser uiue,
sed obstinata mente perfer, obdura.
uale puella, iam Catullus obdurat,
nec te requiret nec rogabit iniuitam.
at tu dolebis, cum rogbabis nulla.
scelesta, uae te, quae tibi manet uiita?
quie nunc te adibit? cui uideberis bella?
quem nunc amabis? cuibus esse diceris?
quern basiabis? cui labella mordebis?
at tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura.

IMITATION OF CATULLUS

Miser Catulle desinas ineptire &c

CEASE the sighing fool to play;
Cease to trifle life away;
Nor vainly think those joys thine own,
Which all, alas! have falsely flown!
What hours, Catullus, once were thine,
How fairly seem’d thy day to shine,
When lightly thou didst fly to meet
The girl, who smil’d so rosy sweet -
The girl thou lov’dst with fonder pain
Than e’er thy heart can feel again.
You met - your souls seem’d all in one -
Sweet little sports were said and done -
Thy heart was warm enough for both,
And hers, indeed, was nothing loath.
Such were the hours that once were thine,
But, ah! those hours no longer shine;
For now the nymph delights no more
In what she lov’d so dear before;
And all Catullus now can do,
Is to be proud and frigid too;
Nor follow where the wanton flies,
Nor sue the bliss that she denies.
False maid! he bids farewell to thee,
To love, and all love’s misery.
The hey-day of his heart is o’er,
Nor will he court one favour more;
But soon he’ll see thee droop thy head,
Doom’d to a lone and loveless bed,
When none will seek the happy night,
Or come to traffic in delight!
Fly perjur’d girl! - but whither fly?
Who now will praise thy cheek and eye?
Who now will drink the syren tone,
Which tells him thou art all his own?
Who now will court thy wild delights,
Thy honey kiss, and turtle bites?
Oh! none. - And he who lov’d before
Can never, never love thee more!

This imitation follows the sense of its source closely until the very end. It is written for the
most part in Moore’s favoured iambic tetrameters, and rhymes in couplets, which reflects
well the iambic trimeters of Catullus, but Moore uses a trochaic tetrameter in the first
couplet perhaps to reflect the chiding effect created by the harsh opening to Catullus’
scazon. There is, more or less, one English couplet for each Latin line. The structure of
sequences is dictated by the source poem, i.e. where there are pivotal points – indicated by
words pertaining to ‘now’ or ‘but’ - in the Latin, this is replicated by the same feature in the English on almost the same line number (doubled), for example: (line 14) *at tu dolebis*... (‘but you will be sorry’) becomes: (line 27: “But soon he'll see thee droop thy head...”

For the repeated line *Fulseret... candidi tibi soles* (ll.3 and 8 – ‘the sun shone brightly for you’) Moore has his own refrain: “How fairly seem’d thy day to shine, / When lightly thou didst fly to meet...” (ll.6-7) and (ll.15-16): “Such were the hours that once were thine, / But, ah! Those hours no longer shine.” Where Catullus uses the double negative of *nec puella nolebat* (‘and the girl was not unwilling’), Moore matches it with: “And hers, indeed, was nothing loathe.” Moore’s is an oddly upbeat interpretation of its source. It is a wonder that he can turn the tortured poem 8 into such an accessible and fun poem, incorporating as many “original features” as he does. “For now the nymph [Lesbia] delights no more / In what she lov’d so dear before; And all Catullus now can do, / Is to be proud and frigid too” is a bizarrely positive and wordy take on Catullus’ self-chastising, grit-teethed and bleak: *nunc iam illa non uult: tu quoque impotens noli* (‘Now she does not want [you]: you too, weakling, must not want [her]’).

Partly due to his background in writing for musical, theatrical and poetic performance, which prioritises the need for verse that communicates and/or entertains immediately, I think Moore became a master of a particular speed and style of delivery. This mix of accessibility, ease of reading and reciting is one of the qualities that brought him such popularity, but it is also what restricts him here from “imitating” Catullus. This poem is more of an English versification of Catullus’ poem in the style of Thomas Moore. By virtue of his poem’s readability Moore enabled “the common reader” to access and enjoy a previously suppressed element of classical culture.

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22¹ A parallel may be drawn with pop music, or slam poetry – where the timing of delivery is (stereotypically) uniform.
On page 8 of *Little* Moore attempts to reconcile a Catullan love and a Christian afterlife in the poem *To Julia*:

Well, Julia, if to love, and live
'Mid all the pleasures love can give,
Be crimes that bring damnation;
You - you and I have giv'n such scope
To loves and joys, we scarce can hope,
In heav'n, the least salvation!

And yet, I think, did Heav'n design
That blisses dear, like yours and mine,
Should be our own undoing;
It had not made my soul so warm,
Nor giv'n you such a witching form,
To bid me dote on ruin!

Then wipe away that timid tear,
Sweet truant! you have nought to fear,
Though you were whelm'd in sin;
Stand but at heaven's gate awhile,
And you so like an angel smile,
They can't but let you in.

Moore imports the lovers of poems 5 (*Vivamus mea Lesbia*) and 7 (*Quaeris quot mihi basiationes*) into a Christian context. Catullus' stars that witness the furtive loves of men (7.7) are converted into 'heaven.' Instead of introducing a Christian consolation like Wordsworth did with poem 3 over a decade before, Moore jokingly suggests that his persona's girl, though "whelm'd in sin," will still be able to flirt her way into heaven. This poem introduces Catullan lovers into a Christian setting, and presents their casual irreligion as comedy. Moore shows his lack of respect for Christianity, which would have offended a large portion of the reading public.

The allusions in line one to poem 5 and the situational allusion to poem 7 in the second half of the first stanza, i.e. being viewed from the cosmos whilst enjoying themselves to excess, import the lovers of Catullus' kiss poems into Moore's new poem. He, or Little, adopts the roguish side of Catullus' character and becomes complicit in his immorality. By doing this Moore expands the public perception of Catullus from the passionate and charming love poet to the playful and scandalous hedonist. There are sinful
sides to Moore’s Catullus that are generally smoothed over in earlier and contemporary receptions.

**Poem 72**

Dicebas quondam solum te nosse Catullum,  
Lesbia, nec pra me uelle tenere Iouem.  
dilexi tum te non tantum ut tulgus amicam,  
sed pater ut gnatos diligit et generos.  
nunc te cognoui: quare etsi impensius uror,  
multo mi tamen es uilior et leuior.  
qui potis est, inquis? quod amantem injuria talis  
cogit amare magis, sed bene uelle minus.

**Dicebas quondam, &c.**  
**TO LESBIA**

THOU told’st me in our days of love,  
That I had all that heart of thine;  
That, ev’n to share the couch of Jove,  
Thou would’st not, Lesbia, part from mine.

How purely wert thou worshipp’d then!  
Not with the vague and vulgar fires  
Which Beauty wakes in soulless men, -  
But lov’d, as children by their sires.

That flattering dream, alas, is o’er; -  
I know thee now - and though these eyes  
Doat on thee wildly as before,  
Yet, even in doating, I despise.

Yes, sorceress - mad as it may seem -  
With all thy craft, such spells adorn thee,  
That passion even outlives esteem,  
And I, at once, adore - and scorn thee.

This poem does not seem to appear in print before *The Poetical Works of Thomas Moore* in 1841, but it is likely that it was composed many years earlier. Although it is part of the “Lesbia cycle,” it was not a commonly translated or imitated poem. Moore’s translation is double the length of Catullus’ poem, and in four stanzas of four lines in the abab rhyme scheme. The rhythm follows Moore’s favoured iambic tetrameter, almost all of which are end-stopped, like the source.

This imitation is another example of Moore’s sensitive reversification of the sense of the Latin poem. He was a grafter rather than a fluent poet. The additions he uses in this poem are either in keeping with the source, or so platitudinous that they do not register

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222 Before Moore’s there seems only to be a hybrid poem of c.72 and c.85 by Richard Lovelace in Lucasta (1659) version can be found most easily in Gaisser (2001) 29., and an imitation made by Richard Dabney in *Poems Original and Translated*, Philadelphia (1815).

as foreign. For example, he reworks: *dilexi tum te non tantum ut vulgus amicam...* into "Not [worshipped] with the vague and vulgar fires / Which Beauty wakes in soulless men..." The coupling of ‘vague’ with ‘vulgar’ has very little impact on the sense of *vulgus*, but the words allow Moore to some extent to mimic the strongly alliterative Latin line. The introduction of a personification of Beauty (line 7) should, one would have thought, change things greatly - just as the additional identification of the *vulgus* with the heavily loaded ‘soulless men,’ but they do not.

Readers can be swept along with Moore’s busy iambics without pause to consider the Latin source, but if they do return for a closer inspection, they will notice that the translation achieves an uncanny balance of meaning, demonstrating Moore’s high level of intimacy with his source. Catullus’ *vulgus*, everyman, is given characteristics of vagueness, vulgarity and soullessness, which may well be implicit in Catullus’ use of the word – and fit perfectly with Moore’s interpretation of the text. But Catullus offers the reader less information; what may be implicit remains possibly implicit. This is a useful example of Moore’s interpretative translational style. He was often criticised for his paraphrastic translations and there is no doubt that he often took the scenic route round Catullus’ skeletal sense, but he uses his various detours to express, often with great sensitivity, what he understood Catullus to express. One final example of Moore’s sleight of hand and flexible translation style can be seen in his translation of Lesbia’s incredulous reported question *Qui potis est, inquis?* (‘who can do that? you might ask’) into Catullus’ answer “Yes, sorceress – mad as it may seem...”

Thomas Moore engaged with Catullus in a new way. He attempted to translate not only the sense of the Latin, but also what might once have been called “the spirit of Catullus,” which is bound up in the poem’s style of communication and the visibility of the poet behind it, and the shades of meaning created therein. Moore is visible in these poems, like Catullus is in his, as the intriguing celebrity poet. He offers his own “Catullan”
persona in its place and replicates as many features of the source’s style and diction as he can, within the limits of his compositional mode. Moore did challenge the current public perception of Catullus because he was happy to push the literary limits imposed by a sense of good taste and a regard for religion he did not share.

Byron and Catullus

Poor LITTLE! Sweet, melodious bard!
Of late esteem'd it monstrous hard,
That he, who sang before all;
He who the lore of love expanded,
By dire Reviewers should be branded,
As void of wit and moral.

“To the Earl of [Clare]” Byron (1809).

In Byron’s eyes Thomas Moore’s Little expanded “the lore of love.” By this he meant that Moore had introduced new elements, shades and colours to the British love lyric; features which had previously not reached the public, due to the unwritten but understood rules of self-censorship. Eroticism and unchaste expressions of love were not welcome in a book of poems, which could readily be picked up – and worse, read and understood – by those supposedly without the faculty to resist its moral pollution, i.e. women, children and the uneducated. Byron’s stanza above, however, also shows that Moore paid the price for this expansion, a price dearer perhaps to him as a professional writer than Little’s healthy sales figures. The critical backlash against Little is indicative of how the literary establishment was simply not ready for this kind of text. The extent of their ill preparation was matched only by the elated readiness of Little’s readerships, and the support and exploitation of the book trade (booksellers, printers and stationers).

Moore’s book was a hit. Its rejection by the literary establishment, and the scandal surrounding its eroticism combined with the intimacy associated with its professed autobiographical and ostensibly truthful nature, only fanned the flames of Moore’s success. Its apparent confessionary and indeed incriminating nature foresaw the importance of
intimate and personal communication in the goal of uniting mass readerships/audiences with the print industry, which was by this point capable not only of supplying demand for populist literature, but also of facilitating and fuelling the burgeoning celebrity culture.224

As Jeffrey Vail (2001) demonstrates, Little greatly influenced Byron’s early works, especially *Fugitive Pieces* (1806). He was attracted to the mystery and mischief of Moore’s creation, that is “The Late Thomas Little,” just as much as the poetry he was meant to have written. The poetic situation established in *Little* put the poet at the centre of his poems, a position into which Byron intended to put himself. It offered Byron more than a model for composition; it offered him a way of being the kind of poet he could respect, and in his *Fugitive Pieces* he borrowed lavishly from Moore. It was not only Moore’s expansion of erotic expression in which Byron revelled, but also the subversive and playful lyrical voice and, most importantly, the autobiographical appearance of the work. What Byron admired in and took from Moore was what Moore, in turn, had taken in no small part from Catullus. Byron acknowledges this in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809): “Tis Little! Young Catullus of his day, / As sweet but as immoral as his lay.” By the combination of *Little*’s preface, the Catullan engagements in his poems and the stylistic context in which these were set, Moore developed the popular perception of Catullus. His antiquarian dust was blown off by Moore’s contemporary and entertaining British lyrics. Moore offered Byron a way of processing his classical scholarship, and producing a popular and powerful poetic style.

Both Byron in *Fugitive Pieces* (1806) and Moore in *Little* (1801) and later (as we have seen) translated Catullus’ poetry. But they did more than just this; they brought into British Poetry one of the more dangerous elements of Catullus’ style: the visibility of the poet behind his provocative poems. The important difference, however, between their two

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224 For the rise of celebrity in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century see Mole (2007).
versions of this Catullan trait is that Moore did it at a relatively safe distance by creating a fictional, dead, "juvenile" poet, whereas Byron created an idealised, sentimentalized though rakish version of himself, and then did his best to live up to it. He saw the public outcry and scandal that Little provoked and was drawn to it. Perhaps he saw in it a way in which to reinvent himself, to achieve a public status that his physical self — at the time overweight and partially lame — denied him. With the protection of his social standing and high level of education he could, if he used this mode of self-presentation, become the roguish and sentimental hero he aspired to be. The first Catullan poem in Byron's *Fugitive Pieces* was a translation of Catullus' translation of Sappho, poem 51, entitled *Translation from Catullus* 'Ad Lesbiam:'

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**Translation from Catullus.**

*Ad Lesbiam.*

Equal to Jove that youth must be—
Greater than Jove he seems to me—
Who, free from Jealousy's alarms,
Securely views thy matchless charms.
That cheek, which ever dimpling glows,
That mouth, from whence such music flows,
To him, alike, are always known,
Reserved for him, and him alone.
*Ah! Lesbia! though 't is death to me,*
*I cannot choose but look on thee;*
But, at the sight, my senses fly;
I needs must gaze, but, gazing, die;
Whilst trembling with a thousand fears,

Parch'd to the throat my tongue adheres,
My pulse beats quick, my breath heaves short,
My limbs deny their slight support,
Cold dews my pallid face o'erspread,
With deadly languor droops my head,
My ears with tingling echoes ring,
And life itself is on the wing;
My eyes refuse the cheering light,
Their orbs are veiled in starless night:
Such pangs my nature sinks beneath,
And feels a temporary death.

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225 His lameness is well documented, and he weighed 14 stone 6 pounds in 1806 at the height of 5 feet 8 ½ inches — recorded in his vintner's archives. In 1811, by strict dieting and travelling he weighed in at only 9 stone 11 ½ pounds.
In this poem Byron uses the dramatic scenario and general sequence of events of Catullus' poem. He does not often strive for the reflection of textual and stylistic characteristics. The rhyming couplets are musical and natural, but they do not attempt to relate to Catullus' form, metre or metrical style. Byron's translation, while attempting to remain close to the general narrative of the source, interprets and exaggerates its meaning with a number of additions and circumlocutions. The beginning of Catullus' poem is marked by dejection, expressed largely through understatement, with an underlying taste of bitter envy. In lines 3-8 we find a particularly Moore-ish style of translation. It is written in Moore's preferred form of iambic tetrameters in rhyming couplets, and it also interprets the Latin so as to give a distinctly melodramatic, "post-Moore" Catullus. For example where Catullus has: qui sedens adversus identidem te / spectat et audit / dulce ridentem ("[He] who sitting across from you again and again / looks at you and listens / to you sweetly laughing"), Byron introduces a level of description that goes beyond that of the source and in so doing causes Catullus to overplay his part. The traces of envy bound up in the admiration of Ille are applied in proportions more fitting to comedy.

The personification of an abstract concept is common in classicizing poems, but especially those conforming to eighteenth-century British classicism. In this way the use of 'Jealousy' is apt for its new "classical" context, but the personification is, in fact, alien to the source and it is too blunt a tool to affect Catullus' nuanced bitterness. It introduces a particularly Catullan preoccupation with Lesbia's fidelity, which again fits in well with its generally perceived "Catullan" context, but is not present in the source poem (51). Both of these features are examples of how broader associations with the source text are frequently called into play during the process of translation. Often the translator will draw on generally "classical" imagery, or Latinate expressions, or personifications (as in this case) in order to help them weave the sense of the original poem into a uniformly classical setting whilst adhering to whatever formal restriction they have placed on themselves.
Also, perhaps as frequently, the translator will use words or images that belong specifically to the work of the author being translated, but elsewhere in the work. This kind of “suturing” provides a link with the wider Catullan oeuvre, which encourages the reader to draw on their existing Catullan knowledge and perception of Catullus. It prepares the reader to colour in such “outline” depictions as “thy matchless charms” with some “Catullan” hue, before - in this case - the charms are identified. In lines 5 and 6 they are revealed as Lesbia’s cheek and mouth. It is an obscure route to take in order to deliver the sense of the desperately economic Adonean: spectat et audit, but it is one that enhances the visual aspect of the poem. Byron’s focus on Lesbia’s dimpled cheek and expressions like: “Ah! Lesbia! Though ‘tis death to me / I cannot choose but look on thee,” create a dramatic urgency and charm that both serves to satisfy the prevailing perceptions of Catullus in the wake of Moore, and detract from the simple and pained dejection of the Catullan source.

The idea that Lesbia’s man is her only man (“reserv’d for him, and him alone”) interprets and thus reduces the meaning of the source in Byron’s translation, assuming her lover to be her one lover, and thus her husband. The marital status of ‘Ille’ is particularly significant here because if they are married the poem then shows Byron’s Catullus both spying on and intensely coveting his neighbour’s wife. Byron’s is a voyeuristic poem and Lesbia is a taken woman, it is therefore problematic and “pollutant” within its cultural setting, i.e. the “high art” of poetry in a Christian country. We may see here the result of Moore’s expansion, not only of “the lore of love” but also the perception of Catullus. It is worth noting that Byron here made the Catullan text more improper than he needed to. Rather than self-censoring he adds to the Catullan impropriety.

In Catullus’ third Sapphic stanza he very simply and effectively expands on his

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226 This has of course been thought the case. c.51 is Catullus’ “feeler” poem to Clodia, using the fact that it was a translation as protection against accusations of adultery (Wilkinson et al. beginning with Wilkinson’s discussion at Foundation Hardt in 1953, quoted in Quinn (1970) 241 and Gaisser (2009) 214.}
earlier statement: *omnis eripit sensus mihi* (‘[i]t steals every sense from me’). Every sense consists of speech, touch, hearing and sight. First, his tongue numbs, then a slender flame flows down his limbs, his ears ring, and finally his eyes are covered in night. It is possible that Byron’s staging of a ‘temporary death’ - complete with ‘cold dews’ of sweat on his ‘pallid face’ and ‘deadly languor’ - which does not figure in the Catullan source, harks back to Sappho’s poem 31, the source of Catullus’ poem. Sweat, complexion change and proximity to death are all features of Sappho’s poem. The final stanza of Catullus as we have it was widely dismissed as either a textual defect or an error of aesthetic judgment on Catullus’ part. Byron’s poem, however, explicitly claims Catullus as its source in its title. It is possible that Byron worked from a Catullan text that had “repaired” the final stanza, or printed variations of it in the notes. It is difficult to say with any certainty because the poem is not a close translation of Catullus. But it seems most likely that Byron followed this tradition of not caring for Catullus’ final verse, and decided to create his own hybrid translation drawing on his knowledge of Sappho’s text.

Byron knew Sappho’s Ode well, as can be seen in his *Second Letter on Bowles’ Strictures on Pope*:

> Let us hear no more of this trash about "licentiousness." Is not "Anacreon" taught in our schools? - translated, praised, and edited? Are not his Odes the amatory praises of a boy? Is not Sappho’s Ode on a girl? Is not this sublime and (according to Longinus) fierce love for one of her own sex? And is not Phillips’ translation of it in the mouths of all your women? And are the English schools or the English women the more corrupt for all this? When you have thrown the ancients into the fire, it will be time to denounce the moderns (May 25th 1821).

This rant against Bowles was heavily censored until the late 1830s, excising the references to homosexuality. In the above extract he railed against the persistent equation of gay

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227 Sappho sweats, shakes and her face turns green (as grass).
228 Both Noel and Nott give variations of the text of the final stanza and some discussion. Noël (1803) v.2. 259. Achilles Statius (1524-1581) had: *Sudor it late gelidus trementi / Artubus totis, violamque vincit / Insidens pallor, moriens nec auras / Ducere possum*. Janus Dousa (1545-1604) had: *Frigidus sudor fluit; horror artus / Pallidos herba magis it per omnes, / Et pati mortem videor morans in / Limine mortis; and Henri Estienne (c.1530-1598) had: *Manat et sudor gelidus, tremorque / Occupat totam; velut herba pallent / Ora; sperandi neque compos, orco / Praxima credo*. Nott (1795) gives the first two and also points towards translations of Sappho by Boileau and Ambrose Philips.
passion with "licentiousness," and in doing so expressed quite clearly what might be called his formerly more thickly veiled gay reading of classical culture. In any case, Byron’s Catullus as depicted in Equal to Jove that youth must be supports the eroticized perception of Catullus, developed by Moore.

As we might expect Byron’s approach to this poem bears little resemblance to Wordsworth’s. Where Wordsworth made Catullus’ poem conform to his moral, aesthetic and religious standards, Byron happily presents it, in all its pagan, insincere and eroticized glory. He again uses the lyrical four beat iambic metre, dear to Moore. He, however, chose a more ambitious form than that of Ad Lesbiam. The poem is made up of six quatrains, each with a triplet followed by final verses rhyming with one another in the following
Like Wordsworth, Byron does not attempt to translate the second line (*et quantum est*...), but instead addresses 'Ye Cupids' alone, overlooking the 'venuses' too. He does, however, in a similar manner to Wordsworth give them space in the visual dimension of the poem by mentioning their wings, on which they are somewhat bizarrely warned not to spread joy. This endows them not only with a means of transport but also mischievous infantile characters. The reader is encouraged to generate these connections from the diminutive style of address and instructions ("Ye Cupids droop each little head...") and - again like in Wordsworth's poem - artistic visual representations of Cupids, or Loves, commonly depicted as winged babies. Byron's cupids have more of the naughty cherub about them, which is the first sign of its being a subverted elegy. He has no intention of turning the poem into a Christian consolation, but walks the fine Catullan line between sincerity and humour, which ambiguity gives the source its attraction.

For such a neatly structured poem it seldom strays far from its source, maintaining some of its key verbal and stylistic features. For example, Byron follows Catullus' sequence of events. First comes the announcement to the Cupids that Lesbia's bird is dead, then the eroticized description of the sparrow when alive, then (briefly) its journey to the underworld, and finally the apostrophe to a representative of death ("*tenebrae Orci*" and 'devouring grave'). His description of the living bird is not highly eroticized. There is far less space for the drawing of erotic parallels and euphemism than the original. Byron's sparrow appears a fairly innocent, happy, and easy-going bird. But it does betray its passerine nature at one point. The visualization of the part of the female body where the bird was accustomed to play introduces some erotic potential, and in combination with its suggestive adverb 'lightly,' which both pauses the focus of the reader and evokes his or her sense of touch. The sparrow lightly moves over his mistress' bosom, like a lover's hand. There is a subtle sensuousness in this line, which would perhaps have been expurgated if it
were in a Bowdlerized "Family" Catullus. It, however, is hardly scandalous material and appears quite reserved in its Byronic context. ‘Chirrup’d’ is a neat rendering of the onomatopoeic ‘pipiabat’, which helps to develop a nostalgically, familiar and loving scene, thus enhancing the pity we know Catullus does not really feel for Lesbia.

Byron avoids using the classical proper nouns Orcus and Veneres, which (unlike Jove from poem 51) would call upon a familiarity with classical literature and myth to understand. This means that the two poems are addressed to different characters, but the import and the effect is very similar. The ‘devouring grave’ was at the time of writing a frequent image in the British Christian literary tradition; it appears in translations and commentaries of the Bible, for example: “The gates of the devouring grave / are open’d wide in vain.” (Isaac Watts’ Psalms of David, Hymn 55, also known as Hezekiab’s Song). Since the expression had long been in poetic circulation it would have been the natural choice for Byron, especially as the words ‘devouring’ and devoratis not only share the same root, but also look and sound so similar. Since the Renaissance cupids had been familiar features of classicism, they could therefore be easily conjured both my Byron and his readers. Veneres, on the other hand, would have required the reading agility gained from a familiarity with classical poetry. Byron therefore used details that would have appeared familiar to his readers, which reveals an early tendency towards the popular rather than the esoteric.

In Catullus’ poem the shades of Orcus devour ‘all pretty things’ (omnia bella), including Lesbia’s ‘pretty sparrow’ (bellum passerem). There is an emphasis on prettiness that is absent from Byron’s translation. The jaws of Byron’s grave devour “eternal victims” and “life’s decay.” It is therefore more serious than Catullus’. “Thou hast ta’en the bird away” does not make the same show of emotional investment with the sparrow or Lesbia as Catullus’ apostrophe, complete with the exclamation o miselle passer! Byron’s coolness has the effect of calming down the mock elegy, making it a more objective
comment on death than Catullus’ subjective and comically near-hysterical lament. In this respect it bears some resemblance to Wordsworth’s version of the same poem. The finality of Byron’s grave, as the “receptacle of life’s decay,” is more in keeping with Catullus’ pagan idea of death, than Wordsworth’s Christian one. The use of Christian imagery in a translation that does not treat its religious material in a Christian manner would have perhaps been more offensive to contemporary tastes than offering an overtly pagan and a textually closer version of the source.

Byron’s next Catullan poem in Fugitive Pieces (1806) was called Imitated From Catullus and its source was Catullus 48:

48

MELLITOS oculos tuos, Juuenti,
si quis me sinat usque basiare,
usque ad milia basiem trecenta
nee numquam uidear satur futurus,
non si densior aridis aristis
sit nostrae seges osculationis.

TO ELLEN.

Oh! might I kiss those eyes of fire,
A million scarce would quench desire:
Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss:
Nor then my soul should sated be;
Still would I kiss and cling to thee:
Nought should my kiss from thine dissever;
Still would we kiss, and kiss for ever;
E’en though the numbers did exceed
The yellow harvest’s countless seed.
To part would be a vain endeavor:
Could I desist? — ah! never — never!

Poem 48 is problematic for creative engagement at this time because it was addressed to a boy, Juventius. Expression of homosexual love in classical texts was commonly the target of scrupulous expurgation by British editors and translators right up to the late twentieth century. Byron quickly defuses this potential issue by affixing the dedication in Fugitive pieces: “To Ellen,” and then in Poem on Various Occasions (1807): “To Anna.” The dedication to female lovers draws attention away from the homosexuality of the source, but its selection for imitation is still telling. The “slip” from Ellen to Anna may be taken as a sign of Byron rakishly reusing a love poem, but the inconsistency might also draw attention to the fictionality of the girl, show a crack in the heterosexual gloss of a
homosexual poem. Byron's use of Catullus 48 gives the poem an "edge" that a version of poem 5 or 7, for example, would not have had. The importance of the homoerotically inspired source would have been noted by anyone who knew Byron, because he was by this point no stranger to the homoerotic encounter - even if it did not always extend to its physical satisfaction.210

A key element of Byron's poetic might be seen as making trouble for the squeamish pedant. As can be seen in the bold type above, Byron deals with the Latin very economically. It is his sentimental addition that expands the poem. The persistent repetition of 'kiss' in lines 4-8 stylistically and contextually alludes to the central part of Catullus 5, and transmits the similar idea of excessive sentimentality, as much as excessive kissing. It expresses a sentimental eroticism that was by contemporary standards too "warm" for the majority of readerships because it produced a reading situation particularly fertile for the satisfaction and/or growth of vice. Those innocents at risk of being polluted (i.e. women and children) would need protection from such material. Byron's persona's powerlessness to "desist" aligns him with Catullus', who is in the position of the irrational, "female", passive lover.

In 1810 Byron drew on this same poem again, this time in an overtly homosexual context, the same in fact as provoked a few months earlier the following observation: "In England the vices in fashion are whoring & drinking, in Turkey, sodomy and smoking. We prefer a girl and a bottle, they a pipe and a pathic."221 He wrote from Patras on July 29th to his friend John Cam Hobhouse of his new travelling companion whom he describes in the same letter as: "as forward as an unbroken colt":

230 It is no secret that Byron had lovers of both sexes. Harrow, where he was between 1801 and 1805, was not coeducational.
231 3rd May 1810 Byron's letter to Henry Drury, Byron & Merchand (1973) 1.237: "I first landed in Albania the ancient Epirus where we penetrated as far as Mount Tomerit." This may well allude to Catullus' poem 11.2 sive in extremos penetrabit Indos. It is not a contemporary English travel term and thus may well be read as a Catullan seasoning of their Albanian trip, which by Byron's own account was more than a little salacious.
The next morning I found the dear soul upon horseback, clothed very sprucely in Greek Garments, with those ambrosial curls hanging down his amiable back... 232

They travelled together in Byron’s small group to Patras, and after some time the boy, Eustathius Georgiou, had to return to his father. Byron described their parting as:

Vastly pathetic, as many kisses as would have sufficed a boarding school, and embraces enough to have ruined the character of a county in England, besides tears (not on my part) and expressions of “Tenerezza” to a vast amount. – All this and the warmth of the weather has quite overcome me, tomorrow I will continue, at present “to bed,” “to bed,” “to bed”. 233

Byron’s letters are full of allusions to literature and when he writes about homosexual relationships, as in this case, it is no wonder that he should recourse to the use of classical terms and classical allusion. It is clearly the ancient Greek lifestyle he sees himself to be enjoying, but he alludes to it more often by way of Latin and English poetic sources. He refers to Eustathius as his amiable παιδί (sic), and once euphemistically describes him as “well versed in Ellenics.”234 Byron alludes to specifically Greek customs, but interestingly he does not do it in Greek. Georgiou’s “ambrosial curls” are from Pope’s Iliad 1.684 and the enumeration of kisses is Catullan (poems 5, 7 and 48). It seems that for Byron, as appears to be frequently the case in the Romantic era, Hellenic taste was expressed through Roman and British literary mediations.

Byron’s classical scholarship

Byron’s classical education amounted to around 2,500 hours of tuition in Greek and Latin.235 He developed over this time a deep understanding of Greek and Roman culture, less in the classroom – we are to assume – than in his free time, for he was naturally attracted to the censored poetry, which can be seen in this extract from Don Juan Canto I, stanzas 42-5:

232 Byron & Merchand (1973) 2.6.
233 ibid. 2.6.
234 ibid. 2.7. n.b. παιδί here means ‘boy.’ The ending -η is either a typographical error, or misspelling in MS.
Ovid's a rake, as half his verses show him,
Anacreon's morals are a still worse sample,
Catullus scarcely has a decent poem,
I don't think Sappho's Ode a good example,
Although Longinus tells us there is no hymn
Where the sublime soars forth on wings more ample:
But Virgil's songs are pure, except that horrid one
Beginning with "Formosum Pastor Corydon."

Lucretius' irreligion is too strong,
For early stomachs, to prove wholesome food;
I can't help thinking Juvenal was wrong,
Although no doubt his real intent was good,
For speaking out so plainly in his song,
So much indeed as to be downright rude;
And then what proper person can be partial
To all those nauseous epigrams of Martial?

Juan was taught from out the best editions,
Expurgated by learned men, who place
Judiciously, from out the schoolboy's vision,
The grosser parts; but fearful to deface
Too much their modest bard by this omission,
And pitying sore his mutilated case,
They only add them all in an appendix,
Which saves, in fact, the trouble of an index;

For there we have them all 'at one fell swoop,'
Instead of being scatter'd through the pages;
They stand forth marshall'd in a handsome troop,
To meet the ingenious youth of future ages,
Till some less rigid editor shall stoop
To call them back into their separate cages,
Instead of standing staring all together,
Like garden gods - and not so decent either.

This catalogue of classical censorship reveals both Byron's intimacy with the listed texts
and his view of the "rigid editors". It is also an example of how much of Byron's own
experience goes into his heroes, and how little he feared the resultant biographic reading.
Don Juan is not Byron, but it would not be possible to write this section of verse without
Byron's considerable classical knowledge.

It is interesting that despite there being an emphasis on the study of Greek at
Drury's Harrow, Anacreon and Sappho are the only Greek poets listed. This may simply
be because the young Harrovians did not have access to more of the racy Greek material.
The syllabus was most likely focused on Homer, the historians, philosophers and
tragedians, rather than on the symposiastic poets. They are, however, significantly two
Greek poets with whom Byron associates the expression of homoerotic love. The list of authors is an example of Byron’s preference in his classical reference for Latin over Greek, even though his aesthetic inclination seems to have been towards Greece rather than Rome. This is probably largely due to linguistic competence and familiarity rather than anything else. Latin is immediately more familiar to English readers than Greek because they share the same script, and also because a vast majority of British schools tended to start Latin at an earlier stage than Greek, which gave students far more time to become familiar with Latin authors than Greek authors. It is this counterintuitive situation of aesthetic preference and linguistic competence perhaps that results in the Latin-mediated Hellenism that gives Roman Hellenizers, like Catullus and his imitators, their somewhat incongruous position in Romantic Hellenism.

The distinction between the “modest bards” and their “not so decent” Priapean works is an allusion to Catullus 16: nam castum esse decet pium poetam / ipsum, versiculos nihil necesse est. Byron wears his reading proudly, both in his poetry and his other writing. He displays his classical scholarship by referring to Longinus’ comment on Sappho’s poem 31.\(^\text{236}\) His reference to Catullus 51 therefore kills three birds with one stone. Byron’s simultaneous display of classical scholarship and easy, colloquial style is reminiscent of Moore’s early poetry. But we must be careful not to overstate Moore’s influence on Byron’s work, even though Byron himself claims in a letter to Moore that “all the mischief I have ever done, or sung, has been owing to that confounded book of yours.”\(^\text{237}\)

The key characteristic that they shared was the desire to bring the Roman love lyric into English. It is true that Byron’s poetic style of doing this owes much to Moore’s, but there is a point where the influence from Moore stops and the momentum of his classical

\(^{236}\) In Byron’s fair copy he [slightly mis-]quotes Longinus, *On the Sublime*, section 10.

\(^{237}\) *Byron’s Letters and Journals* 7:117
reading takes over. Moore offered Byron a mode by which to release the pent-up classical lyricism, compiled over around thirteen years of classical education. Both Moore and Byron in their prefaces to Little and Fugitive Pieces use the apparently self-effacing Catullanism of offering “trifles” or “nugae” to their readers. Catullus’ work is a recurring and shared subtext in their lives as poets from their earliest publications, as we have seen, right the way through their lives. Their friendship was founded on Catullus, which is demonstrated by Byron’s verse epistle to Moore in May 1813, the day before visiting Leigh Hunt in prison:

But now to my letter – to yours ‘tis an answer –
To-morrow be with me, as soon as you can, sir,
All ready and dress’d for proceeding to sponge on
(According to compact) the wit in the dungeon –
...
But to-morrow at four, we will both play the Scurra,
And you’ll be Catullus, the Regent Mamurra.

For Byron and Moore Catullus was not just a poet whose work they read at school, but was a great influence throughout their careers. We can see that for Moore Catullus was an important source of and support for erotic, scandalous and sentimental poetry. Catullus appears in Byron’s life and work when he follows Moore’s example. He also, however, significantly turns to Catullus in time of crisis.

Byron, Thyrza and Catullus

On 9th October 1811 Byron was notified that his friend/lover, John Edleston – a Trinity chorister – had died of consumption in May 1811. Edleston’s death was the source of great grief for Byron and inspired him to write some of his most sincere and poignant poems. These are often referred to as the “Thyrza cycle” because “Thyrza” was the name Byron adopted for his dead lover, who when alive was nicknamed “Euryalus.” As Philip Cardinale has shown in his doctoral thesis entitled: “Verse Translations of Virgil’s Aeneid in Britain 1787-1824,” the name Thyrza has little to do with Abel’s wife ("Thirza") as
Byron would have had his contemporaries believe. It derives, however, from Corydon’s opponent (“Thyris”) in the singing competition of Vergil’s 7th Eclogue. In order to be true to his dead lover and keep their mutual affection secret, Byron gave Thyris a feminine form, and is reported - when asked who Thyrza was - to have replied only this: “I took the name from Gesner. She was Abel’s wife,” referring to Solomon Gessner’s The Death of Abel (1758).\footnote{238}

The identity of Thyrza was subject to many years’ scholarly debate, but it is now commonly understood to be Edleston, not least due to the presence of an unpublished lament in Latin verse called Edleston, which dates to the same time and reflects sentiments expressed elsewhere in the Thyrza cycle:

\begin{verbatim}
Te, te, care puer! Veteris sin omen amoris
Iam valeat, socium semper amare voco.
Te, fatumque tuum, quotiens carissime! Plango,
Et toties haeret fortior ipse dolor.
Dulcis at ipse dolor, quam dulcis! dulciorem ardet
Vanus amor, credens te tenuisse saeul.
Me miserum! frustra pro te vixisse precatum,
Cur frustra volui te moriente mori? –
Heu quanto minus est iam serta, unguenta, puellas
Carpere cum reliquis quam meminisses tu?
Quae mihi nunc maneant? Gemitus, vaga somnia fratris,
Aut sine lacrymis pervigilare toro.
Ah Libitina veni, invisae mihi parcere Parcae!
Mortua amicitia Mors sit amica mihi.
\end{verbatim}

It is only in this poem of the Thyrza cycle, written in elegiac couplets, that it is clear that the object of Byron’s lament is a boy. It converses with the classical tradition of lament for a beautiful boy. Care puer is found in number of Latin poems, e.g. Tibullus 3.6.5, Martial 1.88.7, Vergil Aeneid 8.581.\footnote{239} The reason for its being written in Latin is perhaps partly, as Higashinaka suggests, “Covering up his Greek love [for Edleston].”\footnote{240} There were, however, countless better ways to cover this up than writing in Latin, for example not

\footnote{238}{Gessner (1758) see Carmen iii. 30-2, notes. n.b. At this time sodomy was still punishable by death in England.}

\footnote{239}{Since Byron called Edleston “Euryalus,” it is perhaps likely that in addressing him as care puer he is kindling the memory of his likening them to Nisus and Euryalus.}

\footnote{240}{Higashinaka (2011).}
writing it at all. I think Byron is more likely to have written it in Latin because it was in the fictional world of the classical love poem that his and Edleston’s love made most sense in a world institutionally hostile towards homosexuality.

McGann’s note on this poem states that: “B’s principal model here is Catullus, especially nos. 68, lines 15-24, and 101. Line 11 here specifically echoes Catullus 8.15.”

Line 11: *quae mihi nunc maneant?* (‘what now remains for me?’) has a close verbal connection to *quae tibi manet vita?* (‘What life remains for you?’). The bitterness of Catullus’ line is picked up by Byron and turned back on himself. The reapplication of the phrase (what remains for...) in the new context allows it to mean differently to and independently from its source. This goes to show that the apparently artificial technique of “picking out” can in the right hands produce beautiful and “natural” poetry. I would not, however, go so far as suggesting that Catullus is Byron’s principal source for this poem. Poems 68 and 101 are where we should find the Catullan material for Byron’s lament because of their concern with his recently deceased brother, but it is not there. Without a significant body of textual parallels I do not think it useful to present Catullus as the primary model, especially because there are other important sources.

The *credens te tenuisse sinu* (‘believing to have held you in my lap’) is reminiscent of Catullus 2 *quem in sinu tenere* (‘[the sparrow] whom [Lesbia was accustomed] to hold in her lap’). *Tenere sinu* in Catullus’ poem introduces an eroticizing element to what is ostensibly a poem about a pet sparrow. The fact that Byron draws on this phrase in this new context both shows that he recognized the erotic subtext of poem 2, since he applies it effectively and naturally to its human significance, and had digested the Latin to the extent that its use did not seem inappropriate to the much graver context of a lament. Line 9’s

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242 c.f. Introduction p.12f.
243 It is therefore somewhat strange that McGann would point us there.
serta, unguenta, puellas allude to Juvenal’s homoerotically coloured 9th Satire, lines 126-9:

Festinat enim decurrere uelox
flosculus angustae miseraeque breuissima uitae
portio; dum bibimus, dum serta, unguenta, puellas
poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus.

For the shortest bud of our narrow and sad life hurries fast away.
While we drink and call for flowers, perfumes and girls,
unthinking old age creeps up on us.

The texts on which Byron draws tell us a good deal about his Latin reading. Just as we may have surmised from his catalogue of texts in Don Juan above, he seems to have been drawn to poetic expressions of the erotic and especially homoerotic. This is perhaps because he found in these works poetic expression of the way he felt about his lovers. The apparent lack of interest in alluding to “unproblematic” classical literature seems to suggest that in his early works Byron used classical allusion as a stick with which to strike out against authority and/or to defend his “alternative” sexuality against the moralizing pressures of society.

It is tempting to suggest that the source texts used by Byron in Edleston are not so much alluded to as borrowed from because their source application seems inconsistent with the sincerity of the elegy. It could be that their traces remain only because those poems were the ones he remembered, or perhaps they were ones that the two boys enjoyed to read together, because they told the story of their pure love. Juvenal’s Satire, however, could hardly be seen to do this. There, thankfully, does not have to be one answer. Sincerity is not exclusive of the kinds of artistic play involved in poetic composition, both conscious and unconscious. If we are to take these Thyrza poems, as I think we are meant to, as sincere expressions of grief, then we might feel that some of the texts with which Edleston connects are somehow inappropriate. But together they make up a rich tapestry of Latin texts that have a clear surface meaning that celebrates the love Byron felt for Edleston.
The individual texts situate their love in a culture and classical literary tradition that did not class their love as unnatural, dangerous or "licentious." It is an exasperated celebration of forbidden love, a "Greek" love, mediated, and at some level protected, by Roman poetry. Byron's request for Libitina (Roman goddess of funerals and personification of Death) to come to him does not import any sense or sentiment from Horace's *Odes* 3.30.7, even though that is likely to be the verse in which he came across her. It is not possible to assess allusive dialogue in this instance in the same terms as we might when a poet writing in his or her language alludes to another text. For Byron the words on which he drew would seldom have come unattached from a specific text, because it was not a living language for him. The composition of *Edleston* was a more artificial process than that of *Ad Lesbian* for example. The blocks of sense he was using were bigger and clumsier, and the skill of the poet lay in the concealment of the stitches in this Frankenstein's monster of a poem. It is a poem that shows just how skilled a Latinist and poet Byron was, but perhaps more importantly it demonstrates how an artificially constructed poem can be natural and communicate sincere affection. The Catullan fragments in this poem are verbally recognizable, but their sense has been all but consumed by the sense of the new poem.

The Thyrza cycle has other Catullan allusions, but nothing that alters the picture of Byron's Catullus that has already emerged in the discussion above. The presence of Catullus in this cycle is important in so far as it shows that his works had a significant effect on Byron in his early career and also later on, as has been the case with Wordsworth and Moore. As he does in Moore Catullus appears in Byron's early poetry alongside

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244 *One struggle more and I am free:* "It suits me well to mingle now / With things that never pleased before: / Though every joy is fled below, / What future grief can touch me more?" c.68.23: *Omnia tecum una peierunt gaudia nostra.*

*If sometimes in the haunts of men:* "I would not fools should overhear / One sigh that should be wholly thine" — c.5.
Anacreon. One reason for this is that they were the two naughtiest poets they would have come across at school, but for Byron – as we see in his letter to Murray criticizing Bowles and from his selection of poems 51 and 48 in *Fugitive Pieces* – they represent two key members of the gay classical canon. Byron’s engagement with Catullus seems in part to have been as an example of how so-called “licentious” poetry can achieve high artistic merit and cultural value. It is different from Moore’s engagement with Catullus. It is, for example, less jovial and social. But Byron’s and Moore’s Catulluses are equally mischievous and represented threats against a sexually illiberal society by challenging the public perceptions of classical culture. Their work combined did not conform to the prevailing and somewhat suppressed perceptions of Catullus. Their Catullus was more erotic, sentimental and importantly contemporary than he had been before. By contemporary I mean familiar as a member of society. In Wordsworth, as much as Moore, he spoke the language of the people, not a neoclassical hybrid of English and Latin. The cultural and social threat of Catullus’ was beginning to become a reality, with more sides of his poetic craft and character on show to the public.
3. Catullus the Reformer - Leigh Hunt’s Reception

This chapter will examine the literary engagement with Catullus of the poet, journalist and spokesman of social and governmental reform, Leigh Hunt. Following the influential work on Hunt of Jeffrey Cox and Nicholas Roe, the study of members of the “Hunt circle” or “Cockney School” tends now to be usefully conducted with an awareness of their position within an alternative and dissenting social group. From this approach Hunt has taken a more central position in the literature on early nineteenth century Romanticism than his poetry or prose alone might have assured for him. Hunt, as I hope to show, was a key figure involved in the emergence of Catullus before the eyes of the public at a time when less than a handful of his chaster poems were read at school.

On leaving school he gravitated slowly towards journalism and public life. He was brought up surrounded in his family by political and religious dissent, but learned early that involvement in the extremes of either form of dissent made life very hard. This no doubt informed the middle-path, moderate approach to reform that is omnipresent in his journalism of the early nineteenth century. By twenty-four Hunt became the editor of the influential Sunday journal The Examiner, an intellectual stronghold for reform and an important vehicle for the public communication of political dissent. The paper claimed no political allegiance and sold itself as an impartial publication, but it did not take long for Hunt’s politics to break through this veneer of impartiality. In his autobiography Hunt identified the main objects of The Examiner as being “to assist in producing Reform in Parliament, liberality of opinion in general (especially freedom from superstition), and a

246 For details of Hunt’s school life see Introduction page 13f. n.b. There were also pressures from his family to get a job. See Roe (2005) 46f.
247 See Roe (2005) for a detailed biography of Hunts early years.
fusion of literary taste into all subjects whatsoever. It began with being of no party; but Reform soon gave it one." The paper’s commitment to Reform made it a bitter enemy of the Tory press. Hunt was outspoken in his criticism of government policy, and successfully so, for example, in his campaign against corporal punishment within the military. In this instance Henry Brougham defended a case of libel brought against Leigh and his brother John Hunt for his article One thousand Lashes!!, which condemned the common military practice of flogging. Eventually, however, their luck ran out and in February 1813 the brothers were imprisoned for two years for libelling the Prince Regent. In March 1812 Hunt published an article entitled The Prince of St. Patrick’s Day that the Lord Ellenborough judged to be “a foul, atrocious, and malignant libel.” Hunt must have known he was on thin ice when he characterized the Prince as “a violator of his word, a libertine over head and ears in debt and disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demireps, a man who has just closed half a century without one single claim on the gratitude of his country or the respect of posterity!” The incarceration of the Hunt brothers did little to prevent the The Examiner from becoming a popular and powerful publication.

Hunt wrote and published translations of Catullus’ poems from 1808 to 1819, from the age of twenty-four to thirty-five. I intend to examine these translations with a focus on their publishing histories, presentation, paratextual information (such as introductions and commentary) as well as their style of translation. I shall work through the two collections of poems, The Feast of the Poets (1814) and Foliage (1818), in turn, but will follow the

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248 Hunt (1850) 1.203.
251 The Examiner, 22 March 1812, 179.
252 By the end of 1808, its first year, The Examiner had gained a circulation of 2200, which rose to around 8000 in 1812 - according to Jeremy Bentham, a subscriber to the paper: A. Bain (1882 and 1967), p. 123.
individual translations back into their earlier publications in order to glean as much information as possible about Hunt’s relationship with Catullus.

Catullus at The Feast of The Poets

In 1814 Leigh Hunt published *The Feast of Poets, with notes and other pieces in verse*. Catullus was not invited to this particular Feast since it was organized solely for British poets. He joins the party all the same, however, when he appears as the key author of the “other pieces in verse”, which Hunt describes in his preface as: “A few little pieces of a graver description, in order that those, who in return for being lightly regarded, are eager to make accusations of levity, may see that he has at least a taste for more serious enjoyment.” Feast was in the bookshops while Hunt was still imprisoned at Surrey County Gaol for libelling the Prince Regent in 1813. It consists of his long eponymous poem *The Feast of the Poets* (with extensive notes), three translations of Catullus (which will be addressed below), a translation of Horace’s *Ode to Pyrrha* (1.5), a translation of part of a choral ode from Seneca’s *Thyestes* (336-390), one of the Homeric Hymns (*Bacchus, Or the Pirates*), an original Occitan sonnet requesting the company of a friend (T---- B----- Esq), and a poem called *Politics and Poetics, or that unhappy situation of a journalist smitten with the love of rhyme*. Hunt’s expression “more serious enjoyment” demonstrates his understanding that displays of critical judgment, like those in the Feast, needed to be supported by the cultural authority to criticize. This is one of the main reasons we find this parade of classical poets both translated and alluded to in the poems that follow the Feast.

Hunt, however, does not only display his learning by translating the canonical classical texts that would shine a light of erudition on him from Greece and Rome via a

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253 Hunt (1814) xiv.
254 The phrase “more serious enjoyment” is reminiscent of Vergil’s *Paulo malora canamus* (let me sing in a slightly higher register) from the first line of *Eclogue 4*. 

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good school education. The classical texts he selects are all seasoned with his own political and poetical taste, which are seldom divided in his published works from the early 1810s. The word “enjoyment” also reveals much about Hunt’s approach to literature, culture and perhaps life in general as things in which to take pleasure. To actually enjoy classical poetry was no small step beyond the schoolboy classics of grammatical rote learning, which left many school leavers in a confused state between hatred and admiration, expressed succinctly by Byron in Childe Harold: “Then farewell Horace, whom I hated so, / Not for thy faults, but mine.”

In Feast Horace, who was a staple of the traditional classical education, and as such often pilloried as the figure presiding over “cold classicism”, is here presented in “warmer” dress by an ode that tells of a femme fatale, Pyrrha, who has multiple partners and dominates effeminate young men, in whose number we are led to believe – once stood Horace himself. Showing Horace’s “feminine” side was a disruption to the precarious balance of a classical education used to instill manly morality in the young citizens of patriarchal society. The gender politics of Hunt’s version of the Homeric hymn are equally damaging in this respect: a “blooming youth” [Bacchus] with “dark locks ripening in the sunny ray, / And wrapt in a loose cloak of crimson bright, Which half gave out his shoulders broad and white” (p.133), turns himself into a lion and transforms into dolphins the Captain and many of his crew. Before his metamorphosis the Captain criticized the Master for refusing to put the god in chains: “Stick to thy post and leave these things to men” (p.134). Hunt may be seen in these translations to challenge contemporary perceptions of manliness. Although he was by no means a feminist by any modern sense, his upbringing - influenced as it was by the Unitarianism and Universalism.

255 Byron (1818) canto iv, 77.
256 n.b. Hunt seems to allude to Hector’s last words to Andromache before going out to battle in Iliad book 6: ἄλλ’ εἰς οἶκον ὁδεῖν τά σ’ αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε / ἵστον τ’ ἡλικάτην τε, καὶ ἐμφυτοῖς κέλευε/ ἔργον ἔποιεσθαι: πόλεμος δ’ ἄνθρωπος μελῆσε/ πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ’ ἔμω, τοὶ ἰλίῳ ἐγκαθαύν. (But go home and see to your own tasks/ the loom and distaff, and instruct your maids/ to go after their work – war shall be a concern for men/ all of those, and especially to me, who are in Troy) 6.489-493. It is an example of Homeric “suturing” in Hunt, who would have believed that the Homeric Hymns were written by Homer.
of his immediate family - seems to have led him to the conviction that the manners of men, and thence government, could be reformed by normatively anti-masculine ideas such as domesticity. Seneca's choral ode, which tells of what a king should and should not be, is particularly poignant when translated by a man incarcerated for the libel of his sovereign. There is a tension therefore between a professed desire to use the cultural authority offered by manly classical literature, and the presentation of an alternative classicism, a feminized and politically active one that supports Hunt's fight for political and social reform.

CATULLUS'S RETURN HOME TO THE PENINSULA OF SIRMIO.

CARMEN XXXI.

O best of all the scatter'd spots that lie
In sea or lake,—apple of landscape's eye,—
How gladly do I drop within thy nest,
With what a sigh of full, contented rest,

PENINSULARUM, Sirmio, insularumque
Ocelle, quascunque in liquidibus stagnis
Marique vasto fert eterque Neptunus,
Quam te libenter, quamque letus inviso,

Figure 17

Catullus the "homester"

The first Catullan poem printed in Feast is Catullus' Return Home to the Peninsula of Sirmio (poem 31). It is presented with English and Latin on the same page, separated by a single continuous line (fig. 1). This format allows the reader who knows some Latin to

237 More of this will come across in the analysis of individual poems.
read Catullus alongside Hunt’s translation. The way that only small chunks of corresponding text are provided promotes engagement with the Latin and comparison between the two. Instead of simply a translated poem, the reader receives a cross-lingual literary experience. The reason for opening up the translation could be that Hunt wanted to prove to those who accuse him of levity that he was in fact both well educated and a decent translator, who could handle Catullus in a serious way. Another reason could be that he wished to convey to his reader the specific choices made by him, so as to bring them more deeply into the translational process, increasing their sense of participation and interaction with the book.

The extensive notes given to the Feast are another example of Hunt’s interactive style. He provides for the reader a window into the writing process and in doing so opens himself up to a heightened scrutiny, which no doubt won as much derision as it did favour. The ‘open’ style of translation works both to show off the skill, education and imagination of the translator, and to broaden access to a formally exclusive source. One other consideration for presenting the text in this manner is space – the more words, the more pages, the thicker and pricier the book. This may well be, but Hunt would not have published in this manner if he was not happy for the comparison to be drawn. The opening up of the experience of the Latin better fits with the wider democratizing nature of Leigh Hunt and his circle’s cultural output. Parallels may be drawn with the reproduction of Continental and Classical artwork in cheap materials at the time like outline etchings of classical art (e.g. Henry Moses – printmaker, whose output was largely classical258), cheap

258 See Oxford DNB: Lucy Peltz, ‘Moses, Henry (d. 1870)’, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004. His preface to A collection of vase etc... shows his democratizing intention: “Many of the most admirable productions of antiquity are however inaccessible to students, whose limited income will not allow of their travelling to see them; and correct representations of them are only preserved in volumes of enormous expense, or great scarcity. I therefore conceived that I should perform an acceptable service to the lovers and professors of the Arts, if I were to select from various Museums, Collections, and Cabinets, and to engrave in a manner the least expensive, such of the most of eminence, who have by their communications greatly contributed to increase the value of this Publication.” Moses (1814).
prints of Italian painting, even classically inspired wallpaper, wax statuettes, and sheet music. The Cockneys were key participants in this trend of reproduction and promulgation of high culture, and their emphasis on entertainment and accessibility as well as education increased its reach as much as its openness to criticism.

Two slightly different translations of poem 31 were published by Hunt before its appearance in *Feast*. In 1808 the poem seems to act as an advertisement for the book, *Excerpta ex variis Romanis poetis qui in Scholis rarius leguntur* (1808), compiled by fellow ‘Old Blue’ (former student of Christ’s Hospital), John Rogers Pitman, whose book was an important resource for Hunt. The Latin is not printed with the translation in *The Examiner* in 1808, but it is in 1812, which is presented in a similar style to the *Feast* version, but this time with all the Latin and English on the same page (Figure 18). We may deduce from this that it was Hunt’s intention to have the Latin showing on the same page in both bilingual publications, since – as the editor - he had a good deal of control over the way *The Examiner* was printed.

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259 *The Examiner* is a good example of this commitment to democratization of culture, via the public presentation of communal cultural activities such as communal dining (recorded in Table Talk), theatre going (recorded in theatre criticism), art exhibitions etc. Outside of *The Examiner* but still in the circle, Vincent Novello helped to found the Philharmonic Society (1813) to promote the performance of classical music, he also founded Novello and Co. – a publishing house committed to make music available to all rather than just those who could travel to London. He shared with Hunt a simultaneous commitment to entertainment and education (See *Oxford DNB*: Nicholas Roe, ‘Hunt, (James Henry) Leigh (1784–1859)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2009.

260 This book is written entirely in Latin and introduced the classically educated public to poems and passages of Lucretius, Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus, Persius, Seneca, Lucan, Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, Statius, Martial, Juvenal, Ausonius, and Claudian. Its publication and subsequent editions show an increasing demand for Roman poetry other than that which was commonly prescribed by school curricula. Hunt used this book, apparently in conjunction with Noël (1808) and Nott (1795), in order to select which poems he would translate and what text of Catullus he would use. This is certainly the case for *Feast*, in which Hunt translated the passage of Seneca’s *Thyestes* that Pitman includes in his book, and all Hunt’s Catullan poems from this collection were published in *Excerpta* too. Pitman’s book (1808) therefore seems to have played a significant role in expanding the range of Latin poetry on offer to the “public” through the early 19th c.
About the poem. This paratextual information is valuable in helping us establish Hunt's perception of Catullus and the one that he was interested in giving to his readers. The introduction to the poem begins: "The following lines have already been published, but they have since been altered to greater closeness with the original, and are therefore more original was a key concern for Hunt, which was not so much the case for Byron or Moore. 262 This "closeness", however - as we shall see - does not come in the form of strict

261 Green represents the English, yellow - the Latin, and red - the introduction and further discussion.
262 c.f. Moore, p. 106; Byron, p. 117.
biography, without any sense that this is problematic. He tells how Catullus’ return home from Bithynia was made all the more pleasurable on account of the disappointment he felt from not raising as much money as he had hoped (extrapolated from poem 10) and the loss of his brother (poem 101), which Hunt supposes to have “softened [Catullus’ pleasure of returning home] into additional tenderness.” As we can see in the commentaries available at the time, this kind of biographical reading of Catullus’ work was very much in vogue, and demonstrates a deep familiarity not only with the poems of Catullus, but also the “Catullan narrative” that commentators had been busy constructing from his poems since the discovery of the text.263 Hunt then uses his pedagogic introduction to teach his readers a positive lesson in domestic bliss – part of The Examiner’s broader social programme:

Certainly it would be difficult to find, in the whole range of poetry, ancient and modern, a more thorough feeling for domestic enjoyment; and this is more striking, inasmuch as from the state of manners the ancient world, particularly its want of a proper appreciation of female society, home with them does not appear to have been that complete and magic circle of comfort which it is with ourselves. Yet here is an ancient Roman, a bachelor, and a dissolute man of pleasure, who speaks of a snug, domestic, unpolluted happiness, with as much sense of its value and quickness to its impressions, as the soundest homester among us.

Hunt here effectively washes his hands of Catullus’ less chaste verses and the “immorality” they represent, which would sully not only his name but also the causes for which he was fighting. He also extols the virtues of domesticity and the “proper appreciation” of the position of women in society, in contrast to the sexual inequality and un-Christian mores of Catullus’ day. Following this somewhat backhanded compliment Hunt gives his translation of the poem:

Peninsularum, Sirmio, insularumque Ocelle, quascunque in liquentibus stagnis Marique uasto fert uterque Neptunus, Quam te libenter quamque laetus inviso, Vix mi ipse credens Thuniam atque Bithunos Liquisse campos & videre te in tuto! O quid solutis est beatius curis, Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino

263 The biographical reading of Catullus existed long before and after Le Chapelle’s The Adventures of Catullus (1707) (from ancient commentary, to the present day), however, it was perhaps never so clearly exemplified than in this publication.
This translation reflects the economy of the Latin only in terms of length. It does not
capture the density of Catullus' Latin, nor does it seem to strive for verbal proximity. It
includes idiomatic English turns of phrase, selected to convey the "spirit" of Catullus' poem, which in Hunt's reading is clearly a languid celebration of homecoming and
domesticity. The first two lines, for example, are lexically distant from the source text but
achieve a pleasing coherence of message with it by visibly being clever and sensitive
equivalences of expression in idiomatic English. Especially impressive is "apple of the
landscape's eye" for ocelle, which captures skillfully the diminutive nature of the word by
reflecting its colloquial familiarity and linguistic register. The use of 'eye' also helps to
justify the expression's use by its lexical ties with ocelle, while 'apple' carries a similarly
affectionate sonic quality in its softening, alveolar, final syllable.

Without the Latin text presented alongside much of this cleverness and sensitivity
would be missed. Hunt may have felt that providing the Latin granted him, as translator,
license to stray further from the source than he otherwise would, because no charge of
misleading the reader could be made against him. I would argue that Hunt is more likely to
have presented the poem in bilingual form in order to give the reader more; more
ownership of a socially beneficial cultural product, more involvement in the recreation of the Catullan poem, and more fun and satisfaction resulting from that increased interaction with both poem and translator.

*The Examiner* was flourishing in 1812, reaching around 8,000 households. Over the four years since it was first printed the paper had built up a loyal readership, and with this came an understanding of what their readers wanted and, if you like, a security of identity. It had become a Sunday paper for well-educated, middle class, liberal families. Although there were no doubt countless exceptions it appears as if it was designed specifically for weekend and family consumption.\(^{264}\) It is therefore tempting to see a bilingual translation of this nature as fulfilling a similar role to that of a crossword. Since most of Hunt’s readers would have some idea of the Latin language such an interactive literary experience would perhaps have been a welcome feature to ponder over and share between the variously educated members of the family. Its implied readership (educated, liberal families) and even implied reading environment (at home on Sunday), dictated certain other obligations concerning suitability of content, which I shall cover as they reveal themselves.

In the autumn of 1812 Leigh Hunt corresponded frequently with his lawyer, the Whig politician, Henry Brougham.\(^{265}\) The aforementioned charge of libel on the Prince Regent had already been brought against him and he awaited his court summons. There was therefore a professional reason for this exchange of letters. They also engaged in political discussion about such things as the Luddite attacks and rumours of corruption of

\(^{264}\) The fact that Keats’s headmaster Clarke at Enfield took the paper and made it available to his pupils is testament to its suitability for “family” consumption.

\(^{265}\) Besides being a lawyer Brougham was a key contributor to the often-controversial Whig-leaning journal, the *Edinburgh Review*. He would later become Lord Chancellor and was an influential fighter for reform as an active abolitionist, educationalist, campaigner for the poor, and champion of middle-class causes. See *Oxford DNB*. 

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the press, and debate over whether Brougham should stand for Westminster or Liverpool (which last seat he finally lost to George Canning).266

While their letters were full of such political debate, the correspondence is remarkable because they spent as much time on discussions of poetry as they did on politics. Equally remarkable is the fact that one of the most consistently recurrent discussions of their extant correspondence is of Hunt’s translations of Catullus. Their exchange shows a personalized version of the ideal communication between Hunt and the readers of The Examiner. It would seem that Brougham was at the top end of Hunt’s ideal readership, someone classically educated who could play with the bilingually presented translations. It is worth mentioning that the other end of this “ideal” readership were to be found the less gifted Latin linguists who could use the translations to piece the poem’s meaning together by comparison. In receipt of Hunt’s 1812 version of poem 31 he wrote:

My Dear Sir, - I thank you for Sirmio. It is close and spirited and elegant — for some things increasing the beauty of the original, (as “all the wished-for bed,” which is highly expressive of the hearty meal, of lying down and stretching, which a weary man devours); in some rendering it admirably where rendering it at all was most difficult — as “ridete quidquid,” &c.; in some rendering it excellently and faithfully, where the difficulty was less, as “Hoc est quod,” &c.; in some falling short of the beauty and simplicity of the Latin — chiefly owing to the two languages, as “O quid,” &c. for really these three lines have always dwelt on my ear as amongst the most melodious in all the range of Latin numbers. I object to “easy-chair” vehemently. So I should to “apple,” &c. were it not borne out by the original (occide) which the former is not. — “How gladly,” &c. is a beauty superadded, but a great one — I mean the “Nest.” But I am running on into a critique.

Brougham’s criticism, exemplified above, is by no means a simple act of flattery. It shows a balanced, honest and openly critical appreciation of both source and translation, and it is no coincidence that in Hunt’s editing of the translation for Feast (1814) the ‘easy chair’ is cut, and the three lines beginning with “O quid, ’ &c.” have been dramatically reworded:

Oh where’s the luxury like a loosen’d heart,
When the mind, breathing, lays it’s load apart, -
When we come home again, tir’d out, and spread
The greedy limbs o’er all the wish’d-for bed! (7-10)

266 Hunt, T. L. (1862) 56-68.
In all his drafts Hunt avoids restoring Roman proper names and adjectives like Neptunus (3), Thynia and Bithynus (5), and Lydius (13), which is a common feature of poetic translation that favours the use of idiomatic expressions in the target language, for a smoother reading experience.\(^{267}\) Another example of Hunt’s “domesticating” translation style is his avoidance of trying to reflect such idiomatically specific expressions as: coming \textit{larem ad nostrum}, preferring to: “come home.”\(^{268}\) We can take the fact that neither Hunt nor Brougham make mention of this kind of preference towards the smooth English translation in their correspondence as evidence that this translational style was conventional, at least among the well-educated, liberal litterati.

In an earlier letter Brougham complained about Hunt’s handling of Catullus’ diminutives in \textit{Acme and Septimius} (which letter we shall return to in the next section when we address that poem).\(^{269}\) In response to this criticism Hunt replied:

\begin{quote}
I need not tell you how much it pleases me to find that you like my verses. I shall send you some more of the poem as soon as I can please myself with one or two necessary alterations, and in the meantime, you see, I furnish my regular weekly translations. When I tell you that I shall be very happy to see your “free remarks,” you will do me the justice to believe me sincere. The fact is, that so far from being inclined to reject any observations that may do me good, I never satisfy myself with what I do, and have kept these things in my desk, months and months, without taking courage to print them. I do not want a general confidence, but it fails me in particulars; and I have tried those confounded little delicacies you mention over and over again, and sent them forth with a sort of hopelessness at last. But I shall not lose sight of them still. The touch in which I have succeeded best, of this kind, is, I think, in rendering the quidquid est domi cachinnorum of Catullus’ Return home, which you have seen by this time.
\end{quote}

This extract demonstrates how happy Hunt was to collaborate on his poetical compositions and willing to receive criticism. It also shows how he approached the job of translating. He made translations and then kept them in a drawer, working on them again and again, even after publication. He is proud of a successful translation of one of Catullus’ more idiomatically foreign expressions: “Laugh, every dimple on the cheek of home,” which softens and makes even more intimate the already fond expression - by focusing on the

\(^{267}\) c.f. Dryden’s \textit{Virgil} for example.
\(^{268}\) See Venuti (2008) on “domesticating” and “foreignizing” translation.
\(^{269}\) The letter was written to Hunt on an unspecified Tuesday in autumn 1812. It can only have been one of the following dates August 18\textsuperscript{th}, 25\textsuperscript{th}, September 1\textsuperscript{st}, 8\textsuperscript{th}, 15\textsuperscript{th}, 22\textsuperscript{nd}.
minute visual expression of joy. It shows Hunt’s skill of negotiating the diminutive expression of Catullus without falling into triteness. It can be seen how hard it is even for Hunt, who already leans towards this kind of expression, by his reference to Catullus’ diminutives as “those confounded little delicacies.”

Nicholas Roe takes Catullus’ Return Home to mark a clear departure for Hunt from the poetic style he presented in Juvenilia, i.e. that of ‘imitation’. \(^{270}\) “It is,” Roe writes, “A poem of domestic and social ‘content’, evoking familiar scenes in Hunt’s uniquely odd cadences... As in the Feast, Hunt deliberately unsettles received ideas of elegant poetic diction to create a modish, colloquial classic.” Some of the credit for Hunt’s “uniquely odd cadences” and idiosyncrasies of diction in this piece ought to be given to the fact that he is translating Catullus. The process of trying to reflect Catullus’ style in English led him into an exploration of the diminutive realm of expression, intimacy and lightness of touch, which stood out from the contemporary poetic milieu.

It is strange that Hunt should be seen to progress and move away from imitation by way of imitating, but he does seem remarkably comfortable in this application of his poetic skill. Part of this comfort may come from the fact that he saw himself as presenting something of real worth to his readers. He uses Catullus’ poem to create a unique weekend reading experience, full of languid self-satisfaction at sitting by the fire poring gently over a Latin poem that people do not read at school; the perfect environment for peacefully absorbing Hunt’s slightly quirky domestic values and dreaming of a better England.

Roe also suggests that the contrasting nature of juxtaposed published material in The Examiner might work as a medium for the expression of dissent. \(^{271}\) On 21st August 1808 Catullus’ Return Home is followed by COURT AND FASHIONABLES, a copied article from a morning paper, entitled: THE PRINCE OF WALES, LORD ERSKINE,

\(^{271}\) ibid 127-8.
AND MAJOR HANGER!!!, presented by Hunt: “Our readers will make their own comments; for our parts, we can only express our deep chagrin and mortification at not having been present at the glorious and refreshing sight. It must really have filled the hearts of the thousands present with joy to have witnessed the red jacket and pantaloons of their future Sovereign...”272 The side by side presentation of a scene of “domestic and social ‘content’” and the extravagant luxury of the Prince’s birthday party does have the effect of presenting two worlds within the same England, the first - a world of cultured and joyous simplicity, the second – of foolish and extravagant excess.

The future sovereignty of this “pamper’d prodigal, unasham’d in waste” was an obvious concern, and the division of society by the presentation of courtly corruption and extravagance in contrast with the Cockney vision of domesticity and sociality is a key feature of Hunt’s journalistic work in The Examiner. Hunt may have intended for this kind of encoded expression of dissent in The Examiner, or it might just be a happy accident. Hunt, after all, did infer to Brougham that these Catullan translations were intended as space-fillers:

I have had it [translation of Catullus 45] by me among some others, which I made as studies, to familiarize me with the niceties and fitnesses of expression, and which I may as well put in the paper now and then, when the Parliament affords us matter no longer.273

In any case, in this situation I agree with Roe that the positioning of the material in the paper had the potential to provoke dissent. We might not expect to find Catullus being used in this way, where a more stoical poet might seem more appropriate.274 But Catullus, by virtue of his obscenity and omission from the existing classical canon, may have been attractive to middle-class reformists, wanting to establish for themselves the same kinds of

272 The Examiner (21st August 1808), 541.
273 Correspondence (1862) 58. This is not the attitude we expect from the man who, only a month earlier, was pointing out to “mere politicians... that poetry may really do something.” This shows a division between the personal and public thoughts of Leigh Hunt, or maybe he simply did not want to give the impression that he thought very highly of the verses he was sending to a critical reader and not-so-close friend.
274 e.g. Hunt does translate a choral ode of Seneca in Feast (1814).
cultural capital as their landed overlords, but marking out their territory differently and putting it to different uses.

A Man Like Catullus

After reading Hunt's translation of 31 in *The Examiner* (1812) the reader is led into a short piece of travel writing/commentary beginning with a topographical note about Sirmio ("now called Sirmione, is a small peninsula, two miles in circumference..."), which then proceeds into a short discussion of Catullus' financial situation ("if it really belonged to Catullus, it was perhaps the largest house that ever a poet possessed."). Hunt's comment then sweeps, by way of two stories about Catullus and revolutionary France, into an attack on French morality. The comment after the poem is strange. It has the markings of a 'cut and shut' article. On closer inspection it seems that this is the case because Hunt begins to translate the note from Noël's commentary on poem 31 in his *Traduction complète des poésies de Catulle*. Although Hunt does refer to Noël as his source, it is less than obvious what Hunt attributes to Noël's book and what is his own. In order to show more clearly the relationship between the texts I give two corresponding passages:

...Be that as it may, the place itself appears to have been worthy of all that he said of it. The prospects are delightful, the air of a perpetual balmyness, and the ground for the most part covered with olives. On an eminence in the middle of it, is a Chapel dedicated to Saint Peter, which peeps out of a group of the tallest trees, and commands a view up the whole of the Lake, the borders of which, rising back like an amphitheatre, present a beautiful variety of rocks, vallies [sic], and hills of wood, while the barks of the fishermen gleam about at intervals in the sunshine. See an extract from the Journal Historique des Operations Militaries du Siege de Peschiera, in the Notes to M. NOël'S prose translation of CATULLUS. Paris 1803.

...Indépendamment des réflexions et des souvenirs que ce sol réveille, la nature offre dans ces lieux le site le plus agréable. On y respire un air pur et toujours tempéré. La presqu'île, depuis Sermione jusqu'à son extrémité, a deux milles environ de tour. Elle est en grande partie couverte d'oliviers, qui y forment un bosquet délicieux. Au milieu et sur une éminence qui domine le lac, est une chapelle dédiée à saint Pierre... De cette position, la vue se porte de tous les côtés sur le lac de Garda, dont les bords ornés de maisons et de paysages charmants, s'élèvent en amphithéâtre, et présentent les aspects les plus rians et les plus diversifiés. *Des collines boisées, des riches vallons y font, par intervalles, un contraste frappant avec les rochers qui bordent au Nord les rives du lac. Souvent ces tableaux sont animés par une quantité de barques du pêcheurs...*

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275 Noël (1803) 2.179-185.
276 The reference comes at the bottom of the second red column on Figure 18. The whole of the second column is a concealed translation from the French.
As can be seen from the above extract, Hunt's passage approaches a direct translation of the work quoted in Noël's note. It takes Hunt 32 lines of distinctly Huntian, or "Cocknified", prose (which may be exemplified by such irksomely diminutive or colloquial, bordering on childish, expressions as 'perpetual balminess', 'Chapel...peeps out') before he reaches the point, at the end of the above extract, where he acknowledges that there is a source and directs his reader to another text. "See an extract..." does not specify whether or not it is a translation of that text. The order of delivery is mixed up occasionally and at no point does Hunt let on that he had not by this point been to Italy, let alone visit the grotto di Catullo - travelling instead the "Cockney" way, through books and visual art.

Translating foreign language articles and extracts from books without attribution was common practice in contemporary British journalism, and usually went both undetected and unpunished. Therefore by referencing his source at all Hunt is being comparatively scrupulous for his writing environment.

The fact that Hunt is translating Noël in his commentary on poem 31 shows that for Hunt, and presumably for many European readers after 1803, Noël's translation — or at least its commentary — was a significant mediation of Catullus' poetry. François Noël (1756-1841) was a scholar at the Collège Louis-le-Grand before the Revolution broke out. He then went into politics and, by the time he published his Traduction complète des

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277 c.f. Introduction p.13f.
279 Noël (1803) is frequently quoted in Lamb's (1821) translation. Martin (1861) xxix, remarks on the value of Noël's notes. In his preface (p.34 in particular) Noël seems to present his Catullan translation as an endeavour taken on as a distraction from "those disastrous times" (presumably when the French armies were being defeated abroad and the revolution was spiralling into chaos) and in place of the panegyric (for the revolution / France?) which was expected of him, but which he felt incapable of writing due to the repugnancy of the "marche tenue" ('done thing') of that period of political strife (presumably the frequent use of the guillotine etc.). Any political statement made here is quite vague and dependant on more knowledge of his biography than is easily obtainable. Suffice it to say that Noël does not appear to have been an 'un-mixed' supporter of the methods of revolution, although he did hold a key position in Napoleon's 'government'. From Hunt's point of view, however, the fact that Catullus was translated and published in revolutionary France, begs questions of how much French politics accompanied Catullus across the channel.
poésies de Catulle (1803), he had held the position of Inspector general of public education for a year in Napoleon's France. Noël puts forwards his two volume translated edition of Catullus with notes as an attempt to "rekindle a taste for solid studies (solides études) and favour this happy return to the study of ancient languages - the necessity of which is often felt - and to recall those principles from which - as the current state of our literature shows - one distances oneself at one's peril."\(^{280}\)

In his advertisement to the poem Hunt's editorial interjections into Noël's commentary betray a deep-seated Francophobia, resulting from the disillusionment following the early years of revolution in France. After he translates more of the notes on the Siege of Peschiera,\(^{281}\) reporting that General Lacombe Saint-Michelle had held a party on the peninsula in Catullus' honour, and General Chasseloup (Bonaparte's engineer general for l'armée d'Italie) showed clemency and paid damages to the inhabitants of Sirmione - who had suffered from troops being stationed there, he writes:

"Thus," says M. NOËL, will a complacent nationality, which makes us both smile and look grave at this time of day, "every thing concurred to render the holiday a memorable epoch for the inhabitants; and history, with the renown of the poet, will always connect the recollection of French courtesy, which knows so well how to accord with French valour, and with the respect of our generals for the glory of letters and the sufferings of humanity."

It is certainly creditable to the French, that with the assistance of their national vanity, their policy took a turn of this nature, and helped to diminish the horrors of war; and it is highly probable that many of them deluded themselves on such occasions, and really imagined they were knights errant in behalf of all that was classical and humane; but none but a people of lax morals, as well as complexional enthusiasm, could furnish a large body of persons, who would chuse to unite in this unmixed homage to the memory of a man like CATULLUS. It was in these specimens of animal spirit and indiscriminate levity, under the mask of an elegant and superior mind, that acute observers foresaw the result of their professions as a nation. However, it is useful to point out to those mere politicians, who do not know how to make a proper use of such things, that poetry may really do something for them, even in a day of disaster."\(^{282}\)

\(^{280}\) Noël (1803) xxxi-ii, in which the author also shows that the turn towards Catullus and the Latin muses was driven by the desire to give pleasure to his readers, the same pleasure that he received from Catullus' work: "Je désire que le résultat de ces recherches soit aussi agréable pour le lecteur, que ces recherches l'ont été pour moi-même." In this respect he shares Hunt's goal of bringing the classics back into public consumption. He also writes that his work should also be seen as part of Napoleon's campaign to restore French literature to all its former glory by offering Catullus as a good poet to imitate: "à une époque où le héros qui a porté au plus haut degré la gloire militaire et politique de la France, veut encore lui rendre toute sa gloire littéraire, et par-là même une partie de sa pré-éminence..."

\(^{281}\) The Siege of Peschiera was conducted in 1801.

\(^{282}\) The Examiner (September 20th 1812).
Catullus is here embroiled in a debate about the French Revolution. Along with many other liberal thinkers and writers of the early nineteenth century, Hunt was still reeling from the disaster of the French Revolution, which they had actively supported in its early years, taken in by the “mask of an elegant and superior mind.” In simple terms Hunt likens an unreserved admiration for Catullus to an unreserved admiration for revolutionary France. François Noël was inspector general of public education in France when he made his translation of Catullus. As the product of a scholar in such a central position of French educational policy, Noël’s Catullus is evidence of Catullus not only being associated with, but also promoted by, revolutionary France. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine Noël’s Catullus and its reception in France, but further investigation may well show that part of the invigoration of interest in Catullus’ work across Europe was a result of a revolutionary reading of his oeuvre.283

Hunt was a journalist committed to social reform, therefore we should not be surprised that he should use this space in his paper to address one of the major liberal concerns of the time, disillusionment about the failure of the French Revolution, which was initially hoped to have provided a model for English reform. It is curious that it is embedded in what is ostensibly a literary article introducing a Catullan poem to the public. It is a good example of one of the ways in which Hunt saw that the blurring of the divide between the literary (and specifically the poetic) and the political could “really do something… even in a day of disaster.” His comment on the “complexional enthusiasm” of the French and the example of their uniting “in unmixed homage to a man like Catullus,” serves to distance himself and his politics from a failed and highly damaging French

283 Some parallels may be drawn between this revolutionary Catullus and that of the 1960s, foreseen perhaps by Levens (1954) and his individualistic Catullus, “clinging, in a disintegrating society, to… personal integrity” - 284.
reform movement, which Keats - along similar lines - called the "unlucky termination" of a gradual and progressive "opposition to Tyranny".\textsuperscript{284}

Hunt's criticism of the French here is part of a wider campaign to resituate British Reform politics on sufficiently moderate ground. His criticism of an "unmixed" appreciation of Catullus, the man, provides a new and safe platform for a 'mixed', or wary appreciation of Catullus' poetry. While the concept of social reform was at this time burdened by its association with revolution, Catullus – we are to assume – was similarly associated with Roman, but more importantly, French moral corruption. It is important for Hunt to make clear that there exists a line between moderate and peaceful reform politics and French-style revolution, in order to reinvigorate the British Reform movement, whilst other pro-reform literary figures had 'gone to the other side' and/or visibly retired from public life and taken to the solitary expression of disillusionment. Hunt cannot resist alluding to Catullus 13.9 in this criticism of the French Catullus: \textit{meros amores} ("unmixed / full bodied love"). He would perhaps advise Fabullus to take up Catullus' offer of dinner, but beware his host's louche advances. A similarly positive, middle-path mentality caused Hunt to lament the fact that his school teacher Rev. Bowyer instructed his pupils in anti-classicism instead of "teach[ing] us how to love them [the classics] wisely."\textsuperscript{285} His pedagogical role in society as a liberal journalist was to teach the public how to love reform wisely. The Catullus that Hunt loves and exhibits to the public is safe and moderate, but he is still and anti-establishment figure because of the known "corrupt" sides of his character suppressed by Hunt.

\textsuperscript{284} Rollins ed. (1958) ii. 193.
\textsuperscript{285} Hunt (1860) 108. c.f. Introduction, p.13f.
Catullus spreads cheer

In *Feast* (1814) Hunt also published *Catullus to Cornificius* (poem 38) and *Acme and Septimius* (poem 45). These too were previously published in *The Examiner* in 1812.

Poem 38 is a short, simple poem in hendecasyllables, which admonishes a friend for not consoling the poet in time of sickness. The *Examiner* version differs only from the *Feast* version below by all but insignificant changes in punctuation.

**CATULLUS TO CORNIFICIUS.**

*CARMEN XXXVIII.*

Sick, Cornificius, is thy friend,
Sick to the heart, and sees no end
Of wretched thoughts, that gathering fast
Threaten to wear him out at last:
And yet you never come and bring—
Though were the least and easiest thing—
A comfort in that talk of thine:
You vex me:—this, to love like mine?
Prithco, a little talk, for ease, for ease,
Full as the tears of poor Simonides.

Male est, Cornifici, tuo Catullo,
Male est mehercule, et laboriose,
Et magis magis in dies et horas:
Quem tu—quod minimum facillimumque est—
Qua solatus est adlocutione?
Irascor tibi:—sic meos amores?
Paulum quid lubet adlocutionis,
Moestius lacrimis Simonideis.

Figure 19

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From Sept. 13 - Oct. 4 1812 Hunt published each week a poem translated from Latin. This group consisted of three poems by Catullus and one by Horace (all of which found themselves in *Feast* (1814), as discussed above).
Hunt opens his introduction to the poem in *The Examiner* with: “The delicious little effusion, of which the following lines attempt to give some idea to the English reader, is allowed by the commentators and translators to breathe something full of sensibility, thought they cannot exactly say what.” In this opening statement Hunt alludes to the interpretations of “the great scholars” (without providing names), which seem to have agreed that Catullus in poem 38 asks for a poem to console him (*adlocutione*). Hunt decides that “they ['the great critics'] mistake a plain and natural longing after the *society and conversation of a friend* for a request certainly not so consistent with the writer’s depression, and not to be borne out by his very words without doing them a violence.” Whether or not we agree with Hunt, his opposition to existing scholarship showed his readers that he was not only aware of the Catullan scholarship but was also able to use it to make his own critical judgment. Although Hunt is clearly carving himself out a position as a dependable, scholarly and intelligent cultural disseminator, he also brings the engagement with scholarship into the public sphere. He shows that many more can do it than those within the thick walls of Oxford and Cambridge, if they continue to subscribe to his paper, that is. What he has patently not done, however, is introduced the poem, or “give[n] some idea to the English reader” of the “delicious little effusion.” His italicization of the words: *the society and conversation of a friend* indicates the importance in Hunt’s mind and sociopolitical campaign of simple acts of sociality. Just as Cornificius’ cheerful conversation might have relieved Catullus of his depression, Hunt’s cheery and non-literary interpretation of *adlocutione* warms up the “cold classicism” of great scholarship.

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287 More recent scholarship tends to follow “the great scholars” (presumably the early editors such as of Scaliger, Voss, Vulpius, Achilles Statius and perhaps Muret) rather than Hunt, e.g. Quinn (1970 ed. 1996) 207: “5. *allocutione*: i.e. (in view of 7-8) a consolation poem. For such an *allocutio* in verse see Horace’s ode to Tibullus (on the loss of a mistress -- stolen by a wealthier lover), *Carm. 1.34.*”

288 n.b. The Latin texts printed differ between publications. For example 1812: (line 5) *allocutione* c.f. 1814: *adlocutione*; 1812: (line 7) *paulum quod lubet* c.f. 1814: *quid lubet*. Nott (1795) and Noel (1803) both have...
Hunt quotes Milton’s *Lycidas* in this introduction to the poem in order to show that “our elder poets” like the ancients (as Catullus in line 8) also used the word ‘tears’ (*lachrymae*) for “the productions which caused them: ‘He must not float upon his watery bier,/ Unwept and wetter to the parching wind, Without the meed of some melodious tear.’” The presence of Milton as an intermediary here has the effect of shortening the distance, created by linguistic, temporal and cultural barriers, between the reader and the Latin poem. The quoted passage usefully shows the permeability of these barriers. Hunt wrote in *A Day by the Fire*: “He that would run the whole round of the spirit of heathenism, must become intimate with the poetry of Milton and Spenser...”289 His understanding of the importance of intermediary receptions in the quest for a working appreciation of classical literature for the general public seems anachronistically progressive. In an age when the ruling classes heavily defended high culture Hunt stands out as a somewhat perverse cultural tour guide.290

Hunt’s translation of poem 38 follows its source closely in both meaning and verbal presentation. It is economic but not to the extent of the super lean Latin. The expression of desire for company, particularly its audible form, “talk”, is what attracted Hunt to print it in *The Examiner* and *Feast*. This theme is picked up in the very last poem of the collection, the sonnet *To T---- B----, Esq* — which ends:

This charm our evening hours duly restore,-
Nought heard through all our little, lull’d abode,
Save the crisp fire, or leaf of book turn’d o’er,
Or watch-dog, or the ring of frosty road.
Wants there no other sound then? - Yes, one more,-
The voice of friendly visiting, long owed.

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*adlocutione* and *quidlibet*. *Quid lubet* and *adlocutione* both appear together in Scaliger (1577) and Vulpius (1710) which Hunt may have accessed via Doering (1788), the notes of which Hunt quotes in *The Indicator* (1820) 1.79 in his introduction to *The Old Skiff* (his translation of c.4 *Phaselus ille*...). The 1812 text is identical to that of *Catulli Tibulli Propertii Opera* (1749).

289 Hunt (1870) 59.

Such an inclusive approach to classical culture was not unique to Hunt. His public presence, as editor of *The Examiner*, however, made him more visible than other reformist writers, who were at the same time expressing similar ideas, e.g. Shelley, Peacock et al.
Cornificius, Sirmio and To T-- B----, Esq all promote domesticity and sociality, which – as I have already argued, following Roe (2005) - is a key factor in Hunt’s campaign for “wise” and peaceful social reform. Hunt’s writing in general, but of 1811 to 1813 in particular, is laced with references to conviviality, domesticity and simple causes for joy – which all feed into Hunt’s wider philosophy of cheer.291

Acme and Septimius is translated by Hunt in his usual lyrical and colloquial style, shying away from obscure classical expressions and delivering to the reader a smooth English reproduction of Hunt’s understanding of the poem, which was informed by the existing scholarship on Catullus.292

ACME AND SEPTIMIUS; OR THE ENTIRE AFFECTION.

FROM CATULLUS.—CARMEN XLV.

'Oh, Acme love!' Septimius cried,
As on his lap he held his bride,—
'If all my heart is not for thee,
And does not on thee desperately,
And if it does not more and more,
As desperate heart ne'er did before,

Figure 20 Feast of Poets Version

Oh, Acme love! SEPTIMIUS cried,
As on his lap he held his bride,—
Oh, if I love thee not, my wife,

291 For more on Hunt’s philosophy of cheer see Edgecombe (1994) passim.
292 It is difficult to say exactly which editions Hunt had access to at any one time because over the time in which he was publishing Catullan translations he refers either directly or shows indirectly (by use of a specific textual variant, for example) to a number of sources. We can only be certain in stating that he initially came to the publication of Catullus while in consultation with Pitman (1808) and then drew heavily from Noël (1803) and Nott (1795) which was read by Noël (see his preface xxv). Hunt shows himself to be aware of all the scholarship from all the early editors – however it is highly likely that he accessed them through the mediation of Noël and Nott. Where an edition is apparent I have endeavoured throughout to note it.
Distractedly, and shall for life
As much as mortal madness can...

(Examiner Version - 1812 Sept. 13)

In Hunt’s introduction to the poem in *The Examiner* (Sept. 13 1812) he tells his readers that there are not more than “nine or ten imitations” of Catullus by English poets, and out of these:

The only two, that are of value, are an imitation of “Miser Catulle, desinas ineptire,” by THOMAS MOORE, and a paraphrase of the little poem before us by COWLEY. If the latter had been an imitation also instead of a paraphrase, and COWLEY had put nothing into it but his poetry, no other need have been attempted; but though there is the fling of his fine hand in parts of it, and an agreeable insolence towards the conclusion where he runs out into a vein of his own, yet it wants the repose and simplicity of the original...

There were more than ten imitations of Catullus before Hunt wrote *THE ENTIRE AFFECTION, IMITATED FROM THE ACME AND SEPTIMIUS OF CATULLUS*, but the apparent lack of Catullan imitation shows that a majority of these were not in popular circulation. Hunt blames the “curious fact” of this lack on Catullus’ “non-appearance among the books that are read at school.” This not only tells us that Catullus, by 1812, was still not in the schoolbooks, but also that by introducing the public to Catullan poems Hunt felt that he was blazing a trail for his readers. Remarking on the fact that Catullus was not in schools due to his obscenity, he makes the point that teachers managed to navigate well enough around the obscene poems of Horace and Ovid. Hunt therefore can be seen to have been promoting the reading of Catullus both in public, by way of his translations, and in the schools, by a recommendation to teachers. The idea that if Cowley had written an “imitation” Hunt would not have had to make another imitation, which apparently for Hunt at least closely resembles what a modern scholar might call a translation.

In the quotation above the ‘his poetry’ (in bold type) must refer to Catullus’ poetry, which might not be immediately clear. This extract clarifies Hunt’s term of “imitation” as indicative of a fairly “invisible” *translation*, and his term “paraphrase” as something that allows itself more freedom from the source text and the opportunity to introduce foreign
elements to the poem. These kinds of terms will always be problematic because the lines between them cannot be fixed. Hunt's own personal thinking about translation may be seen both by his criticism of other translations and his own translations, although he does not always adhere to the rules he imposes on others. Hunt suggests that if Cowley had been more "faithful", less intrusive, or more "invisible" then Hunt would not have needed to attempt it again. This is mainly a show of homage to Cowley's poetic abilities and humility on Hunt's part, but it also shows that Hunt believed, at some level, in the idea of a definitive translation.²⁹³ It is interesting that, following these assertions, he allows himself the "space" from the source that he does, for example where he allows the word combinations of other poets to enter his translation/"imitation" of Catullus (e.g. (line 5) "As much as mortal madness can..." Pope Iliad 5.1087).

It is notable that in the Feast version Hunt uses two footnotes in this poem, which he tends to avoid:

²⁹³ For the idea of the invisibility of the translator see Venuti (1995).
ACME AND SEPTIMIUS.

May I be doom'd, on desert ground,
To meet the lion in his round*!*

He said; and Love, on tiptoe near him,
Kind at last, and come to cheer him†,
Clapp'd his little hands to hear him.

* The ancients believed, that perjured persons were particularly liable to encounter wild beasts.

† It has been supposed, that the passage here, which is rather obscurely expressed in the original, at least to modern apprehensions, alludes to some difficulties, with which the lovers had met, and which had hitherto prevented their union.

Solus in Libya, Indiave tosta,
Casio veniam obvius leoni.'

Hoc ut dixit, Amor, sinistram ut ante,
Dextram sternuit, approbationem.

Figure 21

The first footnote is used to clarify the strange pledge Septimius makes to Acme, in lines 3-7 of poem 45, in which he asks, if he does not perish with love for her, to meet a green-eyed lion, alone, in the desert. This note is given as much to entertain, as it is to instruct. The second footnote explains the sinistra... ante of the repeated refrain (45.7 and 17), referring to Amor's, presumably unpropitious, sneezing on the left before he seems to have relented and blessed their union by sneezing this time on the right (dextram sternuit approbationem). Hunt does not mention sneezing, following the example of the French,
Pezay (1771) and Noël (1803), who deemed it aesthetically impossible to render in a modern language. In Hunt's *Examiner* version he writes that sneezing "certainly presents no image to the modern reader that is not ludicrous." In Noël's edition we find the substitution of applause in the place of sneezing that Hunt seems to follow with "clapp'd his little hands..." Hunt's footnote in this translation is a product of his reaching a limit in his personal translational policy. He cannot translate the message of the text without straying too far from the Latin. He also does not have in *Feast* the luxury of an introduction and commentary, as he allowed himself in *The Examiner*. On receiving *Acme and Septimius* from Hunt, in autumn 1812, Brougham wrote the following response:

One or two turns struck me, but they were mere specks, and, I believe, from Dryden. In the translation, I doubt respecting your two diminutives - I rather more than doubt - especially as to "poor fellow," which is inconsistent with the infinite refinement of the piece. Could you not contrive some more delicate diminutives? Also could you not give the Sinister ante? I think both you and Cowley give it the go-by. Now, I question if it does not convey some such meaning as that a change was effected in the lover - at least in the degree of possession. If it means anything bordering on Indelicacy, it is indeed better omitted.

In spite of Brougham's criticism Hunt allows "poor fellow" to stand, and it appears two years later in *Feast*. This is presumably because he could not improve on it, forgot to do

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295 Hunt (1812) 569. George Lamb (1821) 81 seems to follow Hunt here: "The approbation of Love in the original is signified by his "sneezing," an action ever sacred and ominous to the ancients. Even in the hands of Cowley the literal translation of this passage corroborates the opinion of Pezay [1771], that it could not be rendered into a modern language without being ridiculous." "Modern language... ridiculous' owes a clear debt to 'Modern reader... ludicrous,' even with the apparent supplementary bookwork indicated by the reference to Pezay. Noël (1803) 2.233 says only "Il était difficile d'être ici littéral," and then quotes Pezay's translation. This is one example of the many confusing paper trails encountered in these early popular editions of Catullus.

296 "Amour l'entendit, et battit des ailes pour applaudir." Noël (1803) 77. Clapping with wings and "little hands" are not the same thing - but the applause is distant enough from the original to make the connection between the translations probable. Noël also prints a verse translation by Walef that has: "Amour leur applaudit, et, depuis cet instant, / La tendre Acmé fut fidèle, I Septime aimait constamment."

297 Brougham here alludes to "mortal madness", which rather than being from Dryden is from Pope's *Iliad* book 5 The Acts of Diomed: "The heavenly Venus first his fury found,/ Me next encountering, me he dared to wound;/ Vanquish'd I fled; even I, the god of flight,/ From mortal madness scarce was saved by flight."

298 With "sinister ante" Brougham seems to know, or have at hand Vossius' edition of the text. The two diminutives Brougham disliked must be "My Septimy" (edited out of the *Feast* version) and "clapp'd his little hands..." (left in). "My Septimy" may be a Cockneyism, in the sense that it appears to be a feminized and somewhat ridiculous diminutive (to which Hunt was not wholly adverse), but it also bears resemblance to the quaintly Anglicized Graeco-Roman names in Arthur Golding's *Ovid* (1567) e.g. 'Orfey' for 'Orpheus' etc.
so, or thought that it served its purpose well enough. It has the effect of making the poem more accessible to his reader because it is a common colloquial expression, as can be seen in the manner of Brougham’s objection, which is made on the grounds of ‘refinement’.

Hunt’s reply was:

I confess to having given the slip to Sinister ante. The truth is, I believe, that I did not understand it, though, if it has any meaning at all, and is not a mere corruption of the text, it must intend something of what you say. The commentators generally suppose, that the union of the two lovers had been hitherto prevented – which is borne out perhaps by the Nunc ab auspicio, &c.; but they wrote in so many different ways, that they seem all to have been puzzled with it. I adopted the reading of Vossius as the most reasonable one, and more consonant to the construction which you put upon it.

Hunt’s willingness to expose his ignorance is refreshing. Before he might give Brougham, a very well educated reader, the idea that he is not the most conscientious of scholars, however, Hunt presents him with plenty of information that suggests the opposite is true.

His awareness of the text’s corruption here, for example, gives the impression of a depth of scholarship beyond that of an amateur translator. His agreement with Brougham about the probable “indelicacy” of the expression sternuere ad sinistrum shows the perception, shared by both, of Catullus being a poet who tended toward the obscene. What is obscure is thought obscene, which is a natural result of a reading in which a “modern” readership fills the gap in the text with what they perceive to be the problematic, or subtextual message that the writer wished to convey. The Catullan idea is too foreign for non-contemporary readers to say with any conviction what Love’s sneezing, on left or right, might signify. It is into this interpretative ‘space’ that our own preoccupations with the poet, and not only his poetry, flood. The prudery Brougham shows and with which Hunt complies, expressed in the above exchange (i.e. “If it means anything bordering on

299 The word for nose (nasus) was occasionally used to refer to the phallus. (Adams 1990) It is therefore conceivable that the actions of sneezing and ejaculation might have been conflated by Romans for comic effect. The fact that it is the nose of the love god, Amor, and appears in a poem of Catullus make it more possible than if it were say the nose of Mars in the Aeneid. The most likely reason for Hunt’s avoidance of the term was purely aesthetic. Sneezing renders the sneezer out of control, it often makes people make funny noises and is a symptom of colds. These connotations and more hardly make the sneeze a particularly “poetic” action.
indelicacy, it is indeed better omitted") is of the kind usually associated with that of the
Victorian period. In his introduction to the poem in The Examiner Hunt explains:

Catullus is perhaps the most singular instance of moral extremes, passing from the coarsest and most
loathsome depravity of sensual abandonment to the most refined and loveliest delicacy of sentiment;
and in rejecting the bad part of him with disgust, there is no reason why we should not select and
bring forward the good, even out of humanity to his name and as a help towards his atonement.

Hunt's desire to hide away Catullus' less chaste side was informed by a duty to protect the
innocence of his chaster readers and a professional necessity to protect his reputation. Any
obscenity was not welcome in a Sunday paper read by people of all ages and both sexes. A
vast majority of the readers of Hunt's poetry books would also subscribe to his paper, so
even if he had wanted to (for which there is no evidence) he would have been ill advised to
show any hint of moral imperfection.

Hunt tells Brougham that he has "adopted the reading of Voss," which again gives
the impression of scholarship. It is possible that Hunt has been more influenced than he
lets on by Nott's footnotes on the same problem:

*Amor, sinister, &c.* I much approve, and have adopted Vossiuss's emendation of this passage, which he thus interprets:
"Love, unpropitious before, now proved himself propitious, by
sneezing from the right;" which was esteemed a good omen,
according to many writers, as Aristophanes, and Plutarch; the
latter of whom, in Themistocle, says, that before a naval battle it
was a sign of conquest. Many write, *Amor sinistra, ut ant e dextr a, st e rnu it approbatione, i. e. " Love sneezed both to right and left:" some only place a comma after ant e; and some make use of the
accusative instead of the ablative case: others read, *Amor simistra ant e dextr ams ster nui it approbationem; construing dextra m, pro spere ram; meaning, "Love from the left sneezed prosperous approba-
tion;" for left-handed means happy-omened, according to some
writers.

Figure 22

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308 On Nott's translation see Chapter 1, beginning p.24.
This similarity could be coincidental, however the use of the term of ‘adoption’ makes the case for direct influence stronger. Whilst adopting Voss’ reading Hunt, intriguingly, follows Doering, apparently via Noël, in his choice of sinistram ut ante, which Nott only alludes to above: ‘... and some make use of the accusative...’\textsuperscript{301} I would argue that it is through a combination of reading Nott and Noël’s relatively new editions that Hunt receives his knowledge of the various views of ‘the commentators.’

The interaction between Brougham and Hunt shines a light on the level of thought and analysis that went into Hunt’s translations. His translational work is scholarly, even if that level of scholarship is lower than that which he wanted to convey to Brougham. It is by no means the work of a gifted schoolboy, which is perhaps what we have seen in Wordsworth’s versions of Catullus.\textsuperscript{302} Hunt’s Catullus, and the one which he communicates with his readers, is far from the quaint love poet, who wrote about sparrows and kisses; nor is he the erotic poet, sexed up by Moore and coaxed out of the closet by Byron.\textsuperscript{303} This Catullus is different. It is Hunt’s selection of poems that shaped Catullus into the poet that could be of service to him, not the way he translated him. Hunt uses his Catullan poems in The Examiner and Feast as vehicles for the expression of domesticity and sociality in promotion of his campaign for political and social reform. He also used his commentary on Sirmio in The Examiner, as part of his project to provide British reformists with a stronghold of moderation around which to rally after the unpopular example of French reform.

Catullus amid the Foliage

\textit{Foliage} (1818) was the keystone Cockney classical text in which Hunt sought to correct

\textsuperscript{301} Nott (1795) 126. Hunt was familiar with Nott’s edition from 1811, at the latest, see \textit{Reflector} (1811) 1.166. n.b. Hunt prints Mavolt (line 22) which is also a variant spelling particular at this point to Noël and Doering’s texts – Voss, Nott, Leonard (Delphin) all preferring mavult.

\textsuperscript{302} c.f. p.91f.

\textsuperscript{303} c.f. Moore: p.106f; Byron: p.117f.
what he saw as the “gross mistake about what they [eighteenth century litterati] called classical, which was Horace and the Latin breeding, instead of the elementary inspiration of Greece.” The collection is a living showcase of the philosophy proposed by Hunt in *Feast* (1814), made up largely of verse epistles and sonnets addressed to friends – offering a window into a highly sociable group of people living an alternative lifestyle.

The book opens with the classicizing tour de force, *The Nymphs*, and then seven ‘domestic bliss’ poems under the title of *Miscellanies*, including poetical addresses to his two young sons. It closes with over a hundred pages of translations, entitled *Evergreens or Translations from poets of Antiquity*, including poems by or extracts from Homer, Theocritus, Bion and Moschus, Anacreon, and Catullus. It is immediately clear from reading the introduction and a glance at the contents pages that it is Greece, and not Rome, that is the inspiration. So why does Catullus figure? The selection of Catullan poems may help our answering of this question. Poems 63 and 61, *Atys* and *The Nuptial Song of Julia and Manlius*, are both of Greek persuasion, 63 being an epyllion in the Hellenistic style, and 61 an epithalamium, deriving from the Greek tradition of Fescinnine verse.

Before *Foliage* the translation of poem 63 was printed in *The Reflector* (1811), “a quarterly magazine, on subjects of philosophy, politics, and the liberal arts”. The poem was entitled *Atys the Enthusiast*:

![Figure 23](image_url)

305 Ironically Horace’s *Epistles* I could be an influential source for this feature of *Foliage*, but both books are far from what Hunt means by “Horace and Latin breeding”. This demonstrates the same confused reception of Horace as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.
The poem is about a young Greek man who flees his native land and travels in a frenzied state to Ida, the land sacred to the goddess Cybele. At the beginning of the poem and at the height of his madness he castrates himself. The castrated Atys then, after singing and running about, sleeps. On waking he feels regret for what he has done, but there is no return from his act, and in return for his regret he is met by anger from the goddess. In his prefatory remarks Hunt makes a less than watertight case for the protagonist, Atys, being a religious enthusiast: “What have the monks been in all ages, so many professed if not indeed practical Atyses, who denied themselves in conscience what they took care to retain in capability? It is most probable therefore, that Atys was really a religious enthusiastic…”

This statement narrows the scope of possible interpretation of the poem. It imposes on it an interpretation particularly apt for Hunt’s personal and public distaste for the Methodist enthusiasm, which he and his brother consistently attacked in the Examiner from its foundation.

Enthusiasm is a fraught issue in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and the meaning of the term varies widely according to who is using it. Its semantic journey in England began when it meant specifically: a religious error, i.e. the equation of “the imagination of men to the holy scripture of God”; and came to its current meaning of: “passionate eagerness in any pursuit, proceeding from an intense conviction of the worthiness of the object” (OED). For Hunt the term ‘enthusiasm’ is not dissimilar to ‘fanaticism’ in that it was still largely based on the concept of a fundamental misunderstanding of religion. Hunt was concerned specifically with the excesses of Methodism, against which he inveighs in a pamphlet published in 1809 called: An attempt to shew the folly and danger of Methodism… His providing the translation of 63 with this contextual theme of religious fanaticism, along with his passing swipe at monasticism,

306 Hunt (1811) Article XIX.
308 Hunt (1809).
gives *Atys the Enthusiast* a contemporary ‘hook’ and his readers a political line of interpretation, which is not, in my opinion, a dominant feature of the source. It is, however, a useful way of bringing the poem into contemporary relevance. It seems to have been the way that Hunt himself identified with the unusual subject matter of Catullus’ poem, and he uses it as a journalistic entry point for his readers. The poem fits well the anxious contemporary discourse on Enthusiasm, a particularly relevant facet of which is summarized by Jon Mee:

> If transport out of the self offered itself as a way of authenticating individual experience in terms of some higher ontological arena, providing a corroborating ground for subjective experience, whether Christian or theist, there remained the nightmare of losing the self on the journey. What if one could not get back down to earth after the transports of the sublime?

It is this “nightmare” that Hunt equates to the plight of Atys, who in religious frenzy castrates himself in exile and in doing so severs ever tie with his former life. For Atys there is no way back, and, although during his first song (s)he is accompanied by other *gallae* (castrated attendants of Cybele) he ends up completely alone, outside of society, and forced into the service of a tyrant goddess. Mee also notes that: “Where men succumbed to enthusiasm, they were regularly regarded as effeminized, and Hunt has some striking passages on the confusion of the sexes as a dominant aspect of the literature of enthusiasm.” There is no more powerful symbol of effeminization than castration and this in combination with Catullus’ grammatical sex change of Atys at line 6 fits uncannily into Hunt’s characterization of enthusiasts.

Aside from telling the basic story of Atys, Hunt’s preface to the poem addresses three subjects: the poem’s suitability in terms of obscenity, its previous translators, and the form and style of his translation. In reference to obscenity Hunt writes: “Had this poem been a loose one, or in any respect of a loose tendency, a translation of it would never have

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310 ibid 269.
found a place in The Reflector; but Catullus, duly impressed with the nature and interest of his subject, has treated it in a manner that might have made Pope himself blush for some parts of his Eloisa." Having said as much, two pages later he returns to the subject: "It is only in two instances that I have made any considerable deviation from my author's text, - one where he alludes to a custom of which neither our manners nor morals should endure to hear, - and the other, where he converts Atys, on his emasculation, into a female." The custom to which Hunt refers can only be Atys' self-castration, which he renders at no significantly greater distance from his source than the rest of the translation: "With flinty knife he gave to earth the weights that stamp virility" (line 6). In writing this statement, therefore, Hunt carves out an opportunity for himself to make a public and ostentatious commitment both to the expurgation of obscene material, and to the "closeness" of his translation to the original, which show him to be a model of morality and scholarship.

It is in this preamble that Hunt qualifies what he means by 'closeness' with "the proper freedom of a translation, which endeavours to accompany the poet's ardour rather than to tread in every print of his feet." Hunt, then, followed a mode of translation that prioritized the 'ardour', or "spirit" of the author (and presumably also his message or meaning) over a stricter verbal proximity. At the same time, however, he is committed to rendering this 'ardour' and meaning in very small increments; he focused tightly on the Latin and really worked at matching Catullus' expressions with contemporary ones. Where Moore, Wordsworth and Byron were happy, as we have seen, to stray quite far from the Latin, and not infrequently from the source's style of delivery too, in their translations, Hunt really strives to wring out the Catullan flavours and textures of meaning from the

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311 Pope's Eloisa to Abélard (1717) is particularly relevant in comparison with Atys because it deals with the castration of Abélard (99-106), is Pope's most erotic poem and shows love's domination over Christianity in the character of Eloisa (116 - "Not on the Cross my eyes were fix'd, but you"). In his correspondence with Henry Brougham it is clear that they shared similar views on expurgation of obscene material, e.g. Brougham writes (about the sinistrum ut ante of Acme and Septimius): "If it means anything bordering on indelicacy, it is indeed better omitted." Tuesday 1812, Hunt, T. L. (1862).
Latin and soak his English with them, so that even though he may not be in “every print of his [Catullus’] feet”, he is most certainly hot on his heels. We gain a further insight into his desire to give Catullus’ ‘ardour’ when he dismisses the work of previous translators. Although he depends on both Nott (1795) and Noël (1803) for his ‘prefatory remarks’, textual criticism and access to earlier commentators, he does not mince his words in the dismissal of their attempts at translation. About the “anonymous Translator of Catullus” (i.e. Nott), he writes: “In the notes to his work has shewn a taste singularly contradicted by his poetry, and of whose translation it may be said altogether, that it possesses nothing whatever to atone for such a gross violation of decency as a complete version of Catullus must necessarily be.” Of the French imitation given in Noël’s notes Hunt writes: “Some parts are ridiculous and others disgusting,” and calls Noël’s a “wretched prose translation.”

Hunt defends his choice of “irregular versification” thus:

I do not call it deviation, since it would be impossible by a continued heroic measure to give any idea of the anxious rapidity of the original; Alexandrines would have been still less suitable; and Hexameters, in our language, have a kind of hopping solemnity that looks like burlesque. But the irregularity, allowed by modern poetry, had other advantages; it naturally surpasses all regular metre in variety of expression and has been reckoned by the best writers the most suitable vehicle for the changeful temper of enthusiasm.

The “best writers” to whom he refers are Dryden and Redi, whose *Alexander’s Feast* and *Bacco in Toscana* (respectively) were, to Hunt, the “most enthusiastic poems of modern times”.

In an attempt to reflect the “reckless vigour”, “exultation” and “swiftness” of the original, as well as using an irregular metre, Hunt adopts long lines, triplets, the occasional half line and a “carelessness of rhyme”. He also uses frequent repetition of words and

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312 We have seen Hunt’s use of Noël (1803) earlier in this chapter and his debt to Nott (1795) can be seen, e.g., in his quotation of Gibbon’s note in *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 2, chapter 23, note 18 – even though he goes as far as to refer to a different edition (another example of Hunt’s desire to appear more learned than he is). Gibbon’s is a short, inconspicuous footnote in a vast multivolume work. The origin of British interest in Catullus 63 is, I think, unlikely to have been this footnote - Gaisser (2009) 199. Lamb (1821) notes it too, but it was Nott’s wide reading and fine-toothed scholarship that gave subsequent access.

313 Hunt (1811) 166. To Hunt Nott’s identity as translator of Catullus still seems to have been a mystery in 1811. c.f. Chapter 1, p.45.

314 Ibid. 168

315 ‘Enthusiasm’ here is used in a more general sense than above.
phrases and internal as well as end rhymes. All this does give the poem an energy and speed, but it also makes it very busy and the reader is propelled through a turbulent ride, as prone to stumbling and ruining the effect altogether as feeling an effect akin to that provided by the galliambic metre.

The only major deviation from the source text is caused by Hunt’s decision that “the genius of the English language will not allow this determined metamorphosis [of Atys from masculine to feminine], however warranted it may have been by that of the Latin, and by the light in which the ancients regarded eunuchs.” He therefore “substituted the pronoun it, as expressive of neither sex.” This is a bold move, and perhaps we can detect that Hunt knew he was on shaky ground when he proceeded with the following justification of it: “this pronoun, when used on any mysterious occasion, has an air of solemnity and perplexity, that seems particularly to adapt it to the present subject.” It poses as many problems as it avoids.

Catullus loads the newly castrated Atys with traditionally feminine attributes, e.g. *niveis ... manibus* (line 8), which describes Atys, who from the first line could be an epic hero, as a woman, and even more problematically as a beautiful woman with ‘snowy hands’. This contrast is a powerful challenge to ideas of sexual division, especially when we are later told of Atys’ former life, complete with effeminate “Greek” undertones, e.g. *Ego gymnasii fui flos; ego eram decus olei* (line 64 – ‘I was the flower of the gym; I was the glory of the oil’). Hunt gives a fairly reductive translation of Atys’ fond memory: “I was the charm of life, the social spring) First in the race, and brightest in the ring.” Byron, no doubt, would have made more of this erotic undertone, but it is not in Hunt’s interest to bring out Atys’ “pre-op” effeminacy. It is better for Hunt that his Atys was simply a thoroughly popular chap, both sporty and sociable: “Warm with the stir of life was my

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316 Repetition is also an important feature of the original.
And when I rose betimes, my friends would come/ Smiling and pressing in officious scores,/ Thick as the flow’rs that hung at lovers’ doors...” Back home Hunt’s Atys used to have very many friends, whereas the implication is that Catullus’ Atys had a whole stream of lovers, who kept his door busy, threshold warm and his house covered in floral love gifts:

Mihi ianua frequentes, mihi limina tepida
Mihi floridis corollis redimita domus erat...

Mine were the often-crowded doors, mine the warm threshold
Mine was the house covered in floral wreathes

In combination with Atys’ comment, just a line before, about being the ‘flower of the gym’, a single sex establishment where Greek boys and men exercised naked, there is an intimation that his gift-bearing lovers were men, but perhaps not exclusively so. Catullus’ Atys fondly recalls his days as a prolific polyamorist, and whether he was heterosexual or homosexual, this does not fit into the story of religious fanaticism Hunt is trying to tell, or the moral system he promotes.

317 The presentation of love gifts in poetry and on vases seems usually to have been the business of older men to boys and women.
Arys o'er the distant waters hurried in his rapid bark
Soon with foot of wild impatience touch'd the Phrygian forest dark,
Where amid the awful shades possess'd by mighty Cybele,
In his zealous frenzy blind.
And wand'ring in his hapless mind,
With flinty knife he gave to earth the weights that stamp virility.
Then as the widow'd being saw it's wretched limbs bereft of man,
And the unaccustomed blood that on the ground polluting ran,
With snowy hand it snatch'd in haste the timbrel's airy round on high,
That opens with the trumpet's blast, 'thy rites, Maternal Mystery;
And upon it the whirling fingers while the hollow parchment rang,
Thus in outcry tremulous to it's wild companions sung:
Now rush on, rush on with me,
Worshippers of Cybele,
To the lofty groves of the deity!
Ye vagabond herds that bear the name
Of the Dindymenian dame!
Who seeking strange lands, like the banish'd of home,
With Atys, with Atys distractedly roam;
Who

Sirrsa alts vectus Atys celeri rate maris,
Phrygiam nemas ciato cupide pede texit,
Aditique opaca silvis redimite loca decem;
Stimulatus ubi furenti rable, vagus animi,
Devolvit illa acuto sibi pondera silice.
Itaque ut relictas sentit sibi membra sine viro,
Et jam recente terrae sola sanguine maculata,
Nives citata cepit manibus leve tympanum,
Tympanum, tabam, Cybele, tan, mater, initia:
Quatiensque terga tauri teneris bata digitis,
Canere hae suil-adorum est trombunda comitibus;
Agite, ite ad alta, Galli, Cybeles nemora simul,
Simul ite, Dindymene domine vaga pecora;
Aliens qua petentes, velut exules, loca,
Sectam meam exsiccutrice duce me, mihi comites
Rapidus

Figure 24

By referring to Atys as 'it' in line 7, Hunt loses the effect Catullus has skilfully set up. This would usually work against Hunt's translation mode. "The genius of the English language" might not be able to reflect the gender play as neatly as the Latin, but neither does it prohibit any such play. Are we to assume that the English language earns its genial epithet for the very fact that it does not allow such a "determined metamorphosis"? Contemporary and/or personal attitudes towards gender roles may not have permitted him to play along with Catullus, in this instance. It may have been one of those "indelicacies" that were best
omitted. It is a shame because “With snowy hand it snatch’d in haste the timbrel’s airy
round on high,” is flat as a result; Atys has no gender and therefore no character. It also
misses the mild but “edgy” eroticism that gives the original its salt.

Due to the politicized nature of *Atys The Enthusiast*, it is particularly interesting to
assess the relationship between Leigh Hunt and Catullus, in terms of who does what to
whom, and the resultant effect on contemporary readers. The relationship is not a simple
one; it is characterized neither uniquely by the “push” system of “influence”, nor the “pull”
of “reception.” It is a hybrid of the two. Hunt’s stylistic debt, as well as that of narrative
sequence and general content, to the source is necessarily high due to his personal notion
of translation (discussed above) and sensitivity to Catullus’ delivery, but Catullus cannot
be seen as wholly in control the interpretation of new text because of the slight but
important spin that Hunt puts on the title (i.e. *The Enthusiast*). Hunt selects and uses poem
63 to support a personal political/religious belief. In doing so he introduced a foreign
“subtext” or overall message to the poem: Methodist enthusiasm is a deluded error.
Catullus, however, still more or less controls the rest. The force exerted on Hunt by
Catullus is one of diplomacy and sensitivity.

The Hunt of 1809, who attacked Methodism in an openly hostile way, calling it “a
distillation from popery” and haranguing its vulgar followers, would not have written a
tender and impassioned lament for the poor enthusiast. Hunt could not solve “the problem
of Methodism” among the vulgar and uneducated masses by indirectly assailing them in
print (circulated among the liberal middle and upper-middle classes), and even less so by
allusion to a Roman poet. It may, however, be said that his engagement with the story of
Catullus’ Atys tempered his anti-Methodist feeling into a more usefully expressed mode,
that is an intensely moving poem that promoted pity in its readers rather than venomous

318 For the “push/pull” formulation see Goff (2005) 12–14.
disbelief in the fanatical behavior of the uneducated poor, to whom Methodism gave an arguably more suitable, and certainly more direct, route to spirituality than that condoned by the established clergy. The inhuman evil of Cybele took the agency away from Atys, giving him the status of victim. It is this status therefore that is taken up by the more extreme practitioners of Methodism, and the focus of agency is more justifiably directed towards the cause of the societal ills rather than the victims.

In Foliage (1818) Hunt's translation of poem 63 is simply called Atys and not Atys the Enthusiast, it has no introduction, nor commentary, and does not give the Latin. Atys therefore stands on its own as a translation to be read away from its source and independently of any contextualizing preface.319 There are a number of changes between the two translations but they are slight and only cosmetic alterations, e.g. “Atys o’er the distant waters, hurried in his rapid bark” becomes “Atys o’er the distant waters driving in his rapid bark”. Hunt’s Atys presents a more literarily ambitious Catullus. He is not just a poet who wrote charming love poems and tender vignettes of domesticity – but one who wrote longer Greek-style poems that apparently warned his public against the perils of religious fanaticism. We cannot know exactly what inspired Catullus to write this phenomenal poem. Hunt’s reading offers us an interesting insight into one possible interpretation. He offers us the view that Catullus wrote from a moderate religious standpoint, warning against extreme religious fervour. What is most interesting about Atys The Enthusiast is that it anchors poem 63 in its social and political setting. It offers the poem as an act of social criticism rather than simply a work of classical art or literature. By finding this “journalistic hook” to the poem he reduces the distance between Catullus’ poem and his London readers. They are forced to respond to it in relation to their own

319 The decision not print the Latin may have been influenced by the amount of Latin and Greek that would have to be printed in the book if all the translations were to be bilingually presented. This would have involved a good deal of extra work in terms of editing, printing and checking the texts. It would also have made the book very long and expensive.
experience and not as a distant classical artifact of which only the most scholarly can presume to make sense.

Julia and Manlius

The next poem in Foliage is The Nuptial Song of Julia and Manlius, a translation of Catullus 61:

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**CATULLUS.**

100

Meet the day with dancing pleasure,
Singing out a nuptial measure,
And with fine hand at the air
Shake the pine-torch with a glare.

For to day (so Beauty's Queen
Came to Paris to be seen)
Julia will her Manlius wed,
Good with good, a blessed bed:

Like a myrtle tree in flower,
Taken from an Asian bower,
Where with many a dewy cup
Nymphs in play had nursed it up.

Come then, quit the Thespian steep
With Aonian caverns deep,
Over which, like glass, and chill,
Aganippe's wells distil.

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**Figure 25**

Julia and Manlius had previously been published in The Examiner (May 12th 1816), ten days after the occasion of the royal marriage of Princess Charlotte of Wales and the future Leopold I of Belgium. This translation differs from the earlier Examiner Latin poems, of 1812, in a number of ways. It was printed in celebration of a specific occasion; it is a longer poem (180 short lines); the Latin is presented on the left hand side of the English, both of which columns are squeezed into one regular column's width. THE NUPTIAL
SONG OF JULIA AND MANLIUS, TRANSLATED FROM CATULLUS BY LEIGH

HUNT begins with the words:

As our Poets at present, - such of them at least as would be likely to be acceptable at Court, seem all busy with celebrating matters of war... it was thought as well to take occasion of the late Royal Wedding and print the following Epithalamium, the original of which is one of the loveliest and most natural pieces of writing in all antiquity.

As he does in the introduction to Acme and Septimius he justifies his translation by showing that it has not been done satisfactorily before. In Acme Hunt tells us that Cowley paraphrased too much, here in the epithalamium he writes: “The first forty lines of the poem have been formerly rendered by SANDYS, the truly poetical translator of OVID,- and with such spirit, that had he gone on with the remainder, I should certainly not have thought of giving another version.”

He thus shows the gap in the literature and bows humbly before a great translator, whom he much admired. In this shorter than usual introduction he then goes on to sketch out the dramatic scene: “The poet is to be imagined standing near the door of the bridegroom’s house...” It is a very practical kind of introduction that Hunt gives by setting out the position of the “players”.

In Foliage, as can be seen in Figure 25, it was printed without the Latin text. This means that the reader cannot be sure if there have been omissions made or significant changes to the source. In this translation Hunt is particularly stringent in his self-censorship, and the cause of this censorship is the same that called for suppression in Atys, homosexual love. In the epithalamium there was a whole character that needed to be removed. Hunt went about this expurgation by way of omission. Before focusing on the expulsion of the concubinus (male slave with whom a master has a sexual relationship whilst an adolescent) it is worth noting that there outside of this excision the translation is conducted in a similar way to Hunt’s other Catullan poems. In general it reads smoothly thanks to Hunt’s usual facility of expression and his simplification of mythological

320 Hunt (1816) The Examiner May 12th.
allusions. It is not entirely smooth for the reader, however, for example: "For to day (so Beauty's Queen/ Came to Paris to be seen)/ Julia will her Manlius wed,/ Good with good, a blessed bed" for: Namque Julia Manlio,/ Qualis Idalium colens/ Venit ad Phrygium Venus/ Judicem, bona cum bona/ Nubit [sic] alite virgo. This particular simplification — aside from not being smooth — is positively sticky, and it would seem purposefully so. Hunt has tried to reflect the typically Latinate postponement of sense by way of delaying the verb, 'nubit'. He does this by introducing the mythological simile ("so Beauty's...") after "For to day" and before we know to what it is likened.

It is a rare example of Hunt's moving away from the smooth conveyance of Catullus' message and 'ardour', and towards a translation that reflects a "foreignizing" stylistic Latinism. He also seems to leave the expression in parenthesis pregnant with playful and anachronistic significance. 'Beauty's Queen' does not immediately signify Venus, and 'Paris' does not immediately not signify the capital of France, both in the early nineteenth century and today. Hunt therefore creates a playful and self-conscious pun. To go "to Paris to be seen" further develops the hermeneutic potential of the idea of a British fashionista touring to Paris in order to show her face at various social gatherings. The allusion to the modern world acts like an "update" of the text, but is ultimately rejected rationally (though not all traces can vanish from the non-rational response to the poem).

Had Hunt wanted to cut out this "sticky" allusion he could have rendered Catullus' judex somehow, and made it an explicit reference to the Judgment of Paris. Catullus does not use the word Paris, but rather refers to the Phrygium judicem — so Hunt may have been trying to reflect the fact that Catullus does not simply write "the judgment of Paris", or equivalent, but the potential anachronistic flood of meaning is all of Hunt's doing. It

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321 n.b. Nubit is commonly nubet in modern editions.
introduces for a harmless moment a playful visibility to the serious and invisible task of translation."

In poem 61 lines 126-150 tell of Manlius’ concubinus. Catullus implies that this slave had been much loved by Manlius and had acted as his master’s keeper (villice/Concubine 61.136-7). Catullus addresses him personally: Sordebam tibi, villice/Concubini, hodie atque heri (‘I appeared worthless to (was despised by) you, superintendant sex slave, today and yesterday’), then reminds him that now (with the marriage of Manlius) his relationship with his master is over. He has not only lost his lover but also his illegitimately held authoritative position in the household. It is possible that Catullus implies that the slave used to be jealous of the relationship between Catullus and Manlius, but now the slave, according to custom, will have his beard shaved – marking his passage from his life as a glaber (effeminate adolescent) to adulthood. Catullus’ twenty-four lines (119-143) read both like a taunt to the concubinus and an embarrassment to Manlius. In any case Hunt presumably felt it his duty to cut the character of the concubinus out of the poem altogether.

Hunt’s excision successfully sidesteps the problem of showing the homosexual relationship between Manlius and his concubinus but it significantly changes the balance of the poem. The responsibility for the stability of the marriage lies almost entirely with the nova nupta – she is bombarded with advice, all of which is designed to coerce her into offering herself sexually to her husband on the honeymoon, despite her alleged

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322 On translators’ visibility and “foreignization” see Venuti (2008). Catullus’ readers would certainly have arrived at the judgement of Paris naturally from Phrygium iudicem, but it is not so easy for an English reader. The ‘Phrygian judgement’ may not even immediately communicate Paris to all but the most confident readers. Therefore this may be an example of Hunt replicating the friction of his own reading experience rather than attempting to recreate a Catullus/Roman reader communication.

323 This is the text of the key existing editions at the time other than those of Achilles Statius (1566), the Delphin Classics (1685) and Noel (1803), which three change it to: sordebant tibi villicae and modern editions tend to have sordebant tibi vilicae both meaning ‘the female superintendant slaves were despised by you’. The sordebam reading implies that the concubinus might have had cause for jealousy in the relationship between Catullus and Manlius.
unwillingness ("for all her no," line 4), and ever after. Hunt translates Catullus' 24 lines with 8 of his own (98-103):

Soon the nuts will be flung;
Soon the wanton verses sung;
Soon the bridegroom will be told
Of the tricks he played of old.
License then his love had got;
But a husband has it not.
Let the air with Hymen ring;
Hymen, Io Hymen, sing.

The passive mood and future time of the verbs allow Hunt to bypass the role of the concubinus entirely. He projects the acts of nut throwing, verse singing and trick telling into a vague future time, outside of the narrative temporal sequence, and gives agency of these acts to an anonymous party. Hunt makes it clear that Manlius was a licentious bachelor ("License then his love had got"), but there is absolutely no implication that the "tricks he played of old" had anything to do with a homosexual relationship. In line 106, immediately following the excised passage, Hunt has: "Thou too, married one, take care, /What he looks for, not to spare, /Lest he look for it elsewhere." The 'too' in its current context is obsolete and is a testament to Hunt's excision. It would necessarily follow a didactic address to the husband, which is indeed present in the Latin. This is an example of the bluntness of excision as a tool of expurgation and evidence that perhaps the excision was performed at a late stage in production.

In Hunt's advertisement there is no mention of obscenity or the necessity for expurgation. It would have been out of place in a feature designed to celebrate a royal wedding, and would have taken up more space than he had at his disposal. The exclusion of the concubinus is consistent in the two versions of Hunt's translation. The presence of the Latin in the 1816 Examiner version poses the question to Hunt of whether or not to cut

324 Hunt does not appear here as committed to the feminist cause as in The Examiner (1812) 600, quoted p.147 above.
the source text too. He does choose to cut the Latin and replaces the excised extract conspicuously with ten astrices in a single line across the width of the half column of Latin verse. It is worth noting that where there is a corruption of the text at line 111 [107] Hunt cuts the Latin for the first time and then decides to extend the lacuna to line 121 [114], presumably on account of the suspiciously suggestive content of the preceding lines: o cubile, quot (o nimis/ Candido pede lectuli)... ('o in bed, how often - o too often with bright foot on the little couch.')\(^{325}\) Following 121 [114] the Latin returns undisturbed until line 131, where we find identical marks to those used to note the lacuna of 111f. There is no mistaking the reason for this excision. Hunt cuts the character of the *concinibus* from the poem (131 [124]-146 [139]).\(^{326}\) Again astrices are used to denote the omission of lines from 206 [199]- 210 [203]: *ille pulvis Erythraei/ Siderumque micantium/ Subducat numerum prius,/ Qui vestri numerare vult/ Multa millia ludi* (Nott: 'He, who your various sports would count,/ Your thousand of delights explore,/ Must number first the sands' amount/ That spread the Erythraean shore;/ Must number every spark of light/ That frets the azure vault of night'). This verse also seems to have been cut due to an eroticism deemed unsuitable for Hunt's Sunday journal.

There are no further cuts made to the Latin or English texts in Hunt's translation of poem 61. Hunt is careful to show himself exercising a keen moral judgment in his translation and presentation of the Latin text. The expurgated translation of Catullus' poem was a fitting tribute to a royal wedding that seems to have represented, at least to Hunt, the potential for a new phase of English history, the light after a grim Regency period. The

\(^{325}\) Hunt may appear to disguise excision by this extension of the lacuna, however it seems more in his interest to be seen exercising good moral judgement and excising what he felt to be harmful to the welfare of his more “vulnerable” readers, i.e. women and children. All line numbers and quotations of omitted Latin text are taken from Nott's (1795) edition as a contemporary edition, to which he seems to have had access. The second number in squared brackets is from Mynors (1958).

\(^{326}\) n.b. Hunt has *concubinus amorem* at 1.120 (Nott 130; Mynors 123). Therefore *concubinus* is there in the Latin, but concealed in the English translation by: “license then his love had got”, which is reassuringly followed by “But a husband has it not.”
woman who was at this time destined to be Queen of England seemed to sympathize with liberal concerns, live a simple life, and – most importantly – be just.\textsuperscript{327} Hunt wanted England to take the opportunity to show by all manner of artistic celebration "that the Greeks were not the only people who could unite the true splendours of monarchical government and the enjoyment of freedom."\textsuperscript{328}

It is interesting that Hunt puts forward in this article an argument that is reminiscent of the youth movement of 50s and 60s America: "Leave them, for GOD'S sake, to the generous and happy suggestions of their present age and condition. They will teach them, if any thing [sic] can, how to appreciate the happiness of others as well as themselves. There is no old head at Court can teach them half as much for our advantage as their own youth."\textsuperscript{329} Catullus' poem was primarily selected simply because it was an epithalamium. Hunt's turning to Catullus as a poet suitable for state affairs is, however, strange. He seems to have been determined to introduce to the public the chaste side of Catullus, perhaps - at some level - as an analogue for introducing to the public the moderate side of reform.

Velluti, Atys and Hunt

On the 7\textsuperscript{th} August 1825 The Examiner carried a poem called \textit{From Velluti to his Revilers}. It was prefaced by a customarily reflective 'advertisement' of 622 words, consisting of an account of the impulse or inspiration of the poem, an introduction to the protagonist, and an apology for, or explanation of, its imperfections. It was, in Hunt's words: "occasioned by the ungenerous personalities which two or three writers in the public journals allowed themselves to vent against [the famous Italian castrato] Signor [Giovanni Battista] Velluti,

\textsuperscript{327} See article on the marriage 2 pages before \textit{The Nuptial Song} in \textit{ Examiner} May 12th (1816) 289-290.
\textsuperscript{328} ibid 290.
\textsuperscript{329} ibid 290.
on his arrival in England," and "An effusion of the feelings at a moment." Its identification as an "effusion of feelings" suggested that it was written at speed and without much editing. We are supposed to believe that it approached automatic or continuous writing, and ought perhaps to believe that Hunt did turn it out relatively quickly and in a style natural to him and without too many stylistic restraints. It is after all written in loose, iambic, rhyming, pentametric couplets, often spilling over into alexandrines and triplets, which was an extremely loose form for the time and one that comes naturally to English speakers. *Velluti* is an attack on severe conservative critics as much as it is a defense of the singer Velluti. Hunt's poem approaches versified journalism and ranges from laments for Velluti drawn from Catullus to a treatise on manliness. Centre stage is the familiar Huntian journalistic charge down a liberal middle path built on Cockney culture, Catullus 63, and Cockney morality, the "feminine" strengths of generosity and tolerance:

You wrong your manhood, critics, and degrade
Your just disdain of an inhuman trade...
Scorn, as you will, the trade; you cannot err;
But why with curses load the sufferer?
(lines 3-4, 7-8)

Hunt agrees in principle with his conservative opponents' call for the end of castrati, but objects to the manner in which this objection was expressed. Audiences and critics in England responded initially very poorly to Giacomo Meyerbeer's *Il Crociato in Egitto*, written especially for Velluti, who had an unsettlingly powerful voice, especially for English audiences that had not heard the voice of a male soprano, if at all, for the past 25 years:

Of Signor Velluti it is not easy to speak; and very difficult to describe the effect of his voice. It is... too unnatural to be always agreeable in quality, and sometimes even approaches to a scream.331

330 *Examiner* Aug 7, 1825.
331 Literary Gazette (1825) 430.

185
In *Velluti* Catullus’ text features as more than a source of inspiration and comparison, although it is certainly both these things. The presence of Catullus here acts as a kind of cultural anchor, designed to keep Hunt’s topical verse from falling from its innovatively elevated literary genre. By drawing on the classical poem he obtains a certain level of generic security, as well as projecting a contemporary news story into a mythic setting. It asks readers to compare the plight of Velluti with that of Atys, and in so doing mythologizes the people, acts and concerns of the present.

Tears can shine sweetly, looking on a smile;  
Not so, when what we look on mourns the while.  
How often have I wept the dreadful wrong,  
Told by the poet in as pale a song,  
Which the poor bigot did himself, who spoke  
Such piteous passion when his reason woke!  
To the sea-shore he came, and look’d across,  
Mourning his native land and miserable loss.—  
Oh worse than wits that never must return,  
To act with madness, and with reason mourn!  
I see him, hear him; I myself am he.  
Cut off from thy sweet shores, Humanity!  
A great gulf rolls between. Winds, with a start,  
Rise like my rage, and fall like my poor heart;  
Despair is in the pause and says “We never part.”  
‘Twas ask’d me once (that day was a black day)  
To take this scene, and sing it in a play!  
Great God! I think I hear the music swell.  
The moaning bass, the treble’s gibbering yell;  
Cymbals and drums a shatter’d roar prolong.  
Like drunken woe defying its own song:  
I join my woman’s cry; it turns my brain;  
The wilder’d people rise, and chase me with disdain!  
(lines 141-163)

It is in these lines that Hunt most strongly alludes to poem 63; the poet and ‘pale song’ of line 144 are Catullus and poem 63. The ‘poor bigot’ is Atys and the scene to which Hunt alludes is that of lines 44-73: *Ita de quiete molli rabida sine rabie... Iam iam dolet, quod egi iam iamque paenitet.* Hunt supports his allusion to 63 with a footnote: “See The poem of Atys, above-mentioned. Gibbon says, it is enough ‘to fill a man with pity, an eunuch

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32 n.b. ‘bigot’ (here): “A superstitious / unreasonably obstinate adherent to a particular religious belief.” *OED Online.* This suggests that Hunt’s Atys here was still driven to his act by a religious frenzy, and therefore still that of *Atys the Enthusiast* (*Reflector* 1811). n.b. Hunt later claimed in his *Autobiography* (1850) that the *Examiner* “advocated the mild spirit of religious government, as exercised by the Church of England, in opposition to the bigoted part of Dissent” (1850) 1.208.
with despair.”—In what sex are we to place those who feel neither like the one nor the other?” This note invited the reader to read the Latin text, and perhaps quite frequently reminded his *Examiner* readers of his *Atys the Enthusiast*, his translation from *The Reflector* (1811). If they did not go back to the Latin, which is most probably the case for the vast majority of readers—they at least receive the impression from Gibbon’s authority that the scene to which he refers is most lamentable, particularly apt and, even more importantly, of high cultural value. “I see him, I hear him; I myself am he” attributes the drawing of the comparison with Atys to Velluti himself, which in the first person is particularly powerful and reminiscent of the emotive monologue to which Hunt alludes. Catullus’ monologue is stamped by persistent, and effectively incredulous, first person personal pronouns, e.g.: *Ego mænas, ego mei pars, ego vir sterilis ero?* (line 69 – I a maenad, I a part of me, I a sterile man?). Hunt reflects this in *Velluti*. The suggestion that Velluti had performed an Atys in lines 56-7 (“’Twas ask’d me once (that day was a black day) / To take this scene, and sing it in a play!”) is intriguing. It is unlikely that he refers to *Il Crociato in Egitto*, which does not seem to have a scene that corresponds to a canto di Attis. When Hunt’s Velluti starts to remember the scene in question the music that swells up is the music from the frenzied dance of the Gallae, not the waking lament. I am not aware of any record that can confirm the suggestion made by Hunt. Unless some evidence is found we must assume that Hunt uses a little poetic license to bind the two stories together.

From 1809 to 1825 Hunt used Catullus to various ends. From his 1812 series of classical poems we can see that he felt that he was unveiling poems from their current obscurity, resulting from their not being in the schoolbooks. These same poems, however, were also used by Hunt as classical exempla in his campaign for the promotion of domesticity and sociality, which in turn served to cast in damning relief the luxury and vice of the Prince Regent. He used poem 63 (*Atys*) first to pass judgment on what he saw
as the vulgar rise of Methodist enthusiasm, and nine years later called it to the cause of an exiled castrato in need. Poem 61 he used on the occasion of a royal wedding.

Hunt seemed to have had a symbiotic relationship with Catullus, in the sense that he popularized Catullus by bringing his poetry into the public domain in an accessible manner, and at the same time used each engagement with Catullus' poems to ingratiate himself with the public by showing his classical learning, moral fortitude and ability to counter traditional policy with moderate reform. His presentation of Catullus seems to parallel his approach to post-revolutionary reform. Broadly speaking the message Hunt seems to be putting across is that although there are sides to Catullus (just as there are elements traditionally associated with social reform especially after the 'unlucky termination' of the French Revolution) that should by no means be presented to the public (or attempted to mimic in our own domestic policy), we must not deny ourselves his entire body of poetry (or governmental and social reform) when a tastefully expunged (responsibly moderate) version would bring us into contact with some of the finest poetry of all time (would make England a fairer and better place).
This chapter has two aims. The first is to act as a survey of the most prominent literary engagements with Catullus' 64th poem in British Romantic poetry other than those translations discussed in chapter one. The second aim is to assess the kinds of engagement made with the text to show how and why this poem attracted the attention it did in the liberal and reformist circles. To achieve this I shall focus on various instances of influence from and allusion to the Catullan poem in the work of Robert Southey (1774-1843), Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866), Leigh Hunt (1784-1859) and John Keats (1795-1821). These texts all make use of elements of poem 64 and show varying levels of engagement with a Catullan source. Apart from Southey's poem, The Curse of Kehama, the selection is made up entirely of "Cockney" texts. The following analysis of their connection to a common Catullan source indicates the diversity as well as similarity of approach to classical culture by members of the Cockney School. The comparison of "Cockney classicism" with that of Southey serves to demonstrate the exaggeration of what this label really means.

The essence of Cockney classicism has less to do with inferior levels of education, scholarship and class than contemporary Tory criticism would suggest. It has, I would argue, more to do with a highly literate social minority's expression of a revolutionary attitude towards classical culture, which challenged the authorities of both traditional classicism and what may be termed Lake-school "anti-classicism" by, in a sense,
redefining classicism itself. Their new classical style, which is often and sometimes unhelpfully labelled “Greek,” brought into print, critical discourse and popular consciousness a new way of approaching and experiencing classical culture. Along with this new classicism came the politics associated with their group, whether it was expressed explicitly in their work or implicit in their work’s politicized Cockney style. The concomitant burgeoning interest in allegorical readings of classical myth in the period, which may be seen to start with the influential work of Thomas Taylor (1758-1835), “the modern Platonist”, “English pagan” and friend of Thomas Love Peacock, has led me to explore a potentially polemic allegorical reading of the myths surrounding Bacchus and Ariadne in a cluster of poems produced by Peacock, Hunt and Keats between the years of 1816 and 1819.335

Southey and 64

The Curse of Kehama was written by the future poet laureate, Robert Southey, at the height of the Peninsular War. Southey, who drew deeply from the stylistic examples set by both Frank Sayers’ Dramatic Sketches and William Taylor’s German translations, especially in his early work, attended a number of schools before 1788, when a wealthy uncle secured for him a place at Westminster School, which prepared him for entrance to Balliol College, Oxford.336 He therefore received a high level of classical education. Like Sayers, Southey was a political radical and staunch supporter of the French Revolution throughout his early years, although this radicalism was eventually tempered by time and his career prospects. Southey also has in common with Sayers the fact that they both read and engaged creatively with the poetry of Catullus. There may be other textual connections to Catullus.


336 In 1801 he explained to Taylor that the metre of Madoc (1805) was indebted to Sayers’ blank verse in Dramatic Sketches (1790), see letter to Taylor, 23 Jan. 1803.
in Southey's work, but I am yet only aware of the allusion to poem 64 in *The Curse of Kehama*.

The epic poem was first published in 1810 and went through many editions subsequent to its first publication. For example, what was originally a 24-book epic in 1810 was scaled down to a 12-book epic by 1818 and then restored to 24 books by 1838 in Southey's self-collected *Poetical Works*. Between the 1810 and 1838 versions there are no textual differences in the two sections examined here. The poem is set in India and tells the story of an evil priest, Kehama, and his attempt to become a god. The part of the story that concerns us here is the section where Kailyal, a peasant girl, who having been rescued by her father first from an abduction by Kehama's son and then from her own suicide, is left on a beach while her semi-divine father, Ladurlad, seeks a god from the underwater city of Mahabalipur. Southey is unreservedly dismissive of Indian mythic personae and narratives in his preface to *Kehama*. He therefore created his own Hindu tale and embedded it in a tastefully poeticized world of Indian myth: "No figures can be imagined more anti-picturesque, and less poetical, than the mythological personages of the Bramins."*338*

Catullus' presence in *Kehama* after such a dismissal suggests that Southey considered the Ariadne scene, from 64, entirely picturesque and poetical. It is important to remember that this would have been a key reason why Catullus 64, and in particular lines 52-67, appears so frequently as a source here and elsewhere in early nineteenth-century literature. There are not many other passages of classical or non-classical poetry that tread so deftly the picturesque line between the beautiful and the sublime, and another comes in the preceding poem, 63's lament. Catullus was a master of harnessing and vividly portraying the two essential desires of humans, sex and self-preservation. The combination

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*337* The 1818 version omits the section entirely.

*338* Southey (1810) viii.
of sympathy, lust, terror and liberty in Ariadne's situation approaches a recipe for the Burkean sublime. Even if we were to interpret Southey's 'picturesque' in the manner in which Henry Nelson Coleridge defines his father's conception of the poetic picturesque (i.e. that which in poetry creates a picture as an emblem of a sentiment), Catullus' scene on Dia's shoreline is the textbook example. Southey uses Catullus' portrayal of Ariadne on the beach for his character Kailyal in two different passages. The first passage is from book xv:

10.

So saying, he put back his arm, and gave
The cloth which girt his loins, and press'd her hand
With fervent love, then from the sand
Advanced into the sea; the coming Wave
Which knew Kehama's curse, before his way
Started, and on he went as on dry land,
And still around his path the waters parted.
She stands upon the shore, where sea-weeds play,
Lashing her polish'd ankles, and the spray
Which off her Father, like a rainbow, fled,
Falls on her like a shower; there Kailyal stands,
And sees the billows rise above his head.
She at the startling sight, forgot the power
The Curse had given him, and held forth her hands
Imploringly, ... her voice was on the wind,
And the deaf Ocean o'er Ladurlad closed.
Soon she recall'd his destiny to mind,
And shaking off that natural fear, composed
Her soul with prayer, to wait the event resign'd.

Figure 26

Ladurlad leaves his daughter Kailyal on the beach before traveling to the underwater city. He is protected from drowning by the curse put on him by Kehama. Besides the contextual parallels between Ariadne and Kailyal's situation there is in this first passage a

339 Burke (1757) On the Sublime and Beautiful 49-85.
341 Southey (1810) 164; (1838) 188-9.
342 The narrator's focus on Ladurlad's (removed) loin-cloth, and the 'fervent love' with which he presses his daughter's hand introduces an unexpectedly eroticized element to this departure.
trace of Catullus only in the lines: “She stands upon the shore, where sea-weeds play, / Lashing her polish’d ankles...” This only faintly resembles 64 by the verbal triggers (emboldened) that correspond to line 60 and 67: *quem procul ex alga maestis Minois ocellis* (whom [Theseus] Ariadne [sees] far off from the seaweed through her sad eyes) and *ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis alludebant* (the salt waves play with them [her clothes] in front of her own feet). This evidence alone is insufficient to postulate an allusion, but it represents the subtle beginnings of a sustained allusion to Ariadne’s situation. The seaweed shore of Kailyal dimly begins to recall Dia. The next lines are as follows:

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Alone, upon the solitary strand,
The lovely one is left; behold her go,
Pacing with patient footsteps, to and fro,
Along the bending sand.
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The ‘solitary strand’ increases the connection with Catullus’ poem because it recalls the *sola arena* of line 57 (the lonely sand). ‘Strand’ is not the same as ‘sand,’ but it is very close indeed. If Southey had written ‘sand(s)’ the connection would be explicit. As it is the transfer of the epithet ‘solitary’ from the deserted maiden to the inanimate ‘strand’ works as another subtle reminder of the Catullan precedent. Seven days and around 20 pages later the god Baly observes Kailyal from the sky. His observations make the connection between Kailyal and Ariadne explicit to the reader familiar with Catullus’ poem:
4.

There he beholds, upon the sand,
A lovely Maiden in the moonlight stand.
The land-breeze lifts her locks of jet;
The waves around her polish'd ankles play;
Her bosom with the salt sea-spray is wet;
Her arms are cross'd, unconsciously, to fold
That bosom from the cold,
While, statue-like, she seems her watch to keep,
Gazing intently on the restless deep.

Figure 27 – Southey’s Kehama 17.4

Kailyal’s situation and emotional reaction to it are imported directly from poem 64. The fact that both characters are left alone on a beach when their protectors have departed is their first point of correspondence. They are both also being observed in their plight by gods (Baly and Bacchus). Their state of (un)dress, and the “inappropriate”, or essential, erotic focus of their description add critical mass to the textual connection, which connection is then confirmed by the verbal triggers: “play” (in final position and in conjunction with an eroticized focus on an underdressed woman in the shallows). The shared focus on a fearful and deserted maiden’s breasts provides a further visual link between the two poems. “Statue-like” corresponds directly to Catullus’ saxe ut effigies (like a stone statue).

The allusion is established beyond any doubt and Southey’s text is enriched by its association with Catullus’ vivid scene. In reference to the passage in figure 2 above, Coleridge’s son Henry Nelson Coleridge, in an essay on the poetic picturesque attached as an appendix to volume 7 of his father’s collected works, wrote: “This might be a pendant to the Ariadne of Catullus.” He later writes: “The simile of the statue in the pictures of

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343 ‘The Curse of Kehama’ xvii 4 – Southey (1838) 164.
344 The similarity of the gods’ names (i.e. they both begin with ‘Ba’) is a further correspondence, however, it appears to be coincidental since Southey did not make up the name, but discovered him and his legend related in Pierre Sonnerat’s Voyage aux Indes Orientales et à la Chine (1782) i.28.
Ariadne and of Kailyal... does not call away the mind from the object it is brought to express, but appears for a moment, like snow upon a river,- then melts into the current of thought and is lost sight of. I would like to extend this elegant description to the manner in which the allusion to Catullus' Ariadne works in Southey's Kailyal passage. The ghost of Ariadne is present as soon as Kailyal is alone on the beach; the reader's identification of it is not essential for appreciation, but it acts like another simile, or lighter and longer lasting snowfall.

Southey's Kehama has a Hindu mythological framework but it is Zoroastrianism - an ancient religion popular with sceptics because of its demonstration of unsettling correspondences with and precedents for Judaism – that provides the ideological system. The implicit dissent expressed by this religious background gives the poem a political colouring. Due to it being published two years into the Peninsular War, when the enthusiastic support of the French Revolution among liberals was in rapid decline, its politics are wisely less than obvious. Like all pro-reform liberals of the time Southey was deterred from making explicit political comment given the risk of being associated with anti-war Jacobinism. His future job prospects were another reason for him to be guarded about his political views. He was at that time embarking on a career in writing for the Tory-managed Quarterly Review, where he was not, we are told, immediately trusted to write on political matters.

In spite of the close textual bond between the two passages I do not think that the desertion of Kailyal and its relationship to Catullus' Ariadne represent any significant

343 n.b. within Shelley's circle J.F. Newton was a Zoroastrian and Peacock uses Zoroastrian mythology in his epic fragment Ahriman. European perceptions of Zoroastrianism were in flux and hotly debated. In early 18th c. there was a Christianized and partially informed understanding of the religion reported back to Britain by such oriental scholars as Thomas Hyde (1636-1703), which by 19th c. was under significant threat by the less partial (in both senses) work of the French scholar Abraham-Hycacinthe Anquetil du Perron (1731-1805), see Boyce (2001) 194f.

346 Southey supported the war with France because withdrawal from the Napoleonic Wars would (and eventually did) leave the Spanish patriots without a hope.

social or political comment. Southey is likely simply to have enjoyed reading Catullus’ poem and felt that a connection with it would enhance his poem aesthetically. A sad woman on a beach is a powerful and memorable image, which can only be made stronger by allusion to the most famous and memorably portrayed abandoned woman in Latin literature, Ariadne. Kailyal’s fearful sojourn on the shore effectively builds up suspense in the narrative. It is important to remember that Kailyal was not really abandoned by Ladurlad and (although she does slip his mind for a short while when distracted by the marvels of the underwater city) the reader is never given cause to think that he will not return. Ladurlad is also Kailyal’s father and not her perfidious lover and she does not deliver an Ariadne-style lament for what she has lost. These factors suggest that Southey’s allusion to Catullus 64 is established to enhance the visual and emotional elements of the scene alone rather than to equip it with any challenge to the cultural, political or social status quo.

**Catullus 64 in the Hunt Circle**

"The poetry of abandoned women flourishes wherever those who read it are reminded of their own subjection and alienation, of everything that is missing from their lives." Lipking (1988).

Now I shall focus on the presence of Catullus 64 in the work of the alternative group of writers labelled by *Blackwood’s Magazine* the “Cockney School”. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, immediately after the Napoleonic Wars, the poets Shelley, Peacock, Hunt and Keats were writing classicizing poems designed to challenge cultural, religious, moral and political orthodoxy in England. Due, in part, to the acceptance of the “gloomy”, Germanic, introverted poetics of the Lake poets into the literary establishment, the “Cult of the South,” as Marilyn Butler (1981) calls the Hunt and Shelley Circle(s),

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348 As we have seen in earlier chapters some classicizing work went on before the end of the Peninsular Wars but it was not until 1817 that the most important texts appear.
developed an alternative poetic style. The poetry of this group for a time (late 1810s) was liberal, Mediterranean, Classical, pagan and eroticized. Instead of the confessional and Christian contemplations of solitary and introverted males (the Lake school), these poems are objectively narrated romances, engaged with classical myth without any attempt to reconcile it with its new Christian context, and openly celebrate sexuality.

This reactionary poetic can be seen in a cluster of important poems made by the Cockneys. A number of these poems feature an Ariadne figure, which - as the epigraph for this section states - tends to flourish in the literature of a dissenting minority. Another character that appears in this cluster of Cockney poems is Bacchus, who - like Ariadne - operates outside the usual social mechanism. His law, like hers (because she has nothing to lose), is a wild, natural law - an alternative to the earthly system of authority that goes to war and segregates humankind. Both of these figures appear in Keats' poem, *Endymion* (1818), which I shall take a closer look at in the next chapter along with his other Catullan engagements. In the very same year another Bacchus figure can be seen in Thomas Love Peacock's poem *Rhododaphne*.

Peacock's poem entered the public sphere amid the cluster of poems and peripheral discussions and writings that make up what Jeffrey Cox (in 1994) coined 'Cockney classicism' and it is my intention to assess it, like the others, as the production of an individual, who loosely adheres to the values of an alternative cultural group whose members share a social and political goal. Peacock, whose poem *Rhododaphne* I shall discuss later in this chapter, operates at the opposite extreme of the Cockney classical

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350 n.b. The Cockney casting of Wordsworth and the Lake School as "antisocial egoists, desponding solipsists" does not take into account, as Cox notes (1998.113-4), the value of their work which was "offering its own complex, opposing social vision grounded in a sense of nation and a national church."
Generally speaking Peacock’s classicism is literary, learned and demands a certain amount of scholarship from its reader, whereas Cornwall’s is less challenging, more populist and demands only a general interest in classical culture. The classicizing works of Shelley, Keats, Horace Smith and Hunt, with regard to their levels of populism and intellectualism appear to fall somewhere between these two examples. 354

The paganism and eroticism of the group’s classical mythological stories was designed to challenge the “institutionalized Christianity that was part of the apparatus of State.” 355 Byron, Shelley, Keats, Hunt, Peacock, and Barry Cornwall are dramatically different kinds of poet, from various walks of life, but for a time they can be seen to have all followed the same “Southern” poetic, and were united not only by ties of friendship and shared literary tastes, but also by hostility from the Tory reviewers. Catullus’ new prominence in British literary culture at this time should not be thought a coincidence. The Cockneys’ revival of classicism could not have happened without a certain recasting of classical culture itself. 356 Catullus did not fit the mould of eighteenth century British classicism, but his highly respected, convivial and eroticized work offered a legitimate but also, importantly, alternative side to the classics. It was a consciously adapted classicism, concurrently legitimate and subversive, a Cockney classicism.

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353 Due to space I am unable to discuss Cornwall’s reception of Catullus in The Flood of Thessaly (1823). In it he engages with the Ariadne myth via reference in a less sustained way than Keats, Peacock and Hunt.
354 All poets mentioned can be found in Oxford DNB. Horace Smith is not addressed here because I have not identified any engagement with Catullus in his work, but his work, Amarynthus, The Nympholept (1821) is very much a part of this Classicizing cluster of poems.
356 As has been discussed in chapter 1 perceptions of classical culture were already in flux largely due to the numerous archaeological discoveries and more scientific disposition of classical research.
"Noxious Race of Heroes"

According to Cox, "The Hunt circle's encounter with Catullus was a profound act of self-recognition." The fact that Catullus was read, translated and alluded to by so many of the poets associated with the Cockney school indicates a definite attraction to his poetry. There are also many parallels that may be drawn (as Cox does) between our conception of the "neoteric poets" and the Cockney school, but without significantly more mention of Catullus made in correspondence or commonplace books, I would hesitate to suggest that the influence of Catullus was as great as that of Spenser or Shakespeare, for example, whom they mention frequently and freely in correspondence.

The most important parallel of poetic programme between the neoterics and the Cockney School - which may be a direct influence from Catullus and the school we speculate form around him - is his subversion of the epic and traditional notions of martial heroism. This can be seen generally throughout his work in his persona's lack of engagement with or respect for the traditional duties of a Roman man (public affairs, farming and/or fighting), and also perhaps his attempt to reframe Roman social values such as fides (loyalty) and amicitia (friendship/political alliance) in the terms of his own ideals. It can be seen more specifically in poem 64 by the way in which it subverts contemporary notions of heroism. Virtutes heroum (51 - the virtues of heroes) are revealed as deficiencies of character that will ultimately bring death and grief. The song of the Parcae, which Catullus' narrator knowingly tells us will forever be seen as true (322), predicts that the marriage of Thetis and Peleus will bring about the birth of their son, and with him will come death and mourning rather than glory. Ariadne, Bacchus and the Parcae are all figures that bob conspicuously in the wake of the Roman idea of heroism, represented by the hero, Achilles.

357 Cox (2009) 618.
358 For discussion of neoteric poetics see Lyne (1978), Crowther (1970).
359 See, for example, Lyne (1978) and Bramble (1970).
In a letter written in the summer of 1812 to William Godwin a somewhat petulant
Shelley, opening with: “Dear Godwin, I have never seen you, and yet I think, I know you,”
attacks contemporary classical education: "The evils of acquiring Greek and Latin
considerably overbalance the benefit.” He goes on to explain why he doubts the “efficacy
of classical learning as a means of forwarding the interests of the human race... Was not
the government of republican Rome, and most of those of Greece, as oppressive and
arbitrary, as liberal of encouragement to monopoly, as that of Great Britain is at present?
And what do we learn from their poets? As you have yourself acknowledged somewhere,
"they are fit for nothing but the perpetuation of the noxious race of heroes in the world."
Lucretius forms, perhaps, the single exception.” Shelley here misquotes Godwin back to
him. What he refers to is the following extract from an essay called ‘Of Choice in
Reading,' published as the fifteenth essay in a series of essays in The Enquirer that bore
the title of Reflections on education, manners, and literature (1797):

What is the tendency of Homer’s Iliad? The
author seems to have designed it, as an example
of the fatal consequences of discord among poli-
tical allies. One of the effects it appears most
conspicuously to have produced, is that of en-
hancing the false lustre of military achievements,
and perpetuating the noxious race of heroes in
the world.

Figure 28

I bring this up here because it seems particularly poignant that Godwin and Shelley should
be in agreement over the point that Catullus seems to be making with 64, i.e. that epic
heroism confounds fair with foul (omnia fanda nefanda malo permixta furore... 405).
What Godwin and Shelley were reacting against was the perception of the classical world

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360 Shelley Letters (to Godwin), Lymouth July 29 1812.
promoted by eighteenth-century classical education.\footnote{361} Had this correspondence taken place six years later, or had Shelley been more familiar at that point with Catullus' 64th poem he may not have singled out Lucretius as the only classical poet exempt from the charge of promoting the 'noxious race of heroes'. Catullus can be seen to stand against the very same tradition, whilst at the same time being, from a modern perspective, part of that tradition. His 'alternative' position within the same tradition that was steeped in cultural authority made him highly attractive to an alternative social and literary group intent on effecting cultural change from within.

A key feature of the narrative poetry of Keats, Shelley, Hunt and Peacock in the 1810s is their use of symbolic analogy. Since the code of such allegorical readings is dependent on contemporary - and perhaps more specifically "Cockney" - political and social debate (and to some extent therefore lost) we can rarely be absolutely certain of the meanings we generate from them. The allegorical reading of 64, above, as a protest song, for example, is not the only possible reading of the poem, but it is - to my mind - the most convincing.\footnote{362} Without a greater understanding of Catullus' relationship with the society around him there is no way we can ever be sure of such a reading. But subsequent receptions of the poem, like that in Vergil's Aeneid 4 and others continuing to the present day, including Romantic interpretations, inform our understanding of the source text by showing us how others have interpreted it in different reading climates.\footnote{363} I now turn to Peacock’s equally enigmatic poem to see how it interprets its Catullan source.

\footnote{361} n.b. Godwin seems to have taken the term from William Wilberforce (1797/1815 ed.)153. 
\footnote{362} Konstan (1977).
\footnote{363} Martindale (1992).
Thomas Love Peacock's *Rhododaphne*

The few notes subjoined are such as seemed absolutely necessary to explain or justify the text. Those of the latter description might, perhaps, have been more numerous, if much deference had seemed due to that species of judgment, which, having neither light nor tact of its own, can only see and feel through the medium of authority.\textsuperscript{364}

These are the final few lines in Peacock's preface to his poem *Rhododaphne*. Such a frank dismissal of the judgment of those who cannot make up their own minds, coupled with the use of such esoteric terms as 'hypaethric' (meaning open to the air), which appears in the poem's second line, goes to show just how few concessions Peacock was willing to make for his non-classical reader. In this sense his approach to classicism is a far cry from, for example, Hunt's and Elton's accessible and empowering classicism found in *The Examiner* and *Specimens*. The desire to educate and demystify was of no great concern to Peacock, who was self-educated from the age of thirteen. Democratization is then not a feature of all Cockney classicism. The tendency to increase access to an exclusive cultural zone seems to have been more dependent on personal rather than group mentality. The correspondence and journals of the group show them rarely to have been entirely of one mind; although their attitudes towards religion and politics were broadly similar there appears to have been constant and heated discussion on subjects ranging from Platonic and Zoroastrian philosophy to vegetarianism and boating.\textsuperscript{365} In spite of the fact that Peacock did not wish to justify his poem, or even make it particularly easy for readers without a classical education, the appreciation of *Rhododaphne* is not reliant on the knowledge of specific texts. Peacock does however admit to the practice of 'weaving in' imitations of classical texts into his story, mixing his own ideas with those of his classical forebears:

\begin{quote}
The second song in the fifth canto is founded on the Homeric hymn, 'Bacchus, or the Pirates.' Some other imitations of classical passages, but for the most part interwoven with unborrowed ideas, will occur to the classical reader.\textsuperscript{366}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{364} Peacock (1818) xi.
\textsuperscript{365} From various sources Hunt and Shelley stand out as the fieriest of table talkers. See e.g. Ilay (2010).
\textsuperscript{366} Peacock (1818) xi.
The practice of interweaving classical imitation and 'unborrowed' ideas does seem to be a feature of Cockney classicism. Shelley's description of *Rhododaphne* as a modern love story told in a 'Greek and Pagan' manner reveals in part the shared goal of the classicizing cluster produced in and around 1816-8. The emphasis on its modernity stresses the poem's relevance to contemporary debate; its 'Greekness' indicates its scholarship (and legitimacy); and its paganism stands as a challenge to the state religion and a symbol of its alternative politics. Douglas Bush wrote that the Hellenism of *Rhododaphne* "is wholly a romantic dream, a way of escape." I would argue that the setting of the poem in Thessaly and its Hellenism are not distancing mechanisms allowing the poet to escape from reality. Peacock was too much of a cynic for escapism. The "Greek" style of the poem is a declaration of its association with the group of which he was a part and a rejection of the Lake school aesthetic. Its clear, objective and yet foreign mythological style allowed Peacock to express a basic social, political and moral message by means of symbolism, which Bush thought beyond his poetic capabilities. I shall return to the poem's symbolism shortly. The poem's classical appearance creates in the reader the impression that it was written according to an ancient system of belief, and that it should be read with all the seriousness and scholarly consideration of a classical poem. As we have seen is so often the case, the appearance of "Greek" is, even in the case of "Greecy Peaky," mediated to a large extent by Roman texts. The Latin authors, Apuleius and Petronius, for example, stand alongside the Greek of Lucian and the Homeric Hymn as the sources named by Peacock in his introduction.

*Rhododaphne* is a poem about the love of a young man called Anthemion for a beautiful girl called Calliroé. Their love is threatened by the seduction of Anthemion by

368 The poem bears the epigraph: "Rogo vos, oportet, credatis, sunt mulieres plus sciae, sunt nocturnae, et quod sursum est deorsum faciunt." Petronius' *Satyricon* 63. Peacock's translation (found in the preface and not accompanying the epigraph): "You must of necessity believe that there are women of supernatural science, framers of nocturnal incantations, who can turn the world upside down."
the semi-divine enchantress, Rhododaphne, who is eventually killed by Love for profaning his altars. There is an underlying paradox in the poem, which is that Anthemion’s love for the divine Rhododaphne is presented as an earthly love, and thus inferior to the divine love he feels for the mortal Calliroë.\textsuperscript{369} \textit{Rhododaphne} shows how deeply familiar Peacock was with the classical languages and poetry. It reads with a disarming fluency, with its punchy and diverse rhythm controlled by a flexible rhyme scheme, responsive to the action of the poem. The characters have Greek names (Rhododaphne, Calliroë and Anthemion) and Peacock draws on a vast vocabulary that has absorbed classical, and particularly Greek, terms such as ‘hypoathric’, ‘nebris’ (faun skin/dress of a bacchant) and ‘thiasus’ (dancing group).\textsuperscript{370}

Calliroë, or Callirrhoe, is the eponymous protagonist of a Greek novel by Chariton. Peacock alludes to Chariton’s novel not only by the name of one of his characters but also by his story’s use of certain narrative elements employed by the Greek novel, for example the separation of hero and heroine until close to the end of the work, apparent death, or Scheintod (Calliroë falls into a coma) and piratical capture (Anthemion is sold into slavery by pirates and Chariton’s Calliroë is captured, when thought dead, by tomb-raiding pirates).\textsuperscript{371} The breadth of Peacock’s classical reading shown by the range of classical influence in \textit{Rhododaphne} is quite astonishing, especially for someone who left formal education at the age of thirteen. His classicism is not that of the schoolroom but one built up from the obsessive and erratic reading of a lover of classical literature let loose on the well-stocked libraries of friends.

\textsuperscript{369} For discussion on \textit{Rhododaphne} see Butler (1982) 50-72, and Dawson (1970) 46-54.  
\textsuperscript{370} Shelley in his \textit{Laon and Cythna} uses classicizing names for his protagonists.  
\textsuperscript{371} See Reardon (1991) and Goold (1995).
Peacock, Milton and Vergil

To see how Peacock's verse can be both smooth and densely learned at the same time one only needs to read over a few lines, for example: "Oeagrian Hebrus, swift and cold./Impels his waves o'er sands of gold." The rhythm bounds the "classical reader" into the next line regardless of whether or not they know or care that 'Hebrus' is a river in Thrace, and that 'Oeagrian' is an epithet, referring learnedly to a Thracian king called Oeagrus, "borrowed" from Vergil's Georgics 4.524, where Oeagrius Hebrus also occupies the final position in the line. On reflection, however, the reader might recall by the association of that Thracian river in Vergil with Orpheus the following lines of Milton's Lycidas (61-2): "His gory visage down the stream was sent/ down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore."

Peacock's description of the 'Oeagrian Hebrus' as 'swift', in combination with the shared subject matter and geography, makes the connection to Milton particularly attractive. It is therefore an example of a highly complex allusion. Peacock builds into his poem a connection to the poetry of Milton and Vergil, in which both poets are engaged in describing the journey of Orpheus' head, torn off by wild and spurned bacchante lovers, as it races to the sea still singing Eurydice's name. As is clear from this example Peacock's classical allusion is as rich and dense as it is learned, but it is also - as in this case - more decorative than functional. In this respect Peacock's use of 'Oeagrian' is similar to Vergil's own use of Oeagrius; it adds a learned texture and, even more importantly, a Greek colour to the passage of the poem.

Experienced readers of classical poetry might well be familiar with the Thessalian river and its Vergilian epithet, but if they were not then at least they knew that they could either look up the meaning in a classical dictionary, or take a guess from the context. A "non-classical" reader on the other hand might feel as if there were something they could

372 Any importation of sense or sentiment from the source(s) would not fit the context. The works are referenced more to casually stimulate the 'classical reader' than to establish a functioning allusion with the source text.
not understand in the poem, something that denied them access to its full appreciation.\textsuperscript{373}

The use of stock epithets and phrases would have been as useful to Peacock as it was to Vergil in keeping to his chosen poetic form, and in both Roman and Romantic instances it bestows upon the verse a Greek flavour. Peacock’s \textit{Oeagrian} is therefore an interesting example of a Romantic poet’s conjuring of the ‘spirit of Greece’ by allusion to Hellenizing Roman (and here also English) poetry. Peacock’s \textit{Rhododaphne} is as learned as the classicizing poetry of poets like Gray and Collins but appears less precious in its classicism. Peacock does not seem to break stride in order to tread in the footprints of his classical forebears. He has absorbed their images and content (and to some extent their style) and draws it into his poetry. Often even when the imitation is sustained, for example in canto 5 with the Homeric Hymn to Dionysius, neither imitated nor imitating author come to the fore of the reading experience – but the narration remains objective, and the primacy of the story offsets its essentially derivative nature.\textsuperscript{374}

\textbf{Peacock and Petronius}

The allusion to Petronius’ \textit{Satyricon} 115 in canto 6 of \textit{Rhododaphne} is an exception to this rule. It stands outside of the narrative at the beginning of a canto before any character is introduced or any action takes place. Far from being purely decorative classicism Peacock’s allusion to Petronius, in parts, approaches what we might like to call translation

\textsuperscript{373} The introduction of such language into an original composition shows no desire to communicate to a broad readership or be popular. I wonder if it was the exclusivity of Peacock’s classicism that caused Leigh Hunt to reject Shelley’s glowing review of \textit{Rhododaphne}, which he sent to him in his capacity as editor of \textit{The Examiner}.

\textsuperscript{374} \textit{Ομφαλίς Διόνυσον, Σεμέλης έρικοδέος υίόν, / μνήσομαι, ώς έφάνη παρά θεῖν’ άλος άτρυγέτοιο / ἀκτῆ ἔπι προβιβάζει γενὴν ἄνδρι έκουσα, / πρωθήθη: καλαὶ δὲ περιστεῖν τοῦ ἔδειραι, / κυάναι, οἴδρος δὲ περὶ σπαράσσεις ἐχεῖν οἴμοις / πορφύρεον... (Εἰς Διώνυσον 1-6) Translated by Leigh Hunt (1814) \textit{Feast of Poets}: “Of Bacchus let me tell a sparkling story.- / ’Twas by the sea-side, on a promontory, / As like a blooming youth he sat one day, / His dark locks ripening in the sunny ray, / And wrapt in a loose cloak of crimson bright, / Which half gave out his shoulders, broad and white.” Peacock renders: “Bacchus by the lonely ocean / Stood in youthful semblance fair: / Summer winds, with gentle motion, / Waved his black and curling hair. / Streaming from his manly shoulders / Robes of gold and purple dye...”
due to its closeness to its source text. The Latin prose fits comfortably into Peacock’s verse and provides the occasion, or need, for a rare narrative interjection, a direct address made from the poet/narrator to the reader:

Hast thou, in some safe retreat,  
Walked and watched, to hear the roar  
Of breakers on the wind-swept shore?  
Go forth at morn. The waves, that beat  
Still rough and white when blasts are o’er,  
May wash, all ghastly, to thy feet  
Some victim of the midnight storm.  
From that drenched garb and pallid form  
Shrink not: but fix thy gaze, and see  
Thy own congenial destiny.  
For him, perhaps, an anxious wife  
On some far coast o’erlooks the wave:  
A child, unknowing of the strife  
Of elements, to whom he gave  
His last fond kiss, is at her breast...” (6.1-15).

This corresponds to Petronius’ *Satyricon* 115, where Encolpius finds a man’s body washed up on the shore:

Et, Hunc forfitan, proclamo, in aliqua  
parte terrarum secura exspeciat uxor: forfitan igna-

rns tempefatis filius: aut patrem utique reliquit  
ali quem, cui proificicens oculum dedit.

Figure 29 - Petronius' *Satyricon* 115 (1790)

“Maybe,” I cried, “there is a wife waiting cheerfully at home for this man in a far-off land, or a son or a father, maybe, who know nothing of this storm; he is sure to have left some one behind whom he kissed before he went...”

Peacock strays from his source momentarily before returning to the passage of Petronius:


But it is not the seas alone that thus keep faith with mortal men. The warrior’s weapons fail him; another pays his vows to Heaven, and his own house falls and buries him in the act. Another slips from his coach and dashes out his eager soul: the glutton chokes at dinner, the sparing man dies of want. Make a fair reckoning, and you find shipwreck everywhere.

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375 Text of Petronius is Biponti (1790) as example of a contemporary edition in circulation, translations by Michael Heseltine (1913), lightly amended.
His poetical adaptation is as follows:

Wreck is not only on the sea,
The warrior dies in victory:
The ruin of his natal roof
O'erwhelms the sleeping man: the hoof
Of his prized steed has struck with fate
The horseman in his own home gate:
The feast and mantling bowl destroy
The sensual in the hour of joy.
The bride from her paternal porch
Comes forth among her maids: the torch,
That led at morn the nuptial choir,
Kindles at night her funeral pyre.
Now turn away, indulge thy dreams,
And build for distant years thy schemes! (6.28-42)

The absence of any mention of an afterlife or god is striking considering the passage's content and its publication date. Peacock uses Petronius' passage to express his atheism. The conspicuous difference between Peacock's 'sleeping man' and Petronius' praying man does not seem to result from textual variation. The verbal closeness of Peacock's rendering of this part of Satyricon 115 alerts the reader to his "mistranslation," and allows Peacock to express what he dare not explicitly write by the power of localized mistranslation.

Catullus in Rhododaphne

Peacock's first engagement with Catullus comes in canto 4 and it is not with poem 64 but the final stanza of 11:

Nec meum respectet ut ante amorem
Qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati
Ultimi flos praetereunte postquam
Tactus arato est. 377

And let her not as before expect my love,
Which by her fault has fallen like a flower
On the Meadow's margin after a passing
Ploughshare has touched it.

376 I have checked a number of editions of the time and earlier to find the text as it is printed above.
377 Catullus 11.21-4.
In poem 11 Catullus asks his friends to deliver the message to Lesbia that his love for her is exhausted. He compares his love to a flower cut down by a ploughshare. It is this simile that Peacock recalls when he tells of how Calliroë falls down apparently dead when kissed by Anthemion, thanks to the curse placed on his lips by Rhododaphne.

Oh! He has kissed Calliroë's lips!  
And with the touch the maid grew pale,  
And sudden shade of strange eclipse  
Drew o'er her eyes its dusky veil.  
As droops the meadow-pink its head,  
By the rude scythe in summer's prime  
Cleft from its parent stem, and spread  
On earth to wither ere its time,  
Even so the flower of Ladon faded...

This is an example of Peacock's interweaving imitation. An allusive connection presents itself but Peacock does not develop it. The reader may recall the delicate image to which Catullus' past love for Lesbia is likened, but it is the image of the 'meadow-pink' itself and Peacock's own developed simile that is dominant, and little if any importation of the emotion attached to Catullus' simile is supported. We may detect in the final words of Peacock's preface (above) a certain desire for his fellow classicist to recognize his sources. The reference (not an allusion) seems designed to exploit the gratification of recognition rather than to use such a connection for any emotional parallelism by allusion. Calliroë's apparent death is likened to the withering of a flower, which might recall the corresponding lines of Catullus, but the connection is not laboured enough for a reader to be expected to liken her death to the death of Catullus' love for Lesbia. The idea, and its execution, is too complicated for a result that adds little or nothing of relevance to the new poem.

Peacock draws on Catullus again in canto 7 when Rhododaphne seduces Anthemion with all her magic and art. She has stolen him away to an enchanted palace where she has, like a Circe/Dionysus hybrid, turned the pirates (previously their captors) into "many an uncouth form," including a 'grim dwarf', 'a bony Aethiop', some 'gigantic...
mastiffs’, lions and ‘a joyous Bacchanalian train’ of ‘blooming youths and maidens’.

Peacock launches into a dancing procession that resembles the arrival of Bacchus in Catullus 64, lines 251-64.

Oft, 'mid those palace-gardens fair
The beauteous nymph (her radiant hair
With mingled oak and vine leaves crowned)
Would grasp the thyrsus ivy bound,
And fold, her festal vest around,
The Bacchic nebris, leading thus
The swift and dizzy thiasus:
And as she moves, in all her charms,
With springing feet and flowing arms,
'Tis strange in one fair shape to see
How many forms of grace can be.
The youths and maids, her beauteous train,
Follow fast in sportive ring,
Some the torch and mystic cane,
Some the vine-bough brandishing;
Some, in giddy circlets fleeting,
The Corybantic timbrel beating:
Maids, with silver flasks advancing,
Pour the wine's red-sparkling tide,
Which youths, with heads recumbent dancing,
Catch in goblets as they glide:
All upon the odorous air
Lightly toss their leafy hair,
Ever singing, as they move,
- "Io Bacchus! son of Jove!" -
And oft, the Bacchic fervors ending,
Among those garden-bowers they stray,
Dispersed, where fragrant branches blending
Exclude the sun's meridian ray,
Or on some thymy bank repose,
By which a tinkling rivulet flows,
Where birds, on each o'ershadowing spray,
Make music through the live-long day.

In this passage Peacock does not restrict himself to his Catullan source. His is a free interpretation of a Bacchic procession that draws on details of other Bacchic processions, one of which is found in 64. The source is woven deeply into Peacock's description, and although faintly reminiscent of Catullus' passage, there is not a strong engagement with it. The possible connection is initially suggested by the common theme of "Bacchanalian
train.” The two Greek words *thyrsus* and *thiasus*, admittedly at home in this context, appear together in Latin script only in these two poems.378

That Peacock is drawing on a Catullan source is, by this evidence alone, unconvincing, but when the echo of Catullus’ anaphoric “pars... pars... etc.” in Peacock’s “Some... Some... etc.,” the connection is more convincing. Bush notes that Peacock’s “animated description of Bacchic revels, though the theme was stereotyped, may owe something to the *Dionysiaca* [of Nonnus], xxii. 1f.”379 Whether or not it had become a convention the theme of Bacchic revelry seems to have been popular among the Cockneys.380 As we shall see below Keats wrote one in *Endymion* 4.193-272 (1818) as did Hunt in his *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1819). These three Cockney versions of Bacchic dances are similar in that they all end in the redemptive power of sex in a bower. The poems in which these processions are found are mythic narratives all concerned with love and in particular the love between mortals and immortals, which is, of course, a central theme of Catullus 64 (previously often referred to as *The Nuptials of Peleus and Thetis*). Peacock’s dance ends in a rather coy evasion of a love scene:

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378 The word *thiasus* appears in classical Latin only in Cat. 63.28, 64.253, Vergil Ecl. 5.30, Aen. 7.581, Statius Silvae 3.1.41. Only in 64 is *thyrsus* also present. *Nebris* is rare in Latin, found with *thyrsus* in Stat. Theb. 2.664 but it is in speech rather than a description of a procession.
379 Bush (1969) 184 n. Although I think that stylistically the Cockneys considerably resemble Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca* especially in its rich eroticism, this passage seems to owe little if anything to the section of Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca* given by Bush. Extant ancient depictions of Bacchic processions are most commonly found in Greek art, on vases associated with the symposium. n.b. Nonnus was one of Peacock’s favourite poets.
380 It is easier to call something stereotyped than to prove it to be so or not. It is not particularly common, between 1780 and 1830 outside of the Cockney school, as we might expect of a stereotyped passage. Other than Keats and Hunt, I am only aware of Wordsworth’s short description of Bacchic revelry in stanza 10 of *On the Power of Sound* (1828).
The bath, the dance, the feast's array,
And sweetest rest, conclude the day.
And 'twere most witching to disclose,
Were there such power in mortal numbers,
How she would charm him to repose,
And gaze upon his troubled slumbers,
With looks of fonder love, than ever
Pale Cynthia on Endymion cast,
While her forsaken chariot passed
O'er Caria's many-winding river.

Figure 30 - Peacock's Rhododaphne canto 7 (1818) 153.

Peacock's Symbols and Allegory

Peacock was a friend of Thomas Taylor, the eccentric Neo-Platonist. It is well documented that he encouraged Shelley to read Plato's Symposium during their time together in Marlow in the summer of 1817. It was at this same point in time when Peacock was writing Rhododaphne (published anonymously in February 1818). This has meant that any allegorical interpretation of Rhododaphne has been concerned primarily with showing its connection to Plato's discourse on Eros, or Urania vs Pandemos Aphrodite. There is no doubt that Peacock knew Plato's works intimately, but any attempt to call the poem simply an allegorical discussion of Platonic love would be as reductive as calling it purely an aetiological myth for the Rose-laurel, or purely an allegory on post-Napoleonic social reform. Peacock's poem has an aetiological dimension, in so far as the origin of the rose-laurel is linked to the death of Rhododaphne when the plant/shrub springs 'luxuriant' over her grave (p.166), but this is by no means the poem's primary concern. There are elements within Peacock's highly complex work that lend themselves strongly to the kinds of

381 n.b. Plato was considered at the time a "pioneer sceptic," ignored by the academy and embraced by religious dissenters like Shelley, Taylor and Peacock, see Butler (1982) 54.
382 e.g. Notopoulos (1949). In his notes Peacock explains Plato's theory of there being three loves, Urania, Pandemos and the Sun.
allegorical interpretation that Peacock’s friend, Thomas Taylor, was trying to ‘restore’ in contemporary approaches to classical myth. Given that this text was created in this context of the restoration of allegorical interpretation of classical myth, it seems probable that in embarking on mythmaking in a classical style the same processes of interpretation may be used that this subgroup of Cockneys, “the Athenians”, themselves applied in their approach to classical myth.

I therefore put forward a potential polemic reading that identifies divine love, the goal of all these Cockney love quests, with societal contentment brought about by reform. In Peacock’s poem this subtly reveals itself when Rhododaphne is depicted as a Bacchus figure, who brings eroticism and “extramarital” sexual satisfaction. Within the group Bacchus represented more than simply drunken revelry. He represented, as I hope will become clearer throughout this chapter, conviviality, sociability, and Cockney non-conformism, but also in the cluster of poems here under examination: a champion of the liberal middleclass and emblem of hope for reform. Anthemion’s relationship with Rhododaphne may be seen to symbolize France’s relationship with Republicanism, which ultimately ends with the death of Rhododaphne, which (according to the schema) relates to the abdication of Napoleon. It is perhaps overly simplistic to label each character with specific political persuasion or role, but I hope in laying it out in this fashion might make the overriding symbolic message clearer: in Peacock’s poem, both Anthemion (Republican) and Rhododaphne’s rival lover, Callirhoë, (non-Republican) mourn the death

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383 See for example Porphyry’s treatise on ‘The Cave of the Nymphs’ (in Odyssey 13) first published in 1788 in Taylor’s translation of Proclus’ Mathematical Commentaries v.2. In Shelley and the wider Hunt circle the mythic narratives of the classical world are given contemporary social, cultural and political resonance. They are not only engaging with mythic material, but also making their own myths, which were designed to be hermeneutically active in their own times, and charged with contemporary concerns.

384 The “Athenians” were a self-named group comprising Hogg, Shelley and Peacock. See Hogg & Scott ed. (1943) 64 for name in use. See Butler (1982) 50-72 for an illuminating discussion of contemporary uses of mythographical hybridity by the Hunt circle as a challenge to contemporary Christian asceticism.

385 Anthemion and Callirhoë are not married but their relationship is one of true love, and Anthemion effectively cheats on Callirhoë with Rhododaphne.
of Rhododaphne, because her error (i.e. the French Revolution) was inspired by the positive force of love (i.e. desire for reform):

But when the maid Anthemion led
To where her beauteous rival slept

The long last sleep on earth dispread
And told her tale Calliroe wept
Sweet tears for Rhododaphne's doom
For in her heart a voice was heard
Twas for Anthemion's love she erred

64 in Keats' Endymion

Keats begins book 4 of his Endymion with a proem, in which he makes a dedication to an indigenous and a classical muse, drawing a line of progression from ancient Greek poetry to his own by way of Rome and Italy. Immediately after this proem, he introduces in line 30 the voice of a new character, the Indian Maid:

"Ah, woe is me! That I should fondly part
From my dear native land! Ah, foolish maid!
Glad was the hour, when, with thee, myriads bade
Adieu to Ganges and their pleasant fields!

The new voice is immediately identified as that of an abandoned woman, a tragic heroine, not only by what she says but also the highly theatrical way she says it. She resembles a Medea, Dido, or Ariadne figure, but these specific identifications are quickly suppressed by the mention of the Ganges as being the river of her homeland. The first stanza of her lament steers Endymion's attention away from his 'hecatomb of vows' and draws him in 'anxious as hind towards her hidden fawn.' Endymion's anxious approach is likened to the strictly feminine anxiety of a mother deer looking for her potentially lost offspring. This is

386 For a full discussion of Keats and his engagement with Catullus see chapter 5, beginning p.229.
387 There does not seem to be a connection between Keats' Indian Maid and Southey's Kailyal. The sources of the Indian Maid are mostly likely the Indian Maid from the medieval tale called The Lay of Aristotle, which Keats retold in a fragment of prose apparently written during a lecture at St. Thomas's Hospital (see Finney 275-6) and (as we shall see) Catullus' Ariadne.
by no means a traditionally heroic characterization. It is a far cry, for example, from the approach, in a comparable passage in Homer's *Odyssey*, of the naked Odysseus stepping out from the bushes towards Nausicaa and her handmaids, who is likened to 'a mountain-reared lion, confident in his might' (*O* 6.130-36). Endymion's feminized characterization reveals Keats' ambition to create an alternative classical hero, a fool for love who rejects the traditional, dutiful masculinity of those heroes condoned by the institutionalized and patriarchal classicism that was, like Christianity, part of the apparatus of State. Keats can be seen throughout *Endymion* to be showing the redemptive power of love, perhaps even as an antidote to Godwin and Shelley's "noxious race of heroes."  

As *Endymion* reveals himself to be no traditional epic hero, we soon also discover that the Indian Maid is no ordinary tragic exile. Keats has her overplay her role to the extent of pastiche. Her "lament" is knowingly stylized and artificial. Keats uses the heightened eroticism of her speech to disrupt the intricate balance of emotion set forth in a genuine tragic scene, subtly undermining the credibility of her character:

"Is no one near to help me? No fair dawn 
Of life from charitable voice? No sweet saying 
To set my dull and sadden'd spirit playing? 
No hand to toy with mine? No lips so sweet 
That I may worship them? No eyelids meet 
To twinkle on my bosom? No one dies 
Before me, till from these enslaving eyes 
Redemption sparkles! - I am sad and lost." (44-51)

The Indian Maid's initial question is a commonplace of tragic drama, but the gradual crescendo of mannered eroticism is not. The Indian maid, who is in fact the goddess Diana in disguise, knows exactly where Endymion is, and has only seduction in mind. She tantalizes him increasingly through lines 67-70 by her expression of desire for sexual satisfaction from a Hyacinthus (hypothetically materialized from a flower using "Hermes' wand"), for whom she exclaims: "Ah me, how I could love! - my soul doth melt / For the

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389 Discussed in section, beginning p.199.
unhappy youth."\textsuperscript{390} We find in Woodhouse's interleaved copy of \textit{Endymion}, which he annotated recording earlier draft variations, that lines 49-54 were, in the original draft of the poem (now lost).\textsuperscript{391}

\begin{quote}
To twinkle on my bosom! False! 'twas false
They said how beautiful I was! Who calls
Me now divine? Who now kneels down and dies
Before me till from these enslaving eyes
Redemption sparkles. Ah me how sad I am!
\textsuperscript{...392}
\end{quote}

It is interesting that Keats should choose to edit out what appears to be a sutured allusion to Catullus, poems 64 and 8. In Keats' early draft the Indian Maid exclaims 'false' twice in quick succession. From the lips of an exiled and abandoned lover this might well recall Ariadne's repeated \textit{perfide} from the opening lines of her lament in 64:\textsuperscript{393}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Siccine me patriis avectam, perfide, ab oris,}
\textit{Perfide, deserto liquisti in litore, Theseu?}
\end{quote}

Like this, carried from my native shores, perfidious,
Perfidious Theseus, have you left me on a deserted beach?

This potential connection to Catullus' poetry is more attractive, or more likely to be made by a reader when he or she reads the following lines, which contain: 'Who calls / Me now divine?' This (at a similar level of certainty, or allusive force) calls to mind the imagined voice of Lesbia generated from the end of Catullus 8, where Catullus poignantly asks Lesbia what life is left for her, now that their relationship is over:\textsuperscript{394}

\textsuperscript{390} 4.71 – n.b. 'Melt' is Keats' chosen word for sex, e.g. \textit{Eve of St. Agnes} 320: "into her dream he melted," \textit{Endymion} 2.815: "O let me melt into thee."

\textsuperscript{391} Richard Woodhouse (1788-1834) Scholar, linguist and lawyer. There is no \textit{Oxford DNB} entry but mention of him is made in most collections of Keats' work, since he was a close friend, admirer (of his poetry) and frequent correspondent.

\textsuperscript{392} This can be found in Woodhouse's interleaved edition of \textit{Endymion} (1818), in which he notes down Keats' variations from the first and final drafts and the published text. This passage of handwritten verse is marked or', which shows that it come from Keats' draft.

\textsuperscript{393} Lines 132-3. Latin text is Nott (1795) as example of contemporary text, literal translation is mine. For an example of \textit{perfide} rendered as 'false' see Cowley's \textit{The Heart Fled Again}, stanza 3: "The doleful Ariadne so, / On the wide shore forsaken stood: / False Theseus, whither dost thou go? / Afar false Theseus cut the flood. / But Bacchus came to her relief; / Bacchus himself's too weak to ease my grief." Cowley (1784) 2.56.

\textsuperscript{394} This demonstrates how allusion often exists above the page. It is not intertextuality, as such, because the alluded information exists in the digested experience of the reader, rather than in the text per se.
What life remains for you?
Who will come to you now? By whom will you be seen as beautiful?
Whom now will you love? Whose will you be called?
Whom will you kiss? Whose lips will you bite?

The presence of two potential allusions to Catullus in such close proximity in an early draft shows not only that Keats, during composition, was engaging with Catullus at a textual level, but also that in editing he did something that equates to concealing his source. The presence of the Catullan allusion from the draft makes the subsequent engagement with Catullus 64 more explicit. Keats’ decision to make it less explicit here is a good example of his mode of allusion, which I shall investigate in greater detail in the next chapter.³⁹⁵

Diana, disguised as the Indian Maid, succeeds in her seduction of Endymion:

And so he groan’d, as one by beauty slain.
The lady’s heart beat quick, and he could see
Her bosom heave tumultuously.
He sprang from his green covert: there she lay,
Sweet as muskrose upon new-made hay; (98-102)

Endymion is wild with lust, and feeling simultaneously both “loving and hatred” (112), resigns himself – somewhat inexplicably – to death.³⁹⁶ He asks the maid to sing to him as he dies. It is in her song (146-290) that the Catullan connection strengthens. The Indian Maid’s song is a sequel to Ariadne’s lament in Catullus 64 in the sense that she tells the story of her adventure with Bacchus having been rescued from Dia, where Catullus’ Ariadne is stranded. Keats, however, by no means limits himself to just one source, but instead draws on a multitude of sources from literary and visual culture as the assessments

³⁹⁵ In brief, it seems Keats preferred not to distract his reader from the message of his poems by alluding clearly to particular texts.
³⁹⁶ The most famous and perhaps original poetic expression of simultaneous feeling of love and hatred is found in Catullus 85. There are however many possible mediating receptions. The presence of surrounding Catullan allusion suggests that Keats would have been aware of the potential connection to that poem for his reader.
of Finney (1936) and Jack (1967) show in their source studies. Keats' fusion of so many inter-related and fluently integrated sources has the effect both of breaking down allusions to any particular source and synthesizing something entirely new from its vaguely recognizable parts. This is a feature of Keats' mode of allusion, as shall be seen in the following chapter. Neither Finney nor Jack mentions Catullus as a possible source, which is strange when both mention the intermediary sources of Sandys' version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Titian's 'Bacchus and Ariadne'.

The Indian Maid begins with her "Song to Sorrow" (145-181), which provides a stark lyrical contrast to the rhyming couplets and sets a melancholic and contemplative context for her second Ariadne tale (182-290). In lines 188-227 the maid tells the tale of her being rescued from misery by Bacchus:

"Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,
I sat a weeping: what enamour'd bride,
Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,
But hides and shrouds
Beneath dark palm trees by a river side?

"And as I sat, over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revelers: the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue —
'Twas Bacchus and his crew!

"The earnest trumpet spake, and silver thrills
From kissing cymbals made a merry din—
'Twas Bacchus and his kin!
Like to a moving vintage down they came,
Crown'd with green leaves, and faces all on flame;
All madly dancing through the pleasant valley,
To scare thee, Melancholy!

..."

"Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,
Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood,
With sidelong laughing;
And little rills of crimson wine imbrued
His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white
For Venus' pearly bite;
And near him rode Silenus on his ass,

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For possible sources for the Indian Maid's song see Finney (1936) 272-291 and Jack (1967) n.b. Finney writes with more authority on the literary sources of Keats in this passage than Keats' style of allusion allows. This must largely be due to the fact that since visual sources and classical translations and handbooks have been so long identified as Keats' sources that it is overlooked that Keats was able to read Latin as well as his contemporaries.
Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
Tipsily quaffing.

"Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence came ye!  
So many, and so many, and such glee?  
Why have ye left your bowers desolate,  
Your lutes, and gentler fate?—  
'We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing?  
A conquering!  
Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,  
We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide:—  
Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
To our wild minstrelsy!'

"Over wide streams and mountains great we went,  
And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent,  
Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,  
With Asian elephants:  
Onward these myriads—with song and dance,  
With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians' prance,  
Web-footed alligators, crocodiles,  
Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,  
Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil  
Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers' toil:

'Good or ill betide' may help to implicate 64 as a source since it is in Catullus' poem that Bacchus' intentions are ambiguous, in the sense that the reader is left unsure as to whether his love for Ariadne is anything more than rapacious lust. Keats' reception of classicizing visual art clearly played a large part in the composition of the images of the Indian Maid's song. Titian's painting, 'Bacchus and Ariadne', has a good number of the elements described by Keats, including, for example, the whiteness of Bacchus and the nearby presence of a 'Silenus on his ass'. 399 I do not intend here to enter into any debate on the validity of the myriad sources for Keats' poetry provided by critics since Endymion was written, but shall only recommend visiting Finney's two-volume study (1936) for an almost exhaustive account of potential literary sources and Jack's Keats and the Mirror of Art (1967) for a thorough discussion of the possible visual sources. It is not without some guilt that I add another to the already long list of potential literary sources, but I do so because the presence of Catullus 64 provides, not only material from which Keats could

399 'Bacchus and Ariadne' does in fact contain a 'Silenus on his ass' contrary to Jack (1967) 159.
have drawn, but also an important literary precedent for Keats' subversion of the traditional epic hero.

Although Catullus’ story appears so deeply enmeshed with visual and literary sources within Keats’ composing mind that it bears little allusive force, I feel it is still necessary to show that Keats is at some level responding to Catullus’ poem because there are significant parallels between Keats’ and Catullus’ poetic programme in these two poems. An example of Keats showing a Catullan aversion to the heroic in epic can be found in the proem to *Endymion* book 2, and particularly lines 8-43, in which he tells us that “The woes of Troy” and other representations of warfare in epic “dimly fades / Into some backward corner of the brain. / Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain / The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.” Unlike Hunt, Keats had no problem with long poetry, so it is not a Callimachean distaste for unrefined length that calls him to reject in this passage “pageant history”, as a representation of traditional, eighteenth-century classicism, but a preference for Elizabethan classicizing romance.400

**Hunt and 64**

*Bacchus and Ariadne* was published in 1819 alongside Hunt’s *Hero and Leander*. The poems in this publication were begun three years earlier and so are very much to be associated with the cluster of classicizing texts written by Keats, Shelley and Peacock. Like Keats’ song of the Indian Maid, it takes up where Catullus left off, moving the action on to the union of Bacchus and Ariadne. Where Keats can be seen to thread it into his longer project, Hunt clearly takes the idea as his sole theme, as the poem’s title would suggest. The fact that these two Cockney poets took up the same theme in their writing at roughly the same time suggests that the subject perhaps came up in conversation and they decided to work on it independently. The well-documented sonnet competitions, of which

400 On long poetry see Keats’ letter of 8th Oct. 1817 in Forman (1952) 52 (letter 25).
On the Grasshopper and Cricket was a product, demonstrate that the Cockneys were by no means adverse to setting each other writing challenges in the manner of the Catullan circle as in poem 50. This challenge seems to have been to save Ariadne in a Catullan manner. Catullus’ poem is not a positive one. The arrival of Bacchus (incensus amore – scorched with love [for Ariadne]) with his noisy and barbarous entourage does not necessarily bode well for Ariadne. In the Indian Maid’s song the Ariadne figure is rescued only temporarily by Bacchus, since she must eventually again have been abandoned, allowing Endymion to find her. The plight of an abandoned woman can be related allegorically to the powerless position of a social minority. Her hope for future happiness is tied up with the minority’s hope for a better place within a fairer social system. In Hunt’s Bacchus and Ariadne an allegorical reading is supported by the text, although here too it is subtle and imposes very little on the surface appreciation of the poem. Hunt is no stranger to the allegorical use of classical myth, and even specifically Catullan myth, as we have seen in the discussion of his Atys the Enthusiast in chapter 3, where Hunt draws a parallel between the raving of Attis and Methodist Enthusiasm.

The poem begins with a beautifully handled “Keatsian” moment of transience depicting Ariadne between sleep and wakefulness:

The moist and quiet morn was scarcely breaking,  
When Ariadne in her bower was waking;  
Her eyelids still were closing, and she heard  
But indistinctly yet a little bird,  
That in the leaves o’erhead, waiting the sun,  
Seemed answering another distant one.  
She waked, but stirred not, only just to please  
Her pillow-nestling cheek; while the full seas,  
The birds, the leaves, the lulling love o’ermight,  
The happy thought of the returning light,  
The sweet, self-willed content, conspired to keep  
Her senses lingering in the feel of sleep;  
And with a little smile she seemed to say,  
‘I know my love is near me and ’tis day.’

401 This is unclear because the Indian Maid is not really an Indian Maid but rather the goddess Diana, pretending to be an abandoned woman.  
402 The first fourteen lines were published on their own in The Poetical Works of Leigh Hunt (1832 and 1844, Boston) as Ariadne Waking.
Hunt has created here a dramatic scene that plays on the reader's knowledge of the myth, and by tragic irony enhances the level of Ariadne's trust of and love for Theseus, and heightens the sympathy his reader has for her. This is not a feature of any prior reception of the myth and therefore stands as an example of Hunt's creative and free adaptation of his sources. Throughout this poem Hunt engages freely with the story of the myth rather than any particular source, but he also draws on certain classical and non-classical sources from literary, visual and material culture as and when he chooses. In this respect Hunt's poem is a rewriting of the myth. In the following passage Hunt addresses the question of why Theseus left Ariadne and, as he does so, subtly develops the allegory:

Some say that Theseus took this selfish flight
From common causes — a cloyed appetite;
Others, that having brought her sister there
As well, he turned his easy love to her;
And others, who are sure to quote Heaven’s orders
For great men’s crimes, though not for small disorders,
Pretend that Bacchus in the true old way,
A dream, advised him sternly not to stay,
But go and cut up nations limb by limb,
And leave the lady and the bower to him.

One thing looks certain, — that the chief that day
Was not alone a skulking runaway,
But left the woman that believed his smile
To all the horrors of a desert isle,
Perhaps to starve, perhaps be torn asunder
Of beasts, or madden with despair and wonder. (46-61)

Hunt does not pass any clear judgment on why Theseus fled, but in lines 54-5 he establishes an ethical opposition between Theseus, motivated by war and heroism (‘cut[ting] up nations limb by limb’) and Bacchus, who knows the value of love and pleasure. Hunt does not appear to agree with this establishment reading of the myth, which ‘pretends’ that Bacchus deceived Theseus by ordering him to follow his heroic destiny, just as Vergil has Aeneas called away from Dido by Mercury in “the true old way, / A

403 c.f. Ovid Heroides x. 9-11.
dream.” ‘Cut[ting] up nations limb by limb’ belies a similar contempt in Hunt for the deeds of the ‘noxious race of heroes’ as Catullus shows in his song of the Parcae, and Godwin and Shelley in their writings and, of course Keats in *Endymion*. Cox (1998) discusses this very subject and explains how: “The poem (64) indicts the heroic choice made by Theseus and Achilles of an epic career over a life of sexual and personal fulfillment, an indictment strong enough to call forth Virgil’s reply in the Dido episode of his epic where, echoing in order to ‘correct’ Catullus, he sought to demonstrate that it is the right choice to abandon one’s love for the demands of country, home, and *pietas*.”

This interpretation of the poem, which views Bacchus as a herald of hope, is certainly attractive when it is read within the Cockney context. Hunt clearly advocates this reading of the poem, and I would agree with Cox when he asserts that *Bacchus and Ariadne* is “A Catullan counterresponse to Virgil,” by its rejection of heroic duty as scapegoat. Hunt exposes all this in the above lines (46-55), which in themselves say nothing decisively. This vagueness of expression and the distancing technique of superficially impartial reportage suggests that Hunt is telling his reader more than he is saying. The mystery encourages a dissident reading. He pretends that the cause of the tragedy is of no consequence. The one thing that ‘looks’ certain (again not even here certain) is: “that the chief that day / Was not alone a skulking runaway…” Referring to Theseus as ‘the chief’ is odd. Given the mysterious nature of the writing and the strangeness of the name it may be that a polemic message lies encoded here.

Napoleon Bonaparte was popular among British liberals before the war, but their attitudes towards him were complicated by the onset of war, when he became an enemy of the nation. He bore the title ‘chef de la famille impériale,’ which corresponds directly to Hunt’s somewhat awkward reference to Theseus by the word ‘chief.’ Hunt’s depiction of

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404 Cox (1998) 159-161.
405 Hunt betrays its importance and his impartiality by the bitterness of “and others… limb by limb” (50-54).
him as a ‘Skulking runaway’ might refer to his abdication and subsequent exile on the island of Elba in 1814, or perhaps his defeat at Waterloo in 1815. Daniel Watkins explains:

Napoleon’s defeat is historically significant not only in practical political terms but also symbolically, because many artists and intellectuals of the period had come to associate the French general with the cause of freedom. Even those who disliked him saw him as the last best hope in the struggle against tyranny. His defeat, many believed, meant a halt to progressive historical development and the return of Europe to rule by divine right.

Theseus took Ariadne away from her home and old way of life. Within the allegory this relates to revolutionary France’s rejection of the ancien régime. The defeat of Napoleon, as the symbol of the revolution, may in Hunt’s Bacchus and Ariadne be expressed allegorically by its relation to Theseus’ abandonment of Ariadne, the ‘woman that believed his smile’. Bacchus’ arrival then acts as an emblem of hope for the liberal European cause to champion human possibility, oppose the restoration of tyranny and lighten the gloom of despondency. In Hunt’s poem he arrives thus:

Bacchus! – a sort of thrill seemed to come out
Of his mere presence...
The beauty [Ariadne] (touched already with a strange
Half self-resented feeling of blest change.

The ‘half self-resented feeling of blest change’ may refer to British society’s unwillingness to come out of the despondency, which the Cockneys, following Wordsworth (in The Excursion - 1814), identified as the mal du siècle. Keats begins his Endymion by identifying the very same negative force, which he, like Hunt, endeavours to counter with poetry:

Spite of despondence, of the inhuman death
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o’erdarkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall

406 The term ‘skulking’ is appropriately critical for Hunt’s portrayal of Bonaparte, whose actions he was careful not to condone in the Examiner during the Peninsular wars.
408 c.f. Marianne, the iconic female figure of the Revolution.
Hunt and Keats identify in these Cockney classical texts two key threats to British society in the post-Napoleonic restoration. The first is the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty itself, which the British government were helping to fund, and the second is the widespread despondence of the liberal intellectual community, given a voice most prominently by Wordsworth. Bacchus, representing hope, cheer, conviviality, sociability, and a new style of uncensored and effeminate classicism is offered as a potential cure to this second problem:

Bacchus took in his arms his bridal lass,  
And gave and shared as much more happiness  
Than Theseus, as a noble spirit's caress,  
Full of sincerity, and mind, and heart,  
Out-relishes mere fire and self-embittering art. (229-343)

‘Mere fire’ may be seen to represent the hard-line radical activism, from which Hunt was ever at pains to distance himself, and ‘Self-embittering art’ may represent the response of the establishment artistic (and literary) community to the rise and fall of Republican France.

In this chapter I have tried to show the attraction of Catullus 64 for poets between 1780 and 1830 and in particular in the Cockney School. Allegorical readings, and especially those that give voice to the seditious comment of a cultural minority, are impossible to be entirely sure about because they often depend on a subtle cultural code that we as readers from another culture and time have to recreate artificially from scarce evidence. The growing contemporary interest in allegorical readings of classical myth as indicated by the writings of the Neo-Platonist, Thomas Taylor, who was associated with the Cockneys both by friendship and the influence on them of his work as a translator of and commentator on
alternative and controversial classical literature, shows that the literary climate was responsive to such forms of allegory as those I have above tentatively put forward. The fragmented narrative forms of Peacock's *Rhododaphne* and Keats' *Endymion* mean that at times they read like collages of their sources, for which they have in the past been highly criticized. This also has the effect of complicating allegorical interpretation, which makes them harder to detect, but it ought to be noted that the insecurity of these readings is an essential feature of poems that express dissent when civil liberties are limited.\(^{409}\)

Each engagement with the Ariadne myth discussed above is handled differently by each poet and with different degrees of attachment to their sources. None of the poems engages with Catullus exclusively of other sources, and none is afraid to stray from or develop their sources. The historical approach I have adopted is I think appropriate for the work of a countercultural literary group that was acutely aware of its political situation and committed to trying to effect social change with its art. Love and sex in these Romance tales seems politicized to the extent that being a lover is the equivalent of being a reformer. In a "buttoned-up" age when an open collar was seen as a threat to social mores the open expression of sex and desire was a powerful weapon for a non-conformist group such as the Cockneys.

Peacock's *Anthemion*, Keats' *Endymion* and Hunt's *Ariadne* all come out of their respective mythic tales with divine love, and they all reached it by falling in love with the wrong people along the way. The moral lesson common to all their stories seems to be that if someone gives in to love, even if it that love is misdirected at first, they will succeed in their quest for divine love. The Cockneys were, however, not in the business of dealing out relationship advice to ambitious lovers; they were making myths, and myths - according to Coleridge, (probably by way of contemporary German philosophy) - were considered

\(^{409}\) Both freedom of speech and the rite of *habeas corpus* were curtailed. Leigh Hunt's imprisonment from 1813-15 is testament to the real dangers of speaking against the state.
"Fundamentally allegorical, and typical of the powers and functions of nature..." They were writing these myths as dissenting liberals during the post-Napoleonic restoration of the ancien régime, which they were helping to pay for by way of taxation.

The message from the mythic allegory is by no means straightforward, and it is different in each case. But what appears in all is a rejection of traditional classicism, such as we have seen in Hunt's preface to Foliage (1818). Eighteenth-century classicism was identified by the Cockneys as part of the apparatus of State, and as such it needed revision. Catullus steps forward alongside other marginalized classical authors - such as Petronius, Apuleius and Plato - and modern mediators of classical culture, including classicizing English and Italian poets - such as Shakespeare, Spenser, Dante, Petrarch, Chapman and Fletcher - and classicizing visual artists - such as Titian, Poussin, Claude - all of whose work on a classical theme exhibits an alternative, liberated and vibrant classicism. This kind of classicism served as an antidote to the schoolboy classics that the Cockneys viewed as an oppressive social structure akin to that of state religion. It was a classicism that by virtue of its paganism and eroticism challenged contemporary English mores, which were shored up by Tory-approved, mainstream culture.

The Cockney poets have in this chapter been seen both undermining a former "buttoned-up" classical aesthetic, called by Hunt a 'gross mistake', and reacting against the Wordsworthian aesthetic governed by what Keats referred to as the 'egotistical sublime'. Their classicism, as John Whale writes: "conflicted with their [the Tory reviewers] championing of an orthodoxly Christian moral landscape based on the pastoral poetry of Wordsworth." Their message, which is enmeshed with their reactionary classical style, and worked into their complex and subtle mythological allegories is that social progress

410 Coleridge (1853) 4.309.
411 Coleridge (1885) 150. The English government were financially assisting the restoration.
can only be made by means of continued reform, and that despondency itself is no cure for despondency.
5. Keats and Catullus

Much might be said about Keats's mixed sources, for he is as little of a purist in such matters as Chaucer or Spenser. Few scholars have suggested that the poetry of Catullus was a source for Keats' poetry. It is my purpose in this chapter to offer a full discussion of Keats' engagement with Catullus, drawing on the existing scholarship and identifying previously undocumented connections between the works of the poets. In so doing I intend to demystify this mysterious relationship and also to call into question traditionally held views of Keats' classical learning.

I was first attracted to the subject of Keats' reception of Catullus because when I first read Catullus I was struck by certain similarities in their poetic styles. These similarities included the use of colloquialisms and diminutives, which read awkwardly in comparison to the other 'serious' poets I was reading and had read at the time. Their counter-cultural literary historical positions also seemed to parallel one another, in the sense that they both adhered to an "alternative" poetic, which seemed to manifest itself in their comparable formal choices, their use of eroticism and punning to subvert apparently serious poetical moments. Later it was their production of occasional poems, the intimacy in which they wrote them and the way that a countercultural effeminacy seemed to colour their work in a similar light, that drew them together still further in my mind. Since both Catullus and Keats allow into their writing apparently autobiographical and equally traumatic love affairs, and both men suffered the premature deaths of brothers, it would

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413 Bush (1969) 103.
414 Those who have suggested a connection between Keats and Catullus include Cox (1998) and Woodman (1974). There is a glancing reference in McPeek (1939) 26: "We may fancy that Keats contemplated it [c.64] momentarily [sic] when he wrote (Isabella, xii)." I will address these instances in the following pages.
appear that even their biographies are conspiring to pull them together across countless social and cultural boundaries, not to mention around 1,880 years.

The above appear to be a list of coincidences; their critical mass is surprising, but inconclusive as evidence for a significant literary engagement, especially when no mention of Catullus appears to be made in Keats’ extant correspondence, in which he often writes about and refers to his literary predecessors, including Shakespeare, Spenser and Milton. The parallels of biography, even though they are largely if not entirely coincidental, may however feed into the reading process at some level both from the reader- and writer-sides of the reception cycle. The different, yet to some extent equivalent, emotional and practical experiences of two men who have, for example, suffered the death of a brother may colour their poetic practice in a subtly associated way.

Emotional experience and the power to empathize are of course important elements that work upon an artist at moments of creative expression, but the effects of such experiences on an artist are usually too diffuse and entangled with other experiences to be specifically identifiable in their work. The shared emotion may be dimly perceivable but it will rarely be explicit. The knowledge of the reader, on the other hand, that these two poets shared particular experiences during their poetic careers may also have the effect of making other parallels between their work more attractive than they would otherwise be. It may also be the case that such associative patterns created by coincidental biographical details also worked on Keats as a reader of Catullus, who, on account of the perceived emotional and experiential bond between them, was consequently drawn in tighter to his poetry.

A certain amount of self-recognition and kinship across the cultural and temporal divides between the Cockneys and Catullus has been suggested by Jeffrey Cox; I would argue that Keats would have felt the pull not only of Catullus’ social and political position, but also a personal affiliation with a man who had been through and expressed poetically
shared emotional experiences.\textsuperscript{415} In this chapter I intend to show, by close readings of the poetry, that Keats was not only familiar with Catullus’ poetry, but also that he engaged with him in different ways throughout his career.

**Keats and Shakespeare**

In his mode of literary engagement Keats may be seen to have taken his lead from his literary hero, Shakespeare, whose sources are, like Keats’, predominantly classical, frequently invoked, often ‘hybridized’ (mixed with other sources), and absorbed to the extent that they appear original in their new context.\textsuperscript{416} On this last point Colin Burrow explains that Shakespeare’s classicism was active and highly practical, which he argues results from an Early Modern humanistic method of education that encouraged the familiar use of exempla drawn from classical literary texts. This pragmatic classicism was, Burrows explains, that of the commonplace book, which encouraged schoolchildren to cherry-pick the classics for choice *sententiae* and passages useful in their own writing and discussion.\textsuperscript{417}

This idea of Shakespeare’s *active* reading during education may be extended to his active reading as a professional playwright. The writing pressures of a professional dramatist affect the way they approach and read the classics, which acted, as they still do, as a communal source of rich images, historic and mythical exempla, and, importantly, a writer’s resource of plotlines, characters and ideas. Keats’ relationship with his classical sources are similar to Shakespeare’s for three interconnected reasons: first, Keats was influenced by and imitated Shakespeare’s familiar use of classical material; second, they both benefitted from a practical and more ‘liberal’ classical education (compared to that

\textsuperscript{415} Cox (2009) 618.
\textsuperscript{417} n.b. There are parallels here between this education model and that supplied by the rhetorical training at Rome, which also encouraged the use of *sententiae* and clearly influenced Augustan and post-Augustan Roman poetics, e.g. the poetry of Ovid and Seneca.
provided by the leading schools of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries); and third, Keats was also reading "actively" as a professional writer, and therefore with a mind to harvest his reading to fill the stores of his writer's imagination.

Keats' varied style of engagement with Shakespeare is comparable to the ways in which he engages with Catullus, as we shall see. For example he "alludes" with a high degree of specificity to the following lines of The Tempest:

...we are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. (Tempest iv.156-7)

in Endymion 1.747-9:

...The Morphean fount
Of that fine element that visions, dreams,
And fitful whims of sleep are made of. (E.1.746)

Even though there is no mistaking the connection, Keats has both veiled and repackaged the expression 'such stuff as dreams are made of' to the extent that it appears natural and original. He has detached it from its previous context with little apparent regard for its original use; the all-important 'we are...' is omitted. In Endymion there is a 'Morphean fount' from which this 'fine element' that no longer constitutes 'us' issues forth. The additions of the fount, 'visions', 'fitful whims of sleep', and the more stately expression of 'fine element' in the place of the earthy 'stuff' further obscure his source. Are we to assume that Keats is concealing his source? Or are we perhaps meant to recognize and appreciate the woven expression as we might a sample in a piece of music, or a reproduction of a well known painting in a larger collage; or is it perhaps more like a shiny crisp packet in a magpie's nest in the sense that it catches the eye but has not been put

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418 On Keats’ education and access to classical handbooks in school see Clarke (1878) 124-5.
419 n.b. The most commonly printed text for Tempest IV.i.157 reads: "As dreams are made on." The normalization of 'of' appears in the edition that Keats read and was familiar with, i.e. The Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare (1814), published by Whittingham at Chiswick, and partially reproduced in Spurgeon (1928) 56.
there for any intellectual reason? I think that Keats, at times, consciously conceals his source, but it is not, I would argue, plagiarism. He appears to hide them like a parent might hide chocolate eggs in an Easter garden, for the express purpose of their being found. This would appear to be the case for the above allusion, but each one is unique and we find in Keats' poetry engagements that seem to work at different levels of conscious artifice. The level of artifice involved in embedding the expression, 'stuff that dreams are made of', would suggest that his allusive practice in this case is closer to that of the collage artist or the musician than the magpie. According to my terms above this engagement with *The Tempest* IV.i would be called a reference rather than an allusion because it does not import any of the original sense or sentiment from its source. Its function is aesthetic; it is designed to satisfy and entertain by recognition.420

To show the variety and scope of engagement between Keats and Shakespeare I take another example of Keats' *Endymion* connecting with *The Tempest*. This engagement comes in book three, in the story of Glaucus,421 and refers to the following section of Miranda's appeal to Prospero at the beginning of Act one, scene two:

...O, I have suffer'd
With those that I saw suffer! A brave vessel,
Who had no doubt some noble creatures in her,
Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock
Against my very heart! Poor souls! They perish'd. (*Tempest* I.ii.5-9)

420 By 'aesthetic' I mean here something close to 'decorative', since the reference stimulates the reader's senses rather than contributing towards any creation of related meaning. I do not mean to suggest that there are not many possible meanings of the text, nor that the reference is not at first read as an allusion, but rather that it is an allusive red herring or hermeneutic wrong turn; it appears to (and therefore does) take part in the creation of meaning, but it does not contribute to the what it means so much as the how because it does not carry enough content relevant to its new context. On the importance of aesthetics in poetry, and the interconnectedness of content and form see Martindale (2005).

421 The myth of Glaucus was familiar to Keats through the Oxford edition of Sandys' translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (1632), which according to Colvin (1917 §6) he used. It is also probable that he had read the episode in a Latin edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 13, for it is common to read both an original and translation(s) when both are readily accessible. Keats dramatically remodels the myth to suit his allegorical and symbolic needs. He depends on his Ovidian sources only really for the dramatis personae and draws on multiple external sources. Circe, in Keats' version, punishes Scylla by (apparently) killing her, rather than by metamorphosis, and Glaucus, with Endymion's help, eventually revives her. c.f. Peacock's *Rhododaphne* for the use of *Scheintod* in a classicizing allegorical poem.
Keats' Glaucus says:

The tempest came: I saw the vessel's shrouds
In perilous bustle; while upon the deck
Stood trembling creatures. I beheld the wreck;
The final gulping; the poor struggling souls:
I heard their cries amid loud thunder-rolls. (E.3.656-660)

Endymion is at first unwilling to be diverted from his own quest by Glaucus, but he is struck by the misfortune of the old man, and feeling deep sympathy for him takes time to listen to and help Glaucus. This decision to feel and to abandon his own quest is another example of a Cockney subversion of the epic genre, and the establishment's creed of the heroic, which was perceived as being shored up by the 'manly' and 'pious' decisions made by the likes of Aeneas and Theseus. As in the first example of Keats' engagement with The Tempest, this is clearly a conscious act. The verbal trigger of 'The tempest came' preceding an extended and close engagement with Shakespeare's The Tempest is a clever allusive flourish designed to entertain and reward his close reader as much as it is designed to signpost the allusion and trigger the reader's own memory of the source text. Not only the memory but also consistent textual indicators of the allusive engagement with Shakespeare's play appear to surge into Keats' poem with the power both of the highly emotive memory of Keats' reception of The Tempest and the storm within the narrative itself. In this way Keats effectively characterizes his own mode of allusive composition and engagement with Shakespeare. The reader is conspicuously invited to read Keats reading Shakespeare, or more like, to be deeply moved by Keats being deeply moved by Shakespeare. The contextual connection is made by Keats' position of Glaucus in the same situation as Miranda, i.e. a powerless viewer empathizing with the victims of shipwreck. The dense and sustained verbal triggers, or correspondences of vocabulary (in bold above)

422 See section beginning on page 199 for a full discussion of the Cockney reaction to 'the noxious race of heroes.'
provide ample supporting evidence that the connection is both easily detectable and conscious. This is a hybridizing allusion that has an, at least nominally, Ovidian character playing the part of Shakespeare’s Miranda. It works as an allusion because the reader’s prior reception of the character of Miranda can feed directly into his or her understanding of Glaucus’ tale. The source and target passages are working in parallel to show their characters’ pity for the suffering of others and their desire to help. Both of the above engagements with Shakespeare’s Tempest are quite specific and thus relatively easy to detect, but they are embedded enough not to disturb the narrative surface too dramatically, and flexible enough to allow the interplay of multiple sources.

The ‘embeddedness’ of his sources and the ‘looseness’ of his engagement with other poets have caused many scholars engaged in source criticism to describe Keats’ writing in terms of mystery. Pettet, for example, in On the Poetry of Keats writes:

> When we examine the influences in Keats’s poetry, especially in his earliest writing, we notice that, compared with the first works of many other poets, his verses do not contain very much verbal echoing — certainly not of a close and unmistakable kind... All readers of Endymion must feel, if only as a vague impression, that the poem derives a considerable inspiration from Shakespeare, whom Keats was avidly and intensely reading at the time... Most of the reminiscences of phrase and image are remote.\(^\text{123}\)

John Middleton Murry in The Mystery of Keats explains that, “The relationship between Wordsworth and Keats is peculiarly intimate; and probably impossible to unravel.”\(^\text{124}\)

Caroline Spurgeon in Keats and Shakespeare describes the “influence or rather kinship” between the two poets thus:

> It is almost as if Keats, after living through the magical experiences and sights and sounds of The Tempest, was still, when beginning his own poem, so steeped in Shakespearian enchantment that the glamour of it is carried over into the early adventures of his own hero, who actually sees and hears similar sights and sounds and is stimulated by the visions of even greater and deeper beauty.\(^\text{125}\)

\(^{123}\) Pettet (1958) 5.
\(^{124}\) Murry (1949) 224.
\(^{125}\) Spurgeon (1928) 12.
My two examples of Keats' engagement with Shakespeare above do not seem to exhibit quite the same degree of uncertainty that would justify such mysterious terminology. This is partly because I have chosen examples where the engagement is relatively straightforward to detect, partly because the scholarly vocabularies of the 20s, 40s and 50s are markedly different from mine, and partly because they are summarizing the nature of Keats' relationship with his sources, which is incredibly difficult to do because each engagement is different. What I intend to show in these snippets of criticism is that the relationship between Keats and his sources is peculiar, difficult to describe, and prone to elicit impressionistic criticism. A more elusive engagement with Shakespeare can be found in *Endymion* 2, where he 'borrows' a detail from *Midsummer Night's Dream* (II. i. 159-63):

[Cupid all arm'd]
... loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon;

and spot its connection with *Endymion* 2. 170-4:

... O Cynthia, ten-times brighter and fair!
From thy blue throne, now filling all the air,
Glance but one little beam of temper'd light
Into my bosom, that the dreadful might
And tyranny of love be somewhat scar'd!

I take the example from Spurgeon (1928.15), where she explains that Keats' engagement with *Midsummer Night's Dream* is different from *The Tempest* in that it, "takes the form rather of pictures that he remembers or of ideas which have attracted him, which he re-embodies in his own poem." It is the idea that moonlight can counteract Cupid's arrow that enters Keats' poem. There is scarcely any textual correspondence at all, however, it is clear

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426 c.f. Introduction p.4 for a brief discussion of my scholarly vocabulary.
that Shakespeare's text is the source, especially when Spurgeon tells us that Keats, in his own copy of Midsummer Night's Dream, "doubly marked" the passage.\(^{427}\) The lack of verbal correspondence, and dramatically different tone, suggests that Keats was engaging with the idea from memory, rather than working with the text open (or recently closed) on the desk, which is likely to have been the case with The Tempest. In this example we can witness Keats responding to the memory of a specific idea in Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream. The idea seems to have come to Keats in the moment of composition, when his reflections on the subject of Orpheus had ceased to produce material. The idea, linked by mythological subject matter and register, seems to have permeated his composition, to which he then reacted with the following:

Yet do not so, sweet queen; one torment spar'd,
Would give a pang to jealous misery,
Worse than the torment's self...

This comes in a particularly fast-moving section of the poem, in which Keats can be seen swinging from idea to idea through the jungle of his experience on vines, hanging down from the canopy of his reading. This is certainly a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings but the emotional reception of Shakespeare's play is by no means here recollected in tranquillity, as Wordsworth may have advised. It is instead snatched up in a frenzy of composition.\(^{428}\) This time the Shakespearean episode is not woven into the text, or concealed in any way; it has, through an intense literary reception, somehow become part of the thread of Keats' composing mind.

Keats engaged with the poetry of others in a range of different ways and at various levels of specificity, clarity and ownership. At times he can be seen to have actively concealed his source, and at others it is apparent that the source has emerged from his

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\(^{427}\) See Lau (1998) for more recent discussion of Keatsian marginalia and MS marking.

\(^{428}\) It is of course possible to affect the appearance of writing fast, and we need not necessarily believe that Keats wrote at high speed, but what I have described as Keats' Tarzan-like snatching of literary vines does seem to show a mind freely associating and propelling itself from one source of inspiration to another.
memory unrecognized. These quirks of composition do not necessarily contribute to the reader's appreciation of the poem, but sometimes they do. An 'allusion' to the poet's own memory of reading a text is very different from the superficial reference to a myth, or a highly specific allusion to a particular poetic text, and we find all these kinds of engagement and more in Keats' poetry. I hope that it will be useful to bear the variety of these examples of literary engagement in mind while we examine Keats' engagement with Catullus.

Educating Keats

We have been less inclined to believe that Keats might have read and engaged directly with Catullus' poetry because of both the underestimation of his education and the overestimation of the importance of his education. Our perception of his schooling still bears the vestiges of both negative and positive myth-making about his life by his contemporary critics and supporters respectively. The first sought to undermine his cultural legitimacy for reasons of political bias and entertainment value, and the second to salvage his reputation by depicting him as an underprivileged, natural poet who rose to literary stardom from adversity. By the manner in which his supporters answered the harsh criticism of Blackwood's and the Quarterly, particularly after his death, they not only successfully vilified the bullying, 'masculinist' critics but also confirmed the need to confront issues of gender when discussing Keats. They could not argue, for example, that he did not challenge contemporary, normative notions of masculinity, because he did.

429 See Bate (1986), 175-201, for some discussion on such engagements. The idea that an "echo," which in Keats' case is said often to operate "below the level of conscious intention," can at the same time be described as "an honouring of the 'Presider' [Shakespeare]" is problematic. This kind of theoretical faultline is an example of the many reasons why I have decided to avoid engagement with the theoretical tradition of "burden" and "anxiety" founded in the influence scholarship of Walter Jackson Bate (1970) and Harold Bloom (1973). The practice of poets, who engage creatively with earlier texts, is highly varied, often complex and deserving of more flexible and less distracting models of critical attention than those, which take their methodological lead from the burden tradition. For my methodology see p.5.

430 See, e.g., Wolfson's 'Feminizing Keats' in De Almeida ed. (1990).
Within a system that treated masculinity and femininity in binary terms, and in which debates about sexual equality were in their infancy, any characterization of Keats as 'effeminate' worked against his reputation, even if it was written by a friend who in no way wished it to be received as derogative criticism. An example of this may be found in Shelley's preface to *Adonais*, written in the summer of 1821, the year Keats died, in which he inveighs against the 'cankerworms' of the *Quarterly Review* for their 'savage criticism' of *Endymion*:

> It may well be said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows, or one, like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff.\(^{431}\)

The gendering of the critical act is quite clear here. In stanza 60 of *Don Juan xi* Byron juxtaposes Keats' effeminate vulnerability with his 'forced' and flawed relationship with the Greeks:

> John Keats, who was killed off by one critique,  
Just as he really promised something great,  
If not intelligible, - without Greek  
Constrained to talk about the Gods of late,  
Much as they might have been supposed to speak.  
Poor fellow! His was an untoward fate: -  
'Tis strange the mind, that very fiery particle,  
Should let itself be snuffed out by an Article.\(^{432}\)

Byron characterizes Keats here as an unintelligible poet, who struggled (and, we are to presume, failed) to engage with Greek myth. 'Constrained' implies that the engagement was problematic and his inability to read Greek is the most obvious barrier between Keats and his ambition. There is also perhaps a note of derision in his stress on the orality of Keats' classicism. The casual and prosaic phrases 'to talk about' and 'might have been supposed to speak' seem to imply that Keats' was not so much a literary venture as a spoken one.

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431 Shelley (2002) 410. n.b. Shelley thought that the anonymous reviewer for the *Quarterly Review* (April 1818) was Robert Southey, but it was in fact John Wilson Croker.  
432 Byron (1970) 735, lines 473-80.)
and thus risibly ephemeral as a mode of classicism. It is an example of the still enduring overvaluation of linguistic ability in the creative engagement with classical culture. There are, and were in the time of Keats, many ‘alternative’ routes to accessing classical culture aside from reading the literature in the original languages, and these have been consistently exploited by people who have received between zero and a high level of classical education. I refer here to both classical and classicizing artefacts of visual and material culture, as well as translations, adaptations, abridgements and imitations of Greek and Roman literature.

An example of the lingering public, if no longer scholarly, perception of Keats’ education may be seen in Marjorie Levinson’s colourful summary of his “corrupt relation to the languages of poetry”:

He knew some French and Latin, little Italian, no Greek. His Homer was Chapman, his Dante Cary, his Provencal ballads translations in an edition of Chaucer, his Boccaccio Englished. Keats’s art education was largely by engravings and, occasionally, reproductions. His absorption of the accessible English writers was greatly constrained by his ignorance of the originals upon which they drew and by

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43 This distinction is reminiscent of current debates surrounding the cultural illegitimacy of performance poetry as opposed to the legitimacy of the printed page. Keats’ “uneducated” and spoken, ephemeral form of classicism appears to have challenged the expectations of the establishment. Such challenges to established literary classical forms were developed throughout the 19th century and welcomed by the reading public, and especially female readers, as evidenced by the publication of literary annuals and gift books, see Wallace (2011) 116-7.

44 The binary notion of someone either ‘having’ or ‘not having’ Latin and/or Greek according to whether or not they have studied them veils the truth that even those who have been taught the languages may not actually be able to read the literature well, or even at all. There is great variety in both the ability and application of students, and the linguistic competence and contextual knowledge needed to read different classical texts. I do not wish to enter here into a discussion on the level of Greek linguistic ability in the Romantic age, but will simply put forward the notion that there must have been a broad range of reading ability even among those who supposedly ‘had Greek’. The apparently culturally justified position of being able to read Greek in the original without the aid of a translation would have been possessed by so small a percentage of readers (even excluding those of Blackwood’s Magazine who could still reel off pages of a Greek grammar book) that its rhetoric of cultural posturing was built on as false a floor then as it would be today. For translation and performance as alternative routes to the classics see Hall (2008). For the abundance of translation as a route to Homer see Young (2003), from which it may be seen that between 1800 and 1810, for example, there were 49 British publications of Homeric poetry; 36 of these were written in English (incl. 17 editions of Pope), and (a still considerable) 12 in Greek (with either Latin or English notes) and 1 in Latin translation. These figures show that the majority of people reading Homer at the beginning of the nineteenth century were doing so, at least in part, in English - from blank verse translations, prose literal translations and/or Pope’s translation. In 1841 an ‘interpaged translation’ (Greek and English) of Iliad books 1-6 was printed in London, Young (2003) 234. See also Hardwick (2000) 25ff for the increase in classical translation in 19th century from non-elite as well as elite and scholarly translators.

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his non-systematic self-education. To say all this is to observe Keats’s literally corrupt relation to the
languages of poetry: his means of production.435

This view has been challenged by Nicholas Roe (1997) on the grounds that it is highly
influenced by contemporary Tory criticism and Levinson’s own desire to portray an
educationally disadvantaged and culturally ‘anxious’ Keats.436 It is, however, a strangely
persistent view, partly perhaps due to the fact that Keats and his contemporaries may well
have accepted many such charges made against him. With hindsight, however, we may see
beyond certain deeply ingrained prejudices of the day and thereafter, and approach Keats’
work as a product created within, and for, the more forgiving reception context of the
group associated with the Cockney school. Due to the fact that Keats was engaged in the
‘high’ art form of poetry, and has now become a canonized British literary figure, he has
forever been judged according to the very highest educational criteria, and against the
literary giants of his time and others. His education was not as thorough or traditional as
that, for example, of an Etonian who went on to study at Oxford, and his classicism does
bear the marks of an alternative education, and therefore perhaps his societal position. But
these marks contribute towards what makes his classicizing poetry stand alongside
Shakespeare’s as being accessible, ‘new’, and of great cultural value.

Levinson’s summary does not reflect the biographical evidence we have of Keats’
Latin linguistic ability, and it characterizes Keats as a failed reader, culturally hamstrung
by his second-hand and non-linear autodidacticism. As exemplified above in his
relationship with Shakespeare’s plays, Keats was perfectly capable of absorbing the work
of English writers who engaged with the classics, and, as I hope to show with the example

435 Levinson (1988) 7. It is certainly true that Keats was to educated in classical culture in part via
reproductions, but this does not mean that when he went to the Angerstein Gallery or the British museum he
kept his eyes closed, and no does it mean that those who had a classical education did not also observe, and
divine great pleasure from, classical reproductions. As for his corrupt relationship with the languages of
poetry – we all have a corrupt relationship with language, especially ancient languages, and even our own.
There are degrees of corruption and, as I hope to show, Keats’ was at neither end of the scale – especially
when it came to Latin.
of Catullus, he was also capable of absorbing the work of Latin writers. Roe draws our attention to a passage in Clarke's *Recollections of Keats*, which shows that Keats was an intensely studious schoolboy:

He was at work before the first school-hour began, and that was at seven o'clock; almost all the intervening times of recreation were so devoted; and during the afternoon holidays, when all were at play, he would be in the school - almost the only one - at his Latin or French translation.\(^{437}\)

Clarke goes on to explain that Keats had an enormous appetite for books by the end of his school career. In his last ‘eighteen months’ at Enfield:

He must have gone through all the better publications in the school library, for he asked me to lend him some of my own books; and, in my "mind's eye," I now see him at supper (we had our meals in the school-room), sitting back on the form, from the table, holding the folio volume of Burnet's History of his Own Time between himself and the table, eating his meal from beyond it. This work, and Leigh Hunt's Examiner — which my father took in, and I used to lend to Keats — no doubt laid the foundation of his love of civil and religious liberty.\(^{438}\)

Clarke further details the contents of the school library by writing that it:

consisted principally of abridgments of all the voyages and travels of any note; Mavor's collection, also his Universal History; Robertson's histories of Scotland, America, and Charles the Fifth; all Miss Edgeworth's productions, together with many other works equally well calculated for youth. The books, however, that were his constantly recurrent sources of attraction were Tooke's 'Pantheon,' Lempière's Classical Dictionary, which he appeared to learn, and Spence's 'Polymetis.' This was the store whence he acquired his intimacy with the Greek mythology; here was he 'suckled in that creed outworn.'\(^{439}\)

Immediately following this passage Clarke states: “his [Keats’] amount of classical attainment extended no farther than the *Aeneid*; with [sic] which epic, indeed, he had voluntarily translated in writing a considerable portion.” It is strange that Clarke should draw attention to the ‘fact’ that Keats did not read more of the classics, especially since the school certainly taught Latin, and is thought to have presented him with book 15 of Ovid’s

\(^{437}\) Roe (1997) 40 and Clarke (1878) 122.  
\(^{438}\) Clarke (1878) 124.  
\(^{439}\) ibid 123-4. n.b. ‘Suckled in that creed outworn’ is a quotation from Wordsworth’s sonnet *The world is too much with us.*

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Metamorphoses, which he kept in his chest of books until his death.\textsuperscript{440} Besides those texts presumably taught in the schoolroom,\textsuperscript{441} Keats would have had access, even as a schoolboy, to a number of classical texts, including (and not exclusively) those of Catullus in the pages of Hunt's Examiner, to which Clarke's father subscribed. It is possible that by 'classical attainment' Clarke means an in-depth scholarly project, like the written translation of the Aeneid, and not simply reading classical texts. In any case by denying Keats' classical attainment and emphasizing the role of the classical handbooks, Clarke may be seen here contributing towards the Victorian fiction of 'Poor Keats'.

At the end of his apprenticeship as an apothecary Keats was among the very first students who, in order to become a practising apothecary, had to take examinations. No small part of these examinations seems to have involved translating from various medical texts, including, for example, the Pharmacopoeia, which were written in Latin.\textsuperscript{442} He passed these exams on first attempt, having apparently invested little time or interest in his studies, which of course infuriated his more committed friends who failed. One of these friends, his housemate Henry Stephens (the inventor of Stephens Ink), protested uncharitably that Keats had only passed because he was good at Latin.\textsuperscript{443} This snippet of anecdotal evidence that Keats' Latin was a source of envy among his fellow medical students may hardly be used to suggest that he was a gifted classical scholar, but it does at least show that Keats' Latin was exceptional among those in the lower echelons of the medical profession.

When drawing up his will in 1821 Keats requested that his 'chest of books' would be divided between his friends. This chest contained over 150 volumes of 81 titles

\textsuperscript{440} See Owings (1978).
\textsuperscript{441} It is unlikely that the children would not have studied some Latin literature alongside their language lessons.
\textsuperscript{442} "Pharmacopoeia n. An authoritative or official treatise containing listings of approved drugs with their formulations, standards of purity and strength, and uses. Freq. in titles of such works."\textsuperscript{443} OED Online.
\textsuperscript{443} Motion (1997) 98.
including a number of Latin, Italian and French classics as well as English.\footnote{See Owings (1978). He owned translations of Livy (The Roman History – 'faithfully done into English,' London, 1686), Dante (The Vision – 'translated by the Rev. H. F. Cary, A. M,' London 1814), Francisco de Moraes (Palmerin of England – 'Anthony Munday's translation corrected from the original Portuguese by Robert Southey,' London 1807), and he had a Latin edition of Ovid (Metamorphoseon libri xv – Delphine edition, London 1806). Keats also owned The English and the French Languages Compared in the Grammatical Constructions, Mr. Duverger, London 1807). Oliver Goldsmith's Grecian History was presented to Keats by Haydon. It was not in the chest because Keats gave it to his brother before his departure for America in 1818. This is a reminder that the books in the chest by no means represent the whole of Keats' reading.} One of the books in his chest was a Greek-Latin version of the New Testament, with which he intended to teach himself Greek.\footnote{John Taylor (1781-1864) was Keats' friend and publisher.} Opposite the frontispiece of this book is inscribed: "John Keats from his / friend John Taylor / Sept. 1820."\footnote{Both Colvin and Lowell agree this Latin text was one of the books given to Keats by Clarke's Enfield school; yet not as a prize for scholarship, but rather a token of friendship. It is intriguingly autographed by Keats thus: 'John Keats emer / 1812' (my italics). Owings (1978) 49 comments: "There are markings in the text; but one can only speculate how much this particular edition of OVID influenced Keats in his work. It is George Sandys translation of OVID which present-day Keats scholars cite as a source for much of Keats's mythmaking, especially in Endymion." Some influence of Met. 15 may be seen in Keats' fascination in Endymion in apotheosis and the relationship between the mortal and the divine.} The use of this particular book by someone keen to teach themselves Greek does not signal a lack of confidence in their Latin. Another book in the chest was a Latin edition of book 15 of Ovid's Metamorphoses, as encountered above. It was from the Delphin series of the classical texts, originally created in the late 17th century for the education of the young Louis, Grand Dauphin (1661-1711), and therefore filled with helpful notes, but entirely (notes included) in Latin.\footnote{Bailey's gift to Keats of Livy's Histories in English translation may be interpreted in a number of ways. I would suggest that he may have judged Livy's history more valuable to a young poet for its information rather than the reading experience it offered. A translation would take him far less time to get through and provide him the same material. It could obviously also show that Bailey thought that Livy's Latin was beyond Keats, but I think this is unlikely.} The picture generated by these few anecdotes and bibliographical detail is not of a man who knows 'some Latin', but rather of someone with a lifelong familiarity with the Latin language, and the ability to access any Latin author he chose.\footnote{See Owings (1978). He owned translations of Livy (The Roman History – 'faithfully done into English,' London, 1686), Dante (The Vision – 'translated by the Rev. H. F. Cary, A. M,' London 1814), Francisco de Moraes (Palmerin of England – 'Anthony Munday's translation corrected from the original Portuguese by Robert Southey,' London 1807), and he had a Latin edition of Ovid (Metamorphoseon libri xv – Delphine edition, London 1806). Keats also owned The English and the French Languages Compared in the Grammatical Constructions, Mr. Duverger, London 1807). Oliver Goldsmith's Grecian History was presented to Keats by Haydon. It was not in the chest because Keats gave it to his brother before his departure for America in 1818. This is a reminder that the books in the chest by no means represent the whole of Keats' reading.} I would argue that Keats was well very equipped to read poetry that engaged with classical sources. His reported, almost obsessive use of source books when at Enfield school, including Lemprière's Classical Dictionary (which Clarke tells us he seemed to learn), Spence's Polymetis and
Tooke's *Pantheon*, does not exclude the possibility of his reading those texts (either in the original or in translation) that the source books and dictionaries reference. Indeed his constant use of these books was essential for his literary development, since they contained the passages and stories with which the authors he was reading were engaging; they provided the key to classical culture. Keats' use of these books has taken on a greater significance than it should due to the amplification of small biographical details by his posthumous fame.\textsuperscript{449}

In his letters and poems Keats consistently displays a deep familiarity and confident personal relationship with classical literature, and it is this well-read and studious version of Keats that I would like to take on through this chapter.\textsuperscript{450} On first looking into *Chapman's Homer* has been presented as an example of Keats' anxiety of cultural inferiority and "belatedness" in his approach to Greek literature.\textsuperscript{451} I would argue that this poem, rather than showing signs of anguish, is one in which Keats openly celebrates his relationship with Greek culture. He opens the ode by boldly informing his reader: "Much have I travell'd through the realms of gold." This is emphatically not: "I have not much travell'd in the realms of gold," and thus is hardly the opening of a young man who sees himself as culturally malnourished. It is through Chapman's lively Elizabethan translation that the beauty of Homer's creation finally dawns on him. He has successfully accessed the 'wide expanse... that deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne', and is consequently inspired to write a sonnet to celebrate his new relationship with Homer. The fact that it is

\textsuperscript{449} n.b. Of the three books that Keats enjoyed consulting as a child only Lemprière's dictionary was owned by him when he died. Seamus Heaney is reported to own and make use of Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary* as the excellent reference tool that it is, but this information does not constitute the mainstay of scholarly discussion about his classicism - learned in conversation with Lorna Hardwick (2010).

\textsuperscript{450} Before Keats was 14 Clarke explains that he, "Hazarded the opinion to me (and the expression riveted my surprise), that there was feebleness in the structure of the work." This shows a surprising level of literary critical awareness for a boy of 13 years, whether or not he was just showing off to his teacher with a line he had read elsewhere.

\textsuperscript{451} For full discussion see Aske (1985) 40-6. n.b. In *Keats and Hellenism* Aske draws on Bloom's (1973) Freudian concept of literary influence. He subscribes to the prevalent image (above) of Keats as culturally impoverished ("not cultivated") and therefore works from the premise that Keats' engagement with classical culture indicates a "psychohistorical problem" (1985) 3 & passim.
Chapman's Homer and not Pope's Homer or Homer's Homer aligns him with the Cockneys and Hunt in particular, who were keen to promote unorthodox routes to the classics.\textsuperscript{452} We may read the sonnet as an expression of the same desire to encourage his readers to experience the classical world in a less austere, and more inclusive and 'liberal' way, i.e. by reading the classicizing works of the likes of Shakespeare, Spenser, Fletcher and Chapman.\textsuperscript{453}

\textit{Sleep and Poetry}

Woodman (1974) identifies a possible connection between Keats' \textit{Sleep and Poetry} (S&P) and Catullus 50. The connection is made by the drawing of parallels in content, the similar role played by 'involuntary insomnia' in their creative processes, and the 'sequence of events' that led up to the production of the two poems. After calling the similarity 'striking', and pointing out the potential parallels between Keats' 'indolence' and Catullus' \textit{otium} he concludes thus:

In view of the great similarity between the two poems we should ask whether Keats may have been at all influenced by Catullus' poem. Keats of course knew Latin, and the references to various Latin authors which scholars have detected in his poetry show his familiarity with Latin literature. But it must be said that no one has so far pointed out a clear parallel between Keats's poetry and that of Catullus beyond the possibility that his epitaph ('Here lies one whose name was writ in water') is a reminiscence of Catullus' famous lines in poem lxx - and even here there are many passages in English which Keats could have remembered instead.\textsuperscript{454} It is thus more likely that these correspondences between Catullus and Keats... are to be attributed to coincidence. But if in the light of further literary correspondences an attempt were to be made to establish a relationship between Keats and Catullus, the present parallel would surely take on a new significance.\textsuperscript{455}

I shall examine the possible connection he puts forward and return to his enticing 'new significance' once I have established and assessed the relationship between Keats and Catullus in full.

\textsuperscript{452} See Chapters 2 and 4.
\textsuperscript{453} A little known example of contemporary interest in Elizabethan classicism is the reprinting of Thomas Dekker's \textit{Gull's Hornbook} (1609), edited by John Nott, the translator of Catullus, in 1812.
\textsuperscript{454} Rollins (1965), \textit{The Keats Circle} 2.91 n.72.
\textsuperscript{455} It should be noted that the references made to Latin literature in Keats' poetry have almost entirely been attributed to his familiarity with translations of Latin texts. Woodman does not reference the work of those scholars who have detected references to various Latin authors in Keats.
It is perhaps no coincidence that Keats' textual relationship with Catullus should begin in the early days of his friendship with Leigh Hunt. As we have seen in the third chapter, Hunt was an avid reader, translator and promoter of Catullus' poetry. It is probable that he shared his enthusiasm for the poetry of Catullus with his new friend and protégé in a similar way and at the same time as he shared his passion for visual art.\textsuperscript{456} From the poem, \textit{S&P}, and a supporting statement from Charles Cowden Clarke (1787-1877) in a retrospective journal article (printed 45 years after the occasion it relates) we learn that in the autumn of 1816 Keats spent the day with Hunt at his cottage.\textsuperscript{457} In the poem, and specifically lines 327-338 and 352-404, Keats remembers the experience of being in Hunt's library, presumably for the first time, by allowing himself to fall into a sensuous description of the artwork he viewed in the room:

Scarce can I scribble on; for lovely airs
Are fluttering around the room like doves in pairs;
Many delights of that day recalling
When first my senses caught their tender falling.
And with these airs come forms of elegance
Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's prance,
Careless, and grand-fingers soft and round
Parting luxuriant curls; - and the swift bound
Of Bacchus from his chariot, when his eye
Made Ariadne's cheek look blushingly.
Thus I remember all the pleasant flow
Of words at opening a portfolio. (327-338)

Keats' free use of visual sources in his poetry can in part be traced to a Cockney attitude exemplified in the following passage extracted from Hunt's \textit{Indicator} Oct. 1819:

Here we are... with our fire before us, and our books on each side. What shall we do? Shall we take out a Life of somebody, or a Theocritus, or Dante, or Ariosto, or Montaigne, or Marcus Aurelius, or Horace, or Shakespeare who includes them all? Or shall we read an engraving from Poussin or Raphael?\textsuperscript{458}

\textsuperscript{456} See Jack (1967) 1-22 for a very informative chapter on Leigh Hunt's influence on Keats approach to visual art as inspiration for poetry.
\textsuperscript{457} \textit{Atlantic Monthly} vii (Jan. 1861) reprinted in Matthews (1971) 393.
\textsuperscript{458} \textit{The Indicator}, i. 10 (no. ii, 20 Oct. 1819) reprinted in Jack (1967) 7-8. n.b. The italics are Hunt's own.
Hunt's emphasis on reading an engraving explains much about his and Keats' approach to visual art. The conflation of reading and viewing is picked up in Keats' poem: "Thus I remember the pleasant flow / of words at opening a portfolio" (my italics). Hunt's comment on Shakespeare as a writer 'who includes them all,' shows not only his respect for Shakespeare, but also, more specifically, his respect for Shakespeare's absorption of classical learning. The range of literary engagement, both with classical and native English writers, employed by Shakespeare appears to have been an important feature of his poetry for Hunt. A similarly high respect for Shakespeare can be found frequently stated in the correspondence of Keats, whose guiding poetic theory of 'Negative Capability' ("when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts without any irritable reaching after fact & reason,")) is inextricably linked with Keats' reception of Shakespeare, who - according to Keats - possessed the quality 'so enormously'. The construction of narratives that depend on the irrational feelings of characters, the separation of poet and character, and the permission for ambiguities to remain in the text are features of both poets' work.

As has been argued by Jack (1967), Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne is clearly a source of Sc&P 331-8. I would suggest that it is unlikely that Hunt would have shown Keats a print of Bacchus and Ariadne without also showing him, reading to him, or at least mentioning the source of Titian's painting, i.e. Catullus 64. It is even less likely when in the same poem (136-154) a trace of the arrival of Bacchus in 64.251-66 may be faintly perceived:

harum pars tecta quatiebant cuspide thyrsos

459 The passage also shows that Hunt believed Shakespeare to include (perhaps not all) many classical and European authors, which brings into focus an element to Keats' emulation of Shakespeare that might otherwise be missed, his use of multiple sources that are inessential to comprehension and only faintly detectable but omnipresent.

460 Keats, Buxton Forman ed. (1947) 72, the famous 'Negative Capability Letter' written by Keats in December 1817 to his brothers.

461 Jack (1967) 130.
Pars e divulso jactabant membra juvenco
Pars sese tortis serpentibus incingebant
Pars obscura cavis celebrabant orgia cistis,
Orgia quae frustra cupiunt audire profani.

This was translated by Nott (1795) as:

Some shook the ivied thyrsus which they bore;
Some the raw limbs from mangled heifers tore;
With writhing serpents some their waists intwined;
With hallow'd stores in ozier caskets shrined,
Some mystick rites perform'd, with solemn show,
Rites the profane in vain desire to know.

We may identify in Keats' poem a partial Catullan source in the following lines, where he uses the same style of ecphrastic description of a similar and classicizing scene:

The charioteer with wond'rous gesture talks
To the trees and mountains; and there soon appear
Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,
Passing along before a dusky space
Made by some mighty oaks: as they would chase
Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.
Lo! How they murmur, laugh, and smile, and weep:
Some with upholden hand and mouth severe;
Some with their faces muffled to the ear
Between their arms; some, clear in youthful bloom,
Go glad and smilingly athwart the gloom;
Some looking back, and some with upward gaze;
Yes, thousands in a thousand different ways
Flit onward - now a lovely wreath of girls
Dancing their sleek hair into tangled curls;
And now broad wings. Most awfully intent
The driver of those steeds is forward bent,
And seems to listen: O that I might know
All that he writes with such a hurrying glow.

(S&P 136-154)

The connection is suggested first by the thematic link of both poems dealing with a chariot-borne god with dancing entourage. Their common use of ecphrasis, the poetic description of a visual artefact, strengthens the connection, and the anaphoric repetition of 'some' might recall Catullus' similar repetition of pars... or a translation's reflection of it.

Lines 143-7 of the passage above closely parallel Nott's translation of Catullus' anaphora. The metre in both cases is identical; the placement of 'some' at the beginning of
the line agrees with the same pattern. The two line space is matched by Keats, and the first line without an initial 'some' in Nott (With writhing serpents some...) contains a centrally placed 'some', also matched in Keats' line 145 ('Between their arms; some...'). Keats' centrally-placed 'some' does not appear at the same syllable but does, by the natural magnetism of a repeated word in series, attract the same percussive stress. The repetition of 'thousand' also creates a similar effect to the internal rhyme of 'profane' and 'vain'.

This kind of anaphora is not an unnatural method of describing in verse a procession such as this, and the link might, even in the face of such strong correspondence, be coincidental.

If we were certain, which I hope we shall be by the end of this chapter, that Keats had read Nott's edition of Catullus the identification of a Catullan source would be that much more secure, because Keats here seems to have been recalling his aural reception of the English verse rather than the Latin of Nott's bilingual edition.\(^2\) The process behind such an intricate connection between texts is either one of studious verbal manipulation on the part of the 'alluding' poet, or one that is barely conscious and depends on a well-worn memory of a particularly striking and/or well-loved passage of poetry. If it were a case of the former I would suggest that the connection would be more visible still and the sense more closely rendered, which would approach creating the effect of what Hinds calls allusive 'self-annotation', i.e. when the allusion says: 'Yes, I am an allusion.' I think it likely in this case that for Keats in the moment of describing his 'Bacchic entourage' and celestial charioteer a memory of the rhythm and repetition of Nott's lines detailing a similar vision 'returned' to him, either consciously or unconsciously (or somewhere in between) and fed into his composition. Outside of Hinds' groundbreaking discussion...

\(^2\) See discussion of figure 30 on p.270.
allusions do not speak, but if they did I would suggest that Keats’ would, more often than not, play dumb.463

‘Drinking in’ and Source Emergence

The identification of this kind of ‘source emergence’ triggered by a strong aural reception is not unprecedented in Keatsian scholarship. Earle Vonard Weller, in her study Keats and Mary Tighe (1928), detects similar “echoes that reveal how deeply Keats absorbed the rhythm of the Tighe poem.” Her examples of Keats’ engagement with Tighe are similar to those of Keats with Shakespeare, shown above, and Catullus, as I hope will become apparent, in terms of the presence of similar word groups in combination with subject parallels and, significantly, parallels in ‘phrase patterns, metrical form and rhythm.’464 An example of Weller’s selection of Keats-Tighe correspondence similar to our Keats-Nott correspondence is her alignment of Ode on a Grecian Urn and Tighe’s Psyche:

Oh, how unlike the pure transparent stream,
Which near it bubbles o'er its golden sands!
The impeding stones with pleasant music seem
Its progress to detain from other lands;
And all its banks inwreathed with flowery bands,
Ambrosial fragrance shed in grateful dew:
There young Desire enchanted ever stands,
Breathing delight and fragrance ever new. Psyche (1.21.5-8)

Which emerges in Keats’ poem as:

Ah, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new. (Grecian Urn 21-4)

On encountering Nott’s edition of Catullus 64 Keats’ imagination seems to have been fired to the extent that he ‘drank in’ Nott’s words and rhythms as he did with Tighe and

464 Weller (1928) ix f.
Shakespeare. The twenty-first stanza of Tighe's *Psyche* seems to have had a deep effect on Keats; he uses imagery from it in three other poems from different stages of his poetic career.\(^{65}\) The recurrence of imagery from this stanza throughout his career suggests that Keats was accustomed to pick out and 'drink in', or learn favourite passages from poems, which later fed freely into his own compositions. This process could explain why we find a number of correspondences between Keats' poetry and just a few Catullan passages, or ideas and images from them, spread across his literary career, for example, the arrival of Bacchus (64.251-64) and the kiss and sparrow poems. The nature of the engagement with his sources may obviously vary according to his current writing conditions, literary ambition, confidence etc. Both the length of time between his absorption of the source and its emergence in his writing, and whether or not it was open on his desk at time of writing may also affect the kind of engagement seen, or unseen, by the reader. Returning now to the passage of *S&F* under discussion; the final two lines are as follows:

O that I might know  
All that he writes with such a hurrying glow.

We may well detect another play upon the Huntian conflation of reading and viewing; for it is possible that the "writer" who has such a 'hurrying glow' is a visual artist. The flow of words might not be those written by a poet in the hurrying glow of composition, but those conjured in the mind of the viewing poet, who has lately been taught by his friend to *read* visual artwork. The above connection is not hugely convincing on its own and the fact that the connection to Catullus has not been remarked upon before now is testimony to its low operational level in the reception of most readers, but when the reader is aware of its situation within a more extensive literary relationship between Keats and Catullus (and

\(^{65}\) See Weller (1928) 19. 'Flowery band[s]' occurs in *Endymion* 1.7 (written in 1817), 'golden sands' in *To George Felton Mathew* 92, and *To Some Ladies* 23 (both written in 1815). n.b. *Grecian Urn* was written in 1819.
particularly Nott's Catullus) the contextual, formal and (to some degree) textual connections are present in a high enough degree to promote a reception of Keats that draws on the reader's own knowledge of Catullus' poetry. In general this kind of conditionality and subsequent lack of certainty will sadly be a feature of my discussion of Keats' mode of creative engagement with Catullus. The accumulation of evidence is therefore of particular importance in this chapter in order to substantiate connections between Catullus and Keats. As for the Huntian conflation of reading and viewing, Keats' absorption of Catullan images blurs the already murky borders between the processes of reading and writing because of Keats' highly responsive and 'transparent' style of composition. By this I mean that we, as readers, are often in the position of witnesses of Keats' mind reading and viewing remembered passages and images as much as we are reading the product of his own imagination, which is of course itself dependent on his memory, both conscious and unconscious. His apparent preference for less concrete literary engagements seems to be part of his aesthetic ambition to keep his reader ever wondering about the provenance of his poetry. Such a style makes his reader constantly looking beyond the surface of his text, which has the effect, whether they recognize anything or not, of giving his poetry depth.

Bacchus from the Blue?

Another correspondence between Catullan imagery and S&P appears when Keats first introduces the celestial charioteer (125-30):

And can I ever bid these joys farewell? 467
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,
Where I may find the agonies, the strife
Of human hearts: for lo! I see afar,
O'er sailing the blue cragginess, a car
And steeds with steamy manes...

466 Although the allusion may scarcely affect the reception of what is being communicated, it does at some level affect the way in which it is communicated.
467 'These joys' refer to an eroticized pastoral poetic realm (of Flora, and old Pan), the first through which Keats says that he must travel in his programme of overwhelming himself in poesy.
The god arrives in his flying chariot immediately after Keats pledges to move onto a higher realm of poetry: "I must pass them for a nobler life, / Where I may find the agonies, the strife / Of human hearts..." As an example of shifting to the higher more 'noble' poetic register (as might be suggested by the ambiguous 'for', which is used exclamatorily but cannot help but communicate a certain amount of consequentiality - 128) the arrival of the chariot, drawn by 'steeds with steamy manes,' falls short in terms of epic grandeur. Might the charioteer then be a deus ex machina arriving to rescue Keats from his 'progress of poetry' trope, which would inevitably lead (as it does in 158) to 'a sense of real things... [coming on] doubly strong'? Keats' ultimately unfulfilled desire to 'upgrade' from pastoral to epic poetry is reminiscent of Vergil's recusatio of Eclogue 6 (cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthius aurem / vellit et admonuit: 'pastorem, Tityre, pinguis / pascere oportet ovis, deductum dicere carmen - 'When I was singing of kings and battles, Apollo gave me a thick ear and said: A shepherd, Tityrus, should raise fat sheep, but sing a well-spun song.' E.6.3-5). In this poem Vergil shows an affinity with the Catullan-Callimachean aesthetic principle favouring short and highly finished poems about love rather than war. This easily politicized preference has been discussed at greater length in the previous chapter; suffice it to say here that Keats may well in this passage have been engaging broadly with the same theme. For Keats the image of the celestial charioteer with entourage seems to be associated with a reaction against the grim reality of an outdated social order that traditional epic came to symbolize among members of the Cockney school.468

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468 n.b. Keats can also be seen engaging with the Catullan-Callimachean aesthetic in Endymion 2.8-43.
In any case the charioteer and his entourage appear in *S&P* over a blue horizon, which detail, in combination with the parallels of subject and style, offers a perceivable connection to the arrival of Bacchus, written around two years later, in *Endymion* 4.193:

Over the light blue hills
There came a noise of revellers: the rills
Into the wide stream came of purple hue -
'Twas Bacchus and his crew!

The identification of Bacchus as the charioteer in 1818 does not mean that we should assume that it was Bacchus in 1816, even though the scene appears to be set largely in the same way. What it does tell us is that flying chariots, processions of various creatures through the bright blue skies, and Bacchus have an association in Keats’ mind with escape and reform.469 The two charioteers arrive in both occasions of Keats’ verse as remedies for human pain and sorrow, for in *S&P* he comes when Keats considers moving onto a ‘nobler life / Where I may find the agonies, the strife / Of human hearts,’ and in *Endymion* 4 he arrives to save the Indian Maid from her lonesome sorrow (*Endymion* 4.193).470 It is interesting to see the subtle progression of Keats’ poetic ambition from a young poet, who uses his imagination and classical imagery to ‘stave off’ or escape the reality of the present, which he tells us ‘bear[s] along my soul to nothingness’, to one who uses very similar imagery as a symbol of future social amelioration.471

The connection between *S&P* and Catullus 64 is embedded and subtle. It does not show itself strongly enough to sustain much transfer of sense or sentiment, therefore - even though a Catullan source might be detected – I would argue that the function of the

469 Dionysus/Bacchus rides in a chariot also in Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca*, a 5th century C.E. Greek epic, which was a favourite poem of Thomas Love Peacock. The god is also found in a chariot at Vergil *Aeneid* 6.804-5 (drawn by tigers), and Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4.24-5 (drawn by lynxes and with Bacchic entourage).

470 n.b. Both passages also come at times of generic shift. Keats’ interest in the Bacchic chariot may be compared to Nietzsche’s discussion of the duality of the Apollonian and Dionysian in *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (1872, Basel). A similar duality might to some extent be played out in *Lamia* where the philosopher, Apollonius, is clearly the proponent of order and calm, and enemy of Keats’ creativity, which seems bound up in this poem and elsewhere in the Dionysian.

471 See previous chapter.
allusion is to a greater degree involved with the conditions in which the meaning is made than the creation of meaning itself. Beyond the Bacchus myth being superficially referred to, the source is not drawn upon to contribute in the communication process, but rather to lurk beneath the surface as a shady presence to be ever wondered at.

Sleepless Poets

In his article ‘Sleepless Poets’ Woodman (1974) identifies a different possible connection between S&P and Catullus. After explaining the apparent situation of composition of Catullus 50 (as told in the poem itself), i.e. Catullus is stimulated by the charming company of Calvus to the extent that when he returns home he cannot do anything other than write a poem for him, Woodman says:

It is remarkable that we have on record a very similar sequence of events concerning the poet John Keats. One afternoon, probably in the October of 1816, Keats had been visiting his friend and literary mentor Leigh Hunt, and they fell to talking about poetry until evening. Since it was then too late for Keats to set off for home, he spent the night in the library at Hunt's cottage, where an extemporary bed had been made up for him on the sofa... But once settled down for the night, Keats, as he wrote to Hunt later about a different occasion, 'thought so much about poetry so long together that I could not get to sleep.'

Woodman quotes lines 350-3 and 396-403 to show how this situation revealed itself in Keats' poem:

The chimes
Of friendly voices had just given place
To as sweet a silence, when I 'gan retrace
The pleasant day, upon a couch at ease.

... The very sense of where I was might well
Keep Sleep aloof: but more than that there came
Thought after thought to nourish up the flame
Within my breast; so that the morning light
Surprised me even from a sleepless night;
And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,
Resolving to begin that very day
These lines.

I have marked in bold the textual similarities between the two poems:

472 n.b. Woodman here refers to Rollins (1958) 1.138 (10 May 1817).
HESTERNO, Licini, die otiosi
Multüm lusimus in meis tabellis,
Ut convenerat esse: delicatos
Scribens versiculos uterque nostrum,
Ludebat numero modò hoc, modò illóc,
Reddens mutua per jocum, atque vinum.
Atque illinc abii, tuo lepore
Incensus, Licini, facetiisque,
Ut nec me miserum cibus juvaret,
Nec somnus tegeret quulete ocellos;
Sed toto indomitus furore lecto
Versarer, cupiens videre lucem,
Ut tecum loqueret, simulque ut essem.
At defessa labore membra postquam
Semimortua lectulo jacebant,
Hoc, jucunde, tibi poem a feci,
Ex quo perspiceres meum dolorem. 473

At leisure, Licinius, yesterday
We'd much fun with my writing-tablets
[As we'd agreed: each of us
writing frivolous, light verses]
Played now with this metre, now that,
Capping each other's jokes and toasts.
Yes, I left there fired by
Your charm, Licinius, and wit,
So food gave poor me no pleasure
Nor could I rest my eyes in sleep
But wildly excited turned and tossed
Over the bed, longing for daylight
That I might be with you and talk.
But after my tired aching limbs
Were lying on the couch half dead,
I made this poem for you, the charmer,
So you could spot my trouble from it. 474

The first correspondence is that both poems are reportedly written under the same conditions. Both poets explain that they have stayed up all night following a glorious day of extreme creative stimulation. They also describe their experience in terms traditionally reserved for the poetic expression of love (tuo lepore / incensus... facetiisque - enflamed by your charm and wit - 50.8, and “flame / Within my breast” S&P 398-9). 475 Both exhibit a

473 There are another 4 lines in poem 50 that are here omitted because they do not correspond with the Keats poem.
474 The translation is from Lee (1990). His ‘leisure’ corresponds closely with Keats’ ‘ease’. I have amended the translation slightly according to the difference in punctuation of the source texts; line 3 tends now to be end-stopped and Nott’s colon is omitted. The two men therefore are thought to ‘have agreed to be delicatos’.
475 incensus is usually accompanied by the ablative form of amor (burning with love for someone) e.g. Catullus 64.253, where Bacchus burns for Ariadne: te querens, Ariadna, tuoque incensus amore. Licinius Calvus’ charm (lepos) is therefore given the force of love in Catullus’ poem.
delight in spending a day indulging their passion 'at ease' (S&P 353), and there is an informality and lightness to their approach to the traditionally serious business of literary creation, e.g. in Catullus' lusimus in meis tabellis (we played on my tablets - 50.2) and the diminutive form of versiculos (little verses - 50.4). Their tones are similarly sociable and personal, but there is a clear difference between Catullus’ freely erotic insinuation and the warmth and sincere respect, almost reverence, that comes across in Keats’ poem, especially in 396-7: “The very sense of where I was might well / Keep Sleep aloof,” referring to Hunt’s house, about which he writes in 354: “It was a poet’s house who keeps the keys / Of Pleasure’s temple.”

The ‘couch’ on which Keats reclined during his dies otiosa with Hunt, and his depiction of his host as the key holder to Pleasure’s temple, are classicizing affectations that imply that Keats and Hunt were engaging with classical culture before the poem was written, and thence promote in the reader an allusive sensitivity to a classical source.477 Both S&P and 50 (coupled with 51) are poems of high programmatic importance for their poets and the “schools” they appear to represent. They provide windows into alternative lifestyles and promote an accessible and human view of literature. “The apparent spontaneity of both poems,” Woodman warns, “should not lead us to think that each lacks weight; on the contrary, these poems each occupy unusually important positions in the work of their respective composers.”478 The allusiveness of S&P created by the classicizing content, extensive use of ecphrasis, and the Catullan contextual parallel (50), which is to some extent supported by both specific and thematic allusions to 64, whether they were intended or not, all have the potential to enable a reader to explore the allusive channels

476 Syntactically this line is poor, but the message is clear enough. n.b. One clear difference between the two poems is that Keats rises from his sleepless night ‘refresh’d, and glad, and gay’ whereas Catullus expresses his suffering (meum dolorem) to Licinius, probably in jokingly on account both of his ‘tragic’ separation from him and a hangover from all the toasts.
477 These sources are likely to be visual because of the ecphrastic nature of the description, but also literary because they are reprocessed by the literary medium of poetry.
between Keats' and Catullus' texts. The areas of allusion to Catullus are not exclusive enough of other sources to allow us to be absolutely sure of any conscious use of allusion to Catullus on the part of Keats. The evidence when viewed together is suggestive of partial and inclusive Catullan interaction. It brings me to the same conclusion as that given by the epigraph to this chapter that Keats was no purist when it came to allusion, and that there are multiple sources at work simultaneously.

The allusion to the myth of Ariadne and Catullus may be partly conducted via the use of allusion to a visual artistic mediator, i.e. Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne*, but this does not exclude simultaneous, direct textual allusion to Catullus, or other sources of the myth, or even experiences (artistic and otherwise) connected somehow in Keats' composing mind with the very experience of writing what he is simultaneously, seeing, reading, remembering and imagining. Keats seems to have had a particularly porous creative memory during composition, which enabled him to produce texts that at any given moment might draw on multiple and cross-media sources, connected by thematic, verbal, visual and emotional links of varying degrees of tenuousness. I do not wish to overstate the case because there is a slim chance that Keats had not read Catullus 64 when he wrote *S&P*. He had almost certainly been exposed to what Hunt printed in the *Examiner* because Enfield School took in the Hunts' Sunday paper, which is how Keats first came into contact with Hunt's politics and poetics. I would argue that if the 21-year-old Keats had experienced Catullus' poetry by late 1816, when he wrote *S&P*, it is unthinkable that Keats, the poet, voracious reader and lover of literature, could allude to the myth of Ariadne without being fully aware of its Catullan allusive potential.

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479 Clarke (1878) 122-5.
Counting kisses

We have already seen in the previous chapter that Keats engaged with Catullus 64 (and poem 8) in his retelling of the Ariadne and Bacchus myth. In *Endymion* Keats also makes use of another Catullan theme, counting during acts of intimacy:

Soon, as it seemed, we left our journeying high, and straightway into frightful eddies swoop’d; Such as ay muster where grey time has scoop’d Huge dens and caverns in a mountain’s side: There hollow sounds arous’d me, and I sigh’d To faint once more by looking on my bliss - I was distracted; madly did I kiss
The wooing arms which held me, and did give My eyes at once to death: but 'twas to live, To take in draughts of life from the gold fount Of kind and passionate looks; to count, and count The moments, by some greedy help that seem’d A second self, that each might be redeem’d And plunder’d of its load of blessedness. (*Endymion* i.653-660)

In Catullus’ 5th, 7th and 48th poems the poet famously mentions the counting of kisses. In 5 (*vivamus mea Lesbia...*) Catullus suggests that he and Lesbia kiss many thousands of times and then muddle up the numbers in order to avoid any malicious observer being able to know the number of their kisses: *conturbabimus illa ne sciamus / aut ne quis malus invidere possit / cum tantum sciat esse basiorum* (‘We’ll muddle them so as not to know / Or lest some villain overlook us / Knowing the total of our kisses’). In this case it appears to be best if no one knows how many kisses the lovers share, not even the lovers themselves. The kiss-counting old men, and accurate enumeration of their kisses, both seem to represent an external threat to the ideal universe of the lovers. The act of kiss counting introduces the unwelcome phenomenon of quantity to a situation of joyous abandon, which without the oppressive rule of quantity and time would never end. The
quest for infinite and ideal love is a preoccupation of both poets, as shall become apparent.\(^{41}\)

Catullus' 7\(^{th}\) poem deals with the concept of amorous satisfaction and excess: *Quaeris quot mihi basiationes / Tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque* ('You ask how many of your mega-kisses / Would more than satisfy me, Lesbia'). Catullus responds to the query with well-worn but carefully subverted poetic tropes describing infinity.\(^{42}\) Poem 48 is not addressed to Lesbia, but a male youth called Juventius, and in it Catullus says that he could continue kissing him forever, even "if their osculation's crop / Were closer-packed than dried corn-ears" (*si densior aridis aristis / sit nostrae seges osculationis*). Keats' 'moment counting' in *Endymion* deals with a similar problem, i.e. the transience of sexual pleasure, but it attempts a different and equally fanciful solution. Keats' solution is preservation by counting: "to count, and count / The moments, by some greedy help that seem'd / A second self, that each might be redeem'd / And plunder'd of its load of blessedness." The theme of lovers counting whilst kissing is what initially suggests the link to Catullus. The repetition of 'count' then strengthens the connection by recalling the repetitive demands made on Lesbia by Catullus in 5: *da mi basia mille, dein deinde centum, dein mille altera, dein secunda centum, dein deinde usque altera mille, dein centum* ('give me a thousand kisses, then give a hundred, / then give another thousand, then give a second hundred, / then give me another thousand, then a hundred.' 5.7-9). It is tempting to suggest that there might be some kind of "correction" of Catullus' approach to kiss counting in Keats' poem. The correction would be that counting kisses somehow preserves them to be savored later. I think that this would be taking it too far, but both poems certainly deal with erotic

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\(^{41}\) This is a Catullan theme that occurs in *Hush hush tread softly*, in which may be detected other influences from Catullus, but they are not certain enough to warrant full discussion here.

\(^{42}\) The obvious and simple figurations of infinity, i.e. number of grains of sand in the desert and stars in the sky, are beautifully seasoned with subversive and libidinous references to extramarital sex. The now extinct laser root for which Cyrene was famed (*lasarpiciferis... Cyrenis - laser-bearing Cyrene*) is likely to have been used in birth control, and the stars look down on the 'furtive loves of humankind' (*furtivos hominum vident amores*).
insatiability and the finiteness of pleasure. A correction would seem to necessitate a more explicit anchoring of the target to the source text. But it is not impossible that Keats intended this subtle and nuanced triangulation between his text, his reader and Catullus. In any case the connection is very much there to be made; there are possible intermediary sources in the form of imitations, but it is unlikely that they would exert enough pull away from their Catullan source to attract an author and his readers who have experienced the original.483

The allusion to Catullus fits with Ricks’ assessment of Keats’ mode of allusion as a ‘bonus’ not an ‘entrance fee’, but such an assessment tells us very little because it could be said of the vast majority of literary engagements.484 It means that the poetry can be experienced by those who do not see the connection to Catullus, but a reader who does see the connection receives a “bonus”, which could come in the form of the self-assuring warmth of recognition, and/or the satisfaction of literary learning rewarded, and/or a momentary flash back to the reception of the source (and concomitant judgment of whether or not it affects the meaning of the target text). In Keats’ poem it is this model of flashback to the reception of the source that enriches the poem by creating depth and the possibility of plural meanings. It is important to note that especially with Keats’ allusion it is the poet’s reception of the source, not the source text per se that Keats tows his reader through. This, of course, works at some level alongside the young poet’s desire to prove himself by exhibiting his classical learning, whilst at the same time displaying his political colours by his selection from classical culture, i.e. the more ‘liberal’ Catullus, and not for example the more ‘conservative’ Horace or Pope’s Iliad.

483 There are a number of allusions in Romantic poetry to Pope’s version of the Iliad that do not appear to engage with Homer directly, but this was a canonical poem, and in its own right ‘a classic.’ An imitation of a short lyric of Catullus is unlikely to have had the same effect. 484 Ricks (2002) 165.
"Think not of it, sweet one so"

_Think not of it sweet one so (Think)_ was probably written around 11th November 1817, when Keats was in the process of finishing his fourth book of _Endymion_, which also alludes to Catullus 64, as seen in the previous chapter. It was not published during Keats' lifetime but was discovered in the Reynolds-Hood commonplace book. Think alludes to two separate but often-conflated Catullan tropes, lovers counting, as above, and the death of a lover’s pet. It is a short poem so I shall give it in full:

Think not of it, sweet one, so,
   Give it not a tear.
Sigh thou mayst, and bid it go
   Any, any where.

Do not look so sad, sweet one -
   Sad and fadingly.
Shed one drop, then it is gone,
   Oh, 'twas born to die.

Still so pale? then, dearest, weep -
   Weep, I'll count the tears,
And each one shall be a bliss
   For thee in after years.

Brighter has it left thine eyes
   Than a sunny rill,
And thy whispering melodies
   Are tenderer still.

Yet, as all things mourn awhile
   At fleeting blisses,
E'en let us too! But be our dirge
   A dirge of kisses.

_Think_ is a poem of consolation, addressed to a young woman whose pet has died. "Oh 'twas born to die", if applied to a dead human, would be uncharacteristically dark for Keats, and the earliest manuscript has in its place: “Sweetly did it die” (my italics). The _epicedion_ or _consolatio_ is a classical poetic trope with a rich history on which Keats could have drawn. Classical literature has many eulogies for dead pets, particularly in Greek

485 It was first printed in _Keats_ (1848) 2.257.

486 Keats returns to the dead bird theme in late 1818 or early 1819 with a song, _I had a dove, and the sweet dove died_. There appears to be no engagement made with Catullus.
epigram, but the most famous dead domestic birds are found in Ovid’s *Amores* 2.6, Statius’ *Silvae* 2.4, and Catullus 3. The playfulness and eroticism of Keats’ poem and the presence of a separate allusion to another Catullan *topos* (intimate counting) aligns it most closely with Catullus 3, which is concerned with the death of Lesbia’s pet sparrow. As discussed in the introduction the sparrow (2,3) and kiss poems (5,7, 48) were the Catullan poems most widely circulated before and during the Romantic era, so they would have been familiar to most regular readers of poetry. 487

In *Think* we find the same preservation of emotion as we do in *Endymion* 1.653f. This time the things counted are ‘tears’, which with counting become future blisses. The final stanza introduces both Keats’ persona’s real intention in the poem, i.e. to turn the girl’s emotional situation to his favour, and another subtle syntactical allusion to Catullus:

“Yet, as all things mourn awhile / At fleeting blisses, / E’en let us too! But be our dirge / A dirge of kisses.” It seems completely natural to use subjunctive ‘let us…’ in such a context, but I would argue that it is so because of Catullus 5 and its translations, which all variously begin “let us live and love.” In the first line of the fourth stanza Keats writes: “Brighter has it left thine eyes,” which focuses on the effect the mourning has had on his lover’s eyes. In reality no one looks better after crying. It is possible that this obvious lie, designed to seduce his lover, is perhaps revealed not only by the reader’s own experience of crying eyes, but also by allusion to the end of Catullus 3, in which Catullus’ persona chides the shades of Orcus for making his girl’s eyes swollen and red:

O factum malé! o miselle passer!
Tuâ nunc operâ meae puellae
Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli. (3.16-18)

O hapless bird! o fatal deed!
That makes my Lesbia’s bosom bleed;
And, her eyes swell’n with many a tear,
Bids the red streak of grief appear. 488

487 c.f. Introduction, page 1f.
488 Latin text and translation from Nott (1795) 1.10-11.
The presence of kissing, counting, a dead pet, mourning female lover, pressing male protagonist, 'let us...' and the focus on the effect of mourning on the eyes, all within an erotic and playful mock *epicedion*, make this poem a Catullan locus *par excellence*, a fusion of the most famous Catullan poems (3 and 5). Keats' persuasion of the female lover to abandon her traditional mourning and join him instead to a 'dirge of kisses' are more overtly insensitive than Catullus is in poem 3. Both Keats and Catullus subvert their *consolationes* with eroticism, but Keats' veil of eulogy is substantially thinner than Catullus'. It is often the case that an alluding poet exaggerates the interpretative element that drew him or her to the source in the first place. The suturing of Catullan poems (3 and 5) by Keats and the exaggeration of Catullan subversive eroticism show that Keats is again sharing with the reader his experience of reading Catullus rather than directing them back to the Catullan text itself.\(^{499}\)

**Isabella and the Realms of Gold**

Between February and April 1818 Keats wrote *Isabella*, a free adaptation from Boccaccio's *Decameron* (novel 5) in *ottava rima*.\(^{490}\) While introducing the reader to his star-crossed lovers, Isabella and Lorenzo, he alludes to Catullus 64. In stanza 11 Keats situates his lovers "close in a bower of hyacinth and musk, / Unknown of any, free from whispering tale. / Ah! better had it been forever so, / Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe." In placing them in this idyllic and remote *locus amoenus* he acknowledges a future and minacious 'whispering tale' (86), which sets up a similar relationship between the bubble of two lovers and a corrupt external world to that which we find in Catullus 5 (*vivamus mea Lesbia*...). In 5 Catullus' *rumores... senum severiorum* (rumours of severe

\(^{499}\) c.f. for example *Ode on a Grecian Urn* which does not describe a vase so much as Keats' reception of that vase.

\(^{490}\) It was not published until 1820.
old men - 5.2) threaten the pleasure of Catullus and Lesbia. Keats allows his reader to know that ‘idle ears’ will, later in the story, ‘pleasure in their woe’ (88), and it is this mention of ‘woe’ that stimulates the rhetorical question:

Were they unhappy then?—it cannot be—
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,
Too many sighs give we them in fee,
Too much of pity after they are dead,
Too many doleful stories do we see,
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read;
Except in such a page where Theseus’ spouse
Over the pathless waves towards him bows. (89-96)

Keats here displays a reluctance to write a tale of unhappy love, which he suggests are already numerous in number and, importantly, are best read in “bright gold”. I would suggest that by “bright gold” Keats refers specifically to Classical literature. If we were to apply the same symbolic meaning of ‘gold’ in our approach to On first looking into Chapman’s Homer we would understand that Keats’ travelling “through the realms of gold” seems to refer to his experience of Classical literature (in translation):

Much have I travell’d in the realms of gold,
And many goody states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Before Keats picked up Chapman’s version of Homer his reading of Greek literature had not struck him as deeply as he thought it should. According to the sonnet and Clarke’s

491 “My friends laugh at you! I know some of them - when I know all of them I shall never think of them again as friends or even acquaintance. My friends have behaved well to me in every instance but one, and there they have become tattlers, and inquisitors into my conduct: spying on a secret I would rather die than share it with any of them again. If I am the Theme, I will not be the Friend of idle Gossips. Good gods what a shame it it our Loves should be put so into the microscope of a Coterie. Their laughs should not effect you... These Laugthers, who do not like you, who envy you for your Beauty... People are revengeful - do not mind them - do nothing but love me... Do not let my name ever pass between you and those laughers, if I have no other merit than the great Love for you, that were sufficient to keep me sacred and unmentioned in society.” - To Fanny Brawne June 1820 (just before publication of Lamia... and Other Poems, 1820). This letter shows the kind of emotional experience that would have fed into Keats’s reading of the rumores in c.5. Even if he read the poem a long time ago, any contemporary engagement with that text in his own writings cannot have failed to be influenced by this real life situation. It is probable that the literary experience influenced his emotional response to the real life situation and the concomitant epistolary expression above. The literary world, where Keats spent most of his waking hours, may be seen to have encroached on his perception of social reality.
Recollections (pp.128-30) this all changed after he experienced Chapman's version. This appreciation of Greek literature through the adaptations of a "real" English poet, rather than the translations (often in Latin) of scholars, or Pope, who for the Cockneys was stylistically out of favour, runs roughly parallel with Hunt's idea that: "a single page of Spenser or one morning at the Angerstein Gallery, will make him better acquainted with it [ancient Greece] than a dozen such folios as Spence's Polymetis, or all the mythologists and book-poets who have attempted to draw Greek inspiration from a Latin fount." Keats wrote Chapman's Homer when he was first courting the attention of Hunt, who had become his literary hero from his reading of the Examiner at Enfield School. It is no coincidence therefore that in the sonnet should be found a particularly Huntian attitude towards classical culture.

The Page and Metrical Allusion

Turning back to the meaning of the stanza in Isabella stanza 12 (ll.89-96):

Were they unhappy then?—it cannot be—
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,
Too many sighs give we them in fee,
Too much of pity after they are dead,
Too many doleful stories do we see,
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read;
Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

McPeek (1939) tentatively suggested that there might be a Catullan source at play here by writing: "We may fancy that Keats contemplated it [64] momentarily when he wrote (Isabella, xii)." The phrases 'we may fancy' and 'contemplated momentarily' show that McPeek felt that he was going out on a limb with this suggestion. The connection to 64 is clear, and it is not as fleeting an engagement as 'momently' would have us believe. Keats is saying here

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492 Hunt (1870) A Day by the Fire 59.
that the best tales of sad lovers are to be found in Greek literature, with the exception of Catullus 64, which is, of course, written in Latin:

Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse
Over the pathless waves towards him bows. (*Isabella* 95-6)

The mention of 'page' makes this stanza explicit evidence of Keats' ability to allude to the myth of Catullus 64, not only via visual or material mediations such as Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne*, but also directly to the text. With this assurance in Keats' ability to access Catullus' text directly, combined with the knowledge that Keats was a capable Latin reader, the following allusion, which depends on an intimate familiarity with the Latin text, is more convincing than it might otherwise be. The thought of star-crossed lovers, which seems to have stirred Keats' memory of his reception of Catullus 5 (perhaps both as a reader and a writer by this point), may have jolted his 'Catullan memory' to the extent that his experience of other Catullan themes then began to feed into his composing consciousness. The thought of Ariadne and Theseus may have brought back memories of his reception of Catullus 64. It may be that as Keats recalled his reception of 64 he recalled the sound of a particularly memorable passage, which harks back to a better time when love could cross the 'social' divide between mortals and immortals:

\[
\text{Tüm Thêtdis Pêléüs incénus fêrtr amôre,} \\
\text{Tüm Thêtis hûmanós non déspext hyménæos,} \\
\text{Tüm Thêtida pâtër îpsè jûgándum Pêlea sënsit. (64.19-21)}
\]

I would argue that we find in *Isabella* stanza 12 a rare example of metrical allusion to a Latin text. The repetition of the dactylic 'Too many' in consecutive lines, appears to echo

493 It is possible that the 'page' contained a print of a visual interpretation of the myth, but I think it is unlikely that Keats would use the word 'page' to refer to a plate. It could of course also refer to a translated page.
494 The text is Nott (1795) 2.6. His translation on facing page: "For Thetis then, 'tis said, young Peleus burn'd; / His mortal flame fond Thetis then return'd; / Then too her sire consented they should wed. / Convince'd that Peleus well deserv'd the maid." (64.23-26) I have marked the lines with acute accents to denote stressed long-vowel and circumflexes to denote short syllables. Unmarked vowels are all long unstressed apart from the final foot of line 20, where the diphthong æ is accented.
the stark sonic shift in 64. This dactylic anaphora emphatically marks Catullus’ shift from *Argonautica*-style epic to a cross-genre epyllion. It is a particularly memorable feature of the poem especially for a reader as sensitive to the sound of poetry as we might imagine Keats to have been. Latin was pronounced differently in Britain from how it is generally pronounced today. The thrice repeated Tüm Thêt- sound, which creates the memorably percussive dactylic effect that I suggest Keats might recall in his four-fold repetition of ‘Too many,’ could not have been significantly different (even if the Thê- syllable was incorrectly pronounced as long (*Th-ay-tis*), which strikes me as unlikely). It is not the first engagement in this chapter that has operated on both the writer and reader sides by an aural trigger, but it is the first and only example of Keats engaging specifically with Catullan Latin. With this engagement emerges a more linguistically capable and learned Keats than has been seen before. Since this engagement with Catullus appears to operate on a closer textual level than any other it is likely that when Keats began *Isabella* he had recently returned to the Catullan text. He had only recently finished *Endymion* 4, which engages (as we have seen) with 64, so it is possible that he had access to a copy of the text around this time, i.e. October 1817 to March 1818. This idea is supported by a rare textual correspondence that might link Keats’ text to a specific edition of his source. This is page 38 in volume 2 of Nott’s (1795) *The Poems of Caius Valerius Catullus.*

495 E.g. See Bailey’s letter to Milnes: “Indeed his sense of melody was quite exquisite... One of his favourite topics of discourse was the principle of melody in Verse, upon which he had his own notions, particularly in the management of open & close vowels... He was himself, as already observed, a master of melody.” Rollins (1965) 2.277.

496 See Allen (1978) Appendix B, especially 105: “It was a strangely pronounced language, far removed from classical Latin, which was current in England by the nineteenth century.” Allen remarks that: “By the mid nineteenth century, however, schoolmasters were beginning at least to observe vowel-length in open syllables (doubtless owing to the exigencies of metrical teaching)...” Nott’s edition of Catullus (1795) provides a metrical key for the poems, which shows an interest in and understanding of Latin metre and pronunciation by the end of the 18th century. This shows that Keats (and others) had access to metrical readings of Catullus’ poems. Whether or not they followed them is another matter.

497 c.f. p.248f.

498 An aural appreciation of the text shows an uncommon familiarity with the Latin.
Is CATULLI CARMINA. CA. 61.

Pars è divulso raptabant membra juvenco:
Pars sese tortis serpentibus incingebant:
Pars obscura cavis celebrabant orgia cistis,
Orgia, que frustra cupiunt audire profanis:
Plangebant alii proceris tympana palmis,
Aut tereti tenues tinnitus se ciebant:
Multi raciisonis effabant cornua bombis,
Barbarique horribili stridebat tibia cantu.

Raptabant membra juvenco. This custom, of the bacchanals tearing, and eating raw every kind of animal they could meet with, is mentioned by Ovid, in the story of Pentheus, Metam. 3. and thus too Euripides:

Raptabant membra juvenco. This custom, of the bacchanals tearing, and eating raw every kind of animal they could meet with, is mentioned by Ovid, in the story of Pentheus, Metam. 3. and thus too Euripides:

Wreathing their bodies, and even binding their hair with serpents, in their rites, is another ceremony recorded by many writers, as Plutarch, Euripides, and others. Thus Horace:

Tu separatis vocibus in jugis,
Nuda serpentes viperina
Histrionicum sind fraudes cruces.

Hor. Od. 19. Lib. 2.

And o'er the pathless mountain's height,
Her head with horrid snakes enroll'd,
Which harpless writhe their angry fold,
Thy raptur'd priestess speeds her flight.

Francis.

Vossius, who has a very long and learned note upon this subject, remarks, that no satisfactory reason has been given for the custom;

Figure 31

As can be seen in the above image page 38 of Nott's second volume contains the Latin text of 64 that Keats alludes to in Sleep and Poetry (143-7) and book 4 of Endymion (4.193-208). The verbal trigger that connects it with this stanza of Isabella is not found in the
Latin text, or in the note below the Latin, which contains a verse translation of Horace 2.19 by Ann Francis (bap. 1738, d. 1800).499

And o'er the pathless mountain's height,
Her head with horrid snakes enroll'd,
Which harmless writhe their angry fold,
Thy raptur'd priestess speeds her flight.

"Pathless" is not an infrequently used epithet in the translation of classical and particularly Greek poetry and it may be that in his 'travels' Keats came across the expression "pathless waves" (Isabella 96) in Potter's translation of Aeschylus's Agamemnon.500 It could therefore be seen as a broadly classicizing adjective. Seeing, however, as it is likely that Keats read the above page in Nott's edition of Catullus' poems because it is from the most accessible edition available at the time, it is worth mentioning that this translation of Horace's ode in the note may have been "filed away" as a Catullan experience in Keats' memory, and for this reason was recalled by him when writing about 64.

A Grecian Urn and Ariadne's Ashes

Jeffrey Cox argues that: "the 'legend' that 'haunts about' the shape of Keats' urn is the same as that depicted on the Portland Vase, i.e. that of Catullus' odd wedding poem [64]."501 In this assertion he is in agreement with Skalsky (1992), who has argued for connections between the vase and Catullus' poem not only in terms of subject matter but also style of mythic engagement.502 Cox tells us that the relationship between 64 and Keats' ode is manifest in "Keats's use of a Catullan style and his pursuit of a Catullan argument

500 See, e.g., Potter (1808) 181: "Whilst heroes, breathing vengeance, snatch their shields, / And trace her light oars o'er the pathless waves..."
502 For recent scholarship supporting the connection between 64 and the vase see Harrison (1992) and Skalsky (1992). n.b. Many other theories exist, see Painter and Whitehouse's paper in Newby (1991) 33-43 with full bibliography. I am not convinced by Cox's argument that the Portland Vase has anything to do Keats' relationship with 64, beyond perhaps its contribution to his experience of classically inspired visual culture.
against the epic and the heroic," rather than any 'specific connections' per se.\textsuperscript{503} The 'Catullan style' Cox speaks of is characterized by a "delight in toying with what others consider serious in the name of a linguistic and also finally an erotic delight."\textsuperscript{504} This may be identified in 64, for example, in the erotic subversion of Ariadne's lament (64.63-7):

\begin{quote}
Non flavo retinens subtilem veritce mitram,
Non contecta levi velatum pectus amictu,
Non tereti strophiio lactentis vincta papillas,
Omnia quae toto delapsa e corpore passim
Ipsius ante pedes fluctus salis alludebant.
\end{quote}

Not keeping fine-spun snood upon her golden head,
Not covered by light raiment over veiled bosom,
Not tied about the milky paps with rounded band,
All which had slipped down off her body in disarray
And at her feet salt waves were playing games with them. (Lee 1990 translation)

The unique quality of this style, which Keats may have learned in part from Catullus, is the subtlety and incompleteness of the subversion. Although Catullus threatens the serious tone of the tragic lament by introducing an erotic element, he does so with a delicacy that saves it from being 'undercut' and ruining the primary tragic effect. He pitches his element of 'play' at such a level that it does not disturb the overall effect, but deepens our emotional attachment to it by the humanness of the image, and simultaneously enhances its aesthetic appeal by its use of nudity. It is very difficult to explain the way in which it achieves what it does because the balance is so fine, but I would argue that Keats displays a similar ability to weave in challenges to the unity of the primary tone without quite tipping the balance and disturbing the overall effect. There are a number of puns in the ode that by their artificial nature could draw attention away from the message of the poem, but somehow they do not have this effect.\textsuperscript{505} This kind of balance results in depth, realism and a pleasant friction and delay in reception. In Keats' poem this can be seen in his opening,

\textsuperscript{503} Cox (1998) 164.
\textsuperscript{504} ibid. 162.
\textsuperscript{505} There is an interesting parallel between Keats' embedded and non-functional punning and his allusions that do not work like allusions.

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wherein the puns, or polysemes, of ‘still’, with both its temporal and kinetic meanings, and
‘brede’ (in conjunction with ‘overwrought’), which has sexual as well as decorative
connotations.

Thou still unravish’d bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
... O Attic shape! Fair attitude! With brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought...

I accept Cox’s notion that Keats was an advocate of a Cockney and ‘Catullan
argument against the epic and the heroic.’ Hunt explicitly casts himself as a modern day
Catullus by printing the epithalamium of poem 61 on the occasion of the royal wedding of
Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Zaalfeld, explicitly drawing
attention to his desire to celebrate their love rather than to write about war, as he claimed
all the other poets were busy doing. It is in poem 64 that Catullus most conspicuously
challenges the heroic, which he does by showing sympathy for the ‘collateral damage’ of
the epic quest, not only in Ariadne’s lament but also, for example, in the song of the Parcae
(64.348-51):

Illius egregias virtutes claraque facta
Saepe fatebuntur gnatorum in funere matres
Cum incultum cano solvent a virtice crinem
Putriaque infirmis variabunt pectora palmis.

His [Achilles’] extraordinary virtues and famed deeds
Shall mothers often own at their sons’ funeral,
When they shall loose dishevelled hair from their white crowns
And with impotent palms shall bruise their withered breasts.

In the rest of his book Catullus’ focus on otium as opposed to negotium, and the salacious
underbelly of Rome rather than the austere façade, may also be interpreted as a less
explicit expression of his rejection of epic and the orthodox morality it shored up. In
Grecian Urn Keats may be expressing his ‘Catullan’ and ‘Cockney’ principle of

506 c.f. 178f.
celebrating sexual love as a symbol of an alternative, unorthodox, but civilized, culturally
authorized and progressive lifestyle, but I am not sure that he can be seen in this poem to
engage with Catullus at any other level.

The problem with literary connections formed by ‘style’ and ‘argument’, as
opposed to direct verbal links, is not only that they are harder to prove, but also that they
may not even exist outside the beholder’s eye. Taken in isolation the specific connections
that Cox offers are vague and unconvincing, but interestingly they match my own
reception of Keats’ ode. This kind of anecdotal corroboration is, of course, inadmissible as
evidence in the case for a literary connection, but it does suggest that there is something in
*Grecian Urn* that triggers a response from readers who are primed to detect a Catullan
influence. The nature of this ‘something’ is not easy to define. I have previously found
ingenious ways to tease out textual connections between *Grecian Urn* and Catullus 64, but
I am now of a conviction that they are figments of my imagination generated from a deep
familiarity with both poets, who seem to have certain aesthetic and social ambitions. But if
there was no correspondence between these two poems, then I would not be writing about
them here. It may be that Keats’ *Grecian Urn*, written in 1819, is an example of where the
influence of Catullus has become indistinguishable from Keats’ own imagination, and the
reception of Catullus has become so deeply ingrained in Keats’ memory that it is no longer
perceptible as an external influence. This may not be as far-fetched as it sounds. Indeed it
is certainly less strained than some of Cox’s and my own attempts to link the two poems
with textual correspondences that cannot be detected by reasonable means.\(^{508}\) The most
attractive of the connections between the two poems is found in stanza 4, which Cox
reminds us is, “The most admired part of the poem and one for which we have struggled to
discover a model or prototype.” He continues: “Keats’s description of the abandoned town

\(^{508}\) On ‘associations’ see introduction p.5f and Martindale (2005) 76-7.
is tantalizingly close to Catullus' account of the desertion of Thessaly as everyone journeys to attend the wedding of Peleus and Thetis.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of its folk this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return. (31-40)

This may correspond to 64.31-42:

Quae simul optatae finito tempore luces
Advenere, domum convenitu tota frequentat
Thessalia; oppletur laetantl regia coetu:
Dona ferunt: praet declarant gaudia vultu.
Deseritur Scyros; linquunt Phthiotica Tempe,
Grajugenasque domos, ac moenia Larissaeae:
Pharsalum coëunt, Pharsalia tecta frequentant.
Rura colit nemo; mollescunt colla juvencis;
Non humilis curvis purgatur vinea rastris;
Non glebam prono convellit vomere taurus;
Non falx attenuat frondatorum arboris umbram;
Squalida desertis robigo infertur aratris.

At length love's long-expected hours are come,
All Thessaly frequents thy blissful home:
See, drest in smiles, what joyous numbers wait
With costly gifts, and throng thy palace gate!
See, in Pharsalus how the crowds prevail,
Forsaking Scyros, Phthian Tempe's vale,
Each Grecian city and Larissa's wall!
Pharsalian dwellings now assemble all!
No hind now cultures the neglected soil,
With neck relax'd the steer foregoes its toil,
No rake now weeds the vineyard's humble bough,
No bullock drags o'er furrow'd glebe the plough,
No hook molests the too luxuriant shade,
And with corroding rust the share's overspread. 509

The assembly of all the inhabitants of a now empty town for a ceremony is what these two passages immediately have in common. Although Keats is unsure as to whether the amassing figures are set: 'In Tempe or the dales of Arcady,' the fact that he mentions Tempe identifies the imagined region as Thessaly, the same pastoral region of Greece

509 Nott (1795) 2.8-11.
Catullus has emptied of its folk for the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. The mortals in Catullus’ poem do set off for home and back to their town in 64.276-7, but it is not explicitly stated whether or not they make it. The post-Apocalyptic ‘Golden Age’ description that Catullus embarks on in lines 38-42, in which the necks of the oxen become soft and the ploughshare rusts with disuse, suggests that the people never return, or that time has somehow inexplicably sped up. The people in Catullus’ poem have been detained by a wedding ceremony and extended ecphrastic digression in a similar manner to that in which Keats’ folk are detained by their sacrificial ceremony, and more importantly the atemporal stasis of the urn on which they are depicted. Cox explains that, “These passages gesture towards a loss, an absence, that underwrites the poems’ more apparent argument.” I agree with Cox’s assessment; both formerly inhabited regions are left similarly desolate, and both passages represent cracks in the surface of their respective mythical narratives through which darker significances lurk.

The features that the two poems have in common might well bring them together in a reader’s mind. We might even imagine that Keats was aware of this Catullan influence, if it is a Catullan influence. I would argue that in Grecian Urn no attempt is made by the author to bring Catullus’ poem into the reception of the reader. Neither is there any sign that Keats has consciously concealed his source. The Catullan connection can only, I believe, be generated ‘reader-side, ’ and the triggers for such a creative reception are: the classical subject matter, a potentially subversive style, the knowledge of former connections, its ecphrastic form, and antimilitaristic principles. This does not, however, mean that Keats was not influenced by Catullus’ poem at some level, and this influence, if

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510 Catullus appears to simultaneously mock the solemnity of proceedings and the pomposity of epic tradition by subverting a traditional ‘golden age’ description by introducing it where it does not quite fit.

511 Cox (2009) 620. n.b. This passage of Keats’ poem may have a political dimension similar to that of Oliver Goldsmith’s Deserted Village, i.e. a protest against Enclosure of formerly public lands, which caused many rural dwellers in the 18th and 19th centuries to migrate to the cities. See Kelly (2010).

512 On the antimilitaristic principles see Cox (2009) 620f.
it was at work on Keats, may have subtly fed into the composition of the poem, and even now be dimly perceivable in its manner of meaning rather than in any straightforward verbal correspondence.

In this chapter I have shown the range of different ways that Keats engages with Catullus, and compared it with his engagement with the work of Shakespeare and Mary Tighe. This engagement varies from the most vague, reader-side association to a highly specific, author-driven allusion, via a spectrum of other kinds of engagement differentiated by, for example, the level of consciousness of the receiving poet and his desire to embed or conceal his sources. I have presented evidence of Keats' reading John Nott's bilingual edition of Catullus, printed in 1795, and shown that it is likely that he studied deeply and became familiar with, at least in part, not only the English translation, but also the Latin text, and even Nott's scholarly notes. A generation has passed since Woodman suggested that there might be a connection between the two poets, and I hope that the nature of this connection is now as clear as it can be. I have argued that Keats had more than enough linguistic capability to read Catullus in Latin, as well as access to read it in English. We know from the introduction to his translation of poem 63, Atys, that Leigh Hunt read Nott's translation and it is more than likely that he passed the book on to Keats, or at least recommended it to him, not long after their first meeting in 1816.513

We see that there are a few topics within Keats' poetic output that are uniquely Catullan. These are kiss-counting, dead pets, and Ariadne and Bacchus. The first two topics are engaged with by Keats in a different way from the last. This could be because the kiss and sparrow poems were first encountered by Keats earlier in his

513 Hunt in The Reflector (1811) 1.166: "There has hitherto been none, I believe, in our language but by the anonymous Translator of Catullus, who in the notes to his work has shewn a taste singularly contradicted by his poetry, and of whose translation it may be said altogether, that it possesses nothing whatever to atone for such a gross violation of decency as a complete version of Catullus must necessarily be."
poetic career, perhaps at school, or before he came to know Leigh Hunt. These poems were also in wider poetic circulation (in anthologies of British poetry, for example) and their images and sentiments had therefore become part of the established national poetic landscape.\textsuperscript{514} Countless English mediations may therefore have fed into Keats reception of the poems. The engagement with Ariadne and Bacchus, however, is more nuanced and the myth appears to be loaded with contemporary political significance. As I have shown in the previous chapter, its symbolic application seems to have been developed as a shared interest of a few writers of the Cockney school.

I have also briefly touched on the reception of Keats as an effeminate.\textsuperscript{515} In the mid 1930s Douglas Bush lamented the ‘congenital faults of taste and certain baneful literary influences, both Elizabethan and contemporary’ that interfered with the ‘masculine and classical style’ that Keats exhibited in \textit{On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer} before regaining it once more in \textit{Hyperion}. This narrative of progress from “congenital” feminine weakness to masculine and classical maturity is as misleading as it is distasteful to modern ears. One of these “baneful,” feminine, and non-classical influences on Keats during the period in which he wrote \textit{Sleep and Poetry} and \textit{Endymion}, we now know, was Catullus. We might be tempted to conclude that Keats used Catullus to help him challenge contemporary normative attitudes to gender, or perhaps to justify his own ambivalence towards the prevailing binary notions towards it. It is not always, however, necessary to stretch literary reception onto a frame of social utility. It is enough, I think, to suggest that this common ground of anti-masculinist expression, along with the other biographical coincidences discussed above, was a

\textsuperscript{514} See Gaisser (2009) 198.

\textsuperscript{515} See Wolfson in De Almeida Ed. (1990) 317-349.
potential area of connection, which might have drawn Keats to Catullus and into a relationship with his poetry.¹¹⁶

As I have become more familiar with Keats' poetry and his sources I have been surprised by the extent of both his assimilation and use of other poets' work. But Keats' writing is remarkable not only for the extent to which he draws on other poets, but also the smoothness of the surface reading of poems that might be populated by a dozen sources mixed together from literary and visual culture at any one time. Catullus' poems make up an important part of Keats' 'eternal book', or store of experience, something which has not before been fully realized.

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The aim of this thesis was to shed light on the reception of Catullus in the Romantic era, in which the full extent of his poetic achievement was first presented in English. Before Nott's pioneering translation in 1795 the public perception of Catullus was dependent on limited access to a small number of his chaster poems, which were frequent objects of study in school, and popular sources of imitation in anthologies of English poetry. Wordsworth's early imitations of poems 3 and 5, *The Death of a Starling* and *To Lesbia*, are examples of a schoolboy interaction with Catullus. He was, however, a particularly talented schoolboy, and attending a forward-looking school that encouraged a creative engagement with classical literature. His further engagement with poem 45, a relatively close translation presumably made when he had recently gone up to Cambridge, proved that he returned to Catullus later in his development as a poet. His early creative engagement with Latin literature and particularly the poetry of Catullus seems to have instilled in him a highly textual and allusive approach to the art of writing, which he was to hone throughout his later career.

Catullus' highly selected perception in the late eighteenth century was further informed by a vague notion of his unfortunate immorality. This was supported by many articles in literary journals, in which it seems to have been de rigueur when mentioning Catullus to explain that he had been corrupted by the manners of a dissolute age, accounting for the obscenity of much of his poetry. Such apologies for Catullus' coarser and morally wayward side were prevalent late into the Victorian age when, for example, Theodore Martin published his expurgated translation in 1861. In 1795 through Nott's bilingual edition the English reader, and especially one with a basic grasp of the Latin language, could for the first time experience something approaching the full force of Catullus. The easy-reading translation and illuminating and learned notes opened up sides
to Catullus’ work that were thought potentially damaging to polite society and had been suppressed for nearly three centuries after his first arrival on British soil. My research and this thesis have shown the extent of the influence of Nott’s edition on those who followed him. It deeply informed the later receptions of George Lamb, Leigh Hunt and John Keats.

Lamb’s expurgated translation, which has previously been assessed to have been written in a style very much of its time, was widely ridiculed by critics. The contemporary critical verdict was that, although it looked and sounded the part, it lacked the force of the original and was bland. If he had not been the Hon. George Lamb he presumably could have expected far worse treatment. His translation is also in my view somehow unconvincing as a piece of writing. It “borrows” too much from Nott in the translation, and too much from all his predecessors in the preface and notes. Aside from his verse preface, which perhaps deserves more treatment as a poem in its own right, and to some extent his version of Atys, his translation has the over-processed ‘feel’ of a compilation, rather than having any real stamp of genuine character, which seems essential for a translation of Catullus, whose poetry trades so heavily on the conceit of the lyric I.

In Catullus’ poetry, Thomas Moore, and by his example, a young Lord Byron found a mode of poetry that suited both their mischievous streaks and their interrelated literary and social ambitions. The celebrity, or anti-hero, style of Catullus attracted them both, and to some extent contextualized and legitimized their own self-stylizing quests for literary fame, or notoriety, and their penchant for the erotic. Byron seems also to have found in the poetic universe created by Catullus and the other Roman lyric poets a self-assuring and culturally elevated precedent for his bisexual tendencies. Both Moore and Byron were big enough personalities to partially reactivate the rebellious celebrity side of Catullus’ poetic character.

In Leigh Hunt’s engagement with Catullus we find a very interesting relationship. Hunt learned much from Catullus’ poetic mode of self-exposure and the public
communication of moments of tenderness and intimacy. He can be seen to use Catullus' poetry to help communicate his campaign for liberal reform when more overt routes had become increasingly risky. In his relationship with Catullus a subtle parallel can be seen with his model for social reform. His exploration into and central presentation of previously marginal sides of Catullus' character, namely his poetry of friendship, conviviality and domesticity, alongside his carefully moralistic avoidance of the potentially harmful sides of the poet's oeuvre, demonstrated that it was possible to advance towards and engage positively with something potentially dangerous, such as social reform, for the greater good. Such even-handed treatment and diplomacy seems designed at least in part to have been likened to positive steps away from the current state of despondency without endangering governmental control and social stability, as in France.

I admit that out of context such a suggestion seems far-fetched. In its defence we need not think of this parallel as the primary reason for Hunt's public presentation of Catullus, but rather as a useful by-product of it. The presentation of Catullus provided Hunt with an opportunity to ingratiate himself and his ideals with his readers, and convince them of the moderate nature of his calls for reform. The use of Bacchus in a small cluster of Cockney poetical texts as a symbol of hope for British reform appears even more far-fetched. It has been a highlight of this research to experience the journey of this mythic allegory from its beginnings as scarcely credited hunch, towards where I hope it now stands, as a convincing example of a Cockney response to a Catullan precedent for the symbolic and political use of myth.

It would be interesting to further explore the connections between Catullus, revolutionary France and his British Romantic reception. Noël's translation in 1803 locates Catullus right in the thick of French revolutionary classicism and I suspect that his British reception was to some extent coloured by this association with France. Reception studies of classical texts often shine a new light on the original texts because they give us the
opportunity to see with greater clarity how they have reacted within a cultural and social context, about which we know more than reception contexts closer to the text's date of composition. The engagements of the Cockney school offer a reception context with comparable levels of political turbulence and social change. The symbol of the abandoned women, Ariadne, who is taken by the Cockneys to represent the reformist liberals of the early Romantic period, may have represented in Catullus' original context the disempowered Roman élite males of the late Roman republic. I would like to have reflected more on the application of my findings to the Roman reception of Catullus, but have sadly been constricted by both space and time. As I said in my introduction, this project began and ended with John Keats. I am delighted to be able to say finally and with conviction: 'KEATS DID READ CATULLUS.'
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Abbreviations:

*LIMC* *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae.*


*OED* Oxford English Dictionary

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