

*fortasse requires: Sapphic and Terentian Intertextuality in Catullus 85*

Catullus' elegiac poems provide a foundation for Roman elegy, a literary genre that thrives for the brief period between Catullus and Ovid (c. 60-10 BCE), a time that saw the upheaval of the Republic and the establishment of an Empire. The identification of influence and intertextuality between Catullus and older Greek poets, such as Sappho and Callimachus, has been vital to our understanding of this intentionally subversive and egocentric genre. The narrative Ego, a first person narrative, is one of the most notorious markers of Latin elegy. Paul Allen Miller (2002) argues that Catullus establishes this 'uniquely interiorized voice' in Latin literature. To put this view in a broader perspective, we must also consider Ellen Greene's (1999) claim that the Catullan Ego is merely a masculinized version of the Sapphic Ego. To add another layer in the development of this poetic voice, Alison Sharrock (2013) observes that Terence pioneered Sapphic sentiment and style in Latin long before the Roman elegists.

The influence of New Comedy on Catullus has been particularly well observed. New Comedy provides a Latin precedent for elegiac characters such as the *domina*, the *servus amoris*, the *exclusus amator*, and the *diues amator* as well as *topoi* such as *paraclausithyron* and erotic military metaphors. David Konstan (1986) pinpoints Terence's *Eunuchus* as particularly influential to Latin elegiac themes and characters. He identifies intertextuality between Terence's *Eunuchus* and Catullus 109. He argues that in this poem Catullus emulates Phaedria's desire for honesty from his promiscuous lover. In a similar way, this paper argues that Catullus 85 echoes Phaedria's frustration and convolution of binary emotions. Catullus 85 offers a reaction to the concept of simultaneously experiencing conflicting emotions brought on by jealous love. While Terence's dramatic *amator* is concerned with action, Catullus' poetic *amator* engages in a public display of reaction. As David Bishop (1971) points out, Catullus 85 does not mention Lesbia nor

any *puella* as the object of “*odi et amo*” and therefore the issue is not for whom he feels this way towards but *why* he experiences such contradictory emotions.

Catullus 85 suggests that love, with its wide range of associated emotions, is fundamentally paradoxical and something that cannot be rationalized. The subversive genre of elegy can be thought of in similar terms. This paper explores one aspect of the complicated relationship between the amatory poems of Catullus and earlier poetic texts. In addition to identification and discussion of intertextuality in Catullus 85, this paper suggests that these intertextual references support a metapoetic reading of Catullus 85 whereby the poem itself represents the genre of Roman elegy and situates itself among previous poetic genres.

#### Bibliography

- Barsby, J. A. 1975. “Rhythmical Factors in Catullus 72, 75, and 85”. *Phoenix*. 29 (1): 83-88.
- Bishop, J. David. 1971. “Catullus 85 Structure, Hellenistic Parallels, and the Topos” *Latomus*. 30 (3): 633-642.
- Greene, Ellen. 1999. “Re-Figuring the Feminine Voice: Catullus Translating Sappho” *Arethusa*. 32 (1):1-18.
- Konstan, David. 1986. “Love in Terence's Eunuch: The Origins of Erotic Subjectivity”. *The American Journal of Philology*. 107 (3): 369-393.
- Miller, Paul Allen. 2002. *Latin Erotic Elegy: an Anthology and Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Sharrock, Alison. 2013. “Terence and Non-Comic Intertexts” In *a Companion to Terence*, Augoustakis et al. (edd.). Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell. 52-68.