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TRANSLATION BEFORE THEORY

The Poetics of Translation in Catullus, Horace, and Vergil

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The history of ancient Roman translation begins not with literary translation but with political interpreters, as might be expected from any emerging and expanding civilization that necessarily interacted with neighboring cultures. As the Roman state began to grow throughout the third century BCE (and through its long period of expansion in the Mediterranean up to the first century CE) it encountered Greek, Etruscan, and other cultures, requiring written and spoken communications in a variety of languages. Rome, however, insisted that these interactions occur in Latin, even when both parties knew Greek. Foreign delegates and dignitaries thus either had to learn Latin or rely on an interpreter.¹ Though there is limited written evidence for the work of interpreters, various references to their presence at Rome's political and commercial interactions with its neighbors throughout the Mediterranean testify to their necessity and the value of their work. From these accounts, it seems that such interpreters operated primarily orally, translating speeches in the Senate and mediating political negotiations.² In addition to testimonial evidence, the most significant written record of the work of these *interpretes* are the translated *senatus consulta* ("decrees of the senate"), which were presumably dispersed throughout the Greek speaking regions of the Eastern Mediterranean.³

The actual practice of these *interpretes* centered on pragmatic, word-for-word translation of the content expressed in each language, rather than engaging any impulse towards artistry.⁴ Consistency in phrasing and word equivalences in written translations of Senate proceedings are

¹ Young 2015, 13.

² Feeney 2016, 48.

³ McElduff 2013, 31 cites Sherk 1969, who gathered a number of these decrees and other official documents. For inscriptional evidence of translation, see Larson 2011, 50-61. See also Papaioannou 2011, 62-74 and McElduff 2013, 33-38 on the translation of Augustus's *Res Gestae*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

evidence for a sort of word bank from which official interpreters worked.⁵ This system, however, did not necessarily lend itself to clarity, since political translation was heavily Latinate and did not necessarily go to any length to assist a Greek reader's understanding of the document's meaning.⁶ For example, the translations from Latin into Greek often left out the Greek definite article, which had no Latin counterpart, and preserved Latin legal formulae that would have been meaningless to someone not familiar with Roman practice.⁷ As a result, the translations expressed the power and predominance of the Latin language and, by extension, that of Rome over its foreign conquests.⁸

Although Rome's interactions with neighboring cultures necessitated this kind of pragmatic translation, it was not natural or inevitable that Rome would engage in a literary translation project, especially since no other ancient Mediterranean civilization interacted with foreign writings in this way, or at least the evidence of such translation does not survive.⁹ In fact, there is evidence for nearly every other kind of translation in contemporaneous societies—law, business, medicine, astronomy—*except* for literature, making Rome's early translations of Greek poetry and drama in the third century BCE unique.¹⁰ These translations signify a broader cultural enterprise in Rome than other civilizations. It is important to note, however, that Rome's relationship to Greek culture was close and incorporative, easing the process of translation of ideas and values from one to the other.¹¹

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Brock 1979, 74.

⁷ McElduff 2013, 32.

⁸ Feeney 2016, 49.

⁹ Ibid. 40. Modern lines between what is “literary” and “non-literary” are much more defined than those boundaries in the ancient world. My aim is not to anachronistically define those limits based on modern standards, but to focus on poetry (which encompasses drama) as a form that prompted unique translation projects in ancient Rome.

¹⁰ Ibid. 40-41 notes the Babylonian *Gilgamesh* epic as an example of a literary work that was not widely translated while other material in the same language was translated into a variety of languages, including Aramaic and Arabic.

¹¹ Feeney 2016, 79. See also Cornell 1995, Smith 1996, and Wiseman 1989, 129-137.

One of the earliest examples of a literary translation project comes from the mid-third century BCE: the *Odussia* of Livius Andronicus. Livius was a resident of a Greek colony conquered by Rome in 272 BCE, becoming the Roman city of Tarentum, and the fragments of his translation of Homer's *Odyssey* that survive reveal that he makes a number of adaptive moves to bring Homer's epic into a familiar Roman sphere.¹² First, rather than using the Homeric hexameter line, Livius's poem employs the Saturnian meter, a cadence considered to be native to Italy and presumably familiar to Romans from other festival songs and poems in the same meter.¹³ From the poem's opening line, a number of translation choices further reveal Livius's desire to bring the genre of Greek epic into familiar Roman terms while staying close enough to the original to qualify as translation. For Homer's opening line, Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον ("Tell me, Muse, of the much-turned man," *Od.* 1.1), Livius writes *Virum mihi, Camena, insece versutum* ("Tell me, Camena, about the turned man"). The formal closeness of these lines is significant, as Livius's word order follows a nearly identical pattern to Homer's, with the exception of exchanging the positions of the verb (*insece*) and the addressee (*Camena*). Even as he changes the meter, Livius remains very close to Homer's text, suggesting his attention to preserving the syntax, tone, and meaning of the original.

At the same time, Livius's version adapts the line to fit its new Roman context. He substitutes *Camena*, a Roman nymph, for the Greek Muse, and continues to change Greek deities into Roman ones throughout the poem.¹⁴ *Camena*, a fertility goddess, eventually came to be associated with the Greek Muses, but her presence in Livius's translation suggests an association of writing and birth, appropriate for Livius's position of inheriting Homer's epic. These

¹² Feeney 2016, 65-66. For more on Livius, his translation, and the question of whether he was Greek, see Kytzler 1989 and Gruen 1996, 82-83.

¹³ McElduff 2013, 50.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.

substitutions indicate Livius's objective to make his epic accessible and understandable to his audience even as he writes in an unfamiliar genre, drawing equivalencies across the two cultures. By transferring the power of the Muse onto a Roman deity, Livius calls attention to the act of translation, both in terms of the meaning of the words and impact of the ideas: Latin provides words with equivalent meanings as well as forms and contexts that allow listeners and readers to understand the overarching story and its significance.

Livius's use of *versutum* for *πολύτροπον* points again to the self-awareness of his translation, punning on the concept of "turned" with a word that shares the same root as the Latin word for "translate," *vertere*.¹⁵ Odysseus is "much-turned" by both his journeys from Troy to Ithaca and from Greek to Latin. Even Livius's simplest and most literal translation choice, *mihī* for the Greek *μοι*, calls attention to the epic as a work of translation, since it is no longer Homer who speaks but Livius himself who conveys his epic in a new form.¹⁶ Each of these choices shows a sophisticated awareness of the problems of translation and reveals inklings of the translator's values. These values persist and recur in various forms throughout Roman literary history.

The early translation efforts of Livius, as well as those of early second-century BCE authors Plautus, Ennius, and others, are the product of a linguistic climate different from the one found in later Roman society. These authors and their contemporaries emerge from a multi-lingual society in which Rome's earliest military conquests in the third and second centuries BCE brought a great variety of vernacular languages into contact with one another.¹⁷ These early translators knew Latin as their "second" (or even third) language, positioning them as outsiders bringing the rich literary culture of Greece to a Roman audience they thought would be receptive

¹⁵ Feeney 2016, 54.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹⁷ McElduff 2013, 21.

to it. The translations reveal acute awareness of both source and target culture, as well as an understanding of how much adaptation and explanation would be necessary for reaching their Roman audiences. For example, in the introductions to their adaptations of Greek comedies, second-century BCE Roman playwrights Plautus and Terence take time to explain what sources they are drawing from and how they use that material.¹⁸ All these authors were working with well-established linguistic equivalencies between Greek and Latin, solidified by the two cultures' years of consistent contact, but they certainly had to flesh out some less straightforward links between the two cultures. The translators gauged how receptive their Roman audiences would be, and in most cases went to great lengths to adapt their sources. In finding Roman parallels to Greek characters and concepts, these early translators contributed to the notion that Greek and Roman cultures are in some way equivalent, complementary, or continuous.

As these third- and second-century translators situated themselves within the context of Greek literary production, Roman criticism and historiography corroborated their claims. Authors such as Ennius, Accius, and Naevius, writing in the second century BCE, traced the beginnings of Rome to the Trojan War, implying that competition, collaboration, and continuity with the Greeks was natural and inevitable.¹⁹ At the same time, Roman writers were also suggesting that Greek literature had “ended” and Latin literature was picking up where it left off.²⁰ This sensibility continues through later Roman authors, even when Latin literature had been established in its own right, with its own literary history and canonical works. Writing in the late first century BCE, Ovid describes himself at the end of a long line of Greek and Roman authors in *Amores* 1.15. Beginning with Homer and Hesiod and progressing through Greek lyric poets and playwrights, Ovid seamlessly transitions into early Roman authors Ennius and Accius

¹⁸ McElduff 2013, 68. For the translation projects of early Roman dramatists, see *Ibid.*, 61-95.

¹⁹ Feeney 2016, 240.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 164.

without acknowledging the switch of language.²¹ The continuousness of this list suggests that Ovid views Greek and Latin literature as one tradition, but the lack of overlap between Greek and Roman authors (Ovid lists all the Greek authors, then all the Romans) positions Latin literature as the successor of Greek. This succession implies a break between the two parts of the list, a break which Ovid attempts to elide by situating Greek and Latin as one continuous literary tradition.

Ovid was writing during the reign of Augustus, following a century of rapid expansion and drastic political paradigm shifts, as well as prolific literary production from authors such as Catullus, Horace, and Vergil. Conquest likely caused increased interest in translation, adaptation, and appropriation of foreign literature, since the establishment of a military hierarchy would lead the Roman Empire towards the establishment of a cultural relationship as well. Greek culture, however, continued to be the central interest of Roman literary figures, and a newfound Hellenizing impulse accompanied the conquest of Greek lands in the first century BCE. The cultural relationship between Rome and conquered Greece is displayed in the ways poets Catullus, Vergil, and Horace interact with their Greek models. Much like the early translations of Livius and others, their translations are still incorporative of Greek language and ideas, but the poets operate from a different position: Livius and his counterparts were Greek or non-Romans who were working to bring Greek literature into Latin, whereas Catullus, Vergil, and Horace are writing from within Roman literary culture and reach *out* to Greek models.²² For Livius writing his translation of the *Odyssey*, his Greek source is a means with which to create a Roman literary product without a precedent or model in Latin to look to. The likelihood that Greek was Livius's first language, as well as the absence of any previous epic tradition in Latin, suggests that Livius

²¹ Ibid., 3.

²² Feeney 2016, 68.

writes from within Greek culture. For these late Republican and early Imperial poets, on the other hand, Greek is the end in itself, and translation serves as a creative flourish that exhibits the author's erudition and poetic values. Importantly, literature, for Livius, is *exclusively* Greek and his act of translation is also one of invention.²³ Catullus, working in the first century BCE, has an established tradition of Latin literature to look to for his own models, and yet he focuses on the Greek poets Callimachus and Sappho, marking his translations as re-inventions.

The central question that Roman translators grapple with throughout the history of Roman literature is the interrelationship of Hellenization and Romanization.²⁴ The process of Hellenization requires looking out to Greek sources, while a Romanizing impulse adapts the unfamiliar aspects of a Greek source into understandable Roman terms. Translation from Greek into Latin, however, was not absolutely necessary for the bilingual literary culture of Late Republican and Early Imperial Rome, since most readers would not have needed the aid of a translation to understand and appreciate a Greek literary work.²⁵ In this cultural climate, the question of what a Greek text meant was much less significant than the question of what a Greek text meant *to the Romans*, promoting imitation and adaptation as the primary means of “translating” Greek literature into Latin.

This kind of translation inevitably requires an element of Romanization as Greek originals are brought into a new context. For Livius, writing in the third century BCE, the process of Romanization held greater leverage on his translation because he adapts Homer explicitly into a Roman context, without trying to insert his own voice. While the fragmentary state of Livius's epic prevents any definitive statements about his values as a translator, it is unlikely that he strove to compete with Homer or add his own stylistic flourishes, since he had

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Feeney 2016, 69.

²⁵ Lockwood 1918, 116.

no other Latin work to take a cue from. If Livius himself is present in his translation, he is likely muted and subtle, blending Homeric language with the native Greek tenor of his own personal voice. For later poets, however, the Romanizing impulse manifests itself in different ways, since the poets reach back into foreign sources and blend them with Roman literary practice.

Translators speak the words of their Greek sources in acts of ventriloquism that leave open opportunities to assert their own voices as distinct, predominant, and ultimately superior. From the outset of Roman literary history, Roman voices engage in a dynamic play with Greek sources, competing with the foreign authors in style and changing the contexts of their works to fit the new language and culture. Translation and adaptation served a pivotal role in the establishment of literary standards, in which Greek originals were to some degree Romanized.

The study of Roman translation practices, however, is complicated by the lack of commentary by the translators themselves, who rarely state their intentions explicitly. Instead, a handful of writers comment on translation in the abstract, most notably Cicero, Horace, and Pliny. Most modern scholarship on ancient translation has largely focused on these authors, without applying the ideas broadly to the practice of literary translation in Rome.²⁶ Nevertheless, the work of these authors provides an important framework for understanding the place translation held in Roman society. In Cicero's *De optimo genere oratorum*, he discusses his own translations of the Greek orators Aeschines and Demosthenes (*Opt. Gen.* 14):

nec converti ut interpres, sed ut orator, sentiis isdem et earum formis tamquam figuris, verbis ad nostram consuetudinem aptis. In quibus non verbum pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vimque servavi. Non enim ea me adnumerare lectori putavi oportere, sed tamquam appendere.

I did not translate as an interpreter but as an orator, with the same ideas and their forms, the figures of speech as it were, with the

²⁶ For modern scholarship on ancient translation, see McElduff 2013 and the essays collected in McElduff and Sciarrino 2011. Kytzler 1989, Lockwood 1918, Brock 1979, and Feeney 2016 provide valuable insight as well.

words adapted for our usage. In doing so, I did not hold it to be necessary to render it word for word, but I preserved the overall style and force of the words. For I did not think that it was necessary for me to count out each one for the reader, but to weigh it out so to speak.

Cicero's claim that he translates as an *orator* rather than an *interpretes* situates his work in the context of literary translation. Indeed, his disdain for word-for-word translations and his focus on preserving the *vim* ("force") of the text suggest he values style over literal meaning. In a similar vein, Horace criticizes the *fidus interpretes*, or the "slavish translator," who does not budge from exact meaning of a source (Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 131-135). Horace addresses his comments to Roman authors seeking to imitate Greek models, confirming the separate set of values for *interpretes* and writers. Pliny, on the other hand, discusses the merits of translation between Greek and Latin as an educational tool for improving style (Pliny, *Epistulae* 7.9.1-2). Pliny's emphasis on the *proprietas splendorque verborum, copia figurarum, vis explicandi* ("the quality and grandeur of your words, the variety of figures of speech, the strength of your explanations") that the pupil will gain from the practice of translation indicates that the value he places on translation is of a literary nature rather than a purely practical one.

While each of these authors offers related standards for literary translation, their comments are isolated instances that do not constitute a coherent "theory" of translation.²⁷ In fact, to assume as much would be an anachronistic projection of contemporary conceptions of translation onto the Roman world. The best means to develop a fuller understanding of ancient attitudes towards translation is instead to consider the works of translation themselves alongside their sources. Close textual analysis establishes each translator's priorities and practices while the comparison of a variety of authors (here Catullus, Horace, and Vergil) reveals consistent trends across a range of texts. Careful attention to what the translator inserts, deletes, lengthens,

²⁷ Kytzler 1989, 42.

paraphrases, or changes can reveal not only their objectives, values, and priorities but also their translation processes, which together form the translator's theory and practice. In other words, the texts themselves are the best evidence for ancient attitudes towards translation. The selection of texts I examine in this thesis span a period of approximately 50 years, but more importantly, they represent a spectrum of linguistic closeness to their sources. In poem 51, Catullus produces a translation of Sappho fragment 31 with enough fidelity to meet modern standards for translation, maintaining Sappho's form, style, and vocabulary. In the *Odes*, Horace often begins his poems with translations of his Greek models, then takes them into new material of his own. If Catullus translates in bulk, Horace gives morsels. Finally, Vergil's translation project in the *Eclogues* draws heavily from the *Idylls* of Theocritus but intersperses the translated parts with material culled from a variety of other genres and authors. The variety displayed by these three authors demonstrates that the modern anxiety over how to render a work "faithfully" would not have been a concern for ancient literary translators. Instead, their works suggest two parallel impulses, one to compete with the model for literary excellence and another to situate the translation within an explicitly Roman context.

Indeed, the existence of works like Catullus 51 and the other poems examined here reveals a certain anxiety about the Greek influence on Roman culture. As a result, they grapple not with questions of "faith" or "precision," but with concerns about cultural relevance and how to simultaneously honor and surpass their models. Each author, however, demonstrates his competitive urge in a slightly different way. Catullus does not allow his speaker to succumb to the erotic oblivion that Sappho's does, enacting the competition on a narrative level. Horace desires to join the canon of Greek lyric poets, explicitly stating his ambition. Vergil competes

with Theocritus on a subliminal level, demonstrating his mastery over the genre of pastoral while also stretching its limits to encompass the language and images of other genres.

Secondly, these authors all strive to situate the Greek models in a Roman context, both making the foreign material accessible to its Roman audience and displaying their own creative interpretations and extensions of the source material. Catullus reframes a poem about erotic passion to be a discourse on the uniquely Roman social tension between leisure and work. Horace turns some of Alcaeus's political poems into commentary on Rome's political situation and changes other poems' settings to be on Italian soil, literally moving the poem's context closer to Rome. Likewise, the city of Rome itself figures in the *Eclogues*, disrupting the fantasy world of pastoral poetry.

Notably, these two trends are nearly contradictory to modern translation sensibilities. For example, Lawrence Venuti's conception of the "invisibility" of the translator, that is, the "self-annihilation" of the translator's voice in favor of the original, seems incredibly misplaced when considering Catullus's or Vergil's poetic voices, even in instances where they call directly on Greek models.²⁸ At the same time, looking at these translations under Venuti's construction allows us to see the ways in which these translators prioritize their own voices. Furthermore, the idea of creating a "resistant" translation that strains the linguistic conventions of the target language in order to emphasize the foreignness of the source highlights many ways in which Latin authors interact with their Greek precedents, precisely because the translation process tends to be *not* resistant at all.²⁹ Since the influence of Greek culture dominated Roman literary production, resistant translations would not have been so foreign to their readers. And yet, resistancy opens a frame of reference to consider how Latin translations interact with their Greek

²⁸ Venuti 1995, 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

originals. In the work that follows, close reading and careful comparison of source and translation provide much of the groundwork for my claims about ancient translation, but modern translation theory, particularly the works of Venuti, Walter Benjamin, and Jacques Derrida, lies in the background, providing valuable frames of reference.³⁰

The two significant impulses that link the translations of Catullus, Horace, and Vergil are the groundwork for a cohesive theory of Roman translation that is both a product of Rome's interaction with Greece and a determinant of their relationship. The values and standards of Roman translation differ from Roman literary standards in general, signifying the importance of translation as a practice within a broader literary culture. Ultimately, an understanding of the goals of the authors of ancient translations allows for new translations into modern languages that reflect those ancient objectives.

³⁰ Venuti 1995, 1-42; Benjamin 1923, 15-25; Derrida 2001, 174-200.

Chapter 2: Catullus

Catullus's choice to translate a work of Sappho reflects his own personal poetic values as well as the literary climate he operated in. Throughout his body of work he engages, like many Roman authors, with a variety of Greek sources in a complex project of translation, adaptation, and imitation. Formally, he writes in different meters lifted from Greek lyric poets such as Hipponax, Archilochus, and Sappho, although he often infuses his poems with subject matter and discourses outside of the traditional scope of the genres associated with these meters.¹ Furthermore, he derives his own aesthetic values from those of Hellenistic poet Callimachus, particularly learned allusion, clever language, and personal or trifling subject matter.² Catullus's engagement with these sources, however, extends beyond form and content to embrace the language and culture from which he draws. Poem 64, for example, is an epyllion in the Alexandrian style which brings into Latin a number of distinctly foreign ideas even though it is not a direct translation of any known Greek original. The poem features at its center a purple coverlet that stands as a symbol of imported luxury, positioning the poem itself as an appropriation of an entire genre and its inherent Callimachean disdain for epic.³ And indeed, a number of Catullus's poems profess or reveal these same values, including poems 1, 22, and 50.

On two occasions, however, Catullus pushes beyond simply adapting the genres, forms, and values of Greek models and actually translates, in the modern sense, a Greek original. Poem 66 recreates Callimachus's *Lock of Berenice*, a poem that commemorated a Ptolemaic queen's vow to give a lock of her hair to the gods in exchange for her husband's safe return from war in

¹ Quinn 1970, xxxiii.

² McElduff 2013, 126. For Catullus's stylistics, see Johnson 2007, 175-189.

³ Young 2015, 30.

the third century BCE.⁴ Catullus's version maintains just enough of the original's dense historical references to give his version an overtly Hellenistic feeling while also filling the gaps leftover with a Roman context and his own poetic innovations.⁵ Poem 51, with which this chapter is primarily concerned, is a close reproduction of Sappho's fragment 31 and engages with its Greek source in a similar manner.⁶ Together with poem 66, it reveals how keenly Catullus felt the influence of his models and how closely he hoped to engage with them in his own work. Poem 51, however, shows an unusual level of closeness to its source, making it stand out among surviving Latin poetry as an extreme example of Roman translation. And yet, the similarities between the Greek and Latin versions throw the differences into striking relief, and these differences reveal how Catullus views his relationship to his model.

Sappho 31

φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν
 ἔμμεν' ὄνηρ, ὅττις ἐνάντιός τοι
 ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἄδν φωνεί-
 σας ὑπακούει

καὶ γελαίσας ἡμέροεν, τό μ' ἦ μὰν
 καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν·
 ὡς γὰρ ἔς σ' ἴδω βρόχε', ὡς με φώναι-
 σ' οὐδ' ἐν ἔτ' εἴκει,

ἀλλὰ καὶ μὲν γλῶσσα †ἔαγε†, λέπτον
 δ' αὐτίκα χρῶ πῦρ ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν,
 ὀππάτεσσι δ' οὐδ' ἐν ὄρημ', ἐπιρρόμ-
 βεισι δ' ἄκουαι,

καὶ δέ μ' ἴδρωσ ψῦχρος, τρόμος δὲ
 παῖσαν ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας
 ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω ἔπιδευῆς
 φαίνομ' ἔμ' αὐτ[α].

⁴ Ibid., 142.

⁵ Young 2015, 144. See Ibid., 139-165 for a full reading of poem 66 as a translation of Callimachus. For Catullus's relationship to Callimachus more generally, see Knox 2007.

⁶ For Catullus as a translator, see Young 2015, especially 167-181 on poem 51. For poem 51 and its relationship to Sappho 31, see Greene 1999, 1-18 and D'Angour 2006, 297-300. For Sappho's influence across Catullus's body of work, see Greene 2007, 131-150.

ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον, ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένητα†...

That man seems to me to be equal to the gods, whoever sits opposite you and listens close to your sweet speaking and your lovely laughter, which, in all honesty, stirs up the heart in my chest; for when I see you for an instant, then it is no longer possible for me to speak, but my tongue is stiff and a thin flame runs under my skin right away, and there is no sight in my eyes, and my ears ring, and a cold sweat holds me down, and trembling seizes me all over, and I am greener than grass, and I seem to myself to be lacking little before death. But all must be endured since... and a poor man...

Catullus 51

*Ille mi par esse deo videtur,
ille, si fas est, superare divos,
qui sedens adversus identidem te
spectat et audit
dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis
eripit sensus mihi; nam simul te,
Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi...*

*lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
flamma demanat, sonitu suo
tintinant aures, gemina teguntur
lumina nocte.
otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:
otio exultas nimiumque gestis:
otium et reges prius et beatas
perdidit urbes.*

That man seems to me to be equal to a god, that man, I dare say, surpasses the gods, who, often sitting facing you, looks at you and listens to you laughing sweetly, which rips all senses from wretched me; for as soon as I see you, Lesbia, nothing is left to me... but my tongue is stuck, a thin flame runs down under my limbs, my ears ring with their own sound, and my eyes are covered by a twin night. Leisure, Catullus, is harmful to you: you exult in leisure and you get too stirred up: leisure has destroyed kings of old and blessed cities.

Both Sappho 31 and Catullus 51 situate the poetic speaker as a lover in a dramatic triangle with the beloved and her other suitor. As the poems progress, the speakers turn their

focus inward, describing the symptoms they each experience when they face the situation. Sappho's poem describes complete sensory disarray and bodily fragmentation in language suggestive of orgasm before creating a sense of endurance and resolution in the final line before the fragment breaks off. Catullus, on the other hand, spends fewer lines on the symptoms before resolving the poem with an emphatic self-reproach. Significantly, Catullus calls out his beloved by name, Lesbia, in the second stanza, situating the poem among the other poems regarding the same woman in his body of work. Though Sappho calls out the names of the objects of her affection in other poems, she does not do so in this particular fragment. The insertion of "Lesbia" follows a Sapphic model but also diverges from the source for poem 51. The language of desire, however, is persistent across Sappho's surviving works, and Catullus's use of the same material reframes this aesthetic in his own corpus.

Formally, Catullus's poem mirrors Sappho's with extraordinary closeness, but subtle shifts in tone reveal his innovations. Catullus employs the same meter as Sappho's original, Sapphic stanzas, but it is one of only two poems in his surviving corpus in the Sapphic meter.⁷ Not only would poem 51 stand out among Catullus's other poems because of its atypical meter but also because this meter was so closely related to the works of Sappho herself and probably rarely, if ever, reproduced in Latin before Catullus. Catullus emphasizes the structural imitation of Sappho but adjusts her diction by reducing the amount of epic language Sappho uses.⁸ Sappho describes the rival in her poem as ἴσος θεοισιν ("equal to the gods," 31.1), a Homeric epithet used primarily for heroes of war who possess supernatural amounts of a certain quality, be it strength, endurance, intelligence, or good looks.⁹ The poem's speaker, by contrast, is affected by

⁷ Quinn 1970, 125. See poem 11 as well.

⁸ Edwards 1989, 596.

⁹ Telemachus is ἰσόθεος φῶς (*Od.* 1.324); Odysseus is θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιος (*Od.* 19.267); Achilles is θεοείκελ(ε) (*Il.* 19.155). For a close study of the connotations of these epithets see Race 1983, 92-101.

passion in the same ways that the prospect of battle strikes fear into Homeric soldiers.¹⁰ Catullus parallels Sappho's language without invoking Homer's. In the first line of his poem, he substitutes *par deo* ("equal to a god") for ἴσος θεοῖσιν, which seems simply to mirror Sappho's description. Catullus, however, undercuts the gravitas of the description in the following line, when he claims *ille, si fas est, superare divos* ("that man, I dare say, seems to surpass the gods," 51.2). To describe the man in terms of a Homeric man of war is permissible, but to assert that he is better than the gods is irreverent and lowers the stakes of the rivalry and the poem itself. The concession, *si fas est* ("I dare say," "if it is right to say"), constrains the hyperbole while also heightening the bitterness of Catullus's attitude towards the man.

Catullus's attitude is also related to how he establishes the dramatic situation. In Sappho's poem, the man is described as ἐνάντιος ("opposite," 31.2) and πλάσιον ("close," 31.3), both spatial signifiers that emphasize the proximity and togetherness of the beloved and the rival. Catullus adds a temporal element to the situation as well: the man sits both *adversus* ("facing," 51.3) and *identidem* ("often," 51.3). The situation for Catullus is thus generalized, since it occurs repeatedly, whereas Sappho's poem seems to refer to a particular moment.¹¹ Indeed, Sappho places emphasis on the act of observation with φαίνεται ("he appears," 31.1) as the first word of the poem. Furthermore, another visual cue sets off the reaction for Sappho in the second stanza, ὥς γὰρ ἔς σ' ἴδω βρόχε' ("for when I see you for a moment," 31.6), again emphasizing the instantaneousness of the reaction that follows. The very observation of the man and the beloved prompts an immediate reaction for Sappho's speaker, while Catullus's speaker seems to be reflecting on a recurrent circumstance. As a result, he describes his reaction in the abstract, rather than narrating the experience as it happens.

¹⁰ Of the Trojans in the face of battle Homer writes, τρόμος αἰνὸς ὑπὲρ λυθε γυῖα ("a dreadful trembling went under their limbs," *Il.* 20.44). For more on Homeric language in Sappho 31 and Catullus 51, see Edwards 1989, 590-600.

¹¹ Fordyce 1961, 220.

Consequently the symptoms that the Catullan speaker experiences in the face of his beloved are less debilitating than those that Sappho's speaker undergoes. Catullus's version highlights predominantly sensory reactions, focusing on the ability to see, speak, and hear, and his description of these reactions mirrors Sappho's with extraordinary closeness. Though one line of Catullus's poem is missing and one of Sappho's is corrupt, the third stanzas of each poem can be neatly mapped on to one another on a nearly word-for-word basis: γλῶσσα corresponds to *lingua* ("tongue," 31.9 and 51. 9), λεπτον πῦρ to *tenuis flamma* ("slender flame," 31.9-10 and 51.9-10), ὀπλάτεσσι to *lumina* ("eyes," 31.11 and 51. 12), and ἐπιρρόμβεισι δ' ἄκουαι to *tintinant aures* ("ears ring," 31.11-12 and 51.11). Catullus even selects *demanat* for ὑπαδεδρόμηκεν ("goes under," 31.10 and 51.10), both of which suggest the same movement just below the surface.

What precedes these closely translated lines, however, shifts the intensity of the reaction in Catullus's version. Sappho's very first symptom is outside of the sensory realm: τό μ' ἤ μάν / καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν ("which, believe me, makes the heart in my chest race," 31.5-6). This inner reaction precipitates the sensory distress that follows, and the center of the reactions move throughout Sappho's body, from chest to mouth, skin, eyes, and ears. Catullus's counterpart to this line, however, describes the reaction as a whole, rather than just its inception. He writes, *misero quod omnis / eripit sensus mihi* ("which snatches all senses from wretched me," 51.5-6). The catalog of reactions that follow, then, are merely details to describe what Catullus has already stated as happening. Catullus thus creates a degree of separation and abstraction between himself as he describes the event and the event itself, markedly different from the way Sappho walks her reader through each individual blow. Furthermore, while *omnis eripit sensus* evokes a sense of totality, it does not necessarily connote finality. Catullus uses the

phrase *sensibus ereptis* (“the snatched away senses,” 66.25) in poem 66 to describe Berenice’s anguish at her husband’s departure for war, an anguish that is ultimately resolved with his safe return. Thus Catullus downplays the seriousness of Sappho’s erotic experience in his tone and diction.

While Catullus’s symptoms end in the third stanza, Sappho’s speaker undergoes complete bodily fragmentation and even comes to be *τεθνάκην δ’ ὀλίγω ἴπιδεύης* (“lacking little before death,” 31.15) in her fourth stanza. Catullus omits this stanza entirely, effectively stopping the process of annihilation before it can be completed for his speaker and transferring the idea of destruction away from his body and onto the kings and cities of lore (*otium et reges prius et beatas / perdidit urbes*, “leisure has destroyed the kings of old and beautiful citadels,” 51.15-16).

It is in Sappho’s fourth stanza that the bodily effects of her experience become most acute (31.13-16):

καὶ δέ μ’ ἴδρωσ ψῦχρος ἔχει, τρόμος δὲ
παῖσαν ἄργει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίασ
ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ’ ὀλίγω ἴπιδεύης
φαίνομ’ ἔμ’ αὐτα.

And a cold sweat holds me, and trembling seizes me all over, and I
am greener than grass, and I seem to myself to be lacking little
before death.

The symptoms of Sappho’s speaker progress from affecting the individual capacities of speech, feeling, sight, and hearing into a total effect on the body as a whole. For the sweat to “hold” her, it must cover her completely, and Sappho explicitly acknowledges this completeness when she says that the trembling occurs *παῖσαν*, “all over.” The reader watches as Sappho’s body is overcome with passion, piece by piece, until the tremors attack her body as a whole. Finally, her symptoms conclude with two observations about her own body, which suggest a separation and fragmentation of her mind from her senses and her physical being. She is aware of her greenness

and her nearness to death because she is able to observe these things about herself, seemingly from without. The same word of observation that began the poem here concludes the process of the speaker's fragmentation.

And yet, Catullus cuts out this culmination of the erotic experience in his version of the poem, not allowing his speaker to suffer anything other than sensory disarray. With this omission, Catullus reduces the tenor and totality of the symptoms in his version because the process of fragmentation and utter dissolution never occurs for the Catullan speaker.¹² Catullus's symptoms begin with a sense of totality, but they are contained to only his sensory capacities: *quod omnes / eripit sensus mihi* ("which rips all senses from me," 51.5-6). Catullus follows this line with a description of how each sense is disrupted by the presence of the beloved and the other man. The impact, then, is that the following lines are just descriptions detailing what the reader knows has already happened, whereas each of Sappho's symptoms in succession compound with the others until the overall effect is complete destruction.

Both poems suggest a sort of resolution into their final stanzas. While Sappho's is incomplete, the first few words, *ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον, ἐπεὶ* ("but all must be endured, since...," 31.17), indicate that the speaker has retained enough composure not to leave herself completely dead. The extent to which this signifies a full recovery is unclear without the remaining lines, but the speaker certainly reconstitutes herself enough to reflect on the experience or come to terms with her condition.

Catullus's final stanza is similarly unclear in the amount of resolution or recovery it offers. The tone shifts abruptly from the anxiety of the erotic experience to self-reproach. Catullus signifies this shift by introducing decidedly unerotic language and inserting his own name in a dramatic self-address (51.13-16):

¹² Greene 1991, 8-9.

*otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:
otio exsultas nimiumque gestis:
otium et reges prius et beatas
perdidit urbes.*

Leisure, Catullus, is troublesome for you: you exult in leisure and it stirs you up too much: leisure destroyed both kings and blessed cities before.

While the language that describes the effects of *otium* on the speaker can be mapped onto the erotic effects he describes in the previous stanzas (*molestum, gestis, perdidit*), the term *otium* as well as the kings and cities bring the poem out of its erotic context and into the social and political sphere. The scope of this final stanza is much greater than the dramatic set-up of the speaker, his beloved, and his rival, and it does not seem to directly resolve the situation. Instead, the final stanza diverts attention away from the situation and towards its root cause and the way it affects both individuals and the community. Catullus acknowledges that *otium* is a problem for him, but does not necessarily do anything about it, eliminating the possibility that the final stanza serves as a solution to the drama that started the poem in the first place.

It does, however, signify a certain level of reconstitution of Catullus's mind. He can call himself by name and turn away from his inner turmoil to see its reflection in the world around him. The poem's arrival at this point, a full stanza before Sappho's, also indicates that Catullus possesses a level of restraint that Sappho does not. His new stanza is emblematic of the ways he diminishes the intensity of Sappho's original.

Catullus's insertion of his own name into his final stanza has no counterpart in the extant Sappho fragment, and if it did (which is not impossible to imagine given Sappho's propensity to mention herself by name), Catullus's name would still represent a divergence from Sappho's

text.¹³ When he uses his own name he reveals that it has not been Sappho speaking in Latin throughout the poem but Catullus speaking Sappho's words in a new language. Moreover, Sappho herself does appear in the poem as the beloved, whom Catullus calls Lesbia. The name recurs throughout Catullus's corpus as his persona's love interest, and thus is fitting for the amatory content of this poem. However, the name itself, meaning "woman from Lesbos," is an oblique reference to Sappho herself, who lived on that island. By reading the poem as an address to Sappho, it takes on further significance as a translation, since the speaker's attitudes towards the woman in the poem then serve as a mirror for Catullus's relationship with his poetic model. In the poem, Catullus's speaker treats the object of his affections with the same erotic reverence that Sappho treats hers, although the effect is different for each speaker. As a poem about Catullus's relationship with his model, the name Lesbia expresses the foreignness of the woman he is enamored of—Lesbia is exotic and alluring, and Sappho's poem is culturally distant and unfamiliar to Roman contexts.¹⁴ Thus the Catullan speaker pursues a foreign woman that he never wins over while Catullus the poet pursues a Sapphic model that he feels he might never truly match. Catullus's diminution of the intensity of the symptoms reflect an attempt to distance himself from the parts of the poem that are too feminine or too Greek, even as he embraces the language and aesthetic of the foreign genre.

To read the Catullan speaker's interest in Lesbia as Catullus's interest in his Sapphic model suggests an element of futility into Catullus's translation project. As he recounts what happens when he beholds Lesbia or a Greek poem he wants to emulate, he does so from a distance, allowing himself to feel the beginning of the kind of impact it could have without fully succumbing. This leaves open the question of whether he maintains a certain distance because he

¹³ Sappho mentions herself by name in poems 1 and 94, though both instances are quotations from another speaker rather than direct self-address.

¹⁴ Young 2015, 170.

does not want to go closer or because he is unable to. On the one hand, to articulate Sappho's orgasmic experience from his own voice would signify a descent into a feminine erotic experience, unbecoming of an elite Roman man. Alternatively, Catullus could feel unable to transpose accurately the content of the Greek poem into Latin, a language in which the genre of erotic love poetry had no precedent. Thus, the central interpretive concern in the relationship between the two poems is whether Catullus is affected more by the constraints of society or by the constraints of translation. In other words, does he change Sappho's poem to fit its new Roman context better or to make a claim about his own poetic authority over Sappho?

The strength of Catullus's own voice in the final stanza runs counter to any sense that he sees his translation project as futile. Instead, his dramatic assertion of his own voice serves as a claim of ownership over Sappho's model, even if he never wins Lesbia over in the plot of the poem. A "successful" translation, therefore, is not necessarily parallel to the successful pursuit of a love interest. Rather, the author of a successful translation is able to turn away from the model and toward his own concerns, which mirrors both Sappho and Catullus's turns away from the amatory situation in their final stanzas. Though Catullus exerts careful control over his translation, he asserts his ownership only when he shifts his focus away from his beloved, and indeed, from Sappho's original poem itself, as he diverges in his final stanza. Thus it would seem that whatever victory or success he views himself achieving through his translation lies in his ability to move beyond his source and stake his own claim of poetic voice.

But the speaker in each poem is not concerned only with the object of his or her affections but also with the rival, who seems calm and collected in the presence of the woman while the speaker is debilitated by his or her passion. In Sappho's version, the man's presence

initiates the speaker's reaction, but he does not occupy a central role as the scene plays out.¹⁵ The emphasis Sappho gives him, calling him κῆνος... ὄνηρ ("that man," 31.1-2), highlights his masculinity more than his actual presence, since the indefinite pronoun that Sappho uses (ὅστις, "whoever," 31.2) suggests that he is not a specific man. As a result, the situation is generalized and Sappho's focus turns inward and away from both the man and woman. The various descriptors of his proximity to the woman (ἐνάντιός τοι, "opposite you," 31.2; πλάσιον, "close," 31.3) again suggest that Sappho's speaker is concerned not with the man himself but with the idea of how a man can sit with the beloved while she is debilitated by passion.

Catullus, however, foregrounds the presence of the godlike rival, with *ille* ("that man") in the emphatic position at the beginning of the poem's first line, a position that Sappho reserves for φαίνεται ("he appears"), which highlights the action of observation rather than the object of that gaze. Catullus doubles the emphatic pronoun when he repeats *ille* at the start of the second line, matching Sappho's double emphasis, κῆνος... ὄνηρ ("that man," 31.1-2). He then spends two lines on his godlike qualities, rather than mirroring Sappho's single line of description of her rival, even as his concession, *si fas est* ("if it is right," 51.2), undercuts the seriousness of the hyperbolic praise. The tone of the line makes clear that Catullus feels resentful of the other man and his relationship to Lesbia, whereas Sappho's resentment is directed at the proximity of the man to her beloved, not the man himself. By foregrounding the other man in his version, Catullus implicitly shifts the dynamic between the three characters in the poem.

One way to understand this shift is to consider the poem in its new Roman context. Women in Roman society were consistently subordinated to men, thus making Catullus and his rival the primary characters in the triangle and Lesbia as merely the occasion for that

¹⁵ Race 1983, 98.

relationship.¹⁶ Though the same could be said of women in archaic Greek society, Sappho's speaker is female, automatically upending the power dynamics that would have been associated with the situation had she been a male suitor. She even suppresses the speaker's gender until the fourth stanza, when *χλωροτέρα* ("greener," 31.14) finally reveals that the speaker is indeed a woman. Catullus, on the other hand, declares the masculinity of his speaker in the second stanza of the poem, inserting the masculine *misero* ("wretched," 51.5) to describe the poem's speaker with no direct counterpart in Sappho's poem.¹⁷ By emphasizing the masculinity of both the speaker and the rival, Catullus foregrounds those two roles over the role of the woman because the Roman context necessitates that she should be considered negligible.

In this reading, however, Lesbia's role as a metaphor for Sappho and her poetry is significantly diminished. Sappho's lyrics become merely an opportunity for Catullus to attempt to contend with another Roman man. Indeed, Elizabeth Young reads the rival in Catullus 51 as a poetic rival, suggesting that Roman elites were hyper-competitive about their poetic production, and Catullus in particular reveals careful attention to what his rival poets are doing throughout his corpus.¹⁸ The poem thus becomes less about the Catullus's relationship with his Greek models and more concerned with his immediate Roman contemporaries. This reading, however, opens the question of why Catullus produced a translation of Sappho for a poem about the Roman literary climate, when he discusses the topic explicitly elsewhere in his corpus.¹⁹ Catullus clearly had no reservations about calling out the poems and poets he found distasteful, so the veiled suggestion of poetic competition in poem 51 seems uncharacteristically subtle. While his circle of poetic rivals certainly valued translation and Greek poetry in a similar way, it is unusual

¹⁶ Greene 1999, 5. For more on gender in Catullus's poetry, see Wray 2001 and Manwell 2007, 111-128.

¹⁷ Wray 2001, 98.

¹⁸ Young 2015, 175.

¹⁹ Catullus discusses the competition in his literary circle in poems 1, 14, 22, 36, and 40.

that Catullus would look to a foreign model to describe a situation so unique to Roman society. In other words, his translation should be a statement of his authority as a poet and translator, not a description of competition in Rome.

If instead the poem's self-consciousness as a translation signifies that Catullus is exploring his relationship with his models, the rival becomes yet another stand-in for Sappho herself. Catullus expresses his affection for Sappho in his erotic interest in Lesbia, but he reveals his rivalry and desire to surpass her accomplishments in his competition with the other man. The emotional reaction that Catullus has in the poem is thus a dramatization of his complicated relationship to his model, for whom he simultaneously feels both adoration and hostility. The bodily effects that Catullus experiences are not necessarily a reaction to the beloved or the rival individually, but rather a reaction to them as a unit. The neuter *quod* in the first line of the second stanza, with no clear grammatical antecedent, appears to refer to the situation as a whole. It is also the subject of *eripit*, creating the sense that whole nexus of relationships causes the speaker's rapid decline. Sappho's τό (31.5) functions the same way, blurring the causality of the reaction that follows. Both poets, however, move to clarify the cause of their declines when they focus on the action of seeing the beloved directly before the decline occurs. Sappho's ὡς γὰρ ἔς σ' ἴδω βρόχε ("for as soon as I see you," 31.6) corresponds closely to Catullus's *nam simul te, / Lesbia, aspexi* ("for as soon as I see you, Lesbia," 51.6-7), though Catullus doubles the emphasis on the woman, calling her by her name in addition to the pronoun *te*. Catullus thus aligns the sensory disarray more closely with Lesbia than the rival, suggesting that this reaction is a result of his affection for Sappho's poetry, leaving the *otium* stanza to reflect his competitive urge. Indeed, where Sappho's fourth stanza describes complete destruction of the body, Catullus's

transfers that destruction into the more masculine realm of kings and warfare (51.15-16), a more fitting analogy for the competition of poets than the erotic experience he has just described.

Regardless of whether the rival stands for an aspect of Sappho or a Roman poetic rival, the different ways in which the relationships between the principal characters are portrayed reveal that Catullus's speaker is much more outward-focused, whereas Sappho's remains preoccupied with her internal turmoil and erotic experience.²⁰ This contrast is revealed most specifically in the final stanzas (or parts thereof) of each poem. Sappho's fragment breaks off with the injunction, presumably to the speaker herself, ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον ἐπεὶ ("But all must be endured since..." 31.17). The poem seems to conclude on a still internally-focused note of perseverance despite the overwhelming nature of the experience. It is likely that Sappho's poem finished with an example from mythology or with a generalizing comment, but Catullus's choice to inject the language of *otium*, a strictly Roman idea, reveals that his poem is more politically and socially conscious. Catullus concludes his poem with a self-admonishment to avoid leisure: *otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est* ("Leisure, Catullus, is troublesome for you," 51.13). This launches the poem into the external Roman literary context in which the spaces of *otium* and *negotium* ("leisure" and "work") were in constant conflict.²¹ The effect is still physical and destructive, as *molestum est*, *gestis*, and *exsultas* all signify physical movement or ailment ("is troublesome," "you get stirred up," "you exult," 51.9-10). The difference between these reactions and the ones that parallel Sappho's so closely is that they are external and visible reactions. The erotic experience, for both Sappho and Catullus, is centered on internal feelings not necessarily visible to the onlooker. Sappho emphasizes this internality when she says φαίνομ' ἔμ' ἄντα ("I seem to myself," 31.16), suggesting that she does not necessarily appear this way to anyone else.

²⁰ Greene 1999, 4.

²¹ Ibid., 6. For more about the civic values of translation, see McElduff 2013, 96-121 and Baltussen 2011, 37-47 on Cicero's translation projects.

Catullus achieves a similar effect as he emphasizes only sensory reactions, until shifting in the final stanza into visible restlessness and sickness. The turn outwards to find a way to explain his reaction is compounded by the presence of outward effects. Thus Catullus situates the internal turmoil of the erotic experience within a broader cultural context, turning outward for answers rather than inward for strength.

This solution, such as it is, takes on further significance as the solution to Catullus's problem of his relationship to his model when the poem is read as a dramatization of the translation process. In saying that erotic pursuits lead to the destruction of societies, Catullus suggests that his interest in the foreign works of Sappho could destroy him as well, since *otium* is the sphere in which poetry can be created. This turn mirrors Roman attitudes towards Greek culture, which is often represented in Roman literature as alluring, feminine, and potentially dangerous.²² Catullus's immediate reaction of bodily disintegration enacts this fear, and his ultimate self-admonishment suggests an acknowledgement of *negotium* as the standard of Roman manhood, even if he does not actually resign himself to a life of civic duty. Since *otium* is the space from which Catullus can compose his poetry, his denial of leisure is likely playful and ironic, and his ability to compose poems despite his supposed loss of voice serves as affirmation of his own skill as a poet and translator: Catullus is able to write exquisite translations, even as he suffers under the influence of *otium* and Greek culture. In poem 51, Catullus's inner voice speaks for those Roman standards that Catullus's translation seems to defy, saying that control over self and foreign objects is a means to assert one's superiority, whether as a member of society or as an artist. Rome feared falling to Greek cultural influence, even when its military influence was uncontested, and Catullus's seemingly quick jump from the effects of *otium* on the individual to its effects on cities suggests that he speaks not only about his

²² McElduff 2013, 10-11; Young 2015, 7.

own dealings with Greek poetry but also speaks on behalf of the entirety of Roman culture beholden to its Greek models.²³ The desperate city is thus in the same position as the desperate lover, and Rome could face the same loss of sense, body, and voice that Catullus expresses in his poem.

Catullus recovers from his ailment, however, when he reasserts his voice in the final stanza, concluding his slow assumption of control over Sappho's poem. This process began with the first adjustments to Sappho's language and tone: the hyperbolic description of the rival and the reframing of the dramatic set-up. Next, he inserts *misero* ("wretched") as an epithet for the speaker, which not only has no parallel in Sappho's version, but also reveals the gender of the speaker as male.²⁴ This insertion pushes Catullus's poem out of the realm of translation and into a performance of Sappho from his own voice, especially since Catullus uses *miser* to describe himself many times throughout his corpus.²⁵ He finally explicitly takes ownership of the poem in his final stanza, when the speaker addresses himself by name, *Catulle*, signifying that Catullus has not been attempting to merely render Sappho's poem in a new language but to speak it from his own voice into his own context.²⁶ While the poet does not make explicit that the speaker is addressing himself, it also gives no indication of who the new speaker could be, if *Catulle* is not also the man who experienced the erotic breakdown in the previous stanzas. The self-address then serves as an announcement of authorship, emphasizing the new voice that can speak Sappho's words. Significantly, this address occurs as Catullus makes his most drastic change to Sappho's model, cutting off the remaining lines and inserting his own conclusion. In this way, Catullus not only takes control of Sappho's words, but cuts her short with an assertion of his own

²³ Young 2015, 178-179.

²⁴ Wray 2001, 98.

²⁵ See poems 8, 30, and 99.

²⁶ Young 2011, 31.

voice. In the poem's discourse on translation and Hellenism, this move reinforces the translator's desire to rival, conquer, and surpass his source. Catullus the speaker of the poem recovers from his erotic passion quickly and decisively while Sappho merely endures it; Catullus the translator acknowledges his fascination with Greek models but does not allow himself to fully submit to their control. His poem is both a performance of a Greek poem in a new Roman context and a declaration of a sort of victory over his model by claiming Sappho's voice as his own. Catullus's management of his own erotic experience better fits the context of Roman masculinity that he writes Sappho into (or out of) in his translation. By the standards his poem will be judged by, then, Catullus is "better" at dealing with emotions than Sappho and, by extension, better at poetry itself.²⁷

By diverging in his final stanza, Catullus effectively silences Sappho's voice, before even reaching the point at which Sappho attempts to reclaim her own voice at the conclusion of her own poem. Thus Catullus's translation reveals that control of a source text indicates a broader, imperial control over Greek culture.²⁸ Catullus conceals this discourse of imperialism within an erotic narrative, calling to our attention the complicated emotional relationship to Greece that occurs especially in cultural contexts, while the military and political relationships are more concretely that of victor to conquered. Catullus's attitude within his version of Sappho is not merely a celebration of a successful conquest or curious interest in an exotic object. He experiences sensory breakdown and an inability to speak in the presence of his model as well as a competitive urge and a desire to distance himself from his own amatory response. In the imperial realm, control is the result of conquest and is earned by a definitive victory. In literary terms, control only comes at a cost of emotional turmoil, and even Catullus's claim of victory is

²⁷ Young 2015, 125.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 180-181.

tenuous. His solution seems to be that he can come to the brink of complete surrender to the foreign text, but emerge from the fray as the superior poet by claiming the poem his own.²⁹ Indeed, the mark of the best Roman poet might just be the ability to come as close to a Greek model as Catullus does in his opening stanzas without allowing the whole poem to be consumed by that model. While Sappho comes near to death in her erotic experience, Catullus comes near to another sort of death in his version: the obliteration of his own voice.

Catullus's discussion of *otium* in the final stanza elucidates how he views his interaction with Sappho. Leisure ran counter to Roman values, taking the would-be statesman away from his civic duty, but this final stanza reveals that Catullus had this erotic experience, and thus also produced the poem, in a leisure space. *Otium*, however, was closely linked to the Greek symposium, an intellectual and creative space within Greek culture.³⁰ The suggested sympotic context is amplified when poem 50 is read as a preface to poem 51. In 50, Catullus and his friend Licinius enjoy a day of leisure and playful composition of poems that leave Catullus experiencing a similarly erotic affection for his friend's "charm and wit" (*lepore... facetiisque*, 50.7-8). Near the conclusion of the poem, Catullus writes, *hoc, iucunde, tibi poema feci* ("I made you this poem, darling," 50.16), referring to the present poem but also the following translation of Sappho.³¹ The translation is thus contextualized in a Roman setting with a foreign air.

Catullus has to create a Roman context for Greek erotic poetry in order to bring it into the Roman language. By creating this context he fully places himself in Sappho's position, which allows him to take on her voice so successfully. But at the moment when this embodiment seems

²⁹ McElduff 2013, 131.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

³¹ The relationship between 50 and 51 is modeled by the relationship between 65 and 66. 65 expressly function as a translator's preface to 66, Catullus's translation of Callimachus's *Lock of Berenice*. There, Catullus sends Hortalus *haec expressa tibi carmina Battiadae* ("[I send] these translated lines of Callimachus to you," 65.16), suggesting that the relationship between 50 and 51 falls along similar lines. For an in-depth analysis of these relationships, see Wray 1999, 88-109 and Young 2015, 116-138.

complete in his poem, Catullus recovers his own voice, signifying his poetic agility and his masterful command of his source text. This ultimate rejection of *otium* thus serves as an expression of the constraints of Roman society on literary production as well as the futility of trying to come so close to a Greek model.³² Translation of Greek literature into Latin is thus not possible without a re-contextualization that fits those Greek models into Roman society while rejecting the those elements of Greek culture that are not compatible with Roman values.

Catullus's approach to translating Sappho reveals that the primary problems he faced were context and the mixed emotions of affection and competition. Sappho can't exist in Latin because the space for erotic experiences did not exist in Roman society, and likewise the genre of erotic love poetry had no place in the Roman literary imagination. Catullus solves this problem by creating a new context, framing the erotic part of the poem in what amounts to a dismissal of the leisure that allows such poetry to be created. Even as he embodies Sappho, experiencing the same symptoms and speaking the same words, he does so as an act, affirming in his final stanza that it has been Catullus speaking all along, or at least a masculine, Roman speaker overtaking Sappho's voice. And yet, his dismissal of Sappho is at odds with his clear affection and passion for her work, expressed both within the poem in his feelings for Lesbia and in the act of translating itself. At the same time, Catullus expresses his desire to surpass Sappho as the poet of her own words. However, Catullus maneuvers his way out of this complicated emotional trap by turning the poem away from its erotic subject to the broader questions of Roman values and the relationship between the two cultures. As a translation, poem 51 carefully re-situates its source into a Roman and masculine context, allowing Catullus to make a competitive statement about his own poetics.

³² Greene 1999, 15.

Chapter 3: Horace

Shortly after Catullus dabbled in the Greek lyric poetry of Sappho, Horace staked his own claim over the Greek lyric tradition as a whole. While Catullus engages with lyric in a variety of ways, he does not situate himself within the within the Greek tradition as emphatically as Horace. Catullus's lyric adaptations are often tempered by Callimachean values and Roman social and political circumstances. In poem 51, for example, he reconfigures the erotic lyric situation to be about the tension between work and leisure in Roman society rather than leaving the unfamiliar erotic subject on its own. And while Catullus adjusts the context of singular poems in this way, Horace transposes the entire genre of Greek lyric into a new context. These are the central claims of Horace's *Odes*, in which he synthesizes a vast array of lyric models to reproduce the lyric aesthetic over the course of his collection.

This kind of "generic" translation, however, is not without precedent. In poem 64, Catullus works with the Hellenistic genre of epyllion to produce a work that seems Greek even though it is not drawn from a specific source.¹ By emulating the form, style, and subjects of Hellenistic epyllion, Catullus produces a singular poem that reflects the influence of an entire genre. Unlike the Romanizing impulse he displays in poem 51, Catullus makes no effort to fit poem 64 into Roman literary standards or give it a Roman cultural context. Instead, poem 64 defines itself as overwhelmingly Greek in its aesthetic, drawing the reader away from a Roman context and into the world of Hellenistic values.² Catullus celebrates the foreignness of the story, highlighting the characters' conventional Hellenistic luxury, rather than adjusting it for a more austere Roman audience.³ Horace's project differs on both of these points. Rather than produce a

¹ Young 2015, 25. See *Ibid.*, 24-51 for a full analysis of how poem 64 fits into Catullus's translation project.

² *Ibid.*, 37.

³ *Ibid.*, 31.

single poem that represents the whole genre, Horace composes multiple poems reflecting the variety of forms and themes within the genre of lyric. As a result, he conveys a much more nuanced impression of the Greek genre and employs a variety of methods to translate his sources. Secondly, Horace goes to great length to re-contextualize his Greek models into Roman settings. Since he claims to be the first *lyricus vates* (“lyric bard,” *Odes* 1.1.35), he must establish the genre’s presence in Rome at the same time as he proves his own presence among his Greek models.

While it is productive to consider Horace in his self-described position as inventor of Latin lyric and the ways he works with the archaic lyric in aggregate, an analysis of Horace’s position of translator, working with particular Greek lyric poems, is the only way to reveal the actual methods by which he renders lyric in Latin. Indeed, within his broader project of generic translation, Horace engages with specific lyric models. When writing about his models explicitly, Horace prioritizes Alcaeus as one of his main sources, and the instances in which he translates his work neatly reflect his project as a whole, especially the ways he plays with context.⁴

Horace’s claim to be one of the great lyric poets is contingent on his ability to establish the genre’s validity in Rome, where the contexts that prompted lyric composition in archaic Greece did not exist. By artificially aligning his own situation with those of his models, Horace can position himself as more than an imitator of an ancient genre that had no place in his literary culture, and thus become a true lyric poet, even if his works are never accompanied by song.⁵ On the one hand, Catullus solves the problem of not having a Roman equivalent to the Greek

⁴ *Odes* 1.9, 10, 14, 18, 22, 32, and 37 use Alcaic source material. See Feeney 1993, 41-63, Hutchinson 2007, 36-49, Curley 2004, 137-152, and Paschalis 2002, 71-84 for more on Horace’s relationship to Alcaeus and other Greek lyric poets. For Horace as a translator, see Spencer 2011, 101-115.

⁵ For the performance of Horatian lyric, see Lowrie 2009, 63-97.

symposium by creating symposium-like occasions for particular poems, depicting himself at leisure among friends by happenstance rather than design.⁶ Horace, on the other hand, finds moments in which Rome provides new, slightly different contexts that promote the composition of the same kind of sympotic, lyric poetry. This process is intertwined with Horace's translation practices, since the act of translation implicitly links the context of the original with that of the translation. If Alcaeus's or Pindar's words fit in this new context, lyric as a whole can fit in Rome.

Horace does not, however, translate from his models in full, as Catullus seems to have come close to doing in poems 51 and 66. Instead, he often adapts single lines of Greek authors as his first lines and proceeds from this "motto" into an original poem.⁷ These mottoes, positioned at the very beginning of the poems and presumably recognizable as translations, frame his poems as engagements with specific sources while also allowing Horace to claim originality and ingenuity. These moments of translation emphasize Horace's contextual play, since the ability to render the Greek poems comprehensively in Latin and in Roman settings "proves" that the contexts that promoted the genre in its original form persist in Horace's literary climate.

Horace's engagement with Alcaeus is particularly relevant to his concerns about context. Alcaeus occupied a very specific position in his community as both a poet of the symposium and an active figure in the political sphere in his home city of Mytilene on the island of Lesbos.⁸ Horace, on the other hand, operated under the patronage of Maecenas, an adviser to Augustus, with a small circle of elite poets.⁹ Despite the vast differences between their roles in society,

⁶ See poems 10 and 50, for example. For the symposium in Horace's work, see Murray 1985, 89-105.

⁷ Aside from the examples here, *Odes* 1.9, 1.12, 1.22, and 3.12 use mottoes from Greek lyric authors in their opening lines. For more on the use of mottoes in Horace, see Richmond 1970, 197-204.

⁸ For Alcaeus's poetry and politics, see MacLachlan 1997, 135-155.

⁹ For a discussion of Horace's imperial patronage and its implications, see Bowditch 2010, 53-74.

Horace calls attention to the historical situations that produced Alcaeus's lyric, aligns them with his own situations, and thus creates a valid context for Latin lyric.

In *Odes* 1.9, Horace engages with Alcaeus fragment 338, which describes a winter storm:

ὔει μὲν ὁ Ζεῦς, ἐκ δ' ὀράνω μέγας
χείμων, πεπάγαισιν δ' ὑδάτων ῥόαι
< ἔνθεν >
< >

κάββαλλε τὸν χεῖμων', ἐπὶ μὲν τίθεις
πῦρ, ἐν δὲ κέρναις οἶνον ἀφειδέως
μέλιχρον, αὐτὰρ ἀμφὶ κόρσα
μόλθακον ἀμφὶ<βάλων> γνόφαλλον.

Zeus rains, and a great storm comes from the heavens, and the rushing of the waters is frozen... [thereafter]... Throw out the storm, pile up the fire, and mix the sweet wine unsparingly, and [throw] around your head a soft pillow.

The storm drives the speaker and the addressee indoors, creating a space that is conducive to lyric production. This occasion for the poem is general enough that Horace does not have to do much work to establish that a similar situation could occur in a Roman context. However, he overemphasizes the Roman setting of his own version, since keeping the general sense would make him a mere imitator rather than accentuate his project of bringing Greek lyric into Latin. In the first two stanzas Horace twice emphasizes Roman places, first with *Soracte* (1.9.2), which adds a degree of specificity to where the storm is happening, and then with *Sabina* (1.9.7), which emphasizes the Italian origins of the wine. These two stanzas, however, still mirror the progression of Alcaeus's poem rather closely (1.9.1-8):

*Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte nec iam sustineant onus
silvae laborantes geluque
flumina constiterint acuto?*

dissolve frigus ligna super foco

*large reponens atque benignius
deprome quadrimum Sabina,
o Thaliarche, merum diota.*

Do you see that tall Soracte stands white with snow and the struggling trees do not now hold up the load and the streams are frozen with sharp ice? Melt away the cold, piling logs on the fire unsparingly and pour out the four-year wine from the Sabine jar more generously, oh Thaliarchus.

Horace follows a nearly identical progression to Alcaeus, from the frozen rivers, to a command regarding the storm, to a big fire and copious wine. However, the rest of the poem turns the sympotic occasion of the storm into an opportunity to offer advice to the young Thaliarchus.

The most striking difference between the Alcaeus fragment and Horace's adaptation of it is the way each poet positions the gods. Alcaeus emphatically attributes the inclement weather to Zeus, declaring ὅτι μὲν ὁ Ζεῦς ("Zeus rains," 338.1). In Horace's version, the gods have the power to stop the storm: *permitte divis cetera, qui simul / stravere ventos aequore fervido / deproeliantes* ("Leave the rest to the gods, who as soon as they have scattered the winds battling on the roiling sea...", 1.9.9-11). While the gods are responsible for creating the space for lyric in Alcaeus's poem, they seem to have the opposite role in Horace's, calming the storm and thus eliminating the need for the cozy, symposium-like space. These opportunities are fleeting for Horace, so he characterizes them as occurring outside the jurisdiction of the gods. The storm is a blessing to the Alcaic speaker, and Zeus's role in it implies a divine inspiration for the poet. In contrast, the gods take an active role in the calm in Horace's poem, suggesting that he is working outside of the conventional Roman poetic standards. Horace emphasizes the exceptional nature of this particular setting with his use of the comparative *benignius* ("more generously," 1.9.6), implying that Thaliarchus should pour more wine than usual. Horace's characters are taking advantage of the gods' neglecting to regulate the weather by drinking in excess and, supposedly,

composing in an atypical genre. Alcaeus emphasizes excess in his poem as well with ἀφειδέως (“unsparingly,” 338.6), but Horace piles up the language of excess with *large* (“generously,” 1.9.6) as well as the emphasis on the luxuriousness of the aged wine.

Regardless of role of gods, the weather creates the opportunity for a sympotic space, thus establishing the common ground between Alcaeus's circumstances and his own Roman situation. Horace's choice to translate this particular poem reflects his need to transpose lyric contexts into Roman terms. Alcaeus's storm creates a symposium-like space, but it isn't exactly a symposium. The spontaneous nature of the occasion as well as the excessive drinking signify that while this gathering might have the same tone or aesthetic as a symposium, it is also an organic occasion, instigated by the weather rather than the traditional goals of an organized symposium. Because the “symposium” is constructed in this way, Horace is able to craft the same scene in Latin, caused by the same organic sequence of events. Horace's symposium-like retreat is a literary fabrication based on the idea of a Greek symposium rather than a structured occasion for composing and sharing lyric poems.¹⁰ Thus, he aligns the occasion for Greek lyric composition with a Roman situation, allowing for the production of Latin lyric.

The final move of Horace's poem is away from the cozy villa space and into the urban setting of Rome.¹¹ Where Alcaeus's poem focuses on the contrast between the warmth of the gathering and the cold of the storm, Horace's movement from cold to warmth centers on a movement from stillness to motion and action.¹² After “loosening the cold” (*dissolve frigus*, 1.9.5) with the actions of stoking the fire and pouring the wine, Horace urges his companion to go out into the fields and courtyards (*nunc et Campus et areae*, 1.9.18) and to meet the girl who

¹⁰ The best studies on this concept are Mindt 2007 and Rossi 1998, 163-181. The source languages prevented me from reading these works, but for a summary of Mindt's argument, see Lorenz 2002, 97.

¹¹ For the movement between open and closed spaces throughout the *Odes*, see Paschalis 2002, 71-84.

¹² *Ibid.*, 75-76.

waits for him, “hiding in a secret corner” (*nunc et latentis proditor intimo / gratus puellae risus ab angulo*, “and now the pleasing laughter betraying the girl hiding in a secret corner [should be sought again],” 1.9.21-22). The sympotic space in the mountains spills over into the nooks and crannies of Rome. As a result, Horace extends the link between Lesbos and the Roman countryside to include the city of Rome as well. Indeed, the scenes which take place in Rome are characterized by a number of programmatic words for lyric: *gratus* (“pleasing,” 1.9.22), *lenes* (“soft,” 1.9.19), *composita* (“well-arranged,” 1.19.20). Horace implies that if such things can exist at Rome, so can the space for Greek lyric in Latin.

In another moment of translation from Alcaeus, Horace engages with fragment 6 in *Odes* 1.14. The Alcaeus fragment describes a ship in the midst of a great storm, and the speaker urges the sailors to act quickly so that they survive the ordeal (6):

τόδ' αὖτε κῦμα τὸ προτέρω ἴνέμω
 στείχει, παρέξει δ' ἄμμι πόνον πόλυν
 ἄντλην, ἐπεὶ κε νᾶος ἔμβρα
] . ὀμεθ' ε[

] . . [. .] · [
 [φαρξώμεθ' ὡς ὄκιστα [τοίχοις,
 ἐς δ' ἔχυρον λίμενα δρό[μωμεν·

καὶ μή τιν' ὄκνος μόλθ[ακος ἀμμέων
 λάβη· πρόδηλον γὰρ μέγ' [ἀέθλιον·
 μνάσθητε τὸ πάροιθα μ[όχθω·
 νῦν τις ἄνηρ δόκιμος γε[νέσθω.

καὶ μὴ κατασχύνωμεν [ἀνανδρία
 ἔσλοις τόκης γὰς ὕπα κε[ιμένοις·

This wave comes again [like?] before, and it will bring a great trouble for us to bail out, when it enters the ship's... Let us quickly strengthen [the sides of the ship] and run into a safe harbor; and let soft fear seize none [of us]; for a great [ordeal] is clear; remember the previous trouble; now let each man be steadfast. And let us not

disgrace our noble ancestors lying under the earth [with cowardice]...

The poem is cited as an allegory for Alcaeus's political situation by Heraclitus, a claim corroborated by marginalia in papyri that contain pieces of the same poem.¹³ Though Horace clearly works from this Alcaic source, he makes no effort to clarify what the allegory of the ship stands for. Horace's poem begins (1.14-1-10):

*O navis, referent in mare te novi
fluctus. o quid agis? fortiter occupa
portum. nonne vides ut
nudum remigio latus*

*et malus celeri saucius Africo
antemnaeque gemant ac sine funibus
vix durare carinae
possint imperiosius*

*aequor? non tibi sunt integra lintea,
non di, quos iterum pressa voces malo.*

Oh ship, the new waves are going to bear you back into the sea. Oh, what are you doing? Make for port aggressively. Do you not see that your sides are bare of oars and your mast is broken by the swift southwest wind and the yardarms are groaning with and the hull is hardly able to endure the very overbearing sea without reinforcements? You have no intact sails, no gods on whom you might call when you are overwhelmed by disaster again.

The points of correspondence are clear. Both poems begin with an impending wave (τόδ' αὔτε κύμα, "this wave again," 6.1; *novi fluctus*, "new waves," 1.14.1-2). Horace's *imperiosius aequor* ("very overwhelming sea," 1.14.8-9) mirrors Alcaeus's πόνον πόλυν ("great trouble," 6.2) that enters the ship. Where Alcaeus urges the sailors φαρξώμεθ' ὡς ὄκιστα [τοίχοις] ("Let us strengthen the ship's sides as quickly as possible," 6.7), Horace notes that his ship is *sine funibus* ("without reinforcements," 1.14.6). Furthermore, Horace employs pieces of another Alcaeus

¹³ Campbell 1982, 288.

poem about a ship, fragment 326. The *malus saucius* (“broken mast,” 1.14.5) reflects Alcaeus’s masthead filled with water (ἄντλος ἰστοπέδαν ἔχει, 326.6) and the *non integra lintea* (“no longer intact sails,” 1.14.9) recall Alcaeus’s sail that is “see-through” because of all the holes in it (λαῖφος δὲ πᾶν ζάδηλον ἦδη, “and the whole sail is now transparent,” 326.7). Horace blends two Alcaic sources to overemphasize that his ship is affected in exactly the same way that Alcaeus’s is. As their ships undergo nearly identical destruction, Horace aligns his position with that of Alcaeus.

Commentators and critics have been continuously interested in grounding Horace’s allegory in a political reality at Rome, aligning the ship with various political factions and historical circumstances which tend to be too specific for the metaphor to fit in every aspect. Instead, the poem seems to be about the *res publica* in general, reflecting Horace’s concern for the stability of the Roman state.¹⁴ These readings all favor a political interpretation of some sort, citing the relationship between Horace’s poem and his Alcaic models. However, the allegory in Alcaeus’s poems are never made explicit either, so Horace’s ambiguity seems to simply engage with his source’s own mode of expression. And while the debate about whether Horace’s allegory is a “ship of state,” like Alcaeus’s, or erotic, or something else entirely is important to reading Horace’s poem as it stands alone, it becomes less relevant in terms of the poem’s relationship to its model. If it is the “ship of state” metaphor, it draws a connection between Alcaeus’s evidently precarious political situation and Horace’s understanding of the Roman political situation, establishing in turn a shared experience that brings about lyric composition for both authors. On the other hand, if Horace’s poem is an erotic metaphor, describing lover about to embark on a tumultuous affair, Horace either claims that his amatory situation is similar to Alcaeus’s political situation or that Alcaeus’s poem was also about an erotic situation. Again, the

¹⁴ See Mayer 2012, 136-137 for a comprehensive bibliography of the variety of allegorical interpretations.

effect is that the two poets' situations are likened to one another, creating a common ground for lyric composition. Horace's translation hinges not on the hidden meaning of Alcaeus's text but instead on the transferal of context from Lesbos to Rome.

The most striking difference between the two poets' renditions of the allegory is the role the speaker has in the ship's predicament. Alcaeus's speaker is on board his ship and his exhortations to the sailors come with the added urgency that his own life depends on their reaction to the storm. In Horace's version, the speaker addresses the ship itself, leaving the sailors in a more peripheral role. In asking the ship itself to hurry to a safe harbor, Horace's speaker acknowledges that he has no actual power over the ship's fate. The personification allows him to create distance between himself and those who are involved in the storm. The different positions of the speakers in turn make the stakes different for each.

Horace transfers certain details from the people on Alcaeus's ship to the ship itself in his version. Alcaeus's shipmates are exhorted to "remember the previous trouble" (μνάσθητε τὸ πάροιθα μ[όχθῳ], 6.11) and to honor their "noble ancestors" (ἔσλοις τόκης, 6.14). These details occur in Horace's poem as qualities of the ship itself, which is *iterum pressa...malo* ("overwhelmed by disaster again," 1.14.10) and has its own noble ancestry (*quamvis Pontica pinus, / silvae filia nobilis, / iactes et genus et nomen inutile*, "Although you, Pontic pine, daughter of a noble wood, boast your race and useless name," 1.14.11-13). Where these details suggest that the crew on Alcaeus's ship is fighting together for a common cause, the sailors on Horace's are subordinate to the ship's illustrious status. Horace's sailors are not the poem's central figures, and when they are mentioned it is only to describe them as *timidus* ("fearful," 1.14.14). The sailors have no faith in the ship to carry them to safety (*nil... puppibus fidit*,

1.14.14-15), signifying that Horace has no faith in them to steer the ship while Alcaeus is entirely dependent on their skill.

As a result of these changes, Horace's poem is more impersonal, and the stakes of the ship's plight are lower. Within the framework of a political allegory, the greater distance between Horace and his ship reflects the different role in society that Horace occupied. Alcaeus's involvement in his ship's situation reflects his involvement in the political sphere. Horace, on the other hand, writes as a citizen observer of the political climate. His personal status won't change significantly given the outcome of the storm, but he nonetheless would prefer a stable government to one that is as turbulent of the ship he describes. The impersonality of Horace's poem works with the erotic reading of the allegory as well. In the erotic reading, the ship represents a lover in a tumultuous affair, so Horace shifts the focus of the allegory to the singular ship rather than the team of sailors. The ship is the one lover in pursuit of a partner, not a group working towards a common goal. If Horace refigures the political allegory into an erotic one, he relies on the shift in central subject from plural to singular. In either reading, this distance highlights the subtle differences in Horace and Alcaeus's positions that Horace is unable to completely align. Alcaeus is a public figure with a stake in his political sphere, and Horace is a private citizen. This difference ultimately allows Alcaeus to write as a form of political rally, while Horace's poem is confined to political or personal commentary. At the same time, Horace identifies his own social or political moment with one that produced lyric poetry, claiming a related context and thus a place for lyric in Rome.

Horace also draws a connection between Alcaeus's political poetry and his own political moment in *Odes* 1.37, where he describes the defeat and death of Cleopatra at the Battle of

Actium in 31 BCE. Horace's poem translates a short, exuberant fragment of Alcaeus before continuing on to its distinctively Roman subject matter (332):

νῦν χρῆ μεθύσθην καί τινα πέρ βίαν
πώνην, ἐπεὶ δὴ κάτθανε Μύρσιλος...

Now it is necessary to get drunk and to drink with all one's might,
since Myrsilus is dead...

Horace invites his friends to similar celebrations in the opening stanza of his poem (1.37.1-4):

*Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero
pulsanda tellus, nunc Saliaribus
ornare pulvinar deorum
tempus erat dapibus, sodales.*

Now is the time for drinking, now for striking the earth with an
unrestrained foot, now is the time to decorate the couch of the gods
with Salian feasts, my friends.

Horace employs an Alcaic motto that would presumably be immediately recognizable as such by his readers. The first line, then, suggests the death of a tyrant, even before any further details are given. When the dead figure turns out to be Cleopatra, Horace very effectively aligns the political situation in Rome with Alcaeus's on Lesbos, although he increases the scale of political sphere he considers. Octavian's victory over Cleopatra and Mark Antony effected the Roman state on a global level at which Horace had no impact or involvement. Alcaeus, on the other hand, actively competed with Myrsilus in the political arena, even attempting to overthrow the tyrant which resulted in his exile from the city of Mytilene. Thus Myrsilus's death had immediate impact on Alcaeus himself and his return from exile.¹⁵ The occasion of his death, however, still prompted Alcaeus to compose lyric poetry and, despite the different scale, the death of Cleopatra creates another occasion for lyric composition in Rome.

¹⁵ MacLachlan 1997, 136.

Horace's poem continues past the Alcaic motto to describe Actium and Cleopatra's eventual suicide. In the process, he deliberately calls attention to the contrast between the Roman victors and Cleopatra's foreignness. In the second stanza, Horace refers to Roman wine (*Caecubum*, 1.37.5) and the Roman Capitoline hill (*Capitolio*, 1.37.6). Furthermore, he writes *antehac nefas depromere* ("Before it was unrighteous to draw up...", 1.37.5), employing the standard Latin word for sacrilege. Cleopatra, on the other hand, drinks foreign wine (*Mareotico*, 1.37.14), retreats away from Italy (*ab Italia*, 1.37.12), and flees Octavian like a Thessalian hare (*Haemoniae*, 1.37.20). Though the poem ultimately accords her a degree of respect, it goes to great length to portray her as foreign and excessive, emphasizing her drunkenness and crazed fantasies of power (*quidlibet impotens / sperare fortunaque dulci / ebria*, "wild with all sorts of hopes and drunk on sweet fortune," 1.37.10-12).¹⁶ The stress on these elements of her character suggest the greater scale on which Horace's poem operates even when Horace considers the occasions for his work and Alcaeus's equivalent. In other words, though the Roman world is much vaster than the Lesbian political sphere and Horace's role in it insignificant, there is occasion for lyric composition in both.

These three instances of translation from Alcaeus indicate that Horace believes that lyric can and should exist in Rome because the contexts which prompted lyric composition for his models persist in Roman society. He overtly aligns his situations with those of the poems he translates from, and even when this matching is largely artificial he emphasizes that there is still common ground despite the very different roles that he and Alcaeus had in society. Notably, Horace draws from both Alcaeus's political poetry and his more sympotic mode, claiming simultaneously that both belong in Rome and that he, like Alcaeus, is a master of both kinds of lyric. The remaining *Odes* extend this claim, as Horace engages with Pindar, Sappho,

¹⁶ Paschalis 2002, 84.

Archilochus, and Anacreon on subjects ranging from erotic to military.¹⁷ Not only can Horace function in both of Alcaeus's main modes, but in fact he can encompass every kind of archaic lyric and every notable archaic poet. In this way Horace unifies the very diverse tradition of Greek lyric under his own name, making him both a contributing member of the lyric genre but also its pinnacle.

It is within this framework that Horace engages with his models in a competitive manner. Having established a space for Latin lyric by aligning his and Alcaeus's contexts in his translations, Horace's discussions of his ambitions and his poetic values in the abstract explain the ways in which he strives with his lyric models. Unlike Catullus, who never discusses translation explicitly and whose values can only be read from the metapoetic implications of his translations, Horace separates his commentary on translation from the translations themselves. In other words, Catullus's translations are in some way about the act of translation, while Horace simply translates, only writing about translation explicitly in *Odes* 1.1, the programmatic poem of the book, and again in the *Epistles* and *Ars Poetica*.

In *Odes* 1.1, Horace describes a variety of vocations before explaining his own ambition to be considered among the canon of Greek lyric poets. The poem concludes (1.1.29-36):

*me doctarum hederæ præmia frontium
dis miscent superis, me gelidum nemus
Nympharumque leves cum Satyris chori
secernunt populo, si neque tibus
Euterpe cohibet nec Polyhymnia
Lesboum refugit tendere barbiton.
quodsi me lyricis vatibus inseres,
sublimi feriam sidera vertice.*

But for me, the ivy crown, the reward for learned brows, mix me
with the gods above, the cool grove and the light choruses of the

¹⁷ *Odes* 1.13 works from Sappho fragment 31; *Odes* 2.7 works from Archilochus 6; *Odes* 1.12 and 3.4 work with models from Pindar; *Odes* 1.27 reflects Anacreon. For Horace's engagement with Archilochus, see Watson 2007, 93-104 and Davis 2010, 105-127. For Horace and Pindar, see Race 2010, 147-173.

Nymphs with the Satyrs separate me from the people, if Euterpe does not hold back the reed-pipes and Polyhymnia does not flee from offering the Lesbian lyre. But if you insert me among the lyric bards, I will strike the stars with my lofty head.

Horace begins with the striking claim that his poetry will count him as one of the gods but continues to specify precisely how he hopes to do so. He wants to master the *barbitos*, an instrument that accompanied solo lyric song, and the *tibia*, which was used for choral performances of lyric.¹⁸ By including both types of song in his ambitions, Horace asserts that he will bring together a diverse lyric tradition into one book of his own authorship. Finally, his hope to be considered among the *lyricis vates* (“the lyric bards,” 1.1.35) combines the Greek word for the genre (*lyricus*) with the Latin concept of the poet endowed with the powers of prophecy (*vates*). By pulling the Greek and Latin concepts together, Horace implicitly claims that he and his Greek models occupy the same role: Alcaeus is a *vates* as much as Horace is a *lyricus poeta*.

In the *Epistles*, Horace’s collection of “letters” on various topics in verse form, he discusses his position on “slavish” imitation and his relationship to his models. He admonishes a short catalog of writers who too closely imitate their sources, concluding with a tirade against his own imitators: *O imitatores, servum pecus, ut mihi saepe / bitem, saepe iocum vestri movere tumultus!* (“Oh imitators, slavish herd, how often your noises stirred my anger, how often my laughter!” 1.19.19-20).¹⁹ Immediately following this scathing condemnation, Horace describes his own relationship to his models, claiming that he is a truly original poet (1.19.21-34):

*Libera per vacuum posui vestigia princeps,
non aliena meo pressi pede. qui sibi fidet,
dux reget examen. Parios ego primus iambos
ostendi Latio, numeros animosque secutus
Archilochi, non res et agentia verba Lycamben.
ac ne me foliis ideo brevioribus ornes,
quod timui mutare modos et carminis artem:*

¹⁸ Feeney 1993, 42.

¹⁹ For *Epistles* 1.19, see Woodman 1983, 75-81.

*temperat Archilochi musam pede mascula Sappho,
temperat Alcaeus, sed rebus et ordine dispar,
nec socerum quaerit, quem versibus oblinat atris,
nec sponsae laqueum famoso carmine nectit.
hunc ego, non alio dictum prius ore, Latinus
vulgavi fidicen; iuvat inmemorata ferentem
ingenuis oculisque legi manibusque teneri.*

I first placed my step through empty land, pressing my foot where no other had. Whoever trusts himself, he will rule the swarm as leader. I first revealed Parian iambics to Latium, having followed the meter and spirit of Archilochus, but not his subject and the words stirring up Lycambes. But lest you crown me with lesser wreaths because I feared to change the meter and the art of the song: masculine Sappho regulates her Muse by the meter of Archilochus, and Alcaeus regulates his, but different in subjects and arrangement, neither does he seek a father-in-law, whom he might smear with spiteful verses, nor does he weave a noose for his bride with a slanderous song. I, a Latin lyricist, circulated this man, not before spoken by any other mouth; it is pleasing, bringing things yet untold, to be read by the eyes and held in the hands of the noble.

Here Horace claims that he was the first to write in the manner of Archilochus in Latin, and that such an act was not imitation or translation but innovation. He goes on to say that Sappho and Alcaeus *temperant* their Muses with the meter of Archilochus, which can mean both “render less harsh or violent” or “mix.” Both interpretations have sympotic connotations, suggesting either the effects of wine or the mixing of it.²⁰ Like Horace himself, the great lyric poets used the styles and meters of other poets in their own poetry. The overall impact of this argument is that if Sappho and Alcaeus both imitated Archilochus and were considered original, then Horace’s imitation of these authors both makes a peer of the archaic poets and testifies to his originality. This dual claim complements his programmatic statement, in *Odes* 1.1, that he wishes to be considered one of the *lyricis vatibus*. Here he suggests that his acts of translation mirror those

²⁰ Peponi 2002, 24-25.

same acts of his models. Horace thus presents his double claim that he is the first Latin lyricist and the newest Greek lyricist.

Notably, Horace elides the problem of language in his claim. After all, he cannot truly be a Greek lyric poet unless he writes in Greek. This slippage has two implications. First, the elision reveals the extent to which Horace views Latin and Greek literary tradition as a singular, continuous phenomenon. When he writes *Parios ego primus iambos / ostendi Latium* (“I first revealed Parian iambics to Latium,” *Epist.* 1.19.23-24), the claim is geographic rather than linguistic. He brings the meter of Archilochus from Archilochus’s homeland of Paros to his own homeland of Latium, without acknowledging that he must also bring it from Archilochus’s language into his own. Secondly, by choosing not to acknowledge the linguistic gap between his own work and that of his predecessors, Horace diverts the reader’s attention away from his position as translator or imitator. As a result, he is able to promote himself as an original poet who can join the Greek lyric canon.

Under this framework of cross-cultural continuity, direct competition with his models is unnecessary. He neither attempts to surpass his individual models nor embody them, as Catullus seems to do with Sappho in 51. Instead, once Horace has created the context for lyric in Rome, his central concern is alignment, that is, making sure his work is Greek enough that he can be considered a lyric poet. And indeed, rather than trying to speak Alcaeus’s words in Latin as if he could become a new Alcaeus, Horace places Alcaeus’s words within a Roman context that is distinctly his own. As a result, he can claim that he is like Alcaeus and his other models in both his innovation and his imitation, which in turn legitimizes his claim to be a Greek lyric poet writing in Latin.

This form of competition takes a different tone from Catullus's more direct engagement with Sappho in poem 51, and this difference is reflected in the ways that Horace engages his models in translation. Catullus's pointed competition with Sappho prompts his close translation of a singular, identifiable source. On the other hand, Horace's desire to be included in the canon of lyric poets drives him to translate the genre as a whole, so he competes more generally. In his choice to translate multiple poems of Alcaeus in the full range of his subject matter, Horace works with the concept of who Alcaeus was rather than one of his specific works. This synthesis reflects Horace's broader project of unification across the genre of lyric. Horace engages in translation as an act of scrambling, meshing, and combination that brings a variety of sources together with his own original work. His deployment of various meters and source texts, even just within Book 1 of the *Odes*, suggest his attempt to unify the whole genre of lyric within the confines of a single book.²¹

Genre, then, becomes the basis for Horace's poetic production in the *Odes*. Unlike Catullus who writes in a variety of forms, Horace works under a single generic principle in the entirety of the *Odes*. Because he works in a specific genre, which he emphasizes by his allusions to the Greek lyric canon throughout the collection, he operates on the assumption that genre is an established mode of writing with an inventor and a succession of followers that he can join in a hereditary structure.²² To operate within the limits of the genre of lyric does not, for Horace, necessitate the same musical accompaniment or symposium setting, so long as next manifestation of the genre innovates on the previous iterations in some way. The primary dilemma Horace faces when working in the genre of Greek lyric is this: he must legitimize his work as lyric by reaching back to his sources at the same time as he must account for the great

²¹ Hutchinson 2007, 42.

²² Barchiesi 2002, 50-51.

distance that separates his own circumstances from those of his models. He addresses the first issue by translating and the second by his close attention to context, with the effect that he operates fully within the limits of the genre, allowing him to be a member of the canon.

Underlying this desire to join the canon of Greek lyric poets is an engagement with the Alexandrian tradition of scholarship which established the canon in the first place. In the process of anthologizing the archaic Greek poets, Alexandrian critics of the third and fourth centuries BCE tended to favor the Callimachean aspects of each poet, writing out the diverse range of subjects that were sung of in the archaic symposium and instead highlighting the private and erotic elements at the expense of the public and civic.²³ Horace, however, engages with Alcaeus in both his private and public modes, seeming to attempt to reach past the Alexandrian framework to a more organic notion of the possibilities of lyric. He does this implicitly in his careful selection of which Alcaeus poems to work with, but in *Odes* 1.32 he explicitly characterizes him as a poet who operates in both the public and private spheres. Although Alcaeus is *ferox bello* (“fierce in war,” 1.32.6), *Liberum et Musas Veneremque et illi / semper haerentem puerum canebat* (“He was always singing about Bacchus and the Muses and Venus and her boy, clinging to her,” 1.32.9-10).

Despite these attempts to look past the Alexandrian values that established lyric as a genre, Horace’s preoccupation with joining the canon and situating lyric within Roman contexts reveals the inescapability of the Alexandrian framework. The Callimachean values that drove the canonizing process also pervaded the literary climate in Rome and could not be totally disregarded if Horace was to gain any regard within his literary circle. While Horace may have seen Alexandrianism as a barrier to his ability to reach “real” archaic lyric poetry, it was also the

²³ Clay 2010, 129-130.

only means by which he could actually access those texts.²⁴ His indebtedness to the Alexandrian tradition manifests in a variety of ways, from the use of mottoes, which suggest the Alexandrian practice of cataloging poems by their first lines, to the book format, in which Alexandrian critics arranged poems that had been originally composed singularly.²⁵ Even if Horace tries to work around the Alexandrian tradition, that tradition was the only means for him to access his source material and thus effected his work at its structural core.

As Horace engages with the Greek lyric tradition, he occupies a unique position as both translator and originator. He embarks on the broad translation project of bringing both the text into a new language and the genre into a new literary setting while also inserting himself into the tradition he draws from. Where Catullus strives to bring Greek poems into a new context, a movement from past to present, Horace brings archaic poems into his own literary moment while reaching in his own poems back to the archaic tradition, a back and forth movement.

These different translation objectives manifest in the ways the two authors deal with the context and competition in their works of translation. Competition is a much more general problem for Horace, who synthesizes a variety of authors in a genre-based translation project, than for Catullus, who tackles specific authors in poems 51 and 66. And while Catullus does take on a generic translation project in 64, he condenses the genre of epyllion into a singular poem rather than engaging with that genre on the scale of a four-book collection. In terms of context, Catullus reframes Sappho to come from his own poetic voice, necessarily including her in a Roman setting. In a similar move, Horace aligns the situations that prompted lyric composition with real or plausible Roman situations but makes no attempt to reframe the lyric poets themselves as Roman. Instead, he reframes his own voice to fit the Greek model. Context and

²⁴ Feeney 1993, 44.

²⁵ Ibid.

competition, however, are the primary lenses through which both Catullus and Horace approach their translation projects.

Chapter 4: Vergil

Vergil's first collection of poems, the *Eclogues*, engages with the *Idylls* of Theocritus in a similar manner to Horace's engagement with Greek lyric. Rather than translate a specific poem, Vergil translates snippets of Theocritean poems throughout the collection, resulting in a series of poems that explore all the possibilities within the genre of pastoral.¹ However, Vergil's source material is not limited to Hellenistic pastoral. In the process of situating pastoral within his own Roman literary context, Vergil imbues his pastoral poems with language and narratives from other genres as well, most notably from love elegy. Indeed, *contaminatio*, the blending of multiple source texts into one new text, was a prevalent Roman literary device that allowed authors to assign new relevance to old texts by bringing them together in different contexts.² As a translation project, Vergil's *Eclogues* fill the space left between the *Idylls* and contemporary Roman society with more familiar material, exploring the limits of genre and the impact of translation.

The first *Eclogue*, presumably positioned at the front of the collection intentionally, implicitly frames Vergil's pastoral project as a particular form of translation.³ The structure of its opening lines allude to a similar structure in the opening of Theocritus's first *Idyll*. *Idyll* 1 begins with Thyrsis, a shepherd, complimenting a goatherd for his song. These lines mention a variety of defining characteristics of the pastoral genre: herdsmen, natural settings, singing and playing music on pipes, Pan as the patron god of their song, and song competition (1.1-6).⁴ Theocritus, however, is not writing in an already established genre, though these opening lines assume a

¹ For the pastoral tradition in Theocritus and Vergil, see Segal 1981, especially 3-14. For Vergil's pastoral project in general, see Putnam 1970, 3-19.

² For *contaminatio*, see Beare 1959, 7-11 and McElduff 2011, 87-89.

³ See Coleman 1977, 14-21 for speculation on the order and publication of the *Eclogues*.

⁴ For the Theocritean tradition of bucolic poetry, see Halperin 1983, especially 249-257.

preexisting standard.⁵ By writing these characteristics into the opening lines of the poem, Theocritus creates an imagined tradition for his work. His characters operate under an assumed tradition of bucolic song as well, when they discuss Thyrsis’s previous song competitions (αἰ δέ κ’ ἀείσης / ὥς ὄκα τὸν Λιβύαθε ποτὶ Χρόμιν ἄσας ἐρίσδων..., “and if you sing as you sang when you competed with Chromis of Libya...” 1.23-24) and the established fame of the song he is about to sing (ἀλλὰ τὸ γὰρ δὴ, Θύρσι, τὰ Δάφνιδος ἄλγε’ ἀείδες / καὶ τᾶς βουκολικᾶς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεόν ἴκεο μοίσας, “but indeed, Thyrsis, you sang about the sufferings of Daphnis and you surpassed the rest in rustic song,” 1.19-20).⁶

The opening of *Eclogue* 1 uses a similar structure to also establish its own tradition where a Latin pastoral tradition does not seem to have existed before. Meliboeus greets Tityrus as he rests in a natural setting, playing music brought to him by the “woodland Muse” (*silvestrem Musam*, 1.2). Vergil uses the Theocritean structure to transpose the characteristics of Greek pastoral into Latin. This is made explicit when he writes that Tityrus was singing *formonsam Amaryllida* (“the lovely Amaryllis,” 1.5), suggesting, like Theocritus, a pre-existing song that had already reached enough fame for Meliboeus to recognize it. Furthermore, Amaryllis is a Greek name mentioned in *Idylls* 3 and 4, implying that the song Meliboeus recognizes is actually a poem of Theocritus.⁷ In this way, Vergil inaugurates his own pastoral tradition by picking up the structures, themes, and characteristics of Theocritus’s *Idylls*. These allusions to the pre-existing tradition make the explicit establishment of the pastoral genre, which was necessary for Theocritus, a less pressing need for Vergil. Yet his mirroring of the Theocritean model at the beginning of his collection still accentuates the moment of inception and establishment, opening the genre to new possibilities in its new Roman context.

⁵ Breed 2000, 6. See also Segal 1981, 25-46.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁷ Coleman 1977, 73.

Indeed, Meliboeus's address to Tityrus, while well within the limits of Greek pastoral, is also an interruption of that genre. Tityrus had just been singing a song about a Theocritean woman when Meliboeus finds him and wants to discuss his real-world problems. He has just been dispossessed of his land, and wants to know how Tityrus can seem so relaxed while their world seems to be in flux. Meliboeus seems to be talking about the extensive land redistributions ordered by the Roman state in the late 40s BCE.⁸ Whether Vergil intends to suggest these historical events is difficult to prove, but either way, Meliboeus's real world difficulties encroach on the serenity of Tityrus's idyllic, pastoral world.⁹ And upon closer examination, the opening stanza of *Eclogue* 1 is not exclusively pastoral in its diction, structure, and subject. The "woodland Muse" (*silvestrem Musam*, 1.2) does not have a specific Theocritean counterpart from which Vergil draws, recalling only vaguely the "rustic song" (τᾶς βουκολικᾶς... μοίσας, 1.20), and instead seems to allude more directly to the Latin didactic poem of Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*.¹⁰ Vergil's use of the word *tenui* ("slender," 1.2) evokes the poetic values of Catullus and the neoteric poets who were likely still active when Vergil's published the *Eclogues*. These allusions to various traditions suggest that Vergil is not engaged in a single-source translation project or even a generic project such as Horace and Catullus were, but that he is operating in an inventive and synthetic mode, infusing Greek pastoral with notes and tenors from other Latin poets. Thus Vergil's programmatic statement for his pastoral project enacts an interruption of Theocritean pastoral with a Roman literary and political relevance.

Vergil's relationship to Theocritus, then, is not simply competition through allusion or the transposition of a dated genre into a new context. Instead, Vergil characterizes his use of Theocritean material as an echo. In the poem's opening, Meliboeus addresses Tityrus after

⁸ Breed 2000, 18.

⁹ For the intrusion of discord in the pastoral world in *Eclogue* 1, see Putnam 1970, 20-81.

¹⁰ Cf. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura* 4.589.

complaining of his own hardships, saying, *tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra / formonsam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas* (“You, Tityrus, lazy in the shade, teach the woods to echo ‘the lovely Amaryllis,’” 1.4-5). The song’s name, *formonsam Amaryllida*, echoes two uses of the name in Theocritus’s *Idylls*, ὦ χαρίεσσ’ Ἀμαρυλλί (“Oh lovely Amaryllis,” *Idyll* 3.6, 4.38), just as Vergil’s structure and subject in *Eclogue* 1 echo those of *Idyll* 1.¹¹ The name Tityrus occurs twice in Theocritus as well, including alongside Amaryllis in *Idyll* 3 where his name is repeated in three consecutive lines, forming an internal echo throughout the opening of the poem (*Idyll* 3.2-4). Vergil replicates this echo by repeating Tityrus’s name in the opening of *Eclogue* 1: *Tityre tu... tu Tityre* (*Eclogue* 1.1,4).

The echo, however, is emblematic of Vergil’s translation project in the *Eclogues* as a whole. An echo is a repetition, but its relationship to its source is tenuous. The time that elapses between the word spoken and its echo as well as the distance the sound must travel effect the echo’s closeness to its source, resulting in an echo that can deceive the listener and confuse the original sound. The echo seems to come from the original sound but is not created from the same source, just as snippets of Theocritus link the *Eclogues* to their model without anchoring them within the limits set by the model. Echo has the power to confuse source and imitation, and Vergil takes advantage of the leeway that confusion creates by inserting a variety of sources into his works. As a result, the reader does not know for certain which source a particular *Eclogue* is an echo of. Most significantly, however, an echo is effected by the landscape the words are spoken into. In the same way, Theocritus’s material is affected by the political reality into which Vergil projects it in the *Eclogues*. Echoes of Theocritus and a variety of other authors resound through the *Eclogues*, allowing Vergil to define his own voice in relation to his sources.

¹¹ Breed 2000, 14-15.

In characterizing his project as an echo, Vergil sets up the ways he intends to compete with his models throughout the *Eclogues*. The distinctive blend of genres in the opening of *Eclogue 1* indicates that what follows will not be a simple rehash of Theocritean bucolic, and Tityrus's journey and the god's pronouncement enact a new influence in the previously isolated sphere of pastoral poetry.¹² The power of Rome affects the inhabitants of the pastoral world in profound ways—Meliboeus must leave his land permanently—and Vergil thus claims his own power to stretch the genre of pastoral beyond its Theocritean standards. While song competition is a hallmark of pastoral, Rome's intrusion into that world creates a new kind of competition between Meliboeus and Tityrus. A typical bucolic song competition concludes in a draw, marked by gift exchange and praise conferred from each competitor to the other. In *Eclogue 1*, Tityrus's fate is far superior to Meliboeus's, and the paradise of the bucolic world is interrupted: *undique totis / usque adeo turbatur agris* ("Indeed, here and there in the whole land there is constant unrest," 1.11-12). Indeed, the presence of Rome renders the old competitions obsolete. Tityrus says that everything is small when compared to the city of Rome (1.22-25):

*sic canibus catulos similes, sic matribus haedos
 noram, sic parvis componere magna solebam.
 verum haec tantum alias inter caput extulit urbes
 quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi.*

Thus I reckoned that puppies were like dogs, kids like goats, thus I was accustomed to compare big with small. Truly this one raised up her head among other cities as much as the cypresses are accustomed to among the bending shrubs.

Tityrus dismisses any previous standards of judgement now that he has seen Rome. And if Rome's presence in the pastoral world reflects Vergil's presence in the pastoral genre, the implicit claim is fiercely competitive: Vergil's pastoral will render all other pastoral poetry insignificant.

¹² Van Sickle 1975, 70.

Eclogue 1 also signifies the process of creating a new, Roman context for pastoral poetry. Vergil accomplishes this by physically positioning his characters in relation to the city of Rome, a move which brings with it the political realities that faced Romans living in the countryside. Meliboeus's loss of his land could be a symptom of the land dispossessions that were happening around the same time that Vergil was composing the poems and the "god" that Tityrus's visits in Rome could stand in for a Roman magistrate or even the young Octavian. Furthermore, the exchange between Tityrus and Meliboeus centers on real pastoral work as each rejoices or complains about his sheep, cows and goats.¹³ The emphasis on labor brings these characters out of a completely idealized world into one that is grounded in a reality based on contemporary Roman experience. As Meliboeus interrupts Tityrus's song with his own harsh reality, Vergil intrudes upon the idyllic world of pastoral with his own world and all of its concerns and troubles.

While the opening of *Eclogue 1* takes its structure from *Idyll 1*, the lament of Gallus in *Eclogue 10* follows the content of Thyrsis's song in *Idyll 1*. In this way, Vergil bookends his collection with material drawn from the programmatic first Theocritean *Idyll*, tying his project back into the pastoral genre. His concluding *Eclogue* takes its cues from Thyrsis's song about Daphnis's suffering and eventual death when he is separated from an unnamed lover for unspecified reasons. In the *Idyll*, various gods come to console Daphnis and both the wild animals and the herds of the pastoral world mourn for his loss until Daphnis gives his final speech, spurning love and saying goodbye to his land and flocks. Likewise, in *Eclogue 10*, the trees and animals have pity for Gallus, and then he is visited by various deities, he laments his failed love, and finally he sings his farewell.

¹³ Van Sickle 1975, 69.

After Vergil's brief introduction, the opening lines of the song about Gallus closely translate the opening of Thyrsis's song about Daphnis (1.66-69):

πᾶ ποκ' ἄρ' ἦσθ', ὅκα Δάφνις ἐτάκετο, πᾶ ποκα, Νύμφαι;
ἦ κατὰ Πηνειῷ καλὰ τέμπεα, ἦ κατὰ Πίνδῳ;
οὐ γὰρ δὴ ποταμοῖο μέγαν ῥόον εἶχετ' Ἀνάπῳ,
οὐδ' Αἴτνας σκοπιάν, οὐδ' Ἄκιδος ἱερὸν ὕδωρ.

Where were you then, when Daphnis was wasting away, where were you, Nymphs? Were you in the beautiful valleys of Peneius, or Pindus? For indeed you were not at home in the great stream of the Anapus river, not the peak of Etna, nor the sacred water of Acis.

In Vergil's version, the narrator begins the story of Gallus with a similar set of questions (10.9-12):

*Quae nemora aut qui vos saltus habuere, puellae
Naides, indigno cum Gallus amore peribat?
Nam neque Parnasi vobis iuga, nam neque Pindi
ulla moram fecere, neque Aoniae Aganippe.*

What woods or what grove were you living in, Naiad girls, when Gallus was being ruined by cruel love? For neither the ridges of Parnassus nor any of Pindus caused your delay, nor did Aonian Aganippe.

Both versions call on the deities with the implication that they have the power to save the man in question from his troubles if they were present, and both look to similar or proximal locations to find these deities. The absence of the Naiads and Nymphs, however, take on subtle differences in how they affect Vergil's and Theocritus's characters. In the *Idyll*, the Nymphs are away from their usual haunts, and the speaker implies that they are visiting other remote areas of Greece at just the moment they are needed at home in Sicily. Thyrsis speculates that the Nymphs might be in the Pindus mountains or somewhere similar, while Vergil, fixating on the same physical place at the same place in the line, finds that the Naiads disappeared without a trace. Vergil's speaker cannot find them in their usual woods nor their distant getaways. Their complete disappearance

ominously signifies Gallus's abandonment, eliminating the slim hope that the goddesses might return just in time to help him.

Though these deities have abandoned both Daphnis and Gallus in their times of need, the flora and fauna of the pastoral world rise to the occasion for each man. In *Idyll* 1, the absence of the Nymphs is contrasted by the description of the jackals, wolves, lions, and cattle that mourn for Daphnis instead (1.71-75). Vergil's pastoral world also pities Gallus, but rather than the animals mourning for him, it is the laurels and tamarisks that weep, and even the Arcadian mountains are moved by his plight (10.13-15). In other words, the whole landscape takes on expressive power. While this kind of personification has precedent in the *Idylls*, such a move is not present in *Eclogue* 10's direct model.¹⁴ Thus by extending the scene of animals mourning for Daphnis into a scene of the whole natural world mourning for Gallus, Vergil increases the dramatic stakes of the situation. Furthermore, the mountains that cry for Gallus are not the idyllic mountains of the typical pastoral world. Vergil depicts them as harsh and desolate, writing *pinifer illum etiam sola sub rupe iacentem / Maenalus et gelidi fleverunt saxa Lycaei* ("Even pine-bearing Maenalus and the rocks of icy Lycaeus wept for him, lying under the lonely cliff," 10.14-15). Even Gallus himself is in an uncomfortable and rocky position, suggesting the encroachment of pain and desolation into the bliss of the typical pastoral world.

Similar to the presence of real-world problems in *Eclogue* 1, the harshness depicted in *Eclogue* 10 both raises the stakes of the Theocritean model and sets the pastoral world in a new context. While the new context in *Eclogue* 1 is explicitly Roman, the contemporary Roman context is implied in *Eclogue* 10 with the use of Gallus and Lycoris, referring apparently to the

¹⁴ In *Idyll* 7.73-77, the mountains and trees lament for Daphnis, and in 1.132-133 the flowers and trees are exhorted to lament, but never actually do.

poet Cornelius Gallus and his mistress.¹⁵ Where Theocritus uses the mythical figure of Daphnis, Vergil opts instead to place a real Roman into his pastoral world, thus corrupting its ethereal nature and re-contextualizing the Greek model into the Roman world.

Perhaps the one intrusion of the real world into Theocritus's *Idyll* is when Daphnis is visited by herdsmen: ἦνθον τοὶ βοῦται, τοὶ ποιμένες, ὀπόλοι ἦνθον / πάντες ἀνηρώτευν τί πάθοι κακόν ("The cowherds came, and the shepherds, and the goatherds; all were asking what evil he was suffering," 1.80-81). Vergil mirrors the visitation of the herdsmen in *Eclogue* 10.19-21 but emphasizes the reality of the occasion in a variety of ways. First, he emphasizes this visit by naming Menalcas as one of the herdsmen who comes to Gallus. Daphnis's named visitors, by contrast, are all gods. Where Theocritus refers to Daphnis's mortal visitors only by their professions, the naming of a mortal companion for the *Eclogue*'s real-life protagonist centers the poem in the plausible reality (such as it is) of the pastoral world before the immortal figures step in. While Menalcas is not necessarily grounded in the same Roman reality that Gallus is, his presence as a mortal foregrounds the realistic context of the poem. Secondly, Vergil employs prosaic diction and a colloquial tone to describe these interactions: *venit et upilio, tardi venere subulci, / uvidus hiberna venit de glande Menalcas. / omnes 'unde amor iste' rogant 'tibi?'* ("and the shepherd came, and the slow swineherds came, and Menalcas came, wet from the winter acorn. they all ask 'where is that lover of yours?'" *Eclogue* 10.19-21).¹⁶ Vergil's uses *upilio*, a word lifted from agricultural writing, instead of the more literary *pastor*.¹⁷ Furthermore, *subulci* ("swineherds") are unusual characters for the pastoral world since their work is too base to fit in the bucolic paradise.¹⁸ Finally, Vergil's herdsmen talk to Gallus directly (10.21) while the

¹⁵ Lycoris is mentioned as Gallus's lover by Propertius (2.34.91-92) and Ovid (*Amores* 1.15.30).

¹⁶ Coleman 1977, 281.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 280.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

herdsmen in *Idyll* 1 only speak indirectly (πάντες ἀνηρώτευν τί πάθοι κακόν, “They all were asking what evil thing he was suffering,” 1.81). The indirect question in *Idyll* 1 has a generalizing tone that subordinates the herdsmen to the direct speech of Priapus that follows (1.82-91). Vergil’s choice to use a direct quotation elevates their status, especially when the *Eclogue* is read closely with the *Idyll*. Despite the colloquial tone of their question, the herdsmen of the *Eclogue* have a voice, suggesting that Vergil is interested in the world of mortal men as well as the influence of the gods. These subtle variations on an otherwise close translation suggest Vergil’s intention to ground his *Eclogue* in a realistic, Roman context.

Much of the two characters’ speeches differ in structure and content, but each concludes with a farewell to the woods they inhabit. In the *Idyll*, Daphnis depicts himself departing from a cherished land, addressing even the predators that inhabit it (1.115-119):

ὦ λύκοι, ὦ θῶες, ὦ ἀν’ ὄρεα φωλάδες ἄρκτοι,
χαίρεθ’ ὁ βουκόλος ὑμῖν ἐγὼ Δάφνις οὐκέτ’ ἀν’ ὕλαν,
οὐκέτ’ ἀνὰ δρυμῶς, οὐκ ἄλσεα. χαῖρ’, Ἀρέθοισα,
καὶ ποταμοὶ τοὶ χεῖτε καλὸν κατὰ Θύβριδος ὕδωρ.

Oh wolves, oh jackals, oh cave-dwelling bears under the mountains, farewell; I, Daphnis the oxherd, will no longer be in your forests, no longer in your groves or woods. Farewell, Arethusa, and you streams that pour your lovely water down the Thybris.

The love affair has brought Daphnis to the brink of death, but he frames his own death as a departure from his home. In *Eclogue* 10 on the other hand, Gallus frames his demise as choice between the pastoral world and one more suitable to his plight (10.62-69):

*Iam neque Hamadryades rursum nec carmina nobis
ipsa placent; ipsae rursum concedite, silvae.
non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,
nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosae
nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,
Aethiopum versemus ovis sub sidere Cancri.*

omnia vincit Amor et nos cedamus Amori.

For again neither the Hamadryads nor songs themselves are pleasing to us; again, farewell you woods. Our labors are not able to change that one [Love], even if we drink the Hebrus in the middle of winter, or if we endure the Sithonian snows of a wet storm, or if, when the dying bark withers on the lofty elm, we turn the Ethiopian flocks under the star of Cancer. Love conquers all, and let us yield to Love.

Gallus's departure from the pastoral world shows that world to be harsh and unforgiving, and the wrong place to go for a cure for love. This perversion of conventional pastoral bliss mirrors Theocritus's seventh *Idyll*, where the singer urges a similar plight on Pan, if he does not come to his friend's aid in a love affair: εἴης δ' Ἡδωνῶν μὲν ἐν ὄρεσι χεῖματι μέσσω / Ἔβρον πὰρ ποταμὸν τετραμμένος ἐγγύθεν Ἄρκτω, / ἐν δὲ θέρει πυμάτοισι παρ' Αἰθιόπεσσι νομεύοις ("and in midwinter may you live on the mountain of the Edonians, turned toward the river Hebrus near the pole, and in summer may you graze your flocks among the farthest Ethiopians," 7.111-113). Thus Theocritus's antithesis to the pastoral world becomes Vergil's primary setting for lovesickness and elegiac composition. In *Eclogue* 10, Gallus ultimately urges himself give in to the forces of *Amor*, abandoning the pastoral world for this more suitable context. Daphnis can offer affection for the harshest elements of his pastoral world because he is a character of that world, whereas Gallus finds these aspects of pastoral unforgiving and unrewarding. Ultimately, Gallus's choice is one of genre, choosing the language and style of elegy as the proper mode of conveying his sort of love affair.

This conflict between pastoral and elegy emerges before Gallus gives his final farewell to the world of bucolic poetry. Gallus begins with a focus on his own elegiac poems (*amores*, 10.34), then abruptly expresses his desire to be a pastoral poet saying, *atque utinam ex vobis unus vestrique fuisset / aut custos gregis aut maturaе vinitor uvae* ("And if only I were one of

you and a guardian of your flock or a vine-dresser of your ripe grape,” 10.35-36).¹⁹ These two impulses are then blended, as Gallus imagines a pastoral life with his elegiac lover, Lycoris: *Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori, / hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer aevo* (“Here are the icy springs, here the soft meadows, Lycoris, here is the wood; here with you I would be consumed by time alone,” 10.42-43).²⁰ Gallus’s idea of a pastoral paradise echoes a description of the ideal place for song competition in Theocritus’s fifth *Idyll* (ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ τουτεῖ καταλείβεται ὄδε πεφύκει / ποία, “here cold water pours down; here grass grows,” 5.33-34), indicating Gallus’s full, if only momentary, commitment to pastoral as a genre. Gallus’s reverie is then interrupted by the realization that *insanus amor* (“mad love,” 10.44) has control over him. This *insanus amor* is the force that Gallus ultimately yields to at the conclusion of his speech.

The conflict between elegy and pastoral that Gallus faces in *Eclogue* 10 mirrors the intrusion of reality into the pastoral world. Gallus, in his role as elegiac poet of the real Roman world, takes a sojourn in a new and unfamiliar genre, attempting to translate Theocritus with his own elegiac flair. Such an experiment proves unsuccessful for Gallus, who returns to his elegiac roots. But for Vergil, the use of the more familiar Roman genre of elegy contributes to his establishment of pastoral within a Roman context: *Eclogue* 10 effectively explores the differences between the two and highlights their incompatibility. To create this intersection of genres, Vergil opts to intersperse direct translations of Theocritus with original material, rather than embarking on a more generic project that simply evokes pastoral motifs such as Horace did with Greek lyric in his *Odes*, or a nearly complete translation like Catullus’s engagement with Sappho 31. This choice contributes to the legitimacy of Vergil’s argument about how pastoral and elegy fit together. He embeds elegiac material in a Theocritean framework, creating an

¹⁹ Kidd 1964, 59.

²⁰ Ibid.

intricate pattern of translation and allusion that illuminates the relationship between Vergil's two generic models. This process is a further reflection of Vergil's depiction of translation as an echo. Daphnis's song eventually reaches Vergil's literary moment, and he sends back an echo that does not sound exactly like the original because it has been imbued with the sounds of poetry familiar to Vergil himself. Vergil leverages the distance between himself and Theocritus to repeat pastoral with a different effect.

As a result of the intrusion of elegy and reality into Vergil's pastoral poem, the plight of Gallus is more violent and mad than Daphnis's situation.²¹ While his results in death, it is not a destructive death but a gentle one, sweeping him away in the waters: Δάφνις ἔβα ῥόον. ἔκλυσε δίνα / τὸν Μοῖσαις φίλον ἄνδρα, τὸν οὐ Νύμφαισιν ἀπεχθῆ (“Daphnis went to the stream. The eddy engulfed the man dear to the Muses, who was not hateful to the Nymphs,” 1.140-141). While Daphnis's death is characterized with serenity, Gallus's downfall is fraught with conflicting feelings, military language, and insanity. Gallus expresses hatred for Lycoris, calling her *dura* (“cruel one,” 10.47), a scorn which is absent from Daphnis's relationship with his beloved. As Vergil heightens the intensity of Gallus's experience, he implicitly makes a competitive move to assert his own dominance in the genre of pastoral. He wields Theocritean lines with precision and careful variation while also imbuing them with new meanings, contexts, and significations. Vergil turns the *Idyll's* amatory conflict into a discourse on the limits and intricacies of genre, incorporating both the Theocritean model and his own contemporary literary world.

As a result of this kind of translation, Vergil retroactively imbues meaning into the conclusion of Daphnis's speech. After giving his farewells and accepting his end, Daphnis says (1.132-136):

²¹ Kidd 1964, 58.

νῦν ἴα μὲν φορέοιτε βάτοι, φορέοιτε δ' ἄκανθαι,
ἀ δὲ καλὰ νάρκισσος ἐπ' ἀρκεύθοισι κομάσαι,
πάντα δ' ἀναλλα γένοιτο, καὶ ἄ πίτυς ὄχνας ἐνείκαι,
Δάφνις ἐπεὶ θνάσκει, καὶ τὰς κύνας ὄλαφος ἔλκοι,
κῆξ ὀρέων τοὶ σκῶπες ἀηδόσι γαρύσαιντο.

Now may you brambles bear violets, and you thorns bear the same,
and may the lovely narcissus flourish on the juniper, and may
everything become changed, and may the pine tree produce pears,
since Daphnis is dying, and may the deer tear apart the dogs, and
may the owls from the mountains sing like the nightingales.

Daphnis's wish for all of nature to be reversed as a result of his death highlights his self-pity and amplifies the drama of his end. Since *Eclogue* 10 translates other pieces of this *Idyll*, it invites the reader to return to that *Idyll* and fill it with new possibilities of meaning in the process.²² Each of these plants reverses what it is supposed to produce or the animals reverse their role in nature, just as Gallus the elegiac poet has reversed his production to pastoral and Vergil has turned the meaning of Theocritus's *Idyll* in the process of translation. When read from the perspective of the *Eclogue*, the statement πάντα δ' ἀναλλα γένοιτο ("may everything be changed," 1.134) becomes competitive, asserting that Gallus's forays into pastoral and Vergil's play with elegy have the power to transform the poetic world they exist in.

Ultimately, this claim bolsters Vergil more than Gallus who, after all, sings his poetry into an imaginary pastoral world. On the other hand, Vergil projects his peculiar blend of pastoral and elegy into the real Roman literary scene. And where Gallus is torn apart by his attempt to do both genres at once, Vergil, as the speaker of the poem, accomplishes exactly that balance in his re-telling of Gallus's song. The real Vergil succeeds where the caricature of Gallus fails. Furthermore, the framing narrative of *Eclogue* 10 associates the speaker of the poem with Thyrsis in the *Idyll*, who receives a prize for his singing. Vergil prevails over Gallus in his

²² Notably, Vergil has a version of this passage in *Eclogue* 8.52-56, revealing his tendency to translate snippets of sources across multiple poems in his project of *contaminatio*.

ability to write pastoral while also claiming an edge over Theocritus by retroactively interpreting his poem through translation. Thus like Catullus and Horace, Vergil's translation project includes a competitive relationship with his models both past and contemporary.

Likewise, Vergil follows Catullus and Horace with his desire to re-contextualize a foreign source. Vergil brings familiar elegiac tropes into the unfamiliar pastoral world to establish a point of entry into his foreign source material for his Roman audience. The presence of Roman genres, mirrored by the presence of Rome itself, signifies Vergil's new kind of pastoral that is influenced and affected by contemporary political and literary concerns. For all Vergil's work to make pastoral fit into a Roman context, it ultimately spills over into other genres. In other words, Vergil's competitive urge drives him to stretch pastoral to its limits, and at such extremes the genre transforms into something uniquely Roman and marked by Vergil's own ideas of translation.

In order to successfully extend pastoral in this way and to claim his own mastery of the genre, Vergil must also write pastoral that fits within the Theocritean tradition, translating his source closely enough to prove that he can write true pastoral, as defined by the Theocritean tradition. *Eclogue 2* interacts with *Idyll 11* in this way. Both poems are didactic in tone, describing through two exempla the maxim "There is no cure for love except song," as Theocritus states in his opening lines, οὐδὲν ποττὸν ἔρωτα πεφύκει φάρμακον ἄλλο, / Νικία, οὔτ' ἔγχριστον, ἐμὶν δοκεῖ, οὔτ' ἐπίπαστον, / ἢ ταὶ Πιερίδες ("There is in nature no cure for love, Nicias, neither an ointment nor a powder, it seems to me, except the Pierian Muses," 11.1-3). Polyphemus, the famous cyclops who longed for Galatea, is his example and he describes the occasion for his singing: ἀλλὰ τὸ φάρμακον εὔρε, καθεζόμενος δ' ἐπὶ πέτρας / ὑψηλᾶς ἐς πόντον ὀρῶν ἄειδε τοιαῦτα ("But he discovered the remedy, and sitting on the high rocks and looking

into the sea he sings thus..." 11.17-18). Vergil makes a similar opening statement describing how his subject, Corydon, found respite from his desire for Alexis in song: *tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos / adsidue veniebat. ibi haec incondita solus / montibus et silvis studio iactabat inani* ("He was constantly coming among the thick beeches with their shady peaks. There alone he was sending forth these crude [words] to the mountains and woods with useless passion," 2.3-5). Notably, in Vergil's version of these lines, he situates Corydon in the specifically pastoral setting of the woods instead of Theocritus's more unconventional seaside setting. Vergil continues this tendency to make Theocritus's poem more pastoral throughout *Eclogue 2*, thus establishing himself as a pastoral poet.

Corydon and Polyphemus both express their indignation that their beloveds reject them by describing their wealth in flocks and skill in song. Polyphemus admits that he is not the most handsome of Galatea's suitors, citing his singular eye (11.30-33), but counters that fault with a description of his thousand sheep and the milk and cheese they provide (11.34-37). He concludes this plea with an allusion to his skill in song, noting that he is the best of the Cyclopes and often sings of Galatea herself (11.38-40). In *Eclogue 2*, Corydon follows a similar logic in his plea to Alexis, noting his animals and the never-ending supply of milk they provide as well as his skill as a singer and piper (10.19-24). Instead of using these aspects to counterbalance his unattractiveness, as the cyclops does, Corydon notes that on top of all his blessings he is also handsome (2.25-27). While he stays close to the structure and content of the Theocritean model throughout this section, Vergil also makes a number of adjustments to Polyphemus's speech to give it a more emphatically pastoral feeling. In the *Idyll*, Polyphemus brags about his year-round cheese stock, saying, τυρὸς δ' οὐ λείπει μ' οὔτ' ἐν θέρει οὔτ' ἐν ὀπώρα, / οὐ χειμῶνος ἄκρω ("And cheese is not lacking for me in the summer or the fall or at the end of winter," 11.36-37).

Vergil's Corydon makes the same claim about his milk: *lac mihi non aestate novom, non frigore deficit* ("New milk is not lacking for me in the heat, nor in the cold," 2.22). The emphasis on milk instead of cheese in the *Eclogue* reflects not only the abundance of Corydon's herds but also the luxury he enjoys as a countryman, since fresh milk was likely a rare treat for someone who lived in a town.²³ The luxury of pastoral life is amplified, rather than the labor of cheese-making and the frugality required to make such supplies last. Corydon enjoys an idyllic life in a pastoral paradise, while Polyphemus, still wealthy and content, lives a harsh, rustic life. In this way, Vergil subtly shifts Theocritus's language to make his character seem even more pastoral than the model.

Vergil employs the same method of adjusting language slightly in order to heighten the pastoral mood elsewhere in the same passage. While Polyphemus "grazes" (βόσκω, 11.34) his flocks, Corydon never takes on the role of laborer. His flocks "wander" (*errant*, 2.21), eliminating a need for Corydon to any work and emphasizing the paradise of the pastoral world. Furthermore, Corydon has larger flocks than Polyphemus, giving the impression that Corydon's pastoral world teems with wealth that requires little labor. This impression fits with the broader pastoral world in Theocritus's *Idylls*, in which herdsmen are depicted lounging and more preoccupied with their songs than their herds. By eliding the small hint of labor that is present in Polyphemus's speech, Vergil makes Corydon a more typically pastoral character. Indeed, the name "Corydon," a particularly rustic character in *Idylls* 4 and 5, signifies that he is a proper inhabitant of the pastoral world, whereas Polyphemus is a character from the world of myth and the genre of epic. Theocritus's choice to show Polyphemus in a bucolic setting stretches the bounds of the genre of pastoral. In order for Vergil to prove himself as a pastoral poet, he brings Theocritus's poem back into a proper pastoral world.

²³ Du Quesnay 1979, 65.

Even as Vergil makes Theocritus's *Idyll* 11 more distinctly pastoral, he continues his project of re-contextualizing the model by obliquely introducing an element of reality. Polyphemus and Galatea's love is impossible because she is a sea-nymph and he is a land-bound shepherd. Alexis, on the other hand, is a city-dweller, incompatible with the *rusticus* Corydon ("countryman," "boor," *Eclogue* 2.56).²⁴ Both Polyphemus and Corydon cannot leave their bucolic land because it is integral to their identities as pastoral figures. But while Polyphemus is drawn to a mythical sea inhabited by the mythical Galatea, Corydon's Alexis is present neither in pastoral nor epic. As a result, his character is linked to the reality from which Vergil writes.

As in *Eclogue* 10, the presence of reality in *Eclogue* 2 is reinforced by the presence of elegiac language. At the conclusion of his speech, Corydon describes himself as *perditus* ("desperate," 2.59), as well as implicitly *torva* ("grim," 2.63) and *lasciva* ("wanton," 2.64). Such diction clearly evokes the elegiac trope of the spurned lover, a role that fits just as easily as his pastoral role. This effect is doubled when Corydon exhorts himself to move on from Alexis, saying, *me tamen urit amor; quis enim modus adsit amori?/ a, Corydon, Corydon, quae te dementia cepit! ... invenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexin* ("Nevertheless love burns me; indeed, what bound can there be for love? Oh Corydon, Corydon, what madness has seized you! ... You will find another Alexis, if this one spurns you," 2.68-69, 73). While Polyphemus makes a similar self-address in the *Idyll* (11.72ff), Corydon's self-pity amplifies the elegiac tone in contrast to his classically pastoral profession of love for the countryside, rather than his beloved, in the preceding lines.

Vergil includes a slew of Theocritean names in *Eclogue* 2, such as Amaryllis, Amyntas, and Damoetas, which marks the names of the city-folk, Alexis and his master Iollas, as unusual and out of place. Their intrusion creates a tension between city and country that mirrors the

²⁴ Clausen 1994, 62.

tension between elegy and pastoral in *Eclogue* 10. When read in this way, Corydon's renunciation of the city life that Alexis represents is the opposite outcome of Gallus, who chooses elegy and real Roman world over pastoral. Vergil, then, uses *Eclogue* 2 to demonstrate his investment in and mastery of pastoral poetry through Corydon's passionate defense of his lifestyle. Corydon's dismissal of Alexis doubles as a creed of the pastoral life and a statement of Vergil's intentions with the genre: *habitarunt di quoque silvas / Dardaniusque Paris. Pallas quas condidit arces / ipsa colat; nobis placeant ante omnia silvae* ("Even the gods and Dardanian Paris have lived in the woods. Let Pallas dwell in the citadels that she founded herself; let the woods be pleasing to us before everything else," 2.60-62).

As a whole, Vergil's translation project in the *Eclogues* engages with its Theocritean source material with the same concerns for context and competition as Horace and Catullus faced their models with. Each author introduces a contemporary Roman context for their versions of the Greek originals and competes with those authors in the process. Vergil's approach to these problems, however, is significantly more subtle than Horace's or Catullus's. The latter two authors announce their translations as such, either with a motto at the opening of the poem as an emblem of the source Horace was drawing from or by including an allusion to the source's author as Catullus does with "Lesbia." Vergil, on the other hand, lets the form, content, and characters of his pastoral poems insinuate the Theocritean source material without ever calling out his source explicitly. Vergil blends Theocritean material with his own innovations and adjustments, rendering Theocritus's presence in the *Eclogues* a mere shadow rather than an active force. And if Theocritus's presence is a shadow, his voice is an echo, distantly related to his work in the *Idylls*. At every moment that the *Eclogues* seem to translate Theocritus, Vergil makes a change in diction, tone, or meaning to remind the reader that it is his voice and his

presence that drives the collection. In this way, the echoes of Theocritus lose their grounding in what he originally said. As echoes in a cave vary in articulation and volume, Vergil's echoes of Theocritus vary in the closeness of the translation and the intensity of Vergil's voice over his.

The subtlety of Vergil's play with his source material, however, does not hinder him from re-contextualizing pastoral into a Roman context. In fact, his careful attention to blending Theocritus's voice with his own reveals Vergil's assumption that pastoral poetry will fit in the Roman literary world. While his translation is less explicit, Vergil does tend to operate within the established conventions of pastoral poetry, which contributes to the Theocritean impression throughout the collection. Where Horace discusses the Roman political situation explicitly or Catullus speaks Sappho's words from his own voice, Vergil depicts typical Theocritean characters in a nearly carbon-copy version of his pastoral world. The encroachment of the real Roman world is thus less for the purposes of establishing a place for the genre in Roman literary culture than for exploring the limits of that genre. Vergil stretches pastoral into new territory by interspersing elegiac undertones into pastoral settings on the one hand, and exaggerates the pastoral features of Theocritus's *Idylls* elsewhere. The result is a translation project that tests the boundaries of the genre, finding new relationships between the literary production of old and new authors.

Chapter 5: Afterword

For the modern reader, the process of translation is often conceived of as a one-step, linear process. The author writes a work in a certain context and for a certain audience and the translator produces the same text in a new language. Some of the source text's nuance is lost in the process, but the reader must assume a certain level of equivalency between the inaccessible source text and its translation. This one-step process, however, does not apply to every translation. Books such as the *Odyssey* or the Bible are translated into one language hundreds of times over hundreds of years. Each translation takes into account the translations that came before it, attempting to do something unique with each particular iteration, whether by targeting the text to a certain audience or applying an unconventional method of translation. The translation process for these works is no longer linear or binary, but incorporates an array of sources that interact with each other in a web of relationships over a long period of time.

Catullus, Horace, and Vergil operate within a similar "nexus" structure. Vergil combines contemporary Roman sources with his Hellenistic source material, producing a unique blend of a variety of genres and voices. This synthesis has a leveling effect on the various sources. By interweaving Gallus's love elegy with Theocritus's bucolic poems, Vergil implicitly sets the two on comparable ground. And if Gallus's ultimate choice to pursue elegy over pastoral carries a value judgment, the combination of the two genres serves as a means to prompt productive interpretive questions about the nature and limits of each genre.

Vergil's synthetic impulse is not limited to Gallus and Theocritus. He includes material drawn from Catullus in a variety of *Eclogues*, particularly *Eclogue* 4 which uses descriptions of

the golden age from Catullus's poem 64.¹ In the *Eclogue*, Vergil's golden age child will see gods and mortals mingle together: *ille deum vitam accipiet, divisque videbit / permixtos heroas et ipse videbitur illis* ("he will receive divine life, and he will see heroes mixed with gods, and he himself will be seen among them," 4.15-16). This golden age description parallels Catullus's while adjusting the temporality of the depiction to fit a coming golden age rather than the past golden age. Catullus writes, *praesentes namque ante domos invisere castas / heroum, et sese mortali ostendere coetu / caelicolae nondum sprete pietate solebant* ("for before, when piety was not yet spurned, the heavenly ones were accustomed to visit the pure homes of heroes and to show themselves in the company of mortals," 64.384-386).

Vergil changes the tense of another characterization of the golden age from Catullus 64 when he describes the way the land will produce without labor. In *Eclogue* 4 he writes, *molli paulatim flavescet campus arista / incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva / et durae quercus sudabunt roscida mella* ("slowly the plain will yellow with soft grain, and the reddening grape will hang from the uncultivated briar, and the rough oaks will sweat with honey-dew," 4.28-30). The three end-stopped lines mirror the metrical rhythm and tone of a similar description in Catullus 64: *rura colit nemo, mollescunt colla iuvenis, / non humilis curvis purgatur vinea rastris, / non glebam prono convellit vomere taurus, / non falx attenuat frondatorum arboris umbram* ("no one tends fields, the necks of the cattle become soft, the low vines are not cleared with curved rakes, bull does not heave up the soil with a downturned plow, the scythe of the pruners does not thin out the shade of the tree," 64.38-41).²

In these two instances, Vergil adapts Catullus by temporally adjusting the descriptions of the golden age from past to future, simultaneously signifying the forward motion of the

¹ For more on the relationship between *Eclogue* 4 and Catullus 64, see Du Quesnay 1976, 68-75 and Arnold 1995, 143-160.

² Clausen 1994, 136.

perpetuation of a work through repeated adaptations. While this is not translation in the traditional sense, it reveals the attentiveness with which Vergil read and incorporated other Roman authors. And the inclusion of Catullan sources in his pastoral collection is particularly insightful, since Catullus is emphatically urbane. In poem 22 Catullus writes about a sophisticated man who is a bad poet, calling him a *caprimulgus* and *fossor* (“goat-milker” and “digger,” 22.10) as well as *infaceto est infacetior rure* (“he is more boorish than the boorish countryside,” 22.14). Vergil ironically refigures Catullus’s distaste for the country as an aversion to pastoral by including his words in pastoral poetry.

Horace’s poem about a golden age, *Epode* 16, is also present in *Eclogue* 4. However, the uncertainty of when each poem was published and the nuanced differences across the references make it impossible to tell who imitates whom.³ Each poem includes the impossible fraternizing of predator and prey (*Eclogue* 4.21-22; *Epode* 16.33), untilled land producing fruit (*Eclogue* 4.18-19; *Epode* 16.43-44), and honey-dew falling from oak trees (*Eclogue* 4.30; *Epode* 16.47). Regardless of who the imitator is, the speed with which each author is able to adapt the other and the prevalence of these adapted moments throughout the poems testify to the incorporative and competitive literary values of Roman authors at this period. While Vergil, Catullus, and Horace engage in translation projects from Greek sources into Roman contexts, they also bring a variety of other Roman sources into their works, changing the contexts of these other Latin poems within the limits of Roman literary culture.

The most notable example of this nexus of translation and imitation is Horace’s *Odes* 1.22, where he translates again parts of Sappho fragment 31.⁴ His work postdates Catullus’s translation and engages with both sources in ways that reveal his competitive urge. *Odes* 1.22 is

³ For a comprehensive discussion of this problem as well as a bibliography of sources on the question, see Clausen 1994, 145-150.

⁴ For the interrelationship between Sappho 31, Catullus 51, and *Odes* 1.22, see Ancona 2002, 161-186.

not a full translation or adaptation of either Catullus 51 or Sappho 31, but directly references both poems in its final stanza (1.22.21-24):

*pone sub curru nimium propinqui
solis in terra domibus negata:
dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
dulce loquentem.*

Place me under the chariot of the sun, which is too close, in a land denied homes: I will love Lalage sweetly laughing, sweetly talking.

Horace maintains the Sapphic meter of the source like Catullus does but drastically changes the tone. Horace's narrative persona is *curis expeditis* ("free from cares," 1.22.11) and *integer* ("untouched," *Odes* 1.22.1), whereas Catullus and Sappho come to the brink of death. He faces no competition for his beloved and expresses his confidence with the indicative *amabo* ("I will love," 1.22.23) in the emphatic position at the end of the line. Furthermore, Horace's version uses the elegiac setting of a lover wandering in a distant land, re-positioning the lyric poem within a new genre. Despite this shift in tone and context, Horace points clearly back to Sappho's and Catullus's versions. *Dulce ridentem* ("sweetly laughing," 1.22.23) is a direct quotation from Catullus (51.5) and, more significantly, a moment of clear adaptation from the γελάϊσας ἰμέροεν ("lovely laughter," 31.5) of Sappho's beloved. Horace then concludes his poem with *dulce loquentem* ("sweetly speaking," 1.22.24), a translation of a part of Sappho 31 (ἄδῦ φωνείσας, "sweet voice," 31.3-4) that Catullus elides in his version.⁵ The effect is an acknowledgement of both sources and the ways they interact with each other, revealing again the extent to which Roman poets read and incorporated their ancient and contemporary sources alike.

Finally, Catullus makes Sappho's poem about his poetic persona and Lesbia, so Horace changes the context again to be about his own relationship with Lalage, suggesting the infinity of

⁵ Young 2015, 177.

possibilities these Roman poets saw for a single poem in translation. This insertion also emphasizes the restoration of the voice of Sappho's beloved, since "Lalage" means "chatterbox."⁶ Where Catullus leaves out the speaking of the beloved, Horace doubles the emphasis on her voice, implicitly pointing to Sappho as the primary model. Even after Catullus fully embodied the Sapphic voice in his translation, Horace refuses to let him have the last word on their shared model, indicating the extent of competition among Roman poets and their shared Greek models.

Unlike most modern translators who focus on a single source text, ancient translators treat a source as well as other translations and adaptations of that source with equal validity as they attempt to produce a new version of the text.⁷ The inclusive impulse of Roman translators results in a nexus of translations and adaptations, each offering its own interpretive claims about the others it incorporates. With each iteration of a text, a Roman author makes a competitive claim about his own artistic capability and situates himself within the rich tradition of Greek and Roman literary culture. And because each iteration combines a variety of sources, the resulting literary tradition is a complex web of interrelated texts across two languages and many authors.

⁶ Mayer 2012, 168.

⁷ Possanza 2004, 2.

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