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In this elaborate web of “analogy and reflection,” almost any strand, once pulled, reveals connections and patterns running backwards and forwards throughout the whole poem. It is this very complexity that gives 68 perhaps the largest bibliography of any Catullan poem; its nuances seem virtually inexhaustible. This article will address one of the most vexed and vexing passages of all, lines 51–66, presented here without any punctuation but with several standard emendations of the manuscript readings:

nam mihi quam dederit duplex Amathusia curam	
scitis et in quo me torruerit genere	
cum tantum arderem quantum Trinacria rupes	
lymphaque in Oetaeis Malia Thermopylis	
maesta neque assiduo tabescere lumina fletu	55
cessarent tristisque imbre madere genae	
qualis in aeri perlucens vertice montis	
rivus muscoso prosilit e lapide	
qui cum de prona praeceps est valle volutus	
per medium densi transit iter populi	60
dulci viatori lasso in sudore levamen	
cum gravis exustos aestus huiulcat agros	

3. Feeney, "Shall I Compare" (n. 2 above), 34; Feeney's italics.

hic velut in nigro iactatis turbine nautis
 lenius aspirans aura secunda venit
 iam prece Pollucis iam Castoris implorata
 tale fuit nobis Allius auxilium

65

The primary question here is whether the extended description of the cool river leaping from a stone, which begins at line 57, should be taken with the preceding description of Catullus' tears, or with the following description of the help Allius gave Catullus, or even with both.⁴ This question, deceptively simple in appearance, was first raised by Franz Skutsch in 1892 and has continued to trouble critics ever since; Wolfgang Hering, in a counsel of despair, even suggested a lacuna between lines 56 and 57.⁵

The difficulty in finding a simple answer rises, of course, from the nature of the Catullan simile itself. The more one examines the cool river of lines 57–58, the less straightforward an image it becomes. However, only a few editors recognize the inherent complexity of the image and attempt to preserve it through ambiguous punctuation; most come down firmly on one side of the question or the other, and punctuate the passage so that the imagery of the cool mountain stream must be taken in connection either with the lines that follow it (the reading of the majority of editors) or with those that precede it (the reading of a sizeable minority, including Kenneth Quinn).⁶ The first reading requires a period after *genae* (line 56); the second gives a comma after *genae* and a period after *agros* (line 62).⁷

Each interpretation has cogent arguments in its favor. To support reading the cool river with the preceding lines, Jane Phillips says, "The ele-

4. Throughout this article, I use "Catullus" to refer to the *persona* within the poem, without necessarily implying any correlation between the events of the poem and the biography of the poet.

5. F. Skutsch, "Zum 68. Gedicht Catulls," in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. W. Kroll (Leipzig and Berlin, 1914), 49–50 (*RhM* 47 [1892]: 138–51); W. Hering, "Beobachtungen zu Catull c. 68, 41–160," *ACD* 8 (1972): 52. This suggestion of a lacuna has not met with acceptance.

6. J. Sarkisian suggests that "in fact, the simile describes both Catullus' tears and Allius' *auxilium*. There is precedent for such similes in Homer and Apollonius Rhodius, and the device is quite in keeping with the conscious artistry of 68B" (*Catullus 68: An Interpretation* [Leiden, 1983], 15). D. F. S. Thomson allows for ambiguity by punctuating with a comma after *genae* (line 56) and a colon after *agros* (line 62), although his commentary takes the image of the stream most closely with the preceding lines (*Catullus* [Toronto, Buffalo, London, 1997], 481).

P. Y. Forsyth punctuates with semicolons after both *genae* and *agros*, and argues in her commentary that the image of the stream goes with both the preceding and the subsequent lines. On lines 57–62, she says: "*qualis*: the image which now appears has generated a great deal of controversy: does it refer back to illustrate the tears of the poet, or does it look ahead to the help supplied by Allius (cf. line 66)? In truth, it seems to pertain to both, forming a transition from the poet to Allius" (*The Poems of Catullus: A Teaching Text* [New York and London, 1986], 471). Cf. the cautious comment in Feeney that the simile "compares the heat of Catullus' passion, and also, *perhaps*, the flow of his tears, to two things which emit hot liquid" ("Shall I Compare," 37; italics mine) or the remark of R. G. M. Nisbet that the simile goes "*primarily* with what follows (the relief provided by Allius), not with what precedes (Catullus' tears)" ("Notes on the Text of Catullus," in *Collected Papers on Latin Literature*, ed. S. J. Harrison [Oxford, 1995], 95–96; italics mine). Cf. F. Solmsen, "Catullus' Artistry in c. 68: A Pre-Augustan 'Subjective' Love-Elegy," in *Monumentum Chiloniense: Studien zur augusteischen Zeit*, ed. E. Lefèvre (Amsterdam, 1975), 263–64.

7. Period after *genae* (line 56): H. Bardón, *Catulli carmina* (Brussels, 1970) and *Catulli Veronensis carmina* (Stuttgart, 1973); F. W. Cornish, trans., *Catullus, Tibullus, Pervigilium Veneris*, 2d ed., rev. G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1988); W. Eisenhut, *Catulli Veronensis liber* (Leipzig, 1983); R. Ellis, *Catulli Veronensis liber* (Oxford, 1867) and *A Commentary on Catullus* (Oxford, 1889); C. J. Fordyce, *Catullus* (Oxford, 1961); D. H. Garrison, *The Student's Catullus*, 2d ed. (Norman, OK, 1995); G. P. Goold, *Catullus* (London, 1983); G. Lafaye, *Catulle. Poésies* (Paris, 1974); G. Lee, *The Poems of Catullus* (Oxford, 1990); L. Mueller, *Q. Valerii Catulli carmina* (Leipzig, 1903); R. A. B. Mynors, *C. Valerii Catulli carmina* (Oxford, 1958); V. Pöschl, *Catull* (Heidelberg, 1960); M. Schuster, *Catulli Veronensis liber* (Leipzig, 1949). See also

ments of water, flowing, and flowing in a track, prepared for by the volcano and the hot springs, and brought forward by the introduction of the tears, are now picked up and carried further in the simile of the brook."⁸ H. D. Rankin notes that "the transformation of tears into stream . . . is metasyntactical, and represents a flow of images that carry the poet . . . from the grief of 68a to the more hopeful position of 68b. The hot tears have become a refreshing stream."⁹ But other critics point out that the picture of a cool river giving a thirsty traveller a longed-for drink seems very awkward if it is meant to refer back to hot tears.¹⁰ Furthermore, the correlation of *qualis* (line 57) and *tale* (line 66) supports taking the simile with the following, not the preceding, lines. Although this reading requires changing the manuscripts' *hic* (line 63) to *ac* (an emendation that Douglas Thomson calls "both unwarranted and palaeographically unconvincing"), it is the one adopted by most editors.¹¹

Here, then, the matter has stood. After considering the sequence of images, and balancing the attractive correlation of *qualis* . . . *tale* against the necessity for emending *hic* to *ac*, some editors decide one way, some the other, and some reserve judgment. Although I think ultimately the simile remains ambiguous, working both backward and forward, this article offers new support for taking lines 57–62 closely with the preceding imagery of the hot springs of Thermopylae. My argument is that the cool river is thematically connected with Thermopylae in a manner that has not previously been noticed, through an implied reference to the hero Heracles.

the comments of D. F. Bright, "*Confectum carmine munus*: Catullus 68," *ICS* 1 (1976): 98–99; H. Weber, *Quaestiones Catullianae* (Gotha, 1890), 127; and C. Witke, *Enarratio Catulliana: Carmina* L, XXX, LXV, LXVIII. Mnemosyne Suppl. 10 (Leiden, 1968), p. 37, esp. n. 3.

Period after *agros* (line 62): E. Baehrens, *Catulli Veronensis liber*, rev. K. P. Schulze (Leipzig, 1893); G. Friedrich, *Catulli Veronensis liber* (Leipzig, Berlin, 1908); J. Godwin, *Catullus: Poems 61–68* (Warminster, England, 1995); W. Kroll, C. *Valerius Catullus* (Stuttgart, 1959); K. Lachmann, *Q. Valerii Catulli Veronensis liber* (Berlin, 1829); M. Lenchantin de Gubernatis, *Il libro di Catullo* (Turin, 1966); and K. Quinn, *Catullus: The Poems*, 2d ed. (Houndsmill, Basingstoke, London, 1973). See also the comments of R. Heine, "Zu Catull c. 68," *Latomus* 34 (1975): 183–84; M. Janan, *When the Lamp is Shattered: Desire and Narrative in Catullus* (Carbondale, IL, 1994), pp. 120, 178–79, n. 37; and H. A. J. Munro, *Criticisms and Elucidations of Catullus* (Cambridge and London, 1878), 176. G. Williams says that the imagery of the mountain stream "link[s] with the previous few lines" (*Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* [Oxford, 1968], 710), but he seems to have changed his mind later and to take the *qualis in aërii* . . . simile with the following lines (*Figures of Thought in Roman Poetry* [New Haven and London, 1980], 52–53).

8. J. E. Phillips, "The Pattern of Images in Catullus 68.51–62," *AJP* 97 (1976): 342.

9. H. D. Rankin, "Water and Laodamia as Catalysts of Emotions in Catullus 68b," *Latomus* 26 (1967): 692. Cf. J. Clauss, "A Delicate Foot on the Well-Worn Threshold: Paradoxical Imagery in Catullus 68b," *AJP* 116 (1995), who says that Catullus "compares his tears of frustration to a mountain stream. In a sudden shift from himself to Allius, the distant stream becomes a river that flows through the middle of a dense population" (242). Clauss sees this shift in the simile as a reference to Callimachean poetic aesthetics; "subtle, discreet, and original poetry . . . is represented as the clear spring located in a mountainous and inaccessible locale; awkward and banal poetry, the kind appreciated by the masses, is envisaged as a huge and muddy river" (242). I am grateful to one of the two anonymous referees for calling these points to my attention.

10. See, for instance, H. P. Syndikus, *Catull: Eine Interpretation*, vol. 2 (Darmstadt, 1990), 265–67.

11. Thomson, *Catullus* (n. 6 above), 481. The arguments against this currently more popular punctuation were laid out very clearly by Ellis: "(1) *Hic velut* seems to introduce a new object of comparison, not to resume one spoken of before . . . (2) no part of this simile is irrelevant; the tears of sorrow in the end bring relief (*dulce levamen*), not less certainly because they continue a long time; if the digression loses sight of the idea with which the simile started, it leads up in doing so to another idea closely connected with it, at any rate not sufficiently at variance to rouse a feeling of illogical contradiction. (3) This is certainly the first impression which the passage conveys; the view that it refers to the help given by Allius proceeds from exaggerating the importance of 59–62, and almost necessitates the change of *Hic* in 63 to *Ac*, against the Mss. (4) If *qualis* referred to what follows, some particle of transition would, I think, have preceded it; elsewhere verses beginning thus refer to what goes before, not to what follows" (*Commentary* [n. 7 above], 412).

That the imagery of 68.53–62 contains an underlying reference to Heracles was first suggested by Arthur Robson and picked up by C. J. Tuplin and by Feeney.¹² However, neither these scholars nor several others who have discussed the Heracleian imagery of these lines have realized the significance of that imagery for the cool river that appears next in the poem.¹³ But the warm springs that gave Thermopylae its name were not the only bodies of water in that region that were associated with providing relief to Heracles. In fact, there was another legend that connected the hero with the sudden appearance of a river of cold water whose *raison d'être* was to assist him. In the passage that Robson cites to point out Heracles' association with Thermopylae, Herodotus does not stop at mentioning the warm springs; he also mentions the River Duras which, according to legend, sprang up to help Heracles as he was burning (presumably on his funeral pyre): . . . ποταμὸς τῷ οὐνομα κεῖται Δύρας, τὸν βοηθέοντα τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ καιομένῳ λόγος ἐστὶ ἀναφανῆναι (Hdt. 7.198). This point is picked up by Strabo, who specifically says that the river appeared in order to quench the pyre: πρὸς γὰρ τῷ Σπερχεῶ τῷ παραρρέοντι τὴν Ἀντίκυρον καὶ ὁ Δύρας ἐστίν, ὃν φασιν ἐπιχειρῆσαι τὴν Ἡρακλέους σβέσαι πυράν (*Geographia* 9.4.14.4). Here, then, is an association of images that corresponds almost perfectly to the much-discussed Catullan simile: warm springs; Malia; a man who is burning (with love in Catullus' case, literally in Heracles'); a cool river that springs forth (ἀναφανῆναι; ἐπιχειρῆσαι; *prosilit*) to soothe, either literally or metaphorically, the burning subject.¹⁴

12. A. G. Robson, "Catullus 68:53: The Coherence and Force of Tradition," *TAPhA* 103 (1972): 434–39; C. J. Tuplin, "Catullus 68," *CQ* 31 (1981): 113–39; Feeney, "Shall I Compare," 33–44. Robson cites Herodotus 7.198–201 to support the association of Heracles with Oeta, Malia, and Thermopylae, and indeed with hot springs in general ("Coherence," 435–36); his main argument is that this association provides good reason for emending *Trinacria rupes* (line 53) to *Trachinia rupes*, a suggestion that has not been adopted by any recent editors of Catullus, though Bright and Sarkissian both mention it with respect ("*Confectum*" [n. 7 above], p. 99, n. 59; *Catullus* 68 [n. 6 above], p. 49, n. 33). Tuplin too notes these lines' association with Heracles, in his magisterial marshalling of the sources for Heracles' later appearance in the Laodamia passage, lines 107–18 ("Catullus 68," 119–31). The possible Homeric source (*Il.* 9.14–15) for the tears simile of lines 55–58 has been noted by, inter alios, Fordyce (*Catullus* [n. 7 above], 350) and Thomson (*Catullus* [n. 6 above], 481).

Surprisingly, in her illuminating discussion of Heracles' role in the Laodamia simile (lines 107–18), Janan does not comment on the association of Thermopylae with Heracles, although she does discuss the thematic connection of the water imagery in lines 51–62 and lines 107–18 (*When the Lamp* [n. 7 above], 120–35). Similarly, Sarkissian recognizes the correspondence of the water imagery in both passages, but does not discuss Heracles' importance for the first one (*Catullus* 68, 26). Witke notes that Mt. Oeta was the site of Heracles' death (*Enarratio* [n. 7 above], 41).

13. See, inter alios, T. Hubbard, "Catullus 68: The Text as Self-Demystification," *Arethusa* 17 (1984): 29–49; H. Offermann, "Der Flussvergleich bei C., c. 68,57ff.," *Philologus* 119 (1975): 57–69; Phillips, "Pattern of Images" (n. 8 above), 340–43; and Rankin, "Water and Laodamia" (n. 9 above), 680–94. Tuplin and Feeney both approach this realization but then veer away into other lines of argument; Tuplin notes the strong association of Heracles with water, including several rivers ("Catullus 68" [n. 12 above], 124), and Feeney comments, "Only after reading on and seeing the importance of Hercules later in the poem is the reader likely to be in a position to catch the inversion involved in Catullus' comparison of his passion to the hot springs of Thermopylae: in Catullus' case, the springs are an illustration of the heat of his affliction before the relief of Allius came, whereas for Hercules the springs were themselves a relief, provided by Athens for him to bathe in after one of his toils" ("Shall I Compare," 37–38).

14. Although Heracles' fire is literal and Catullus' figurative, it is worth noting that the necessity for Heracles' self-immolation is ultimately caused by his difficulties in marriage. On this point, see Robson, "Catullus 68.53" (n. 12 above), 436–38.

The idea that Catullus intends a reference to the River Duras is supported by reading lines 51–66 in juxtaposition with the later simile of the *barathrum*, which introduces the long excursus on Laodamia. The pertinent lines read (105–17):

quo tibi tum casu, pulcerrima Laodamia,
ereptum est vita dulcius atque anima
coniugium: tanto te absorbens vertice amoris
aestus in abruptum detulerat barathrum,
quale ferunt Grai Pheneum prope Cyllenaeum
siccare emulsa pingue palude solum, 110
quod quondam caesis montis fodisse medullis
audit falsiparens Amphytrionides,
tempore quo certa Stymphalia monstra sagitta
perculit imperio deterioris eri,
pluribus ut caeli tereretur ianua divis 115
Hebe nec longa virginitate foret.
sed tuus altus amor barathro fuit altior illo . . . ¹⁵

It is already well established that the water imagery of 51–62 is matched and echoed by this comparison of Laodamia's love for Protesilaus to the *barathrum* Heracles dug to drain the Olbios River in Arcadia, and that even the structure of the two passages is markedly similar.¹⁶ The correspondence between these two passages' opening sections is even more striking once the cool river too is accepted as an oblique reference to Heracles. When the river is included, then in both passages Heracles' presence is indicated through a reference to one of his lesser-known adventures, and is then connected—through the strange interweaving of imagery so characteristic of this poem—with oddly matched pairs or groupings of similes that illustrate depth of passion (Catullus' and Laodamia's respectively).

In both instances, the poet refers to a little-known Heracleian story and contextualizes it by associating it with a better known one.¹⁷ Thus, in each passage, an image that is quite commonly associated with Heracles (the hot springs of Thermopylae, the Stymphalian birds) appears side by side with

15. Thomson's text.

16. Commenting on the similes that follow next in the Laodamia passage (concerning a grandfather's love for his late-born grandson and a dove's passion for her mate), Feeney notes that Laodamia's love is illustrated by analogy, in "two dense juxtaposed similes, a doublet which picks up and accentuates the doubleness of the poem's first two simile pairs (Aetna and Thermopylae; the river coming downhill and the advent of Castor and Pollux)." Thus, in each passage "two radically different areas of comparison are introduced side by side" (Feeney, "Shall I Compare," 41); see also Janan, *When the Lamp*, 132; R. McClure, "The Structure of Catullus 68," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 7 (1974): 225–26; Sarkissian, *Catullus 68*, 26–28; and Tuplin, "Catullus 68," 132.

17. As Sarkissian notes, the idea that Heracles dug the *barathrum* of line 108 is very obscure; Pausanias 8.14 is the only other extant reference to it (*Catullus* 68, 27). Tuplin, who thoroughly marshals and discusses the sources for this *barathrum*, thinks that such an association is also implied by references in Plutarch and the fragments of Euphorion ("Catullus 68," 129). He further argues that Catullus' most likely immediate source for the *barathrum* was Euphorion's *Chiliades*, although he admits that there is no evidence that Euphorion made any connection between Heracles' exploit of digging the *barathrum* and his Labor of killing the Stymphalian Birds (123–30). Claus comments that the obscurity of the *barathrum* story "reinforces the central paradox of the poem. While the *barathrum* excavated by Hercules is huge, as befits the greatest of Greek heroes, the story itself is rare and the language rarified" ("Delicate Foot," p. 246, n. 31).

an oblique reference to a very uncommon one. Further, both of these uncommon, obscure images involve flowing water (the River Duras, which quenched Heracles' fire, the *barathrum* that drained the Olbios).¹⁸ And as a final connection between the two complexes of Heracleian imagery, each Heracles passage stresses not only water, but also fire, although in both the water is foregrounded and the fire concealed. As we shall see, however, it is this hidden fire that provides the key to unlock the full richness of imagery in each passage.¹⁹ Thus, the structure of each passage reflects in miniature, as it were, the overall function of the passage in the poem as a whole: the more obvious images (water; Heracles' well-known exploits) simultaneously conceal and give the clue to the more significant ones (fire; the obscure minutiae of Heracles' adventures).

Sarkissian has already noticed the importance of hidden fire in the Laodamia narrative. Commenting on the descriptive phrase *flagrans amore* (line 73), he says:

This is surely a *double entendre* intended to remind the reader of the Laodamia who actually burns in the fire in which her father has destroyed the image of Protesilaus. Thus without actually introducing it into the poem, the poet calls attention to the strangest variation of the myth.²⁰

Laodamia's funeral pyre is present only in the reader's mind, but Sarkissian demonstrates that it is crucial for the Laodamia/Protesilaus simile's function as a comparandum for Lesbia and Catullus; the Laodamia evoked by *flagrans* "epitomizes passion rather than faithfulness, an unnatural passion at that."²¹

The hidden fires that Sarkissian uncovers in the Laodamia passage are present, and crucial, in lines 51–66 as well. Concealed here, too, is a death-bringing pyre, submerged and disguised under the text's surface imagery of flowing water. Heracles' funeral pyre is, in fact, buried even deeper in the subtext than is Laodamia's. Yet I contend it is no less there, and no less important. The clues (Thermopylae and the associated adjective *Oetaeis*, which refers to Mt. Oeta, the site of Heracles' apotheosis; the verb *ardere*, which literally means burning [though on the surface level it refers to passion]; and the cool river) are enough to ensure that Heracles' pyre would appear in the mind of the *doctus* or *docta* reader, just as Laodamia's pyre does later. Thus, in each of these paired passages, Catullus interweaves images of Heracles, of flowing water, of hidden fires, of obscure toils that helped Heracles gain his union with Hebe, of marriage caused or sealed ultimately by a pyre.

18. Other scholars too have noticed the correspondence of the imagery of burning and of water in both sections. See, e.g., Bright, "Confectum," 102–3.

19. Witke notes "the contrast between fire and cool water" in the Laodamia passage, but does not relate it specifically to lines 51–66 (*Enarratio*, 36).

20. Sarkissian, *Catullus* 68, 19.

21. Sarkissian, *Catullus* 68, 19. He continues, "The simile takes a sinister turn . . . On the surface Catullus is simply using a simile to compare the woman he loves . . . with a splendid mythological figure. His words do not touch upon the less attractive aspects of the Laodamia myth. *flagrans*, however, . . . calls up those disturbing elements" (19). Cf. Clauss, "Delicate Foot," 242.

The imagery of lines 53–62 is both more oblique and more optimistic than that of the Laodamia passage.²² Heracles' suffering on his funeral pyre, intense though it may have been, led to a happy eternity with Hebe; the later passage, despite its direct reference to Hebe, is bleaker, since in it Heracles serves as a foil to Laodamia, who (like Catullus) was a mortal whose thwarted passion for her incomplete marriage led to her actual death, not to any apotheosis.²³ This movement from more- to less-optimistic imagery is fully in keeping with the overall tenor of 68B, since these two passages introduce Lesbia's two epiphanies (as will be discussed further below); and it is in the second of these epiphanies that Catullus' recognition of the reality of his situation starts to pierce through the veneer of his avowed adoration.²⁴

It may seem odd that the poet would use so allusive and elusive a reference to Heracles early in the poem and save the more direct reference to the hero for later. But, this too is very much in keeping with the overall style and presentation of poem 68, whose "Chinese box" structure invites, or rather, requires the reader to wander back and forth through it and to look for correspondences in theme and material.²⁵ This poem does not yield its images easily: like so much else in it, the Thermopylae passage can only be fully understood after the reader has moved on in the poem, and has then turned back, to scrutinize the poem's earlier images by the light of the later ones. This "two-directional" reading reveals, among other things, that both of Lesbia's epiphanies are introduced by a set of three elaborate similes. The first set (lines 51–66) describes Catullus' ardor for Lesbia and the help that Allius gave him; the second (lines 105–28) describes Laodamia's love for Protesilaus and, by implication, Catullus' love for Lesbia. Each of these sets of similes begins with a reference to Heracles, and, as we have seen, in both cases the underlying Heracles story touches on the hero's death/apotheosis and marriage.

It is these images of death and marriage that provide perhaps the fullest answer to the obvious question: why Heracles, in this poem? Tuplin has already pointed out various thematic resonances between Heracles' experiences and those of Catullus. As he says, while Heracles' "experience at Oeta led to immortality and legitimate marriage, Catullus' 'Oeteian' suffering led to adultery and mere pretence of immortality."²⁶ On a deeper thematic level,

22. Tuplin touches on this shift from more- to less-positive imagery when he comments that Allius' help "is like a stream at first careering down a mountain, but then proceeding more gently to bring *levamen* to a weary traveller in the parched plain. Contrast Laodamia's *barathrum*, . . . which involves falling water and a dry plain, but which affords no *levamen*" ("Catullus 68," 132).

23. Sarkissian recognizes that the *barathrum* passage is permeated with death imagery (Catullus 68, 27), but he does not recognize the death images in the earlier passage. See also Witke, who says, "The site of Hercules' death, Mount Oeta, is mentioned (54) . . . These images of death and longing are continued in the story of Laodamia and in the reference to Nemesis (77), and particularized by 'Troia (nefas!)'" (Enarratio, 41). However, the overall complexity of the interconnection of death, marriage, and immortality in these images has not yet been explored; I hope to make it the centerpiece of a future monograph.

24. Here I disagree with Witke, who sees a movement from negative to positive in the poem's imagery, with the brother's death at Troy (lines 91–100) as the pivotal point (Enarratio, 41); cf. Claus, "Delicate Foot," 246–49.

25. The term "Chinese box" was used to describe the structure of poem 68 by A. L. Wheeler, *Catullus and the Traditions of Ancient Poetry* (Berkeley, 1934), 172.

26. Tuplin, "Catullus 68," 134.

Janan has demonstrated that Heracles' significance in 68B derives from the fact that he is "the one mortal whom myth credits with effecting the transition between mortality and the gods, and the one whose legend shows him frequently crossing between gender positions."²⁷ All these characteristics of the hero gain added relevance if we accept that a reference to Heracles' apotheosis introduces not only Lesbia's second epiphany (in which she is called *lux mea*), but also her first, in which she appears as Catullus' *candida diva*.²⁸ Catullus presents Lesbia as a goddess, and almost as his bride, in 68B, and yet the reader knows that she is, in fact, neither of these things; Catullus' own words refuse to allow the illusion of marriage to stand (143–46).²⁹

nec tamen illa mihi dextra deducta paterna
 fragrans Assyrio venit odore domum
 sed furtiva dedit mira munuscula nocte,
 ipsius ex ipso dempta viri gremio

Heracles burned, was soothed by a cool river, and eventually gained immortality and thus eternal marriage with a true *candida dea*. Catullus burned, was soothed by his own tears and Allius' help, but what did that help bring him? Although Catullus calls his beloved a *candida diva*, the end of the poem makes it only too brutally obvious that, in reality, Allius' help brought him only another man's wife, sneaking away to a rendezvous with him that, despite the extraordinary beauty of the language in which the poet describes it, was nevertheless in its essence sordid and transitory, in fact for her only one out of a series of such encounters (*etsi uno non est contenta Catullo . . .*, 135).³⁰ Immortality with Hebe for Heracles; a few stolen nights with Lesbia for Catullus.³¹

Catullus does not, of course, take the contrast between himself and Heracles to its logical and terrible end by setting his own future death in oppo-

27. Janan, *When the Lamp*, 132.

28. On the exact resonance of *diva*, see P. E. Streuli, *Die Lesbia-Partien in Catullus' Allius-Elegie: Ein Kommentar* (Urnäsch, 1969), 23–26.

29. Obviously, I read the tone of poem 68B, especially of the lines "rara verecundae furta feremus erae/nemini sumus stultorum more molestum," very differently from M. Heath, who denies that Lesbia is presented as a bride at all ("Catullus 68b," *LCM* 13 [1988]: 117–19), and even from C. W. Macleod, who says, "In so far as Catullus can liken Lesbia to Laodamia, he thinks of her . . . as virtually a bride; but in so far as he faces reality, he plainly denies that there is any hint of a marriage between them: there is only the loose association of two polished and sophisticated people" ("A Use of Myth in Ancient Poetry," *CQ* 24 [1974]: 85–86). Surely the wedding imagery of lines 70–73 and 131–34 argues for more than a "loose association"; as Janan says, "The earlier symbolic presentation of Lesbia and Catullus' union denies that infractions against it are to be viewed as minor offenses" (*When the Lamp*, 139). On the marriage imagery of 68B, see Janan, 122; Sarkissian, *Catullus* 68, 17–19, 31; Tuplin, "Catullus 68," 117–19; Williams, *Figures of Thought* (n. 7 above), 60; T. P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics: Three Studies in Greco-Roman Literature* (Totowa, NJ, 1979), 177–78; and Witke, *Enarratio*, 37.

30. The comparison to Juno in lines 138–40 is difficult to interpret, not least because the exact reading of the verb is questionable. The difficulty is only increased by the apparent lacuna following line 141 (*atqui nec divis homines componier aequum est*). It is safe to say, however, that Juno is hardly an obvious *comparanda* for someone who claims to accept his beloved's infidelity. Juno may have been unable to prevent Jove's infidelities, but she can scarcely be said to have accepted them with equanimity. At the very least, I think, Catullus' use of Juno as an *exemplum* here undercuts and contradicts the surface claim of line 136: *rara verecundae furta feremus erae*. Clearly, this is the area where I disagree most strongly with Clauss, who reads Catullus' acceptance of Lesbia's *furta* as a genuine, reflecting the poet's reevaluation of the relationship and his own expectations of it ("Delicate Foot," 246–49).

31. *Pace* Feeney, I remain certain that the woman of 68B is in fact Lesbia (see "Shall I Compare," 43).

sition to Heracles' deification.³² But this theme too, human mortality, is woven throughout the poem, not only in the Laodamia passage and the references to Troy, but most noticeably in the centrally placed apostrophe to the dead brother. *Tecum una tota nostra sepulta domus*: surely, among the resonances of that repeated line (68.22 = 68.94) is the implication that Catullus will die unmarried and childless, and that the *domus Catulliana* has therefore died with the brother, who (unconstrained by a false "marriage" with Lesbia) might have begotten legitimate children to continue the *domus*.³³ The symmetry of opposing mirror images is thus complete: a true *candida dea* led to the blissful fulfillment of Heracles' destiny in immortality and marriage, but for Catullus a false *diva* led only to a non-marriage, sterile and ultimately destructive of the only kind of immortality available to humankind, family continuance.³⁴

The original question this article posed was a seemingly simple one: how should we punctuate lines 57–62? But the apparent simplicity of this question and of its usual answers is, like so much else in criticism of poem 68, ultimately deceptive. The rationale for any answer to this question must lie in the interpretation of the image itself, which relies in turn on the interpretation of much of the rest of the poem; the punctuation that best preserves the simile's complex ambiguity will be truest to its function in the poem. Part and parcel of 68B's elaborate architecture, the cool river leaping from a mossy stone embodies in itself the necessity for reading both backward and forward throughout the entire poem. Its significance is both structural and thematic: it contributes to the poem's formal balance and symmetry, and, when read with and against the later reference to Heracles and the whole Laodamia/Protesilaus paradigm, constitutes an important element in the poem's underlying thematic framework of reversals and correspondences, elements that make this poem perhaps the most difficult and (in my view at least) the most rewarding of all Catullus' work.³⁵

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32. Here again, although I obviously agree with Witke about the importance of Heracles in 68B, I cannot agree with his interpretation of that importance. He says that the poet "also attains the highest experience of love with the *candida diva*. He is thus fully analogous to Hercules the benefactor, resuscitator of life and ravisher of a divine bride" (*Enarratio*, 42). Quite aside from the oddity of referring either to Heracles' relationship with Hebe or Catullus' with Lesbia as a "ravishment," this reading overlooks the recurrent reminders in lines 135–46 that Lesbia is not, in fact, Catullus' bride. Witke goes even further astray later, when he refers to Heracles as "a relevant image setting forth the triumphs of life in the midst of woe, and of the immortality which a man may win through generous actions" (49). Clauss, who reads the description of Catullus' relationship with his beloved at the end of the poem as unambiguously positive ("Delicate Foot," 246–47), does not comment on the marriage imagery associated with Lesbia's second epiphany.

33. On Protesilaus' *domus incepta frustra* as both unfinished house and unbegotten children, and its links with Catullus' words to his brother, see Janan, *When the Lamp*, 121–23.

34. Janan says, "If the death of Catullus' brother stymies his ability to write poetry, if Lesbia's failure to desire Catullus exclusively makes marriage impossible, then Catullus loses his two claims to existence beyond death—poetry and children" (*When the Lamp*, 127).

35. Versions of this paper were given at the Northwestern University Department of Classics Quarterly Classics Colloquium, November 1996, and the annual CAMWS meeting, April 1997. I would like to thank my colleagues and students at Northwestern, and the audience at CAMWS, for their helpful comments and suggestions. The article also owes much to many discussions with Professor David L. Wray, and to the comments of the anonymous *CP* referees.