

Sallusts Interesse und Kritik gilt vor allem der römischen Herrschaft und ihrer Entartung. Die Voraussetzung, von der er dabei ausgeht, nämlich daß der Reichtum des weltbeherrschenden Rom zuerst zu *pecuniae cupido* oder *avaritia* führte, der Prozeß der Entartung dagegen in erster Linie durch *ambitio* oder *imperi cupido* ausgelöst wurde, dürfte dem damaligen gebildeten Leser eine so geläufige Vorstellung gewesen sein, daß ihm die knappen Bemerkungen, die Sallust dazu gemacht hat, genügen.

Kiel

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CATULLUS 76.21: *UT TORPOR IN ARTUS*

The increasing critical attention devoted in recent years to poem 76 of Catullus has served to underscore the importance of this poem for understanding what Carl Rubino has called the poet's "erotic world"¹). Despite differences in approach and emphasis (and apart from the well-known "elegy vs. epigram" debate), one notices, in particular, a striking consensus as to the tone of the poem, and especially the emotional impact of the poet's

1) Important treatments of poem 76 that have appeared from about the time of the editions of Fordyce and Quinn include the following: Richard Freis, Form and Thought in Catullus 76, *Agon* 1 (1968) 39–58; H. Akbar Khan, Catullus 76: The Summing Up, *Athenaeum* 46 (1968) 54–71; L. A. Moritz, *Difficile est longum subito deponere amorem*, *G & R* 15 (1968) 53–58; Gordon Williams, Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry (Oxford 1968) 410–412; Georg Luck, The Latin Love Elegy (London 1969) 67; David O. Ross, Jr., Style and Tradition in Catullus (Cambridge, Mass. 1969) 168, 171–173; M. Dyson, Catullus 8 and 76, *CQ* 67 (N.S. 23) (1973) 127–143; Kenneth Quinn, Catullus: An Interpretation (New York 1973) 115–128; John J. Bodoh, Catullus 76, *Emerita* 42 (1974) 337–342; Carl A. Rubino, The Erotic World of Catullus, *CW* 68 (1975) 289–298; A. D. Leeman and D. den Hengst, Catullus Carmen 76, *Lampas* 9 (1976) 244–256; Ernst Siegmann, Interpretationsversuch dreier Catullgedichte, *WJA* (N.S.) VIa (1980) 127–138; Paul Pietquin, Analyse du poème 76 de Catulle, *Les études classiques* 54 (1986) 351–366; Marilyn B. Skinner, Disease Imagery in Catullus 76.17–26, *CP* 82 (1987) 230–233.

concluding prayer to the gods (76.17 ff.)²). In general, however, the diction of this remarkable passage has attracted very little attention, beyond enumerations of familiar features of prayer language³). Here I wish to point out a hitherto unsuspected Homeric resonance behind line 21, which may help inform our interpretation of this prayer's phraseology.

At the climax of his appeal to the gods, Catullus begs them to remove the destructive disease, *quae mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus / expulit ex omni pectore laetitias* (76.21–2)⁴). It has not, to my knowledge, been noticed before that Ovid also describes a paralysis (here the quite physical one of Daphne) via the same collocation of *torpor* and (line-final) *artus*:

Vix prece finita, torpor gravis occupat artus (Met. 1.548)

This correspondence need not be significant of itself: if one is to describe "paralysis" – whether psychological or physical – independent recourse to the words *torpor* and *artus* can hardly be ruled out. What is more important, however, is that the phrase *torpor gravis occupat artus* is in fact a variant of an Ovidian pattern involving line-final *artus* (by far the most common position for the word in Ovid). This pattern can be traced back from Ovid directly to Virgil, and from thence to Homer, as the following brief survey will show.

With Ovid's ... *torpor gravis occupat artus* (just mentioned), compare the following:

... *attonitus subitō tremor occupat artus* (Met. 3.40)⁵

occupat obsessos sudor mihi frigidus artus (Met. 5.632)

... *et metuit, pressos veniat ne livor in artus* (Met. 10.258)

The frequency of nouns in *-or*, in such patterns, is striking⁶). Note also the following, which extend over two lines:

2) On the question of the relationship of Catullus (in a biographical or autobiographical sense) with the persona depicted in the poem, see especially Dyson (above, n. 1) *passim* and Rubino (above, n. 1) 298.

3) The most notable exception is Skinner's (above, n. 1) recent analysis of disease imagery in the prayer, and its meaning for the poem as a whole; see especially 231–232 on the implications of disease imagery as a cliché of political rhetoric.

4) The generally accepted *quae* (for the impossible *seu* of V, at the beginning of line 21) is open to some question; note, for example, Leeman's (above, n. 1) *seic* (i. e. *sic*), 248, accepted by Pietquin (above, n. 1). This question, however, has no direct bearing on the following discussion, and is therefore left aside.

5) ... *occupat artus* also Met. 14.757 and 15.166.

6) Similarly Ib. 605: *ut cruor Herculeos abiit diffusus in artus*.

... *gelidos nutricis in artus*
ossaque (sensit enim) penetrat tremor... (Met. 10.423–4)

... *nunc quoque frigidus artus,*
dum loquor, horror habet... (Met. 9.290–1)

In Virgil, the form *artus* is again typically line-final, as in *frigida mors anima seduxerit artus* (A. 4.385) or *quies laxaverat artus* (A. 5.857)⁷. The pattern with noun in *-or*, moreover, is well-represented (both with and without *occupat*), including the phrase *subitus tremor occupat artus* just seen in Ovid:

... *subitus tremor occupat artus* (A. 7.446)
 ... *cur ante tubam tremor occupat artus* (A. 11.424)
 ... *sopor fessos complectitur artus* (A. 2.253)
 ... *fessos sopor inrigat artus* (A. 3.511)
 ... *fessosque sopor suus occupat artus* (G. 4.190)

With Ovid's *sudor ... artus* (cited above), compare also the following (here in the enjambed pattern):

... *salsusque per artus*
sudor iit... (A. 2.173–4)
 ... *ossaque et artus*
perfundit toto proruptus corpore sudor (A. 7.458–9)⁸

The pattern *tremor/timor/torpor/sopor/sudor* (etc.) (*occupat artus* and its phraseological variants represents, in turn, a relatively transparent Roman incarnation of Homer's line-final τῶμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα (Il. 24.170) and its variants⁹). Note specifically that the

7) Note also *sitis miseris adduxerat artus* (G. 3.483), with an echo in Ovid (*macies adduxerat artus*, Her. 11.27); cf. Tibullus' *effice ne macies pallentes occupet artus*, 3.10.5.

8) The same pattern appears in both the *Ciris* and the *Culex*: *ei mihi! ne furor ille tuos invaserit artus* (Cir. 237), †*nescius aspiciens timor obcaecaverat artus* (Cul. 199). The frequency of such expressions involving line-final *artus* in the *Culex* is extraordinary, as is the compression of the first five occurrences within seventy-eight lines of each other (128, 138, 160, 199, 205; a sixth occurrence appears at 409). As recently observed by Joseph Solodow in another connection (HSCP 90 [1986] 140), this sort of patterning in "clumps" indicates a "diminished consciousness and discrimination" of a stylistic feature.

9) For the Virgilian passages cited above, see the documentation of Homeric parallels by Georg Nicolaus Knauer, *Die Aeneis und Homer* (Göttingen 1964), as well as his discussion of the similar phrase *solvuntur frigore membra* (A. 1.92 = 12.951), 320–322.

phrase appears most typically with ὑπό: ὑπὸ τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα (Il. 14.506 = Od. 18.88), ὑπὸ τε τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα (Il. 3.34), cf. (with τρόμος in verbal guise) τρομέει δ' ὑπὸ φαίδιμα γυῖα (Il. 10.95), ὑπὸ δ' ἔτρομε γυῖα (Il. 10.390), τρέμον θ' ὑπὸ γυῖα ἐκάστου (Od. 11.527), comparable to e.g. Virgil's ... *tremere sub dentibus artus* (A. 3.627). The same feature is also prominent with the other main variant of the formula, which makes use of forms of λύω, as in λύθεν δ' ὑπὸ φαίδιμα γυῖα (Il. 16.805), λύθεν δ' ὑπὸ γυῖα ἐκάστης (Il. 18.31 = Od. 18.341), ὑπέλυσε δὲ γυῖα (Il. 15.581 = 23.726), ὑπέλυσε μένος καὶ φαίδιμα γυῖα (Il. 6.27), etc. (cf. Ovid's *formosos perluit artus*, Met. 4.310)¹⁰). As far as the Latin hexameter is concerned, a two-syllable vowel-initial form like *artus* would naturally occur most frequently in final position, so that the overwhelming frequency of line-final *artus* in Virgil and Ovid does not of itself justify direct comparison with Homeric γυῖα¹¹). But the convenient line-final patterning of *artus* was a happy coincidence the Roman poets exploited to the full, in their working out of the imitation *tremor occupat artus* (and its variants) = τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα.

To return to Catullus: part of the interest of poem 76 lies in its pervasive verbal echoing of other poems in the Catullan corpus¹²); and it is this feature which provides a final indication of the Homeric background here suggested. Quinn and others have pointed out certain extensive correspondences between lines 19–21 of poem 76 (one of the last poems in the Lesbia sequence) and lines 5–9 of poem 51 (among the first – if not the first – of the poems addressed to Lesbia)¹³):

*me miserum aspiciate et, si vitam puriter egi,
eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi,*

10) On the complex transformations of similar Homeric formulae in Ennius and Virgil, see Walter Moskalew, *Formular Language and Poetic Design in the Aeneid* (Leiden 1982) 91–93.

11) I am indebted to my colleague George Goold for this observation.

12) On this point see especially Rubino (above, n. 1), largely based on the treatment by Quinn (above, n. 1).

13) Kenneth Quinn, *Catullus: The Poems* (Cambridge 1970; 2nd edition 1973) ad 76.19–21, and *Catullus: An Interpretation* (New York 1973) 126. See already Steele Commager (HSCP 70 [1965] 97–98), whose analysis is apparently independent of similar observations made by Salvatore Costanza some fifteen years before (*Risonanze dell'ode di Saffo Fainetai moi kénos da Pindaro a Catullo e Horazio* [Messina-Florence 1950] 84–85). Indeed, the comparison had already been signaled by Friedrich in his commentary (ad 51.9), although no subsequent commentator other than Quinn has seen fit to mention it. More recently, see also Valdis Lejnieks, *CJ* 63 (1968) 262–263, and Skinner (above, n. 1) 231 n. 3.

*quae mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus
expulit ex omni pectore laetitas.* (76.19–22)

*misero quod omnis
eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,
Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi*

** * *
lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
flamma demanat* (51.5–10)

Perhaps the most verbally striking among these correspondences consists precisely in the similar collocations *sub(repens) . . . torpor . . . artus* (76.21) and *torpet, . . . sub artus* (51.9), even if the syntactic connection is quite different – the material first noted by Friedrich. In a general way, as has often been noted, “Sappho’s ‘symptoms’ are largely drawn from Homeric descriptions of *fear*”¹⁴). More specifically, her phrase τρόμος δὲ / παῖσαν ἄγρει (lines 13–14 of her fourth stanza) is again a variant of the Homeric ὑπὸ . . . τρόμος ἔλλαβε γυῖα discussed above¹⁵). It is no accident, moreover, that Lucretius’ well-known description of the physical symptoms of fear (3.152 ff.) is generally thought to be modelled (at least in part) on Sappho’s poem, and is often adduced in this connection by commentators on Catullus 51 – and here, too, Lucretius refers to the giving way of the limbs in the (line-final) phrase *succidere artus* (3.156)¹⁶).

Thus, for Catullus’ invocation to the gods in poem 76 Quinn’s pronouncement that in this passage the poet “draws . . . upon the high style of the epic-tragic tradition”¹⁷) can be interpreted more precisely, as far as line 21 is concerned. In typical neoteric fashion, Catullus’ lyric evocation of the Homeric formula is relatively complex (as compared with the relatively straightforward transpositions seen in Virgil and Ovid). For τρόμος, we find not *tremor* ‘trembling’ but *torpor* ‘paralysis’ (used also by the Augustans, as we have seen), which has both physical and psycho-

14) Garry Wills, GRBS 8 (1967) 174 n. 18.

15) I intend to show elsewhere that Catullus’ third stanza of poem 51 (where *torpet, . . . sub artus* is found) reflects a partial conflation of material from Sappho’s third and fourth stanzas.

16) Among commentators on Lucretius, only Merrill takes any note of Homeric phraseology relevant to *succidere artus*, although his comparison with “Hom. λύτο γούνατα” seems less apposite than the patterns with ὑπὸ . . . γυῖα discussed above.

17) Kenneth Quinn, *The Catullan Revolution* (Cambridge²1969) 77.

logical reference¹⁸). The somewhat colorless ὑπὸ ... ἔλλαβε (cf. *occupat* in Virgil and Ovid) becomes the highly charged *subrepens*, whose prefix at the same time expresses the insidious nature of the affliction, and also subtly recalls the pervasive Homeric ὑπό. The *artus* are given the adjective *imos*, which has its own intense and partly erotic resonances in Catullus¹⁹); and as a final touch, the phrase is couched as a simile (*ut torpor*), which is not a part of the original epic phraseology²⁰).

There is, then, a perceptible, if subtle, epic reference behind Catullus' description of the disease overtaking his limbs like a creeping paralysis: the association with the seizing of the hero's limbs in extreme states of fear (and the loosening of the limbs in death) serves to reinforce the tone of seriousness and despair (not to mention self-pity) on which so many critics have commented in more general terms. Note, finally, that this interpretation complements Skinner's view of disease imagery in the prayer²¹): whereas the use of disease imagery itself is primarily related with the external facts of what Skinner calls "political and social conduct" and the "social and moral dimensions" of the poet's *amor*, Catullus' manipulation of this imagery via the heroic associations outlined above has more to do with his personal conception of his own suffering.

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18) Note further that while *tremor* and *torpor* both have potentially pathological overtones (at least in some circumstances), they are also semantically opposite in terms of their physical sphere of reference; at the same time, their phonetic make-ups (including their internal bilabial consonants) are extremely similar.

19) Kroll (ad 76.21) compares 64.93 *imis exarsit tota medullis* and 35.15 *ignes interiozem edunt medullam*; cf. further 45.16 *ignis mollibus ardet in medullis* and 66.23 *exedit cura medullas*.

20) The *corpore* of V cannot seriously be defended (see Leeman [above, n. 1] 248 on this point); the preceding discussion lends further support, if any were needed, for the early conjecture *torpor*.

21) See note 3 above.