

of non-Catullan galliambics. This denial of expectations cannot help but be noticed when the poem is read aloud.

It is tempting to regard the elision merely as one of Catullus' atmospheric effects: the first half of the line falls into the second half in much the same way as Attis falls into sleep, and the repeated *o* sounds add to the lines' drowsy feeling. Further, Catullus may be making one of his deliberate mistakes (see the inept lines which end *cc.* 73 and 116): as Attis nods, so nods the poet. Yet there are indications of a more thematic use of elision which may be seen when we view this elision in relation to other elisions in Catullus.

Lee, in the article cited above, defines a type of illustrative elision that appears in contexts of surrounding and swallowing. Such elision is occasionally sinister, as when the *codicilli* surround the *moecha putida* (42. 10 and 18); and appears often with sexual embraces, actual (64. 372, 61. 3-4, 61. 56-57, 57. 7, 62. 46) or metaphorical (the door closing on the married couple, 61. 224), so that perhaps there is here a remembrance of Attis' former sexuality and a reminder that his only potency now is with sleep.

But more to the point, elision occurs twice as death swallows its victim: the sparrow hopping down the road to hell, "*Orci, quae omnia bella deuoratis: / tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis*" (3. 14-15), and the tomb of Troy which swallows the corpse of Catullus' brother, as before it has swallowed the dead of the Trojan war, "*Troia (nefas!) commune sepulcrum Asiae Europaeque, / Troia uirum*

et uirtutum omnium acerba cinis" (68. 89-90).⁶ Catullus 63. 37 has sleep covering Attis' eyes with "drooping drowsiness." As death surrounds and devours the bird, and the tomb Catullus' brother, so sleep enshrouds and, one might say, entraps Attis. The states are comparable: Attis castrated is Attis dead. This line becomes a preparation for the boy's lament (63. 50-73), and sleep under the influence of the goddess Cybele takes on the implication of death. Finally the elision, by making the line a whole rather than two distinct parts, envelopes and captures Attis' eyes, as indeed Cybele has previously captured his rational senses and will do again at the end of the poem.

The pictorial effect of this elision with its thematic implications makes an effective close to the section of the poem that deals with the insane Attis. With the rising of the sun, lucidity returns to the deranged boy, but only for a short time before the goddess drives him into permanent madness. The prominence of the elision makes it easy to believe, with Guillemin, that the structure of the poem follows the pattern of madness-sanity-madness, and that a new section begins after line 38.⁷ The elision in the closing two lines of this section becomes the culmination of a series of effects⁸ which indicates rapidity and rabidity, movement and madness, so that at the peak of Attis' exhaustion elision turns the line into a blur, the obliterating effect of sleep that is death and worship that is castration.

CRAIG KNOBLES

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

6. Note that the elision between *uirtutum* and *omnium* bridges the central diaeresis of the pentameter, an elegiac situation comparable to the elision under discussion in this paper. While Catullus has a number of incidences where elision crosses the pentameter's central diaeresis, other poets rarely use this, and it might be considered a stylistic device peculiar to Catullus: cf. Lee, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-52, and E. B. Lease, "Elision in the Diaeresis of the Pentameter of Catullus," *CR*, XV (1901), 362.

7. Guillemin, *op. cit.*, p. 153, and Merrill, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

This is in contrast to the view that the poem takes its predominant structure from the alternation between narrative and speech, a view held by Weinreich, *op. cit.*, p. 488, and Ross, *op. cit.*, p. 152. I am not saying that one structure denies the other, but merely that the second does not predominate.

8. Speaking of the first section, Guillemin (*op. cit.*, p. 154) says, "Catulle use avec le plus grand art des procédés inventés par les Alexandrins: harmonie imitative, répétitions pathétiques, rappel des temps, des objets, parfois de la langue archaïques, brillante création d'adjectifs composés."

CATULLUS 49: AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I recently developed in this journal (LXV [1970], 1-7) the idea that the stimulus behind Catullus 49 may have been poetry written by

Cicero. This suggestion, as I have now been made aware, had earlier been put forward by Professor D. F. S. Thomson in the course of

an article entitled "Catullus and Cicero: Poetry and the Criticism of Poetry" in *Classical World*, LX, No. 6 (Feb. 1967). Mr. Thomson's treatment differs from mine in approach and emphasis, and in fact the two papers largely complement each other. Their agreement on

the likely origin of the poem may therefore be thought to make this particular hypothesis so much the more persuasive.

ERIC LAUGHTON

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD