

example of the phrase before Ausonius: Lucretius 5.259 *et quoniam dubio procul esse uidetur / omniparens eadem rerum commune sepulcrum . . . / . . . terra*. It should be noted, however, that this resonance is not exclusive. Cicero (*Off.* 1.55) can use the phrase of upper-class family tombs; but, according to Hopkins,³⁵ long-term family burial chambers were not frequent. The phrase *commune sepulcrum* is overall rare: *TLL* III.1969.71–5.

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³⁵ *Ibid.*, 206.

CATULLUS 107.7–8

In ‘Catullus 107: a Callimachean reading’ (*CQ* 50 [2000], 615–18), A. J. D’Angour proposes a new remedy for the desperately corrupt text of Catullus 107.7–8:

quis me uno vivit felicior? aut magis †hac est
optandus vita dicere quis poterit?†

That remedy is to read *hac esse* at the end of 7 (despite introducing a hypermetric line, otherwise unattested in Catullus), with *optandam vitam* beginning 8. The approach is methodologically sound: though he is not explicit about the details of the Catullan tradition, and though he bases the conjecture upon the reading *hac*, D’Angour is clearly aware that there are two readings of equal authority here (*hac* is read by O, *me* by GR), and since he believes *hac* to be correct, he properly (though unsuccessfully) attempts in note 8 to explain how *me* arose as an alternative to it. But corruption of one reading into another is not the only possible explanation for two diverse readings of equal authority; it is also possible for both readings to have arisen from something else entirely, which I believe to have been the case here.

Obviously the context requires a second reference to Catullus’ own experience. A number of scholars (whose suggestions are recorded by D’Angour) have attempted to satisfy both palaeographical criteria (to account for *me*) and this criterion of sense with emendations that introduce forms of *res*; I propose to satisfy the same criteria in a different way, suggesting that Catullus wrote *nostra* in the final foot of 7. This requires the scansion *magi*’, which is not common in Catullus (though more common than hypermetric lines), but cf. 116.8 *tu dabi’ supplicium*; alternatively, Catullus perhaps wrote *mage*, later ‘normalized’ to *magis*. Whether Catullus wrote *magis* or *mage nostra*, this was, I suggest, eventually glossed in the Veronensis (or an ancestor) with something like *quam haec mea est* (‘than this life of mine is’), explaining first that *nostra* is an ablative of comparison (indicated by *quam*, to be taken with *magis*), and secondly that *nostra* is a ‘royal we’ referring to Catullus’ own life, not his life with ‘Lesbia’ or human life in general. I suggest further that, in time, *haec mea* was corrupted to *hac me* and that *nostra* was expelled in favour of *hac* or *me* and *est* either because it was itself corrupted or because it was thought not to scan after *magis*; and so the scribes whose copies lie behind the two lines of descent from the archetype then made different choices of readings to incorporate, in both cases mistaking a remnant of a gloss for a correction.

Of course *nostra* alone does not solve all the difficulties here, even with the minimal alteration of *optandus* to *optandam* to produce, for example,

quis me uno vivit felicior? aut magi' nostra
optandam vita dicere quis poterit?

This is similar to Ribbeck's proposal *aut magis hae / optandam vita*, which D'Angour (note 12) calls 'worth considering' despite the difficulty (though not impossibility) of supplying *vitam* out of *vita*. Alternatively, one could follow D'Angour and adopt the further alteration of *vita* to *vitam* found in many editions.

Yet objections remain: (i) the sense is weak, whether we understand 'Who will be able to say that a life is more desirable than mine?' or 'Who will be able to call a life more desirable than mine?'; (ii) the corruption *optandus* has not been accounted for (Lachmann's *hac res / optandas vita* is one of the few conjectures to try to explain it)—one can hardly imagine *optandus vita* arising out of the predictable, perfectly straightforward *optandam vitam* or *vita*, and *optandas vitas* seems no more liable to corruption. I propose therefore a further correction: Catullus expressed the supremacy of his happiness in two distinct ways, by saying that he was the happiest man alive, and that his was the most desirable life on earth, and originally wrote

quis me uno vivit felicior? aut magi' nostra
vitam esse optandam dicere quis poterit?

This satisfies palaeographical considerations by being able to account for the ending of *optandus* (the process of corruption is far from self-evident, but perhaps we should imagine an original metathesis of noun and gerundive leading to *optandam esse vitam*, which was then further corrupted through some intermediate stage such as *optandesse vitam*). It also yields a satisfactory sense, with *esse* emphatic not simply by its position but indeed by its very presence: 'Who will be able to say that a life more desirable than mine *exists*?'

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THREE SUGGESTIONS IN LATIN POETRY

CATULLUS 10.26

'quaeso', inquit 'mihi, mi Catulle, paulum
istos commoda: nam volo ad Serapim
deferri.'

Such is the reading of the Oxford Text. Emendations have been numerous and unconvincing—for example, *nam volo commode* (Statius); *commodo* (Scaliger); *commodum enim* (Hand, Haupt); *commoda* (fem. sing.) (Schulze); *da modo. nam* (Monro). On the other hand the text of V has had its defenders; thus Thomson¹ writes 'it is hard to find a satisfactory alternative to the licence of the shortened final *a* in *commoda*', and

¹ D. F. S. Thomson, *Catullus Edited with a Textual and Interpretative Commentary* (Toronto, 1997), ad loc.