

GEMINA NOX:
PORNOGRAPHIC ALLUSION
IN CATULLUS 51

By Pär Sandin

Summary: Catullus 51 may be read as a description of the sexual act of mutual oral-to-genital stimulation popularly known as ‘69’, suggesting a facetious misreading of Sappho 31. In v. 8, supply <*tum nisi cunnus*>.¹

Famously, Catullus 51 is an imitation of the first three strophes of Sappho 31 V.

Catullus 51

1 Ille mi par esse deo videtur,
ille, si fas est, superare divos,
qui sedens adversus identidem te
spectat et audit

5 dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis
eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te
Lesbia aspexi, nihil est super mi
< – UU – – >

1 I am grateful for improvements and corrections to this article suggested by Professor Staffan Fogelmark. I am solely responsible for the errors of philological judgment, style and taste that remain.

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lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
10 flamma demanat, sonitu suopte
tintinant aures, gemina teguntur
lumina nocte.

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

8 *voce locuta* in marg. D^{rec} : *vocis in ore* Ritter : *Lesbia, vocis* Friedrich 10
demanat : *dimanant* Statius, prob. Trappes-Lomax 11 *geminæ* Schrader :
gemina et Spengel : *gelida* Baehrens

Sappho 31 V.

1 φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν
ἔμμεν' ὤνηρ, ὅττις ἐναντιός τοι
ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἄδου φωνεί-
σας ὑπακούει

5 καὶ γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, τό μ' ἦ μὰν
καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν·
ὡς γὰρ <ἔς> σ' ἴδω βρόχε' ὡς με φώνη-
σ' οὐδὲν ἔτ' εἶκει,

ἀλλὰ καὶ μὲν γλῶσσα ἔαγε, λέπτον δ'
10 αὐτικά χρωῖ πῦρ ὑπαδεδρομήκεν,
ὀππάτεσσι δ' οὐδὲν ὄρημμ', ἐπιρρόμ-
βεισι δ' ἄκουαι,

τέκαδε μ' ἴδρωσ ψῦχροσ† κακχέεται, τρόμος δὲ
παῖσαν ἄγρει, χλωροτέρα δὲ ποίας
15 ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω 'πιδεύης
φαίνομ' ἔμ' αὐται·

ἀλλὰ πᾶν τόλματον ἐπεὶ καὶ πένητα²

It would be possible to approach Catullus' reading of Sappho 31 in a previously unexplored manner, which, while it might have the effect of destroying the poetry in the eyes of many readers (were they to accept the reading which will be the result), on the other hand would have the advantage of bringing Catullus 51 in line with a tendency known from the rest of his literary production. As it stands, the *prima facie* offering of the poem, the persona of 'Catullus' admitting to social incapacity before a woman, is not only untypical of the poet,³ but at odds with the Roman, Latin and Italian conception of manhood.

For the alternative interpretation I intend to offer, I find the following instances of the Latin poem departing from the meaning of Sappho's Greek, or offering a different emphasis, significant.

3. **adversus identidem te spectat et audit.** The adjective *adversus* answers to Sappho's ἐνάντιος, 'opposite' but may be even more precise: '[with face] turned towards'. The adverb *identidem*, 'again and again', has no counterpart in Sappho (cf. Thomson 1997). Catullus uses it in one other place in his entire work, which is also the only other poem composed in Sapphic strophes, number 11, where it occurs in the identical position within a strophe, the fifth out of six:

cum suis vivat valeatque moechis,
quos simul complexa tenet trecentos,
nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium
ilia rumpens;

Bid her live and be happy with her paramours, three hundred of whom she holds at once in her embrace, not loving one of them really, but *again and again draining the strength of all*. (Cornish 1988)

What Lesbia here does, *ilia rumpens* again and again, does not mean 'draining the strength' but amounts to an untranslatable pun. Helen's role in

2 For attempts to reconstruct the fifth strophe see D'Angour 2006 and West 1970.

3 As opposed to mere emotional turmoil, which is common, but not elsewhere in Catullus represented as detrimental to verbal faculty or self-confidence.

the fall of Troy (*Ilium*) is alluded to, with its significant notion of a falling tower,⁴ but *ilia* also quite plainly means ‘groin’ (cf. Catullus 63.5).

4. **spectat**, ‘sees’, has no counterpart in Sappho 31.1-6. Catullus emphasises the visual aspect of the envied man’s repeatedly enacted encounters with Lesbia. There is a marked contrast to 6. **omnis eripit sensus mihi**: Catullus’ own encounters usually remove his sight as well as all other senses. This is a substitute for Sappho’s phrase about the heart leaping, καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν, which has no counterpart in Catullus, who in fact almost seems to remain cool, apart from having his senses removed. As Sappho’s fourth strophe is not translated, Catullus experiences no cold sweat, pallor, or shaking.

Sappho mentions loss of sight in the third strophe, though. In the corresponding passage of Catullus’ version, he finds reason to develop this motif in an unexpected manner (see 11–12).

7. **est super** is normally read as = *superest*, ‘is left’ (see Thomson 1997); the regular sense of *super* is of course ‘above’. Sappho’s εἴκει is not perfectly understood: see Page 1955: 23 for a discussion, suggesting that it may be a dialect form for ἴκει. Hutchinson defends the earlier interpretation ‘it is allowable or possible’ (LSJ εἴκω III, deleted in the Supplement) with a reference to παρρείκει in Pl. *Lg.* 734b (also cited by Page 1955).

8. By far the most lauded supplement is Ritter’s <*vocis in ore*> (Ritter 1828). This corresponds well to the sense of Sappho’s Greek, which clearly refers to the loss of speech.

9. **lingua sed torpet**. Whereas Sappho’s tongue is broken, that of Catullus goes numb, plain language substituted for the striking metaphor.⁵

4 See Harrison 2001 for Paris and Helen as mythological models for Catullus and Lesbia in 51. He suggests (p. 165) an explanation of the enigmatic *otium* in the fourth strophe: ‘The *otium* which is *molestum* to Catullus is the leisure generally characteristic of Paris, who could be presented since the *Iliad* as a ladies’ man who preferred the boudoir to the battlefield. ... This idea is specifically applied to Paris and Helen in Catullus 68.101-4: *ad quam* (sc. *Troiam*) *tum properans fertur <simul> undique pubes / Graeca penetralis deseruisse focos, / ne Paris abducta gavisus libera moecha / otia pacato degeret in thalamo*’.

5 I believe, with e.g. Hiersche 1966, further vindicated by Radt 1970: 344-45, that Sappho’s Greek is sound, the hiatus in v. 9 being explained by an archaic digamma in γλωσσα φέραγε (an expression which has an epic-formulaic ring to it: cf. Hes. *Op.* 534; *Il.* 11.559; Choeril. fr. 329 Bernabé; Arat. 1.46; Q.S. 1.204; Nonn. 5.151, 15.15). See Lobel 1925: xxxi-xxxii for arguments to the contrary.

9-10. tenuis sub artus | flamma demanat. Note (1) that *sub* governs the accusative case, properly implying direction *down under* or *down towards* (*OLD* s.v. *sub* 20b), not movement inside; and (2) that the verb *demanat* properly denotes a flow of liquid: literally, ‘a thin flame flows down on/down under the limbs’. Trappes-Lomax 2007: 126 argues (pace Ellis 1889) that this imagery is unacceptable, preferring Statius’ *dimanat*, ‘which means “spreads in all directions” and which is a better representation of Sappho’s $\chi\rho\omega\iota\ \pi\upsilon\rho\ \upsilon\pi\alpha\delta\epsilon\delta\rho\acute{o}\mu\eta\kappa\epsilon\nu$ ’.

11-12. geminā teguntur | lumina nocte. This image has no counterpart in Sappho, who only says (v. 11) $\acute{o}\pi\pi\acute{\alpha}\tau\epsilon\sigma\sigma\iota\ \delta\prime\ \acute{o}\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{o}\rho\eta\mu\mu(\iota)$, ‘with my eyes I see nothing’. What has appeared to be a hypallage, or transferred epithet, in Catullus’ version, the ‘twin night’, has been the cause of a good deal of puzzlement and a number of emendations, some of which have met with the approval of contemporary editors and critics. Schrader’s *geminæ* is adopted by Goold 1983 and given serious consideration by Thomson 1997; Spengel’s *gemina et* is adopted by Godwin 1999;⁶ and Trappes-Lomax (2007: 126-27) argues for Baehrens’s *gelidā*. Jenkyns 1982 on the other hand refers to Catullus’ alleged hypallage as ‘an ingenious and cool conceit’ (p. 21), and recently Alessandro Pardini (2001) detected an allusion to a Homeric formula for dying, *Il.* 5.310 = 11.356 $\acute{\alpha}\mu\phi\iota\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \acute{o}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\ \kappa\epsilon\lambda\alpha\iota\nu\eta\ \nu\upsilon\chi\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\upsilon\psi\epsilon$. Pardini suggests that the adverb $\acute{\alpha}\mu\phi\iota$, ‘on both sides’, answers to the epithet *gemina* in Catullus. It should be added that there may be an allusion to another poem of Sappho, the content of which is mostly unknown: Libanius mentions that Sappho somewhere prays for a ‘double night’, $\nu\acute{\upsilon}\kappa\tau\alpha\ \delta\iota\pi\lambda\alpha\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha\nu$ (Sapph. 197 V. ap. Lib. *Or.* 12.99). But in Catullus’ case, by the hypallage as well as by the particular choice of word, night’s ‘duplicity’ is given an emphasis that seems irrelevant and, hence, poetically defective (notwithstanding Pardini’s suggestion of a concealed allusion to the ‘death’ of Sappho in 31.15).

All these independent idiosyncrasies, as well as the untypical, un-Roman state of romantic helplessness remarked on above, would receive their respective explanations if we were to make one single change of viewpoint, and assume that what is depicted in Catullus 51 is not the emotional turmoil of romantic infatuation, but instead a down-to-earth matter. I suggest that

6 Also in the latter’s translation ‘my twin eyes ...’; in the commentary, however, Godwin defends the ms. reading *geminā*.

the passages under discussion do not offer metaphors for sensory experience, intended to emulate Sappho's masterful handling of the matter, but plain descriptions of sensory experience with reference to a particular situation. This situation is the sexual act of mutual oral-to-genital stimulation known in our times as '69', in the *Kama Sutra* (2.9) as The Congress of a Crow.

First, *geminā ... nocte* will then make sense, being a reference to the buttocks of Lesbia, which is all that 'poor' Catullus gets to see of her, or of anything, as they block his vision like a 'twin night' during the sexual act. *Nox* = νύξ is a euphemism for sexual encounter, 'sometimes ... an equivalent of *stuprum*' (Adams 1982: 178; see esp. *AP* 5.101.3).

For *geminus* in this context see Martial 11.99, where another woman is gifted with *geminā Symplegade culi*, 'a twin Symplegad of arse' (a usage which is not recorded in the *TLL*). Perhaps we may assume that Martial has grasped the innuendo of Catullus, seeing that his stately lady is also named Lesbia.

Mention might also be made of Didyme in Asclepiades 5 (Gow & Page, *HE* 828-31 = *AP* 5.210):

Τῶι θαλλῶι Διδύμη με συνήρπασεν· ὤμοι ἐγὼ δέ
 τήκομαι ὡς κηρὸς πᾶρ πυρὶ κάλλος ὄρων.
 εἰ δὲ μέλαινα, τί τοῦτο; καὶ ἄνθρακες· ἀλλ' ὅτε κείνους
 θάλψωμεν, λάμπουσ' ὡς ῥόδεαι κάλυκες.

Didyme has snatched me with her branch: poor me, I
 melt like wax by fire as I behold the beauty.
 She is black, so what? Coals are black: but when we
 heat them, they shine like cups of roses.

Διδύμη is Greek for *gemina*, a female 'twin' or 'duplicity'. The intended sense of τῶι θαλλῶι, 'the branch', and the action applied by it have not been perfectly understood, but I suggested elsewhere that the rose cups featuring at the end of the poem may refer to Didyme's private parts appearing pink against the backdrop of black (or dark) skin.⁷ Ihm also

7 I should have added that ἄνθραξ 'twice indicates the cunt inflamed by coitus and poked by a (phallic) stoker' in Ar. *Pax* 440, 1136 (Henderson 1991: 143); perhaps also once in *Ach.* 891 (Perpillou 1984: 55-56).

observed that Διδύμη may imply a reference to breasts or buttocks (2004: 65; cf. also Hoeschele 2004 text for n. 5).

Secondly, the jealous reference to the man (husband?) who gets to *see and hear* Lesbia, *turned towards her, again and again*, may allude to a sexual act, more specifically (as the man is *sedens*, ‘sitting’) a coital position with Lesbia on top of her partner. This was the ‘favourite’ position of the Romans according to statistical surveys of the pictorial and literary evidence.⁸

Third: instead of this pleasant scenario, Catullus’ tongue goes numb, not from reasons of emotional turmoil, but from his strenuous use of it pleasuring Lesbia (cf. Mart. II.85).

Fourth, a ‘fine flame’ is trickling down on the poet’s limbs from above. A more literal understanding of this phrase would explain the accusative case of *sub artus* as well as the liquid connotations of the verb *demanat*. *Flamma* will remain metaphorical, but not now of emotions, but in line with the comic and satirical tradition that describes the vagina as a ‘hearth’, ‘oven’, ‘heated pot’, ‘burning coals’ (see n. 7) or, as in a Virgilian cento by Ausonius, a ‘fiery crevice’ (*Cento nuptialis* II0-II):

est in secessu, tenuis quo semita ducit
 ignea rima micans: exhalat opaca mephitim.
 (= *Aen.* I.159, II.524, 8.392, 7.84)

On this theme see Adams 1982: 86-87 and cf. Catullus 94. The vaginal secretion concomitant with sexual pleasure is otherwise referred to by the Greek comic poets as ζωμός, ‘soup’ (e.g. Ar. *Pax* 886; see Henderson 1991: 145, 114), by Aristotle as ‘moisture’, ὑγρὰ ἀπόκρισις (*GA* 727b-728a), ὑγρότης (739a), ἰκμάς (739b), but by most philosophers and medical authors, professing a view which is contested by Aristotle but remains the informed opinion throughout antiquity,⁹ as *semen*: γονή (Hp. *Genit.* 5) or σπέρμα (Hp. *Genit.* 6, Gal. *De sem.* 4.536 Kühn, Sor. I.12.2-3). Galen states that the female ‘semen’ is λεπτότερον, ‘subtler’ or ‘finer’ than the male (l.c.; cf. Arist. *GA* 747a. *HA* 582a, Gal. *Ars med.* I.340 Kühn); Sappho’s λεπτόν

8 Marks 1978, cited by Sullivan 1979: 298-99, text for n. 15.

9 Some pre-Socratic philosophers (e.g. Anaxagoras) held the view of Aristotle, that is that the female part is receptive only in the process of generating offspring: see Lonie 1981: 119 for a full list of references.

πῦρ (9-10) may thus have been particularly suggestive to an informed reader inclined to find hidden obscenities (such as would interact reciprocally with biographical speculation in her case).¹⁰

The only detail of Catullus' poem which does not seem immediately relevant to the situation described is 10-11 *sonitu suo pte tintinant aures*. There is one slight alteration relative to Sappho's (11-12) ἐπιρρόμβεισι δ' ἄκουαι: Catullus is emphasising that his ears are ringing *of their own sound*. While not crucial to the argument, it is possible to explain this added emphasis in a manner that accords with our reading. As the mouths of both Catullus and Lesbia will be otherwise occupied, there is little of sound to hear in the situation described apart from the heart beating in one's ears.

This reading would also cast further light on the choice of name for the literary mistress. 'Lesbia' suggests not only one who performs fellatio (so Randall 1979: 28), an alleged speciality of women from Lesbos (as indicated by several sources as well as the verb λεσβιάζειν), now relevant to the poem itself and significantly placed directly before the description that will give the explanation of the epithet – but also one who enjoys cunnilingus (a natural mode of 'lesbian' sexual intercourse in the modern sense). The same preference is probably hinted at in Catullus 79, where one Lesbius, whom Lesbia is said to prefer to Catullus, cannot get his acquaintances to kiss him: 'niemand mag ihn küssen, da er als *cunnilingus* (...) oder *fellator* (...) bekannt ist' (Kroll).¹¹

The picture would appear even more clearly if we were to allow a different supplement in v. 8 than <*vocis in ore*> or the like, although I am afraid that the alternative I am thinking of is not in particularly good taste, even by Catullus' standards. Consider it an esoteric reading, originally not intended for the general public (but for the ears of Calvus Licinius only? *v. infra*). This would explain the loss of the verse in the ms. tradition; it might not even have been written down. I submit <*tum nisi cunnus*>.

10 A 'sacred flame' may be associated with oral sex in Arched. fr. 4 PCG ἱερὸν πῦρ φῦσάν, although in that case the reference appears to be to fellatio (Dover 1978: 99).

11 A biographical reading identifies Lesbius as P. Clodius Pulcher (79.1 *Lesbius est pulcher*, 'Lesbius is beautiful'), the half-brother of Clodia Metelli (the alleged 'Lesbia'), whom Cicero repeatedly accused of incestuous relations with his sister (e.g. *ad Q. fr.* 2.3.2: full list of references in *RE* vol. 4, col. 107). Cicero also hints at (the unrelated) Sextus Clodius performing *cunnilingus* on Clodia in *Dom.* 10.25, 31.83 (Forberg 1884: 57; Krenkel 1981: 40, 47, 51).

That one seems to me like a god:
That one, if it is permitted, superior to the gods,
who, sitting face to face with you, again and again
beholds you and hears you

laughing sweetly; that which for me, poor me,
takes away all of my senses; for as soon as,
Lesbia, I see you, nothing is left (above) for me
<then but cunt>.

But my tongue goes numb, and a thin
flame is flowing down on my limbs; of their own sound
my ears are jingling, and the lights by a twin
night are shut out.

Leisure, Catullus, is bad for you.
You exult in leisure and wallow in it too much.
Leisure has destroyed kings and happy
towns.

The leisure deprecated in the last strophe may be that enjoyed together with Lesbia as well as that enjoyed writing dangerously clever verses. In both scenarios, the erotic and the literary, *otium* is bad for Catullus for the proverbial reason that it provides time and opportunity for reprehensible and self-destructive behaviour.¹² For a Roman, such behaviour included cunnilingus, and – worse – admitting to it.

While I do not suggest that this is the sense of Sappho's poem, I consider it likely that Catullus would find it amusing to (pretend to) understand it in this manner, connecting details such as the loss of sight, the broken tongue, the pallor (*v.infra*), the bodily tremor, and the 'little death' to scandalous details from Sappho's fictive biography. We may compare the poem which precedes *Ille mi par esse* in Catullus' collection (50), which is about a game

¹² For the perilous character of leisure in general, cf. S. fr. 308 Radt τίκτει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐσθλὸν εἰκαῖα σχολή, also Enn. 195-202 Jocelyn (with commentary pp. 333-38) and, in a suggestive erotic context, E. *Hipp.* 384, 181-85.

with which the poet and Calvus Licinius entertained themselves, drinking wine and writing jocular verse in various metres. Catullus claims to have gone into a frenzy about the event, and to have written, after taking leave of Calvus, yet another poem, ‘from which you may understand my misery’. *hoc, iucunde, tibi poema feci / ex quo perspiceres meum dolorem* (50.16–17). It has been suggested that *hoc ... poema* in 50.16 is not self-referential, but refers to 51 *Ille mi par esse*, which would have been appended to 50 and sent to Calvus.¹³ If so, would a poem about the helpless state of romantic infatuation fit the tone of Roman upper-class scoundrel intercourse? Or one of educated sexual innuendo?

Finally, some remarks on the Roman and Greek attitudes to the sexual practice of *cunnilingus* (henceforth *cl.*), in particular the literary evidence, will be in place.¹⁴ We have already mentioned that Catullus does not translate the fourth strophe of Sappho 31, which contains details that would have been just as suggestive to the licentious mind of the Roman reader as the ‘broken tongue’ or the loss of sight. Apart from the sweating, shaking and death, which are easy to apply to an erotic scenario, Sappho is *χλωροτέρα ... ποίας* (14), ‘greener (or paler) than grass’. The Romans seem to have entertained the idea that *cl.*, or oral sex in general, caused pallor: so more or less explicitly in Mart. 1.77 (cf. 7.4 and perhaps Catull. 80); the matter is probably alluded to in Hor. *Ep.* 1.19.18, where the poet acknowledges that his poetry at times may become pallid, in case his Greek poetical models *biberent exsangue cuminum*, ‘drank the blood-draining cummin’. *Cuminum bibere* is likely to be a euphemism here, and I would

13 First perhaps by J. Mogenet: see Wray 2001: 97 n. 75 with further refs.; and for details on the connections between the poems, Claes 2002: 86 with refs.

14 Krenkel 1981 remains the definite collection of references to *cl.* in ancient literature, although he has to be read with some critical reserve; most if not all instances are also collected in Forberg 1884: 48–107. A good, short and accessible note is otherwise Howell 1980 on Mart. 1.77; supplement with Adams 1982: 134–36 and Soldevila 2006 on Mart. 4.43.11 for secondary literature. There are representations of both non-reciprocated *cl.* and ‘69’ in Greek and Roman art, albeit very few. In contrast to most handbooks on ancient sex, who infuriatingly refuse to give specific references (apart from one or two particular instances recurring), Martos Montiel (2002) has presented a comprehensive list of the pictorial evidence, including reports of pictures found in ancient literature. His collection refutes the claim of Clarke 1998: 224 (repeated in Clarke 2003: 126), that ‘69’ is more frequently represented than one-way *cl.* At the time of writing, his article, an online publication, unfortunately lacked most of its illustrations.

not be surprised if the incomprehensible v. 15 of the same poem, *rupit Iarbitam Timagenis aemula lingua*, contained some similar allusion, seeing that water-drinking, the allegory for delicate poetry composition which is the subject of the passage (Horace presents himself as generally a wine-drinker also in this respect), is elsewhere linked to oral sex: Mart. 2.50 *aquam potes*, 6.69 *potat aquam*, cf. 7.35 *tua, cunne, lavaris aqua* (alluding to received *cl.* or masturbation), 11.82. Furthermore, when Horace's contemporary Antipater of Thessalonica accused the 'water-drinkers' of adding absurd obsolete words to their poems (Gow & Page, *GP* 185-90 = *AP* 11.20), Crates had already made the concept 'gloss' indecent in an innuendo-ridden attack on Euphorion (Gow & Page, *HE* 1371-74 = *AP* 11.218), whose mouth is said to be full of Χοιρίλον (Choerilus or 'pussy'), as he makes his compositions κατάγλωσσα (full of glosses or 'tongue'), being himself Ὀμηρικός (a Homeric or 'thigh-lover'). See Gow & Page ad loc. As for Horace, R.F. Thomas suggests a similar allusion attached to the persona of Ligurinus ('licker?') in *Carm.* 4.1.¹⁵

Although often cited as evidence, the hysterics of Martial with regard to *cl.*¹⁶ may not adequately represent the attitude of an urbane Roman of Catullus' times. See Sullivan 1979 on the somewhat strained quality of Martial's obscenities in general (p. 294 on *cl.*) and Hallett 1978 for the idea that mutual oral-to-genital stimulation ('69') might have been more acceptable than non-reciprocated *cl.*, and possible allusions to the former in Ov. *Ars* 3.775, *Am.* 3.2.29-30; to the latter or both in Suet. *Tib.* 44-45. The Greek attitude was also relaxed. Certainly the coryphaeus of Aristophanes' *Knights*, a decent, upright citizen with high moral standards, is appalled by the alleged *cl.* of one Aripgrades (1281-89); but the joke is on the knight almost as much as on Aripgrades, as the utter solemnity of his paratragic language becomes ridiculous as referring to sexual organs: ἀπόπτυσσον δρόσον, 'abominable dew', κυκῶν ἐσχάρας, 'disturbing the sacred hearths' in the translation of Sommerstein. The 'sacredness' of these ἐσχάραι, a serious tragic word which occasionally had also mundane usages,¹⁷ is brought out by the solemn verb κυκῶν; hence I believe Henderson's (1998)

15 R.F. Thomas in a forthcoming commentary, cited after Mitchell 2010: 52, text for n. 5.

16 1.77, 3.77, 3.80, 3.81, 3.84, 3.88, 3.96 4.43, 6.26, 7.67.15, 7.95.14, 9.27.14, 9.92.11, 11.47.8, 11.85, 12.59.10, 12.85.3.

17 Henderson 1991: 143.

rendering ‘hot-pots’ misses the point. Sommerstein observes that Aristophanes takes on a more relaxed attitude to *cl.* in *Ec.* 846-47 and perhaps *Pax* 716.¹⁸ On the other hand it is not strictly the poet who ‘regards it as a perfectly acceptable pleasure’ in the former passage, but the Heraldess who is speaking; and in the latter, if indeed a double entendre is intended (not so according to Olson 1988), the joke may be on the Council, who to the mind of Trygaeus will naturally be able to ‘perform’ on Theoria with their mouths only. Still, while the (apprehended) licker is a ridiculous character in Aristophanes (it is usually Aripbrates: also *Pax* 885, *V.* 1283, cf. **fr. 926 PCG), he is never such an abominable pervert as the *cunnilingus* portrayed by Martial. For the more cheerful attitude of the Greeks cf. also Eub. fr. 140 PCG. Juvenal in 9.4 may be more Greek than Martial: Catullus certainly is.

From the times of Augustus, official morality becomes stricter, and *cl.* may come to be regarded as an ‘oriental’ vice, as suggested by the Greek verb φοινικίζω attested in mid to late second century AD (Luc. *Pseudol.* 28; Gal. *SMT* 12.249 Kühn; cf. *AP* 11.329.3), and later by the Syrian schoolmaster in Auson. *Epigr.* 82–87.¹⁹ Thus Galen loc.cit. claims that lickers (τοὺς φοινικίζοντας) are loathed (βδελυττόμεθα) more than suckers (τῶν λεσβιαζόντων).

¹⁸ Sommerstein 1981: 211.

¹⁹ Cf. Soldevila on Mart. 4.43.7 with refs.

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