From Literal to Literary: A Translation Project for Latin Poetry Classes

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Abstract[1]

This project gets to the heart of poetic interpretation and the creative process by giving students the first-hand experience of writing an original, literary translation of a Latin poem. The project has five components: First the instructor lays the groundwork by introducing to the class the principles of translation and English versification. Second, students select a poem and write a close, literal translation of it. Third, students meet individually with the instructor to discuss the poetics and literary interpretation of the selection and how those will affect the final translation, and then create an original literary translation. Fourth, after completing their polished, literary translation, students write a short essay explaining their own process. Finally, the culmination of the project is a class *recitatio*, during which each student gives a brief introduction that summarizes the explanatory essay and then performs the original translation.

Detailed steps for the project are offered as well as a primer on the art of translation, examples of student work, a grading rubric, suggestions for adapting the project to individual classroom needs, and an annotated bibliography. (209 words)

Keywords

Latin, poetry, translation, interpretation, pedagogy, class projects, Catullus

Introduction

"Poetry is what is lost in translation."[2]
– Robert Frost

Robert Frost's famous quotation effectively sums up the challenges facing any translator of poetry. In this project we face those challenges head-on and encourage our students to minimize or to compensate creatively for the unavoidable loss. For a number of years we have incorporated

2   Although this quotation is widely attributed to Robert Frost, exactly where or when he said it remains a mystery. See Satterlee for an investigation into the origin of the quotation.

a translation project into our intermediate Latin poetry classes. It has worked well with many different students and with many different instructors, both faculty and graduate teaching assistants. The quality of the finished product, a polished literary translation of a Latin poem, can vary widely in absolute terms, but the process has proved uniformly successful. One interesting outcome is that the best Latin students in class do not necessarily produce the best original translations. Many students have told us that this assignment is one of the most valuable experiences they have ever had in a Latin class, and the project always gives us, as teachers, a sense of genuine satisfaction.[3]

In this paper we first present an overview of the project, including the steps involved and its educational goals. Second, we discuss the project's rationale and the importance of translation in the field of Classics. Third, we give an introduction to the art of translation and a primer on English versification with examples of student work. Fourth, we present a translator's guide to literary interpretation with further examples of student work. Finally, we offer some suggestions for adapting the project to individual classroom requirements. There also is an annotated bibliography (Appendix 1) divided into four categories: theory and practice of translation, English versification, anthologies of modern English verse in meter, and translations of Catullus. Further appendices contain Latin texts for the student translations, an example of a student essay, and a grading rubric.

Project Overview

This project focuses on the creative transition from an accurate, literal translation to an original, literary translation of a Latin poem. The role of the instructor is twofold: to prepare students by giving them sufficient background and to guide them through the process once they have begun. In addition to writing two English versions of a Latin poem, students must examine the creative process by writing an explanatory essay and then perform their original translation during a class poetry reading. We begin with a description of the project's components and goals.

Goals

As we see it, this project has five educational outcomes:
1. To engage students in a deeper literary understanding of Latin poetry.
2. To give students a meaningful, personal connection to at least one Latin poet to carry with them through life.
3. To offer students the experience of poetry performance, as both performer and listener.
4. To help students see that ordinarily we translate Latin as a means to an end, not as an end in itself.
5. To help students understand the limitations of translation, so that they will have a greater appreciation for the Latin text.

Step 1: Groundwork

Through a combination of lecture and discussion, the instructor first presents some necessary background on translation and prosody in class to help students prepare for the project. This

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3   This is the first of two projects that we require in our fourth-semester Latin classes. The second is a recitation project in which students memorize a passage of Latin poetry and perform it during a class poetry reading. This second project focuses on the oral/aural aspects of poetry and the social aspects of performance. We view it as a natural extension of the translation project. In order to be effective performers, students must employ everything they have learned so far about language, poetics, and literary interpretation.

may also include talking about the historical context of the poet(s) chosen for the project, the importance of prosody in informing the meaning of both the Latin poetry and the English translations, and the literary traditions of whatever form of poetry you are working on.

Step 2: Literal Translation

In this section of the project, we begin by helping the students choose a selection of Latin poetry at least ten lines in length. The selection may be a poem that has already been assigned for class, or it may be an entirely new poem that is unfamiliar to the rest of the group. We find that short, autonomous pieces work best for this project, and that the poetry of Catullus works especially well, since his Latin is often more straightforward, and the themes of his poems are more self-contained than those of other poets. It also helps that Catullus himself was a translator of Greek poetry and can serve as a role model for the student-translators (poem 51 is an adaptation of Sappho, poem 66 is of Callimachus). Authors like Horace, Sulpicia, Propertius, Tibullus, and Martial also provide the advantage of shorter pieces that can be dealt with as independent compositions. If you decide to try epic poetry, we feel that it is essential to select passages that are short—an overly long passage will prevent students from focusing on the project with the amount of in-depth consideration it deserves—and as self-contained as possible. For instance, with Virgil we would have students select a short episode, such as Heracles fighting Cacus, or perhaps a simile or ekphrasis. With Ovid we would recommend choosing a passage from the *Fasti* or the *Ars Amatoria* with a sufficiently narrow scope. After making their selection, the students write out a literal translation of their passage and hand it in. By "literal" we mean keeping as close to the mechanics of the original poem as possible while not violating the rules of good English usage. The instructor checks and returns the literal translation. This is a necessary initial step, since it lays the foundation of a solid understanding of the poem in its original language and context.

Step 3: Literary Translation

After they have written and corrected their literal translation, the students meet individually with the instructor to discuss the context and meaning of their poem and the choices they can make individually as translators. After this in-office meeting, the students write an original, polished translation that demonstrates an appreciation for the poetic techniques and context of the Roman author. They explore how to express the effects of Latin poetics through rhythm, stress, rhyme, repetition, and other poetic devices in English. Students are encouraged to be creative. They can incorporate life experiences, allusions (to literature, music, or film), colloquial language, and whatever else they can think of to mediate the themes of the ancient poetry for a contemporary audience. Students are also encouraged to delve into the meaning of the poem and to examine the persona of the poet and consider how such a voice would express itself today.

Step 4: Explanatory Essay

Next the students write a short essay (about two pages) examining the process of interpreting and re-imagining the chosen poem, in terms of both form and content. The essay describes what innovations were made and defends those decisions, explaining what significance the innovations have and what they contribute to the overall product. The students also outline any special challenges that they faced and how these challenges were met. An example of a student essay is in Appendix 3.

STEP 5: ORAL PRESENTATION

In this final step the project culminates in a class *recitatio*, during which each student performs his or her finished product. We recommend that the instructor briefly explain how such formal recitations actually do mirror the original reception of Latin poetry quite closely.[4] Each student gives a brief introduction that summarizes the written essay and then recites the literary translation. Afterwards members of the audience applaud enthusiastically and ask follow-up questions, such as "Why do you think that the limerick is a better medium for this particular poem, as opposed to, say, blank verse?" At the end of the recitation, each student hands in word-processed copies of the corrected literal translation, the original literary translation, and the explanatory essay. In evaluating the project, we try to give greater weight to the process rather than the product, since the original translations can vary widely in quality. A sample grading rubric can be found in Appendix 4.

Why This Project?

As teachers, we have our work cut out for us in fourth-semester Latin. Students sometimes come to us with an expressed fear and/or dislike of poetry. The fear usually stems from ignorance—fear of the unknown—but the dislike can be due to many factors, including a limited exposure to poetry. In addition, many students at this stage are still grappling with Latin vocabulary, morphology, and syntax—a situation which contributes to their anxiety and undermines their full understanding of Latin texts. In our project, students learn to interact with Latin poetry as poetry, not just as a grammar/vocabulary exercise.

Instead of the translation project, we *could* have students write an interpretive essay on a poem, which would focus on poetic interpretation and give them a personal connection to a poet, but would not accomplish the other goals cited above (3, 4, or 5). Or we could have our students compose a short poem in Latin which they would then recite to the class, something which is done with great success elsewhere.[5] This would give students the first-hand experience of writing and performing Latin poetry in meter, but it would not speak to goals 1, 4, or 5. Further, this assignment requires a fluency and comfort level that we rarely see in our fourth-semester students. Instead, we have developed a project that achieves the goals of these two assignments combined and adds another dimension: the experience of translation. Literary translation opens an ancient text to a student in a way that no other exercise can.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSLATION

Some classicists consider translation a "second-rate activity,"[6] neither real art nor real scholarship. Others worry that the proliferation of translations will lead to lower enrollments in Greek and Latin language classes. Once the mainstay of beginning language classes, translation has even been demoted as a teaching method. Today the emphasis is on reading for meaning rather

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4   On the performance context of Roman poetry, see Skinner: "At . . . *convivia* literary recitations, both impromptu and semiformal, were frequently given. For a talented poet with first-rate histrionic skills, amateur banquet performances could attract the attention of leading personages, and so help build a network of *amicitiae . . .* " (62).

5   At St. Olaf College, for example. See Groton (184-5).

6   Burian's phrase (299); he defends the role of literary translation in the field of classics.

than on translating, which has been identified with the inefficiencies of decoding.[7] What, then, is the role of translation in Classics? First, it is an artistic, creative endeavor in its own right, as evidenced by the growing number of translation workshops in writing programs across the country. And a translator, whether a trained classicist or someone from another field, must be familiar with the relevant scholarship or run the risk of faulty interpretation. Second, translations open the world of classical literature to the vast majority of people who do not know Latin or Greek or who are not fully conversant in those languages; certainly this exposure could just as likely increase interest in the languages as inhibit it. Even classicists make regular use of translations, to simplify their own research or to aid their teaching or simply for pleasure. Finally, we think that the art of translation does have a role in the classroom; it *can* be an effective teaching tool in Latin poetry classes.

Most classicists would agree that there is a need for multiple translations of canonical works for every generation. For example, Stanley Lombardo's translation of the *Odyssey* is best for oral performance, while Richmond Lattimore's diction best captures the distance and otherworldliness of Homer. Different translations serve different purposes, as anyone who has taught courses in translation knows. There is a need for new translations every generation because translations rarely survive the test of time. Peter Burian explains why: "We can believe in a Homer who is very old or as new as the morning. Homer in a powdered wig, a Victorian top hat, or even our grandfather's fedora, seems wrong. No doubt most of today's translations will seem terribly out of fashion in a generation or two, but with any luck Homer will not. And the sign of that will surely be that people are still at work translating him into the idiom of their own day, their own world" (303). The translation project, as an educational tool, goes one step further than other approaches to Latin poetry by having students create individual translations that have meaning for them in "their own day, their own world."

Implementing Step 1: Groundwork

Before students even begin to think about which poet or poem they want to work on, we discuss the principles of both translation and prosody in class. During this phase of the project, it is essential to have a sampling of different types of English translations of a single Latin poem for purposes of illustration and comparison. Catullus 43 (*Salve, nec minimo puella naso*) or 85 (*Odi et amo*) work well for this. See Translations of Catullus in the Annotated Bibliography (Appendix 1) for a range of published translations.

We hope that the following information (The Translator's Art and A Primer on English Poetic Form) provides some basic knowledge that will help instructors implement this first step of the project. If you are lucky enough to have a poet-translator in your area, consider inviting him or her to come and offer some expert advice to your class on translating into English verse.

The Translator's Art

A translator may take any number of different approaches, but it is useful for the sake of discussion to consider two: the historical (external) approach and the psychological (internal) approach. In practice, of course, these two methods are not mutually exclusive. There is overlap and interaction between them, and both approaches are essential to writing an effective translation. When students write their *literal* translation of a Latin poem, they are using the historical ap-

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7   For a discussion of reading as opposed to translating, see Hoyos and McCaffrey.

proach. This method grounds the poem in its original context and requires an intensive reading of the text.[8] It seeks to answer the following questions: What does the Latin say? What is the poem about? Who are the historical figures named in the poem? What are the historical or cultural references? As students make the transition from a literal to a *literary* translation of the poem, they shift to the psychological approach and try to put themselves inside the poet's mind. Now the questions become: Why did the poet write this poem? Why did the poet write it this way? What does the poem mean? Another aspect of the psychological approach concerns aesthetics and asks the translator to consider his or her own intuitive response to the poem: How does the poem make you feel?

Ordinarily a translator should be invisible, a conduit for the voice of the poet. After all, the reader of a translated text expects to hear the voice and artistry of the original author, not that of the modern translator, and a translator is advised to check his or her ego at the door. For this project, however, we expect that students will interject themselves into their translations. In updating a poem, for example, a student-translator may take some liberties with the text, provided that the changes are not made in an arbitrary or thoughtless way. Although this is a creative, individual project, we want students to identify closely with the poet and to respect the text.

Every translation is an act of interpretation. Anyone who has used a digital translator or has chuckled over an owner's manual written by someone with little understanding of English idiom knows that this is true. Poetry, with its compression of thought and economy of expression, compounds the problem. Although we have much in common with the people of late Republican Rome, we live in a different culture and a different age. Further, Latin and English, for all their shared history and vocabulary, are two different languages. The most striking difference is that Latin is an inflected language and is far more flexible than English in terms of word order. Thus, a student translating a Latin poem into English verse must make many choices, including the following:

- What type of translation will I write? Close, loose, or imitation? An imitation is a translation inspired by the manner or subject of the original work, one that puts an entirely new spin on the original text. Anne Carson's translations of Catullus would qualify as imitations.
- Will I write in a traditional form or in free verse? Will I use rhyme? Considerations of form can be quite complex and are discussed below ("A Primer on English Poetic Form").
- Who will I imagine my audience to be? A general audience, other college (or high school) students, or a smaller in-group, such as my friends or Latin classmates?
- Will I leave the names and historical references as they are, will I try to gloss them within the text, or will I try to substitute modern equivalents? Many published translations include explanatory notes for these, usually at the back of the book so that they are not a distraction to the reader.
- If there is obscenity in the poem, will I tone it down or use something comparable in English? The intended audience may be a determining factor.

These are just a few of the decisions and tradeoffs a translator must make. By the end of the project, students will have developed a deep respect for the original Latin text and will understand that there is no fully adequate substitute for reading poetry in the language in which it was written.

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8   See McCaffrey (114) for a summary of the four ways of reading: skimming, scanning, extensive reading, and intensive reading.

A Primer on English Poetic Form

We offer some basic information on poetic form, proceeding on the assumption that teachers and students already are familiar with Latin metrics. We also offer some tips on writing metrical verse. For a complete explanation of forms, consult one of the user-friendly guides cited under "English Versification" in the Annotated Bibliography (Appendix 1) or enlist the help of a colleague in the English department to explain to you and your students the basics of English prosody.

What is Form?

In its broadest sense, form refers to rhythm, meter, rhyme, and other structural elements such as repetition, spacing, line breaks, punctuation, and so forth. Applied in its strictest sense, form refers to *traditional* form, that is, the use of meter. For example, "formal verse" means "verse in form" or metrical verse (discussed below). In this paper, we use "form" in the general sense. The Romans borrowed their system of versification from the Greeks, and when these conventions were being established for English poetry, all educated people were familiar with Latin. Thus, English poets adopted the classical system, as European poets had done before them. Of course there are many forms of English poetry that do not derive from the Greeks and the Romans, such as free verse, the sonnet, the limerick, and haiku, to name just a few.

Types of Verse

Latin verse is quantitative; that is, it is based on patterns of long and short syllables. Quantity is determined by the relative length of time it takes to utter a syllable, with a syllable considered long if it contains a long vowel or ends in a consonant, and short if it contains a short vowel and does not end in a consonant. Most English verse, on the other hand, is termed accentual-syllabic, because it is based on patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables. English verse may be divided into two basic types, free verse and metrical verse.

Free verse. Alfred Corn defines free verse as "poetry without a regularly occurring numerical principle in its rhythmic construction" (123). Free verse may use any rhythm (or no rhythm at all), the lines may be of any length, and it does not use rhyme. Free verse appeared in France in the late 19th century as a conscious reaction to traditional forms and eventually came to dominate modern Western poetry. It is the most favored form in American poetry today.

Metrical verse. The term meter, when applied to poetry, "denotes *organized rhythm* and refers to the principle or principles that determine the length and structural character of the verse line" (Steele 1999: 321). Most modern metrical verse employs iambic rhythms and may or may not use rhyme. An iambic foot follows the pattern short-long (◡ -) or unstressed-stressed (u /): duh-DUM. The most commonly used meter in modern metrical poetry is iambic pentameter (five iambic feet); the second most common is iambic tetrameter (four iambic feet). "Blank verse," a term frequently confused with free verse, applies only to unrhymed iambic pentameter. In addition to iambic rhythms, other traditional meters may be employed in modern verse. Many excellent examples of contemporary American poetry in traditional forms can be found in the anthologies edited by Dacey and Jauss and by Finch and Varnes, from dactylic hexameter to Sapphic strophe, and from ballad to villanelle. We recommend bringing many examples to class and having everyone take a turn reading them aloud.

Determining Stress in Metered Verse

"A writer of metered poetry must learn scansion in order to compose metrically, and a reader of that poetry must be able to scan its lines in order to follow the author's metrical pattern" (Corn 26-27). Stress in individual words is fixed and can be looked up in a dictionary. Sentence stress or line stress, as opposed to stress in individual words, tends to fall on words that convey basic information, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. It tends not to fall on articles, conjunctions, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, and affixes, unless one is deliberately trying to stress something (Steele 1999: 28-29)—down as opposed to up, for example:

> The **boy** was **walk**ing **quick**ly down the **road**.
> or
> The **boy** was **walk**ing **quick**ly **down** the **road.**

In practice, of course, there are more degrees of stress than simply stressed and unstressed, and several systems of notation have been developed for them, but they need not concern us here (see, for example Corn: 25-30). It is important to note, however, that scanning English poetry, unlike scanning Latin poetry, is not exact. Different readers may scan the same poem differently, depending on their interpretation and what they choose to emphasize.

Substitutions in Iambic Verse

Since iambic verse mimics the natural stress patterns of English, it is well suited to modern verse. It also is quite flexible, since substitutions for the iamb are freely permitted. This is termed "metrical variance." Some possible substitutions are:

Trochee	/ u	(frequently at the beginning of a line)
Pyrrhic	u u	
Spondee	/ /	
Anapest	u u /	(Frost's "loose iambics," Steele 1999: 79-84)

These substitutions help avoid metrical monotony and provide interest and texture. For example:

>   u   / u   /   u   u   u / u /
> Round hay|fields, corn|fields and | po•ta|to-drills
>   u   /   u   /   u u u   /   u   /
> We trekked | and picked | un•til | the cans | were full
>   – Seamus Heaney, "Blackberry Picking"

Line Length

In determining whether to use a line of four or five feet in a translation, the length of the line used in the Latin poem ordinarily is the guide. For instance, a translator may wish to use iambic tetrameter (4 feet) for Catullus' shorter lines (say, for hendecasyllables), and iambic pentameter (5 feet) or even iambic hexameter (6 feet) for longer lines. It usually takes more English words than Latin words to convey a particular line, but since English words are shorter, the lines actually may turn out to be fairly equivalent in length.

Rhyme

Rhyme was not a major component of ancient poetry. "End rhyme" as a way to mark line endings did not develop until late antiquity, and English poets adopted it only after the Norman conquest (Steele 1990: 22). Even though rhyme is one of the major differences between ancient and modern poetry, rhyme can be used effectively in translations to reinforce the meter or to punctuate a joke, particularly in epigrams. Some advice for the translator who wishes to use rhyme:

- Use a few interlocking rhymes (*ababcdcd*).
- Try rhyming every other line (*xaxaxbxbx*).
- End with a rhymed couplet.
- Try rhyming every other line and then end with a rhymed couplet, if the total number of lines in the poem is odd. For example, *xaxaxbxbxcc* (an 11-line poem).
- Use slant rhyme, which is favored over exact rhyme in modern metrical poetry. Slant rhyme is inexact rhyme, like "hit" and "that" (in which the final consonants correspond but not the vowels) or "heart" and "dark" (in which the vowel sounds are equivalent but not the final consonants).

A rhyming dictionary is an indispensable tool for anyone using rhyme. Several are available online (for example, http://www.rhymezone.com).

Pitfalls to Avoid

We offer the following caveats to novices who wish to be more in tune with the practices of contemporary poets and translators.[9]

- Avoid rhyme without meter, although meter without rhyme is acceptable.
- Do not invert normal word order to achieve rhyme (e.g., today to school I go). Use natural word order instead.
- Avoid words that are no longer in common use, such as "alas" or "behold" (these are archaisms). It is preferable to use contemporary language.
- Avoid having all end-stopped lines, especially when using meter and rhyme, unless the poem you are translating does this or you are trying to achieve some particular effect. An end-stopped line is one in which the end of a thought and the end of a line coincide; enjambment is its opposite.

The Use of Meter is Controversial

The use of meter remains a controversial issue in modern poetry,[10] with some poets arguing that it interferes with poetic expression by imposing artificial restrictions and that it is a relic from the past associated with archaic diction and subject matter, while others claim that meter is constantly evolving and that metrical verse can be written in contemporary idiom on any subject. See Timothy Steele (1990) for a discussion of the modern revolt against meter and its legacy of free verse. One factor which may make free verse more attractive to the beginner is the fact that it does not require special training.

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9   Susan McLean has shared these suggestions in presentations to our classes.

10   Robert Frost is famously supposed to have said of free verse "I'd just as soon play tennis with the net down." This quip, more frequently quoted as "writing free verse is like playing tennis without a net," may have originated in a 1956 live television interview on WQED Pittsburgh (quoted in "Match Point," 56).

As teachers, we are careful not to favor one type of poetry over another, and by sharing examples of many types of verse translations we hope that our students will develop an appreciation for many kinds and will even discover a new favorite. When students are writing their literary translations, we encourage them to give metrical verse a try because it corresponds more closely to the creative experience of the Romans. We teach them how to write iambic verse because it is relatively easy to use, it is adaptable, and it is used by most poets writing metered verse today. Some of our students who have prior experience with English versification invariably choose to write in other traditional forms, such as the limerick or sonnet. If composing in meter proves to be too difficult or if students have a creative preference for free verse, then of course we encourage them to go with free verse. In fact, some of our most creative student translations have been written in free verse. The only restriction for this project: No prose translations!

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT WORK

Two examples of student work follow. (Latin texts for all student translations can be found in Appendix 2.) The first, a translation of Catullus 12 (a request to Asinius to return the poet's stolen napkins), is written in free verse, while the second, of Catullus 46 (a paean to spring, travel, and leave-taking), is in iambic tetrameter. Both Latin originals were written in the hendecasyllabic meter. Allison has transformed poem 12 into a verse epistle, retaining the Roman names and situation but giving it a decidedly modern feel through her use of free verse. She uses line breaks, spacing, and punctuation to convey the flippant glibness of the original, and alliteration of the letter h in lines 13-20 to enhance the disparaging tone. Although Heather has taken liberties with the situation in Catullus 46 by making it resonate with her own experience of returning to the United States after many years spent in England, her translation seems more traditional because she used meter. See Heather's own analysis in Appendix 3. Both translations, we think, are extremely effective.

Catullus XII "Give.Them.Back."

Dear
Marrucinus Asinius

I do not appreciate
The tendency of your hands
To steal napkins

And you think it's funny…fool…filth

I do appreciate that
The way you borrow things
To never return them tortures
Your dear sweet sibling Pollio.
  So stuffed with agreeable attributes
  So loved by earnest men everywhere

Anything asked of him
He would give to you
Happily

And whole heartedly
To hear that you have
Halted your hateful
Habit of Please,
Consider the harm you do.

I love Fabullus and Veranius.
They sent me napkins
from Spain. I love
those napkins.

Give.Them.Back.
(or I will publish)

Yours
Catullus
<div align="right">

– Allison Otto (2008)
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Catullus 46

No more slivers of sun tease the damp air.
No more clouds descend to enclose and confine
Blooming daffodils in morning prayer.
To leave or not to leave? Of course
I will leave with chilblains and health intact.
Off to new pastures, bright with fame.
Now in thought my mind wanders afar.
Now in step my thoughts stray. To past
And present friends, a sweet saddened
Goodbye. The path we shared these years
Now diverges and carries us apart.
<div align="right">

– Heather Wacha (2008)
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Implementing Step 3: Literary Translation

Since our students select different poems to translate, we find that meeting individually with them works best to discuss content. One of the reasons we like this project so much is that it gives us an opportunity to talk about *why* we translate Latin. In intermediate classes we often find that so much time is taken up "translating" the Latin that we no longer have time to talk about what the text *means*. This project encourages students to approach Latin poetry as literature, as something that has meaning, context, and beauty in its own right. When we introduce the project to students, we emphasize that it is more important to translate the *meaning* of the poem than it is to translate the words. We have found that this approach opens up students to thinking creatively about their translation and the form it will take. It also helps them understand that every translation is an act of interpretation. Words in Latin have multiple connotations that one may or may not be able to capture in English, and any translator must make choices about the meaning of any given

phrase based on his or her interpretation of the poem. To use a familiar example, is a sparrow just a sparrow in Catullus 2 and 3? The choice the translator makes has an enormous effect on the poem's meaning, its intended audience, its tone, and so forth. When we meet individually with students, four steps guide our discussion of the poem's content.

GOING OVER THE LITERAL TRANSLATION

During the individual meeting, the student goes through the literal translation again, line by line, with the instructor's guidance. The purpose is to review the poem's basic structure and content.

DISCUSSING THE ORIGINAL CONTEXT

Once the student has a thorough understanding of what the poem *says*, it is time to talk about what it *means*. As we have said, every translation is an act of interpretation, so it is necessary for each student to develop his or her own individual understanding of the poem and the poet on as many different levels as possible in order to have an informed interpretation. For this reason we ask our students a series of speculative questions, based as much as possible on textual references, historical context, and the biography of the poet. Our goal here is twofold: to encourage our students to recognize that these poems had a particular significance and meaning for both the poet and his audience at the time of their creation, as well as a deep and abiding meaning for audiences over time. In order to achieve these goals we use what might be called a new-historical reader response approach.

We examine the poem first by putting it into its original context and trying to understand its place in its own literary and cultural development, and second by eliciting from the students unique modern interpretations of their poems based on their own visceral responses to them. In order to address the first goal, in addition to our investigation of the historical and literary context, we ask several largely speculative questions about the author's goals and intended audience. Although New Criticism would consider this approach intentional fallacy, we believe that these sorts of questions are an excellent way to get students thinking about all the possible things a poem or a poet might have meant. Our intention is not to limit interpretation by saying that there is any one answer to what a poet intends or a poem represents, but rather to expand it exponentially by exploring *all* the myriad possibilities.

Here are some of the questions that we ask our students, but the instructor should feel free to modify and add to them. Some of the questions are more effective for shorter, autonomous poems, so if you are using epic poetry, you will want to modify them to emphasize the role of the passage in the work as a whole.

Why did the poet write this poem? This is an important interpretive question that the student can answer only over time, but it is a good place to start, and something that the student will have to consider in order to write a truly thoughtful translation. We often find that students have no further response than, "because it's cool and it sounds good." Almost always, however, the answer they give at the beginning of the session is different from one they give to the same question later, and is generally based on the student's own response to the poem and a new understanding of its context.

Who is the intended audience of the poem? Here we discuss the difference between the addressee and the audience of the poem. For instance, the poem may be addressed to Asinius, but

who will be reading it? What if the addressee is a specific person, and the audience is a close group of friends who all know that person or are familiar with certain in-words that clue them in to special meaning? How then might the poem have affected the wider audience? Part of understanding the message of the poem is knowing for whom it is written and how it is supposed to affect them.

How does the context of the poem affect its meaning? Are there particular historical or personal events in the poet's life that might give further insight into his intentions and the poem's meaning? This is a good opportunity to pull some commentaries off the shelf and see what scholars have to say on this subject, and there is the added benefit of introducing students to some of the tools of the trade.

Is the poem only about what it *says* it is about? Is a napkin only a napkin? Is a sparrow only a sparrow? What other issues or situations are being investigated in the poem besides or through the apparent ones?

Visualization

Ask the student to visualize the action of the poem, as well as the poet himself. Poetry is a visual medium as much as a written or aural/oral one. It produces mental images, pictures, and impressions, and this step is an opportunity for the student to articulate what those are. There are several ways for a student to do this.

First, create a mental image of the action. Essentially, this means to visualize one's way through the poem as if watching a movie. For instance, with a student who was translating Catullus 2 (*Passer, deliciae meae puellae*), we talked about the following sorts of things: Lesbia is playing with the *passer*, but what does she look like? What is her facial expression? When the student said that she was sad, the instructor responded by asking him *why* he thought she was sad. This sort of questioning also helps students ground their visualization in the text. If Lesbia is sad, why does she feel that way? If she is there, where is Catullus? Is he there too? In this student's visualization, Catullus *was* there, but separated from her, peering at her in secret from a nearby hedge. This concrete visualization arose from our previous discussion of the historic and biographical context of the poem. The student knew that "Lesbia" was married and his visualization of this poem showed her sitting alone in her husband's garden, separated from her lover by both social and physical barriers. When the student included some elements of this visualization in his final translation, it helped him evoke a powerful feeling of division and greatly deepened the poignancy of his interpretation.

Second, create a personal conception of the poet. Having a specific idea about what sort of person is writing the poem can have a huge impact on what the student thinks it means. There are two basic ways for students to get inside the poet's head: they can either put themselves into the poet's world or they can bring the poet into their own world. We have found the following two exercises in time travel to be quite effective. In the first, we tell students to conduct an imaginary interview with the poet by going back in time or by placing a *very* long distance phone call. In other words the students put themselves into the ancient context and try to figure out what sort of person the poet was and what the poem meant to him at that time. In another exercise we ask students to imagine the poet in their car or living room, to hang out with him for awhile, and to ask him questions; that is, to put the poet into a modern context and imagine what he would be like if he were alive today.

How does one convey the *same* meaning that a poem had two thousand years ago, *today*? What is there in a modern context that can accurately convey the same significance that a napkin

does in an ancient context? Further, it is important not only to ask your students what the poem meant to the poet, but also what it means to *them*, because whatever else, they should emerge from these literary exercises with a deep, personal connection to the poem.

Finally, ground the visualization in the text. If a student sees Catullus as a certain type of person or poet, why did he or she make these choices? A translation must be based upon knowledge gleaned from the text.

Discussing the Effect of Meter on Meaning

Now that the student knows what the poem says and means, and has a visual and personal conception of it, you can talk about how meter contributes to meaning. This is one of our favorite parts, because we are able to consider the synthesis of form and content. The first step is to have the student read the poem aloud in Latin, and then to ask the following questions.

How does the meter make you feel? Is it slow and mournful, or fast and light hearted? If the meter conveys a certain mood or feeling, does it match the tone of the words, or does it contrast with them? Words that seem frivolous and teasing, for instance, but are expressed in a mournful tone, can provide a wealth of material for interpretation.

What words are emphasized the most? Seeing where the long syllables and caesurae fall in a sentence can give clues about which concepts and words the poet thinks are most important. When the student reads the meter aloud, simply ask which words stand out the most and it will usually lead to an "ah ha!" moment.

What is the effect of figurative language, and do you want to replicate it? If there are literary devices, how do they create meaning, or what special connotations do they add? Sometimes reproducing in English a literary device like alliteration does not have the same effect that it does in Latin, but the student might try to recreate the *effect* of the alliteration in another way, perhaps by using rhyme instead.

How does word order affect the meaning? Even though we tend not to translate Latin in sequential order, meaning that we often translate subject first, then verb, etc., it was nevertheless meant to be read sequentially. We should always ask our students what expectations are being created by the word order and whether those expectations have been fulfilled or denied by the end of the sentence. In addition, some poets, particularly Horace and Ovid, juxtapose words with contrasting meanings, or with similar meanings, in order to create new associations and images. The placement of noun-adjective pairs, with some words embracing others, is often a very effective way to create word pictures.

Examples of Student Work

We include some examples below to show how the techniques suggested above can have an impact on the finished product. In the following poem, a version of Catullus 13 (*Cenabis bene*), we see how Veronica's own conceptualization of the poet influenced her translation. For her, an important aspect of Catullus' character was his literary context in a young and innovative crowd that thrived on breaking or modifying conventions. Therefore, based on her knowledge of Catullus and his circle of friends, she thought of him as a kind of beat poet from the American literary revolution of the 1950's. This interpretation afforded an apt modern analogy with its specialized vocabulary and intimate circles. She used very short lines to evoke the tone of the original poem and the jaunty, rhythmic insouciance of the hendecasyllables, and she deliberately employed slang

terms to mimic Catullus' in-words. Her translation conveys a vivid impression of who *her* Catullus was, and what his relationship with Lesbia was like.

An Invitation to Dinner

You're back!
Dinner
Friday
My house
You bring:
The Dinner
And the wine
Yup
The girl too
Don't forget
Your funny laugh
And we'll have a party
Just bring it all
And we'll have fun
The whole gang
Back together again.
Me?
No money
But!
Exclusive adoration for you.
Not enough?
Well,
I have more
Oh so much more.
Just as long as
You keep it on
The down
Low!
This girl
This girl
I got
She's got it all
She's got
This
Thing
It will
Really
Turn your head

– Veronica Mraz (2008)

The next two examples, both translations of Catullus 3, demonstrate the difference individual choice about meaning, here specifically the meaning of the sparrow, can make in a translation. In the first selection, Braham felt that the sparrow represented the fleeting beauty and charming elegance of Catullus' age and literary circle. For him, the poem was filled with a poignant sense of mortality and was meant to have deep personal meaning, especially for Catullus and his friends. Braham tried to capture all these elements in his translation and to express them through the elegant form he chose. His interpretation of what the sparrow represents owes a great deal to our discussions of the literary development of Catullus' form and the biographical history of the poet.

Carmen 3

Lament! my fetching friends and loves
and anyone more stylish yet.
The sparrow of my girl is dead.
That sparrow, her delight and joy—
She loved him more than life itself.
For he was always sweet to her,
and more: her closest confidante.
He never left her warm embrace,
but, flighty, hopped about her lap
and shared his song with her alone.
He now goes down that darkened path,
the end of all our mortal lives.
To hell with you, you shadowed jaws
of death! You'll swallow life's brief beauty,
and still you stole my sparrow too.
Dead! My unhappy little bird!
It's your fault that now my girl's
poor swollen eyes turn red with tears.

         – Braham Ketcham (2008)

In the next example, Rodney interprets the sparrow differently, and also has a very different personal visualization of the poet. As opposed to Braham, Rodney found the tone of this poem to be very sarcastic. His personal visualization of Catullus was of a metrosexual—a slightly effeminate, fashion-conscious heterosexual—expounding his poetry before a crowd on the main quad on campus (the Pentacrest), frustrated by the amount of attention his girlfriend was paying to her digital pet (the Tamagotchi). You can see here what a difference a sparrow can make, since he chose the more racy interpretation of the bird flitting about her lap, as the electronic nature of his modern substitute makes abundantly clear. His careful attention to the contributions of meter to the meaning of the original is evident in the words he chose to emphasize, such as MY and DEAD, which were words that were stressed with long syllables in the Latin original.

Delivered on the Pentacrest

Whatever gods and goddesses or those who believe
Themselves to love, I implore you, you MUST weep!

The Tamagotchi of MY girlfriend is DEAD!
Dead!
The Tamagotchi, obsession of MY girl
Which she loved more than her own deep blue eyes!
For the Tamagotchi was honey-sweet and he knew MY girlfriend
Just as well as a girl knows her own mother!
Hell, it never moved itself from her lap,
It was constantly buzzing rapid-fire here then there everywhere
We went.
It was constantly buzzing to her alone, its mistress.
Now, however, it travels through that lone and dreary world
Where all electronic devices are destined to go and never return.
May you not enjoy this Tamagotchi, you slimy pit of Hell,
You junkyard who swallows up all refuge that was once so enjoyable;
You have stolen from me such a gorgeous Tamagotchi.
What a dirty thing to do! You poor little misery of a Tamagotchi!
Because your batteries died the poor little swollen poor little eyes
Of MY girlfriend are red from stress and crying!

                                                    – Rodney Franklin (2008)

The final example, a translation of Catullus 12, shows what a wide range of possibilities this project offers and how technology and different media can be incorporated. With striking originality, Zachary managed to translate the *meaning* of the poem into a modern context by recognizing a modern equivalent of 300 hendecasyllables in the ability to tag pictures of another person on a social networking website, such as Facebook or MySpace. This led him to include visual elements in his translation, which further increased the depth and scope of his interpretation. In addition, he incorporated rhythm and meter through his use of hyphenation.

Sam, your drunk-en an-tics have gone too far.

*Jack-ing the light-ers of the stu-pored and
un-a-ware makes you a look like a prick.*

*At least con-sid-er your street-wise bro-ther's
fat bribe to crip-le your stick-y fin-gers.*

*I'll tag floods of comp-ro-mis-ing pic-tures
if you don't re-turn my zip-po light-er.*

*Ev-en though I no lon-ger smoke, it was
a cher-ished gift from the From-melt bro-ther$'$
trip to New Zea-land, and I'm com-pelled to
keep it in mem-or-y of their friend-ship.*

– Zachary Matthews (2008)

Adapting the Project

The translation project can easily be adapted to the particular needs of your students and situation. For example, if there is not enough time to go over all the suggested questions during an office visit, you can have the students write out answers to the questions in advance. Then during the individual meetings you can help the students fine-tune their understanding of the poem, but in a much shorter amount of time. If you have too many students to meet with them one-on-one, the questions can form the basis for class discussion. In this case, you may wish to limit the project to a given set of poems so that they all can be discussed in class. Or you could turn the questions into a written assignment to be handed in. There probably are questions that you will want to omit and others that you will want to add. Another idea is to have the students research their poet and write up a historical or personality profile. This will give them a more personal stake in their understanding of who the poet is, if you choose to do it. Another option is to use a workshop approach in class, so that students can receive helpful, creative advice from their peers and engage even more in the creative process that is at the heart of translation. There are many other ways in which an instructor could adapt the translation project; these are just a few suggestions. We heartily recommend that you give this project a try and make it your own.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The sources listed below are works that we have consulted and found useful for the translation project. They are not intended to be exhaustive.

Translation: Theory and Practice

Barnstone, Willis. *The Poetics of Translation: History, Theory, Practice*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993. A study of the aesthetics of translation, using the Bible as its main example. This is followed by a brief history of translation studies, beginning with the ancient Greeks.

Burian, Peter. "Translation, the Profession, and the Poets." *American Journal of Philology* 121 (2000): 299-307. Examines the role of translation in classical studies and cites examples of "recent American translations from Greek and Latin that I have found particularly useful, satisfying, and/or provocative."

McLean, Susan. "On Translating the Poetry of Catullus." *Amphora* 1.2 (2002): 12-13. Available at http://www.apaclassics.org/ee/images/uploads/documents/amphora/amphora1.2.pdf. This and the following article offer a first-hand account of the tradeoffs a translator must make as well as practical information on using meter and rhyme in translations of Catullus and Martial.

———. "Playing with Knives: On Translating Martial's Epigrams." *Amphora* 7.2 (2008): 4-5. Available at http://www.apaclassics.org/ee/images/uploads/documents/amphora/Amphora7.2.pdf.

Radice, William, and Barbara Reynolds, eds. *The Translator's Art: Essays in Honour of Betty Radice*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1987. Well-known translators reflect on their personal experiences with specific texts (prose and poetry), including Peter Green on Ovid and Peter Whigham on Catullus. Betty Radice, a classicist and distinguished translator herself, was the editor of the Penguin Classics from 1964 to 1985.

Satterlee, Thom. "Robert Frost's views on Translation." *Delos* 1996: 46-52. Investigates the origin of the quotation "poetry is what is lost in translation," attributed to Robert Frost. Also discusses Frost's views on translation, especially the importance of sound in poetry.

Schulte, Rainer, and John Biguenet, eds. *The Craft of Translation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. A compilation of essays by translators describing the process and challenges of translating from various languages into English, with particular emphasis on the process of deciding between possibilities.

———. *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. A companion to Schulte and Biguenet (1989), this is a collection of essays on translation theory, as opposed to practice.

Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1975, 1992, 1998. This highly technical, seminal study argues that all communication is a form of translation. Steiner focuses on translation, particularly between two mutually unintelligible languages, as a process with four "movements": (1) trust, in which the translated text is deemed valuable; (2) aggression, in which the original language is violated to make it intelligible to another; (3) incorporation, in which the translated text is adapted into the translator's cultural context; and (4) restitution, a subjective condition, in which even greater value is attributed to the originating culture of the translated text.

Vandiver, Elizabeth. "Translating Catullus." In Marilyn B. Skinner, ed. *A Companion to Catullus*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007: 523-541. Vandiver discusses the difficulties of translating Catullus' poetry into English and the strategies employed by different translators. Using poems 1, 16, 51, 84, and 68.109-116 as exempla, she addresses the problems of maintaining metrical, lexical, cultural, and other types of fidelity. Includes bibliographical references and a guide to further reading. Highly recommended for any instructor planning to use Catullus for the translation project.

Venuti, Lawrence, ed. *The Translation Studies Reader*, 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2004. A survey of translation theory from antiquity to the present, with an emphasis on developments in the past 30 years. Serves as an introduction to the multidisciplinary field of translation studies. Venuti, a translator and professor of English at Temple University, is the leading name in translation studies right now.

English Versification

Corn, Alfred. *The Poem's Heartbeat: A Manual of Prosody*. Ashland, OR: Story Line Press, 1998. Concise (only 142 pages of text) handbook on English versification written with students in mind.

Fry, Stephen. *The Ode Less Travelled: Unlocking the Poet Within*. London: Hutchinson, 2005. Entertainingly informative guide to poetry writing by the English actor, writer, and humorist. Includes practice exercises.

Steele, Timothy. *All the Fun's in How You Say a Thing: An Explanation of Meter and Versification*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1999. Comprehensive, thoroughly accessible introduction to English versification for students, teachers, and the general reader. Includes glossary. See also Steele's homepage with link to his "Introduction to Meter and Form": http://instructional1.calstatela.edu/tsteele/index.html.

———. *Missing Measures: Modern Poetry and the Revolt Against Meter* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1990. Steele, a poet and professor of English at California State University, Los Angeles, explains how free verse deposed metrical verse in the modern era. Topics include how meter came to be identified with stagnation; the perceived distinction between verse and poetry; and the influence of prose fiction, aestheticism, and science on the rise of free verse.

Anthologies of Modern English Verse in Meter

Dacey, Philip, and David Jauss, eds. *Strong Measures: Contemporary American Poetry in Traditional Forms*. New York: Harper & Row, 1986. Anthology of poems by American poets who write in traditional forms ranging from elegiac couplet and Sapphic stanza to the ballad and villanelle.

Finch, Annie, and Kathrine Varnes, eds. *An Exaltation of Forms: Contemporary Poets Celebrate the Diversity of Their Art*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. Part handbook, part anthology. Essays by more than 50 contemporary American poets who were asked to choose a form, describe it and its history, and give their favorite examples. The result is a remarkable range of forms discussed by a remarkably diverse group of poets. De-emphasizes the free verse / formal verse dichotomy and celebrates all types of poetry.

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Carson, Anne. "Catullus: *Carmina." Men in the Off Hours*. New York: Random House, 2000. 38-45. Contemporary, highly original versions of 15 Catullan poems in free verse (poems 2, 3, 43, 46, 50, 58, 70, 75, 76, 85, 86, 96, 97, 101, and 109).

Gaisser, Julia Haig, ed. *Catullus in English*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 2001. Very highly recommended, but unfortunately already out of print. This anthology of Catullan translations into English is diverse in terms of chronology and style, ranging from Sir Walter Raleigh (b. c. 1552) to Hugh Tolhurst (b. 1966). The editor provides an excellent introduction as well as background on each translator. Every poem appears at least once.

Green, Peter, trans. *The Poems of Catullus: A Bilingual Edition*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. Close translations in meter. Introduction contains a discussion of "translation and its problems."

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Poole, Adrian, and Jeremy Maule, eds. *Oxford Book of Classical Verse in Translation*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. Anthology of translations by English poets from the early 17th century through the late 20th century, covering Greek and Latin authors

from Homer through late antiquity. A good source for comparison of translations through the ages.

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Whigham, Peter, trans. *Catullus: The Poems*. London and New York: Penguin, 1966. Loose translations in free verse. The translator discusses his process in Radice (216-230).

APPENDIX 2: LATIN TEXTS FOR STUDENT TRANSLATIONS OF CATULLUS

3. Lesbia's Sparrow Is Dead

Lugete, o Veneres Cupidinesque,
et quantum est hominum venustiorum:
passer mortuus est meae puellae,
passer, deliciae meae puellae,
quem plus illa oculis suis amabat.   5
nam mellitus erat suamque norat
ipsam tam bene quam puella matrem,
nec sese a gremio illius movebat,
sed circumsiliens modo huc modo illuc
ad solam dominam usque pipiabat;   10
qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum
illud, unde negant redire quemquam.
at vobis male sit, malae tenebrae
Orci, quae omnia bella devoratis:
tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis.   15
o factum male! o miselle passer!
tua nunc opera meae puellae
flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

12. To a Napkin Thief

Marrucine Asini, manu sinistra
non belle uteris: in ioco atque vino
tollis lintea neglegentiorum.
hoc salsum esse putas? fugit te, inepte:
quamvis sordida res et invenusta est.   5
non credis mihi? crede Pollioni
fratri, qui tua furta vel talento
mutari velit; est enim leporum
differtus puer ac facetiarum.
quare aut hendecasyllabos trecentos   10
exspecta, aut mihi linteum remitte,
quod me non movet aestimatione,
verum est mnemosynum mei sodalis.
nam sudaria Saetaba ex Hiberis
miserunt mihi muneri Fabullus   15
et Veranius: haec amem necesse est
ut Veraniolum meum et Fabullum.

13. *An Invitation to Dinner*

Cenabis bene, mi Fabulle, apud me
paucis, si tibi di favent, diebus,
si tecum attuleris bonam atque magnam
cenam, non sine candida puella
et vino et sale et omnibus cachinnis.   5
haec si, inquam, attuleris, venuste noster,
cenabis bene; nam tui Catulli
plenus sacculus est aranearum.
sed contra accipies meros amores
seu quid suavius elegantiusve est: 10
nam unguentum dabo, quod meae puellae
donarunt Veneres Cupidinesque,
quod tu cum olfacies, deos rogabis,
totum ut te faciant, Fabulle, nasum.

46. *Spring Has Returned*

Iam ver egelidos refert tepores,
iam caeli furor aequinoctialis
iucundis Zephyri silescit auris.
linquantur Phrygii, Catulle, campi
Nicaeaeque ager uber aestuosae: 5
ad claras Asiae volemus urbes.
iam mens praetrepidans avet vagari,
iam laeti studio pedes vigescunt.
o dulces comitum valete coetus,
longe quos simul a domo profectos   10
diversae varie viae reportant.

Text: R.A.B. Mynors, Oxford Classical Text, 1958

APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLE OF STUDENT ESSAY

Catullus 46/Explanatory Essay

Heather Wacha

March 12, 2008

Background Information and Why I Chose this Poem

Catullus 46 tells of Catullus's year spent in Bithynia while on the governor's staff. He had decided to go abroad to forget Clodia. I chose this poem because, in my opinion, Catullus has captured exactly what it means to travel. When he left, I imagine he was only thinking of the leaving part, the one-way out, an escape from his problematic situation. When he arrived in Bithynia, he found that he disliked the governor he was working for, the place, and the weather. When his year was done, he once again thought that travel would solve his problems and provide an escape. However, at the end of the poem, he becomes conscious that in and amidst his complaints, he has really made some good friends to whom he now has to say goodbye.

I feel I understand Catullus because I experienced the same thing when I left for England. I was escaping a long on-again-off-again relationship and had only the one-way ticket in mind. After many years, I too had complaints about my work and especially the weather. Moreover, like Catullus, when I was getting ready to return to the US, I had the same realization that in and amidst the time I had spent there, I had made some very good friends. It seems that it's only when you are getting ready to move on that you realize what you have had all along. I too was excited to travel again but also felt regret at leaving the life and friends I had made there.

Three main things drew me to this poem: first, my own story that so resembled Catullus's experience; second, the double-edged realization of excitement and anticipation coupled with regret that takes you by surprise at the end of the poem, and finally, the weather which plays such an important part in the poem's imagery.

What I Saw in this Poem that I Wanted to Keep in my Translation

To me, one of the most important parts of this poem is the imagery. It revolves around the physical environment and our bodies within that environment. I wanted to keep that same importance of imagery in my translation.

I also wanted to keep the same tone of the poem. I feel that Catullus is not showing us his raw emotion as he does in *odi et amo* but a more thought-provoking emotion that lends itself to introspection and therefore a lot of imagery and symbolism. In his poem he addresses joy, anticipation, relief, sorrow, excitement, and pleasure. I tried to put all of these in my translation.

While trying to maintain a similar tone, I also imagined Catullus in England. I had a sense that perhaps Catullus would have disliked England and its weather even more than Bithynia. Knowing the wit of which Catullus is capable, I decided to try to include a bit of bite, but not too much to detract from the heart-felt realization at the end.

The last thing I wanted to maintain was the structure. The poem uses hendecasyllabic meter and therefore there are eleven syllables in each line. I wanted to keep the meter in my polished translation and since four feet of iambic meter commonly replace hendecasyllables in English, this

is what I did. Catullus also splits the poem into two parts with the first two lines of each part starting with the same word. These are echoes of the same sound. That they start both parts shows how he realizes he is of two minds about leaving. I tried to keep a similar pattern in my translation. I also keep the main point of each section in my poem. The first is about the weather and can symbolize his past year. The second is more about Catullus's body and his feelings, implying a future perspective. I find the end rather anti-climactic because all along you get the feeling he is happy to be leaving and then your impression suddenly changes. I tried to keep this aspect as well.

What I Saw in the Poem that I Changed

I exchanged Bithynia for the Midlands in England where I lived. I interpreted the paths that Catullus talks about at the end into the paths of fate or destiny. I also tried to put Catullus into the Midlands to get a sense of how he might write about the situation. While the general ideas and tone are maintained, I used a very loose translation with only a few ties to the original Latin words.

APPENDIX 4: GRADING RUBRIC

Project 1: Catullus Translation   Name: _____

100 total points   Total points/grade: _____

Literal Translation
10 points

_____ Typed, double-spaced with fewer than three mechanical or translation errors [5]
_____ Handed in on time [5]

Polished Translation
45 points

_____ Typed, double-spaced with fewer than three mechanical errors [5]
_____ Handed in on time [5]
_____ Effective use of form (Free verse, metered verse, rhyme, etc.) [10]
_____ Originality/effective use of language [15]
           (Adaptation to personal experience or present-day situations, vocabulary,
           contemporary idiomatic English, imagery, etc.)
_____ Conveyed style, themes, and tone of original [10]

Explanatory Essay
30 points

_____ Typed, double-spaced with fewer than three mechanical errors [5]
_____ Handed in on time [5]
_____ Showed understanding of Latin poem [10]
_____ Revealed thoughtful consideration of choices [10]

Class Presentation
15 points

_____ Read at moderate speed (not too fast); spoke clearly and with sufficient volume [5]
_____ Read with appropriate expression (to enhance/convey meaning) [5]
_____ Presented engaging background material [5]

Comments:

any single line of poetry; any composition in lines or more or less regular rhythm. paraphrase. restatement in one's own words of what we understand a literary work to say. summary. brief condensation of the main idea or story of a literary work. theme. generally recurring subject or idea conspicuously evident in a literary work. subject. Latin for "seize the day"; applied to characterize much lyric poetry concerned with human mortality and the passing of time. Surrealism. modernist movement in art and literature that tries to organize art according to the irrational dictates of the unconscious mind; founded by French poet André Breton. lyric. short poem expressing the thoughts and feelings of a single speaker; often written in first person. dramatic poetry.