good turn I did him, and giving an account of it which, though basically true, is more complimentary than I deserve.' By the time we reach the end of section 5 we have read eighty-three words about Pliny's kindnesses and fifteen about his friend's gratitude: admittedly I visited him at a dangerous time (21 words), admittedly too I gave him presents of money (26), moreover I did this at a critical period (36); yet I don't think I deserve his eulogies (15). So while the sentences are supposed to demonstrate Pliny's unworthiness, their relative length has the opposite effect.

Most of Pliny's letters were written with a view to publication. As well as fostering a rather careful style this tended to stifle the writer's spontaneity. All in all one feels there is too much sweetness and light in the correspondence. We yearn for a few healthy prejudices, for the occasional crashing indiscretion, for the snarl of full-blooded hate. But perhaps this is asking too much. Pliny's was a simple friendly nature. He was fond of people and anxious to be liked. This made him reluctant to give offence. Moreover, his formative years were passed in a period of political chaos; before he was nine he had seen five different emperors, and during his twenties, when one is normally *audax iuuenta*, he lived in a society where a word out of place could lead to exile or death. So when Pliny came to write his letters he was determined never to appear in a bad light. His boasting and his humility were the positive and negative sides of this preoccupation. And when, as frequently happened, the two activities alternated in quick succession, they produced the kind of mental see-saw that we have been watching.

In spite of the contrasts between their periods and the differences of scale between their achievements, the resemblances between Cicero and Pliny are plain enough – their success at the bar, their contributions to public life, their literary talents, their energy and sociability and (as we have touched on here) their vanity. In all the stratagems that we have been observing, they both show a keen awareness of their readers' reactions. For this reason the comments offered above are, I hope, suitable for inclusion in a collection of essays on the theme of author and audience.

A) [illegible] and T. Power (ed.), Author and Audience in Latin Literature (Cambridge 1992)

D. C. FEENEY

3 'SHALL I COMPARE THEE...?' Catullus 68B and the limits of analogy

'Probably the most extraordinary poem in Latin,' as Lyne describes it,[1] this audacious piece of brilliance has attracted legions of critics.[2] Here no attempt will be made to address each contested individual issue in the hallowed catalogue of notorious problems contained in the scholarly register on 'Catullus 68'; nor will I chase the chimaera of a 'full' reading. Rather, I propose to adopt a partial and oblique approach to this most oblique of poems, taking as my lead the obliquity embodied in the poem's most striking technical feature, obsessively deployed throughout – the simile.[3]

Similes, and the wider system of analogy-making of which they are the most overt example, saturate this poem.[4] One may, in the first instance, refer the main example of the figure, the comparison between the beloved and Laodamia, to the analogical form of much Roman love-poetry, in which one sees a compulsive mapping of lover and beloved onto the famous pairs of the (mythical or historical) past:[5] Propertius and Cynthia become Milanion and Atalanta (1.1.9–16); they become Varro and Leucadia, Catullus and Lesbia, Calvus and Quintilia, Gallus and Lycoris (2.34.85–94), Paris and Helen (2.15.13–14). Commonly only the beloved is thus analogised (with the reader often being prompted to fill in the missing half of the equation):[6] Cynthia is Ariadne or Andromeda (1.3.1–4); Ovid's Corinna is Semiramis and Lais (*Amores* 1.5.11–12), she is Helen, Leda, Amymone (*Amores* 1.10.1–8).[7] Such *exempla* have more in common with the figure of simile than may at first appear; they are themselves often classed with similes under the general heading of comparison by the ancient critics.[8]

If analogy-construction is a lover's itch, it is likewise intimately linked with the wedding-song, a form exploited elsewhere by Catullus himself (61 and 62), and one which lurks behind the epiphany of the beloved at the threshold of Allius' house, *coniugis ut quondam* ... (68.73).[9] Comparison is the cardinal trope of hymenaeal, with mythic, or divine, models proposed for bride and groom,[10] and with analogies from the

world of nature.[11] In Catullus' own wedding-songs we see Sapphic similes from nature (61.21–5, 34–5, 87–9, 102–5, 186–8; 62.39–58), and from myth (61.221–3), while the first simile of 61 says that Junia is coming to Manlius as Venus came to Paris in the beauty-contest on Mt Ida (61.16–20). In 68, Catullus' beloved *is* a goddess as she arrives (*mea ... candida diua*, 70, without a simile marker), and this hyperbole is straight away given a purchase in the forms of hymenaeal as her arrival is compared to the arrival of a bride, a moment which Catullus' own epithalamium, as we have just seen, compares to epiphany.[12]

Love-poetry's analogical bent, with a tangential input from wedding-song, provides, then, some kind of backdrop for the flood of similes which overtakes the poem as the beloved arrives at the house of Allius. No generic framework, however, can possibly be considered to account sufficiently for the strangeness and the pervasiveness of the analogies in this poem, since the rush of similes begins over twenty lines before the beloved arrives. The sheer volume of similes in 68 is something without comparison in ancient literature. A brief paraphrase may convey how little of the poem is outside the context of simile and analogy. I give 68B, indenting and italicising the similes, with a *further* indentation for the similes *within* the main simile, which compares the beloved's arrival to that of Laodamia:

> I cannot be silent, Muses, about Allius' help. I will tell you about it, and you will tell future generations (41–50).
>
> For you know how Venus scorched me, when
>
> *I burnt as much as the Sicilian volcano and the springs at Thermopylae*, and I kept weeping (51–6).
>
> *Like a stream that comes down the hill to refresh the traveller,*[13] *like the arrival of Castor and Pollux in a storm, that's what Allius' help was like.*
>
> He made it possible for us to make love, providing a house and a housekeeper (57–69). My goddess arrived
>
> *like Laodamia arriving at the house of Protesilaus. The loss of her husband taught her the penalty of neglecting sacrifice before she could sate her love* (70–84). *The Fates knew he would die if he went to Troy. Troy was then summoning all the leaders of Greece to avenge the rape of Helen – Troy, where my brother died* (85–92). *Alas, my brother, whose death has been a catastrophe for our house and for me. He is buried in Troy, where all the Greeks were then going* (92–104). *Because of this, Laodamia, you lost*

> *your marriage, sweeter than life and soul, so great was the eddy with which love's tide had sucked you into a barathrum,*
>
> *like the one the Greeks say was made by Hercules at Pheneus, at the time he was performing the labours that would win him divinity and an immortal bride. But your love was deeper than that barathrum* (105–18).
>
> *The late-born grandson is not as dear to the grandfather who can now rid himself of the threat posed by the distant relative who was going to inherit; nor does any dove delight as much in her mate, the dove who kisses more wantonly than the most promiscuous woman. You outdid those passions* (119–30).
>
> Yielding to her not at all, or hardly at all, was my love when she came to me with Cupid in attendance (131–4). Although she has other lovers, I will not be a bore about it.
>
> *Even Juno put up with Jupiter's amours.*
>
> But it is not fit that men should be compared with gods. And she was not even married to me anyway; it is enough for me if I'm her favourite (135–48).
>
> This poem is my thanks to you, Allius, to keep your family name alive; may you and your love be blessed, and house and housekeeper, and the source of all these good things, and, above all, my light (149–60).

Overpowering in their bulk, with the Laodamia analogy governing the main run of the poem, these similes are, many of them, also extremely strange. The *barathrum*-simile is easily the most extraordinary, but the gleeful grandfather and the wantonly faithful dove are not far behind. Even from a poet with a keen zest for the striking simile, these examples are indeed remarkable.[14] This dense and bizarre barrage of analogy leaves one with the sensation that similes are no added ornament to the poem, something additional to what the poem is saying. They *are* the poem, they *are* what the poem is saying, just as (*uelut*) the digressions of 64 are not movements away from the reality of the poem, but rather its very point. What actually *happens* in 68? A man provides a house, a woman arrives – the rest is analogy and reflection, nested within the expression of thanks to Allius. The poem confronts us urgently with the problem of what similes are, what kind of significance they construct.

A brief consideration of the nature of simile is in order.[15] Critics ancient and modern have tended to concentrate on the similitude involved in comparison, and the results are often powerful vindications

of the figure's ability to synthesise emotional and intellectual apprehension of a point, as it forces the reader to strain after the correspondence between often disparate forms of experience or language.[16] No one has demonstrated the illustrative and explanatory power of similes more cogently than the scholar whom we honour in this volume.[17] In the analogical world of Lucretius' atomistic poem, in particular, the sheer intellectual power of the visions of similitude is overwhelming, and no one who has read David West on this poem can be in any doubt as to the enlightening force which this figure can command.

None the less, critics ancient and modern have likewise concentrated on the *dissimilarity* which is inherent in simile. The ancient critics could divide *simile* into *totum simile*, *impar*, *dissimile*, and *contrarium*, recognising that rhetorical force may be gained from comparing, through contrast and inversion, like and unlike.[18] The enquiries of modern critics have revealed the paradox (which is only initially so) that the fundamental nature of simile is itself rooted in the unlike. John Kerrigan's acute discussion of Shakespeare's use of comparison in the *Sonnets* takes as its starting-point the recognition that

> similitude depends on difference; for without difference there is identity, not similitude. 'Identity', writes Wallace Stevens, 'is the vanishing point of resemblance.' Burns's 'love' was 'like a red, red rose' because in most respects she wasn't. Everywhere in the Sonnets, Shakespeare writes with a keen sense of the difference in similitude.[19]

M. S. Silk, similarly, has denied that

> the logical basis, or pretext, for a literary image is necessarily to be equated with the interest or 'point' of the image. As has been repeatedly demonstrated, this interest characteristically derives from the unlikeness as much as from the likeness; and indeed without a sufficient unlikeness, all 'point' in the true sense tends to disappear ...[20]

Silk's first example is an Iliadic simile, where the dying Gorgythion is compared to a poppy drooping its head (8.306–8).[21] Indeed, a great many of the similes of the *Iliad* 'derive their power', as Taplin puts it, 'from an actual *contrast* with the world of war which they are compared to ... Again and again pain and destruction and violent death are compared to fertile agriculture, creative craftsmanship, useful objects and tasks, scenes of peace and innocent delight.'[22] If the dissimilarity

between the things compared is often the point of the *Iliad*'s similes, cumulatively constructing a disjunction between two realms of experience, the poet of the *Odyssey*, in a number of extraordinary passages, goes even further, and creates a complete inversion of similitude.[23] His most striking venture is the simile with which he marks the moment when Odysseus and Telemachus embrace in the recognition-scene in Book 16. They cried shrilly, says the poet, and he shows the inadequacy of his simile to meet the surge of the human emotion by moving into the comparison in the comparative, saying that they wept *more* copiously than birds – birds, he goes on to say, who have had their young snatched away from them before their feathers have grown (16.216–18) – who have suffered, in other words, the exact opposite of Odysseus.[24] Again, when Odysseus has heard Demodocus' song of the sack of Troy, he weeps like one of his own victims, like a woman falling on the corpse of her husband, who has died trying to defend his city and people, as the victors bash her on the back with their spears to drive her off to slavery (8.523–31).[25] Finally, when Odysseus and Penelope at last acknowledge each other and embrace, Odysseus weeps (23.231–2). As glad a sight as land is to men whom Poseidon has wrecked at sea, of whom only a few step on to the land – that for *her* is how glad the sight of her husband was (233–9).[26]

The slippage between tenor and vehicle is, then, often more to the point than the match.[27] In our poem, the radical slippage between tenor and vehicle in the base analogy has been often discussed: it is the discrepancy, as much as the fit, between Catullus/beloved and Protesilaus/Laodamia which generates the energy of the central portion of the poem.[28] I will have something to say about the tussle between discrepancy and fit in this main analogy later on, but I would like to open up the problem by setting it in the wider context of the difficulty of analogy, following the invitation of the poem's manifold similes to reflect upon their paradoxical way of generating significance.

The self-consciousness with which the similes draw attention to their mode of operation appears to intensify as the poem goes on. The first occurrence of simile is a doublet, which compares the heat of Catullus' passion, and also, perhaps, the flow of his tears, to two things which emit hot liquid: the volcano of Aetna, and the hot springs of Thermopylae (passion 52–4, tears 55–6). Only after reading on and seeing the importance of Hercules later in the poem is the reader likely to be in a position to catch the inversion involved in Catullus' comparison of his passion to the hot springs of Thermopylae: in Catullus' case, the springs are an illustration of the heat of his affliction before the relief of Allius

came, whereas for Hercules the springs were themselves a relief, provided by Athene for him to bathe in after one of his toils.[29] Many more contrasts with Hercules are to follow.[30]

After this two-line double simile, and two lines on Catullus' weeping, we have another two similes back to back, this time taking up nine lines (57–65). Like a stream coming down a hill, begins the first one, to relieve a parched traveller...; and at this point we confront the problem of what the tenor is to this simile's vehicle.[31] Some take it to refer to what precedes, so as to illustrate Catullus' tears, and the relief which they bring; some take it to go together with the second simile, so as to refer to the help which Allius gave the afflicted lover; some take it to refer to both. Certainly some Homeric similes change their reference as the reader moves through them, and it has been suggested that the same thing happens here: the reader at first assumes that the water of the simile corresponds to the tears, but then readjusts as the second simile picks up.[32] Catullus' technique is radically more strange than this, however, since we are not dealing simply with a change of focus, but with an apparent fusion of opposites: the simile appears to be susceptible of referring *either* to the distress *or* to the relief of the distress. How may the identical words refer to two opposites? Yet it appears that they may indeed do so, for, in the division of opinion on the simile's reference, each group has grounds for its opinion.[33] Even those readers who decide that the relief brought by the water cannot be the relief of weeping, since Catullus has stressed that he was only relieved by Allius, will have been, many of them, caught out by a first reading; for four lines (57–60) they will have been taking the simile to be referring to the opposite of what they finally decide it to be referring to; at the very least, they will have been uncertain as to what the simile was going to be revealed as meaning.

The difficulty which a reader faces in deciding on the reference of this particular simile is not an isolated scholarly problem, but a difficulty which will recur constantly in the analogies of this poem. At this stage of the poem, the difficulty which readers face over this simile reinforces, in a different way, the point made by the opposing energies involved in the Thermopylae simile, where something which relieved Hercules was used to illustrate the nature of Catullus' pain *before* he received relief. The simile of the water coming down the hillside may do two quite different things, such is the dissembling power of simile, such is the dissimilitude at its core.

The obliquity of simile's reference which Catullus highlights here is further accentuated if we reflect upon the fact that he has used two similes to refer to the same experience; once again, the brief first use of simile

is a pointer to later complications, for the first use of simile occurs in a doublet (Catullus' pain is like Aetna *and* the springs of Thermopylae). The use of two similes to illustrate the same phenomenon is a device which one finds already in Homer, but it is markedly sporadic in later literature.[34] In Homer, the use of double similes is often a matter of focalising, with the two similes offering us perspectives available to two different participants, as when the retreating Aias is first compared to a lion beset by herdsmen, and then to a donkey belaboured by boys in a wheatfield (*Iliad* 11.548–65).[35] In Catullus' poem, where we move from one double simile to another, and finally to a culminating pair at the end of the Laodamia analogy (119–28), the reader is being alerted to the distancing and distorting power of simile: if the same thing can be compared to two different things, does this bring us closer to, or further from, does it clarify or obscure, the 'thing'? We return below to the major destabilisation of reference which is created by the final pair of similes (119–30), a destabilisation which is anticipated in a minor key by the difficulties encountered here, in the poem's first two pairs of similes, where we have been shown that one vehicle may have two tenors and one tenor may have two vehicles.

Allius' help is now described: *is clausum lato patefecit limite campum* (67). As his *candida diua* arrives, and pauses on the threshold, Catullus launches into the prime comparison of his poem, comparing this arrival to that of the bride Laodamia at the doomed house of her husband, Protesilaus, juxtaposing the cognate names of the mythical pair (*Protesilaeam Laodamia domum*, 74) as he had juxtaposed the names of the Roman couple in his epithalamium, *Iunia Manlio* (61.16).[36] The *diua* remains poised on this threshold for sixty lines, while the analogy embarks upon its obscurely illuminating course, generating its own clusters of similitude and analogy as it goes.

As the reader moves through these sixty lines, and their sequel, the dissimilitude of analogical language makes its power increasingly felt, for the discordance between the tenor and vehicle claims our attention as much as the match.[37] The beloved is like and (finally) not like a bride, she is like and (finally) not like a goddess; the adulterous relationship between her and Catullus is like and (finally) not like a marriage:

> There is a contrast between Laodamia, deeply in love, and Lesbia, something less than faithful, as between Laodamia the wife and Lesbia the mistress... In so far as Catullus can liken Lesbia to Laodamia, he thinks of her, or thought of her, as virtually a bride; but in so far as he faces reality, he plainly

> denies that there is any hint of a marriage between them: there is only the loose association of two polished and sophisticated people.[38]

Further, the obliquity of analogy asserts itself here, as it had earlier with the water simile which may refer at once to Catullus' tears and to the relief of Allius, for the Laodamia analogy likewise, but on a much greater scale, points to two referents, to the beloved, and to Catullus: 'the pining Laodamia is in many ways more apposite as a paradigm for the speaker himself; he is the lover truly characterized by passion and desire ... Moreover, Laodamia's loss of her husband at Troy evokes the speaker's loss of his brother there.'[39]

The 'explanatory' and 'illustrative' myth is susceptible to the same slippages and dissimilitude as simile itself. This is true not simply in the terms used by the ancient rhetoricians, for whom *exempla* and *simile* belong together in the larger category of *comparatio*,[40] but also in terms of the more general link suggested by Burkert between metaphor and myth:

> metaphor is a basic trick of language to cover the unfamiliar with familiar words on account of partial similarity; in this sense, myth can be defined as a metaphor at tale level. The effect of metaphor is to widen the scope of the vocabulary, to keep the sign-system finite by a kind of generalization, to provide a context by analogy, while remaining conscious of the fact that this reference by metaphor is somewhat twisted, preliminary, tentative, one-sided. One could say as much about myth.[41]

One might add that reference by simile, signposted as it is with its overt words of analogy ('like', 'as', *sicut*, etc.), is even more openly 'twisted, preliminary, tentative, one-sided' than metaphor.

Through the loss of Laodamia's husband at Troy we move to the loss of Catullus' brother there (89–100), and through Troy we come back to Laodamia (101–5). The depth of her passion introduces another simile, with yet another mythic analogy embedded within it, as we are told of the great eddy with which love's tide has sucked her into a *barathrum*, like the one the Greeks say was made by Hercules at Phenens, at the time he was performing the labours that would win him divinity and an immortal bride (105–16).[42] The bizarre pedantry of the simile, marshalled ostensibly to illustrate the most intense and poignant *comparandum*, the power of Laodamia's passion, shows the emotional distance between tenor and vehicle at its most extreme, while the learned detail, the concatenation of data, come to be almost a parody of the

capacity of similes to take off on their own tangent as they create their own autonomous energy; this parodic quality refers back to the way in which the Laodamia analogy as a whole has itself taken off on precisely this kind of tangent. In a move which is characteristic of the similes at the end of the Laodamia analogy, where the failure of language to establish similitude is much more self-consciously marked than in the similes before the mythical *exemplum*, Catullus goes on to note the inadequacy of the simile he has provided for our 'enlightenment': the 'depth' of Laodamia's love and of the *barathrum* had appeared to be the only sure point of comparison, but even that is taken away from us at the conclusion by Catullus: *sed tuus altus amor barathro fuit altior illo*, 'but your deep love was *deeper* than that abyss' (117).[43]

The baffled reader is immediately enmeshed in another attempt to illustrate the love of Laodamia by analogy, in two dense juxtaposed similes, a doublet which picks up and accentuates the doubleness of the poem's first two simile pairs (Aetna and Thermopylae; the river coming downhill and the advent of Castor and Pollux). Two radically different areas of comparison are introduced side by side, human and animal, legalistic and natural, familial and sexual, as we are told that the late-born grandson is not as dear to the grandfather who can now rid himself of the threat posed by the distant relative who was going to inherit; nor does any dove delight as much in her mate, the dove who kisses more wantonly than the most promiscuous woman (119–28). The great difficulty which readers encounter in trying to harmonise these two similes into one reference is deftly caught by Catullus at the end, with his reminder that Laodamia *alone* is the one point of comparison for the two disparate analogies: *sed tu horum magnos uicisti* sola *furores* (129).[44]

The yoking of the gleeful grandfather to the passion of Laodamia is sometimes referred to the simile which Catullus uses in Poem 72, where he catches the disinterested, equal, 'masculine' nature of his previous regard for Lesbia by saying that he loved her *non tantum ut uulgus amicam*, | *sed pater ut gnatos diligit et generos* ('not just as the mob loves its girlfriend, but as a father loves his sons and his sons-in-law', 3–4).[45] In Poem 72, however, the simile, while certainly startling, is at least congruent with the new area of concern created by the poem and its companions; here in 68B, the slippage is much more radical, especially in the light of the simile's collocation with the dove who immediately follows. This wantonly faithful dove is a very odd creature, and the problematic nature of her worth as a comparison is highlighted by the word which Catullus chooses to describe her 'married' status, a word which alludes self-referentially to her very status as a point of

comparison. *compar* he calls her (126), which as a noun is used to denote 'one of a pair', hence 'husband/wife/mate'; but the word is primarily an adjective, the base of *comparatio*, meaning 'similar, alike, resembling; matching, corresponding'.[46] *compar*, then, within the simile, to her mate, and *compar* without, to Laodamia.

What kind of comparison is she? Commentators note the proverbial fidelity of doves,[47] yet the apparently natural direction of the simile towards marital fidelity is put oddly off-track when Catullus describes the dove as a more shameless kisser than the most wanton of women. This derailment of the simile has provoked some perplexed responses,[48] yet it seems to catch at some of the dubiety which has built up concerning the orthodoxy of Laodamia's passion throughout the analogy;[49] the effect is not only to anticipate the flaws in the assumed passion of Catullus' beloved, but also to capitalise upon the ambivalence which may flicker in hymenaeal's pictures of the sexual passion and attraction of the chaste, devout, virginal bride.[50] The oddity is capped at the conclusion, when Catullus once more undoes the referential power of his simile by saying that Laodamia *outdid* these passions (129); the sum is weirdly self-contradictory, for we have, in the end, been told that the dove does not have as much passion as Laodamia, despite the fact that it is more shameless in its kissing than the most wanton woman.

At the end of over twenty lines of attempts to find analogies for Laodamia's love, we are brought back to the realisation that Laodamia is *herself* 'only' an analogy for the *candida diua*: *aut nihil aut paulo cui tum concedere digna | lux mea se nostrum contulit in gremium* (131–2). Note that bald phrase *aut nihil aut paulo*, 'a curiously prosaic phrase, and a curiously unromantic notion', 'a curious modification'.[51] Here Catullus once more highlights the dilemmas in which he has caught the scrupulous reader, as he deftly mocks (or gently sympathises with) the weighing and judging in which we have become involved in trying to descry the degrees and shades of similitude: 'my light was just like that... or just a little bit less...'[52] And in what respect was the beloved like the analogy? At this point we note the studiedly uncommitted language which connects the beloved and Laodamia: she was '*worthy to yield to her* not at all or only a little bit'. What *is* the point of comparison?

Only the actual arrival, strictly speaking, is the point of comparison, both at the beginning (73) and the end (131–2) of the comparison with Laodamia, while everything else we construct about the beloved is association, inference, analogy. Not even her passion, strictly speaking, is made the point of comparison: the Muses, and through them the

readers, know all about Catullus' love (*scitis*, 52), but the beloved's is not related. The beloved herself is a gap, a vacancy to be filled with analogies; this is one of the reasons why I have followed Catullus in refusing so much as to give her a name, to label her 'Lesbia' (which is, after all, not her name anyway). Just as individual similes take off on their own path, so the basic analogy of the poem generates such an excess of power that it becomes overly adequate, smothering and supplanting the 'thing' it describes. The event is left in silence; although the whole poem is written so that Allius' *studium* will not be covered by a *caeca nox* (44), the event of Catullus' wondrous *nox* with his beloved will be left in silence (*muta nocte*, 145).[53] To repeat a question I asked earlier, what actually *happens* in 68? What does the beloved actually do? She arrives, and she affords the basis for comparison; and in the last verb used of her action on that night, Catullus collapses these two together. Three verbs only are used to describe the beloved's action in the portion of the poem which describes the night itself: she arrived, *se... intulit* (70–1); she checked her foot, *plantam... constituit* (71–2); and she *se... contulit* (132): 'brought herself', but also, fleetingly, 'compared herself'.[54]

In this way, the poem's minute insistence on the difficulty of simile as a figure carries through into more comprehensive reflections on the difficulty of catching experience in the mesh of words. The similes of the poem, in calling attention to their capacity to defer reference, provide the ground for questioning the referential power of the poet's description, in which the event itself remains resolutely undescribed. Metaphors have been defined as being potentially 'weapons directed against reality, instruments to break the referentiality of language',[55] and this potential is even more powerful in the dissembling world of simile. Telling is not sufficient or adequate in this poem, and the poet is driven to create analogies, which themselves generate yet more analogies for their own 'explanation'; the experience is refracted into obliquity by poetry, by the very attempt to find analogies which will make it meaningful.[56]

This distancing effect of similitudinous language has its analogue in the densely allusive character of the poem, with its references to Homer, Callimachus, Euripides, Pindar.[57] Conte, in his discussion of what he calls 'reflective allusion', speaks of how 'two items are juxtaposed and compared', and observes that 'the rhetorical figure that corresponds to it is the simile'.[58] As he says, in the case both of simile and of reflective allusion the reader is involved in an analytical, intellectual operation which 'attracts the reader's attention to the literary nature of the reading matter'.[59] Part of this same phenomenon, we may observe in passing, is the clash between different stylistic levels and registers which one sees

throughout the poem, especially in the similes themselves (Homeric, Alexandrian, Roman, neoteric); note the generic displacement brought about when Catullus speaks of Troy as the site of his elegiacally mourned brother's burial, *non inter nota sepulcra* (97) – the graves of Hector, and Achilles? Catullus' most spectacular demonstration of the strange emotionally distancing effects of allusion comes at the point in the poem which many readers would wish to acknowledge as the most painful and heartfelt (just as his most spectacular demonstration of simile's distancing effect comes at the most poignant moment in the Laodamia analogy, with the *barathrum* simile). When he comes to his brother's death he alludes to, indeed quotes, *himself*, repeating, with only one word and one line altered, the verses he gives in 68A (20–4, 92–6).[60] Moments like this are compelling testimony to the mystery in the power – artificial and distancing, emotional and immediate – of poetic language.[61]

The reader's baffled experience in trying to follow the poet's words becomes a mirror of the poet's own baffled experience in trying to discover words which will be adequate. The distance between our experience and his remains vast, as he had told us it would be (although readers will always try to bridge it): we are, after all, not addressed by Catullus, nor even by the Muses; we are addressed, as Catullus prophesied we would be, by a *carta anus*:

> sed dicam uobis, nos porro dicite multis
> milibus et facite haec carta loquatur anus. (45–6)

T. P. WISEMAN

4 ATOMS AND ELEPHANTS
Lucretius 2.522–40

To those who care both for poetry and for rational argument, the *De rerum natura* is indeed, as David West boldly declared, 'the greatest poem in Latin'. His elegant and indispensable book *The imagery and poetry of Lucretius*, described by its author as 'an attempt to challenge the vulgar error that the *De Rerum Natura* consists of oases of poetry in deserts of philosophy',[1] brilliantly demonstrates that

> the philosophical subject-matter of this poem is not an impediment to the poetry, it is rather the stimulus for the impassioned observation and contentious contemplation of the material world which contribute so much to the poetic intensity of the work.

But vulgar error is persistent, as Lucretius knew better than anyone; *quare etiam atque etiam dicendum est*.

At 1.931–4 (= 4.6–9), with characteristic clarity, Lucretius defines the nature of his work. He has earned the Muses' crown, he says,

> primum quod magnis doceo de rebus et artis
> religionum animum nodis exsoluere pergo,
> deinde quod obscura de re tam lucida pango
> carmina, musaeo contingens cuncta lepore.

The first reason is the importance of his subject, which frees the mind from the bonds of religion;[2] the second is the illuminating effect of his poetry, which touches everything with the Muses' charm.[3] And there's a reason for it, as he immediately explains in the great simile of the honeyed cup (1.935–50 = 4.10–25).

It is, of course, a multiple-correspondence simile:[4] the doctors are Lucretius, the sick children are the public (*uulgus*), the honey is the poetry, the unpleasant medicine is the saving message of Epicurus. Since the edge of the cup is touched with honey (*oras pocula circum | contingunt*), the first taste will be sweet. So the prefaces of all six books of Lucretius are composed with sumptuous poetic art, even to the extent

3 'SHALL I COMPARE THEE...?'

For their comments, criticisms, and suggestions, I gladly thank T. B. McKiernan, C. A. Martindale, and A. J. Woodman.

1 Lyne (1980) 52; I would differ only in removing the 'probably'.

2 The topos of apology for adding to the bibliography is therefore a heartfelt one. Readers will find a way into the labyrinth in Harrauer (1979) 95–8, and Holoka (1985) 228–35. For my present purposes, I have found the following studies particularly stimulating or helpful: Macleod (1974) 82–8; Lyne (1980) 52–60; Williams (1980) 50–61; Tuplin (1981); Hubbard (1984).

3 Cf. Tuplin (1981) 135, on the significance of the *barathrum* simile: 'But, granted that it is oblique, is not that the manner of the whole poem?'

4 'It is remarkable that similes occupy no less than 64 of the 120 lines of LXVIII B', Lee (1990) 174 (the total will vary according to one's definitions). On the links between simile and analogy, see Quint. 5.11.34, with McCall (1969) 210. One of McCall's most interesting findings is to show that the ancient critics did not have our preoccupation with the *formal* distinctions between simile and other forms of comparison: 'in purpose, in sphere and method of use, and in content simile differs not at all from other figures of comparison', McCall (1969) 259. Some modern critics concur: see Booth (1979) 53.

5 I thank D. F. Kennedy for giving me this lead, and for referring me to Barthes' lugubrious meditations on the lover's bent for constructing analogies: 'Le sujet s'identifie douloureusement à n'importe quelle personne (ou n'importe quel personnage) qui occupe dans la structure amoureuse la même position que lui', Barthes (1977) 153. A line of Ovid provides a motto for this gambit: *omnibus historiis se meus aptat amor* (*Am.* 2.4.44).

6 Williams (1980) 62–94.

7 See McKeown (1989) ad loc. Note how Ovid reveals the essential passivity of the beloved's role in this process when he explodes the analogies in *Am.* 1.10: 'You were like Helen, Leda, Amymone, but not any more. Why have *I* changed, you ask? (*cur sim mutatus, quaeris?*).' Not 'Why have *you* changed...?'

8 Quint. 5.11.1–2, with Lausberg (1960) 232, McCall (1969) 187–90.

9 Few will follow Heath (1988) when (after a dismayingly reductive 'demonstration' that Catullus is not really married to his beloved) he declares 'I can see no reason to believe... that Catullus assimilates his relationship to Lesbia to marriage at any point in this poem' (118). More on this below.

10 In Sappho's hymenaeals the groom is compared to Achilles and Ares (frr. 105(b), 111 Lobel–Page), bride and groom (possibly) to Andromache and Hector (fr. 44): see Page (1955) 71–4; Lieberg (1962) 19; Burnett (1983) 219–20; and, generally on such comparisons in hymenaeal, Costa (1973) on Sen. *Med.* 75ff.

11 Sappho frr. 105(a) and (c), and especially 115, where the need to make comparison is explicitly invoked ('To what, dear bridegroom, may I well compare you? To a slender sapling I compare you above all', tr. Page (1955) 123). See Seaford (1986) 52–3.

12 I hope that my use of 'beloved' rather than 'Lesbia' is not irritating; I aim to show further on why we should not glide over the anonymity of the *candida diua*.

13 I return below to the problem of the reference of this simile.

14 Poem 17 is perhaps the most exuberant example outside 68; the flower at the end

of 11 will head most readers' list of memorable Catullan similes. Those with the stomach for it may look again at 97.7–8.

15 Similes are virtually always discussed with metaphor rather than alone, and the following introductory bibliography therefore tends to concentrate on metaphor: Shibles (1971); Silk (1974); Ricoeur (1978); Sacks (1979); Cooper (1986); Kittay (1987). The debate over the relationship between metaphor and simile is one which I may skirt here, since analogies of one kind or another are at issue all the way through this poem.

16 So Ruthven (1969) 9 on the 'intimation of unsuspected harmony on the far side of disparity'.

17 Not only in his articles on similes themselves (West (1969*b*) and (1970)), but in his work on Horace (1967), and Lucretius (1969*a*) and (1975).

18 Lausberg (1960) 230–4.

19 Kerrigan (1986) 23. When Lausberg (1960) 231, commenting on Quintilian's categories of *simile/dissimile* (5.11.7), says 'Jedes *simile* hat (wegen des Mangels völliger Identität) auch ein *dissimile* in sich', he is saying more, so far as I discover, than any ancient critic actually claimed.

20 Silk (1974) 5; he goes on to quote Johnson on a passage of Dryden: 'there is so much likeness in the initial comparison that there is no illustration'. Perhaps the first systematic discussion of this feature of simile is to be found in Richards (1936) 120–7; the enigmatic collocation of 'same' and 'different' forms the main basis of the analysis of metaphor given by Ricoeur (1978): 'in metaphor, resemblance can be construed as the site of the clash between sameness and difference' (196). The most extreme statement of the weakness of seeing only the similar in simile comes from Cooper (1986) 143: 'To say that a simile states a similarity or asserts a likeness is misleading to the point of outright falsity. Similes, in fact, are non-literal utterances, indulgence in which requires as much explanation as does that in metaphor.'

21 Silk (1974) 5: 'Plainly, the point of similarity (the tilt of the man's head and the poppy's head) makes possible a fine sensory effect. But equally plainly, that single point is outweighed in interest by the points of dissimilarity, the contrast. The poppy is alive and flourishing in a peaceful garden; Gorgythion is dead on the battlefield.'

22 Taplin (1980) 15; cf. Porter (1972); Macleod (1982) 48–9; and the preliminary remarks on contrast in Fränkel (1921) 105–6. Ricks (1963) 127–31 has an interesting discussion of some similes in *Paradise Lost* where Milton 'uses an unlikeness between the things compared'.

23 Moulton (1977) 128–34; Foley (1978). The *Iliad* has only one simile quite like this, when Priam's arrival to supplicate Achilles for the corpse of his son is compared to that of a man who has killed someone and runs for refuge to the house of a rich man (24.480–4): see Macleod (1982) ad loc.

24 Macleod (1982) 49: 'The simile intensifies the joy of the moment by pointing to what might have been instead.' A discussion of this simile with students in a Classical Studies seminar at Bristol led to a further conclusion concerning the dimension of loss captured at this moment of recognition: twenty years of filial and parental experience have indeed been lost.

25 This moment of unanalysable power is acknowledged by Virgil, when he has Aeneas say that not even the soldier of harsh Ulysses would be able to refrain from weeping if he heard the story of the sack of Troy (*Aen.* 2.6–8).

26 On this magnificent moment, see Moulton (1977) 129–30, Foley (1978) 24–6 and, especially, Winkler (1989) 161. Those who enjoy Apollonius Rhodius' wit will find much to relish in his deadpan version of the contrast-simile (4.1337–43).

27 'Tenor' and 'vehicle' are the terms coined by Richards (1936) to describe, respectively, the thing compared and the thing to which it is compared. His usage is, in fact, rather inconsistent; for some criticisms, see Kittay (1987) 16–17, 24–6.

28 On this discrepancy, see, e.g., Macleod (1974) 83–8; Lyne (1980) 59–60; Williams (1980) 50–61; Tuplin (1981) 117–18; Hubbard (1984) 34. Heath (1988), in his dogged insistence that 'Leshia is not a bride', and that Catullus never imagined he was married to her, misses the point so entirely that one is at a loss how to begin countering him; would he maintain as stoutly that Gorgythion was not a poppy?

29 Peisander fr. 9[A] Davies. Robson (1972) would read *Trachinia* for *Trinacria* in line 53, thus making another Herculean link, but it is difficult to see what the heat of the Trachinian crag would be.

30 Tuplin (1981) 133–6.

31 Shipton (1983) 872 n. 11 collects the many discussions on the problem.

32 So Sarkissian (1983) 49 n. 36, citing such Iliadic similes as 17.722–34.

33 Sarkissian, ibid.: 'None of the arguments advanced on either side of the question prevent our understanding the simile to modify both the tears and the *auxilium*.'

34 Homer: Moulton (1977) 19–27; note that Homer does not have similes back to back, but moves from one to the other with some connecting material. Rarity in later literature: Williams (1980) 52. I do not find any examples in Apollonius or Virgil; note Sil. It. 1.461–72, 5.384–400, 7.139–45; Stat. *Theb.* 6.596–601.

35 Cf. *Il.* 17.53–69, where the first simile for Euphorbus' death gives us what his father might feel (a young olive has been carefully nurtured by a man, only to be uprooted in a storm), and the second gives us the point of view of Menelaus, his killer: a lion breaks a bull's neck and laps up its blood and its guts. Horace has a similar movement in his paired similes at the beginning of *Odes* 4.4: Williams (1968) 752–3.

36 The juxtaposition appears to look at the title of the *Protesilaodamia* of Catullus' predecessor, Laevius, a poem which, one suspects, lurks behind much of this section: that poem had a doorkeeper (fr. 16 Morel), some jokes and laughter which it is very tempting to read as the Fescennines of a marriage-procession (fr. 15), and anxious meditations from Laodamia about the possible infidelity of her absent husband (fr. 18).

37 I may be curt here, since this discordance has been well analysed, from various different angles, in the discussions cited in n. 28 above.

38 Macleod (1974) 85–6.

39 Hubbard (1984) 34; cf. Macleod (1974) 83–4; Williams (1980) 55, 59; Tuplin (1981) 118, 135–6; Sarkissian (1983) 26, 30 (though I cannot accept Sarkissian's interpretation of *cui* in 131).

40 Above, n. 8.

41 Burkert (1979) 28.

42 On this simile, and on the importance of the oblique analogies manufactured by the startling figure of Hercules, see the discussion of Tuplin (1981).

43 Williams (1980) 56. Compare the way in which Virgil, at *Aen.* 2.496, uses *non sic* 'when a comparison is made with something that is inadequate to give the full force of the thing illustrated', as Austin (1964) ad loc. puts it, giving further examples.

44 I have much sympathy with attempts to blend the two similes into a composite picture of 'intense physical passion and deep spiritual unity and constancy' (Sarkissian (1983) 30; cf. Williams (1980) 57). I wish to stress, however, how very difficult Catullus is making it for us to achieve this blending – a difficulty accentuated by the fact that one may also see reference to Catullus' feeling for his brother leaking into (or out of) the grandfather simile: Williams, ibid. Love in this poem is, after all, double (*duplex*, 51).

45 Reference to Poem 72 in, e.g., Sarkissian (1983) 30.

46 The definitions are those of *OLD*.

47 Prop. 2.15.27–8; Plin. *NH* 10.104.

48 Macleod (1974) 86: 'Perhaps it is because its passion is truer that it seeks kisses more shamelessly than a woman of easy morals'; Williams (1980) 57–8: 'But in the second comparison a note is struck by (128) *multiuola*, which recalls the various allusions to adultery and unfaithfulness; that has, however, nothing to do with Laudamia (who was *uniuira* not *multiuola*), and it seems for the moment to be something that just naturally slipped off the poet's tongue.'

49 Van Sickle (1980); Tuplin (1981) 131–2; Sarkissian (1983) 18; Allen (1986).

50 The clearest example of such dubiety is in 66.15–22, where Catullus' and Callimachus' lock speculates pruriently about the tears of the newly-wed. See Burnett (1983) 216–19 on the preparation for marriage in Sappho's circle: 'One had to be both pure and desirable, and the balance was not easy to keep, for chastity was provocative' (216). The larger issue of the ambivalence of the mythical paradigm in hymenaeal is also relevant in this context. Burnett (1983) 220 n. 6 disagrees with interpretations of Sapphic hymenaeal which seek to find a cloud in comparisons of the groom to Hector or Achilles; however *we* decide to read these passages, it seems hard to deny that Catullus will have found the uncontrollability of such analogies a fruitful starting-point for his paradigms of Protesilaus and Laodamia.

51 Fordyce (1961) and Ellis (1889) ad loc.

52 This adroit touch anticipates the more comprehensive undermining of the reader's analogical interpretations after the final analogy of the poem, where Catullus blandly tells us that it is, after all, not right for men to be compared to gods (*atqui nec diuis homines componier aequum est*, 141).

53 If, that is, one accepts, as most editors do, Heyse's *muta* for the transmitted *mira*; for a discussion, see Streuli (1969) 80–5 (who himself decides for *mira*). Contrast the legitimate marriage of Manlius and Iunia, *quoniam palam | quod cupis cupis, et bonum | non abscondis amorem*, 61.196–8.

54 For this sense of *confero*, see *OLD* s.v. 14.

55 Harries (1979) 78.

56 An interesting parallel to these conclusions is to be found in Colin MacCabe's discussion of the passage in which Milton describes Satan's movements in Hell (*Paradise Lost*, 1.283–312): 'The entire sequence produces a continual changing of perspective, common to Milton's description of Hell in which metaphor and simile follow one another so quickly that there is no question of a basic description which the equivalences or comparisons elaborate. Instead the description simply becomes the passage through these comparisons and equivalences, a *transport*, to give metaphor its original force, of language': MacCabe (1988) 437.

57 And, it may be, Laevius, and Euphorion: Tuplin (1981).

58 Conte (1986) 67.

59 Conte (1986) 68. Cf. Williams (1980) 62 on the extreme rarity of Catullan extended similes in Propertius and Tibullus: 'The figure of extended simile was too heavy

and ornate, too distracting, to be used in love-poetry that purported to be personal statement.'

60 Sarkissian (1983) 23: 'It is disconcerting that what should be a passionate, almost involuntary outburst on Catullus' part is largely mere repetition of what we have already heard.' See Sarkissian's n. 67 for references to the desperate expedient of excision adopted by so many scholars. I realise that this way of looking at the repetition implies a view about the relationship of 68A and B, but this is no place to enter into that maze.

61 I see in a positive light, then, the qualities of the poem which lead Lyne (1980) 52 to speak of 'laboured artificiality vying with sublimity'.

4 ATOMS AND ELEPHANTS

1 West (1969*a*) vii, 17 (*bis*).

2 For *religio* and *religare*, see Lactant. *Inst.* 4.28.3 and 13 (citing this passage); there is also *religione refrenatus* at Lucr. 5.114. Cf. West (1969*a*) 59 on *superstitio super instans*.

3 Cf. Amory (1969) 153f.: 'If Lucretius says that he will touch *cuncta* with poetic grace, he does not mean that he will embroider the work as a whole with a few splendid passages here and there, but that every detail, perhaps for him every word and letter, will have an aroma from the sweet honey of the Muses.'

4 West (1969*a*) 74–8; cf. West (1969*b*) on Virgil.

5 Godwin (1986) 13 translates it as (respectively) 'coats' and 'smears'.

6 6.92–5, cf. 47; 1.117–19, cf. 929f.; 1.716–33.

7 West (1969*a*) 29 and his ch. 3 *passim*. Iphigeneia: 1.84–100. Phaethon: 5.396–405. Trojan War: 1.473–7.

8 5.114–21, 160–3, with 1.80–2, 102–11 (*scelus* at 1.82 and 5.118). For gigantomachy in epic, see Hardie (1986) 85–97, cf. 209–13 on Lucretius.

9 E.g. 1.257–61, 2.352–65, 4.586–9 (Pan), 5.925–52; see in general Gillis (1967).

10 E.g. 2.22–58, 3.48–58, 4.1121–70, 5.999–1101, etc.; see in general Dudley (1965).

11 6.1141–1286, cf. Thuc. 2.47–54; West (1979).

12 *Iliad* 1.247–9 (Nestor), cf. Cic. *Div.* 1.78 (Plato). Kenney (1977) 32–6; 'the message and the mission' is the title of his ch. 4.

13 Bailey (1947) 858–95.

14 2.153–64. *corpora* (*prima*, *genitalia*, etc.) is used at 1.58–61 and elsewhere, but that is more abstract (cf. 1.302–4) and less vivid than the use of the diminutive.

15 The same image at 4.190 (cf. *plaga* 188): successive lightning-flashes as a 'goaded ox-team'.

16 Enn. *Ann.* 236 Skutsch (Aul. Gell. *Noct. Att.* 18.5.2).

17 Lucr. 5.1303, Lactant. *De opificio* 5.12. Cf. Skutsch (1985) 740 on fr. 611 (Isid. *Orig.* 10.270) and Vahlen's emendation of *tenuimus*.

18 Lee (1884) 186. Most commentaries pass over it in silence.

19 Palisade: West (1969*a*) 21. India: Sedlar (1980), cf. Dihle (1964), Schmitthenner (1979). Elephants: Scullard (1974).

20 See for instance Theopompus, *FGrH* 115 F 381; Strabo 3.1.9 (70) on *pseudologoi*; Arrian, *Anab.* 5.4.3. Ctesias: *FGrH* 688 T 11, F 45–52.

21 Varro ap. Plin. *NH* 6.51–2 (trans. H. Rackham, slightly adapted); cf. Aristobulus, *FGrH* 139 F 20. In fact the Oxus (Amu Darya) flows into the Aral Sea, not the Caspian.

22 Nepos fr. 7 Peter (ap. Plin. *NH* 2.170, Pomp. Mela 3.5.44). Metellus under Pompey: Dio 36.54.2–4. Caspian: Strabo 2.5.18 (121), etc.

23 App. *Mith.* 117, Dio 37.21.2, Diod. Sic. 40.4; Nicolet (1988) 45–55.

24 Plut. *Crass.* 16.2, *Comp. Nic. Crass.* 4.2 (trans. J. and W. Langhorne). Cf. also *Comp. Nic. Crass.* 2.6: to make the Caspian or the Indian Ocean the boundary of the Roman empire (ibid. 4.4, Bactria a Roman province).

25 Cat. 11.1–12, cf. 29.12 on Britain (*ultima occidentis insula*).

26 *FGrH* 137 F 17–28. Rome: Cic. *Leg.* 1.7 (L. Sisenna), *Fam.* 2.10.3 (M. Caelius); cf. *Brut.* 42 (*rhetorice et tragice ornare*).

27 Caes. *BG* 6.24.2; 6.27 on *alcae*. See in general Morgan (1980); Rawson (1985) 258–66; Nicolet (1988) 82–95.

28 6.1106–13. Cf. Cat. 29.18–20 on Pontus, western Spain and Britain; Gabinius' army reached Alexandria in the spring of 55.

5 *IN MEMORIAM GALLI*

1 The text appears in significantly different versions in all modern editions: see Barber (1960); Camps (1961); Richardson (1977); Hanslik (1979); Fedeli (1984). The text as printed here was independently constituted but is (*eruptum* apart) identical to Goold (1990) and Paley (1872). The fullest apparatus is provided by Hanslik. Further conjectures are listed in Smyth (1970) 26f. I have used *MSS* to denote the major manuscripts which bear witness to the archetype, and *mss* to denote manuscript readings which may well be early conjectures and none of which has been identified as a possible witness to the important lost manuscript of Valla; names are those of identifiable critics who first or independently made a conjecture. One may note, without attaching significance to the fact, that Pucci did know the Valla manuscript. On the manuscript tradition see Butrica (1984), whose findings are accepted by Tarrant (1983) 324–6 but not by Goold (1988).

2 The following account is designed to foreground what seems potentially relevant to Propertius 1.21. For a full narrative, see Carter (1970) 101–12; Gabba (1971); Wallmann (1975); Kienast (1982) 36–43; Wallmann (1989) 79–135. The most important sources are App. *BC* 5.12–34; Dio 48.5–14; Livy, *Per.* 125f.; Velleius Paterculus 2.74.2f.; Suet. *Aug.* 13f., 96.3; Plut. *Ant.* 30.1.

3 The nature of the sources used by Appian is controversial: see below, n. 123.

4 The dispossessed included Propertius' family.

5 See App. *BC* 5.32 (128).

6 App. (*BC* 5.34 (135)) stresses that neither the city nor Lucius was well prepared for a siege; Dio (48.14.2), on the contrary, that they were well supplied.

7 For night sorties, see App. *BC* 5.34 (136) and 35 (143) (and compare Aeneas Tacticus 23). For a detailed account of the last major attempt to break the siege, see App. *BC* 5.36–7 (145–55). I assume these are all described *exempli gratia*.

8 Many of the assumptions that underlie the following analysis are explained in Hirsch (1967); Cairns (1972), DuQuesnay (1981) 53–62; Sperber–Wilson (1986). The bibliography on this poem is extensive: see Harrauer (1973); Fedeli–Pinnotti (1985); Viparelli (1987). Fedeli (1980) provides an excellent commentary, but where so much is controversial I have preferred to go over the ground independently. My conclusions are often in agreement with those of Helm (1952). The more recent interpretations of Camps (1961), Williams (1968) 172–85,