

LATIN LYRIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Prepare these with references to the particular poems to support which “side” (or compromise) you support.

Catullus 5: Wimpy and girly, or a profound picture of love against all odds?

Catullus 8: Reasonable response to fickle Lesbia, or pathetic monument to self-pity?

Catullus 43, 87: Really mean, or just plain funny?

Catullus 51: Same effect as the Sappho poem it translates, or different b/c the speaker is a man?

Catullus 70, 72, 75, 85, 87: Reasonable responses to fickle Lesbia, or creepy stalker poems?

Catullus 9 & 13: Does Catullus love his friends and like to party with them, or is he all talk and no action in his friendships?

Catullus 33, 54, 57, 69: Funny commentary on human foibles, or vicious personal attacks with little literary merit?

Catullus 63: Scary or silly? Moving or disturbing? Attis: sympathetic or just plain weird? Cybele worship: awful and wrong, or awe-inspiring and natural?

Propertius, Tibullus, Sulpicia:

In what ways is Propertius’ relationship with Cynthia (as depicted in his poems) like/unlike Catullus’ with Lesbia?

A lot of Propertius’ poems on love are addressed to men – what is the effect of the male/female dynamic in the discussion of love?

And what is the view of love that emerges from Propertius anyway?

What is the emotional palette (i.e. range and nature of emotions) in Propertius’ poetry?

Is Tibullus the same, or different in some respect?

Sulpicia is the only female Roman poet we have extant – do you see differences in her talk of love and her definition of her lover, from those in the male poets?