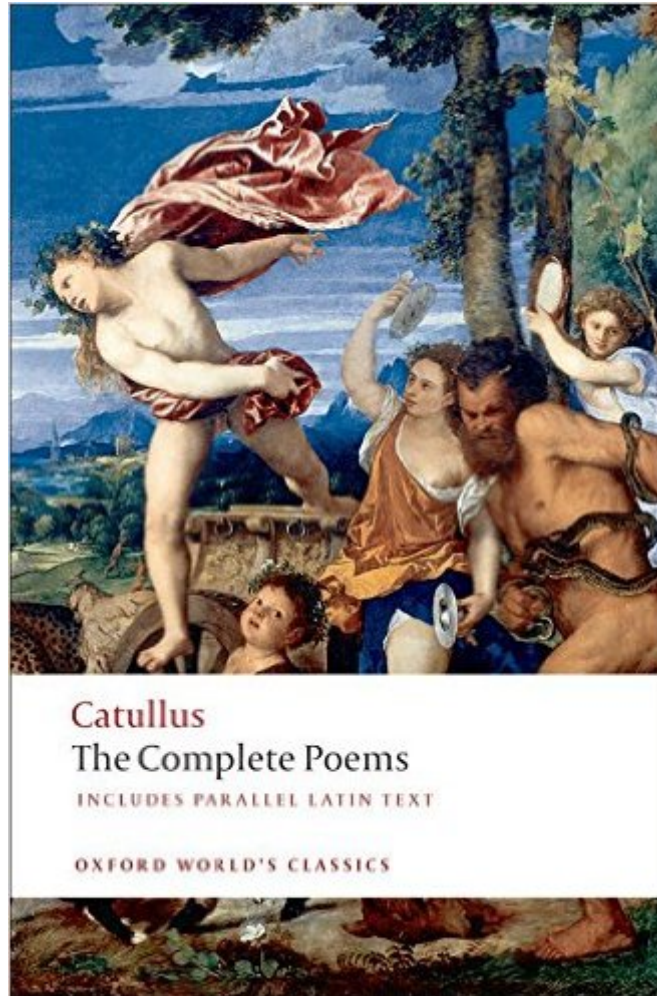


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The Poems Of Catullus (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

Of all Greek and Latin poets Catullus is perhaps the most accessible to the modern reader. Dealing candidly with the basic human emotions of love and hate, his virile, personal tone exerts a powerful appeal on all kinds of readers. The 116 poems collected in this new translation include the famous Lesbia poems and display the full range of Catullus's mastery of lyric meter, mythological themes, and epigrammatic invective and wit. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

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Customer Reviews

The translations are generally flawless. If you are a Latin scholar, it is nice that they put the Latin and the English together on facing pages so you can go back and forth and see what the translator did to try to capture the tricks of meter and such in the translations. If you are just reading them for fun, the translations are not jerky or stilted like some others I could name. If you engage the content of the poetry at all you'll find it is a pretty fantastic narrative of Roman life in the time. Individual lines and individual poems may stand out more to you if you're in various situations, but for the most part, they're among the most vibrant poems of their day. They're much more blue-collar than many of the poems you'll read from other Roman authors, so be ready for some vulgarity, but they stand out as

truly great. Overall, this is the translation I recommend to EVERYONE.

Lee provides an introduction, text with facing translation, brief notes on each poem, an appendix on departures from the Oxford text and one on Catullan metres, and a short bibliography. The introduction begins with a succinct history of the text, followed by an explanation of the division into three libelli. Lee is convinced that the arrangement reflects Catullus' personal touch as editor, but he gives almost no sense of the extensive and controversial scholarly exploration of this point. On the other hand he discusses at length the identification of Lesbia/Clodia, including Skutsch's metrical evidence (as extended by Wiseman) -- only to dismiss the whole argument as "not of great importance to Catullus' readers". Lee promises to pay close attention to the details of translation, such as diminutives, but admits to being more free with metrical forms. His versions are somewhat colloquial, studded with compounds such as "mega-kiss" and "mini nose", and employing British slang such as "poofteer" and "wank". On the whole, however, Lee has produced an accessible version of Catullus' poetry, without oversimplifying its tonal complexities. While the facing translation renders this version undesirable for Latin classes, it might be useful for a class on Roman life or literature. As Lee points out, Catullus' poetry offers an extraordinary and detailed view of Roman experience and emotion, a glimpse that this edition makes available to a wide audience.

Catullus is great and I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys Roman poetry or love poetry in general! Thanks

I prefer to read my Classics for poetry and not for any 'real' translation for isn't it at least somewhat true Catullus comes to us copied from a copy from a copy from a...and Guy Lee is so dry in his introduction and has no trouble sharing his opinion so I'll share mine. His translations are adequate, probably more than that from a translator point of view BUT Catullus is a poet and it should be the poetry we read and admire. For this, Peter Green is brilliant. He outshines Lee and keeps true to Catullus. For study, as a student we're stuck with what the lecturer decrees. For enjoyment, there is personal choice, a freedom to enjoy and with the latter in mind, skip Lee and head straight to "The Poems of Catullus" by Peter Green.

Good

Sometimes translates with a literalism that makes for fatuously bad euphemisms. As in LVIII where

Lesbia "peels great-hearted Remus' grandsons." Green's translation is less literal, perhaps, but the sense is clearer.

A classicist's definition of "modernizing a translation" is still English prep school. I actually can read Catullus in Latin, fyi. So it's probably the best set of translations I've seen (a lot of the older ones expunge whole poems or lines that are too dirty). Not thrilled with the handling of 63.

Mildly interesting, sometimes raunchy poetry! I got a real kick out of a few of these poems, and I generally don't enjoy poetry at all. Scholars believe there are hidden messages in his work which were politically motivated. You've got to be a Classics scholar to catch them though! Short answer-I bought this because it was required for a class. Would I read it for fun? No.

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