



Gaius Valerius Catullus

"Give me a thousand kisses, then a hundred,
then a thousand more" (Catullus 5)

For Wheelock chapter 2

- Catullus (CA. 84 – 54 BCE) is considered one of the greatest Latin lyric poets and is known for both his passionate love poetry for the woman Lesbia as well as his bitter invective poetry against his foes.
- Suetonius and Ovid agree that he was born near Verona.



• "At Lesbia's," Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1865)

- In 57 BCE he took his only political post as staff for the governor of Bythynia, accompanying his friend Memmius.
- Catullus drew his inspiration from the Greek *neôteroi* 'newer poets' (Hellenistic 323 BCE) such as Callimachus and Theocritus, who wrote grandiose poetry about everyday life, shunning the heroic-epic stylings of poetry like that of Homer.
- The subject matter of Catullus' poems is varied: there are poems to his friends (1 etc), there are erotic poems to women and men (such as the Lesbia poems), there are the invective poems that attack or assail his enemies or politicians (16, etc), and consolatory poems directed to himself (8, etc.).

Catullus 8 (excerpt)

Scelestā, vae te, quae tibi manet vita?
Quis nunc te adibit? cui videberis bella?
Quem nunc amabis? Cuius esse diceris?
Quem basiabis? Cui labella mordebis?
At tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura.

(trans. By Kelly Syler)

Wretch, pity on you! What life lies in store for you!
Who will come to you now? Who will think you pretty?
Whom will you love now? Who will people say you are?
Whom will you kiss? Whose lips will you bite?
But you, Catullus, be resolute and stand fast.

Factum ab Sean Signore