11 Violence in an erotic landscape

Catullus, Caesar, and the borders of empire and existence (*carm.* 11)[1]

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Introduction: violence and time

Over the past few years, violence has become a hot topic in cultural and literary studies, often in connection with studies of war and civil war, as well as of aesthetics and moral and philosophical discussions of law, justice, and human rights.[2] Classical and Ancient Studies are also able to benefit from that approach and the resulting interdisciplinary perspectives, as the chapters in this volume suggest. The items that are investigated range from actual, historically verifiable violence to representations of violence in artistic media – especially in the visual arts and literature.[3] Whenever literature and art in general treat historical events, different fields of knowledge – usually kept apart in approach and method – come together and overlap. When Lucan discusses a historical event poetically in his epic *Bellum civile* – the Roman civil war – he depicts scenes of violence that include fictive objects set in a fictional, self-contained (and autonomous?) literary world. This does not make it impossible, however, to read the same scenes of violence as (possible) reflections of actual violence in the context of historical testimonies for that era, nor does it compel such a reading, to be sure. This chapter examines how the representation of violence works *within* a literary text from a literary point of view. Thus, the focus is more on narrativity than on the historicity of violence, without, however, denying a historical interpretation of it. The main emphasis in what follows is on the aspect of time. Time as a thematic concept is not just one of the fundamental categories in literature, and one that plays a correspondingly central role in construction of literary theory; it is also one of the basic analytic categories in the historical and sociological study of violence (see also the chapter by Chaniotis above).

Catullus' *Carmen 11* will be taken as a test case to see how and to what extent results and models employed in sociological research on violence can be fruitful for literary analysis. The sociological models in question employ empirical methods in the study of 'real' examples of violent practices.[4] The sociologist Wolfgang Sofsky has investigated in various studies the way that the several actors involved in violent actions – perpetrator, victim, onlooker, or other third parties – experience time differently, and he has coined the term 'Gewaltzeit' ('time of violence') for this phenomenon:

> Time of violence is not shared time. What seems like a unified type of time to a third-person onlooker is in reality a radical antagonism. The social asymmetry of violence corresponds to the asymmetry of time. The time in which a violent act takes place – the time of action – is very different from the time in which that same act is experienced – the time of suffering.[5]

There is yet another aspect to the asymmetries of the subjective perception of violence characteristic of the several actors: irrespective of the various active or passive roles individual actors may play in a violent action, violent practices themselves may assume different forms of time:

> The time of violence can assume different forms. First, there is suddenness – the instant that breaks the continuity of a time line. Then, there is the surprise attack and the rapid continuity of a police raid. Again, there is the haste of a foxhunt, the rush of the escape, the simultaneous panic. And then there is the duration, the slowness of torture, the endlessness of cruelty. Although each form of violence has its own constitutive form of time that determines its basic structure, violence itself transpires in time, which transforms the circumstances and thereby also the modalities of time. The suddenness of the explosion is followed by the moment of horror, which in turn is followed by the ongoing, progressive storm of panic.[6]

Catullus and the Hellenistic age

Violence is an omnipresent motif in poetry reaching from archaic Greece to Roman late antiquity, from battle descriptions in the *Iliad* to Christian texts on martyrs in late antiquity such as Prudentius' *Liber Peristephanon*. However, its presence is not limited to certain genres: lyrical texts also deal on occasion with extensive physical as well as psychological violence and their (subjective) processing in (lyrical) forms of speech. Catullus, perhaps the most 'Callimachean' of all Roman poets, appears at the end of the era which in Greece is conventionally called the *Hellenistic Age*.[7] There are two reasons why Catullus seems especially relevant to this volume*:* first, he provides a Roman perspective which, at the same time, incorporates Hellenistic Greek contexts, thanks to Rome's general cultural and political proximity to Greece and also to the fact that Hellenistic Greek literature served as a fundamental reference for Roman writers. In Catullus' case, this led to a dense and highly intertextual web of texts.[8] Furthermore, Catullus' lifetime falls in a period of Roman history marked by extreme violence internally as well as externally. It was a time of rapid military expansion in the Mediterranean, in Northern Europe, and in the Middle East.[9] Thus, it comes as no surprise that these bloody wars, including civil wars, elicited notable (lyrical) responses in Catullus' poetry.[10] In addition, Catullus refers directly to the historical events and to the leading politicians and generals of the time; his most prominent target was none other than Caesar himself, but his acolyte Mamurra also receives sharp and direct criticism in a number of invective poems.[11] In light of this context, Catullus – the 'Roman Callimachus' and representative of what was practically the last generation of the Roman Republic – and his poems can be interpreted as part of a cultural discourse on violence in the ‘heated’ transitional period between the late Hellenistic era and Rome in the time of Augustus.[12]

Catullus’ *Carmen 11*

Catullus’ *Carmen 11* concludes with what sounds like a final rejection (cf. v. 17 *valeat*) on the part of the poet’s *persona* (v. 1) of a certain *puella* (v. 15), who, we can assume, is his lover Lesbia – if read syntagmatically in the context of *Corpus Catullianum*.[13] Aurelius and Furius are employed as the messengers of this news – two comrades (*comites*, v. 1) who are also known from other poems in the *corpus*. The actual message does not appear until late in the poem, towards the end of the fourth of six Sapphic stanzas (*nuntiate*, v. 15). Consequently, there is little room for details; just a few disturbing words have to suffice (*pauca . . . non bona dicta*, v. 15–16): she is enjoined to live with all of her adulterers – 300 in total (*trecentos*, v. 18) – none of whom she truly loves (*nullum amans vere*, v. 19). She is also ordered no longer to have regard for her former love for Catullus (*nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem*, v. 21).[14] It was her fault (*culpa*, v. 22), after all, that this love was cut down like a flower (*cecidit velut – flos*, v. 22–23) at the meadow’s edge, sliced by a plough (*tactus aratro est*, v. 24):

Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli,
sive in extremos penetrabit Indos,
litus ut longe resonante Eoa
tunditur unda,
5 *sive in Hyrcanos Arabesve molles,*
seu Sagas sagittiferosve Parthos,
sive quae septemgeminus colorat
aequora Nilus,
sive trans altas gradietur Alpes,
10 *Caesaris visens monimenta magni,*
Gallicum Rhenum horribilesque ulti-
mosque Britannos,
omnia haec, quaecumque feret voluntas
caelitum, temptare simul parati,
15 *pauca nuntiate meae puellae*
non bona dicta.
cum suis vivat valeatque moechis,
quos simul complexa tenet trecentos,
nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium
20 *ilia rumpens;*
nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,
qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati
ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam
tactus aratro est.[15]

As translated by Goold:

Furius and Aurelius, ready to accompany Catullus,
whether he plans to penetrate to the distant Indians,
where the shore is pounded by the far-resounding
wave of the orient
5 or to the Hyrcani and the luxurious Arabs
or the Sacae and the quivered Parthians
or the plains that are dyed by the flooding of
the sevenfold Nile,
or whether he plans to march over the mountainous Alps,
10 viewing the places that tell of mighty Caesar,
the Gallic Rhine, and also the horrible Britons
at the world's end –
ready as you are to face all these hazards with me,
whatever the will of heaven above will bring:
15 take back to my sweetheart a brief
and not kind message.
Let her live and be happy with her lovers,
three-hundred of whom at once she holds in her embraces,
loving none truly but again and again rupturing
20 the loins of them all;
and let her not count on my love, as in the past,
for through her fault it has fallen like a flower
at the meadow's edge, after being lopped
by the passing plough.[16]

The poem provides a pleasing, almost epic breadth or panorama at first, and then suddenly comes to a brief, harsh closure; in doing so, and if read with some scrutiny, it provokes a whole battery of questions.[17] The several conceptual contrastive pairs provide an initial hint of the complexity of the text: first, former love (*ante*, 21) *versus* present and bitter disappointment; related to this is the constitutive contrast between the spheres of politics and war on the one hand and that of intimate, 'private' love on the other, which will later become especially salient in the Roman elegists Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid. Further contrastive pairs are the *one* (true) lover of old *versus* Lesbia's three hundred current adulterers;[18] Caesar's and also Pompey's and Crassus' vast horizon of military expansion, which – in a flight of fancy – imagines the three *comites* Catullus, Furius, and Aurelius travelling all the way to remote India, Egypt, and Britain (v. 2–12, cf. *extremos Indos*, v. 2, and *ultimos Britannos*, v. 11–12), *versus* the spatial limits of love, which in turn exhibits an elegant contrast in the image of the (little) flower; the flower's gentleness and vulnerability *versus* the violence that is not only expressed in the language of military expansion (cf. *penetrabit*, v. 2; *sagittiferos*, v. 6, *horribilesque ultimosque Britannos*, v. 11)[19] but also in Lesbia's ruthless sexual practices (*ilia rumpens*, v. 20) as well as in the motif of the plough (*aratro*, v. 24). In this context, the plough does not stand for peaceful, culturally constructive, agricultural activities, as one might expect. On the contrary, it stands for destruction and death (*cecidit*, v. 22).[20]

The list of contrastive pairs continues: the physical violence of military campaigns *versus* Lesbia's psychological violence towards Catullus; the epic, expansive beginning of the poem *versus* the lyrical conclusion, marked linguistically by the contrast between *omnia haec* (v. 13) – which summarises the geographical excursion – and *pauca . . . dicta* (v. 15–16) – the curt rejection of Lesbia; the masculine *versus* the feminine world, pointedly expressed in the reversal of roles, by which Lesbia's brutal sexual practices seem close to the masculine (Caesarian) world of conquest and war. Catullus' emotional world, as suggested by the metaphor of ploughed-up flower, seems effeminate by comparison.[21] Further, there is the tension between the sphere of love and the world of war: 'It would be more accurate to say that Catullus' fictive journey serves to heighten the impression of him as profoundly conflicted in regard to the appeal Sapphic and Roman values have for him';[22] the third person point-of-view in which Catullus talks about himself at the beginning of the poem (*comites Catulli*, v. 1) *versus* the first person point-of-view he adopts in the second part of the poem (*meae puellae*, v. 15 and *meum amorem*, v. 21);[23] and finally, one may perceive in *Carmen 11*, as Commager observes, a poetic expression of the fundamental conflict between possibility and fact, which is revealed by a process of deconstruction.[24] Striking too is the *spatialisation* of the love relationship. Even the fact that Catullus does not communicate directly with Lesbia but indirectly via Furius and Aurelius points symbolically to an inner distance in their feelings.[25] The above mentioned contrast between war, which encompasses the world, and the narrow life of flowers, which at the same time embraces the dimensions of mobility and immobility, brings into focus the difference between centre and periphery *within* the depiction of the flower itself, located on the outskirts of a meadow (*velut prati / ultimi flos*, v. 22–3).[26] The organisation of space, which is initially oriented towards the horizontal, ultimately expands towards the vertical with the reference to human actions as helpless and at the mercy of superior, divine powers, a contrast enhanced by use of the rather elevated adjective *caeles* (cf. *voluntas caelitum*, v. 13–14).[27]

Contrasts create the basso continuo of *Carmen 11* and produce, through their accumulation, a dense, suspense-filled literary network.[28] A series of semantic ambiguities also contribute to the impression of fundamental antinomy.[29] The poem's addressees already pose an interpretive problem, which does not allow for a definite solution: Do the names Aurelius and Furius really signify the good comrades who are willing (*parati*, v. 14) to accompany Catullus to the ends of the world, to march with him through every peril? Doubt may at least be allowed, seeing as they receive a decidedly negative characterisation in other poems in the *Corpus Catullianum* (cf. *carm.* 16; 21, 23, 24, 26).[30] An alternative reading invites us to see them as bad comrades, proponents of the same 'system' to which Lesbia belongs, people who do deserve just as much contempt as Lesbia herself. Wilamowitz in particular has argued for this ironic mode of interpretation as follows:

> Bittere Erfahrung an Lesbias Unbeständigkeit zeigt sich in 8. 11 sagt ihr entschieden ab, gedichtet 55 oder 54. Boten seiner Absage sind Furius und Aurelius, intime Freunde, die mit ihm bis ans Ende der Welt gehen würden. So sagt er, und wer das für Ernst hält, habe sein Vergnügen. Der Leser des Gedichtbuchs lernt das Paar von anderer Seite kennen: sie gehören in die Sphäre, in die jetzt Lesbia gesunken ist.

> Bitter experience of Lesbia's fickleness reveals itself in [poem] 8. [Poem] 11, composed in 55 or 54, decisively rejects her. The messengers of his rejection are Furius and Aurelius, intimate friends who would go with him to the end of the world. So he says, and whoever takes it seriously is welcome to do so. The reader of the poem's book gets to know the pair from another side: they belong to the sphere into which Lesbia has now sunk.[31]

Noticeable is also the use of the verb *penetrare* (*in extremos penetrabit Indos*, v. 2), which in the immediate context signifies the military penetration of different countries; at the same time, however, it can also – metaphorically – suggest an emotional 'getting through to someone', as Fitzgerald puts it: 'The imperial scenario is introduced by Catullus because it provides the appropriate hyperbole for the problem of 'getting through' to Lesbia.'[32] The ambiguity of the motion verb *penetrare*, of course, is suspended, since it does not become clear until verse 15, when the message is stated, at which point the reader realises that the theme of *Carmen 11* is love. Corresponding to *penetrare* at the beginning is the verb *tangere* (*tactus aratro est*, v. 24) at the end of the poem. At first, *tangere* is understood as 'touch', but the context of rough sexuality (v. 17–20) elicits as well its common sexual meaning.[33] We may assume that this instance of ambiguity is a consciously, reader-oriented textual strategy. Quinn arrives at a similar assessment:

> Actually I believe that Catullus' relationship to Furius and Aurelius in Poem 11 is something about which it is Catullus' object both to arouse and to frustrate our curiosity: we would like to know, and he isn't going to tell us. It is a part of the picture where the focus is deliberately blurred; the poem acquires depth and strength if the reader who wants everything cut and dried is not allowed to have his own way.[34]

Research on Catullus has focused intensely on *Carmen 11* – one of his best known poems, which already elicited a response in Vergil's *Aeneid*, but at the same time is 'one of Catullus' most problematic poems'.[35] Two aspects stand out: (a) the poem's placement and function within the *Corpus Catullianum*: because of the harshness of the concluding rejection, it has most often been identified as marking the closure of a readily identifiable Lesbia-cycle and as a counterpart to the lover's hymn-like worship of Lesbia in *Carmen 51* which, like *11*, is written in Sapphic stanzas. (b) A second aspect concerns the inner structure and movement of *Carmen 11*: the aforementioned question of how the addressees Furius and Aurelius, who serve as the middlemen through whom the *persona* of Catullus delivers his message to the real addressee, Lesbia, are to be evaluated. In addition, there is the problem of the introductory geographical ‘excursus’, which occupies more than half of the total number of verses; thematically and aesthetically, this excursus seems hyperbolic: virtually the entire world known to man at the time is mentally traversed. Finally, there is the image of the flower, violently destroyed by the plough, which establishes inter- and intratextual references to Sappho as well as to other poems in the *Corpus Catullianum* (Sappho *frgm.* 105b Voigt; Catullus, *carm.* 61.89 and 62.39–41). In Sappho, we read that shepherds trample the hyacinth in the mountains:

οἴαν τὰν ὐάκινθον ἐν ὤρεσι
ποίμενες ἄνδρες
πόσσι καταστείβοισι, χάμαι δέ
τὸ πόρφυρον ἄνθος . . .

As a hyacinth in the mountains that men shepherding
tread underfoot, and to the ground its flower, all purple
(trans. Powell)

It seems clear that Catullus reworks this text in his Sapphic rejection poem to Lesbia, particularly since he refers to this same motif also in *Carmen 62*.[36] There too he speaks of a flower (*flos*) and plough (*aratrum*), just as in *11*, but in the opposite sense: the flower is precisely *not* destroyed by a plough:

Ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis,
ignotus pecori, nullo convolsus aratro,
quem mulcent aurae, firmat sol, educat imber. (v. 39–41)[37]

The reference to Sappho’s poetry in *Carmen 11* renders Catullus more feminine, while at the same time Lesbia is characterised as more masculine. Thus, both lovers – male and female – stand to one another in an ambiguous definition of gender that oscillates on both sides between male and female roles. This, at the same time, carries over to the double nature of their roles in respect to violent action. In accord with his feminisation, Catullus turns into the victim, just like the flower, whereas Lesbia, on the other hand, becomes the perpetrator, like Caesar and his armies. Gaisser had already pointed out Catullus’ *dual role* of the victim:

> Both characters, then, are double-gendered. Catullus is a victim in both genders, like both the dying young warrior and the young bride with her innocence destroyed. Lesbia is destructive in both: cast both as a man who deflowers a bride and as a rapacious woman who unmans her lovers.[38]

‘Time of Violence’ in poem 11

We may affirm, then, that violence is a central motif in *Carmen 11*. Research on Catullus has focused mainly on the tension between the political sphere on the one hand, and the subjective, ‘private’ sphere of love on the other side. Depending on one's perspective, different readings of the poem suggest themselves: either as a lyrical-erotic rebuff to an unfaithful lover who has become a sexual monster, or as a political invective, with a primary focus on the criticism of Roman imperialism. David Konstan has adopted the latter approach and read the poem in the context of Catullus' invectives against Mamurra:

> Sexuality and the imperial organisation of spatiality intersect to generate Catullus' subject position. They are his way of defining where and who he is; the spatial imaginary informs the amatory. This is why the geographical preamble is essential to the poem.[39]

Sex and politics create the defining tension; symbolically, the extent of Roman expansion corresponds to the poet's alienation from Lesbia, as do the violence of military aggression and Lesbia's monstrous sexual passion. Also, just as the captured countries are easy victims, so too is Catullus.[40]

If one interprets the introductory geographical text with the goal of finding *explicit* evidence for the violence motif, it will yield less lexical evidence for violence than one might expect: with the adjective *sagittiferus* (v. 6), a type of weapon is introduced that was perceived as typical of the enemy; to this we may add *horribilis* (v. 11) (not highly significant in and of itself), used to characterise the Britains, and the name *Caesar* itself (v. 10), which stands for conquest and can thus indirectly be associated with violence, and so too, perhaps, even the verb *penetrare*.[41] Overall, the first part of the poem is as much eroticised (*penetrare*, v. 2; *tunditur*, v. 4; *molles*, v. 5) as marked by elements of violence.[42] However, this supposition alters precisely when the poem shifts from the 'epic' first part to the second, lyrical part, and the focus switches from military expansion first to Lesbia and then, in an expanding 'zoom-in', to the flower at the meadow's edge. While *complexa tenet* (v. 18) does not necessarily indicate violence, the term *ilia rumpens* (v. 20) certainly does.[43] The violence reaches its climax, and the conclusion of the poem, with *cecidit* (v. 22) and the image of the ploughed-up flower (v. 22–3). More pointedly, we may say that the depiction of violence in the arena of love in the second part of the poem strengthens, through an ironic reversal of the real situation, the conception of the first part of the poem retrospectively as a depiction of violence. The use of *tactus* in the final verse again reveals the extent to which ambiguities shape the text: the verb *tangere* usually suggests a gentle touch which engenders a sharp contrast with the plough and thereby gains a (commonly recognised) euphemistic connotation. Indeed, *tangere* bore a sexual connotation since Plautus' comedies.[44] The basic tension between sex and politics is brought together in an almost epigrammatic way in the junction, *tactus aratro est.*

Carmen 11, however, not only addresses violence on an explicit level. As the thesis of this contribution affirms, violence as the central theme of the poem manifests itself not only lexically but also in its balance and syntactic structure. We have seen that Sofsky insists on the difference in the way time is experienced by the perpetrator, the victim, and the onlooker in his conception of the 'time of violence' (Gewaltzeit). In a violent action, time appears to the victims as extended or stretched out in comparison to the 'regular' time or the subjective perception of other parties involved in the action. This subjective expansion of time opens up the possibility of interpreting the first part of *Carmen 11* as a textual (poetic) expression of the subjective perception of time from the perspective of the victim Catullus, though it is usually seen merely as a long proem, only loosely connected to the theme of rejection. A symbolic temporal dimension is thus added to the symbolic spatialisation of Catullus' alienation from his lover, one that signifies the suffering of the victim: 'the duration, the slowness of torture, the endlessness of cruelty'.[45] The imagined military campaigns in all the cardinal directions of the realm with the 'comrades' Furius and Aurelius have a temporal aspect as well as a spatial-geographical one: the duration on the narrative level (14 verses) corresponds to the amount of time suggested by the narrative; the latter remains undefined, but is definitely long judging by the distances covered. The elongation is converted syntactically into an extended period of time that does not end until the fourth stanza.

The three adverbs of time *simul* (v. 18), *identidem* (v. 19) and *ante* (v. 21) – all of which can be found in the second, violence-heavy part of the poem – also point to the fact that the dimension of time is no less important for the comprehension of *Carmen 11* than the aspect of space. This combination of violence and time expresses Catullus' subjective perception of both: just as he can take part in military expeditions to (almost) all parts of the earth only in fantasy, so too Lesbia's relations with the three hundred adulterers can only occur simultaneously (*simul*) and without interruption (*identidem*) in fantasy. The expansion of time from the perspective of the victim corresponds, in turn, to the speed with which the perpetrator Lesbia consummates her actions; she too, of course, is a product of the victim's imagination. A subjective perception of time can also be sensed in the use of the third adverb of time *ante*, because it is ultimately *his* love, *meum . . . amorem* (v. 21), to which Lesbia is enjoined not to look back; therefore, it is also *his* organisation of time into a past and present. The number of her lovers and its absurd association with simultaneity, subjectively constructed by Catullus himself, are reminiscent of the portrayals of quantitative excesses of violence and mass scenes of war, including the corresponding anonymisation of the victim, which often goes hand in hand with a sense of dehumanisation.[46] Michael Putnam has also referred to the idea of a 'symbolic structure of time'; he however, does not focus on the subjectivity of the time of violence, but on the symbolic contrast between speed in Caesar's and Lesbia's world and the motionless, almost timeless quiescence of the flower:

> Epic poetry surveys an heroic progress through extent of time. Lyric verse inclines to gaze intently and analytically on the vital, immediate moment. In terms of poem 11, the literal level of temporal action befits a Caesar and a Lesbia. The *symbolic time structure* the poet rears for himself leads away from any hypothetical, grandiloquent deeds to a stable emblem of fragility, almost out of time.[47]

Connected to this, again, is the reversal of gender roles: In the motif of the flower as symbol of his love, Catullus, the feminised man, assumes the traditional stability of location and immobility of the woman, while his female counterpart assumes the complete opposite, namely the masculine, heroic mobility of a Caesar.[48] According to the last stanza, the flower is seized by the plough which 'passes by' (*praetereunte*, v. 23). The verb *praeterire* has the connotation of something incidental, casual. The plough does not attack like an army zeroing in on a target; it just happens to pass by exactly where the marginalised flower is located. In this way, the act of violence acquires a quality of absolute arbitrariness and contingency at this moment of the death of love, which already is marked by violence and cruelty.[49] If one draws a parallel to Caesar, who is conquering the ends of the known world, the political dimension of the poem looks highly critical.[50]

Conclusion

The present considerations about the 'time of violence' (Gewaltzeit) look to offer an interpretation that combines results from the sociological research on violence with styles of literary analysis. This approach invites the idea that the much-discussed structural asymmetry of Catullus' *Carmen 11* can also be read as a logical, literary processing of the victim's subjective perception of time; seen this way, the subjective perception of time is, from the victim's perspective, stretched out. The goal, thereby, is not to *save* the poem's unity, which has been questioned by scholars. This is hardly a worthwhile endeavour, inasmuch as unity as a concept is seen these days as a problematic aesthetic and literary category.[51] The abrupt change from the first part of the poem to the second can rather be interpreted as a literary instantiation of experienced violence, reinforced through the kind of suddenness that constitutes one typical form of the time in which violence takes place. Sofsky discusses in his empirical studies exactly this very 'suddenness – the instant that breaks through the continuity of a time line'.[52] Catullus' poem about Lesbia and Caesar, about the conquest of the world and the end of a love affair in a landscape fundamentally violated by war and sex, is primarily a reflection and a discussion of violence and its subjective perception. The centre of this poetic subjectivity is not the wielding of violence but the suffering of it. 'The truth of violence', states Sofsky, 'is not the action, but the suffering'.[53]As has been set out earlier, the focus of this chapter is more on the narrativity than on the historicity of violence. Nevertheless, it seems worthwhile to understand the poem also as part of a larger picture and as a contribution to a general discursivisation of violence in the time of Catullus and his contemporaries. The text itself points explicitly to the sphere of the real world by mentioning Caesar's military expeditions to the borders of the Roman empire. By establishing a two-way relationship between the violence of sexuality and geo-political violence, in which each can be cast in terms of the other, and by exploring the subjectivity of time in processes of violence, Catullus' poem contributes not only to the visibility of violence, but also offers a conceptual apparatus to experience, understand, and interpret it.

Notes

1 I would like to thank David Konstan and Hans-Peter Nill for a most stimulating discussion of this chapter.

2 See Benjamin (1965); Wertheimer (1986; 2006); Gay (1993); Bohrer (1998a; 1998b; 2000; 2004); Grimminger (2000); Seel (2000: 296–323); Neimann (2002); Dietrich and Müller-Koch (2006). On violence and cruelty see Schaub (2009: 16).

3 See Hölscher (2003); Nauroy (2004); Bertrand (2005); Chaniotis (2005); Rohmann (2006); Styka (2006); Muth (2008: 1–24); Zimmermann (2009; 2013). On violence and its representation in media see Keppler (1997); Muth (2008).

4 See the forthcoming dissertation: Hans-Peter Nill, 'Gewalt/Unmaking in Lucan's *Bellum civile'*.

5 Sofsky (1997: 119): 'Gewaltzeit ist keine gemeinsame Zeit. Was dem Beobachter, der aus dritter Perspektive das Geschehen untersucht, als einheitliche Zeitform er-scheint, ist in Wahrheit ein radikaler Antagonismus. Der sozialen Asymmetrie der Gewalt entspricht die Asymmetrie der Zeit. Die Zeit der Tat ist eine ganz andere als die Zeit des Leidens'. All English translations of Sofsky's publications are given by the author of this chapter. Also see Sofsky (1997: 104): 'Das Leiden hat seine eigene Zeit'. Also see Trotha (1997) with regard to sociological research on violence.

6 Sofsky (1997: 119): 'Die Zeit der Gewalt weist mehrere Formen auf. Da ist die Plötzlichkeit, der Augenblick, der die Kontinuität der Zeitlinie durchbricht. Da ist die Überraschung des Überfalls und die zügige Stetigkeit der Razzia. Ferner die Beschleunigung der Hetzjagd, die Eile der Flucht, die Simultaneität der Panik. Und da ist die Dauer, die Langsamkeit der Marter, die Endlosigkeit der Grausamkeit. Zwar hat jede Gewaltform eine konstitutive Zeitform, die ihre Grundstruktur bestimmt. Aber die Gewalt verläuft selbst in der Zeit, die Situationen wechseln und damit auch ihre Zeitmodi. Der Plötzlichkeit der Explosion folgt der Moment des Entsetzens, dann der anhaltende Bewegungssturm der Panik'. Also cf. 103: 'Die Zeit ist eine Waffe eigener Art. Es gibt die langsame Gewalt, die sich Zeit lässt, um die Qualen und Schmerzen der Menschen in die Länge zu ziehen. Schrittweise wird sie in Gang gesetzt, verstetigt, abgebrochen, erneut gesteigert und wieder unterbrochen, bis das finale Stadium erreicht ist. In Opposition dazu steht die Gewalt der Plötzlichkeit, des Überfalls, des Attentats, die das Opfer auf der Stelle tötet. Zwischen diesen Endpunkten rangieren die zahlreichen Varianten der Gewaltzeit, der Beschleunigung und Verlangsamung, der Verstetigung, Unterbrechung und Steigerung'.

7 Concerning questions on periodisation and distinction of era in antiquity, see Walter (2000); regarding the definition of era in general, see Bauer (2010). Hellenism: see Gehrke (2008: 1–4 and 133–6); Scholz (2015: 11–14). Augustan literature and its predecessors: see Schmidt (2003: 1–15, esp. 8–9). On war and violence in the Hellenistic literature and art see Fowler (1989); Chaniotis (2005: 189–213).

8 Roman poetry in the context of Hellenistic research: see Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004: 444–85). Catullus as a Hellenistic poet: see Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1924: 277–310); Braga (1950); Williams (1968: 250–51); Clausen (1970); Thomson (1998: 11–22); Harder (2004: 574); Catullus and Callimachus: see Knox (2007: 156).

9 On the structure of the geographical 'excursion' see Quinn (1972: 162–3).

10 The political backgrounds are discussed in Wiseman (1985); Burl (2004); Konstan (2007); also see the general characterisation of the era in von Albrecht (1997: 336): the nervously beating pulse of a period shaken by revolution. Violence in Catullus: Skinner (2007a: 583) (index s.v. *violence*); Stevens (2013: 72–81) on sexual violence, especially in *carm.* 16.

11 Here, the crucial aspect is not to what extent one can judge the communicative situation as fictional or real through the help of a text. Caesar as one of Catullus' readers: see Schmidt (1985: 16–17). Concerning Catullus' Mamurra-poems and their connection to *carm.* 11 see Konstan (2000).

12 Concerning the generation of Catullus: Gruen (1974: 2); Fantham (2004: 280–85).

13 *Carm.* 11 as a rejection poem and its position within the entire *Corpus Catullianum* see Commager (1965: 99): 'The eleventh poem can be seen as a summation of the various techniques used in the "renunciation" poems'. For an overview, see Beck (1996: 9–40); Skinner (2007b); Hild (2013: 31–45); also see Hutchinson (2008: 109–30) (mostly on the epigrams).

14 *Pauca verba*: see the introduction to Aeneas' rejection speech to Dido in the fourth book of the *Aeneid: ille Iovis monitis immota tenebat / lumina et obnixus curam sub corde premebat. / tandem pauca refert: ego te, quae plurima fando / enumerare vales, numquam, regina, negabo / promeritam, nec* . . . (v. 331–5). This passage, however, is not without irony since Vergil lets Aeneas speak longer than Dido in the end.

15 Text according to Thomson (1998: 106–7), with exception of v. 11: Thomson's preferred *horribile aequor* is a conjecture suggested by Moritz Haupt for transmitted *horribilesque*; see the discussion in Quinn (1972: 162) and Newman (1990: 165).

16 Catullus (ed. and trans. by G. P. Goold) (1983); translations of *carm.* 11 also by Quinn (1972: 161); Konstan (2000: 11–12); Putnam (2000: 13–14).

17 The geographical 'excursion' in the first three stanzas is so 'long' that it needs its own summary (*omnia haec*, v. 13). Concerning the epic style, see for example Greene (2007: 143): 'language of epic grandeur', (p. 144) (on Lesbia): 'epic monster'; Putnam (2000: 257): 'grandiloquent language [. . .] that pushes lyric to the borders of epic'.

18 The number three hundred triggers a (loose) association to the violence in the battle at Thermopylae and, thus, creates a 'Greek flavour' which can also be detected in the Sapphic flower-metaphor at the end of the poem.

19 The characterisation of the Arabs as 'soft' (*Arabes molles*, v. 5) prepares atmospherically the motif of the vulnerability of the flower at the end of the poem. The motif itself is topical, cf. e.g. Vergil, *Georgica* 1.57: *molles Sabaei*, and Manilius 4.654–655: *in mollis Arabas terramque ferentem / delicias*; Fordyce (1961: 126). In *carm.* 16 Furius and Aurelius are described as *molliculi* (v. 4).

20 The poem ends very effectively with the (destructive) plough: *tactus aratro est* (v. 24). The flower as metaphor: see Nünlist (1998: 206). For *rumpere* cf. *carm.* 80.7–8: *clamant Victoris rupta miselli / ilia, et emulso labra notata sero*; Propertius 2.16.14 *rumpat ut adsiduis membra libidinibus*; Adams (1982: 150–51).

21 Holzberg (2002: 93): 'der eigentliche *Mann*'. Greene (2007: 142); also see Fuhrer (2007).

22 Greene (2007: 142–6, quote 143).

23 Greene (1997: 148–9).

24 Commager (1965: 101): 'The stanza epitomizes the tension between possibility and fact that underlies the poem as a whole. Like 58, it conjures up a romantic ideal only to shatter it'. Similarly, Konstan (2000: 14): 'By locating himself at the edge of the field Catullus projects an alternative vision of love'; Putnam (2000: 257): 'this extraordinary poem offers a study of two diverse worlds'. Also see Fordyce (1961: 124): 'The poem opens with three stanzas of highly allusive romantic writing; in the fourth the tone changes to cold realism'. Concerning ancient literary texts and the 'Possible Worlds Theory': see Kirstein (2015).

25 Macleod (1983: 179): 'The journey as an escape from an unhappy love is also a familiar motif. So Catullus entrusts his message to Furius and Aurelius, not only because they are faithful friends, but also to stress the woman's estrangement from him and his rejection of her; he will no longer address her directly'; also see Hild (2013: 146).

26 Just like Caesar's armies reach Britain's most distant areas, the flower is located on the outskirts of a meadow, cf. v. 11–12 *ultimos* and v. 23 *ultimi*. Catullus' self-marginalisation: see Konstan (2000: 14).

27 See Fordyce (1961: 128) on *caelitum*: 'solemn archaic word'. The reference towards the gods as human's fate-deciding power includes also an epic tone.

28 Also see Ross (1969: 173): 'No epigram (even c. 76) can parallel the fluidity, the dramatic and extreme shifts of tone and mood'.

29 Ambiguity as part of poeticality and especially as a marker of poetry: see Bode (1988: *passim)*; Eco (1973); Rimmon (1977); Berndt and Kammer (2009); Bauer *et al*. (2010). Greene (1997: 148) on Catullus' *carm.* 11: 'the many ambiguities and complexities the poem presents to critics'.

30 On both see Fordyce (1961: 124–5); Richardson (1963); Quinn (1972: 164–5); Beck (1996: 104–131), including a detailed discussion of different research positions; Konstan (2000; 2007: 16–17, note 16); Gaisser (2009: 39–40). On the Aurelius-and-Furius-Cycle cf. Schmidt (1973: 219–21); Skinner (2007b: 42).

31 Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1924: 307). Similarly Fordyce (1961: 124): 'Catullus chooses Furius and Aurelius [. . .] because he despises them also'; Commager (1965: 100): 'tinged with irony'; Sweet (1987); Greene (1997: 148); Konstan (2007: 78) on the role of the woman in *carm.* 11: 'She is an overly masculine woman, just as Caesar and Mamurra (and Furius and Aurelius in c. 16) are represented as rapacious and yet feminized men: common to both extremes is sexual voracity'. A different view is given by MacLeod (1983: 179): 'faithful friends', and Beck (1996: 115).

32 Fitzgerald (1995: 181), with reference to *OLD*, *s.v.* 5. An immediate sexual definition of *penetrare* is uncertain, see Adams (1982: 151). Greene (1997: 150), however, assumes further erotic elements within the geographical 'excursion'; see also Putnam (2000: 257); Konstan (2000: 13), with reference to Janan (2010: 64–5); Holzberg (2002: 92).

33 References in Adams (1982: 185–6). The poem's last verse also irritates because *tangere* – even when neglecting the sexual connotation – does not match the medium of touching – the plough – since it does not just touch the flower, but it kills it through a touch (*cecidit*, v. 22).

34 Quinn (1972: 164).

35 See also Greene (1997: 148); cf. the overviews in Kinsey (1965: 537); Forsyth (1991: 457); Beck (1996: 104). For Vergil and Catullus see Putnam (2000: 256–61). When Catullus was rediscovered during the Renaissance, Cristoforo Landino created an imitation of *carm.* 11.

36 This is also supported by the fact that the shepherds have been established as typical figures in love poetry since the bucolic poetry of Theocritus.

37 Greene (2007: 142–6).

38 Gaisser (2009: 144). Poetry might be considered as especially open towards the perspective of the role of the victim, see Fitzgerald (1995: 169); Beard (2007: 210), on Ovid, *Am.* 1.2.

39 Konstan (2000: 14–15).

40 Also see Segal (1968: 308), who creates a correlation between the military campaign's hyperbolic extension and the intemperance of Lesbia's sexual desire: 'By uniting in c. 11 the journey-motif with the farewell to Lesbia, Catullus perhaps suggests that the exotic, extraordinary range of geography is a natural correlative to the extraordinary violence of Lesbia's lust'.

41 Caesar: see Zimmermann (2013: 221).

42 On *tundere* see Adams (1982: 148). The sound profile in the phrase *tun-di-tur un-da* is noticeable, see Thomson (1998: 237); Putnam (1982: 14 with note 1); see Tibullus 2.4.10 *uasti tunderet unda maris*.

43 On the technique of 'zooming-in' in Catullus see de Jong (2014: 64–5).

44 Adams (1982: 185–6).

45 Sofsky (1997: 119). For the relationship between *space* and *time* as a literary ordering principle cf. especially Bakhtin (2008).

46 Anonymisation is also mentioned in Greene (2007: 145): 'The plow's indifferent mowing down of nameless living things parallels Caesar's violent subjugation of foreign lands'.

47 Putnam (1982: 23–4) (my emphasis). This reminds one of Sartre's existentialistic philosophy, which speaks of negation of time by violence. See Staudigl (2015: 100–101); Sofsky (1997: 102): 'Wo Gewalt als Ereignis hereinbricht, zerstört sie die Zeit'.

48 On gender and mobility see Keith (1999); Lovatt (2013: 347); on the 'gender of war' Chaniotis (2005: 102–14).

49 Popitz offers a sociological discussion on lack of motif (1992: 48–9). Also cf. Sofsky (1996: 45–52), here p. 52: 'Grausamkeit zielt auf nichts. Sie hat keinen anderen Sinn als sie selbst', and p. 53: 'In dem Maße, wie sich Gewalt von allen Rücksichten befreit und ganz sie selbst wird, verwandelt sie sich in Grausamkeit'.

50 Konstan (2000: 3) talks of ‘destabilization’.
51 See Konstan (2000: 12); Lamarque (2009: 20); Mikkonen (2014: 53–4).
52 On an ‘aesthetic of suddenness’ in which shock and violence dominate see Bohrer (1981; 2004).
53 Sofsky (1996: 68).

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