

A vertical approach—Ancient Women, mostly Roman, in Latin 1, 2, and 3-4  
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Each of these units is designed to take place in the spring semester. For the Latin 2 readings in Latin, the students have notes from books off my shelf—Google books is a comparable resource—and there are plenty of online dictionary options now as well (Alpheios, Whitakers, NoDictionaries, even Apps which make Lewis and Short searchable for \$4). Latin texts come from the Latin Library unless otherwise noted.

**Latin 1.** Four day unit with assessment.

Students begin by reading Michael Massey's *Women in Ancient Greece and Rome* over the course of two nights (see Appendix 1 for TOC). During class I discuss their readings using a PowerPoint which shows relevant images and some other text passages to spur further discussion and understanding; Catullus is my point for further exploration. I introduce the author and walk them through some poems in the Lesbia cycle (mainly poems 51, 70, and 85). The students do not need any other reference material at this level but the Latin and translation within the Powerpoint; I am simply exposing them to the original text through my introduction and translation of the text. I point out grammatical structures which are familiar to them as well as vocabulary which is programmatic for the genre.

The PowerPoint, which is also posted with this unit, has poems 51, 70, and 85 beside an English translation from my classes (poems 2, 5 87, 8 are also included in case I need more to discuss; the Latin is from <http://www.negenborn.net/catullus/>). The worksheet to accompany the readings for this unit is Appendix 2. The suggested assessment is an essay on Sulpicia and Tibullus in English (see Appendix 3). With this assessment I am trying to get them thinking about analyzing literature not just telling me how it makes them feel (practice for AP essay writing should start year 1).

**Latin 2.** Nine day unit with assessment.

Students read one chapter of Haward's *Penelope to Poppaea* (see Appendix 1 for TOC) and prep one paragraph of Livy and then 20 lines (approx.) of Ovid each night for eight nights (see Appendix 4 for the passages). The students "journal" about their reading in the Haward using the following prompt: Take notes on this assignment which will show that you have understood the reading and which will help you remember the information. This text is longer and serves both as review and as more in depth work on the topic and culture in general; it is thus good for the NLE and JCL and, well, life. Each day we translate the assigned Latin and then discuss the English readings.

The students have read Zoch's *Ancient Rome* by this time and may or may not be done with Kamm's *The Romans* by the time we start this unit. Finished or not, I refresh their memory concerning genre and the authors we are about to read with these two links:

<http://www.the-romans.co.uk/history.htm>

<http://www.the-romans.co.uk/elegy.htm>

Assessment. A 2-3 page essay comparing and contrasting these two versions of the fate of the Sabine women keeping in mind the fact that, although both Livy and Ovid were Augustan era authors, their genres and intents were very different. They are instructed to quote and cite the poems as evidence throughout each answer. The students prep and outline this essay before class but write during one 45-minute period.

**Latin 3/4.** Six day unit with assessment.

This combined class alternates prose and poetry. In the years we are reading Vergil as our primary author, we add a project on Ausonius (materials are posted on *The Worlds of Roman Women* online companion link; see Appendix 5 for a biography and bibliography on the author); the students also read two secondary research articles (Sklenár and Evans-Grubbs). In the years we are reading Caesar as our primary author we add a unit on Calpurnia (using *The Worlds of Roman Women* text) and Clodia (using *The Worlds of Roman Women* online companion \*[http://www2.cnr.edu/home/sas/araia/cicero\\_clodia.html](http://www2.cnr.edu/home/sas/araia/cicero_clodia.html)\* and the last bit of *Pro Caelio* 38: *Nihil iam in istam mulierem dico; sed, si esset aliqua dissimilis istius, quae se omnibus pervolgaret, quae haberet palam decretum semper aliquem, cuius in hortos, domum, Baias iure suo libidines omnium commearent, quae etiam aleret adulescentes et parsimoniam patrum suis sumptibus sustentaret; si vidua libere, proterva petulanter, dives effuse, libidinosa meretricio more viveret, adulterum ego putarem, si quis hanc paulo liberius salutasset?*). At this level the students are fully engaged with the reading/translation, contextualization, and analysis of Latin.

Assessment. A test on the Latin with grammar questions as well as questions on rhetorical and literary devices and an essay.

- Suggested essay topic for Ausonius: How does Ausonius use the vocabulary of the lyric poets and of Vergil to enrich his portrayals? How has the view of women changed, and not changed, since the Augustan era?
- Suggested essay topic for Pliny and Cicero: Cicero and Pliny paint very vivid, very different portrayals of their subjects. How do these portraits, one positive and one negative, combine to create a picture of the expectations and lives of Roman women and of Roman values during this time period?

# Women in Ancient Greece and Rome

Michael Massey



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*Inside the Ancient World*

# PENELOPE TO POPPAEA

Anne Haward

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## Appendix 2—Worksheet for *Women in Ancient Greece and Rome*

### Day 1, Section on Greece

I. Define each of the following. Some of these are not directly defined in the reading, so you will have to look them up, but make sure that your definition makes sense in context.

polis  
metic  
*kyrios*  
patriarchal  
paternalistic  
Delphic oracle  
mystery religions  
matriarchal

II. Pick one Hymn about a goddess (pick wisely—you have to get a *goddess*) to read, summarize, and share with the class:

[http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/homerichymns/Homeric\\_Hymns.htm](http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/homerichymns/Homeric_Hymns.htm)

III. Pick two of the following to read, take notes about, and share with the class-

Weaving:

<http://www.fjkluth.com/weaving.html>

<http://www.ancientsites.com/aw/Article/529404>

Weddings:

<http://ablemedia.com/ctcweb/consortium/ancientweddings10.html>

Aspasia, a Greek Hetaira?

[http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/characters/aspasia\\_p3.html](http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/characters/aspasia_p3.html)

Religion:

<http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/womenandreligioninathens.htm>

A female philosopher:

<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/phil/philo/phils/diotima.html>

Athena, including her judgment in the *Eumenides*:

<http://www.freeessays.cc/db/34/mcio.shtml>

Much more:

<http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/greece.htm>

Day 2, section on Rome

I. Define each of the following. Some of these are not defined in the reading, so you will have to look them up, but make sure that your definition makes sense in context.

*paterfamilias*

*fides*

*pietas*

*gravitas*

*virtus*

*constantia*

*materfamilias*

fuller

II. Read and take notes on the introduction to the sections on Marriage, Work, and Religion. Be ready to share your info with the class:

<http://www2.cnr.edu/home/araia/worlds.html>

III. Pick three of the following to read, take notes about, and share with the class-

Roman names:

[http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/roman\\_names.html](http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/roman_names.html)

Roman values:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mos\\_maiorum#Values](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mos_maiorum#Values)

Roman education:

<http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/grecoromandailylife1/a/o6o6o9RomanEducation.htm>

Augustan laws concerning women:

<http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/augustanreformation.htm>

Livia:

<http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/livia.html>

The Sibyl:

[http://www.fva.is/harpa/comenius/it\\_sybil.html](http://www.fva.is/harpa/comenius/it_sybil.html)

The Villa of the Mysteries:

<http://www.roguey.com/cities/naples/visiting/city/villa/villa.html>

Much more:

[http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/women\\_in\\_ancient\\_rome.htm](http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/women_in_ancient_rome.htm)



### Appendix 3—Latin 1 assessment

Sulpicia, the daughter of Sulpicius Rufus, was the ward of Valerius Messalla Corvinus, the patron of Tibullus. Both lived and wrote during the reign of Augustus.

The students are given the poems to read the night before the exam. When they come to class they are given the following questions to answer (they still have the poems to refer to as they write their response). They are instructed to quote and cite the poems as evidence throughout each answer. They may answer each as an individual question, though some students will incorporate the five points into an essay.

What do we learn about Sulpicia from Tibullus' poetry?

What do we learn about Sulpicia from her own poetry?

How does the tone/style differ from Tibullus to Sulpicia?

How do these poems confirm or contradict what you have learned about Roman Women? Be careful to think about the second half of the Massey and the Catullus in answering this last question.

How can you relate these poems to your own life or what you see in the media (e.g. TV, music, movies, magazines, etc.)?

NB the shift in justification from left to right is simply to help the students remember which author they are working with—the same effect could be produced by repeating the authors name on each poem.

All translations are from:

[http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Tibullus.htm#\\_Toc532635324](http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Tibullus.htm#_Toc532635324)

### Sulpicia's Garland by Tibullus(?)

#### **I. Sulpicia on the First of March**

Sulpicia's dressed for you, great Mars, on your Calends:  
come from the sky yourself, to see her, if you're wise.  
Venus will forgive you: but you, violent one, beware  
lest your weapons fall, shamefully, in wonder.  
Cruel Love lights his twin torches from her eyes,  
when he would set fire to the gods themselves.  
Whatever she does, wherever she turns her steps,  
Grace follows her secretly to prepare everything.  
If she loosens her hair, flowing tresses become her:  
if she arranges it, the curls she's arranged are divine.  
She inflames, if she chooses to walk in a Tyrian gown:  
she inflames, if she comes gleaming in white robes.  
So, pleasing Vertumnus wears a thousand fashions  
on eternal Olympus, and wears them gracefully.  
Sole among girls she's worthy that Tyre grants her  
soft wool twice dipped in costly dyes,  
and she possess whatever the rich Arab, the farmer  
of perfumed fields, reaps from his fragrant lands,  
and whatever gems the dark Indian gathers  
from the red shores of the waters, near to the Dawn.  
You Muses, sing of her, on the festive Calends,  
and you, proud Phoebus, to the tortoiseshell lyre.  
She'll carry out this sacred rite for many a year:  
no girl is more worthy of your choir.

#### **II. Cerinthus Hunting**

Whether you live on the plain's rich pastures  
or deep among shaded hills, wild boar, spare my boy,  
don't let your strong tusks be sharpened for attack:  
let guardian Love keep him safe for me.  
But Diana leads him on with love of hunting.  
O, let the woods die, and the dogs be lost!  
What madness, to want to wound soft hands

encircling the wooded hill, in your drive?  
What pleasure is it to creep into wild beasts' lairs  
and scratch your gleaming legs with sharp briars?  
And yet, Cerinthus, if I might wander with you  
I'll carry the tangled nets over the hills myself,  
chase the tracks of the quick deer myself  
and loose the swift hound's iron chain.  
Then the woods would please me, my love,  
when it's known I've lain with you, beside your nets:  
Though the wild boar comes to the snare, then,  
he'll go safe, lest he disturb the joy of eager passion.  
Now let there be no love without me, by Diana's law  
chaste boy, lay chaste hands on the nets:  
and whoever steals secretly into my place,  
let her fall to the wild beasts, and be torn apart.  
And you leave the study of hunting to your father,  
and hurry back quickly to my breast.

### III. A Prayer For Sulpicia In Her Illness

Phoebus, come, drive away the gentle girl's illness,  
come, proud, with your unshorn curls.  
Trust me, and hurry: Phoebus, you won't regret  
having laid healing hands on her beauty.  
See that no wasting disease grips her pale body,  
no unpleasant marks stain her weak limbs,  
and whatever ills exist, whatever sadness we fear,  
let the swift river-waters carry them to the sea.  
Come, sacred one, bring delicacies with you,  
and whatever songs ease the weary body:  
Don't torment the youth, who fears for the girl's fate,  
and offers countless prayers for his mistress.  
Sometimes he prays, sometimes, because she's ill,  
he speaks bitter words to the eternal gods.  
Don't be afraid, Cerinthus: the god doesn't hurt lovers.  
Only love always: and your girl is well.  
No need to weep: tears will be more fitting,  
if she's ever more severe towards you.  
But now she's all yours: the lovely girl  
only thinks of you, and a hopeful crowd wait in vain.  
Phoebus, be gracious. Great praise will be due to you

in saving one life you'll have restored two.  
Soon you'll be honoured, delighted, when both, safe,  
compete to repay the debt at your sacred altar.  
Then the holy company of gods will call you happy,  
and each desire your own art for themselves.

#### IV. Cerinthus's Birthday

The day that gave you to me, Cerinthus, will be sacred  
to me, and will always be among the days of joy.  
When you were born the Fates sang out new slavery  
for girls, and gave you proud sovereignty.  
I burn more fiercely than the others. It's joy to burn,  
Cerinthus, if from my fire shared fire enters you.  
Let love be shared, I ask it, by your sweetest theft,  
by your eyes, by your guardian spirit.  
Stay spirit, take this glad incense, and favour my prayers:  
if only he's inflamed when he thinks of me.  
But if even now he sighs deeply for another,  
then leave your faithless altar, sacred one.  
And don't you be unjust, Venus, let both serve you,  
equally as slaves, or lighten my chains.  
Rather let us both be held by heavy shackles,  
that no day after this might ever loosen.  
The boy wants the same as me, but hides his longing:  
he's ashamed now to say the words aloud.  
But you, birth spirit, since you're an all-seeing god,  
assent: what matter if he asks it silently or aloud?

#### V. Sulpicia's Birthday

Juno, birth-spirit, accept the sacred heaps of incense  
that the learned girl's gentle hand offers you.  
She's bathed for you, today, dressed herself so gladly,  
to stand before your altar, visible to all.  
She ascribes the cause to you, goddess, it's true:  
yet there's one she secretly desires to please.  
Then be gracious, sacred one, let no one separate  
the lovers, but, I beg you, forge the same fetters for the boy.  
You'll do well to join them: there's no girl he

might more fittingly serve, and no man her.  
And may no wakeful guard surprise their passion,  
and Love provide a thousand pathways of deceit.  
Assent, Juno, and come, bright in your purple robes:  
three times they offer cake, chaste goddess, three times  
wine, and the mother tells the daughter what to wish for:  
she in the silence of her heart asks something other.  
She burns as the altar burns with swift flames,  
and would not wish to be unscathed, even if she could.  
Juno, be gracious, so that when next year comes  
this same former love will still be in their prayers.

### Sulpicia's Verses

#### I. Love Proclaimed

Love has come at last, such love that to hide it in shame  
would be worse than being spoken of for showing it.  
Won over by my Muse, Venus of Cythera,  
brought him, and placed him here in my arms.  
Venus fulfils what she promised: let my joy be told,  
spoken by him who has no joy of his own.  
I wouldn't want to order any of my letters sealed  
so that none can read them before my lover does.  
I delight in my sin: I loathe composing my looks  
for public opinion: let them declare worth meets worth.

#### II. The Hateful Journey

My hateful birthday's here, to be spent in sadness,  
in the wretched country, and without Cerinthus.  
What's sweeter than the city? Is a villa fit for a girl  
or the chilly river that runs through Arretium's fields?  
Peace now, Messalla, from over-zealous care of me:  
journeys, dear relative, aren't always welcome.  
Snatched away, I leave my mind and feelings here,  
she whom coercion won't allow to make her own decisions.

### III. The Journey Abandoned

Did you know the threat of that wretched journey's  
been lifted from your girl's spirits? Now I can be in Rome  
for my birthday. Let's all celebrate this birthday  
that comes to you, now, by unexpected chance.

### IV. Her Reproach

Be grateful I'd not suddenly fall into evil foolishness,  
now you allow yourself free reign, and are careless of me.  
Any toga, any whore loaded down by a basket of wool  
is dearer to you than Sulpicia, Servius's daughter.  
But they're anxious for me, those for whom the greatest  
reason for grief is lest I give myself to an unworthy bed.

### V. In Sickness

Have you any kind thought for your girl, Cerinthus,  
now that fever wastes my weary body?  
Ah, otherwise I would not want to conquer  
sad illness, if I thought you did not wish it too.  
And what use is it to me to conquer illness, if you  
can endure my trouble with indifferent heart?

### VI. Her Apology

Let me not be such a feverish passion to you, my love,  
as I seem to have been a few days ago,  
if I've done anything in my foolish youth  
which I've owned to regretting more  
than leaving you, alone, last night  
wishing to hide the desire inside me.

Appendix 4—Latin read by 2<sup>nd</sup> year class for Ancient Women unit

Livy's *ab Urbe Condita*

[9] Iam res Romana adeo erat ualida ut cuilibet finitimarum civitatum bello par esset; sed penuria mulierum hominis aetatem duratura magnitudo erat, quippe quibus nec domi spes prolis nec cum finitimis conubia essent. Tum ex consilio patrum Romulus legatos circa vicinas gentes misit qui societatem conubiumque novo populo peterent: urbes quoque, ut cetera, ex infimo nasci; dein, quas sua virtus ac di iuvent, magnas opes sibi magnumque nomen facere; satis scire, origini Romanae et deos adfuisse et non defuturam virtutem; proinde ne gravarentur homines cum hominibus sanguinem ac genus miscere. Nusquam benigne legatio audita est: adeo simul spernebant, simul tantam in medio crescentem molem sibi ac posteris suis metuebant. Ac plerisque rogitantibus dimissi ecquod feminis quoque asylum aperuissent; id enim demum compar conubium fore. Aegre id Romana pubes passa et haud dubie ad vim spectare res coepit. Cui tempus locumque aptum ut daret Romulus aegritudinem animi dissimulans ludos ex industria parat Neptuno equestri sollemnes; Consualia vocat. Indici deinde finitimis spectaculum iubet; quantoque apparatu tum sciebant aut poterant, concelebrant ut rem claram exspectatamque facerent.

Multi mortales conuenere, studio etiam videndae novae urbis, maxime proximi quique, Caeninenses, Crustumini, Antemnates; iam Sabinorum omnis multitudo cum liberis ac coniugibus venit. Inuitati hospitaliter per domos cum situm moeniaque et frequentem tectis urbem vidissent, mirantur tam breui rem Romanam crevisse. Vbi spectaculi tempus venit deditaeque eo mentes cum oculis erant, tum ex composito orta vis signoque dato iuventus Romana ad rapiendas virgines discurrit. Magna pars forte in quem quaeque inciderat raptae: quasdam forma excellentes, primoribus patrum destinatas, ex plebe homines quibus datum negotium erat domos deferebant. Vnam longe ante alias specie ac pulchritudine insignem a globo Thalassi cuiusdam raptam ferunt multisque sciscitantibus cuinam eam ferrent, identidem ne quis violaret Thalassio ferri clamitatum; inde nuptialem hanc vocem factam.

Turbato per metum ludicro maesti parentes virginum profugiunt, incusantes violati hospitii foedus deumque invocantes cuius ad sollemne ludosque per fas ac fidem decepti venissent. Nec raptis aut spes de se melior aut indignatio est minor. Sed ipse Romulus circumibat docebatque patrum id superbia factum qui conubium finitimis negassent; illas tamen in matrimonio, in societate fortunarum omnium civitatisque et quo nihil carius humano generi sit liberum fore; mollirent modo iras et, quibus fors corpora dedisset, darent animos; saepe ex iniuria postmodum gratiam ortam; eoque melioribus usuras viris quod adnisurus pro se quisque sit ut, cum suam vicem functus officio sit, parentium etiam patriaeque expleat desiderium. Accedebant blanditiae virorum, factum purgantium cupiditate atque amore, quae maxime ad muliebre ingenium efficaces preces sunt.

Primus sollicitos fecisti, Romule, ludos,  
 Cum iuvit viduos rapta Sabina viros.  
 Tunc neque marmoreo pendebant vela theatro,  
 Nec fuerant liquido pulpita rubra croco;  
 Illic quas tulerant nemorosa Palatia, frondes 105  
 Simpliciter positae, scena sine arte fuit;  
 In gradibus sedit populus de caespite factis,  
 Qualibet hirsutas fronde tegente comas.  
 Respiciunt, oculisque notant sibi quisque puellam  
 Quam velit, et tacito pectore multa movent. 110  
 Dumque, rudem praebente modum tibicine Tusco,  
 Ludius aequatam ter pede pulsat humum,  
 In medio plausu (plausus tunc arte carebant)  
 Rex populo praedae signa petita dedit.  
 Protinus exiliunt, animum clamore fatentes, 115  
 Virginibus cupidas iniciuntque manus.  
 Ut fugiunt aquilas, timidissima turba, columbae,  
 Ut fugit invisos agna novella lupos:  
 Sic illae timuere viros sine more ruentes;  
 Constitit in nulla qui fuit ante color. 120  
 Nam timor unus erat, facies non una timoris:  
 Pars laniat crines, pars sine mente sedet;  
 Altera maesta silet, frustra vocat altera matrem:  
 Haec queritur, stupet haec; haec manet, illa fugit;  
 Ducuntur raptae, genialis praeda, puellae, 125  
 Et potuit multas ipse decere timor.  
 Siqua repugnarat nimium comitemque negabat,  
 Sublatam cupido vir tulit ipse sinu,  
 Atque ita 'quid teneros lacrimis corrumpis ocellos?  
 Quod matri pater est, hoc tibi' dixit 'ero.' 130  
 Romule, militibus scisti dare commoda solus:  
 Haec mihi si dederis commoda, miles ero.  
 Scilicet ex illo sollemnia more theatra  
 Nunc quoque formosis insidiosa manent.  
 Nec te nobilium fugiat certamen equorum; 135  
 Multa capax populi commoda Circus habet.  
 Nil opus est digitis, per quos arcana loquaris,  
 Nec tibi per nutus accipienda nota est:  
 Proximus a domina, nullo prohibente, sedeto,  
 Iunge tuum lateri qua potes usque latus; 140  
 Et bene, quod cogit, si nolis, linea iungi,



Quod tibi tangenda est lege puella loci.  
 Hic tibi quaeratur socii sermonis origo,  
 Et moveant primos publica verba sonos.  
 Cuius equi veniant, facito, studiose, requiras: 145  
 Nec mora, quisquis erit, cui favet illa, fave.  
 At cum pompa frequens caelestibus ibit eburnis,  
 Tu Veneri dominae plaude favente manu;  
 Utque fit, in gremium pulvis si forte puellae  
 Deciderit, digitis excutiendus erit: 150  
 Etsi nullus erit pulvis, tamen excute nullum:  
 Quaelibet officio causa sit apta tuo.  
 Pallia si terra nimium demissa iacebunt,  
 Collige, et immunda sedulus effer humo;  
 Protinus, officii pretium, patiente puella 155  
 Contingent oculis crura videnda tuis.  
 Respice praeterea, post vos quicumque sedebit,  
 Ne premat opposito mollia terga genu.  
 Parva leves capiunt animos: fuit utile multis  
 Pulvinum facili composuisse manu. 160  
 Profuit et tenui ventos movisse tabella,  
 Et cava sub tenerum scamna dedisse pedem.  
 Hos aditus Circusque novo praebebit amori,  
 Sparsaque sollicito tristis harena foro.  
 Illa saepe puer Veneris pugnavit harena, 165  
 Et qui spectavit vulnera, vulnus habet.  
 Dum loquitur tangitque manum poscitque libellum  
 Et quaerit posito pignore, vincat uter,  
 Saucius ingemuit telumque volatile sensit,  
 Et pars spectati muneris ipse fuit. 170  
 Quid, modo cum belli navalis imagine Caesar  
 Persidas induxit Cecropiasque rates?  
 Nempe ab utroque mari iuvenes, ab utroque puellae  
 Venere, atque ingens orbis in Urbe fuit.  
 Quis non invenit turba, quod amaret, in illa? 175  
 Eheu, quam multos advena torsit amor!

## Appendix 5

A very brief biography of Ausonius for a teacher's use, with annotated bibliography.

Born in Bordeaux, Decimus Magnus Ausonius lived from around 310 to 395 A.D. and had a career that was, as Colton put it, far from monotonous. [He was a] university professor of grammar and rhetoric, tutor to the son of emperor Valentinian I (Gratian), governor of Gaul and of other provinces, and consul in 379. . . he was [also]. . . one of the last poets to write in classical Latin. "From his prolific pen issued poems of many kinds - epigrams, epitaphs, epistles, verse catalogues, occasional poems, prayers. His greatest achievement is the *Mosella*, a long piece in hexameters celebrating the Moselle River."<sup>1</sup>

Ausonius is widely admired by scholars, and his Latin is quite accessible for our students, esp. those familiar with Catullus and Vergil. Mackail believed that by virtue of the *Mosella*, "Ausonius ranks as last of the Latin and first of the French poets."

BUT

Payson Sibley Wild, not as friendly to the poet, says that "one looks in vain, except in the *Mosella*, and here and there in spots, for that largeness of vision, that simplicity of thought and expression, that word music, which are indispensable in the make-up of a great poet. . . and yet [he grudgingly admits]. . . he was a man capable of deep feeling and lofty emotion. He was both human and humane."

Ausonius was a Christian writer, though few of his writings are overtly religious. Sister Anne Stanislaus defends Ausonius' Christianity, though, she says, "most of his writings. . . contain no evidence of Christian belief; rather, they are generally pagan in thought and style and contain many mythological expressions and references."

As Hopkins discusses, Ausonius' life shows us that "The society of the fourth century may have been stable. It was not static. We have, then, a picture of an achievement-oriented status group, whose members were often geographically and socially mobile. Their position inside the group and the group's position inside society were not directly correlated to the usual criteria of status: birth and wealth. Finally, the teaching profession functioned as a well-used channel of social mobility." Not a bad point to make with our students!

Sivan's book discusses the other channel which Ausonius' family used quite deftly: marriage. Theirs was a family who used their talents to attain prominence. That prominence brought them better marriages. Yet despite the utility of his marriage, Ausonius also seems to have genuinely loved his wife.

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<sup>1</sup> The Moselle runs through Germany, Luxembourg, and France.

Anna Pearl MacVay notes that, among his many elegiac epigrams, “Those to his wife Sabina are among the most charming. He celebrates her household accomplishments, her literary taste, her faith in his honor, and their mutual affection. In the *Parentalia*—poems written in honor of family members and ancestors—he testifies to her nobility of rank and character; and though he lived for more than fifty years after she died, time brought no comfort for his loss.”

Here we have a poet who uses Vergilian and lyric vocabulary to praise, gasp, his wife.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Green says that “appropriate reminiscences of Vergil ring out in the elegy on his wife (11(9)).”

A few other notes from Green’s article in *CQ*: Ausonius’ profession of teaching seems to have colored his writing, as he employed an “‘introductory’ or ‘preparatory’ technique. . . its function is to prepare the reader for an important imitation.” We can also look for “‘contamination’ - the combination or compounding of references in the space of a short phrase, a single line, or a description, which merits especial emphasis.” Ausonius is known for subtle allusion, cases where the original context is pointedly recast or rejected, and cases where the original has been misunderstood. No wonder evaluations of his poetry vary.

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- Frye, David. "Aristocratic Responses to Late Roman Urban Change: The Examples of Ausonius and Sidonius in Gaul." *The Classical World*, Vol. 96, No. 2 (Winter, 2003): 185-196.  
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- , "Ausonius' Use of the Classical Latin Poets: Some New Examples and Observations." *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 27, No. 2 (1977): 441-452.  
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Wedek, Harry E. "A Gallery of Roman Schoolmasters in Ausonius." *The Classical Weekly*, Vol. 27, No. 18 (Mar. 12, 1934): 137-138.

(A bit of fun, but off topic for the unit—you could pass this information off to your French teacher, though).

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