London, 1962 or later) either. Ashurbannipal was king of Assyria from 668 to 627 B.C., so that he could not have had a library ca. 700 BC (xxxix). If Boghazköy is situated in 'Turkey' and not in 'Asia Minor' or 'Anatolia', then Megiddo is to be found in 'Israel' and not in 'Palestine' (xxxix). To be concerned with dying (xli) is not an innovation of our century. Even discarding antiquity, the 14th and 15th centuries AD in Western Europe were the period of the danses macabres. Finally, the accusation of lack of [international] cooperation (in the field of Assyriology?) (xxxvii) is not based on any reality. There is not only the yearly Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, where Assyriologists from all over the world meet to exchange views and knowledge: there are also the projects such as the Toronto based comprehensive edition of Royal Inscriptions, the Rome-based Ebla research and the Paris- and Strasbourg-based Mari enterprise, in which scholars from different nationalities are involved.

All criticism uttered above refers to shortcomings which are easily redressable in a next edition. Having done so, the authors and the publishers will guarantee for this book the place of honour which it surely deserves.

Jozef de Kuyper
University of Malawi

Janan takes her title from the first line of a poem by Shelley published posthumously in 1824. She provides the first stanza on page vi opposite the contents. Along with lines from Coleridge on the ephemeral nature of perception and understanding, Shelley’s thoughts on the fragility of love and relationships set the tone for Janan’s Lacanian exploration of the poetry of Catullus. Her first chapter provides the background and methodology of her approach using the developments of Jacques Lacan which expand first on the theories of Plato and further on those of Freud with respect to the concept of ‘self’ and the definition of ‘self’ as both subject and object of desire. Then Janan explores how ‘self’ can be represented in the terminology of language through metonymy and metaphor, and finally an author’s (particularly Catullus’) conception of ‘self’, while attempting to describe the symptoms of what it is and is not. Needless to say the perception and understanding of ‘self’ changes with respect to time and environment. Attempts at repetition to define the whole can never fully accomplish the unification of the reality of the ‘self’ which is as constant as the rippling surface of a pool of water.

Sensibly Janan does not attempt to demonstrate her approach in order to clarify all of the Catullan corpus in a work of two hundred pages. Instead she focuses on the Lesbia cycle ‘as, for all its taciturnity, the most complete account of a love affair we have from the corpus’ (33). Indeed she proceeds from there. Chapter 2 covers c.1 and the Lesbia poems through c.11. Although Janan passes over c.8, c.50 is included for clarification of cc.2 and 3. In chapter 3 she considers the poems defining the boundaries of Catullus’ relationship with Lesbia, cc.11 and 51, and the oscillations between the two which portray Catullus and Lesbia through rereadings of the two pieces. Examining cc.70 and 72, 75, 76, 83, 92, 104, 107 and 109 in chapter 4 Janan combines the patterns used to read the polymetric poems in order to draw a more completely fractured picture of the relationship through Catullus’ attempt to question Lesbia’s ‘lies’ in the epigrams. Finally in chapter 5 she applies her methodology to the carmina maior which are associated with the Lesbia affair, cc.63, 64 and 68, using cc.63 and 64 as allegorical readings towards an image of the relationship to be read directly in c.68. Janan sees the figure
of Hercules as a mixture of metaphor and metonymy which Catullus uses as a focal point for the images depicted in c.68.

The secondary scholarship on Catullus is extensive. For general works and for the specifics of the poems included here Janan’s twelve-page bibliography is thorough and provides references to the most recent material as well as to forthcoming works such as Roman Sexuality edited by J. Hallett, A. Richlin and M. Skinner. Janan also gives clear and simplified citations for Lacan’s Séminaires which are on the whole unpublished or, in some instances, available in multiple editions—French and English. Her accompanying notes often include expansive and evaluative discussion which clarifies her position in the text.

As Janan acknowledges in her preface, the text of the Catullan corpus is difficult. There are legitimate lacunae and suspect readings. Yet to dismiss as radical and extreme the consideration that the text reflects the ordering and intent of Catullus suggests that we should believe that copyists were not careful as a rule. If later readers do not understand entirely the plans of an author, it does not necessarily follow that the text does not reflect the author’s purposes. Linear verbal and numerical clues present in the text and tightly woven into the fabric of the poems suggest that the author was involved rather than an editor. Regardless of who arranged the poems, however, by ignoring the current order of the text one loses a more lifelike conception of the cycles, interconnections and relationships present in the Catullan corpus.

Not everyone today finds it difficult to accept that the apparent love affair between the man and woman called Catullus and Lesbia is a hinted and partial picture presented through the eyes of Catullus. Our understanding of Catullus’ ‘self’ is enhanced by the contrast between what he says and leaves unsaid and by the contrast perceived between Catullus and other individuals who appear in the corpus. While Lesbia provides the greatest foil against whom Catullus will be measured, the others help to round out Catullus’ image of himself. Janan’s application of Lacanian psychoanalytic principles gives a formulation of what some already have been exploring through other avenues such as
structural analysis. The methods are complementary rather than exclusive. Janan’s approach to Catullus gets to the heart of an old controversy about the validity of psychological analysis of ancient texts. Those who find the approach useful will welcome her method while others may prefer routes providing more apparently tangible results.

Judy K. Deuling
Victoria University of Wellington


Broadly, the themes prioritized in these studies were historiographical. The unifying factor in more recent work,