

Abstract:

**This article describes, reconstructs, and analyses the contents of an unexamined manuscript notebook in the hand of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. The notebook is kept in the Brewer-Leigh Hunt Collection at the University of Iowa. A number of material and textual factors allow the use of the notebook to be dated from May 1820 and to June 1822, the time of the Shelleys' residence at Pisa. The notebook contains transcriptions from Marco Lastri's *L'osservatore fiorentino* (1821) and a translation of more than 250 lines of Homer's *Odyssey*. It therefore reflects Mary Shelley's two central literary occupations of her last years in Italy: her historical novel *Valperga* (1823) and her two-year study of Ancient Greek. Shelley's Greek studies have received little critical attention, but this translation allows for a proper consideration of her method of language learning and can be usefully situated alongside a number of other Greek manuscripts in Shelley's hand in the Bodleian Libraries, Oxford. The Lastri transcription and the Homer translation should lead to a reconsideration of the collaborative dynamics of the so-called 'Pisan Circle' by modifying our view of the coterie as one dominated by English men. New considerations of the roles of Maria Gisborne, Alexander Mavrocordato, and Mary Shelley herself are required, as is a better appreciation of the influence of Mary Shelley's reading on Percy Shelley and Leigh Hunt.**

The Brewer-Leigh Hunt Collection at the University of Iowa contains a previously unexamined notebook in the hand of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley kept under the shelfmark Ms/S54g. The notebook contains a translation in Mary Shelley's hand of

*Odyssey* I. 114–387 and two transcriptions from Marco Lastri’s *L’osservatore fiorentino sugli edifizii della sua patria* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn, 1821). This article will identify, describe, and discuss the provenance of the notebook; suggest how it may have been tampered with, and hypothesise on its original order; situate the Italian transcription among other extant manuscripts in Shelley’s hand, especially those relating to the composition of her novel *Valperga* (1823) and Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem ‘Ginevra’ (1821); and examine the Homer translation in the context of Mary Shelley’s Greek studies at Pisa in the early 1820s.

Ms/S54g is in a brown half-calf binding with marbled boards, and “GREEK EXERCISES OF MRS. SHELLEY” tooled in gold running down the spine. It is bound in a simulacrum of a nineteenth-century binding that was added when the notebook was in the possession of Luther A. Brewer.<sup>1</sup> Brewer added front and rear pastedowns, and a front and rear free end-paper. Stitched into this binding is the Mary Shelley material, in octavo format comprising 30 leaves of laid paper. Each leaf measures (H) 102mm x (W) 150mm and it appears that the notebook, as manufactured and supplied by the Italian stationer, was intended for use in landscape format. The text-block edges have been speckled which suggests commercial manufacture. The paper carries the watermark of a mantled shield containing an animal (perhaps a lion), and is countermarked with the letters “G B A”. This watermark and countermark suggest that this notebook belongs to what has been called ‘a distinct group of Italian parchment-bound Shelley notebooks. Its members vary in size and features [...] they seem to have been purchased in batches from the same source (very likely a Leghorn stationer)’.<sup>2</sup> The “G B A” notebooks are the largest grouping of the Shelleys’ Italian notebooks with the earliest used in 1819.

There are ten such notebooks currently thought to be extant, making Ms/S54g the eleventh.<sup>3</sup> As I will outline in some detail, the earliest dating for the use of Ms/S54g is May 1820 and the latest June 1822, with my best hypothesis being that the notebook was used from June 1820 to late April 1821.

The present folios run as follows: ff. 1r–10v (gathering 1), ff. 11r–18v (gathering 2), ff. 19r–28v (gathering 3), then f. 29 and f. 30 which have been pasted into the rear on a card hook. The writing in the notebook is all in black ink and in the hand of Mary Shelley. Shelley writes in the notebook in two different ways: the leaves containing the Homer translation (ff. 1r–9r, 11r–28v, 30r–v) are written in portrait (with the spine at bottom of the recto pages), and those containing the Lastris transcription (ff. 10r–v, 29r–v) are written in landscape (with the spine at the left of the recto pages). One leaf (f. 9) has a square removed (approx. 15mm x 21mm) at the top outer corner (when viewed in landscape), and the verso of this leaf has been left blank. Another leaf (f. 29) has a small triangle removed from its lower inner corner (when viewed in landscape). The notebook also contains sketches and doodles, which is typical of the manuscript notebooks of the Shelleys.<sup>4</sup> The drawings are in the sharper doodle style of Mary Shelley rather than the more fluid sketched style of Percy Shelley. Looking at Ms/S54g in portrait it contains: doodles that look like bushes (f. 14v top, see figure 1), more polished versions of similar bushes and a sketch of a centipede (f. 15v bottom), and one more detailed drawing of foliage (f. 16r left side).

The notebook came to the University of Iowa in 1934 after Brewer's death in 1933. There is a comprehensive record of the Hunt-related letters and first editions

owned by Brewer in the bibliography he compiled in the years preceding his death, which was published in two volumes under the title *My Leigh Hunt Library*.<sup>5</sup> The extant typescript of the unpublished third volume of *My Leigh Hunt Library* shows that Ms/S54g was due to be bibliographically described, but this volume was destroyed in galleys at the time of Brewer's death.<sup>6</sup> Brewer began collecting books, manuscripts, and letters associated with Hunt in 1920, and the foundation of his collection was purchased at the library sale of Harry Buxton Forman at the Anderson Galleries, New York 4–7 October 1920. In the typewritten card index at the University of Iowa, the entry for Ms/S54g states 'The MS came from the Forman Library'. Unfortunately, the auction catalogue for the Buxton Forman sale does not contain a lot that corresponds to Ms/S54g.<sup>7</sup> Given that Brewer acquired a number of items from this sale, and the relatively low esteem in which Mary Shelley's work was held in 1920, it is possible that Ms/S54g was bundled with another lot he purchased at the sale.<sup>8</sup> Although Ms/S54g does not appear in the catalogue, I see no reason to doubt that it came from Buxton Forman's library.

## I

It can be ascertained from material and textual evidence that the notebook as it now exists is not in its original foliation or gatherings. Although Buxton Forman was a known forger of literary manuscripts and pamphlets, I do not believe that this notebook has been creatively tampered with.<sup>9</sup> It is difficult to say when the reordering occurred. It is likely that Brewer was responsible for placing the two loose leaves to the rear (ff. 29, 30), as the hook that they are attached to matches the paper used for the end-papers, but it is unclear whether these leaves were already loose when he had

them rebound after taking ownership of the notebook. The fact that these leaves were inserted on a later card hook, the presence of a blank page near the centre of the notebook (f. 9v), and the large gap between the two leaves of Italian transcription (ff. 10, 29), suggest that things are out of place. It is also remarkable that the speckles to the edges of the text-blocks do not appear to align between gatherings 2 and 3, whereas they do seem to align between gatherings 1 and 2, which suggests there has been some tampering with their order.

Within the text there are further signs of reordering. Shelley begins her transcription from p. 119 of Lastri's *L'osservatore fiorentino* on a new page (f. 10r) and writes as if she is about to begin a transcription of some length:

Via della Morte, ossia della morta

——— (osservatore fiorentino Vol 1.

She then fairly accurately transcribes Lastri's narrative for all of f. 10r–v before breaking off in the middle of a sentence at the end of the verso. Shelley gets to the foot of the page by writing 'della morte o della morta da questo caso, se n'andò' and the sentence should end 'a casa del marito, che rispondeva nel corso degli Adimari'.<sup>10</sup> It is not only unusual that this neat transcription ends mid-clause and mid-sentence, but it also ends before the central action of the episode, namely Ginevra's return as a ghost, her rejection by her husband and family, her marriage to her lover Antonio, and the ecclesiastical tribunal that follows. According to the present order, the next page was then used to transcribe ll. 115–118 of *Odyssey* I. The transcription of part of a later episode from Lastri occurs in one of the reinserted leaves at the end of the

notebook (f. 29). The fact that this leaf is re-inserted allows one to speculate that it was not originally at the end of the notebook, and may have been closer to the first Lastri transcription. Where these two Italian leaves were originally placed can be deduced by examining the textual evidence surrounding Shelley's Homer translation.

The translation of *Odyssey* I. 114–387 in Ms/S54g appears in the following order: ff. 1r–8v (ll. 297–387), ff. 11r–18v (ll. 114–173), ff. 19r–28v (ll. 182–296), ff. 30r–v (ll. 174–181). It would be highly unusual to translate the text by jumping around in this manner. Looking at the translation itself provides definitive evidence that Shelley did not perform such a perplexing task. Shelley's technique was to gloss difficult words and phrases for three or four lines, before starting a fresh line to write her translation (see figure 1). Strong evidence that the gatherings have been mixed up is provided by the fact that parts of Greek words and the glosses to them occur at the foot of some pages (f. 28v and f. 30v) and then the corresponding complete translation of the line occurs atop a non-sequential page (f. 1r and f. 19r). If we assume Shelley translated the text in order then Ms/S54g would run: ff. 11r–18v, f. 30r–v, ff. 19r–28v, ff. 1r–8r. To reconstruct the original notebook the location of the two stray leaves now inserted in the rear must be ascertained. The gatherings containing ff. 1–10 and ff. 19–28 are comprised of ten leaves each, and therefore we can plausibly suggest that they are complete, despite being in the wrong order. If the end leaf containing the Homer transcription (f. 30) is part of the original first gathering, as its position in the *Odyssey* suggests (ll. 174–181), then the correct order would appear to be ff. 11–18 and f. 30 (gathering 1, 9 leaves), ff. 19–28 (gathering 2, 10 leaves), ff. 1–10 (gathering 3, 10 leaves), f. 29 (loose Italian sheet).

There are two possible hypotheses for the location of f. 29. One is that f. 29 was the first page in the notebook and is a conjugate with f. 30, so that they form the first and last leaf of the first gathering of a thirty-leaf notebook. There are three problems with this positioning: it does not account for the first transcription breaking off mid-sentence, it places the Lastri transcriptions 28 leaves apart, and suggests, if Mary used the notebook from front to back, that she transcribed a later episode (*L'osservatore fiorentino*, I. 183–185) before an earlier one (*L'osservatore fiorentino*, I. 119–121). The second hypothesis, which I favour, is that Ms/S54g was originally a larger notebook, either a forty-leaf notebook in four ten-leaf gatherings or a fifty-leaf notebook in five ten-leaf gatherings. I incline to this view for two reasons. First, the earliest part of the *Odyssey* translated by Mary is l. 114, ἦστο γὰρ ἐν μνηστῆρσι φίλον τετιμῆνος ἦτορ, given as ‘For he sat amongst the suitors sorrowing his dear heart’, which is the second half of a clause that begins τὴν δὲ πολὺ πρῶτος ἶδε Τηλέμαχος θεοειδής (‘The godlike Telemachus was far the first to see her’). It is doubtful that Shelley began halfway through a clause, so we can speculate that there were earlier translated lines from *Odyssey* I in the original notebook.

There are two plausible starting points for her translation: the transition from Olympus to Ithaca at l. 106 or the first line of *Odyssey* I. The first starting point, the transition from as Athene enters the court of Odysseus on l. 106, would require a further single leaf of translation now lost (I call this f. 1+). I suggest that this leaf was originally conjugate with f. 30, which made the outer bifolium of a complete first gathering. In this imagined composition there are three complete ten-leaf gatherings and a final loose leaf of Italian transcription (f. 29). The last leaf of the third gathering is now f. 10, the Italian transcription that ends mid-sentence. Shelley used the first 29

leaves of the original notebook to translate *Odyssey* I (c. ll. 106–387), followed by a blank page (f. 9v), before beginning a transcription from Lastrì on the last leaf of the third gathering (f. 10) which she then continued on to a fourth gathering, of which f. 29 is the only extant leaf. The hypothetical reconstruction runs f. 1+, ff. 11–18, f. 30 (gathering 1, 10 leaves, of which 9 are extant), ff. 19–28 (gathering 2, 10 leaves), ff. 1–10 (gathering 3, 10 leaves), ff. 31\*–39\*, f. 29 (gathering 4, 10 leaves of which 1 is extant). If the starting point for Shelley’s translation was the first line of the *Odyssey* this would require the translation of a further 113 lines of Greek, which would take up approximately eleven pages of the notebook (I call these ff. 1–11\*). This would represent a new first gathering and a first page of a second gathering. I suggest that f. 11\*, in the same manner as f. 1+, was originally conjugate with f. 30, which made the outer bifolium of a complete second gathering. This imagined composition follows the earlier one but with an extra gathering, and so runs: ff. 1\*–10\* (gathering 1, 10 leaves, of which none are extant), f. 11\*, ff. 11–18 (gathering 2, 10 leaves, of which 9 are extant), f. 30 ff. 19–28 (gathering 3, 10 leaves), ff. 1–10 (gathering 4, 10 leaves), ff. 31\*–39\*, f. 29 (gathering 5, 10 leaves of which 1 is extant). Both of these reconstructions create a notebook that provides a suitable beginning and order for the Homer translation, an order for the Lastrì transcription, and an explanation for the two loose leaves.

## II



The two extant leaves of Italian transcription (f. 10 and f. 30) both come from the same source: Marco Lastri, *L'osservatore fiorentino sugli edifizii della sua patria*.<sup>11</sup>

The *osservatore fiorentino* is a guide to the streets and buildings of Florence based on literary anecdotes of famous personages. In both leaves Shelley is transcribing passages in which Lastri is quoting from Benedetto Varchi's *Storia fiorentina* (1721), but it is clear from a collation that Lastri and not Varchi was Shelley's source text.<sup>12</sup>

Mary's transcription of part of two episodes—the story of Ginevra degli Amieri and the story of the duel of Giovanfrancesco Martelli and Giovanni Bandini—is fairly accurate and contains only minor errors.<sup>13</sup> Shelley's journal states that she began reading Lastri on 10 April 1821; she notes that she read the *osservatore fiorentino* for the following five days.<sup>14</sup> Shelley wrote 'Finish the Osservatore F.' in her journal on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April, which probably meant she had finished reading the first two volumes, which relate to *Valperga*, rather than the 1600 pages of Lastri's full eight volumes. The week when this reading occurred can be plausibly suggested as the time when the transcriptions in Ms/S54g were made, as this date is the only mention of Lastri from Shelley's time in Italy, is after the *terminus ante quem* of 'G B A' notebooks, and coincides with her study of Homer (discussed below).

The *osservatore fiorentino* is an established source for Shelley's second published novel *Valperga*. Percy Shelley wrote to Thomas Love Peacock concerning Mary's process of gathering material for *Valperga*:

Mary is writing a novel, illustrative of the manners of the Middle Ages in Italy, which she has raked out of fifty old books.<sup>15</sup>

Mary Shelley acknowledges her reading from Italian renaissance history in the novel's preface, but it is closer to seven than 'fifty old books' that were 'raked' for material. Her preface explicitly acknowledges the use of Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de Sismondi, *Histoire des républiques italiennes du Moyen Âge* (1807–9, 1818); Niccolò Tegrini, *Vita Castruccii Castracani* (1496); Giovanni Villani, *Croniche Fiorentine* (1537); Louis Moréri, *Grand dictionnaire historique* (1674); and Niccolò Machiavelli, *La Vita di Castruccio Castracani* (1532). It is also known from manuscript notes and events in the novel that Shelley consulted Lodovico Muratori, *Dissertazioni sopra le antichità italiane* (1751), Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti, *Viaggi in Toscana* (1751–54), and Lastri.<sup>16</sup> The reading notes Shelley made for *Valperga* are the only extant examples of working notes for a Shelley novel. She began making notes on medieval Italian customs and history in the notebook Bodleian MS. Abinger e. 49.<sup>17</sup>

When she had run out of space in Abinger e. 49, Shelley then made notes in Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 17. These notes were written in the rear of the notebook in reverse, because she was using this notebook concurrently with her husband.<sup>18</sup> Mary Shelley makes notes on Muratori, Villani, Sismondi, Targioni and finally on Lastri which come near the end of this process.<sup>19</sup> The notes from Lastri come from volumes I and II, and Shelley records a range of observations, noting for example the Florentines' 'Great fancy' for performing lions.<sup>20</sup> It is tempting to think that when Mary Shelley ran out of room in this notebook, or when Percy Shelley began using it again for the second part of 'The Boat on the Serchio', she then moved on to copying parts of Lastri into Ms/S54g.<sup>21</sup> But a comparison between the notes made in adds. e. 17 and the transcriptions made in Ms/S54g makes this hypothesis

unlikely. Shelley's note taking for *Valperga* is exemplified by these three notes from Lastri:

no theatre in Florence before 1546–85

É cosa rimarchevole, che le antiche nostre spezierie, qualunque ne sia la causa eran quasi tutte sulle ~~en~~cantonate delle strade

The church of S. Lorenzo built by the Medici existed in Florence in the 14 cent. it was burnt in 1417 <sup>22</sup>

These notes come before and after the duel of Giovanfrancesco Martelli and Giovanni Bandini that is transcribed in Ms/S54g, and show the process of raking which Percy Shelley writes of in the letter to Peacock. These are clearly notes on reading of a very different type to the transcriptions on f. 29 and f. 10. When making notes Shelley thought were relevant to *Valperga*, she notes them in a rough way, mixing between Italian and English, and summarising material: this differs from the accurate transcription of episodes from Lastri that occur in Ms/S54g.

Although Shelley encountered the Ginevra episode and the duel when she was making her research notes for *Valperga*, these two episodes do not provide source material for her novel. Both episodes are unused reading for *Valperga* that she deemed worthy of recording in Ms/S54g. Mary tried to use these transcriptions to facilitate other literary projects. In the case of the transcription of the duel (f. 29) she was unsuccessful. Shelley sent a letter to Leigh Hunt on April 17 1820 proposing the story of the duel to his journal the *Indicator*, which he had founded in 1819. She writes:

My dear Hunt, I do not know whether you think the above story fit for your Indicator. It appears to me that the whole story terminating with the last visit of Marietta to Lodovico would be a moving tale under your pen.<sup>23</sup>

Shelley encloses a transcription of the entire Martelli and Bandini duel, the manuscript of which is kept in the Harkness collection at the New York Public Library. I think it likely that Shelley first copied out the episode into Ms/S54g while she read it from the Tuesday to the Sunday, and then on the following Tuesday she copied it out from Lastri again (this time with fewer errors) to send to Hunt.<sup>24</sup>

Unbeknown to Shelley, her plan for Hunt to write his own version of the duel was mistimed as, in Hunt's words, 'the *Indicator* had long expired'.<sup>25</sup> But Hunt did not forget the *osservatore fiorentino* that Mary Shelley had recommended to him, and later published 'The Florentine Lovers' based on a story found in Lastri in the first number of the Pisan circle's journal, *The Liberal: Verse and Prose from the South*.<sup>26</sup>

Shelley's transcriptions from Lastri in Ms/S54g were not entirely in vain: the story of Ginevra degli Amieri did lead to a literary work, albeit an unfinished one. Percy Shelley's 'Ginevra' has been part of the poet's canon since it was edited by Mary Shelley and published as the first of the 'Fragments' in *Posthumous Poems* (1824). In a footnote to 'Ginevra', Mary Shelley states,

This fragment is part of a poem which Mr. Shelley intended to write, founded on a story to be found in the first volume of a book entitled "L'Osservatore Fiorentino."<sup>27</sup>

It is the first half of this ‘story’ that Shelley copied out on f.10r–v of Ms/S54g. Both Neville Rogers and Carlene Adamson suggest Percy Shelley read Lastri ‘at about the same time’ as Mary Shelley (10–14, April 1821).<sup>28</sup> It is thought that ‘Ginevra’ was then composed from April 10 to mid-May 1821, at which point Percy Shelley left the poem unfinished and began *Adonais*.<sup>29</sup>

The discovery of a transcription of half of the Ginevra story, which I take to have been complete at one time, does not challenge the proposed range of composition dates for ‘Ginevra’ but it does allow for a reconsideration of how the poem was composed. The current evidence for Percy Shelley’s reading of Lastri is based on it being the source for ‘Ginevra’, but Mary Shelley does not claim in her journals, letters, or in the note to ‘Ginevra’ in *Posthumous Poems*, that Percy Shelley actually read the *osservatore fiorentino*. If we accept that at one time Mary Shelley transcribed the whole of the Ginevra episode, then it is possible that Percy Shelley used the Ms/S54g transcription for the story, and never read directly from the *osservatore fiorentino*. The idea that she was copying it for her husband’s use has two points in its favour. First, we know that Mary Shelley attempted to use her other transcription from Lastri to provide material for a literary work by Hunt, so material in Ms/S54g has been already used in the manner suggested. Secondly, we know from Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, which contains part of Mary’s notes for *Valperga* and Percy’s ‘The Boat on the Serchio’, that at Pisa in 1821 the Shelleys were passing notebooks between one another.

The idea that Mary Shelley was the only first-hand reader of Lastri strengthens the idea of the Pisan circle as a collaborative literary environment.<sup>30</sup> Although Mary Shelley only contributed three articles to the circle's journal, *The Liberal*, her role as a reader and disseminator of material impacting upon the work of Percy Shelley and Leigh Hunt is clearly displayed in Ms/S54g. Critical discussion has focussed on Percy Shelley's literary influence on his wife, on his additions to and review of *Frankenstein* (1818), and on Mary's role as a 'keeper of the flame' in her editorial work on her deceased husband's writing in 1824, 1829, 1839, and 1840.<sup>31</sup> But the Lastri material is something quite different. It shows Mary conducting her own research in an Italian-language text on the Florentine Renaissance, within the cosmopolitan literary circle at Pisa, which acts as the spur to 'Ginevra' and, more obliquely, to 'The Florentine Lovers'.

### III

Among the notes for *Valperga* Shelley writes three Greek verbs on the top of a page; she also gives Hunt, in the same letter which contains the transcription from the *osservatore fiorentino*, 'the latest news from Greece'.<sup>32</sup> These two references to Greek hint at Shelley's Hellenic interests that, along with *Valperga*, were her central literary occupation in Pisa. Relatively little has been written on the subject of Mary Shelley's Greek; below is a brief outline of her Greek studies, before a more detailed chronology of her engagement while at Pisa.<sup>33</sup> This contextual summary will be followed by an examination of her Homer translation, which leads to a more exact proposed date for Ms/S54g.

Shelley's study of Ancient Greek language and literature can be placed into four phases. Her earliest learning of Greek came during her courtship with Percy Shelley in London from September 1814 to May 1815, and in her journal from this period she writes of studying Greek grammar, metre, and characters.<sup>34</sup> Shelley's second encounter with Greek literature, albeit in translation, was her reading of Pope's Homer in August 1818 for seven consecutive days.<sup>35</sup> The third period of interaction with Ancient Greek literature and language, and with the politics of a nascent modern Greece, came in Shelley's sustained study of Greek at Pisa from 1820–22. The Homer translation in Ms/S54g is a product of this period. Shelley's last sustained study of Greek was after her return to England in 1823. On her return to London Shelley read Greek to process the grief of losing her husband; she mentions in a letter to Leigh Hunt of October 1823 that 'In the company of Homer I am with one of his best friends—and in reading the books he best loved I collect his acquaintances about me'.<sup>36</sup> There are numerous manuscripts from Shelley's interaction after her return to England (including translations from Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* and *Philoctetes*). These manuscripts are difficult to date: they could be contemporary with her study of Homer from 1823–24, but they could also be the product of Shelley's Greek studies during her summer holiday at Sompting and Arundel in 1827.<sup>37</sup>

Mary Shelley's first three periods of Greek study often coincide with Percy Shelley reading, studying, and composing poetry, drama, and prose on Greek subjects.<sup>38</sup> While Mary first learnt Greek in September 1814 Percy wrote in Greek and read Diogenes Laertius,<sup>39</sup> and in their letters of 1814 Percy included Greek

phrases and epigraphs which Jennifer Wallace has called ‘a special lovers’ code’.<sup>40</sup>

After the third letter from Percy Shelley that included Greek text, Mary writes,

Goodnight my love—tomorrow I will seal this blessing on your lips dear  
good creature press me to you and hug your own Mary to your heart perhaps  
she will one day have a father till then be every thing to me love—& indeed I  
will be a good girl and never vex you any more I will learn Greek and—but  
when shall we meet when I may tell you all this & you will so sweetly reward  
me<sup>41</sup>

Among the affectionate phrases of a flourishing romance Mary has a brief aside with  
a triple vow: to be a ‘good girl’, to cause no further vexation, and to learn Greek.

Although the final vow has been taken seriously, as Mary seeing Greek ‘as a *rite de passage* to the illicit world of free love’, it could be read as an act of sarcastic  
acquiescence if to be a ‘good girl’ and learn Greek is necessary to understand Percy’s  
correspondence.<sup>42</sup> If the statement is taken in this manner it can be seen as an attempt  
by Mary to gain equality through a light rebuff to Percy, as her wishing to continue to  
learn Greek but without a sense of master and pupil. Indeed, to support a sense of  
Mary’s independent attitude towards her Greek, for three days following the letter  
quoted above Mary spent time alone working with her ‘Greek Grammar’.<sup>43</sup>

Mary Shelley’s study of Greek at Pisa from 1820 to 1822, which produced the  
material in Ms/S54g, coincided with three of Percy Shelley’s most important Hellenic  
works: the poetic translation of the Homeric ‘Hymn to Mercury’ in July 1820, the  
now lost translation of Plato’s *Phaedo* from May to November 1820, and the



composition of his lyrical drama *Hellas* that began in October 1821. One of the sustaining factors for Mary Shelley's systematic study of Greece at Pisa could be the presence of a number of other Hellenists, besides her husband, within their circle. The most important of these was Prince Alexander Mavrocordato, but she could also discuss her study of Greek with Thomas Medwin, Margaret Mason, and John and Maria Gisborne. Indeed, during her stay in and around Pisa, Shelley wrote regularly to Maria Gisborne about her Greek study. The reason for this may have been that Gisborne was an accomplished learner of languages, the 'wisest lady' who helped Percy Shelley read the plays of Calderón de la Barca.<sup>44</sup> Maria Gisborne had grown up among diplomats in Constantinople, and her house at Leghorn contained a 'library of ancient and modern books, with almost every variety of dictionary and lexicon in a variety of languages'.<sup>45</sup> It was in this intellectual circle, which would soon count Byron and the Italianist John Taaffe among its number, that Shelley began her most significant engagement with Greek language and culture.

Shelley's Greek studies at Pisa can be divided into three parts: before, during, and after her friendship with Mavrocordato. The first record of Shelley taking up Greek again occurs in a letter from Percy Shelley to Peacock of 21 July 1820 in which he requests 'Jones's "Greek Grammar"' for his wife whom he describes as 'deep in Greek'.<sup>46</sup> Mary Shelley writes to Maria Gisborne five days later,

I have now very seriously begun Greek — I pass [*sic*] five lines or more every day — reading them over again and again, so that now I may boast that I know perfectly sixty lines of Homer's *Odyssey*.<sup>47</sup>

Shelley goes on to complain of her lack of a ‘Grammar’ and informs Gisborne of the request to Peacock. Although we know from her journal that Shelley had a grammar in 1814, it is unknown whether the requested copy of John Jones’ *A Grammar of the Greek Tongue* (1808) did arrive in Italy.<sup>48</sup> What we can reasonably deduce, on the basis of Percy’s claim that Mary was ‘deep in Greek’, and her own claim that she had ‘very seriously begun’ studying, is that she had been learning for some time before July 1820. More than a dozen entries in Shelley’s journal show that she continued to read and study Greek up to December 1820.<sup>49</sup>

Through their friendship with Francesco Pacchiani, a professor of logic at the University of Pisa, the Shelleys were introduced to Mavrocordato on 2 December 1820.<sup>50</sup> Mavrocordato’s family were Byzantine Greeks, employed by the Turkish Empire as provincial governors. As calls for Greek independence swelled towards the end of the 1810s, Mavrocordato left Wallachia for Pisa where he had earlier been a student.<sup>51</sup> Percy Shelley’s attitude to Mavrocordato was mixed: while Mavrocordato was at Pisa, Percy Shelley had academic disagreements with him concerning the Greek language, and confided to Claire Clairmont on the Prince’s departure that ‘He is a great loss to Mary, and *therefore* to me—but not otherwise’.<sup>52</sup> After Mavrocordato left Pisa Percy Shelley’s attitude appears to have softened: he dedicated the lyrical drama *Hellas* to him, written in September and October 1821, and Medwin records that he claimed the Prince had ‘the highest qualities, both of courage and conduct’.<sup>53</sup>

Mary Shelley reported to Leigh Hunt on New Year’s Day 1821 that she had made Mavrocordato’s acquaintance and that he was ‘a very pleasant man profound in

his own language'.<sup>54</sup> Mary began a close friendship with the Prince based around two shared interests: language exchange (Ancient Greek for Shelley, English for Mavrocordato) and Greek independence.<sup>55</sup> The first record of a Greek lesson given to Shelley by Mavrocordato is in a letter to Claire Clairmont of 21 January 1821 and over the next few months these lessons continued;<sup>56</sup> Shelley wrote to Gisborne asking 'Do you not envy my luck' and to Peacock asking 'Am I not lucky to have got so good a master?'.<sup>57</sup> The only texts recorded in her letters and journals from the time of these lessons are Sophocles' Theban plays, but there are frequent enough references to 'Greek' and 'Greek lesson' without the names of texts to suggest that this was not all the material covered.<sup>58</sup> There are two manuscript items that are thought to originate from this period. The first contains Greek paradigms in Mavrocordato's hand, which includes accents and diacritics, with occasional Latin translations in Shelley's hand.<sup>59</sup> The second is a Greek alphabet, with lower and upper case, and variants, in a very formal, perhaps secretarial hand.<sup>60</sup> The leaf is large (312–317 x 216 mm.) and neatly presented: it is designed as a reference document with the alphabet in lower and upper case on the top half. Beneath this alphabet, in the same formal accentual Greek, is a previously unidentified epigraph, taken from Sophocles' *Philoctetes* ll. 502–3:

πάντ' δεινὰ κάπικινδύνως βροτοῖς  
κεῖται παθεῖν μὲν εὖ, παθεῖν δὲ θᾶτερα<sup>61</sup>

This epigraph is then given twice more below in a freer hand. The formal hand in the first half is that of an expert in Greek who could be writing with a specialised nib.<sup>62</sup> The two renditions of the quotation below seem to be in Mavrocordato's hand, so this document could have been written entirely in his hand with two different quills, or written by another Greek at Mavrocordato's request to aid Shelley's tuition. The quoted lines come after Philoctetes is told of the death of Ajax, Nestor, and Patroclus; Philoctetes is suppliant and asks to be taken by Neoptolemus on to his ship in the hope of seeing his father again. The choice of epigraph beneath this learning aid is darkly comic, as Shelley's Greek learning is equated to Philoctetes' ten years on barren Lemnos.<sup>63</sup> In the context of Shelley's correspondence to Gisborne and Peacock in which she speaks of how 'lucky' she feels to have such an accomplished tutor, the choice of a lines which reflect on the precariousness of 'good fortune' (παθεῖν μὲν εὖ) have a particular irony. Jane Stabler has shown that Philoctetes was a 'bow shot metaphor of exile' in Romantic-period writing by Hugh Blair, Wordsworth, and Blake.<sup>64</sup> This could give further support to Mavrocordato's authorship of the document, as a gift from one exile who would soon return to Greece, to another who would spend five tumultuous years out of England.

On 1 April 1821, ten days before she began reading Lastri, Mary Shelley heard of the outbreak of the Greek War of Independence; the next day Mavrocordato asked the Shelleys to translate a Greek declaration of war by Prince Alexander Ypsilanti.<sup>65</sup> The translation was complete by 5 April 1821, and the aim was to have it published in an English newspaper, but this never appeared as an earlier translation of was printed in the *Morning Chronicle* and *Examiner*.<sup>66</sup> The manuscript of the 'Cry of war to the Greeks' is in two leaves in Mary Shelley's hand, with extensive corrections

by Percy Shelley.<sup>67</sup> It is unknown whether Mary or Percy Shelley was the translator of the 'Cry', whether it was a collaborative effort, or whether Mary Shelley was simply taking dictation. The evidence of Mary Shelley's Greek in Ms/S54g, discussed below, supports Charles E. Robinson's suggestion that her classical Greek would have been insufficient to translate Ypsilanti's text on her own.<sup>68</sup> But, although Percy Shelley was highly proficient in classical Greek, it is also unclear whether he would be sufficiently accomplished to quickly translate Modern Greek to this publishable standard. I would agree with Alan Weinberg that there was in fact collaboration between the Shelleys and Mavrocordato, who Mary had been teaching English, and that the three of them used their various level of Modern Greek, Ancient Greek, and English to make this accomplished translation.<sup>69</sup>

On 5 April 1821 Mary Shelley wrote to Gisborne that 'My master the Prince Mavrocordato is hastening to join the Army'.<sup>70</sup> Although the Prince did not leave until June, the language lessons between Shelley and Mavrocordato ceased in April 1821. Shelley did not lose interest in the Greek language or Greek events: she met and corresponded with Mavrocordato regularly, and kept up her Greek throughout April and May, at which time she mentions reading some odes of Anacreon.<sup>71</sup> Mavrocordato's departure in June meant the loss of a friend and teacher for Shelley, but she still read of the Prince's progress in Greece and reported it with pride to Maria Gisborne.<sup>72</sup> Shelley's journal shows that she continued to read and study ancient Greek after June 1821, with regular entries for her study up to March 1822.<sup>73</sup> At this point she began formal Greek learning with another tutor, as she notes in her diary 'My first Greek lesson'.<sup>74</sup> The identity of this second tutor is unknown, but she could have taken him or her from the growing Greek community at the University of Pisa

based around Metropolitan Ignatius of Hungarovlachia.<sup>75</sup> After a few months of lessons with her new tutor, Shelley's most sustained phase of Greek learning appears to come to an end in June 1822.

Reading and studying Homer, particularly the *Odyssey*, was a mainstay of Shelley's Greek learning from summer 1820 to summer 1822. One of Shelley's earliest references to her resumed Greek learning is to parsing lines of the *Odyssey*, and Shelley's journals shows she studied the first five books of the *Odyssey* from July 1821 to April 1822.<sup>76</sup> Homer also seeped into Shelley's correspondence: in two letters to Gisborne in 1821 she plays on the *Odyssey*, at one point attempting to change the gender of the phrase ἄιστος ἄπυστος (I. 242) to 'ἄιτη ἄπυστη', and in a letter of 7 March 1822 she draws *sors Homeri* and quotes four lines from Books IV and V of the *Odyssey*.<sup>77</sup> The degree of engagement that Shelley had with the *Odyssey* while in and around Pisa makes a precise dating of the Homer translation in Ms/S54g challenging. A large range of composition periods are plausible, from around July 1820, when Shelley claimed to be parsing lines of Homer, to Shelley's Greek learning with a new tutor up to June 1822. To make a more precise dating it is necessary to discuss some elements within the translation.

#### IV

There are two possible editions from which Mary Shelley read and translated Homer: the so-called Grenville Homer that Hogg claimed was 'continually in [Percy Shelley's] hand' while at Oxford, or his copy of the 1792 printing of Stephan Bergler's *Homeri Odyssea*.<sup>78</sup> Unlike Grenville, the *Homeri Odyssea* included the

Homeric Hymns and a parallel Latin translation. Percy Shelley acquired the *Homeri Odyssea* at some point before summer 1817.<sup>79</sup> I believe Mary Shelley used the *Homeri Odyssea* and not the Grenville Homer because of moments at which she has been misled by a Latin crib, two of which will be discussed below. Shelley also had English translations available to her: she knew Pope's translation and she may have had access to Chapman, which Percy Shelley had consulted in January 1818.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, at no point does Mary Shelley's work cleave closely to any of the major English translations. She may also have had access to a copy of Johann Scapula's *Lexicon Graecolatinum* (1580) as Percy Shelley wrote to Hogg in November 1817 that he had not 'summoned courage to accept Scapula as my mentor', a statement which could imply that although he had not yet used the lexicon it was available to him.<sup>81</sup>

Mary Shelley's translation of 273 lines from the first book of Homer's *Odyssey* takes up 28 of the 30 leaves in Ms/S54g. The final part of this article will be a discussion of Shelley's general habits in translating Homeric Greek, and I will look in detail at some parts of her translation. Shelley's method is to translate between four and six lines of the original Greek per side, with four being the norm at the beginning and six by the end (when her Greek has improved so as to need fewer glosses). It should be noted that Shelley does not transcribe accents or breathings in Ms/S54g, but the quotations from Homer given below include them. A section of translation on the present f. 1r offers a good example of Shelley's working process. Shelley is translating the following lines:

ἧ οὐκ ἄϊεις οἶον κλέος ἔλλαβε δῖος Ὀρέστης

πάντας ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους, ἐπεὶ ἔκτανε πατροφονῆα,  
Αἴγισθον δολόμητιν, ὃ οἱ πατέρα κλυτὸν ἔκτα;  
(*Odyssey* I. 298–300)

She begins with word-for-word renderings of 298, including fairly detailed grammatical analysis for example ‘ἄνεις (first-person stem) 2 s. imp. ind.’ and ‘κλέος a. s. n.’.<sup>82</sup> She then translates the phrase δῖος Ὀρέστης (‘Godlike Orestes’), and then breaks from these individual translations to a rendering of the whole line: ‘whether have you not heard what fame Godlike Orestes gained’. The process is repeated for the following line, culminating in ‘among all men because he killed his father’s murderer’. The method for both these lines, three lines of glosses followed by a line of translation, forming a four-line unit, is typical of the translations in Ms/S54g. When the glosses run over to a fourth line, as they do in the translation of line 300, Shelley then has a line break and writes her translation on a new clean line. Throughout Shelley makes a horizontal dash between glosses, and often line breaks are also clearly marked with long dashes (see figure 1). These various repeated elements in her method of translation, and in how she presents them on the page, show a consistent process.<sup>83</sup>

Taking a passage of some length from the translated lines in Ms/S54g reveals a number of things about Shelley’s attempt to learn Greek by translating Homer. It must be said that presenting the translation in this fluid artificial way, without the glosses that Shelley placed between each translated line, exposes its lack of unity across lines and of punctuation, two things that presumably were not of central



importance to her during this exercise. Shelley's rendering of Telemachus leading  
Mentes / Athene into Odysseus's house at ll. 126–139 is translated from f. 13r to 14v:

bearing the spear he placed it against the high column

within the well polished closet where truly others –

many spears of the patient bearing Ulysses stord

leading he commanded her to sit on a throne spreading fine tapestries under –

beautiful & artfully made – a footstool was under her feet.

the

near he placed a variegated couch apart from ^ others

ving

suitors – lest the stranger had ^ molestation from the noise

might he be displeased at supper being present with the arrogant

& that he might speak to her concerning his absent father

bringing

a servant ~~brought~~ water poured[ing] out from a jug

above silver

beautiful–golden. ^ a ^ cauldron ~~above with~~

~~silver~~

to wash – near she spread out a polished table

food the venerable housekeeper bringing, placed

placing before many eatables delighting in the things

present

It is clear from the interlineated amendments, deletions, and changes of tense, that Shelley is resolving and revising her translation as she goes along. Shelley gets her translation somewhat tangled around the break of ll. 127–28 of the extract (and again at ll. 138–39) as her habit of translating in discrete units means she loses subjects and sense. Shelley also has problems with gender and inflection, so on l. 133 ‘supper being present with the arrogant’ she fails to include the qualifying noun (‘suitors’ or ‘men’) that is implied in the inflected original, but required in an English translation. Shelley is also somewhat confused about whether to translate Telemachus’ interlocutor as the female goddess Athene (whom Shelley earlier translates as Minerva) or as Mentos, the King of the Taphians. Despite this awkwardness, this section does contain things to be admired at the level of the phrase or word. These include the choice of ‘variegated’ for ποικίλον in l. 132, a translation that is succinct and echoes the ‘tapestries’ (l. 129) on which Mentos / Athene sits, thus promoting the affinity between her and Telemachus; ‘venerable housekeeper’ for αἰδοίη ταμὴν (l. 139) has a witty implication of matronly behaviour; and the now obsolete ‘eatables’

for εἶδατα (l. 140) has a ring of the servant Diggory in Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* who has 'the eatables and drinkables brought upo' the table'.<sup>84</sup>

The choice of 'closet' for δουροδόκης, suggests that Shelley does not recognise the etymology of δουροδόκης; otherwise she would be likely to translate it as 'spear-rack' or 'spear-holder'. δουροδόκης is an uncommon word, which appears once in Homer and is not repeated until Oppian; Shelley's failure to correctly translate it, and her choice of 'closet', may suggest that she was not using a dictionary or lexicon. It may also provide evidence that her text was Bergler's *Homeri Odyssea* and that she referred to its parallel Latin translation for difficult words. Bergler translates δουροδόκης as 'armarium', a word for a closet or chest from which is derived the current English 'armoire'. Shelley's gloss for δουροδόκης takes an entire line in which she writes

δουροδόκης – gen. sing. –                      the closet

Shelley correctly identifies the case and then leaves an 18mm gap before writing 'the closet', which could suggest she translated this word once she had resolved the rest of the line and then checked her crib.

Shelley's translation is clearly the work of somebody learning Greek: she at times makes mistakes and corrects her work, but she also attempts to make it more than a diplomatic translation of the text. On f. 20r Shelley corrects her gloss of the stem of παρτιθεῖ, and also writes a list of endings at the foot of the page, which implies she is still rather uncertain about verb forms. An example of a simple

mistranslation is ἐς Τροίην ἀναβήμεναι (210) on f. 21v as ‘ascended Troy’. Although the verb ἀναβήμεναι, or Bergler’s crib ‘conscenderet’, can literally mean to climb up, in this context it must mean ‘embarked for’. This mistranslation enters her final translation, but on some occasions Shelley corrects her glosses before they reach the line of translation, as when she corrects ‘leaping’ to ‘dancing’ for ὀρχηστούς to form the phrase ‘song and dance’ (l. 152, f.16r). But Shelley is also capable of nuancing her glosses to make an awkward original more pleasant in English. At f.11r she correctly glosses δώματα as ‘acc. plu. houses’, but opts for the more idiomatic ‘house’ for the line ‘he might make a dispersing of the suitors through the house’, showing a distinction between her grammatical analysis and final translation. Shelley’s knowledge of Greek language and grammar appears to improve as the translation continues, and she develops beyond neat words or phrases to offer whole lines that are of interest. As Phemius is given his instrument we are told ἦ τοι ὁ φορμίζων ἀνεβάλλετο καλὸν ἀεῖδεν (l.155), a line which Shelley translates as ‘he striking the harp preluded to sing beautifully’ (f. 16v), with the one-word rendering of ἀνεβάλλετο as ‘preluded’ being of particular interest for its parallels to Percy Shelley’s use of ‘Preluding’ (l. 66) in his translation of Mercury’s lyre-playing in the ‘Hymn to Mercury’.<sup>85</sup> A few lines later, when Telemachus comments on the suitors’ attitude towards Phemius, we are told τούτοισιν μὲν ταῦτα μέλει, κίθαρις καὶ ἀοιδή (159) which Shelley translates as ‘to these indeed such are of care – the harp and song’ (f. 17r), in which she carefully follows the Greek word order and attempts to match Homer’s concision. Some lines later in her speech to Telemachus, Mentis / Athene claims that Odysseus is ‘ἀλλ’ ἔτι που ζῶδες κατερύκεται εὐρέϊ πόντῳ’ (l. 197) which Shelley gives as ‘but yet alive somewhere is detained on the broad sea’ (f. 20v). Again, Shelley cleaves closely to the Greek word order and translates exactly;

‘detained’ is particularly good, as it only hints at Odysseus’ predicament with Calypso.

Elements of Shelley’s translation can help with a more definite dating of Ms/S54g. The number of grammatical errors, the appearance of what appear to be verb stem exercises, and the absence of corrections from a tutor, suggest that it was completed either when Shelley was learning Greek alone (June 1820–January 1821, April 1821–March 1822) or without the oversight of her tutor. The fact that Shelley does not use accents or diacritics when writing in the notebook may strengthen the case for a dating before Mavrocordato’s teaching. These accent marks, which were traditionally ignored by western classical scholars as a later accretion to the ancient writing system, are essential to the phonetics of modern Greek. The omission of these marks makes it likely that this work was not performed under the supervision of someone educated in the modern language, as they would probably have insisted on them for the writing of Greek.<sup>86</sup> The manuscripts of exercises and paradigms from Mavrocordato’s teaching of Shelley consistently include accents and diacritics when writing Greek, a habit Shelley continued in her later transcription of Euripides’ *Alcestis*.<sup>87</sup> By not transcribing accents or diacritics in Ms/S54g Mary Shelley is following the practice of Percy Shelley, who does not copy these marks in transcriptions.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, as Medwin records, Percy Shelley was often vexed by Mavrocordato’s commitment to these accents in his recitations of Aeschylus.<sup>89</sup> This pre-Mavrocordato dating of June 1820 to January 1821 has two other factors in its favour. First it fits with Mary Shelley’s July 1820 reference to parsing the *Odyssey* (rather than later references to reading), which implies an attempt at grammatical and syntactic resolution similar to what we have in the notebook. Secondly, we have

evidence that the Lastrì material, which follows the Homer in the notebook, was copied in mid-April 1821.

## V

The Homer translation in Ms/S54g presents opportunities for further research.<sup>90</sup> The European re-evaluation of Greek literature, by thinkers such as Johann Heinrich Voss, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Andreas Moustoxydēs, and Ugo Foscolo, would have been part of Mary Shelley's literary milieu and her methods of translating Homer can be usefully viewed within the context of their thought. Percy Shelley admired the philological work of Moustoxydēs, and was also translating Greek poetry at the same time as Mary Shelley.<sup>91</sup> A thorough comparison of the concurrent Greek projects of the Shelleys, especially a comparative reading of the 'Hymn to Mercury' and Mary's Homer translation, and further work on the 'Cry of war to the Greeks', could enhance our knowledge of their collaborative relationship. As the translation in Ms/S54g is as much a learning exercise as a literary work, it is also possible to examine it in the context of changing attitudes towards Greek learning in the period. Shelley would have known John Gibson Lockhart's class-based slight on Keats, that he 'knows Homer only from Chapman', which represents an established opinion of Greek learning as the preserve of Public Schoolboys.<sup>92</sup> But Shelley was learning and translating Greek at a time when classical learning was becoming increasingly democratised. For example, in 1805 Richard Valpy published *The Elements of Greek Grammar* which ran to nine editions by 1824, and allowed its readers to begin learning Greek via an English-Greek grammar, rather than the traditional Public

School Latin-Greek approach.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, Lockhart's jibe is symptomatic of the tensions and controversies surrounding the recent spread of classical education in British literary culture.<sup>94</sup> Shelley's Homer translation can also be analysed as part of the growing critical interest in classical translation and adaptation in the long-eighteenth century by women such as Mary Tighe and Elizabeth Carter.<sup>95</sup> Mary Shelley is often cited in these studies, particularly as an inspirational figure to future Hellenists such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning and George Eliot, but Ms/S54g provides material for a consideration of her role beyond merely symbolic status, and could be part of a comprehensive study of her interaction with Greek literature.<sup>96</sup>

Ms/S54g can be examined and assessed in a number of interesting ways, but the one on which I will conclude is its role as a witness to Mary Shelley's intellectual life at Pisa. In August 1821 Percy Shelley visited Byron at Ravenna and successfully persuaded him to join the Pisan circle. While at Ravenna Percy Shelley reflected on the settled period he had enjoyed since January 1820, and wrote to Mary Shelley of their shared need

to form for ourselves a society of our own class, as much as possible, in intellect or in feelings: & to connect ourselves with the interests of that society. Our roots were never struck so deeply as at Pisa and the transplanted tree flourishes not<sup>97</sup>

The contents of Ms/S54g show that Mary Shelley had already formed a 'society' for herself and connected to its interests by the summer of 1821. She connected with the flourishing Greek community, and received tuition from one of its most famous

members, and also forged friendships with classically educated women such as Maria Gisborne and Margaret Mason. She had struck deep roots in the Tuscan soil, and based her second novel *Valperga* on an assiduous reading of Tuscan history as given by Machiavelli, Muratori, and Lastri. The Lastri material in Ms/S54g reveals that Shelley's process of research did not simply rake history for the material of a novel, but also involved accurately transcribing tales that she thought Hunt and Percy Shelley could make use of. The Pisan circle has often been viewed as a cosmopolitan grouping, with the eclectic contributions of the predominantly male authors of *The Liberal* as its best expression. But we can see in this notebook that before *The Liberal* Mary Shelley was a cosmopolitan collaborative force within this group. It is fair to claim that her Homer translation is only a learning exercise, a literal translation to aid Greek learning, and to question what can be gained from an examination of it. This has been a critical attitude taken towards the literal translations of Percy Shelley, with E. B. Murray claiming the *Faust* paraphrase contains 'errors that would have embarrassed a conscientious novice' and that it is 'below criticism'.<sup>98</sup> Shelley himself acknowledged the weakness of literal translation, claiming in a footnote to a later *Faust* translation 'the volatile strength & delicacy of the ideas escape in the crucible of translation, & the reader is surprised to find a *caput mortuum*'.<sup>99</sup> And yet, in Mary Shelley's *Odyssey* translation and her Greek studies more widely, this residue contains fascinating evidence of her ability both to independently engage with foreign languages and cultures, and to connect and collaborate within a society of shared interests and feelings.



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<sup>1</sup> John Fifield at the Iowa Special Collections and University Archives, has called this type of binding ‘a standard Brewer’s Collectors binding’ (Private correspondence, 07. 02. 2017).

<sup>2</sup> *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* Volume XIX, ed. Nora Crook and Timothy Webb (New York, 1997), lxxxvii.

<sup>3</sup> An introduction to ‘G. B. A.’ notebooks is given by B. C. Barker-Benfield in *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* Volume XXIII, ed. Tatsuo Tokoo and B. C. Barker-Benfield (New York, 2002), 27–28. Speckled edges occur in other ‘G B A’ notebooks, e.g. Bodleian MS. Abinger d. 32 and Bodleian MS. Shelley d. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of these drawings are reproduced in B. C. Barker-Benfield, *Shelley’s Guitar* (Oxford, 1992), 67, 72, 80, 82; and *The Journals of Mary Shelley 1814–1844*, ed. Paula R. Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert, 2 vols (Oxford: 1987), I. 83–4, 290, 326, Hereafter, *MSJ*.

<sup>5</sup> Luther A. Brewer, *My Leigh Hunt Library: The First editions* (Cedar Rapids, 1932); Brewer, *My Leigh Hunt Library: The Holograph letters* (Iowa City, 1938).

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<sup>6</sup> See Frank Hanlin, 'The Brewer-Leigh Hunt Collection at the State University of Iowa', *Keats-Shelley Journal*, 8, 1959, 93.

<sup>7</sup> The catalogue contains only one manuscript work by MWS, No. 628, a manuscript of 'The Choice'. The catalogue does contain fair copies of poems by PBS in MWS's hand, e.g. 'Letter to Maria Gisborne' (no. 714) and 'The Mask of Anarchy' (no. 717).

<sup>8</sup> There is some evidence of bundling at the sale, e.g. no. 656, an 1829 printing of *The Revolt of Islam*, which is bundled with a '3 pp.' letter by MWS.

<sup>9</sup> On Forman and forgery, see John Carter and Graham Pollard, *An Enquiry into the nature of certain nineteenth century pamphlets* (London, 1934).

<sup>10</sup> Marco Lastri, *L'osservatore fiorentino sugli edifizii della sua patria*, 3rd edn, 8 vols (Firenze, 1821), I. 121. Hereafter *Lastri*.

<sup>11</sup> Nora Crook has proved Shelley used the 1821 edition, see *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* Volume XII, ed. Nora Crook (New York, 1991), I. Hereafter, *BSM* XII.

<sup>12</sup> Benedetto Varchi, *Storia fiorentina di messer Benedetto Varchi* (Colonia [Augsburg], 1721). For example in the duel episode Shelley follows Lastri's conjugation and punctuation of 'prese una bellissima e favorevole occasione di voler combattere e morir' (*Lastri*, I. 184) rather than Varchi's 'preso una bellissima, e favorevole occasione di voler combattere, e morir' (Varchi, *Storia fiorentina*, 349).

<sup>13</sup> The most significant omission from MWS's transcription is the footnotes. MWS also makes occasional errors in word order (e.g., 'amici suoi' on f. 29r instead of 'suoi amici' at *Lastri*, 184), and spelling (e.g., 'nemistà' on f. 29r instead of 'nimistà' at *Lastri*, 183).

<sup>14</sup> *MSJ*, I. 360–362.

<sup>15</sup> 8 November 1820, *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Frederick L. Jones, 2 vols (Oxford, 1964), II. 245. Hereafter, *LPBS*.

<sup>16</sup> See *BSM* XII, xlix–l.

<sup>17</sup> Bodleian MS. Abinger e. 49, pp. 26, 29–47, 49–91, 93–7.

<sup>18</sup> MWS's notes occur at Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, pp. 234–221. An excellent discussion of the *Valperga* materials in MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, and the shared use of the notebook, is given in *BSM* XII, xxvii–xxxii, xlix–li.

<sup>19</sup> MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, pp. 226–222 rev.

<sup>20</sup> MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, p. 222 rev., taken from *Lastri* ii. 131–136. Crook has noticed that this note is used in the novel: see Mary Shelley, *Valperga: Or, The Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca*, 3 vols (London, 1823) II. 125.

<sup>21</sup> The second part of 'The Boat on the Serchio' is drafted in MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, pp. 208–218 rev..

<sup>22</sup> MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, p. 223 rev. MWS is making notes from *Lastri* I. 164, I. 181–182, and II. 4.

<sup>23</sup> *The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, ed. Betty T. Bennett, 3 vols (Baltimore, 1980–1988), I. 189. Hereafter, *LMWS*.

<sup>24</sup> The letter and transcript to Hunt comprises of 2 leaves kept under the shelf mark Harkness 12, vol II in the Edward S. and Mary Stillman Harkness collection at The New York Public Library. I take the

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Harkness transcription to be MWS's second transcription of the duel for three reasons: it contains less crossing out and revision than f. 29 of Ms/S54g, she includes Lastrì's footnotes, and she does not mistakenly transcribe 'Suoi amici' as she does in Ms/S54g.

<sup>25</sup> 11 July 1821, *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, ed. Thornton Hunt, 2 vols (London, 1862), I. 165–66.

<sup>26</sup> Leigh Hunt, 'The Florentine Lovers', *The Liberal: Verse and Prose from the South*, 4 nos (London, 1822–1823), I. 51–80. Hunt also published a play *A Legend of Florence* (1840) based on the Ginevra story, which acknowledges *Lastrì* as its source.

<sup>27</sup> *Posthumous Poems of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Mary Shelley (London, 1824), 229.

<sup>28</sup> Neville Rogers, *Shelley at Work*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford, 1967), 250; *Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts Volume VI*, ed. Carlene A. Adamson (New York, 1992), 18–20.

<sup>29</sup> For the move to composing *Adonais* see *The Poems of Shelley*, ed. Geoffrey Matthews, Kelvin Everest *et al.*, 4 vols to date (London, 1989–2014), IV. 203. Hereafter *Poems of Shelley*.

<sup>30</sup> See Jane Stabler, *The Artistry of Exile* (Oxford, 2013), 52–3.

<sup>31</sup> For PBS collaborating with MWS in the composition of *Frankenstein* see Charles E. Robinson, 'Collaboration and Ventriloquism in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*', in *La questione romantica* (Napoli, 2009), 29–39. For MWS's editorial work see Michael O'Neill, "'Trying to make it as good as I can": Mary Shelley's Editing of P. B. Shelley's Poetry and Prose', *Mary Shelley in her Times*, ed. Bennett and Curran (Baltimore, 2000) 185–197.

<sup>32</sup> MS. Shelley adds. e. 17, p. 220 rev.; *LMWS*, I. 189.

<sup>33</sup> MWS's Greek studies are referred to, sometimes inaccurately, in Emily W. Sunstein, *Mary Shelley: Romance and Reality* (Baltimore, 1989), 183–197; and Jane Blumberg, *Mary Shelley's Early Novels* (Basingstoke, 1993), 69–70. The only focused discussion of MWS's Greek, viewed predominantly in relation to her remembrance of PBS through Greek after his death, is given in Jennifer Wallace, "'Copying Shelley's Letters": Mary Shelley and the Uncanny Erotics of Greek', *Women's Studies*, 40.4 (2011), 404–428.

<sup>34</sup> See *MSJ*, I. 27–29, 31, 34, 36, 41–42, 64, 67, 78. Claire Clairmont was learning Greek alongside MWS at this point, see *The Journals of Claire Clairmont 1814–1827*, ed. Marion Kingston Stocking (Cambridge MA, 1968), 45.

<sup>35</sup> *MSJ*, I. 224.

<sup>36</sup> 20 October 1823, *LMWS*, I. 398. See Wallace, "'Copying Shelley's Letters'", 421–22. This reading of Homer continued until at least September 1824, see *MSJ*, II. 471.

<sup>37</sup> Bodleian MS. Abinger e. 52 contains MWS's Greek studies based on Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*, comprising a rearranged Greek text with continuous English translation of lines 1–24 and a word-by-word English translation of lines 30–1530, and her work on *Philoctetes*, comprising a rearranged Greek text with continuous English translation of lines 1–9, and a rearranged Greek text only of lines 1–867. The notebook is undated, but on English paper with a Britannia watermark, so evidently later than her return to England in 1823. The speculative dating of summer 1827 rests on a letter to Jane Williams Hogg of 22 August 1827 in which MWS writes 'I read a little Greek, write walk—work—and the days fly' (*LMWS*, I. 567).

<sup>38</sup> For PBS's and MWS's shared interaction with the Prometheus myth see Wallace, "'Copying Shelley's Letters'", 411–419.

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<sup>39</sup> *MSJ*, I. 28–29.

<sup>40</sup> Jennifer Wallace, *Shelley and Greece* (London, 1997), 34. PBS's uses of Greek in letters to MWS occur at *LPBS*, I. 409, 411, 420, 424.

<sup>41</sup> 28 October 1814, *LMWS*, I. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Wallace, *Shelley and Greece*, 34.

<sup>43</sup> 3–5 November 1814, *MSJ*, I. 42–43.

<sup>44</sup> Percy Shelley, 'Letter to Maria Gisborne', ll. 175, *Poems of Shelley*, III. 449.

<sup>45</sup> See the account of Maria Gisborne's childhood in MWS's unpublished notes for a life of William Godwin in Bodleian MS. Abinger c. 60, ff. 33 r–v. The account of the Gisbornes' library is given by Maria's son, see Henry W. Reveley, 'Notes and Observations to the Shelley Memorials', *Shelley and His Circle, 1773–1822*, ed. by Kenneth Neill Cameron, Donald H. Reiman *et al.*, 10 vols to date (Cambridge MA, 1961–2002), X. 1142.

<sup>46</sup> *LPBS*, II. 214.

<sup>47</sup> *LMWS*, I. 155.

<sup>48</sup> Jones' *Grammar* was a popular work that ran to four editions by 1826.

<sup>49</sup> See references to reading Homer on 7, 8, 11, 14 of November 1820 (*MSJ*, I. 339–340), and on Greek generally on 23, 24 November, and 1–14, 20–30, December 1820 (*MSJ*, I. 340–344).

<sup>50</sup> *MSJ*, I. 341.

<sup>51</sup> See Roderick Beaton, *Byron's War* (Cambridge, 2013), 68–70.

<sup>52</sup> 8 June 1821, *LPBS*, II. 297.

<sup>53</sup> Thomas Medwin, *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. H. Buxton Forman (Oxford, 1913), 264.

<sup>54</sup> *LMWS*, I. 173.

<sup>55</sup> Their discussions of Greek independence appear in the correspondence in French between Mavrocordato and MWS of December 1820 to June 1821. Mavrocordato's letters to MWS are extant see Bodleian MS. Abinger c. 45, ff. 64–68, 73–84r, 85–98.

<sup>56</sup> *LMWS*, I. 182.

<sup>57</sup> c. 14 February 1821, *LMWS*, I. 183; 21 March 1821, *LPBS*, II. 277.

<sup>58</sup> MWS reads and finishes *Oedipus Tyrannus* 19–25 January 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 350–51), and *Antigone* on 17 March 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 226).

<sup>59</sup> Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. c. 5 ff. 135–137. Commentary on these pages is provided at *Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* Volume XXII pt. 2, ed. Alan Weinberg (New York, 1997), 435–36. Hereafter *BSM XXII*.

<sup>60</sup> Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. c. 5, f. 150a recto.

<sup>61</sup> 'for mortals all things are full of fear and of the danger that after good fortune may come evil', Sophocles, *Philoctetes*, ed. and trans. Hugh Lloyd Jones (Cambridge MA, 1994), ll. 502–3.

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- <sup>62</sup> Weinberg first suggested the specialised nib in *BSM XXII*, 440.
- <sup>63</sup> MWS read the *Philocletes* on 3, 4 July 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 373).
- <sup>64</sup> Stabler, *The Artistry of Exile*, 39.
- <sup>65</sup> *MSJ*, I. 359.
- <sup>66</sup> On the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> April respectively.
- <sup>67</sup> Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. c. 5 ff. 91, 34. A text of the ‘Cry’ is given in *Mary Shelley’s Literary Lives*, Volume IV, ed. A. A. Markley (London, 2002), 350–53.
- <sup>68</sup> Charles E. Robinson, ‘Shelley to the Editor of the “Morning Chronicle”’: A second New Letter of 5 April 1821’, *Keats-Shelley Memorial Bulletin XXXII*, 1981, 55.
- <sup>69</sup> *BSM XXII*, 440.
- <sup>70</sup> *LMWS*, I. 188.
- <sup>71</sup> See *MSJ*, 360–372. MWS read Anacreon on 18 April 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 363).
- <sup>72</sup> 30 November and 21 December 1821, *LMWS*, I. 209–211, 212–3.
- <sup>73</sup> MWS notes her Greek study in July, August, and December 1821, and in January and February 1822 (see for examples *MSJ*, I. 373–76, 377, 385, 393–97, 398).
- <sup>74</sup> *MSJ*, I. 400.
- <sup>75</sup> See Beaton, *Byron’s War*, 74–75.
- <sup>76</sup> MWS’s concentrated periods of reading Homer occurred at 5–23 July 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 373–75), 1–6 August 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 376–77), 14–18 December 1821 (*MSJ*, I. 387–88), 27–31 January 1822 (*MSJ*, I. 393), 4–21 February 1822 (*MSJ*, I. 394–398), Homer then appears alongside notes of her Greek lessons in March and April 1822 (*MSJ*, I. 401–410). There is no journal for May 1822, but Homer reappears in 1–8 June 1822 (*MSJ*, I. 410–411).
- <sup>77</sup> c. 30 April and 21 December, 1821 *LMWS*, I. 198–9, I. 212–3; *LMWS*, I. 222.
- <sup>78</sup> Homer, *Ilias & Odyssea*, ed. Thomas Grenville (Oxford, 1800 [1801]); Thomas Jefferson Hogg, *Life of Shelley*, 2 vols (London, 1858), II. 373; Homer, *Homeri Odyssea: Batrachomyomachia, Hymni, & epigrammata*, ed. Stephan Bergler (Padua, 1791). PBS’s copies of Homer are discussed in Timothy Webb, *The Violet and the Crucible* (Oxford, 1976), 350–51, but Webb is unaware of the Bergler edition.
- <sup>79</sup> PBS began reading the Homeric Hymns in summer 1817, which he could not have done in Grenville (*MSJ*, I. 176–7). After using the Bergler he requested a copy of the Hymns alone (*LPBS* I. 565), and he later received the *Homeri Hymni et Epigrammata*, ed. Hermann (Leipzig, 1806). The Bergler edition the Shelleys used is now kept in the Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, New York Public Library. The existence of this text answers the problem of a text for Homer’s Hymns posed in *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts* Volume XVIII, ed. Nancy Moore Goslee (New York, 1996), liv–lv.
- <sup>80</sup> *MSJ*, I. 190.
- <sup>81</sup> 23 October 1817, *LPBS*, I. 569.

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<sup>82</sup> Incidentally the gloss to ἀῖετις is incorrect, it is in the present tense.

<sup>83</sup> Parallels could be drawn between this translation and PBS' earlier literal paraphrase of Goethe's *Faust* (Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. c. 4, ff. 142r–171v).

<sup>84</sup> Oliver Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer: Or, the Mistakes of a Night* (London, 1773), 18.

<sup>85</sup> *Poems of Shelley*, III. 513.

<sup>86</sup> Later in the century female learners of Greek were mocked for their inability to these accentual Greek, a point raised by Elizabeth Barrett-Browning in *Aurora Leigh* (1856), when Romney calls her marginalia 'lady's Greek / Without the accents' (II. 76–7). It seems MWS only wrote so-called 'lady's Greek' under PBS's influence and before her time with Mavrocordato.

<sup>87</sup> See MS. Shelley adds. c. 5, ff. 135–137, ff. 141–145.

<sup>88</sup> For examples see Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 12, p. 56; Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 18, p. 164 and back pastedown; Bodleian MS. Shelley adds. e. 6, pp. 68–69, 143.

<sup>89</sup> Medwin, *Life*, 263.

<sup>90</sup> There is also further work to be done on the transmission of Ms/S54g up to Buxton Forman's ownership, which may reveal more of the murky world of collecting the Shelleys in the nineteenth century.

<sup>91</sup> Medwin, *Life*, 263.

<sup>92</sup> Z. [John Gibson Lockhart], 'Cockney School of Poetry No IV.', *Blackwood's Edinburgh magazine* (Aug., 1818), 522. An excellent summary of School and University education for men in Greek is provided in Isobel Hurst, *Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer* (Oxford, 2006), 11–27.

<sup>93</sup> Richard Valpy, *The elements of Greek grammar: With notes, for the use of those, who have made some progress in the language* (London, 1805).

<sup>94</sup> The tensions and social inferences of classical learning in the nineteenth century are discussed in Edith Hall and Henry Stead (eds.), *Greek and Roman Classics in the British Struggle for Social Reform* (London, 2015).

<sup>95</sup> See for example Hurst, *Victorian Women Writers and the Classics*, 52–100; and Shanyn Fiske, *Heretical Hellenism: Women Writers, Ancient Greece, and the Victorian Popular Imagination* (Athens OH, 2008).

<sup>96</sup> See for example U. C. Knoepfelmacher, 'On Exile and Fiction: The Leweses and the Shelleys', in *Victorians Reading the Romantics: Essays by U. C. Knoepfelmacher*, ed. Linda M. Shires (Columbus OH, 2016), 76–94

<sup>97</sup> 15 August 1821, *LPBS*, II. 339.

<sup>98</sup> E. B. Murray, *The Bodleian Shelley Manuscripts Volume XXI* (New York, 1995), 476–7. Hereafter, *BSM XXI*.

<sup>99</sup> See MS. Shelley adds. c. 4 f. 128r. Reproduced in *BSM XXI*, 82–83.