According to W.H. Auden, the importance of classics is fundamental also in contemporary literature. Not by chance, in his poems Greek philosophy and tradition are essential elements. For instance, in “Lay your Sleeping Head, my Love” (1937) the poet recasts some leitmotifs of Plato’s philosophy and Greek literature – namely the role of Venus and the importance of Heavenly Love – in order to create a connection between himself and the classical tradition. “Lay your Sleeping Head, my Love” and five more poems by Auden are analyzed in this paper, with the purpose of exploring the importance of the classics and of the topic of love. To this end, “Lay your Sleeping Head, my Love” can be considered as a point of connection with the other poems that have been examined. Such an interconnected reading allows the exploration of Auden’s themes and style, triggering a meditation on his complicated relationship with Modernism and the historical events of the first half of the twentieth century.

**Keywords:** W.H. Auden, Modernism, Plato, Poetry, Sympathy