

WHO SPEAKS THE FINAL LINES? CATULLUS 62: STRUCTURE AND RITUAL

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POEM 62 IS ONE of two wedding poems composed by Catullus: equally important for our purposes, it is also one of Catullus' two amoebean poems, the other being, of course, poem 45. A re-examination of the structure of Catullus 62 in light of the conventions of amoebean poetry and consideration of certain features of Roman wedding ritual enable us to identify the speaker of the final lines and also shed new light on the text and interpretation of this poem.

In addition to poems 45 and 62 of Catullus, we have Latin amoebean poems from Vergil (*Eclogues* 3, 7, 8), Horace (*Odes* 3.9), Calpurnius Siculus (2 and 4), and Nemesianus (2 and 4); in Greek we have Theocritus *Idylls* 5 and 8. Two features are characteristic of these poems: (i) two speakers engage in a singing contest in which the second tries to "cap" the first by variation on the words and/or ideas of the first, and (ii) although the amount of introductory material may vary, in the contest itself the two speakers are each given the same number of lines.¹

In Theocritus *Idyll* 5 the contest proper involves Comatas and Lacon. Each sings fourteen couplets. Comatas then sings a fifteenth but Morson cuts the contest short and does not allow Lacon to respond. In *Idyll* 8 Menalcas and Daphnis first sing four 4-line stanzas apiece, followed by two transitional lines; and then each singer has a section of eight lines. In both of these *Idylls* there is a considerable amount of introductory material which is arranged with no strict symmetry.

For Vergil the same "rules" apply. In *Eclogue* 3 Damoetas and Menalcas, after a certain amount of preliminary abuse, call on Palaemon to be the judge of their contest. They then each sing twelve couplets alternately. The poem ends with Palaemon declaring the match a draw. Meliboeus recounts the contest between Corydon and Thyrsis in *Eclogue* 7: each competitor sings six 4-line stanzas and Meliboeus concludes the poem with a couplet.

The following works will be cited by author's name alone: R. Ellis, *Catulli Veronensis Liber* (Oxford 1878); E. Fraenkel, "Vesper Adest," *JRS* 45 (1955) 1-8 (= *Kleine Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* 2 [Rome 1964] 88-101); A. Rossbach, *Untersuchungen über die römische Ehe* (Stuttgart 1853); H. Weber, *Quaestiones Catullianae* (Gotha 1890).

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¹Servius ad Vergil *Eclogue* 3.28: *amoebaeum est quotiens quae canunt et aequali numero versuum utuntur et ita se habet ipsa responsio, ut ad maius aut ad contrarium aliquod dicant.*

The structure of the competition in *Eclogue* 8 is more complex. The contest is introduced by Vergil himself. Damon and Alpheisiboeus then each sing one long song consisting of forty-five lines. Each of these songs has nine sections which are grouped together into three larger divisions with a 5-, a 4-, and a 3-line section plus refrains. The songs are exactly symmetrical except in the last three pairs where Damon sings 4+R, 5+R, 3+R, while Alpheisiboeus has 5+R, 3+R, 4+R.²

Horace *Odes* 3.9 has no introductory material and no conclusion: it consists entirely of the contest between two lovers. Each speaker is given three stanzas with the man taking the lead and the woman "capping" whatever he says.

The same pattern is evident in later poets, who may be judged, in some respects, to be imitative. In Calpurnius Siculus' *Eclogue* 2, Thyrsis judges the contest between Idas and Astacus. The contest follows a 26-line introduction and consists of eight pairs of 4-line stanzas and one pair of 3-line stanzas. The poem concludes with three lines in which Thyrsis passes judgment. *Eclogue* 4 has a very long introductory discussion between the judge Meliboeus and one of the contestants, Corydon. In the contest Corydon and Amyntas each sing six 5-line stanzas. Corydon sings a seventh, but before Amyntas can respond Meliboeus breaks off the contest. Nemesianus also has two amoebean poems in his small collection. In both the poet himself introduces the contest; there is no character who plays the part of the judge. *Eclogue* 2 has a 19-line introduction followed by Idas' 33-line song; the poet inserts a 2-line transition in his own voice. The 33-line song of Alcon is followed by three lines in conclusion, again in the poet's own voice. *Eclogue* 4 opens with the poet's 13-line introduction. Mopsus and Lycidas each sing five 5-line stanzas. These ten stanzas of the contest are each followed by a one-line refrain, marking the transition from singer to singer.

Catullus 45 has two stanzas of seven lines (one for Acme and one for Septimius) plus refrains, as well as a concluding stanza spoken by the poet himself. It is, therefore, no surprise—indeed it is what we would expect—that such symmetry can be observed in the amoebean contest in Catullus 62. The poem has been badly mutilated in its transmission (a point to which I shall return), but enough remains to reveal that, in the contest between the two choruses, Catullus was observing the "rules" of amoebean poetry. What is more, and what may occasion some surprise is that, to judge from the first ten lines, Catullus also observes a strict symmetry in the introductory material.

²For analysis of the structure of this *Eclogue*, see O. Skutsch, "Symmetry and Sense in the *Eclogues*," *HSCP* 73 (1969) 153–158. Skutsch omits line 76 and does not insert 28a. He also makes some interesting observations on the structure of the introductory material.

The poem is written for two choruses, one of *iuvenes*, friends of the groom, the other of *innuptae*, friends of the bride. There is no dispute about the broad structure of the poem: an introductory section (1-19), the competition proper consisting of three pairs of stanzas (20-58), and a conclusion (59-66).³

The introduction can itself be divided into three sections. Lines 1-4 are addressed to the *iuvenes*, 6-9 to the *innuptae*, and 11-18 again to the *iuvenes*. Each of these sections is followed by the refrain, which clearly serves as an important structural device. Most critics assign the first and the last of these three parts to the *iuvenes* and the second to the *innuptae*.⁴ But these sections should be spoken to the choruses by the appropriate chorus leaders rather than by the choruses themselves.⁵ This would mark a clear separation of the introductory lines from the choral competition. In the first stanza the leader of the chorus of young men sees Hesperus and urges his companions to ready themselves for the contest. The leader of the girls' chorus notes this activity and calls on her companions to prepare as well. The boys' leader then turns to admonition: the competition will be tough; the girls are well-rehearsed; the boys have been careless in their preparation; the boys will probably lose but must give it their best.⁶ Furthermore, the "dramatic" development is improved by assigning these lines to the chorus leaders rather than to the entire choruses.

The structure of the competition proper is in fact quite simple. With the girls taking the lead (after all, they had practised!), the two choruses each have three stanzas. The first pair have been transmitted with no damage and suffice to show that Catullus follows the conventions of amoebean song, giving the same number of lines to the boys as to the girls. Through a brilliant play on the girls' language, changing sometimes no more than a word or two, the boys respond. Each of these stanzas is followed by the refrain, as was each of the three introductory sections. Although all but the first line of the girls' next stanza together with the beginning of the boys' stanza has been lost, there is no reason to doubt that the same

³Earlier editors have proposed more elaborate schemes, but the broad outline here described represents the consensus of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century scholarship. On earlier suggestions see Ellis 100-102.

⁴Of all of the editions and discussions I have seen, only Weber (12-35) dissents from this distribution of the first twenty lines.

⁵R. Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus* (Oxford 1889) 241, suggested that the first two stanzas should be assigned to one of the boys and one of the girls respectively. I would also assign the third stanza to the leader of the boys, a suggestion for which U. Wilamowitz (*Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos* 2 [Berlin 1924] 278) had made some allowance.

⁶There are no imperatives in this poem except in the introductory and concluding sections: direct exhortations in this poem are restricted to the introduction and conclusion.

symmetrical structure obtained. Each of the stanzas will have been at least six lines long plus refrains.⁷ With the third pair of stanzas we encounter something of a problem. As transmitted by the manuscripts, the girls have nine lines followed by the refrain, whereas the boys have ten lines with no refrain. There are two possible explanations: either (i) for this pair of stanzas Catullus has loosened the strict symmetry which he is seen to observe in those parts of the poem where it is not mutilated, and which he can be presumed to have observed in the mutilated sections, and intends the ten lines of the boys to balance the nine lines plus refrain of the girls,⁸ or (ii) a line has fallen out of the girls' section. The first is possible, but the second is correct, as a closer examination reveals.

The last three lines of these similes are closely parallel.

- 45 *sic virgo, dum intacta manet, dum cara suis est;*
 46 *cum castum amisit polluto corpore florem,*
 47 *nec pueris iucunda manet, nec cara puellis.*
 56 *sic virgo, dum innupta⁹ manet, dum inculta senescit;*

⁷I take it to be self-evident that there is a lacuna after line 32. K. Lachmann (*Q. Valerii Catulli Veronensis Liber* [Berlin 1829]) proposed a loss of sixty lines, M. Haupt ("Quaestiones Catullianae," in *Opuscula* [Leipzig 1875] = *Quaestiones Catullianae* [Leipzig 1837] and notes) a loss of thirty, on the assumption that the lacuna was the result of the loss of one or two pages from the archetype. It is clear, however, that lines 33–37 respond to the girls' accusation that Hesperus is a thief. The lacuna must be no less than seven lines (at least five lines of the girls' stanza, the refrain, and at least one line of the boys' response), but it is unlikely that it is much longer than that. The similes of the third pair of stanzas form the climax of the competition and were probably the longest sections.

⁸This is the argument of Fraenkel's "Vesper Adest."

⁹In passing I draw attention to an interesting problem in lines 45 and 56. In his discussion *de figuris verborum* (*Inst.* 9.3.16), Quintilian cites Catullus: *Catullus in epithalamio*: "dum innupta manet, dum cara suis est," cum prius "dum" significat "quoad," sequens "usque eo." The second half of this quotation clearly refers to line 45. All modern editors accept the reading *dum . . . dum . . .* and Quintilian's explanation of its meaning. As to *innupta*, Fordyce's comment is typical: "by a slip of memory he has *innupta* for *intacta*." (C. J. Fordyce, *Catullus: A Commentary* [Oxford 1961] 259). There can be no doubt that in the first half of line 45 *intacta* must be the right reading. The girls are entirely concerned with the loss of attractiveness and attention which the flower/girl suffers when "touched" (*carptus* [43]; *polluto corpore* [46]). Quintilian has misremembered the line, but, as S. Linde ("Emendatiunculae," *Hermes* 25 [1890] 639–640) argued, the reason for misremembering was that *innupta* was in fact the reading of the very similar line 56 in which the same unusual use of *dum . . . dum . . .* occurs. Whereas the girls are concerned that the flower/girl remain *intacta*, the boys, with a slight variation so typical of this poem, refer to the vine/girl as *innupta*. This is in keeping with their emphasis on the vine/girl as *vidua* (49) or *marita* (54). Weber (73–75), in the same year (1890), argued for *innupta*, observing that *intacta* has nothing to do with the thought of line 53 nor with the *par conubium* of line 56. This reading must be correct and is the most sensible way of accounting for Quintilian's mistake. Yet it does not appear in the text of any printed edition; and not even in the *apparatus criticus* except in Mynors's Oxford text (1958) and Eisenhut's Teubner (1983).

- 57 *cum par conubium maturo tempore adepta est,*
 58 *cara viro magis et minus est invisā parenti*

In both similes we have *sic virgo, dum . . . , dum . . .*. In both the next line begins with a subordinate *cum*-clause and each has an ablative phrase at the same point in the line with very similar sound; lines 47 and 58 are clearly parallel. Similarly, 42–44 and 53–55 are parallel, as are 39 and 49:

- 42 *multi illum pueri, multae optavere puellae;*
 43 *idem cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui*
 44 *nulli illum pueri, nullae optavere puellae:*
 53 *hanc nulli agricolae, nulli coluere iuveni:*
 54 *at si forte eadem est ulmo coniuncta marita,¹⁰*
 55 *multi illam agricolae, multi coluere iuveni:*
 39 *ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis*
 49 *ut vidua in nudo vitis quae nascitur arvo*

This leaves only lines 40–41 and 50–52:

- 40 *ignotus pecori, nullo convulsus aratro*
 41 *quem mulcent aurae, firmat sol, educat imber;*
 50 *numquam se extollit, numquam mitem educat uvam,*
 51 *sed tenerum prono deflectens pondere corpus*
 52 *iam iam contingit summum radice flagellum;*

While it is not possible to point to the same syntactical symmetry that is found in the other lines of this pair of stanzas, it does seem most unlikely that the imbalance, if it was intentional, should occur here in an otherwise perfectly symmetrical pair. Rather, we should assume the loss of a line, probably after 41, and perhaps beginning with *iam iam*, as was suggested by Spengel.

We must also consider whether or not the refrain should be inserted after line 58. If the refrain is left out there is no clear sign to mark the end of the competition. It is, in that case, blurred into the conclusion. Furthermore, the refrain is present at the end of all of the preceding stanzas and its absence here is striking. We must digress and note the purpose of the refrain. On this Fraenkel was right: the refrain is used to separate the words of the boys from those of the girls.¹¹ I would simply point out that it follows from this observation that the refrain indicates a change of speaker. Wilamowitz made this point explicitly.¹² This much seems obvious, but is either ignored or disbelieved by many editors and commentators when deciding whether or not to insert the refrain after 58. There is virtual

¹⁰*marita* is the reading of T and is to be preferred to *marito* printed in Mynor's and Thomson's texts. (Professor Thomson intends to print *marita* in his forthcoming edition and commentary.)

¹¹Fraenkel 2 (with note).

¹²I am not sure who speaks the refrains. Wilamowitz (above, n. 5) argues that they belong to Catullus himself. Fraenkel's hesitation on this point (3) is not unjustified.

unanimity that the boys speak the final lines. If they do, then the refrain must be left out.

But do the boys speak the final lines?¹³ First the content. The arguments of the final lines continue the boys' legal tone, but with the girls' emphasis on the family, especially the mother. The girls complained that Hesperus tears the maiden away from her mother's embrace (21-22), while the boys drew attention to the fact that the men had made an agreement (28). As Commager notes: "The girls' appeal to the family, and the boys' appeal to law, are at last one."¹⁴ In the final lines the bride is urged to accept this husband because both her father and her mother have given their rights in her virginity to the groom. The blending of the two viewpoints which were presented in the contest makes it impossible to determine, *a priori*, who speaks the final lines. The boys or the girls, or even Catullus himself could express such thoughts. Regardless of who speaks these lines, it is clear that the boys win the contest. Indeed, if the girls had won there would have been no marriage; hardly appropriate for a wedding song! So then, either (i) the boys (or their leader) insist on their victory and tell the bride that she ought not to resist because her parents have a greater say in what happens to her—certainly harsh to modern sensibilities and permitting no resolution of the conflict between the boys and the girls; or (ii) the girls (or their leader), conceding defeat, encourage their companion not to resist *talem coniugem*, especially since her father and mother have given him their rights over her; or (iii) the poet resolves the contest by giving advice to the bride. In either (ii) or (iii) the refrain should be inserted after 58 indicating a change of speaker.

The structure of the poem provides the solution. If we let G=girls, B=boys, L=chorus leaders, and R=refrain; and if, in addition, we identify the pairs of stanzas with numbers we can produce the following diagram down to line 58, allowing for the possibility that the refrain should be inserted after 58:

| | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1BL (4 lines + R) | 1GL (4 lines + R) |
| | 2BL (8 lines + R) |
| 3G (5 lines + R) | 3B (5 lines + R) |
| 4G ([6+?] lines + R) | 4B ([?+6] lines + R) |
| 5G (10 lines + R) | 5B (10 lines + R) |

If all that we knew about the rest of this poem was that it had one more stanza in conclusion, then, to judge from the clear pattern presented we

¹³Only Lachmann (above, n. 7); M. Haupt, "Quaestiones Catullianae," in *Opuscula* (Leipzig 1875) (= *Quaestiones Catullianae* [Leipzig 1837] and notes); Pleitner (cf. Ellis 100-102); and Weber (3-12) have argued otherwise. Of these, Weber tried, unsuccessfully, to divide the lines between the boys and girls. Haupt (35-36, with note) later changed his mind and assigned these lines to the boys.

¹⁴S. Commager, "The Structure of Catullus 62," *Eranos* 81 (1983) 21-33, at 32.

would quite reasonably conjecture that that stanza should be described as "2GL (8 lines +R)." This would provide a stanza corresponding to lines 11-19 and would preserve the strict alternation between the boys and the girls which is observed throughout the rest of the poem. This is, I believe, the right designation for what we have. With the refrain after 58 we have also lost the first line of the conclusion, a line which would probably have removed any confusion as to the speaker. In T and V we have the second line beginning with *et tua nec* (T) or *et tu nec* (V), which is emended by many of our later manuscripts and all modern editors to *et tu ne* or *at tu ne*, but which may be sound. Meerwaldt provides a supplement: *iam satis.—at vivas tali cum virgine coniunx*;¹⁵ This may be on the right track. The speaker now urges the couple to live in harmony with one another as is done in the final stanza of poem 61. It may be on the right track, but it is not satisfactory. It contains no indication of the speaker and it presumes that line 59 can be printed as *at tu: ne pugna cum . . .* Line 59 in T reads: *et tua nec pugna cum tali coniuge virgo*; V read *et tu nec. . .* The emendation of *nec* to *ne* is an easy one, and most editors assume that *et tu ne pugna . . .* is the correct reading. Fraenkel has argued very persuasively that *et tu* is equivalent here to the Greek phrase καὶ σὺ, which is used to denote "the transition from a paraenetic tale or general maxim to its application to the case in hand."¹⁶ But if a line is missing before line 59, then this argument matters little. Weber,¹⁷ noting Baehrens's objection¹⁸ that it is difficult to supply *cum eo* or *ei* with *pugnare* in line 60 when it was already necessary to understand *te*, altered the punctuation and construed *cum tali coniuge* with *non aequom est pugnare*. He then left *nec pugna* to stand on its own, assumed that *tua* agreed with *virginitas*, which he believed had been in the missing line, and, finally, altered *et* to *est*. Baehrens' objection is important, but I do not believe that Weber has found the solution. If we accept *nec* (or *ne*) *pugna* as sound, then the word order would most naturally conjoin *cum tali coniuge* to this imperative. But if *non aequom est pugnare* is treated as a parenthetical and general maxim, and if *pater . . . ipse* is taken more closely with *cum tali coniuge*, then we need only understand *te* : "And do not fight, maiden—fighting is not proper—against such a husband, to whom your father has given <you>." I would retain *nec*. In the first line there will have been at least one other imperative. This use of *nec* is best illustrated from Catullus 8.8-9: *tu quoque inpote<ns noli,> / nec quae fugit sectare, nec miser vive*. Whatever was read at the beginning of line 59 is now obscured by the loss of the preceding line. *et tu* is an obvious and easy remedy for *et tua*, but it cannot stand with *nec*, and it is a remedy only if there was no enjambment from the preceding line.

¹⁵ J. D. Meerwaldt, "Over en uit Sappho's Epithalamia," *Hermeneus* 28 (1956/7) 115.

¹⁶ Fraenkel 6.

¹⁷ Weber 4-6.

¹⁸ W. Baehrens, *Catulli Veronensis Liber* (Leipzig 1876) 334.

The structure here proposed assumes the loss of at least seven lines after 32, the loss of a line after 41, and the loss of two lines between 58 and 59, one of which was the refrain. This may seem an inordinate number of lacunae to posit for such a short poem. But loss of lines is characteristic of the transmission of this text. Since similar omissions can be demonstrated beyond doubt, it should surprise us little if more were found.

The textual tradition of Catullus is not good. All of our manuscripts (with the exception of **T**) derive ultimately from the lost Veronensis (**V**) which can be reconstructed with a considerable degree of certainty from **O**, **G**, and **R**. Yet even then we have only a poor representation of the original text. The situation is slightly better for poem 62. Fortunately, this poem was included in a ninth century florilegium, the codex Thuanus, or **T**, as it is usually designated. With **T** we have a witness to Catullus' text independent of **V**. **T** alone has preserved a number of readings which are clearly authentic. But **T** is also capable of preserving nonsense.¹⁹ The use of **T** with **V** allows us to reconstruct an archetype (**A**). But even this archetype is not a very reliable representation of the original text, as is demonstrated most convincingly by the lacuna after line 32, which is at least seven lines long. In addition to this major lacuna in the archetype, **T** preserves line 14,²⁰ whereas it omits three lines that were in **V**, namely 43, 44, and 62. As mentioned, this is a characteristic fault of the transmission of the text of this poem. Eduard Fraenkel wrote: "... the readings of **T** are at several points, though not of course always, clearly superior to those of **V**, a salutary warning to editors not to practice at all costs a 'conservative' criticism where we have nothing but **V** to go on."²¹ I would suggest that even where we have **V** and **T** to go on it is a dangerous procedure "to practice at all costs a 'conservative' criticism," especially with regard to lacunae: both **V** and **T** preserve(d) lines not found in the other, and both omit(ted) lines which are clearly required. To suggest the loss of lines in the archetype at two other places is not an act of reckless irresponsibility.

What then is the "demand on the reader" in this poem? The answer is to be found in real Roman wedding ceremonies.²² On the morning of the wedding day the auspices are taken and the bride, with her hair arranged

¹⁹E.g.: 13 *memora psilequod*; 50 *quam muniteam ducaturam*.

²⁰Professor Thomson has pointed out to me that, before the discovery of the Thuanus, Parrhasius had a manuscript, now lost, which also included line 14. So Parrhasius and **T** provide independent evidence for the line.

²¹Fraenkel 3.

²²The fullest accounts of Roman wedding ceremonies are those of Rossbach; H. Blümner, *Die Römischen Privataltertümer* (Munich 1911) 341-372; J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Roman Women* (London 1962) 173-189, who follows H. J. Rose, *The Roman Questions of Plutarch* (Oxford 1924) and W. Warde-Fowler, *Social Life at Rome in the time of Cicero* (London 1908) Ch. 5; and S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage* (Oxford 1991): see also J. Heckenbach, "Hochzeit," *RE* 8.2 (1913) 2131-33.

in the special style of the *sex crines*, wearing a *tunica recta* bound with a woolen girdle, a flame-coloured veil, matching shoes, and a garland, is escorted by the *pronuba* into the atrium of her parents' house. There the *pronuba* joins the right hands of the bride and groom, perhaps the most significant symbol of the wedding ceremony.²³ Depending on the type of marriage, certain other rites are performed, usually including a sacrifice. The wedding banquet follows and extends until evening. At the sign of the evening star, preparation is made for the *domum deductio*. The bride makes a show of resistance, fleeing to her mother's bosom. She is torn away from her mother and, with two young boys holding her arms and a third preceding them with a pine torch, the procession begins.²⁴ At the threshold of the groom's house the door is anointed with oil or fat and decked with woolen garlands. The bride makes a final show of resistance and is carried across the threshold into the groom's house. Throughout the day the *pronuba* has been the bride's constant attendant. It is the *pronuba* who leads the girl into the presence of the guests, who joins the right hands of the couple, who accompanies the bride in the procession, and who prepares the bride in the bridal chamber. Also, throughout the day, there are a number of significant moments at which the *pronuba* speaks ritual words or gives the bride advice.²⁵

The moment of Catullus 62 is that of the ritual tearing away of the bride from her mother's embrace in order to begin the *domum deductio*.²⁶ The introductory material sets the time: Hesperus has just risen; the banquet is over; it is time to prepare for the procession. The first strophe and antistrophe of the singing contest are concerned entirely with the seizure of the bride. The second pair of stanzas clearly continue on this line. The feigned violence of this "rape" easily accounts for the remorse of the girls and for their emphasis on the physical "pollution" of the bride's body, which

²³Cf. Blümner (above, n. 22) 355, Rossbach 308–309, and Treggiari (above, n. 22) 164–165.

²⁴Festus (p.364 [Lindsay]): *rapi simulatur virgo ex gremio matris, aut, si ea non est, ex proxima necessitudine, cum ad virum traditur (trahitur L), quod videlicet ea res feliciter Romulo cessit*. On this *Brautraub* see especially Rossbach 328–334.

²⁵On advice to the bride see G. Williams, "Some Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies and Ideals," *JRS* 48 (1958) 16–22. The importance of the *pronuba* is reflected in the use of this term as an epithet for Juno. On this see S. Weinstock, "Pronuba," *RE* 23.1 (1957) 750–756. For the evidence on what words were spoken at Roman weddings, see R. Leonhard, "Coemptio," and "Confarreatio," *RE* 4.1 (1900) 198–200, 862–864.

²⁶"There is . . . an almost total lack of movement and the reader is allowed very few clues with which to set the scene" (G. Williams, *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* [Oxford 1968] 201). The absence of movement is necessary, since the poem focuses on one ritual moment. The scene would have been obvious to Catullus' contemporaries who knew the traditions of real Roman weddings. Williams's statement (202) that the reader is "relieved from the obligation to assimilate the poem to some occasion in real life which he should recognize" is quite mistaken.

we find in the third strophe. The resolution comes when the leader of the girls' chorus, assuming, as it were, the rôle of the *pronuba*,²⁷ turns to the bride and urges her not to fight but to yield. It is right to do so. The procession may now begin!

On this interpretation, Catullus 62 is more Roman and more "realistic" than has generally been conceded. The suggestion of some early commentators on this poem, that it is dependent entirely on Greek original(s), possibly by Sappho, has recently been restated by Tränkle and Courtney.²⁸ Fraenkel was right, however, to point out that there are too many Roman elements for this to be the case.²⁹ In fact, the *Brautraub*, which the reader is intended to imagine as the occasion for this poem, is entirely Roman.³⁰ But Catullus is no antiquarian or reporter; he is a poet, and a poet under the spell of his Greek antecedents. Certain elements of the poem clearly do derive their inspiration, if not their substance, from Greek models and concepts.³¹ If one pressed the details to the extreme, one would have to agree with Fraenkel that this wedding "could not be celebrated anywhere in the ancient world," but that its place is "in a poetic sphere of its own."³² And yet, that poetic sphere for this poem approaches far more closely the real world of Catullus' Rome than that of Sappho's Lesbos.

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²⁷The leader of the girls' chorus cannot actually be the *pronuba*: a *pronuba* must be *univira*. But someone is needed to resolve the conflict; a function which the *pronuba* must generally have performed. Hence the assumption of this rôle by the speaker of the final lines.

²⁸H. Tränkle, "Catullprobleme," *MH* 38 (1981) 251-258; E. Courtney, "Three Poems of Catullus," *BICS* 32 (1985) 85-88; see also W. Kroll, *C. Valerius Catullus*⁴ (Stuttgart 1960) 123.

²⁹Fraenkel 7. Even Courtney admits that the metaphor of "marriage" from Roman viticulture is "a metaphor alien to Greek but meaningful to his Roman readers." Note also the legalistic and mathematical character of the last stanza, which certainly seems Roman.

³⁰In Roman wedding ceremonies there were several rituals which reflected the concept of "bride by capture" and which are generally associated by the ancients with the rape of the Sabine women. Plutarch *Quaest. Rom.* 29 (carrying the bride over the threshold), 31 (the cry "Talassio"), 87 (parting the bride's hair with a spear), and 105 (maidens not marrying on public festivals) are all relevant in this connection.

³¹The geographical references to Olympus and Oeta, while metaphorical, nonetheless betray certain Greek influences. Similarly, the apparent division of the banquets into male and female sections seems Greek.

³²Fraenkel 7.