

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF CATULLUS' WEDDING POEMS: THE RITUAL DRAMA OF CATULLUS 62

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This article is dedicated to Thomas Pepper

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**SUMMARY:** In the shape of a running commentary on those at once literary and religious aspects of “Vesper adest” that may be comprised under the designation of ritual drama, this paper partly summarises, partly expands some of the findings made in its author’s little known monograph *Ritual and Desire: Catullus 61 and 62 and Other Ancient Documents on Wedding and Marriage* (Aarhus University Press 1992). The purpose of both poems, 61 and 62, is matrimonial persuasion; these poems are about desire-awakening ritual, being themselves permeated by the ritual (the poet takes active part in the rituals). Various nuptial passages from Catullus 61 and 66 are compared with Catullus 62, which brings forth the erotic functions of a trio of young *daimones* – Hymenaios, Hesperos, and Plokamos Berenikes – all of them associated with Venus and the starry sky. The new results thereby obtained concern the dynamism of the two mimetic poems Catullus 61 and 62 as well as the history of religion and erotic philosophy. It is hoped that this paper may serve as an introduction to the study of Catullus 61 and 62 and 66 (The Lock of Berenike) and Catullus 64 (Peleus and Thetis’ Wedding), esp. 64.303-381 (The Song of the Parcae). The point of view is: “Hochzeitsschilderungen als heitere und glanzvolle Existenzbilder” (Kroll on 64.31-49).

The leading critical edition of Catullus is Mynors 1958/1960. The leading commentary is Kroll 1923. Kroll’s comments on the Song of the Parcae – just to mention one specimen – amount to a “Meisterleistung der Deutekunst”, on a par with E.R. Dodds’s commentary on Euripides’ *Bakkhai*, admitted by all to be a feat of philological skill. But behind Kroll stands Baehrens, whose commentary – 630 pages, prepared for the press in less than eleven months – appeared in 1885. Emil Bährens (1848-1888), like Nietzsche a pupil of Friedrich Ritschl and like Nietzsche a thorn in the side of the Berlin establishment, including the giant Wilamowitz, exerted an all-pervasive influence on Kroll, so much so that Kroll’s notes quite often remain somewhat unclear until one has recourse to his predecessor and realises that a lively discussion is going on. Kroll was

kept on his toes by Baehrens' unrivalled critical intelligence. Concerning Greek poetry and Greek and Roman religion Kroll shows a much deeper understanding than Baehrens; for all that, Kroll does not have his forte where nuptial events are concerned.

Here is the **text** of carmen 62 as I have argued that it should be constituted:

#### IVVENES

Vesper adest, iuuenes, consurgite: Vesper Olympo  
exspectata diu uix tandem lumina tollit.  
surgere iam tempus, iam pinguis linquere mensas,  
iam ueniet uirgo, iam dicetur hymenaeus.

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

#### PVELLAE

Cernitis, innuptae, iuuenes ? consurgite contra;  
nimirum Oetaeos ostendit Noctifer ignes.  
sic certe est; uiden ut perniciousiter exsiluere ?  
non temere exsiluere: canent quod uincere par est.

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

#### IVVENES

Non facilis nobis, aequalis, palma parata est:  
aspicite, innuptae secum ut meditata requirunt.  
non frustra meditantur: habent memorabile quod sit;  
nec mirum, penitus quae tota mente laborant:  
nos alio mentes, alio diuisimus aures;  
iure igitur uincemur: amat uictoria curam.  
quare nunc animos saltem conuertite uestros;  
dicere iam incipient, iam respondere decebit.

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

## PVELLAE

Hespere, quis caelo fertur crudelior ignis ?  
qui natam possis complexu auellere matris,  
complexu matris retinentem auellere natam,  
et iuueni ardenti castam donare puellam.  
quid faciunt hostes capta crudelius urbe ?

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

## IUVENES

Hespere, quis caelo lucet iucundior ignis ?  
qui desponsa tua firmes conubia flamma,  
quae pepigere uiri, pepigerunt ante parentes,  
nec iunxere prius quam se tuus extulit ardor.  
quid datur a diuis felici optatius hora ?

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

## PVELLAE

Hesperus e nobis, aequalis, abstulit unam

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

## IUVENES

Hespere,  
(namque tuo aduentu uigilat custodia semper):  
nocte latent fures, quos idem saepe reuertens,  
Hespere, mutato comprehendis nomine Eous.  
at lubet innuptis ficto te carpere questu.

quid tum, si carpunt, tacita quem mente requirunt ?

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

#### PVELLAE

Vt flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis,  
ignotus pecori, nullo conuolsus aratro,  
quem mulcent aerae, firmat sol, educat imber;  
multi illum pueri, multae optauere puellae:  
idem cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,  
nulli illum pueri, nullae optauere puellae:  
sic uirgo, dum intacta manet, dum cara suis est;  
cum castum amisit polluto corpore florem,  
nec pueris iucunda manet nec cara puellis.

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

#### IVVENES

Vt uidua in nudo uitis quae nascitur aruo,  
numquam se extollit, numquam mitem educat uuam,  
sed tenerum pronò deflectens pondere corpus  
iam iam contingit summum radice flagellum;  
hanc nulli agricolae, nulli coluere iuueni:  
at si forte eadem est ulmo coniuncta marito,  
multi illam agricolae, multi coluere iuueni:  
sic uirgo dum innupta manet, dum inculta senescit;  
cum par conubium maturo tempore adeptam est,  
cara uiro magis et minus est inuisa parenti.

At tu ne pugna cum tali coniuge, uirgo:  
non aequom est pugnare, pater cui tradidit ipse,  
ipse pater cum matre, quibus parere necesse est:  
uirginitas non tota tua est, ex parte parentum est,  
tertia pars patri, pars est data tertia matri,  
tertia sola tua est: noli pugnare duobus,  
qui genero sua iura simul cum dote dederunt.

*hymen o Hymenaeae hymen, ades o Hymenaeae !*

This may be **translated** thus (Goold 1983 is followed wherever possible):

#### THE YOUNG MEN

The Evening Star is here ! Young men, arise: now at long last  
the Evening Star lifts his much-awaited light to heavenly Olympus.  
Now is it time to rise, now time to leave the rich tables,  
now will come the bride, now will the wedding hymn be sung.

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

#### THE YOUNG GIRLS

Maidens, do you see the youths ? Rise up to face them !  
Clearly the Herald of Night shows his fires over Mount Oeta.  
Yes, that is it; do you see how swiftly they leapt up ? Not for  
nothing leapt they up: theirs will be a song worth beating.

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

#### THE YOUNG MEN

No easy triumph, companions, have we ready made.  
See how the maidens inwardly recall their studied verses.  
Not in vain they study: they have found a song worth remembering.  
No wonder, since they are striving enthusiastically with all their minds.  
But we have directed our minds one way and our ears another;  
justly then shall we be beaten, for victory loves effort.  
Wherefore turn now your minds at least to business;  
soon they will start to sing, soon we shall have to reply.

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

#### THE YOUNG GIRLS

Hesperus, what crueller star than you is carried along in the sky ?  
For you can find it in your heart to tear a daughter from her mother's embrace,  
from her mother's embrace tear clinging daughter  
and give the chaste girl to an ardent youth.  
What crueller deed does the foe commit when a city falls ?

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

#### THE YOUNG MEN

Hesperus, what kinder star than you shines in the sky ?  
For with your flame you ratify the covenant of marriage  
which men and which parents have earlier agreed  
but have not sealed before your fire has risen on high.  
What gift of heaven is more desirable than this happy hour ?

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

#### THE YOUNG GIRLS

Hesperus, companions, has stolen one from among us

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

#### THE YOUNG MEN

Hesperus,  
(for, whenever you come, watchmen keep constant vigil):  
at night thieves lurk, whom often you catch,  
Hesperus, returning with your name changed to Morning Star.  
But maidens love to carp at you with feigned complaints.  
What does it matter that they carp, if secretly within they seek you as their due ?

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

## THE YOUNG GIRLS

As in a garden close a flower grows in a nook,  
unknown to the flock, unscathed by any plough,  
which winds caress, sun strengthens, rain draws forth,  
it have many boys, it have many girls desired;  
but when nipped by the keen-edged nail it has shed its bloom,  
it have no boys, it have no girls desired.  
Thus a maiden, while untouched, the while is dear to her kith and kin;  
when, her body sullied, she loses the flower of maidenhood,  
no longer to boys is she lovely, nor is she dear to girls.

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

## THE YOUNG MEN

As the unwedded vine which grows on treeless soil  
never rears her head, never brings forth a mellow grape,  
but bowing her frail body under the drooping weight  
*now* all but touches her topmost tendril with her roots,  
her have no farmers, her have no steers tended;  
but if perchance she is joined in wedlock to the elm,  
then her have many farmers, her many steers have tended.  
Thus a maiden, while unmarried, the while untended ages;  
but when at the proper moment she has gained a fitting match,  
more dear is she to husband, less frowned upon by parent.

*You*, maiden, fight not with such a husband:  
you must not fight with him your father himself gave you to,  
your father himself with your mother, whom you have to obey.  
Your virginity is not all yours, but partly your parents':  
a third is allotted your father, a third your mother,  
and only a third is yours: fight not with two  
who have given their son-in-law their rights together with the dowry.

*Hail, hymen Hymenaeus ! Come, hymen Hymenaeus !*

Now for the **commentary**:

Introductory note: the genre of “Vesper adest” may be determined as an amoibaion, an antiphonal song (the word “song” only covering lines 20-58, however); it may also be determined as a mimetic poem. The import of the latter designation is, briefly, this: As we read, we are gradually given to understand that a series of highly specific activities are evolving and that these activities move towards a definite goal. However, the activities in question are never narrated; nor is their setting or frame described. Drawing on Aristotle’s terms (*Poetics* chapters 3, 23-24), since revitalised by Gérard Genette in his narratology, the organising principle, the very law of Catullus 62 may be considered as follows: no diegesis, merely mimesis, or better: no diegesis except through mimesis, which is why the question of ritual *drama* is so central to this poem. Having reached the end of the poem, the reader realises that Catullus 62 mimes a ritual, i.e. a concatenation of significant events and conventional acts, designed to break down the fear of sex and the horror of loneliness in young brides. Since the amoibaion, the singing-match, forms part of the wedding ritual mimed, the two designations mentioned above, amoibaion and mimetic poem, are interrelated in the case of “Vesper adest”.

We learn about the setting (for instance, “the abundant tables”, line 3) and about the ritual (for instance, “the singing of the hymenaios”, line 4) because they are relevant to the lines of action chosen by the *dramatis personae*, i.e., the young men and girls whose dialogue pro and contra wedding and marriage is represented, or rather reproduced (if we choose to comply with the poetics of the mimetic poem).

The secret of mimetic poems, such as the *Festgedichte* 61 and 62, lies in their being *fiktiv-dramatisch*, whence they lay heavy demands on the reader’s/listener’s gift for imaginatively reconstructing scenery and events and on his willingness to perform *Zeitsprünge* (see note on line 58 below). The mimetic technique – which lends a strongly dramatic dimension to lyrical poems such as c. 61 and Horace 1.27 “Natis in usum laetitia scyphis”, among others - is typical of Hellenistic poetry; see the sketch offered by Kroll in his introductory note on Catullus 45 “Acmen Septimius suos amores” and Winfried Albert’s monograph *Das mimetische Gedicht in der Antike. Geschichte und Typologie von den Anfängen bis in die augusteische Zeit* (Frankfurt 1988), a book to be admired both for its theoretical reflections and for its organisation of the rich and very difficult poetic material. There is a close connection between “das situationsgebundene Sprechen” as analysed by Albert, with his constant focus on changes in scenery, physical changes that is, and the performative function of self-referential commands in ritual poetry as elucidated below on line 1.

In view of this *Eigenart* of the mimetic-dramatic poem under consideration, it is about time that we return to the practice – in full accordance with the manuscripts – of printing the headings IVVENES and PVELLAE at lines 1, 11, 26, 33, 49 and 6, 20, 32, 39 respectively. As for the data of the manuscripts see Mynors’ apparatus criticus on the beginning of carmen 62 (D.F.S. Thomson 1997/1998 [575 pages] is silent on this point). At line 11 the PVELLE of the manuscripts is easily explained as due to a misunderstanding of *innuptae*, 12, as a vocative (as in line 6); *aequalis* - the archaic

nominative/vocative plural preserved by the ninth century codex Thuaneus - can be masculine as well as feminine; in line 11 it is masculine, in 32 it is feminine.

Notice that there is no heading at line 59; no change of speaker is indicated by the manuscripts. In one particular case of change of speaker the manuscripts would not have to place a heading, namely, if the words 59-65 are spoken by the poet, which I think they are (see below). The overall interpretation offered in this paper corresponds both with the fact that no change of speaker is indicated by the manuscripts at line 59, and with the fact that no refrain is transmitted by the manuscripts after line 58 (a refrain was inserted there by Muretus, who is followed by almost all modern editors). This, incidentally, should not be taken as a general declaration of confidence in Catullus' manuscripts.

The heading of the manuscripts is *IVVENES* or even *TURBA VIR(OR)UM*. It is wrong to speak of Boys in c. 62 (such as, among others, Goold 1983); they are "Burschen". The singers are "Altersgenossen" with the young couple, i.e., they are old enough to be potential bridegrooms and potential brides, which determines the ethos of the entire poem (see on lines 32, 42ff., and 45 below). This is one of the respects in which c. 62 differs from c. 61 (see 61.114 *o pueri*, cf. 61.36f. *integrae uirgines*). Another difference, related to this one, concerns female desire. In c. 62 female desire is apparently non-existent – apart from the teasing insinuation made by the young men in 36f. about the *fictus questus*, the feigned complaints, on the part of maidens subjected to sexual approaches - whereas c. 61 strongly accentuates the need of female desire, to a degree that appeared repulsive, "scheusslich", even to Wilamowitz, who was, after all, less prudish than most of his many followers (the interpretations of Catullus' major Hellenistic poems in Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff *Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos* II [Berlin 1924] are still quite fresh). The inclusion of ancient physiological theories on synchronised male and female orgasm as a precondition of conception (see *Ritual and Desire*, pp.148ff.) enables us to see with greater clarity that this emphasis on female desire in the *domina cupida* of 61.31f. is caused by the stress laid in c. 61 on the begetting of a (healthy) child, a *Torquatus paruulus*, in the near future. Both poems survey two generations: Seeing that *parens*, 61.51, and *suae matris*, 61.58f., are non-specific, having nothing to do with Vinia and Manlius in particular, we may state that c. 61 surveys the bridal couple of the day and *forwards* to the future child. In c. 61 we have a wedding without any previous history, whereas the perspective of c. 62 encompasses the bridal couple (esp. the bride) *back* to the (bride's) parents (lines 59-65).

In its stress on *concordia* as *sexual* reciprocity and concord and on the sexual role to be played by the female, **c. 64** resembles c. 61 (see 64.328-336, esp. *quae...*, 330, and *contexit*, concealed[!], 334, and 64.379f.). In c. 64 we hear - from the mouths of three quivering old women who are at the same time the supreme powers of the universe - a cunningly devised attempt at sexual persuasion on a world-historical scale. This is the rather sex-oriented train of thought that keeps the Song of the Parcae together: First these primeval prophetesses promise Peleus and Thetis a marvellous son, a truly fearless warrior: *nascetur vobis expers terroris Achilles* (64.338ff.); the birth of the boy is mentioned immediately after the very insistent makarismós: "no house ever concealed such loves as these, no love

ever...”. Then follows a long description of the future deeds of the hero Achilles. With particular glee, the Parcae dwell on the enormous amounts of blood to be shed in due time by Achilles, and finally they reach the decapitation of princess Polyxena caused by the fact that Achilles, dead by now, demands her as his bride in Hades. Immediately after this reference to the Trojan *Hadesbraut* the Parcae revert to the bridal couple of the day with a very direct summons to intercourse introduced by a very telling “therefore” (i.e., because such a unique child will be the result): *quare agite optatos animi coniungite amores*, “therefore, come, unite the loves your hearts desire”; and we are given to understand that it will be fatal if the hero son is not conceived on the very wedding-night, i.e. to-night (372-380). By virtue of its artful and extremely pragmatic persuasion the Song of the Parcae is doing the job of a sexual dynamo. Usually, the Fates are imagined as singing at a child’s birth (see the *Odyssey* 7.197f. and [Tibullus] 3.11.3f.; Kroll on 64.320). This song will, if it fulfils its purpose, be sung at the boy’s conception!

**Line 1:** *Vesper adest*: not just the approach of evening, which even in Greece is something gradual, but a definite and sharply distinguishable event: the “rising” - 2, 29, actually the setting - of the Evening Star. The celestial event occurs all of a sudden, and the young men *jump* to their feet (*perniciter exsiluere*, 8, at least as seen by the girls).

A ritual is dependent on tension and suspense, on distinct lines of demarcation and on changes of pace and place; see the note on line 19, see *firmes*, confirm, ratify, 27, and see the remarks about the sharpening of the conflict observable in 30, 37, and 56-58 (in the note on lines 56-58). On the much-debated phenomenon of ritual, see *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* sub voce Ritus and *Der neue Pauly* s.v. Ritual (with references).

*iuvenes, con-surgite*: “Selbstaufforderung”, choral self-referentiality. However, some scholars attribute the lines 1-4, 6-9, 11-18 to a chorus-leader (such as, among others, Kroll [tentatively], Albert *opere laudato*, 119, and T. Goud “Who Speaks the Final Lines? Catullus 62: Structure and Ritual” *Phoenix* 49 [1995] 23-32). This either-or has a parallel in an old and complicated discussion among editors of Greek drama. In Catullus 62 the attribution of the preparatory lines to chorus-leaders would entail widely different uses of the same words, viz....*nobis aequalis*..., in line 11 and line 32 respectively, which is not recommendable. Thus, we should (follow the manuscripts and) recognise the phenomenon of “Selbstaufforderung”, so extremely common in ancient literature: vocatives and imperatives (plural or even singular) are used by all members of the choral group – here, as often is the case elsewhere, the *two* choral groups - who summon each other (see the the interesting We’s in lines 11 and 15-16, both times continued by a You). For a full treatment of “diese von Handlung begleiteten Selbstanreden” (Schadewaldt), see Maarit Kaimio *The Chorus of Greek Drama within the Light of the Person and Number Used* (Helsinki 1970) 121-143 (in tragedy esp. threnodic imperatives, in comedy esp. dance-imperatives). Cf. Nisbet-Hubbard on Horace’s Diana-Apollo hymn, *Odes* 1.21 (Horace has “an zwei Halbchöre gedacht”, Kiessling-Heinze). The other

solution, viz. the co-hortative “let us ...”, so much easier for us to understand, is also common (e.g. Catullus 34.4 *canamus*).

**Lines 1-2:** *Olympo*, cf. *caelo*, 20. Still, taken together with *Oetaeos*, 7, *Olympo* does point to Greece. Hesperos had a cult on Mount Oeta (Servius on Vergil *Eclogues* 8.30), Oeta was his *Wohnort*, cf. the mention of the god’s abode in the invocations in 61.1-2 and 36.11-15, compare 64.96. – Servius’ note runs like this: in eodem monte [sc. Oeta] Hesperus coli dicitur, qui Hymenaeum, speciosum puerum, amasse dicitur, “on that same mountain [sc. Oeta] there is according to tradition a cult of Hesperus, who, according to tradition, was in love with Hymenaeus, a beautiful boy”. For other accounts of Hymenaios as eromenos, see Sauer in Roscher’s mythological lexicon 1.2.2801. The article Hymenaios in LIMC is not very well informed.

*uix tandem* is far more forceful than merely *tandem*; see Fordyce 1961/1973 ad locum: “implying that the event takes so long to happen that it comes near to not happening at all”. The idiom *uix tandem* conveys the experience of endless waiting; compare the young men in lines 29-30 ...*extulit ardor...optatius...* The word *optatus* is a verbum valde eroticum; cf. 64.328f. *portans optata maritis Hesperus*, and 66.79.

Both the youths and the maidens have *long* awaited the appearance of the Evening Star, either with longing or with terror (on this, see lines 6-9 and 20ff.), but in agreement that the appearance of the Star is the decisive event, see the maidens in lines 6-7, and see lines 26-30: Vesper/Hesperus “ratifies the covenant of marriage with his flame”; on the meaning of *firmare* see the note on 27-28. Kroll has the following note on lines 26-27: „ Da die Heimführung der Braut erst beim Aufgange des Abendsternes erfolgt, führt er [Hesperus] die Verlobung (GRÆSK ENGYESIS, *sponsio*) zum Ziel“. But Kroll’s *da*-clause is imprecise; not the *deductio* / “Heimführung“, but the *traditio uirginis*, taking place before the “Heimführung”, is referred to; see below on line 58.

On Hesperos and Aphrodite see Diggle on Euripides *Phaethon*, pp.13f., and Nisbet-Hubbard on Horace *Odes* 2.9.10.

We are left with the following questions: What exactly is the relationship between Hesperus the marriage god and the marriage god Hymenaeus, i.e. between Catullus 62 and 61 (see c. 61 from the very beginning, the invocation of Hymenaeus) and, inside c. 62, the relation between the refrain and the rest?

**Line 4:** *iam...iam...*: in this anaphora the key to the ritual drama of c. 62 may well be said to reside. Such an anaphora with identical verbal tenses presupposes (cf. 3, 18, 50, *passim*) that the second element – in this case the singing of the hymenaios, i.e. the song accompanying the procession from the bride’s father’s house to the bridegroom’s house - *at the earliest* occurs simultaneously with the first element, in this case the coming of the bride.

If, as is supposed by almost everybody, the bride *venit*, i.e., enters the banquet hall, shortly before line 59, it must be concluded from the above interpretation of the anaphora that the hymenaios begins immediately after the *allocutio sponsae*, i.e., the admonition addressed to the bride in 59-65. In other words, the hymenaios is begun where c. 62 ends, at which point the procession is about to start, wherefore the refrain – which would have been out of place before the static *allocutio sponsae* in line 59 – has to be intoned anew, this time by everybody, including the girls who, by line 58, have been vanquished by the young men in the singing-contest.

Thus, c. 62 does not continue far enough to become, I will not say an epithalamion – i.e. the song sung outside the *thalamos* (the bridal chamber in the bridegroom’s house) after the completion of the procession having been followed by various other important acts - , but not even a hymenaios. The view – held by Kroll and Eduard Norden, among others - that the *Hymenaeae* refrain makes c. 62, considered as a whole, a hymenaios cannot be upheld. Why not? Because c. 62 contains much more than this refrain, and half of this “much more” is in open conflict with the invocation of the refrain (*ades!*) and attempts to prevent the coming of the wedding god (Hymenaios, being virtually identical with Hesperos) and the ensuing procession, hence being an *anti*-hymenaios; the refrain opposes this opposition. Briefly put, this is the drama.

In carmen 61, on the other hand, the song accompanying the procession, the *deductio* song as I called it in my book, is to be found in lines 114-183 (a hymenaios is a Greek institution, and therefore strictly speaking incompatible with c. 61 since the wedding celebrated in that poem is Roman, cf. 61.16ff. *namque Vinia Manlio...*), upon which follows the epithalamion in lines 184-228.

*uirgo*: bride; on the designations in Latin for “bride” and “bridegroom” and the meaning of *nubere* see *Ritual and Desire* appendix 1.

**Line 5:** editors, of this and other poems, still capitalise the first letter of the word *hymen*, which was shown to be inadmissible by Maas in 1907 (see Paul Maas *Kleine Schriften* [München 1973] 221-28); GRÆSK, *hymen* is a cry, an interjection. The god Hymen is not documented until Ovid; thus we must reject the conjecture *Hymenis/hymenis* for *omnibus* in Catullus 66.77, sanctioned by Wilamowitz and still treated with respect. Baehrens had settled the matter in 1885: *hymen* is indeclinabile. Ignoring Baehrens as well as Maas, Thomson on c. 61 repeatedly speaks of invoking “Hymen” “the god of marriage”. Hymenaios the god of *wedding* would be correct.

An ephymnion is sung. But the *iuvenes* and the *puellae* do not sing until line 20. Consequently, the refrain does not belong to them; this was realised by Wilamowitz (*opere laudato*, 278). Since the maidens certainly have no part at all in the refrain (see note on lines 20-24), the youths – in this symmetrical amoibaion – do not either. From which it is fair to conclude that the refrain is sung by the assembly of guests, eager to expedite the ceremony. A ritual is at work here, and there is an elaborate – and therefore particularly illuminating - parallel to it in “Vesper adest”: 61.36ff. (addressed to the

chorus of *integrae uirgines*) *uosque item simul...dicite "o Hymenaeae hymen, o hymen Hymenaeae"* (the refrain is the object of *dicite*, sing, cf. 61.116-118); to which should be added Kroll's comment on the preceding stanza, 61.31ff. (the prayer "call the Maiden to her new home", addressed to Hymenaeus): "Dem Hymenaios wird zugeschrieben, was der Chor tut". We may even clarify the function, *munus*, of the god, the *dux bonae Veneris*, by bracketing it: the chorus calls on [the god to call on] the Maiden. The Greeks seem to have derived *Hyménaios* from *hymnos*, in which case singing may be said to be that god's very nature (cf. *Ritual and Desire*, pp.96f.).

Wilamowitz would have the refrains sung by the poet, but not only is an ephymnion sung, it is usually sung by a plurality of people, as is the case in c. 61, c. 64, and in two mimetic poems by Kallimakhos, *Hymns* 5.140-142 and 6.118f. ("Sing, women..., the refrain "Demeter, be hailed...""). There is also a parallel in the exhortations in the concluding procession of Aiskhylos' *Eumenides* (1043, 1047). As for the refrain in line 66, see above on line 4.

**Lines 6-7:** *cernitis...iuvenes...nimirum Oetaeos ...* : "Die Mädchen schliessen [...] aus dem Aufstehen der Jünglinge, dass der Abendstern, den sie von ihrem Platze nicht sehen können, aufgegangen sein muss [...]" (Kroll). At this point in the events, the two parties presumably cannot hear each other, at least not distinctly (see also line 12). The position of the girls as far away as possible from where Hesperus can be seen is in accordance with their fear of him (see on lines 1-2).

We are in Greece; cf. lines 1+7. To the Greek mountains should be added the fact, usually forgotten in this connection, that the singing of a hymenaios is a Greek, not a Roman institution, and the same seems to hold for the custom of men and women reclining at separate tables (see Euangelos, *Poetae Comici Graeci* V, 184f., and Loukianós *Symposion* 8-9).

And we are in the house of the *Brautvater*. Both Baehrens 1885 and Ellis 1889 are, in different ways, in error here, and so is Fraenkel in his 1955 interpretation of "Vesper adest" (Eduard Fraenkel *Kleine Beiträge* II [Roma 1964] 87-101): Following Paul Maas' "brief but masterly appreciation" (RE IX, 1916, 130-134), and basically adopting Maas' view that Catullus 62 takes place in the *domus viri*, the bridegroom's house, i.e., the final destination of the procession through the streets of the village or city, it occurs to Fraenkel to explain *iam ueniet uirgo* in line 4 as a relic of the *deductio*, i.e., as a Roman element, inconsistent with the Hellenizing background. By "Hellenizing background" Fraenkel does not, however, mean the rather obvious points about the mountains, Olympus and Oeta, mentioned above; on the contrary, according to Fraenkel "Catullus has been careful to avoid any definite localization". As mentioned by Fraenkel himself (91, 97 note 1), his view of this matter is influenced by Wilamowitz, who states, inter alia: "Zwei solche Chöre [...] sind uns aus dem Leben nicht bekannt" (op. laud., 277).

By "Hellenizing background" Fraenkel means the bride's eating together with the wedding party. This is *not* non-Roman, however; the bride was present both in Greece

and in Rome (see Hermann Tränkle “Catullprobleme” *MH* 38 [1981] 245-258). Fraenkel shows no interest in any ritual drama, and the idea that the bride actually has been present but has since disappeared is rejected with scorn: perhaps she disappeared, he asks, “to change her dress for the honeymoon?” (the basis of this joke is the – impossible – idea that the bridegroom’s house forms the setting). According to Fraenkel, line 32 *e nobis ... abstulit unam* should be considered a loan and not be taken literally. Here Fraenkel practises the method of his other great teacher, Friedrich Leo.

Confronted with this alleged ritual fragment, *iam ueniet uirgo* in line 4, never adapted by the poet, Fraenkel proceeds to the “neither Hellas nor Rome” topos, familiar to readers of his *Plautinisches im Plautus* (Berlin 1922; notice the initial *Bekanntnis* to Friedrich Leo) and at home there. Fraenkel writes: “The apparent inconsistency disappears as soon as we realize that the poem *Vesper adest* presents to us a wedding such as could not be celebrated anywhere in the ancient world. The place of this epithalamium [quite legitimately, this term is used here by Fraenkel in a non-technical sense] is neither in Greece nor in Rome but in a poetic sphere of its own”. In 61.77 *uirgo adest*, Fraenkel finds a parallel to the reference to “the solemn *deductio* of the bride into the bridegroom’s house” allegedly found in 62.4. He insists on the necessity of the emendation – already in adn. Marc. 12.128 – of *adest* into *ades* and refers 61.77 to “her [the bride’s] and her procession’s arrival”. As is clear from the word “arrival” [sc. “into the bridegroom’s house”], Fraenkel has misunderstood the very basic events of “Collis o Heliconii”; see the note on line 4 above. He is followed by Paolo Fedeli in his monograph on that poem, *Il carme 61 di Catullo* (Fribourg 1972; English translation, Amsterdam 1983), by Syndikus 1990: 2.26, and by Thomson 1997, among others.

The reader is invited to take a look at Fraenkel’s page 99, which contains the following line of reasoning: *For the sake of* the antithetic singing competition, Catullus needed line 32, *e nobis ... abstulit unam*, perhaps derived from Sappho or “some other source”. And then comes the *So*: “So she [sc. the bride] had to be removed, and removed she was by the introduction of the Roman motif of “*iam ueniet uirgo*”, inconsistent though that was with the Hellenizing background of the common feast [sc. at the father’s house]”. It will be realised that Fraenkel’s “free sphere of poetry” admits of the same singers being in two separate houses at once.-

From a methodological point of view we are in a uniquely favourable position in that we possess so many statements, from widely different poems, on the one subject of wedding by the one poet Catullus. In working on Catullus’ wedding poems, we can, with reasonable prospects of attaining the goal, impose on ourselves the duty always – for every interpretation we propose – to try to adduce a parallel from inside the liber Catulli. Things are not made less interesting by the fact that one of these erotico-nuptial poems, viz. “*Omnia qui magni dispexit lumina mundi*”, is a translation – a close metrical translation – from the Greek.

True to the principle of “elucidating Homer from Homer”, we should let our reconstructions and hypotheses be guided by the numerous correspondences between c. 61 and c. 62, such as this one: In c. 61 the first part of the drama takes place in the house

of the bride's father and is represented in the bride's meeting with Hymenaeus during the hymn to Hymenaeus (1-75) and enacted during lines 76-113 (and this song works – as is realised if line 77 *uirgo adest*, “the bride is here”, is compared with line 115 *flammeum uideo uenire*, “I see a bridal veil approaching”). Nobody would dispute that c. 62, which has as its crucial theme the resistance to *das Ehejoch* on the part of the bride and her female friends of the same age, begins at the end of the banquet (62.3), and this lends weight to the theory that c. 61 - with its depiction of the various elements in the wedding ritual designed to arouse desire in the virgin, including the references to Hymenaeus' seduction of the reluctant bride - is sung at the (end of the) wedding banquet.

**Line 9:** *quod*, object of *uincere*, cf. *contra* in line 6, *palma* in line 11 and *uincemur* and *uictoria* in line 16.

**Line 11:** *aequalis*: on this nominative/vocative see Neue-Wagener's Latin morphology 1.375ff., 2.60f. and Courtney on Juv. 2.111 and on Juv. 11.3. Cf. the introductory note on IVVENES above. So, *aequalis* is not an “accusative form”, as stated by Thomson 1997.

**Line 14:** *nec mirum*: sc. “*eas non frustra meditari*”, according to Fordyce; but this is, literally, far-fetched: the immediately preceding *habent* = *repperere*, as in Ter. *Eu.* 674 (thus Baehrens). Actually, Fordyce, whose notes are a repository of information about Latin syntax and style, is not seldom let down by his feeling for poetic argument, see the note on lines 56-58 below. Fordyce's book is essentially more of a thesaurus dictionis poeticae than an actual enarratio carminum Catulli.

**Line 16:** *amat uictoria curam*: a proverb (a *paroimia* in the shape of a *paroimiakós*, according to Kroll; but a short syllable is lacking at the outset for this to be an anapaestic dimeter catalectic) like *nocte latent fures*, 34, and *noli pugnare duobus*, 64; cf. *nube pari* contained in *par conubium* in line 57, and for the proverbial echoes in the lines 62-64 concerning the *tertia* partes, cf. *Ritual and Desire* pp.217-219.

The proverbialisms, the archaisms, the colloquialisms, and the parallelisms together with the Greek ambiente and the Sapphic reminiscences convey the particular aura of “Vesper adest”; through ingredients like these the ritual *actes traditionnels* are integrated, even absorbed, into the texture of the poem and thus made poetic. The dominant tone is “volkstümlich”.

For archaisms see *aequalis*, 11 and 32, the syntax in 39ff., the *dum-dum* in 45. For colloquialisms, see especially “the conversational flavour of the sprightly opening lines”

(Fordyce): i.a. *sic certe est* and *viden ut...*, 8, *nec mirum quae...*, 14, and, besides, *quid tum, si...*, 37. For parallelisms, including the anaphoras and epanalepsis, see 8-9 and 21-22 with Kroll's note; cf. his note on 28. For the Greek ambiente see the above notes on 1-2, on 6-7, and, below, on 20-24 (color Romanus). As for the Sapphic reminiscences, Eva Stigers "Retreat from the Male: Catullus 62 and Sappho's Erotic Flowers", *Ramus* 6 (1977) 83-102 may be consulted. Stigers characterises Catullus' use of Sappho as "polemic, not imitative".

"Victory loves effort": the outcome of the contest shows the exact opposite to be the case; cf. the note on line 20 concerning the law of *agones*. Actually, the ritual is unjust (cf. *iure*). We might well speak of ritual irony here.

**Line 18:** *iam respondere decebit: respondere* is exactly what the youths will do, from beginning to end (at line 58). Thus, the girls' blame of wedding and marriage (beginning at lines 20ff.) is prior to the men's praise; the negative *psogos* engenders the positive *enkomion*. Such is the dynamism of this song, and such are the respective roles of the two sexes: female attack and subsequent male defence. Concerning the young men's *ethos*, see the notes on lines 45, 50+53, and 56-58.

**Line 19:** in continuation of the above analysis (in the note on line 4) of the tension to be found in c. 62, especially around the refrains, the following remarks about the workings of the ritual drama might be pertinent.

In a strongly dramatic manner the refrain in c. 62 wedges a prayer to Hymenaeus, *der Daimon der Hochzeit*, into the singing contest at regular intervals. The prayer is indicative of a wish to interfere in the contest and determine its outcome; notice already the – elegantly calculated – passage from line 4 ...*hymenaeus* on to line 5 *hymen o Hymenaeae...* . Having realised that Hymenaeus and Hesperus are functionally identical, we are in a better position than were our predecessors to appreciate and enjoy the ritual drama of c. 62; see, for instance, what happens here at line 19, and around lines 25, 31, and 38 (after *requirunt* !), where a marvel of clashing philosophies emerges. Catullus 62 would be a worthy addition to the dramatic texts – Euripides' *Elektra*, Sophokles' *Philoktetes* and Aiskhylos' *Hiketides/Supplikes* – analysed in Andreas Fuchs' *Dramatische Spannung: moderner Begriff – antikes Konzept* (Stuttgart/Weimar 2000). Fuchs - who includes the visual aspects of suspense to be observed in vase-painting and film and is well versed in modern suspense theory - focuses on the three interdependent factors of Wissen, Emotion, Zeit. The problem of time in mimetic poems is well highlighted in Pasquali's definition (1913): in a mimetic poem "dum ipse poeta loquitur, actio progredi fingitur". Cf. the pause – or "pause" – after line 58 (see the note on 58). Three of the most famous mimetic poems, Kallimakhos *Hymns* 2, 5, and 6, depict the tense atmosphere of a festival held to honour a god in whose epiphany ("Hail thee, Athena...", 5.140) these poems

culminate, with which should be compared the coming of the bride and the address to her at the end of our poem.

What we have detected so far about the kinship, inside as well as outside “Vesper adest”, between Hymenaios and Hesperos, is, I think, an indication of a major Catullan thematic constellation which can be traced at least back to Kallimakhos. I will try to demonstrate this by making the following comparisons:

To the duo Hymenaios-Hesperos, Plokamos Berenikes should be added. Here I refer to the way in which this pleasure-seeking *daimon* – this perfume-drinker - is conceived in Catullus 66, “Omnia qui magni dispexit lumina mundi”. In lines 15ff. of that poem, Plokamos - the Lock, the Plait, the Tress – shows himself to be a connoisseur of the female heart: They are feigned, he swears, those nice little tears, *lacrimulae*, that are shed so plentifully by the brides, *nouae nuptae*, inside the threshold, *limina* - i.e., behind the door - of the wedding-chamber, *thalamus* (which is certainly, pace Thomson 1997, not situated in “the bride’s parental home”). The conclusion the Plokamos draws is this: These young ladies harbour no hatred of sex, no *odium Veneris* at all, quite the contrary (cf. 31f.). This piece of psychology corresponds with the conviction uttered by Hesperus’ young advocates in 62.36-37, on the *fictus questus* of unmarried girls, although in c. 66 the reference is to *nouae nuptae*, not to *innuptae*. Another difference is that the female behaviour on which the divine Lock of c. 66 exercises his psychology is obligatory inasmuch as it is ritual. In Greece the resistance of the bride accompanied by a scuffle, by streams of tears and cries for help in the marital bed was *nomos*, i.e., ritual (the evidence from scholiasts and lexicographers can be found in *Ritual and Desire*, p.212). Thus, the parents standing outside the *thalamus* are uncertain whether their daughter’s tears are ritual or reality (cf. on line 16, end of note).

But why is it that the parents’ *gaudia* are so easily disappointed (line 16, cf. the *anxia ... mater* of 64.379)? It is because they are religious. If we take a look at lines 79ff. of c. 66 we find that there Plokamos is represented as assisting brides through the intercourse on their wedding night. The Plait will assist them on condition that they pay their respects to him – with a libation of unguent from their *onyx*, i.e., from the little “flacon” possessed by every woman - before they surrender their *corpora* to their *un-animi*, i.e., concordes, husbands (compare 64.372 *optatos animi coniungite amores*, referring to exactly the same point in the nuptial process). Now that it has been made into a star (by Venus= Arsinoe, the divine mother-in-law of Berenike) the Lock will no longer drink frugal virgins’ scents (*uilia unguenta*, 78), but *unguenta nuptae*, perfumes from a bride, pure perfumes from pure and monogamous brides (83-86; 84 refers to brides who have misbehaved while still unmarried).

For a while these brides will ignore their husbands in return for winning them for life (87f.), just as Berenike won Ptolemaios for life thanks to the Lock (33-38). If regaled with the proper divine honours, the Lock will again and again and again act as a love-preserver – or rather a husband-preserver. Here we find, I think, the ritual aitiology, the *Kult-aition* of this Kallimakhos poem at the end of his *Aitia*; cf. the ceremony depicted in lines 89-end, where Berenike is requested not to neglect unguent offerings to the Plokamos on festal

occasions when she propitiates Aphrodite. - The religious reasoning deployed is similar to the one analysed in the note on lines 20-24, below. For Callimachean *aitia* in general and for the much-debated *aition* of “Plokamos Berenikes” in particular see ch.11 “The Horizon of Callimachus” in P.M.Fraser *Ptolemaic Alexandria* I (Oxford 1972), esp. 720-732.

More can be learnt about Plokamos’ powers from lines 33-38. Especially line 35: *si reditum tetulisset. is haut in tempore longo*, “if he accomplished his return. He in no long time...” shows that the queen’s *uotum*, her promise to sacrifice a lock if her husband accomplished his return from the war, was highly efficacious. This is close to miraculous. We do not know exactly how many months or years are referred to with the words “in no long time” (the so-called Laodikeios Pólemos lasted from 246 to 241), but the Plokamos, which had to be left untouched during the period (cf. the *Iliad* 23.142), will have reached a considerable (phallic) size at the time of the king’s return (Kallimakhos has no diminutive in line 63). The efficiency of the queen’s vow shows that the Plokamos furthers the cause of female desire in practice, just as he knows it so admirably well in theory, as is obvious from no less than twenty lines, 13-32, the argument of which is beautifully coherent beneath the rambling surface (13-14+15-18+19-32) where he deals with ardent young women in general as well as Berenike in particular. Through the mouth of the Lock, the poet laureate can psychoanalyse *mea ...regina* (19) with an unheard-of degree of intimacy; thus, the honest answer to the first line of the double question in the distich 21-22 – *an tu...?* - is yes, to the second line no: yes, the cause of my lamentations was my widowed *bed*; no, it was not the separation from a dear *brother*. How could this *not* be read as a travesty of the official designation of the Egyptian king’s consort as his sister? Kroll (on line 13) rightly stresses “das Fehlen jedes Byzantinismus” in “Plokamos Berenikes”; to *Byzantinismus* we might add both *Wilhelminismus* and *Victorianismus*. From a political point of view it is interesting that Catullus chose to translate exactly this text – and that Kallimakhos had placed it at such a conspicuous place in his collection.

The meaning of 66.87-88 is: “but rather than being promiscuous [thereby making your sacrifices to me null and void, *irrita*, 85], you brides, always let concord and eternal love dwell in your houses forever!” After *sed magis* (= *sed potius*, as in 92) the subjunctive *incolat* must be hortative, not “only” optative. The distich 87-88, the conclusion of 79-88, should be compared with 64.376-380 (notice *discordis ...puellae secubitu*), on which see the introductory note above: if the wedding night sees *dis-cordia* and *se-cubitus*, sleeping apart, on the bride’s part, then her mother will “cease to hope for sweet grandchildren”, *caros mittet sperare nepotes* ! On this logic the mother is fully justified in being *anxia* – ceremonial thinking is “angsterregend”. These two passages share the – religious – idea that *concordia* on the wedding night is of decisive importance for the favourable course of the entire marriage; in other words, that the *Fest* prefigures and determines the future *Alltag*. The difference is that in c. 66 the *puella*, the *casta puella*, that is, has a helper: Plokamos Berenikes. What Plokamos can do for the bride becomes clear if we take a look at a

prayer like this one from a wedding poem by Theokritos, 18.51f.: “Aphrodite grant that you [sc. the bridal couple] may love each other with equal love!”

In my book there is a full analysis of the meaning of *onyx/alabaster* in 66.82f. and *adulterium* in 66.84 (cf. Colin Macleod *Collected Essays* [Oxford 1983] 193) together with a discussion of the surrounding textual problems. If we take lines 77-78 to mean: “Together with that [sc. the *vertex*, the crown of the head] while, in time past, it was still virgin [adjective, meaning that the *vertex* belonged to unmarried Berenike], being destitute of all matrons’ perfumes I drank many mean ones”, and if we bear in mind that the admonition in 87-88 forms the conclusion of the passage 79-88, with its demand for *dona*, i.e., sacrifices/libations, then the meaning of the admonition should be clear enough. But the parallel to the ending of the Song of the Parcae, 64.376-380, with its religious idea of “if not tonight then never”, should not be lost sight of.

All this ought to be compared with the depiction of Hymenaeus in c. 61, esp. lines 31ff., epitomised in the one line *mentem amore reninciens*, “binding her heart with desire”, and 44f. *boni coniugator amoris*, an echo of the cult-titles (*sy*)*zygia* and *iuga* attributed to the marriage goddesses Hera and Juno respectively (*zygia* may also be used of Aphrodite). According to my interpretation, “Collis o Heliconii” depicts the ardent love relationship of a male god with the bride during her transitional phase; hence I determined the theme of c. 61 (and c. 62) to be Ritual and Desire.

In truth, I think that Kallimakhos, in making “Plokamos Berenikes” the conclusion of his four books of *Aitia*, counted on readers who, on the basis of their familiarity with the myths concerning Hymenaios and Hesperos, would be capable of enjoying this specimen of courtly poetry in the shape of a long-winded monologue uttered by an ample divine Plait cut off from the head of the formidable Queen Berenike, the once murderer of young prince Demetrios the Fair (see 66.25ff. on “the noble deed”, the *bonum facinus*!). The astronomer – Konon, 66.1-9 – and the poet will have counted on Hymenaios and Hesperos as the pattern of perception, the matrix, so to speak. The Lock has “now” become closely linked to Venus (=Arsinoe, 66.56ff., 89ff.); in exactly the same way both Hymenaios and Hesperos have always been closely associated with her: The Lock has been made “a new constellation among the old” by Venus; in the same way Hymenaios was translated to heaven by Aphrodite, who is hiding him in the aether; and as far as Hesperos is concerned, his catasterism, his *Verstärkung*, by Aphrodite is likewise well-attested (see Diggle on Euripides *Phaethon* 233f., p.151, and in *Latomus* 27 [1968] 175-180). See also the note on lines 20-24 below. – From my interpretation of the erotic argument in “Omnia qui magni dispexit lumina mundi” it follows that I consider lines 79-88 – however much these five disticha are absent from the Greek papyrus – to be translated from Kallimakhos just like the rest of c. 66 (cf. 65.15f.). I am unable to explain, however, the astounding fact that Catullus chose to translate Kallimakhos’ masculine nouns, *plokamos* and *bostrykbos*, into a feminine noun such as *caesaries* (66.8, cf. 66.39 below).

Although it was brought to the fore as early as in 1992, interpreters of Hellenistic poetry or historians of Greek religion have not yet taken **this triad of Hymenaios-Hesperos-Plokamos Berenikes** into consideration, at least not to my knowledge.

A welcome side-effect of this religio-historical interpretation of Catullus 66 or rather its Callimachean model, with its detection of a strongly erotic relationship between the queen and her devoted plait, is that Aeneas' seemingly bathetic words to queen Dido in the underworld, *Aeneid* 6.460: *inuutus, regina, tuo de litore cessi*, “unwillingly, queen, I left your shore” - echoing 66.39 *inuuta, o regina, tuo de uertice cessi*, “unwillingly [in the feminine], o queen, I left the crown of your head [dein Scheitel, din isse]” – are placed in a somewhat clearer light.

**Line 20:** now begins the song, the amoibaion, initiated by the maidens and *therefore* won by the youths, their opponents; this is the general rule of contests, *agones*, in tragedy, in comedy, in bucolic poetry, in ritual (see Thomas Gelzer *Der epirrhematische Agon bei Aristophanes* [München 1960] 65, 127ff. and W.J. Froleyks *Der AGON LOGON in der antiken Literatur* [Bonn 1973, diss.] 386, 389f., 391, 392, 395). Lines 1-18, with the - hectic and nervous - preparations, are to be considered as spoken, not sung; the same holds for the – mature and serene, perhaps even smiling – lines 59-65.

The view taken by Syndikus 1990 (2.57, 2.62, 2.74) of the “Gedichtssituation”, the events, the ritual, the genre (according to Syndikus, “der eigentliche Hymenaios” begins in line 1) of c. 62 differs radically from the one offered in this paper.

**Lines 20-24:** these lines mirror the Roman ritual usually referred to as *raptus simulatus*, cf. Paulus-Festus 364, 26 L.: *rapi simulatur uirgo ex gremio matris, aut, si ea non est, ex proxima necessitudine, cum ad uirum traditur, quod uidelicet ea res feliciter Romulo cessit*. The underlying way of thinking – a kind of imitative aitiology – is revealed in the *quod*-clause: The ritual rape is performed “evidently because Romulus succeeded in doing so”.

Catullus has given the passage Roman colouring, just as the Pindaric simile at 68.119-124 (cf. *Olympian Odes* 10.86-90) has received color Romanus or, rather, has been subjected to interpretatio Romana (see Kroll on 68.121 and 68.123). This is part of this poet's *Arbeitsweise*. The Roman flavour – to be compared with the viticultural marriage metaphor in line 54, cf. 49 *nudo*, “baumlos” - is unproblematic since it does not affect the *events* of our poem: in view of the perfect tense in 32 (see the end of my note on that line) with the accompanying *e nobis* (from among the reclining young girls; obviously not the same as *ex gremio matris*, from the bosom of her mother, as the Roman ritual has it), we should not follow T. Goud and consider the Roman event of *raptus simulatus* the “moment” of c. 62. Nor should one follow Baehrens, who likewise thought that the *raptus* was actually performed while being alluded to, cf. his note on *abstulit*, 32: “uirginem iam e gremio matris raptam procul uident adferri”. This should be viewed in

connection with his – fantastic - idea of the scenery of c. 62 (see his note on line 1): in front of the bridegroom's [!] house where the young people are gathered on the grass with abundant food.

With the blame of Hesperus here in lines 20-24 compare the praise of Hymenaeus in 61.56-59, again reflecting the *raptus* ritual (even in this “Roman” poem this ritual is only alluded to, not performed). The Hesperus of c. 62 is presented as a god who commits rape (cf. line 32) or mediates rape, the first is in *auellere* (21 and 22), the second, the mediating function, in *donare* (23). On rape in captured cities (line 24) see the *Iliad* 9.591-594, Sal. *Cat.* 51.9, cf. R.G. Austin on Verg. *A.* 2.746.

There is a resemblance between Hesperus in c. 62 and Hymenaeus in c. 61; the question is how far the resemblance goes. For the purpose of the present paper we may perhaps allow ourselves to ignore the otherwise important differences between rape and abduction/kidnapping/bride theft (on this distinction cf. *Ritual and Desire*, pp.92ff.). With this proviso, the following may be said: Hymenaeus performs rape for someone else; see 61.3-4 *qui rapis teneram ad uirum uirginem*, “you who kidnap tender bride to (*ad* is local) groom”, plus 31ff. *ac domum dominam uoca coniugis cupidam noui* ..., “and call home home’s mistress in a state of desire for her new husband...”, both passages being addressed to Hymenaeus and describing his general nature. Thus, Hymenaeus acts as vicarious kidnapper, but at the same time the god is a normal kidnapper, since the driving force also for the god is love of the bride; see 61.52f., still addressed to Hymenaeus, *tibi uirgines zonula soluunt sinus*, “for you the virgins loosen their robes from the tiny girdle”. Kroll: “Sie tun es gewissermassen dem Hymenaios zu Gefallen“. We who have studied the brides’ undressing as depicted in 66.79ff. (*unanimis... coniugibus* versus *mibi*) and have become acquainted with the ways of the Plait, the third member of the nuptial trio of Hesperos-Hymenaios-Plokamos, suggest that Kroll’s “gewissermassen” be deleted. The brides *do* have an erotic relationship with Hymenaios.

In c. 62, fire is what connects the star/god (*ignis*, 20) and the lover/bridegroom (*ardenti*, 23); the note on line 19 elucidates the double character of lover and star in the three gods Hesperos, Hymenaios, and Plokamos Berenikes.

On the background of all this it will be seen that the refrain in c. 62, with its invocation of Hymenaeus – who is virtually identical with Hesperus the rapist/the mediator of rape – cannot in any way be participated in by the girls (e.g. at 25!).

Notice the tremendous contrast between the girls’ depiction of Hesperus in 20-24 (to be continued in 32ff.) and the youths’ description of him, in their response in 26-30, as the star which “ratifies the covenant of marriage”.

**Lines 27-28:** *firmes*, confirm, ratify, rendered by *stabilire* and *sancire* in *ThLL* s.v. *firmitas* col. 811, 35ff.: *firmare* with such objects as *fidem*, *foedus*, *pacem*, *pactum*; cf. *pepigere* in line 28 (*sponsio*= *pactio*). In Greece betrothal was obligatory, in Rome it was not; see W. Erdmann *Die Ehe im alten Griechenland* (München 1934) 225f.

**Line 29:** *nec = but* not, as was realised by Gustav Friedrich 1908. More often than not Friedrich's comments are quite inept; see, however, his likewise correct observation on *At* in the note on 59 below. The reader is referred to A.B. Drachmann's review of Friedrich's edition in *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Filologi* III 18 (1909-10) 124-130 ("ein urteils- und geschmackloses Machwerk") and to Kroll, p.XI, cf. p.III. D.F.S. Thomson - in his chapter "The Progress of Catullan Studies from the Editio Princeps to the Present Day" - praises Friedrich's commentary (p.59: "an outstandingly rich commentary", "it well repays consultation").

**Line 32:** *e nobis ... abstulit unam*: the verb *aufero* may be used of abductors/rapists, e.g. Ovid *Fasti* 4.445ff. See the note on lines 20-24.

Parallel to the relationship between the youths, Hesperus, and the silent bridegroom (see *ignis* in 20, *ardenti* in 23, and *iucundior ignis* in 26), we have the following identification: the maidens = the absent Maiden, in the literary (structural) as well as the ritual sense.

There is, we notice, no equivalent on the female side to the god Hesperus on the male side. Thus, the seeming symmetry of the proceedings is flawed from the outset.

The couple of the day, i.e. the principal characters of the entire ritual drama, are silent. As for the implications of silence within the poetics of Greek culture and the performative aspects of the absence of speech, see Silvia Montiglio *Silence in the Land of Logos* (Princeton University Press 2000), esp. ch. 1 on religious silence and ch. 5, where silences in the theatre are shown often to indicate a thematic, structural, or musical shift. Compare the notes on line 18 (female-male), on lines 57-58 (acting and re-acting), and on line 58 (the time factor in mimetic poems).

The maidens sing on behalf of their absent friend, whose terror at this very moment they impress on the guests (cf. *flet quod ire necesse est* in 61.81). The amoibaion includes, in the true manner of a ritual, an entire age group in its perspective. Rich material on "die Genossenschaften der noch unverheirateten jungen Leute, Junggesellenvereine, Bubenbruderschaften, oder, um den jüngsten Ausdruck zu gebrauchen, Burschenschaften" is collected in the enjoyable treatise "Über vergleichende Sitten- und Rechtsgeschichte" by Hermann Usener (*Vorträge und Aufsätze* [Leipzig/Berlin 1907] 103-157, esp. 121ff.).

The bride is not, now, present at the banquet. Why not? Simply because at a certain moment she left the banqueting hall (with the other girls pretending not to notice it, I presume; this is consistent with the fact that she may have been seated near the back door; see on lines 6-7 above). Or rather, because she has been abducted, from among the dining girls, by Hesperus. To believers in the wedding *daimones* the latter reason is the real one.

The message of the refrain – the refrain being strongly revitalised in c. 62 by having had the Latin *ades* inserted into this centuries-old Greek complex – is that a higher power, Hymenaeus, must appear that can bring forth the bride who has been abducted

by Hesperus, and at the same time break the resistance of the unwed maidens and secure the youths victory in the contest. This is the office, the *munus*, of the god: to be attracted by the fresh charm of these young creatures and break their resistance (see 61.41ff.). By now, such ideas about the gods had been held for many centuries; cf. Alkman's first *partheneion*, as elucidated by Claude Calame and Robert Parker *Miasma* (Oxford 1983) 80f.

The Maiden must have been absent longer than Hesperus has been present, because at the precise moment when the Evening Star appears, the youths jump up from the banquet and pronounce: ...*iam ueniet uirgo* (line 4).

As regards the status within the poem of this absolutely crucial event, the abduction of the bride, it should be noticed that line(s) 32 (ff.) is (are) unique in referring to a specific event, whereas the rest of the song (20-58) is or can be understood as generalisations.

**Lines 34-35:** the commentators (Kroll and Thomson 1997 being among them) single out an "astronomical solecism" here. Quite unjustly, since "in the latitude of Greece, the planet Venus *can* be seen before sunrise and after sunset on the same day", according to the note on Kallimakhos *Hekale* 113 in A.S. Hollis *Callimachus Hecale, Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford 1990).

**Line 37:** for the idiomatic *quid tum, si...* cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 10.38.

On feigned hatred of sex and love in young girls cf. 66.15ff., interpreted in the note on line 19, above. One of the most moving documents on excessive hatred of sex and love, *Veneris nimium odium*, in young males is the Attis poem, Catullus 63 (i.a. line 17 *et corpus euirastis Veneris nimio odio*, "and your bodies you have unmanned in utter revulsion from love").

**Line 39:** "Das Hesperusmotiv wird verlassen" (Kroll). This entails no thematic break, however; now as before the central theme is the loss of virginity.

**Line 41:** Spengel's assumption of a lacuna (of one line) after 41 is hardly justifiable, since, from the point of view of language or content, nothing is really lacking (even Goud, who believes in several losses of lines in c. 62, writes about the assumption of a lacuna in this peculiar passage: "probably after 41"). It is not possible, however, to defend the text as it stands by counting 9+1 (39-48, 48 being the refrain) = 10 (49-58); this line of defence is inadmissible because the singers of the refrain are other than the two parties to the contest (see on line 5 above). Two considerations may be added: (1) Not all amoibaia are in accordance with Servius' description "aequali numero uersuum utuntur" (Servius on Vergil *Eclogues* 3.28), see the 8<sup>th</sup> *Eclogue* and cf. Fraenkel on Aiskhylos *Agamemnon* 1072-1177. (2) In the Song of the Parcae (not an amoibaion, of

course), the units separated by the refrain are of unequal length: 3, 4 or 5 lines (see Kroll on 64.323-381 [he changed his opinion on c. 62; see the Nachträge to p. 123 of his commentary]).

**Line 45:** *suis*: here the word must mean, not only “her relatives”, but “her relatives and friends” (on the vagueness of *sui* cf. OLD sub voce *suis* B 6; see also Catullus 61.51). The nostalgic girls discern no conflict of interests between family and friends (of both sexes at that!); but the realistic youths do; see their line 56 from which we gather that childhood friendships will fade away, and line 58 *minus est inuisa parenti*, stating that a (nubile) girl, wed or unwed, under all circumstances is odious to her father, more or less. This is the kind of mischievous and harsh *Heiterkeit* that is allowed to carry the day in “Vesper adest”.

**Lines 50 + 53:** male exaggeration (see Kroll); cf. Septimius as opposed to Acme in Catullus 45.

**Lines 56-58:** *innupta*: S. Linde’s emendation (*Hermes* 25 [1890] 639f.), based on Quintilian’s misremembering (9.3.16) of line 45, is well defended by T. Goud, p.26 (with reference to Linde and Weber). As for the *in-tacta* of the manuscripts see Kroll on 67.20 and J.N. Adams *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (London 1982) 185ff.

*in-culta*, 56, as opposed to *cara*, 58 (see also *cara* in line 45, which is parallel to 56), just as *senescit* is opposed by *maturo tempore*. The emphasis in 56-58 is on *maturo tempore*; this means that the youths, instead of chivalrously soothing the girls with their reply, end up by adding a special sting to their matrimonial persuasion: lines 56-58 contain a summons to marry at the earliest possible age, i.e., at a time when the break with childhood friends will be at its most painful.

*cara uiro magis*: *magis* compares the *matura uirgo* (cf. Verg. *A.* 7.53 *iam matura uiro, iam plenis nubilis annis*) with the too mature and therefore less *cara*. “We shall not go far wrong if we postulate that the Romans [and the Greeks, too] considered it ideal for a young woman’s first marriage to be timed so as to follow almost immediately after menarche” (Susan Treggiari “Digna condicio: Betrothals in the Roman Upper Class” *EMC* 28 (1984) 419-451, 421; cf. her *Roman Marriage* [Oxford 1991] 398ff.). Thus, there is nothing strained about these lines. An explanation similar to the one offered here (and in *Ritual and Desire* [1992]) is found in Thomson 1997 (against Kroll). Fordyce paraphrases thus (cf. Merrill 1893): “the *uirgo* has the affection of a husband, as she had not before: she ceases to be an encumbrance to her father, as she was before”. This presupposes, as far as I can see, that line 58 may mean: *cara magis*, namely, *uiro*, et *minus inuisa*, namely, *parenti*, *est* - impossibly.

In their insistence on the need for the bride to be *tenera*, i.e. still to be as much of a girl as possible at the time when she bids the other girls and boys farewell, the young men conclude the amoibaion in a highly confrontative mood. After lines 30 and 36-37 this is only to be expected.

**Lines 57-58:** referring to these lines Fraenkel (op. laud., 96; cf. 90) writes: “This plain truth silences the girls completely, for what could they possibly reply?” Fraenkel is followed by Quinn 1970/1973 on 59-65 and others; cf. Syndikus 2.74.

But then what could the girls possibly have replied to the insinuation in line 37? And what could they possibly have replied to the jubilantly happy line 30? The truth is that the girls do not ever reply. This is what happens during the contest: the maidens do not enter into discussion with the youths, they hear nothing, they act, their opponents re-act – it is the men that *respondent*, as was stated in line 18, the last words before the contest. See also the notes on lines 9 and 20 above. Fraenkel’s defence of the reading *Et* in line 59 rests on untenable assumptions about the events of the poem (the youths hastening on from their “victorious” line 58 to line 59).

Having reached this point we must ask: Why then do the girls not resume their singing after 58? The answer is: Because the bride has arrived. The events (*ta dromena*) count more than the words (*ta legomena*), such as the words in 57-58, for instance. Please compare my remarks above on line 32 about the maidens = the Maiden, and vice versa, in the literary (structural) as well as the ritual sense.

**Line 58:** given that the function of the refrain is to expedite events (see on line 19), it should *not* be inserted, against the manuscripts, after this line (see the introductory note above), for by 58 the bride *uenit*. There is a parallel to this omission of an expected element in the amoibaion at Aiskhylos’ *Persai* 256-289: five times the choral stanza is followed by a couplet from the Messenger, but the sixth time it is not. Why not? Why this breach of the regularity of the amoibaion? Because at long last Queen Atossa breaks her silence (lines 290ff.). For dramatic purposes the typical arrangement is *not* followed, and should not be “restored” (this was attempted in Aiskhylos, too).

The ritual act of *traditio uirginis* – compare Plautus *Casina* 829ff.; cf. 815-824 – in real life would take place after the completion of the contest/the coming of the bride. This is also suggested by the perfect tenses *tradidit* and *dederunt* (= *iungere conubium*, 29) in lines 60 and 65; see the analysis in *Ritual and Desire* pp.210ff. Instead of speaking of a “pause” between 58 and 59, we might choose to speak of telescoping or *Zeitraffung*, see Albert op. laud., 237: “Zum andern kann es Zeitsprünge geben, indem ganze Phasen eines in sich zusammenhängenden Geschehens zwischen zwei Versen oder Strophen übergangen werden“. Albert refers to Catullus 42.7 (the hendecasyllabics asking a question) and the ritual *Festgedicht* Tibullus 2.1 “Quisquis adest faeuat: fruges lustramus et agros”, inter alia (c. 62 is interpreted differently by Albert).

The bride has just appeared, ready for the procession; this is exactly the point at which the Plautus passage places the *traditio uirginis*/the *datio uxoris*. In Plautus, too, this *acte traditionnel*, viz. the ritual Handing over of the Bride (“*uxorem accipe banc a nobis*”), is fused with words about sexual compliance (*morem gerere* is the technical term). In light of this we are able to explain a strange fact of c. 61, to wit the placing of the words about the joyful activities in the marital bed (61.107-113 *o cubile quod omnibus...*) immediately before the bride sets out on the *deductio*. One might have thought that the sounding of words so thoroughly permeated by the male point of view (*quae tuo* [“you”= the bed] *ueniunt ero, quanta gaudia ...!*) at this point, when the bride would still be full of fear of crossing the threshold of her parental home, would amount to a severe strategic blunder within the overall project of cunning and gentle sexual persuasion. But the correspondance with the *Casina* passages and with Catullus 62.59-65 (*ne pugna ... uirginitas...*) should be taken into consideration. Thus, there were after all limits to the delicacy applied.

**Line 59:** *At tu*: these two words are common at changes of addressee, often with the verb in the imperative or the like, cf. Tib. 1.8.47 *at tu... utere* - cf. Murgatroyd on line 77 of that poem -, Cic. *Fin.* 2.74, Hor. *Epist.* 1.7.16. For *at tu* followed by *ne* see Ov. *Am.* 1.7.63 *at tu ne dubita* and Ov. *Fast.* 4.931 *at tu ne viola*, cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.28.23 with Nisbet-Hubbard; see *TbLL* s.v. *at* col. 995,11, where our passage is cited, along with Catullus 8.14 and 8.19, under the heading “*minae*” (“threat” is, however, much too strong a word to describe lines 59-65). Gustav Friedrich states it concisely: “Dies *At* ist nicht zu entbehren: der Dichter bricht mit diesem *at* ab [...]”. At 66.21f. (definitely a question, otherwise we get the opposite meaning of the one required by the context) we have *at tu* as a variant reading of *et tu*; *at* is impossible; *et*, if sound, must mean “and” (not “also”), but we should almost certainly take *at* as a pointer to *an* (found in the recentiores), cf. 66.27 and 66.31.

Fraenkel (op. laud., 95-96) keeps *Et tu*, which he terms a “formula of application” and translates “and so you, too, do not struggle...”, but he adduces no parallel to demonstrate that *Et tu ne pugna* could possibly carry the meaning “you too do not fight”, i.e. “you must not fight either”. I strongly doubt whether this is proper Latin; it is difficult/impossible even to find examples of positive *et tu* - meaning not “and you” but “you too” - followed by an imperative. But even if *Et tu ne pugna* could be shown to be proper Latin, the inclusion of the other girls – in “too” – would water down the honorific *tali* in *tali coniuge* (cf. the *Epithalamium Laurentii* 39, addressed to the bride: *et tamquam talis fueris praesaga mariti*). And *Et* would come close to being meaningless unless the bride, by entering a long time before line 59, had been able to hear the words that would now, through this “you too”, be mobilized against her. But it is unthinkable that this ritually crucial event - “*iam ueniet uirgo*”, nothing short of the glorious annulment of “*e nobis ... abstulit unam*” - should take place in the dark, so to speak.

Besides, the singing-contest, lines 20-58, has really been completed, both in the ritual sense - in so far as the male point of view has triumphed over and absorbed the female view - and in the literary sense - since similes give “closure” to a poem (Catullus c. 11, 17, 25, 65 and Hor. *Carm.* 1.36), as they do to a song (e.g. Verg. *G.* 1), to a chapter (e.g. Quintilian 2.6.7), or to a book (e.g. Quintilian book 2). Thus, the pair of similes, lines 39-58, each of them of large, Homeric scope, complete and close the unit of lines 20-58, making it a poem within the poem. From *Hespere, quis caelo...* to *minus est inuisa parenti* we have the sung part, at rest within its system of elaborate symmetries. On the “closing” effect of similes see J. Svennung *Catulls Bildersprache. Vergleichende Stilstudien I* (Uppsala 1945) 52f., with references, and Barbara Herrnstein Smith *Poetic Closure: A Study of How Poems End* (Chicago/London 1968).

The situation to be visualised in line 59 is this: the poet ranges the pair before him, as should be clear from the vocative *uirgo* and the deictic *tali coniuge*, and he admonishes the Maiden in the following way: *you* (to whom I now turn) must not fight with such a (wonderful) husband (as the one we have before us here, cf. *genero*, 65). These words introduce a single argumentative unit on the theme *noli pugnare* (lines 59 and 64).

Once it is understood that the youths merely *respondent*, that they do not at any point in the poem propose any independent ideas on marriage, and that they won the amoibaion exactly by dint of their gift for *antilogia* and *elenchos* and ironical echoing, it will be seen that lines 59ff., which are not based on anything sung by the maidens, cannot be attributed to the *iuuenes*.

Two facts in particular convince me that we should return to the practice, nowadays abandoned by almost all interpreters, of attributing 59-65 to the poet: (1) in carmen 61 the *allocutio sponsorum* - with its Summons to Intercourse, its *protrope pros symploken* - is sung by the poet/the master of ceremonies/*der Festleiter*, and by him alone (from 61.204 up to the concluding stanza); (2) the mimetic poem c. 45, “Acmen Septimius suos amores”, is concluded by an epilogue spoken by the poet and containing erotic diegesis and, in conclusion, erotic makarismós (“Who ever saw more blessed mortals...?”). These are my main arguments from outside c. 62. See also the note on line 20 above.

To this may be added that in Catullus’ *carmina maiora* (see c.61 [above], 63.91-93, 64.382-408, and 68.149-160) the poet generally has the last word.

**Conclusion:** The ritual moments of the mimetic poem “Vesper adest” are, in chronological order, (1) the disappearance of the bride (line 32), (2) the appearance of the Evening Star (lines 1-2), (3) the singing-contest (20-58), (4) the coming of the bride (at line 58), (5) the *traditio uirginis* (a little later), (6) the *allocutio sponsae* (lines 59-65), (7) the embarking upon the procession accompanied by the hymenaios (line 66).

