

## Chapter 2

### Reclaiming Heroic Tradition: Catullus' Wedding & Virgil's Child

Virgil builds by absorbing not only historical but literary materials. He expands by appropriating diverse ideas and styles: the vatic from Horace, the philosophical and didactic from Lucretius, and the heroic from the epyllion, 'little epic', which Catullus embroidered around the legendary wedding of Peleus and Thetis. From literature as from history, what Virgil absorbs he transforms, challenging his fellow poets and asserting a new authority in poetics commensurate with his new political vision. The present chapter will examine in some detail how Catullus reshaped the heroic myths into an original synthesis, which Virgil honors by allowing it to represent the epic tradition he would absorb and change to consolidate his new authority as a *uates*.

A. Since ancient times commentators and doubtless also Virgil's best contemporary readers have seen that he drew on the Catullan *Wedding* at one notable point in the fourth eclogue.<sup>1</sup> No ancient interpretation of the passage survives; Macrobius included it without comment in a list of ornaments said to be culled by Virgil from other writers. The interpretative tradition, then, is modern and it follows generally within lines drawn perhaps first by E. K. Rand, who read the echo as an answer by the classic Virgil, whose sympathies, though they sweep through history, converge upon the present, to Catullan romanticism that looks back with longing to the heroic past.<sup>2</sup> Detailed study remains to be carried out.<sup>3</sup>

Virgil echoes a scene invented by Catullus,<sup>4</sup> who imagines that Peleus and Thetis held a wedding banquet where the

<sup>1</sup> Macrobius, *Sat.* 6.1-41.

<sup>2</sup> E. K. Rand, 'Catullus and the Augustans', *HSCP* 17 (1906) 21; cf. for example F. Klingner, *Römische Geisteswelt* (München, 1952<sup>2</sup>) 212; *RE* 2.15.1206.49ff.

<sup>3</sup> A thorough study was called for by Büchner, *RE* 2.15.1260.33ff., yet hardly provided by the work of E. M. Smith, *CJ* 26 (1930) 141ff.; G. Gonelli, *GIF* 15 (1962) 225ff.; and Westendorp-Boerma, *AClass* 1 (1958) 51ff. One early paper, which Büchner names but has not seen, proves to be nothing more than two independent sets of textual comments printed together by chance: B. Stumpo, *Quaestiunculæ quæ ad Catulli Car. LXIV et ad Vergilii Buc. IV pertinent* (Nicosia, 1903).

<sup>4</sup> F. Klingner, *SBAW* 6 (1956) 22.

entertainment consisted of singing by the *Parcae*, who are depicted as old women, with red bands on white hair, bits of wool stuck to chapped lips, the whole a consciously embroidered genre piece that Catullus introduces on the following note: (64.321-22)

talia diuino fuderunt carmine fata,  
carmine perfidiae quod post nulla arguet aetas.

Such utterances the Parcae poured out in divine song,  
in song which no later age will accuse of falseness.

The ensuing song is punctuated by a refrain: (64.327, etc.)

currite ducentes subtegmina, currite fusi.

run on spindles leading the threads, run on.

At the close,  $\neg$ talia. occurs again, now in retrospect: (64.382-83)

talia praefantes quondam felicia Pelei  
carmina diuino cecinerunt pectore Parcae.

such lucky songs for Peleus once-upon-a-time  
the Parcae sang foretelling with divine heart.

Structurally the passages quoted shape the song, giving it an introduction, continuo, and conclusion. All together they underlie a passage in the eclogue, which likewise plays a structuring role.<sup>5</sup>

In the eclogue, the motif of ‘Cumaeian song’ (4) opened the preamble, as we have seen, which developed with such prophetic themes as finality (4), return (5-6), innovation (7) and future change (8-17). Expanding on this outline, Virgil fills the center of the eclogue with prophecy (4.18-45). This he recapitulates in two lines that sum up his whole notion of the future and claim for it the highest prophetic authority. Thus crucial to the whole structure, these lines contain the best known echo of the *Wedding*: (4.46-47)

talia saecla suis dixerunt ‘currite!’ fuis  
concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.

Such as these centuries ‘Run!’ to their spindles have said  
the Parcae concerted in the steady force of the fates.

Like Catullus, Virgil places  $\neg$ talia. in first position, with  $\neg$ Parcae. at the end, capping the period and the verse, which opens with their attribute, ‘concerted, harmonious’, so that together the *Parcae* and their attribute form an outer frame (*a...A*). Within it stands the motif of the ‘steady nod’, another pair, which frames the pivotal word, ‘of the fates’. The whole falls into a concentric pattern (*abxBA*), which is a mannerism characteristic of the *Wedding* and especially of the section in question. Patterns of this kind occur fully in  $\neg$ talia diuino... carmine fata. (*ab.BA*, 64.321) and affect the arrangement and articulation of a verse like

<sup>5</sup> Rand (above n. 2) 18.

–carmine diuino... pectore Parcae. (*Xb.BY*, 64.383). Such patterns (*abxBA*) occur eleven times in the 407 verses of the *Wedding*, six times in the 81 verses devoted to the *Parcae*, to say nothing of verses like –carmine diuino. (*Xb.BY*) that merely reflect in part the form.<sup>6</sup>

Virgil also resembles Catullus in framing the directly quoted –currere. by separated words with identical endings, –suis... fusis..<sup>7</sup> His unbroken two-line period recalls Catullus' tendency, illustrated below, to append full lines paratactically or additively in long, rather languid periods unlike the more taut Virgilian style. To –fuderunt. and –cecinerunt., which were centered by Catullus in their respective verses, correspond Virgil's –dixerunt. and –fatorum.: first the decisive speech act, 'said/have said', then its result, 'fates, things uttered'. A key word in the *Wedding*, *fata* preserves something of its original, etymological sense as the perfect participle of the verb *fari*, hence 'things uttered'. Catullus uses the cognate *praefari* of the *Parcae* singing. He also describes their inspiration in terms that recall Greek ideas of inspired prophetic poetry as translated into Latin epic tradition by Ennius:<sup>8</sup> (*Ann.* 19 V)

quem Venus... fata docet fari, diuinum pectus habere

whom Venus teaches to tell the foretold, to have divine heart

The phrase –diuinum pectus., by which Ennius rendered a Greek formula into Latin poetic diction, reappears disposed around the verb –fuderunt. (64.321). In Virgil, proximity with the verb of speaking, –dixerunt., revives these archaic roots of *fata* alongside more abstract and philosophical development of the word.

B. The episode of the *Parcae* plays an important part in the *Wedding* as a whole. Catullus imagines them foretelling how Peleus and Thetis will have a son, Achilles, who will fight in the Trojan War. The story provides an essential piece, since Catullus conceived of the whole poem as a single, unitary account of the heroic age and the subsequent decline to the age of iron. He links together in one narrative the myths of the Argo's voyage, as told by Apollonius of Rhodes, with the war at Troy, from Homer and the epic cycle, then the decline to the iron age, as in Hesiod and

<sup>6</sup> Cat. 64.89, 125, 133, 173, 202, 309, 314, 321, 344, 350, 368, and cf. 364, 370; cf. Lucr. 5.254, 611; Theocritus 7.147; Virgil, *B.* 3.39; 4.4, 44; 5.17; 6.8; 7.11; 46; 10.20, 49 (50, 53); Cic., *Arat.* 34 (Traglia): 64, 68, 111, 144, 212. C. Conrad *HSCP* 69 (1965) 239-41, relates the pattern to the tendency of Catullus and Cicero to write single-line sense units. The 828 verses of the *Bucolics* have but 9 instances in all. Conrad comments on many of these same verses from another standpoint, p. 216.

<sup>7</sup> On this type of separation, see Conrad (n. 6) 207ff., especially 212-13; what he says (pp. 220-221) about conflict of ictus and accent in uses of *suus* should also be noted here.

<sup>8</sup> Klingner (above n. ) 7-8ff. gives instances of Ennian words in Cat. 64.lff. and says the whole has an old epic effect. The list can be enlarged and refined, cf. nn. 18, 19 and 24.

Aratus. As a unifying motif, Catullus imagines desire in a causal chain from the heroes of the Argo, who began by ‘desiring’ to steal the golden fleece (–optantes,. 64.5, the first cause), which led to the first voyage (–prima,. 64.11), which occasioned a further manifestation of desire, Peleus fired with love at first sight of Thetis (–incensus... amore,. 64.16-17), which led to marriage on the desired day, –optatae luces. (64.31), to the things that husbands desire, –optata maritis. (64.328), and to the desired loves, –optatos amores. (64.372).

In the motif of happy marriage, Catullus momentarily imagines an ideal *concordia* (‘harmony’, 64.336) in which the best might be full of intensity but passion would generate order and not divisive chaos.<sup>9</sup> Peleus and Thetis become, in his imagination, a great and rare type of harmony, which they were not in earlier poets.<sup>10</sup> Yet Catullus also composes a mythic counterpoint containing other figures of desire, imagined as a story woven into the coverlet of the bridal couch: Ariadne’s extreme desire for Theseus (–praeoptarit,. 64.120), her despair at the loss her ‘desired wedding’ (–optatos hymenaeos,. (64.141), finally her marriage to Bacchus ‘fired with love’ (–incensus amore,. 64.253).

After the woven tale, Catullus invents circumstances for the wedding, not without ominous touches: Prometheus comes bearing old wounds;<sup>11</sup> Apollo and Diana, disaffected, do not come. As a centerpiece he adds the the *Parcae*, projecting the next link in the causal chain of desire. Unlike the harmonious passion between Peleus and Thetis, further ominous notes color this account of their offspring. Describing Achilles, Catullus chooses to dwell on the terrifying life and grim consequence of his death, the sacrifice of the Trojan girl Polyxena on his grave, followed by the fall of Troy. The cruel murder of a virgin takes on the proportions of a holocaust for the heroic age, followed by decline to the iron age. Catullus emphasizes that after Troy the gods stopped frequenting mankind and that human life now consists of endless violence. Catullus sees a present wholly dominated by desire, no longer in the form of heroic myths but represented simply by a catalogue of vices.<sup>12</sup> His account leaves little practical difference between the

<sup>9</sup> W. Kroll, *Catullus* (1929<sup>2</sup>, Berlin) 142, calls *concordia* the aim of the whole. It was an important theme in the Hellenist-ic world: reconciliation, concord, *homonoia* accord-ing to W\_W\_Tarn, *JRS* 22 (1932) 135ff.

<sup>10</sup> Kroll, *ibid.*, notes that Cat. 64.20 corrects Homer, *Il.* 18.433, where Thetis is said to have been unwilling to marry Peleus. Apollonius of Rhodes depicts them as already married and separated by a disagreement, 1.865. It was Hera who gave Thetis to Peleus and invited the guests, 1.805ff.

<sup>11</sup> M. C. J. Putnam, *HSCP* 65 (1961) 192, compares Catullus’ descriptions of Prometheus and Attis: –silici restrictus membra ca~tena/ persoluit pendens. (64.296-97), with (deuolsit... pondera silice/ itaque ut relictas sensit sibi membra,. 63.5-6.

<sup>12</sup> U. von Wilamowitz, *Hellenistische Dichtung* (Berlin, 1924) 304, makes two valid observations, but a third ignores the ominous elements just noted and thus perpetrates a misleading generalization: –In der Seele des Dichters, nicht in seiner Handbibliothek... So spricht ein Römer in einer furchterlichen Zeit, der sein Vaterland dem Unter-gange zutrieben sieht. Er selbst treibt mit in diesem Strudel, lebt ein verlorenes Leben und find~et die Rube und Reinheit, nach der er sich

trivial, brutal common manners of his time and the action of the heroes, apart from the momentary harmony of the great wedding.<sup>13</sup>

The evidence of extant literature and Catullus' own rhetoric suggest that he was first to make Argo's voyage an occasion of love at first sight between Peleus and Thetis.<sup>14</sup> They were already wed and estranged in Apollonius' account, where old Chiron carries their son down to see off the boat. The voyage still occasioned amorous glances, but nymphs other than Thetis saw and were seen by the heroes.<sup>15</sup> Catullus introduced a new logic and economy of causes into mythical history: he made the Argo first,<sup>16</sup> attached to it Peleus' love rather than the famous affairs of Hercules and Hylas or Jason and Medea, at which Catullus hints in his opening and in Ariadne's laments on the wedding coverlet. Those stories, to be sure, would hardly be suitable as types of concord or of marriage, which interest and attract Catullus. From Peleus' and Thetis' love, the way to Achilles is direct: the *Parcae* are a happy invention to foreshadow the culmination and end of the heroic age. A new logic of selection and suppression informs the whole account.

Catullus signals his plan, and his consciousness of its originality, in an elaborate preamble, with style calibrated to the theme, beginning as follows: (64.1-7)

Peliaco quondam prognatae uertice pinus		
dicuntur liquidas Neptuni nasse per undas,		
cum lecti iuuenes	argiuae robora	pubis
auratam optantes	Colchis auertere	pellem
ausi sunt uada salsa	cita decurrere	puppi
caerula uerrentes	abiegnis aequora	palmis.

On Pelion's peak once-upon-a-time begotten pines  
are said to have swum through Neptune's limpid waves  
When the picked warriors, might of the Argive youth,  
desiring to take away the golden fleece of Colchis,  
dared to run the salty ways with their swift ship,  
sweeping the sky-blue plains with piney palms.

A Greek adjective used in imitation of a learned, Greek poetic form,<sup>17</sup> *–Peliaco*. refers to a distant place and story; *–quondam*. points nostalgically to distant time and recalls perhaps the language of a commonplace in tragedy.<sup>18</sup> The next verses reach

.....  
sehnt, nur wenn er sich in die versunkene Herrlichkeit der hellenischen Märchenwelt flucht.. Catullus does not escape.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Putnam (above n. 11) 176, 196.

<sup>14</sup> Klingner (above n. 4) 11; cf. also n. 10.

<sup>15</sup> Sight, nymphs seeing heroes, forms an important part of Ap. Rhd. account, 1.548ff., cf. Wilamowitz (above n. 12) 299; *ut uidi, ut perii* was an erotic topos.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Klingner (above n. 4) *passim*.

<sup>17</sup> On similar openings of epyllia, see W. Bühler, *Die Europa des Moschus* (Hermes-Einzelschr. 13, 1960) 47, called to my attention by Professor Clausen.

<sup>18</sup> *–Quondam*. resembles the *pote* of Moschus, as Bühler says, but it, and the opening in general, also recall the tradition of Medea: *–quondam*. (64.1) echoing not only the Ennian *Med.* 246 but also Eurip., *Med.* 1ff. (*pote* in v. 3) according to S. Mar-i-otti, *Il Bellum Punicum e l'arte di Nevio* (Roma, 1955) 47, n. 79,

extremes of synchysis and pleonasm in their arrangements artificially contrived of words referring obliquely to other words through metonymies and metaphors, as ‘pines’ for ‘ships’ and ‘swam’ for ‘went’. The phrase *–lecti iuuenes.* is an epic commonplace.<sup>19</sup> The entire seven lines form a single period which has only two principal members, two main verbs, the rest of the clauses being simply appended.<sup>20</sup> This otiose frame allows elaborate separations of adjectives from nouns,<sup>21</sup> also in four verses (3-6) for patterning of initial letters, *c- a- a- c-*, which then come back in reverse order in the first letters of the second half lines, *a- c- c- a-*. At each of the four verse-ends stands a word in *p-*, two with internal labial stops and two with internal liquid or nasal. The effect is manneristic, the pattern tending to become an end in itself, certainly a stylistic touchstone.

With originality in style, Catullus begins to underscore the original points in his treatment of the myths. Since the motif of desire unifies his whole conception of the heroic age, he insists on it as the originating motive of the heroes. He also insists that they were innovators and inventors who ‘dared’ to sail (*–ausi.*, 64.6) and that their ship was first: (64.11)

*illa rudem cursu prima imbuit Amphitriten.*

that (ship) first tinged Amphitrite, still unused to passage.

This use of *imbuere*, ‘infect, stain, teach’, expresses a certain ambivalence towards innovation, since it occurs again to describe the coming of the ensuing age of iron:<sup>22</sup> (64.397)

*sed postquam tellus scelere est imbuta nefando*

[once upon a time the gods frequented earth]

but since earth has been tinged by unutterable crime

[they come no more]

.....  
elaborating on Kroll.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *B.* 4.35, discussed below. Kroll (above n. 9) compares *–lecti iuuenes.*, *iuuenes.*, 64.4, with Apollonius 3.347 and Theocritus 13.18, which Gow in turn relates to Homer. *Il.* 13.689, *Theocritus* (Cambridge, 1952<sup>2</sup>) ad loc. Kroll also notes Enn., *Medea* 250, *–delecti uiri.* Lucretius has *–ductores Danaum de–lec–ti.*, 1.86, the sacrifice of Iphigenia, which resembles the sacrifice of Polyxena in Catullus, who also writes *–electos iuuenes.* (64.78, cf. *–lecta undique pube.*, 68.101). Gonelli (above n. 3) 246, cites previous tradition but relates 64.4 to four passages in the *Aeneid*. For Ennian material in Catullus, see note 18 above.

<sup>20</sup> Contrasts in periodic structure between Cat. 64.62-67, *Lucr.* 5.1188-93 and *Aeneid* 12.542-47 are remarked by J. W. Mackail, *The Aeneid* (Oxford, 1936) lxxvi. Catullus’ long first period is analyzed by H. Patzer, *Mus. Helv.* 12 (1955) 79. On 64.7. see Conrad (above n. 6) 239.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. n. 6.

<sup>22</sup> *Imbuere* is used of plowing and of marriage in later poets: Merrill, *Catullus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1949) ad loc.; C. J. Fordyce translates, ‘first handselled the untried Amphitrite with sailing.’: *Catullus* (Oxford, 1961) ad loc., and compares *–imbu–is–se palmulas in aequore.*, *Catullus* 4.17, with *Valerius Flaccus* 1.69, *–ignaras Cereris qui uomere terras/ imbuit.*, also adduced by Merrill. Adds Fordyce, *–rudem cursu* is an unparalleled phrase and the innocence of the sea is more in point than the *inex–per–i–ence* of the ship.

In both cases, an overtone of violation colors the beginning.

Pursuing the logic of his plan, Catullus next asserts that the first sailing must have afforded the first opportunity for love between mortals and marine nymphs, and that then it must have been, then only, that Peleus met Thetis: (64.16-21, as restored by Bergk)

illa atque <haud> alia uiderunt luce marinas  
mortales oculis nudato corpore nymphas.  
tum Thetidis Peleus incensus fertur amore,  
tum Thetis humanos non despexit hymenaeos,  
tum Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit.

by that, and no other, light did mortals see  
with their own eyes marine nymphs with body bared.  
Then for Thetis love fired Peleus it is said;  
Then to Thetis the Father himself felt Peleus should be joined;  
Then Thetis did not scorn a human wedding,

Bergk's restoration supports Catullus' special logic, which the poet underlines with extraordinary rhetorical means: triple anaphora of *tum* and triple polyptoton in the name of the goddess.

Having asserted the grounds for his mythological revision, Catullus makes an apostrophe to the heroes in a style that finds still further means of emphasis:<sup>23</sup> (64.22-28)

o nimis optato saeculorum tempore nati  
heroes, saluete deum genus, o bona matrum  
progenies, saluete iterum...  
uos ego saepe meo, uos carmine compellabo,  
teque adeo eximie taedis felicibus aucte,  
Thessaliae columnen Peleu, cui Iuppiter ipse,  
ipse suos diuum genitor concessit amores.

O born in a juncture of the centuries too much desired,  
heroes, hail race of the gods, O of mothers goodly  
line, hail yet again...  
You will I often, you with my song address,  
and you above all, highly honored by prosperous marriage,  
pillar of Thessaly, Peleus, to whom Jove himself,  
himself the gods' begetter yielded his own love.

Composed with traces of old Latin epic,<sup>24</sup> the apostrophe verges on another archaic genre, that of the *carmina*, formulaic and

<sup>23</sup> Punctuation, 64.24-25, follows that of Kroll (above n. 9): "uos.. uos... is anaphora introducing two equal cola joined by *apo koinou*, "meo (carmine), (meo) carmine.; then the accusative, "teque adeo., which specifies one out of the many heroes as particular object of Catullus' appeal. The punctuation of the Oxford text is inexplicable on this point.

<sup>24</sup> Traces of Enn., *Ann.* 35-51 recur in Cat. 64, part of the archaic epic coloring described by Klingner (n. 4): to *Ann.* 35, quoted, and *Ann.* 36, "talia tum memorat memorat lacrumans exterrita somno., cf. 64.56, "utpote fallaci quae tum primum excita somno; Putnam (above n. 11) 169, cites "somnus ex-citam Attin.. Compare Compare also 64.24, "compellabo. to *Ann.* 44, "exim compellare," and *Ann.* 251, "sic compellat., also a spondaic ending; and 64.139-40, "blanda... / uoce., to *Ann.* 55, "blanda uoce uocabam.. Ariadne is one just awakened from sleep.

rhythmic language, whether legal, ritual or magical. Repeated *u*-os. and direct alliteration with *c*-arminē, along with a hint of compulsion in the verb, recall that tradition, as if Catullus were making an instrument of language in a style like that of disappointed lovers in Theocritus' second idyll or Virgil's eighth eclogue: attempts to constrain some object of desire by means of poetic force. Catullus seems almost to seek by force style to draw the heroes to the present. Ironically, his own 'too much', (*nimis*, 22) seems to imply that the task is too hard or the effort self-defeating in its excess. More subtly ironic, Virgil's opening 'greater by a bit' deflects, or momentarily masks, ambition. Catullus projects his desire for heroism in terms that risk seeming paratragic. Appealing to the heroes as 'born at a juncture of the centuries too much desired', the very structure of the verse reflects excess: concentric pairs *nimis... nati*. and *optato tempore*. enclose *saeclorum*. in a pattern like those for *fatorum*. and *fuderunt*. in the *Parcae*'s song (*na.An*). The highly wrought, archaizing, emphatic language is a *tour de force* like the plan it presents and represents.

Themes of excess appear, too, in the story of Achilles told by the *Parcae*.<sup>25</sup> Yet their song remains detached, part of mythology, distant from the present. When Catullus speaks of their songs as once upon a time happy, *quondam felicia*, he echoes the nostalgia with which he began his account of the heroic age and he provokes an irony of his own. He desired happiness and sought images of it in myth, but the burden of the *Parcae*'s song and his own is quite other. Poetry of itself cannot bring order out of nothing, nor even images of order. Virgil, then, perceiving the promise of a different age finds reasons for less distant reference to the *Parcae*, claiming their authority for his own imminent future, grounding new destiny and myth in the present.

C. Although the one strong link has long been remarked, the structural importance of both passages in their respective poems suggests a search for other relations between the eclogue and the *Wedding*. Links appear from the start. Like Catullus, Virgil begins with a Greek adjective that suggests a place and literary genre.<sup>26</sup> But, *Sicelides*, unlike *Peliaco*, relates to bucolic as well as heroic tradition and instead of vociferous address to a time 'too much desired' Virgil offers the riddling proposition of a go at 'things greater by a little bit'. Virgil speaks at first not in his own person but with the Muses, 'let us sing', leaving room, perhaps, for an inference that the bolder, more colloquial form of address in Catullus, the energetic apostrophe grasping at the heroes, 'you often, you...', may be interpreted as a sign of present alienation from the divine and heroic on the part of a poet thrown back on his

<sup>25</sup> Putnam (above n. 11) 195: 'the brutality of his (Achilles') actions somehow helps bridge the gap between the ideal/past section of the poem and the real/present.'

<sup>26</sup> For *Sicelides*, see Chap. 4.

own person and perforce insisting too much, as he gropes for a very distant ideal, one that eludes him in his private and public surroundings. Catullus must confront the heroes himself.

Reflecting on himself, Catullus offers in his preamble only the self-judging 'too much desired'. But when he introduces the woven coverlet of the marriage couch, a calculated artifice if there ever was one, he describes it in both esthetic and ethical terms that may be taken as revealing the principles of poetics operative in his mind as he composes the entire work: (64.50-51)

haec uestis priscis hominum uariata figuris  
heroum mira uirtutes indicat arte.

This coverlet embroidered with antique designs of men  
heroic excellences reveals with wondrous craft.

The combination of astonishing artifice and antique fictions to disclose heroic qualities sounds like an account of the *Wedding* itself. Virgil, less oblique but more abstract, opens by expressing his own desire for 'greater things', which he goes on to explain with the generically ethical criterion, that poetry should both please and benefit (–iuuant, 4.2), which follows with the more specific desire that his work be 'consul-worthy' (–consule dignae, 4.3), a symbol of present Roman authority rather than ancient heroic prestige.

Virgil continues a measured expansion throughout his preamble (4.4-17), putting off any mention even of heroes until he gets to the child's future. The only hero he confronts directly will be of his own devising, not one of the old ones. In the interim, he moves bit-by-bit, absorbing, transforming motifs from the preamble of Catullus, establishing the role of *uates* for himself, as we saw in the previous chapter. As *uates*, the figure he cuts is less personal, no doubt, less passionate and assertive, than Catullus, less lyrical but also less at risk of paratragic excess.

Piecing together the vatic role, Virgil composes the image of the *kairos* (4.4-10), which differs in its sense of order and control from the Catullan present. Virgil anchors the *kairos*, and his vatic voice, in the motif of prophetic language, 'Cumaean song' (4.4), which he locates in his own time, unlike the Catullan *Parcae* who sang 'once upon a time' (–quondam, 64.382). The *kairos* grows with the motif of the 'great order of the centuries' reborn (–saeclorum, 4.5), so that Virgil's significant 'centuries' are at hand, unlike the distant, heroic 'centuries' that Catullus 'too much desired' (–saeclorum, 64.22).

In further pointed appropriation, Virgil builds the *kairos* to the actual arrival from heaven of a 'new line' (–noua progenies, 4.7), which recalls the 'goodly line' of the heroes (–bona... progenies, 64.23b).<sup>27</sup> But Virgil's 'line' is a present, positive harbinger while Catullus' belonged to the estranged past.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Cat. 34.5-6, addressing Diana, who is also Lucina: –O Latonia, maximi/magna progenies Iouis, 'O daughter of Leto, of greatest Jove the great line', where *progenies* means a single divine offspring not a group like the heroes of

When Virgil moves from birth and projected growth to associate the first stage of growth with consulship, his language suggests a further comparison with Catullus: (4.11-12)

teque adeo decus hoc aeui, te consule, inibit,  
Pollio, et incipient magni procedere menses;

You, too, besides, you as consul, will this glory of the age come in,  
Pollio, and the great months take up their course.

With like force Catullus addressed his main hero:<sup>28</sup> (64.25-26)

teque adeo eximie taedis felicibus aucte,  
Thessaliae columen Peleu, cui Iuppiter ipse,

You, too, besides, highly honored by prosperous marriage,  
pillar of Thessaly, Peleus, to whom Jove himself,

For Catullus, ‘you, too’ focused and redoubled his search for the past. For Virgil, it strengthens his relations with current history, leading to ‘consul’, which he uses now in a way that suggests a specific consulship, an actual date after the generic, Roman coloring of ‘consul worthy’ (4.3). When Catullus did refer to his own time, he used not names and dates but categories of degeneracy for the entire unredeemed age.

D. After ‘consulship’ at the beginning of growth, leadership marks the middle stage, again with Catullan traces: (4.13-14)

te duce, si qua manent sceleris uestigia nostri  
irrita perpetua soluent formidine terras.

under your command, if any traces of our crime remain,  
voided they will free the lands from endless fear.

*Scelus* was Catullus’ word for the criminality that provoked the gods to break off all intercourse with humankind, ending the heroic age and bringing on the age of iron:  $\neg$ tellus scelere est imbuta nefando. (64.397, ‘earth was stained with unutterable crime’). *Irrita* in the ‘antique designs’ of the coverlet for Peleus’ couch twice described promises Theseus broke to Ariadne, leaving them ‘discredited to the windy gust’:  $\neg$ irrita uentosae linquens promissa procellae. (64.59).<sup>29</sup>

We have seen how *scelus* in the eclogue evokes the suffering and outrage of civil war while  $\neg$ irrita. suggests Pollio’s efforts at persuading quarrelsome factions to make peace. The word stands

64.23b.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Enn., *Med.* 284,  $\neg$ Juppiter, tuque adeo summe sol.; cf. the other Ennian material cited above, nn. 18 and 24.

<sup>29</sup> Conrad interprets suggestively the  $\neg$ force of the adjectives. in 64.59 (above n.6) 238. Catullus also used *irrita* in a similarly construed line,  $\neg$ quae cuncta aerii discerpunt irrita uenti. (64.139-42, ‘which promises all discredited airy winds snatch off’), echoed in the *Aeneid*:  $\neg$ aurae/ omnia discerpunt et nubibus irrita donant. (9.312-13, ‘breezes/ snatch all away and give discredited to the clouds’).

emphatically first in the verse, which Virgil shapes by disposing word-pairs symmetrically around the verb:<sup>30</sup>  $\neg$ irrita. and  $\neg$ terras. form an outer frame ( $xbvBx$ ), related by not grammar but assonance ( $-rr-t-...t-rr-$ ). Such verse structures, noted above, were a particular idiosyncrasy of the *Wedding*. Virgil also varies another Catullan pattern in the line before (13,  $avBAb$ ): placing  $\neg$ nostri. after rather than before the word that separates it from its noun,<sup>31</sup> he underlines its importance, reinforcing the sense of historical immediacy sought in these sections.

Catullus uses *irrita* of sheer emptying, perfidy; Virgil makes it express a positive good, reformation and new trust. From the irresponsible undoing of promises with resultant fear, he transfers it to characterize a process of change in which the fearsome becomes promising, even actively beneficial. The concept lends itself to such diverse implications because its origins are abstract, prosaic, often denoting a process of calculating, reckoning, invalidating. In this it resembles other key words in the eclogue, acquiring colors from the material around it. Given its Catullan background, it is itself something of a trace emptied of an earlier, negative force. It thus exemplifies a process like that which it describes, one in which the new takes over and reforms the troubled past. Referring to change imposed in the world, it exemplifies the change imposed by Virgil in poetry as he absorbs and revalues Catullus.

After digesting Roman history, Virgil finally gets to heroism, in the image of the child grown up and entering the society of heroes and gods: (4.15-17)

ille deum uitam accipiet diuisque uidebit  
permixtos heroas et ipse uidebitur illis,  
pacatumque reget patriis uirtutibus orbem.

He will take up the gods' life and see with gods  
heroes intermingled and himself be seen by them  
and rule with ancestral virtues a world subdued.

The sketch of heroic society resembles what Catullus writes in summary about the society of the heroic age: (64.384-386)

praesentes namque ante domos inuisere castas  
heroum et sese mortali ostendere coetu  
caelicolae nondum sprete pietate solebant.

For present before heaven-dwellers would visit chaste homes  
of heroes and show themselves in mortal company

<sup>30</sup> The word order in 4.14 recalls concentric pairings in other key lines: 4.4 ( $abvBA$ )  $\neg$ ultima *Cumaei* uenit iam *carminis aetas*., as well as the other account of prophetic au~thor~i~ty, 4.47, ( $abxBA$ )  $\neg$ concordes *stabili* fatorum *numine Parcae*..

<sup>31</sup> In the eclogue itself this type of separation occurs twelve times, with the noun first in only three cases: 4.3  $\neg$ sil~uae...dignae, . 7  $\neg$ caelo... alto, and here; the noun is second in 4.10, 12, 18, 31, 36, 45, 49, 50, 54; on the pattern, see Conrad (above n. 6) 203ff.

when piety had not as yet been spurned.

Such a state before decline to the iron age is what Virgil envisions restored by the child's growth, but with the culminating motif, unavailable to Catullus, of a world on which peace has been imposed.

E. Only now, after the preamble, does Virgil address his hero directly, as if speaking to the child newly born, unfolding the prophecy for which he will claim the authority of the *Parcae*. It projects more fully the child's coming growth and miraculous activity as an agent of change. Continuing his practice in the latter part of the preamble (11-17), Virgil divides the project into a beginning (18-25), a middle (26-30 but then also 31-36) and an end (37-45). Since the beginning is mainly pastoral in coloring, as we shall see, it owes little or nothing to the heroic *Wedding*; but this changes in the account of the middle stage, first with what the growing child might be expected to learn: (26-27)

at simul heroum laudes et facta parentis  
iam legere et quae sit poteris cognoscere uirtus.

But as soon as you can read at last the heroes' praise  
and parents' deeds and know what manhood is.

A picture of the 'virtue, excellence' of heroes was what Catullus offered in the woven coverlet (64.50-51, cited above), but also in the singing by the *Parcae* about Achilles. Such violence, however, scarcely befits the new heroism of the child, which has more in common with an older Roman ideal of the 'goodly orator' and the leader 'strong in wisdom'.<sup>32</sup>

The image of the child's progress continues with three miracles of georgic nature, among them grain ripening, the verb for which, *flauescere*, had occurred in a grimly epic simile where Catullus compared violent Achilles to a reaper mowing down ripening fields (¬flaudentia arua, . 64.354).

Since Virgil thinks of the progress as gradual (¬paulatim, . 4.28), proceeding step-by-step as the child grows,<sup>33</sup> it follows that in the middle stage a few traces of the iron age survive: (4.31-33)

pauca tamen suberunt priscae uestigia fraudis  
quae temptare Thetis ratibus, quae cingere muris

<sup>32</sup> ¬Orator bonus. and ¬sapientipotentes. were opposed to ¬horridus miles. and ¬bellipotentes. by Ennius, in an ideal unity of letters and public affairs: S. Mariotti, *Lezioni su Ennio* (Pesaro 1951; Torino 1963) 84, 112ff. In the imaginary curriculum, Servius saw a proper progression from 'praise' to 'deeds' to 'virtue', which he interpreted as typical subjects of respectively epic poetry, history and philosophy, which ought to be studied in that order.

<sup>33</sup> Servius (on 4.18) praises Virgil for constructing the prophecy so that the golden age is conceived as coming step-by-step in coordination with the growth of the child: ¬Rhe~to~rice digesta laudatio: non enim improuide in principio uniuersa con~sump~sit, sed pau~la~tim fe~cit lau~dem cum aetate procedere, . 'Rhe~tor~i~cal~ly laid out, for it does not exhaust its whole theme at the start without foresight but little by little the praise proceeds with the age'.

oppida, quae iubeant telluri infindere sulcos.

yet a few traces of antique deceit will survive,  
the sort to command trying Thetis with boats, binding towns  
with walls, splitting furrows into earth.

Often the word *uestigia* showed an affinity for the penultimate verse position in poets before Virgil.<sup>34</sup> But he seems to recall here particularly its use in the *Wedding* as a memento of the same deceptive culture: (64.294-95)

...sollerti corde Prometheus  
extenuata gerens ueteris uestigia poenae.

Prometheus of sagacious mind, bearing  
diminished traces of his old penalty.

At the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Prometheus' scars recall the secret he was forced to reveal, that any child of Thetis would outmatch its father, which led Jupiter grudgingly to yield her hand.<sup>35</sup> For the eclogue, Prometheus means something different, evoked by the verbal echo, because he initiated the technology of civilization. 'Antique deceit' may mean the immemorial error of men who fight and toil, but it may also refer to the myth of deceit by which Prometheus stole fire for men.<sup>36</sup> Virgil gives traditional civilization an ambivalent character, not in keeping with the child's, as the rest of the passage also shows.

The name Thetis suggests another sort of Catullan association, not only because it signally and inevitably raises a thought of the *Wedding*. Virgil uses  $\neg$ Thetis. to mean the sea, taking a water nymph for the water as Catullus had done when he wrote that the Argo was first to violate Amphitrite, the sea personified in the nymph.<sup>37</sup> Virgil's  $\neg$ Thetim. not only repeats a locution, it reflects in condensed form the beginning of the heroic age as conceived by Catullus. The verb  $\neg$ temptare, . taking a Greek feminine object, recalls what the Argonauts did in their desire; for its connotations also are exploratory, military, disturbing, arousing, tactile, erotic, cognitive. The Catullan Argo was both an attempt on the sea nymph and a first teaching. Virgil's image of Thetis tried

<sup>34</sup> E. g. Cic., *Arat.* (Traglia) 15.4, 34.123, 181, 228; *de cons. suo*, 11.46; Lucretius, 20 instances, with coincidence of ictus and accent in the fifth foot, as in *B.* 4,11; in fourth foot, 6; in second foot, 3. Virgil imitates 64.123 at *B.* 6.58.

<sup>35</sup> But see n. 24 for an additional connotation, peculiar to Catullus.

<sup>36</sup> The adjective *priscum* served Catullus, too, in recalling the mythic past (64.50, the coverlet again, woven  $\neg$ priscis figu~ris.).

<sup>37</sup> It is by now a commonplace that a relation exists between *B.* 4 and Horace, *Epd.* 16 (for a time when it was not so, see Rand (above n. 2) 20). It is becoming a becoming a common~place that *B.* 4 and Cat. 64 are related. *Epd.* 13 should probably be added to the group, for it shares thematic and stylistic elements, e.g.  $\neg$ nobilis ut grandi cecinit Centaurus almuno. (13.11). Similar word arrangements but not in hexameter: 13.6, 12. In *Epd.* 16, HEX 7, 33, 37, 55, 63; NON HEX, 4, 34, 46, 489 50. Both 33 and 50 have parallels in Buc. 4.21-22. In other epodes, similar arrangement: (iambic) 2.15, 17, 43, 47, 59, 63; (HEX) 12.1, 5, 13; (lyric) 14.3; (iambic) 17.22, 54, 55.

makes an elliptical recollection of the beginning of the heroic age in its Catullan version..the passionate attempt on the sea that led to love of Thetis. Virgil mentions Thetis early in a six-line section that ends with the theme of renewed action by her son Achilles. Also, Virgil's strongly alliterative pattern recalls patterns of *-t-* in the first verses of the *Wedding*.<sup>38</sup>

Forcing the sea is only the first of three actions envisaged as characteristic of the surviving 'traces of antique deceit'.<sup>39</sup> The second, 'bind towns with walls', complements the sexual, cognitive duality of the first, for it is, as T. E. Page observed, 'a mark of insecurity and a violation of that country life which is assumed to be natural'.<sup>40</sup> The third action is a commonplace of agricultural toil, but also common sexual metaphor, suited to the overtones of 'trying Thetis'.<sup>41</sup> Taken together, the three give an ambivalent character to the civilization that is of a sort, 'iubeant', characterizing subjunctive, to impose itself by means of wakes, the vanishing track of the oars that led to Troy, by lines of fortification and by furrows. Such are the literal *uestigia*, the tracks that reproduce themselves until replaced by the child's new culture. Only surviving in the transitional stage, they will be wholly transmuted in the accomplished golden age.

Closely attached to the traces of deceit, in sound, structure and conception, come three verses describing a recrudescing heroic age: (4.34-36)

alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quae uehat Argo  
delectos heroas, erunt etiam altera bella,  
atque iterum ad Troiam magnus mittetur Achilles.

Another Tiphys then will be, another Argo to carry  
chosen heroes, there will be even other wars  
and on again to Troy sent great Achilles.

Virgil's heroic exemplars follow Catullus, both his style and his peculiarly coherent conception of the heroic age with the passion of the Argonauts for the golden fleece as the first cause from which the fall of Troy stems, so that the Argo and Achilles are united in one integral chain of passions, from inception to climax of the heroic age, followed by decline. It is this outline that guides Virgil's sketch of the heroic age, from Argo to Achilles, although he compresses it into a period of three lines with four

<sup>38</sup> 'Tum Thetis.... etc. 64.19-21, quoted above, also 'tene Thetis.. 64.28, the last remarked by Kroll (above n. 9) in a note to 64.53 on alliterations.

<sup>39</sup> 'Le navigation est traditionnellement considérée comme une manifestation de la démesure humaine (*G.* 1.130, 136-37; 2.503; Tibulle 1.3.37). Les fortifications évoquent l'égoïsme (*G.* 1.125-128) e la guerre...: so J. Perret *Virgile, Les Bucoliques* (Paris, 1961). Cf. Northrup Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, 1957) 106: 'The form of desire is liberated and made apparent by civilization. The efficient cause of civilization is work, and poetry in its social aspect has the function of expressing, as a verbal hypothesis, a vision of the goal of work and the form of desire..

<sup>40</sup> Page, *Virgil. Bucolics and Georgics* (1898, London) ad loc.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. *Lucr.* 4.1272-73.

principal members and four verbs, distinctly articulated in quite un-Catullan fashion. Yet traces remain of play with initial letters like that noted earlier in the Catullan preamble. Virgil's first and last verses open and close with words beginning in 'a'. A Greek name beginning with 't' precedes the caesura in both lines. The outside verses have the pattern, *a- t- a-*. The verse endings reflect the unity of the heroic age as seen by Catullus:  $\neg$ Argo... bella... Achilles.: *A-b-A-*. Since the name Tiphys occurs nowhere else in Latin poetry apart from Ovid, it could well have been chosen here for the sake of the patterning of initial letters and parallel placement of names. It would serve better than more famous names because, apart from its association with the Argo, it is essentially neutral, without legendary baggage of its own. The alliteration of 't' here and in the phrase,  $\neg$ temptare Thetim,. also brings to mind the strong alliterative patterns in Catullus' preamble.<sup>42</sup>

Adopting Catullus' idea of a unitary heroic tradition and hinting at a distinct passage in the *Wedding*, Virgil mitigates the extremes of Catullan style. He uses just a trace of patterning by initial letters. Where Catullus strung out periods over loosely related lines Virgil imposes a highly articulated periodic structure, anticipating one of his most characteristic contributions to Latin epic style.<sup>43</sup> The changes suggest the inference that he found Catullan style too affected for the new Roman public language he was creating, just as he rectified and subordinated the Catullan version of history and myth. He uses the Catullan traces in their moderated version to exemplify what must wither away once the new order he envisions has fully come.

The themes of the survival of a few traces of deception and the recurrence of old-style heroism have disturbed many readers of the eclogue, giving rise to attacks on its unity and the competence of the poet.<sup>44</sup> Piracy, conquest, trade and agricultural toil are antithetical of course to the child and his age. That is the point, not the flaw. The difficulty might better be taken to mean that readers need a more adequate conception. Failure resides in them and not the poet. The traces need to be interpreted with care, keeping in mind the coherence of Virgil's conception and how he uses the *Wedding* in the eclogue.

Virgil responds to Catullus'  $\neg$ prima. with  $\neg$ ultima., to 'first' with a definitive 'last' (64.11 / 4.4). He absorbs the Catullan scheme of ages in a more comprehensive scheme. We have just seen how Catullus made 'Argo first' begin the heroic age, which for him was followed by the iron age in which he found himself trapped, as did Horace.<sup>45</sup> Virgil also speaks from the iron age, but

<sup>42</sup> Cf. n. 38, and Conrad (above n. 6) 221.

<sup>43</sup> On this question, see E. Norden, *Aeneis Buch VI I* (Leipzig, 1903) 369ff.,  $\neg$ Periodik..

<sup>44</sup> G. Jachmann,  $\neg$ Die Vierte Ekloge Vergils., *ASNP* 21 (1952) 13-62, to whom a re~but~tal was already available in the rationale offered by Servius: mutual growth 'step-by-step',  $\neg$ paulatim., cited in n. 33 above.

<sup>45</sup> Likewise Horace sees himself in the iron age, 'another age worn down by civil wars': he feels trapped in the eternal recurrence of the same present, which

envisions its end. Looking back further than Catullus, he recalls the golden age that came before the heroic age and he projects its eventual return. For him the process must be a transition, step-by-step, not occurring all at once. Thus he can speak in progressive present tenses of the golden age returning, *redeunt Saturnia regna*, with Justice on her way back (4.6), then go on to sketch progressive stages of the return little by little, *paulatim*, as Servius saw,<sup>46</sup> by the agency of the growing child. By the logic, then, of this conception, he projects traces of the iron age surviving, though ever fewer in number, when the child is only partly grown. By the same logic, he projects the age of heroes between the iron age and the golden age, recurring just before the golden age on the way up even as it occurred just after the golden age on the way down.<sup>47</sup> Only when the child will have become the predominant hero will everything be golden again.

In the framework of the great cycle, the first heroic age followed the golden age and led to the age of iron. In reversal, then, carried back by the same motion, as Servius says, *ferri rursus eodem motu*, the heroic age follows the iron and recurs just before the new golden age. Far from being incongruous, its participation is necessary to the return, in reverse symmetry with the decline. The emphatic *tum*. ('then there will be another Tiphys', 4.34) suggests both unity with the iron age, and succession. On the one hand, 'then' denotes coincidence or inner connection with an aforementioned action,<sup>48</sup> thus depicting heroism as a specific result of the general, primeval deceit. *Fraus* would then characterize both iron and heroic ages, as it did in the *Wedding*. But 'then' also denotes sequence, and thus would set the heroic age after the iron, as a further step in the return to the golden. In this connection it is significant that the heroic age in the eclogue is presented as recurring: there would be 'another' Tiphys, 'another' Argo, *alter... altera*. The traces of deceit survive, merely holding over from the iron age in continuity with the

.....  
 also coincides with the troubled and exhausted world described by Lucretius. Where Catullus yearns for the warlike heroes, Horace looks to the peaceful heroes and islands of the blessed.

<sup>46</sup> Servius on *B.* 4.18, quoted above in n. 33.

<sup>47</sup> Servius saw the process more clearly than most commentators since. He remarks on 4.32: *uidetur tamen locus hic dictus per apokatastasin, id est per omnium rerum reuolubi-li-ta-tem, ex siderum ratione uenientem*, 'This topic appears to be said here by reason of *Reestablishment*, that is by reason of the capacity of all things to return back, coming from the order of the stars'. He refers back to his earlier citation (on 4.4) of a Sibylline oracle: *finitis omnibus saeculis rursus eadem inno-ua-ri: quam rem etiam philosophi hac dis-putatione colligunt, di-cen-tes, completo magno anno omnia si-de-ra in ortus redire et ferri rursus eodem motu. Quod si est idem si-de-rum mo-tus, necesse est ut omnia quae fuerunt habeant iteratio-nem: un-i-uer-sa enim ex astrorum motu pendere manifestum est. hoc secutus Ver-gilius dicit reuerti aurea saecula et iterari omnia quae fuerunt*, in short, things re-iterate, go back to their origins, are carried back by the same motion, so that all which was gets reiterated: a conception of same-ness onto which Virgil grafts one novelty, the child.

<sup>48</sup> Lewis and Short: s. v. I.A.1.F.

indeterminate past, while the heroic age returns after the break Catullus described.

F. Turning from the images of transition to project the full golden age, Virgil draws on yet another part of the *Wedding*, with a levy on Lucretius as well: (4.40-41)

non rastros patietur humus, non uinea falcem,  
robustus quoque iam tauris iuga soluet arator.

the earth will not suffer mattocks, nor the vine pruning hooks;  
the oak-like plowman will loose the yokes from his oxen.

A comparable moment was imagined by Catullus on the occasion of the marriage feast, when rare harmony and peace extend to the countryside as people come to the palace to see the wonderful marriage couch: (64.42-46)

rura colit nemo, mollescunt colla iuencis,  
non humilis curuis purgatur uinea rastris,  
non glebam prono conuellit uomere taurus,  
non falx attenuat frondatorum arboris umbram,  
squalida desertis rubigo infertur aratris.

no one cares for countryside, oxen's necks grow soft,  
creeping vine does not get pruned by curved hoes,  
glebe with down-turned share bull does not tear loose,  
hook of leafers does not thin out shade of tree,  
filthy rust invades abandoned plows.

Lucretius in turn had described a time before toil invaded the earth: (*DRN* 5.933-36)

nec robustus erat curui moderator aratri  
quisquam, nec scibat ferro molirier arua,  
nec noua defodere in terram uirgulta neque altis  
arboribus ueteres decidere falcibus ramos.

Nor was there any oaken ruler of the bent plow,  
nor did anyone know how to till with iron the plowlands,  
nor dig down new cuttings into the earth nor from tall  
trees cut down ancient branches with hooks.

which recurs in part also in a grim context, herdsmen and farmers sickened with plague: (*DRN* 6.1253)

et robustus item curui moderator aratri.

and also the oaken ruler of the bent plow.

The poets variously share motifs. Virgil shares uniquely with Catullus the use and placement of  $\neg$ uinea. and the use of  $\neg$ rastros. and  $\neg$ auris.<sup>49</sup> With Lucretius he shares uniquely the sole adjective  $\neg$ robustus. in almost identical position. All three accounts

<sup>49</sup> Tarn (above n. 9) 160 says that *B.* 4.1-3, 11-17, 34-36, 46-47, 60-63, were added after the peace of Brun-disium and include  $\neg$ all the references to Pollio, to Catullus, and to a human child. . But 4.40-41 contradict him, as do 4.6, 18 and 25 (cf. *Cat.* 68.144-45), 31, 32.

place *arator*, *aratrum* in the sixth foot; all three mention *falx*. All three take negative form, Catullus and Virgil both using *non*. Virgil and Lucretius contrast distant ideals of repose with an actual state of toil; Catullus speaks of a distant moment of repose. Lucretius and Catullus both use interlocking word order, Catullus with rhyme between half-verses. There are four cola in Lucretius' four verses, only one of which is complete within a single verse, and that articulated and enjambed to the preceding one. By contrast, Catullus in five lines has only six cola, none of which runs over to a second line and four of which fill the entire line. He opens with a symmetrical two-line tricolon of the type which Virgil also uses here.<sup>50</sup>

It is possible that Virgil thought of both passages, for he uses at least one element from each that is missing in the other. The structure of his tricolon is closer to Catullus. Lucretius and Catullus in turn share *arbor*, *curuus* and *aratrum*, indicating either that they had some common source, whether in nature or in art, or perhaps that Catullus imitated Lucretius.<sup>51</sup>

G. Thus it is after taking from Catullus and pointedly recasting both heroic and even georgic materials that Virgil appropriates the very framework and mechanism of Catullan prophecy, the *Parcae*, to recapitulate and confirm his central vision: (4.46-47)

talia saecla suis dixerunt 'currite!' fuis  
concordes stabili fatorum numine Parcae.

Such as these centuries 'Run!' to their spindles have said  
the Parcae concerted in the steady force of the fates.

Given the whole tenor of what Virgil has done, this culminating moment acquires an almost polemical edge, as if Virgil implied: 'such as these, not such as those in Catullus'. The claim to prophetic authority consolidates Virgil's new status as *uates*. A definitive triumph over Catullus, it gives perspective to the eclogue's closing lines, suggesting ironic comparisons with the close of the *Wedding*.

Catullus closed by underlining the distance between the age of heroes and his own. He had opened with his apostrophe to the heroes, above all Peleus, though never his wife and child, whose anxious relations had been so amply ventilated by Homer. In closing, he summed up and praised the heroic age (64.384-396), focusing on the active presence of gods among men (¬praesentes, .384), then describing how crime stained the earth as men put justice to flight in a storm of familial infamies that 'removed the just mind of the gods from us' (64.397-406).<sup>52</sup> Catullus saw no

<sup>50</sup> Cf. the structure of 4.6-7, 31-36, in contrast to 4.28-30.

<sup>51</sup> Resemblances occur between Catullus describing the sacrifice of Polyxena and Lucretius describing the sacrifice of Iphigeneia: see note 19.

<sup>52</sup> 'Removed', ¬auer~te~re. (64.406) links the beginnings of the iron and heroic ages, since Catullus traced the heroic age to the the crime of the Argonauts, desiring 'to remove' (¬auer~te~re, .64.5) the golden fleece. Likewise ¬imbuta.

constructive heroism in his own time. Far from anticipating, for example, the divinity of Julius Caesar, he professed indifference as to whether he were white or black and he referred with mock heroics to Caesar's deeds.<sup>53</sup> Neither Catullus nor Lucretius, albeit in very different ways, found divinity in the Roman present, although we shall see that Lucretius identified his philosophical guide as a divine force.

Where Catullus seemed out almost to corral his hero at the start, Virgil saves the most insistent forms of address for the end, closing with gestures of persuading the child to make the move towards growth away from the age of iron: (4.60-63)

incipere, parue puer, risu cognoscere matrem  
(matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses);  
incipere, parue puer: qui non risere parenti,  
nec deus hunc mensa, dea nec dignata cubili est.

Begin, little boy, by a smile to know your mother  
(your mother long discomfort ten months brought);  
begin, little boy: whoever does not smile on his parent,  
him worthy neither god of board nor goddess deems of bed.

As the appropriate first action, Virgil posits a gesture of family harmony, recognition and reconciliation, given a mother's natural discomforts in gestation. Pressing the plea, he widens the scope of motivation to include potential self-interest, which lies at the end of growth far beyond the immediate present. Once again, as in the preamble and the central prophecy, his mind moves from the beginning to the end of the development and again, as in the preamble (15-16), the outcome is a society of gods and men, presented now more fully than before, not merely 'gods' but 'god' and 'goddess', not merely 'life' and exchanged glances but 'board' and 'bed'.

If the ideal of family harmony contrasts with the perverted families denounced by Catullus, the ideal of heroic life looks very like what was idealized in the *Wedding*.<sup>54</sup> Its character, at once traditional and removed, is reflected in the manner of its language: shifting from the intimate 'Begin, little boy' to impersonal forms in

.....  
(64.397) recalls *imbuit*. (64.11) and links the two beginnings: see the remarks on *imbuere* in n. 22. Putnam (above n. 11) 196 observes that the offenses at the end of 64 are sexual and violations between parents and children: he compares 67.23-24.

<sup>53</sup> Caesar's color, Cat. 93; his deeds, *siue trans altas gradietur Alpes/ Caesaris uisens monimenta magni*. (11.9-10), 'whether he will go across the high Alps to see the evidence of Caesar great', with witty *trans* and *de-ploy-ment* of epic separations (*magni*. occurs in such patterns three times in *B.* 4. cf. n. 42): emphatic, unusual placement of *Caesaris*. first, *altas Alpes*. being the more usual order.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. the motif of harmony in an aristocratic family, smile by infant to parent, which appears among the climactic topics in another epithalamic poem by Catullus: (61.216-220) *Toquatus uolo paruulus/ matris e gremio suae/ porrigens teneras manus/ dulce rideat ad patrem/ semihante labello*, 'I want a tiny Torquatus from the lap of his mother stretching out tender hands to smile sweetly at his father with half opened lip'.

the style of proverbs, sententious, stilted, ‘they who..., him...’, with perfect tenses used to express unchanging conventions, all with rhetorical balance and alliteration almost as of a jingle, ending in the rare monosyllable in elision.<sup>55</sup> The semblance of urgency at a turning point in time dissolves into a question of Olympian etiquette, as the new hero, potentially unifying and transforming agent of world revolution is expected to respond as if familiar with the examples of old heroes, like Romulus and Hercules, Peleus.<sup>56</sup>

The old ideal remains at a remove. Yet hope in current history, at Rome, prefigured in the new hero, also remains for Virgil. Catullus closed with a vision of *fanda* and *nefanda*, speakable and unspeakable confused, the world turned topsy-turvy. Virgil at least, in creating the role of *uates*, has reclaimed *fata* as symbolizing universal order and true *felicia*, no longer past but present.

H. Where one poet clearly takes and changes material from another and the process needs to be described and interpreted, metaphors often come into play: Virgil’s uses of Homer and Theocritus often were descried as ‘thefts’ or sometimes praised as competition with the earlier poets.

Virgil’s own metaphor for what happens when something new and powerful appropriates, assimilates and transforms is expressed in the formula *uestigia... irrita*, ‘traces voided’ by a new reckoning, calculations undone. He applied it to historical change, the working of Pollio’s diplomacy; and it serves metaphorically as well to suggest how Virgil himself assimilates historical material, how, for example, he turned Pollio’s activity as peacemaker and dignity as consul into symbolic elements for an ideal future beyond Pollio’s control or desire.

The study of Virgil’s use of poetic material suggests that the same metaphor applies here as well: in the very lines that reflect on Pollio, for example, the metaphor of transforming process itself, ‘traces voided, reckoning recast’, echoes a theme

<sup>55</sup> In the Wedding twice with *est*, both as part of a deponent, 64.147, 301; *dens* (64.313) in the mannered description of the *Parcae*. In the *Bucolics*, 13 times, 8 with *est*, of which 5 deponents. *B.* 6.9, 11, 49 and 74; *B.* 7.7, used twice by the more exaggerated speaker, Thyrsis. *RE* 2.15.1249.33 cites 6 monosyllabic endings only from the *Bucolics*, 13 from the *Georgics*, and 32 from the *Aeneid*.

<sup>56</sup> The child is to rule *–patriis uirtutibus*, i.e. *prisco more*. The bed of Juno and table of Hercules were used in Roman birth rites according to Warde Fowler, *HSCP* 14 (1903) 29. It is reasonable to find an allusion of the sort here, but it does not exclude more general interpretations, like those of W. J. Knight, *Roman Vergil* (London, 1944) 118, speaking from the viewpoint of an archetypal critic: ‘The baby recalls the Eleusinian mysteries in which there was a declaration that a baby, symbol of new life, had been born to the officiating priest and priestess; and it recalls too the Attic New Comedy, with its foundlings, and their identifications which bring happy endings; which is one result of the psychological impulse which led to many mythic pictures of Holy Families, until the Christian Holy Family came. Perhaps Vergil had already reached his greatest poetic discovery, that the Holy Family, human and divine in one, is enough to unify the explorations of the spirit. *–patriis uirtutibus*, i.e. *prisco more*.’

from Catullus, but with a pointed change to positive tone. The sign of despair in Catullus, *irrita*, becomes in Virgil a sign of hope. Likewise, the whole Catullan version of the heroic age becomes in the eclogue subordinated to a new heroism, with even stylistic excess absorbed and recast. Virgil confronts the Catullan concept of destiny with his own, more concrete and more universal, replying to the mythology of the *Wedding* with a new mythology, moderating style and feeling, all the while reaching in his own way greater scope. His effects are not so lavish, but more integrated in their art. Catullus provides old heroic material for a new ruling form.