Classical Quarterly **52.1** 305–320 (2002) *Printed in Great Britain*

VALE, PATRONA VIRGO: THE TEXT OF CATULLUS 1.9

CVI dono lepidum nouom libellum
arida modo pumice expolitum?
Corneli, tibi: namque tu solebas
meas esse aliquid putare nugas
iam tum cum ausus es unus Italorum
omne aeuum tribus explicare cartis
doctis, Iuppiter, et laboriosis.
quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli
qualecumque †qd patrona † uirgo
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo
CATULLUS 1

8 habe tibi η (emendation prior to 1460): tibi habe V = *OGR* libelli al. mei X = *GR*. 9 <o> added in p (the *Codex Persusinus* = *Cuiacianus Scaligeri*, written 1467): om. V q(uo)d *OGR*. *quidem* is a humanist conjecture found in the *Codex Datanus* (*D*, written 1463), in the margin of *R* by a hand of the 1470s (for details, see D. F. S. Thomson, 'The *Codex Romanus* of Catullus: a collation of the text', *RhMus* 113 [1970], 97–110), and in the *editio princeps* (Venice, 1472). Subsequent editors except Goold retain *quod*, giving *quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli qualecumque; quod o patrona uirgo plus . . .*; *<o> patrone, per te . . .* Hand (1849 [n. 4]), 4; *qualecumque quidem <est>, patroni ut ergo* Bergk (1857 [n. 3]), 581; *quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli, qualecumque quidem patroni ut ergo . . .* Munro (1878 [n. 5]), 1–5; Goold (1973, 1974, 1981, 1983 [n. 6]); *quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli. qualecumque quod <est>, patrona uirgo, . . .* Williams (1958 [n. 7]); Cassata (1975 [n. 7]), Wiseman (1979 [n. 7]).

I

For the sigla and affiliation of Catullus' MSS, see Tanner:[1] suffice it to remind the reader that V is the lost Carolingian source of the late fourteenth-century north Italian MSS *O*, *G*, and *R*, *O* being a direct copy, while *G* and *R* are copies of a lost intermediary *X*. Three ways of dealing with the problems in line 9 of poem 1 have been advocated, but none of them is satisfactory. What has become the vulgate text to which almost all editors adhere is a conjecture that goes back to the latest phase of the fifteenth-century Italian humanists' efforts:

(1) quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli
qualecumque; quod, <o> patrona uirgo,
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo,

Therefore keep for yourself whatever this little book amounts to, such as it is; may the which, o tutelary maiden, remain unfailing more than one generation.

This is so well established by repetition in an editorial chain that reaches back almost to the *editio princeps*[2] that it is often forgotten that it is conjectural; and books

[1] R. J. Tanner in L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1983), 43–5.

[2] This had *qualecumque quidem patrona uirgo*, not a bad shot, and better than the actual vulgate.

and articles continue to be written about Catullus as if it were certain. However, it has come under occasional but persistent fire since the middle of the nineteenth century. Bergk,[3] elaborating on an idea of Hand,[4] proposed:

(2a) quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli
qualecumque quidem <est>, patroni ut ergo
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo,

Therefore keep for yourself whatever this little book amounts to, for whatever it is indeed worth; so that thanks to its patron it may remain unfailing more than one generation.

This was modified by Munro[5] (1878) as

(2b) quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli,
qualecumque quidem patroni ut ergo
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo,

Therefore have as your own whatever this little book amounts to; so that for whatever it is indeed worth it may thanks to its patron remain unfailing for more than one generation.

So (2a) and (2b) do not differ by much. In fairly recent times, Goold[6] has advocated Munro's version, while a compromise between (1) and (2b) has also been circulating:

(3) quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli.
qualecumque quod <est>, patrona uirgo,
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo,

Therefore have as your own whatever this little book amounts to. Such as it is, tutelary maiden, may it remain unfailing more than one generation.[7]

To put my cards on the table, I shall argue that (2a), (2b), and (3) are responses to real problems in (1) which should not be ignored as they generally continue to be, and that Bergk did hit on a part of the solution, but that the lines should instead be restored as follows:

(4) quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli,
qualecumque <ali>quid. patro<ci>ni ergo
plus uno maneat perenne saeclo.

Therefore have as your own whatever this book adds up to; something for what it is worth. In witness of your advocacy, may it endure year on year for more than one generation.

Here the description of the goods as *quidquid hoc libelli* draws attention to its

[3] Th. Bergk, 'Philologische Thesen', *Philologus* 12 (1857), 581.

[4] F. G. Hand, *Quaestiones Catullianae* (Jena, 1849), 4.

[5] H. A. J. Munro, *Criticisms and Elucidations of Catullus* (Cambridge, 1878), 1–5.

[6] G. P. Goold, *Interpreting Catullus: An Inaugural Lecture Delivered at University College, London 7 November 1973* (London, 1973), 10–11; id., 'O patrona uirgo', in J. A. S. Evans (ed.), *Polis and Imperium: Studies in Honour of E. T. Salmon* (Toronto, 1974), 253–64; id., 'Two notes on Catullus 1', *LCM* 6 (1981), 233–8; id., *Catullus Edited and Translated with an Introduction* (London, 1983).

[7] T. P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics* (Leicester, 1979), 173 argued for this, mentioning that he remembered his tutor at Oxford, G. W. Williams, making the suggestion in 1958; and the present writer also remembers it being mentioned without attribution in seminars elsewhere in the 1960s. L. Cassata, 'Note Catulliane', *Maia* 27 (1975), 211–12 seems to have come up with the same idea independently.

limited scale and to its composite character; the complementary evaluation in *qualecumque aliquid* exploits line 4 to establish that nevertheless the whole adds up to 'something worth something'; *ergo* has the precise sense 'in witness of', 'in token of' which it properly has in Republican Latin inscriptions, see pp. 313–14; and 'generation' refers not only to a future readership, but also to the present and future cloning of the work itself by faithful copying. As long as the work survives in the form that Catullus wants, it will carry with it this permanent memorial and authentication of Nepos' discrimination and commitment.

The poem moves quickly outwards from internal rumination (lines 1–2) through the personal tribute (lines 3–7) and, with the appeal to all-seeing Jupiter, to a public statement (lines 8–10) which explicitly involves us, the readership, as witnesses to a transfer of legal ownership. Hence the detail of what the thing looks like, what it consists of, and the specious reservation about its debatable value. Nepos is being asked to use his influence as an established man of letters to ensure the survival of a particular collection of Catullus' minor poems, that is, to be Catullus' sponsor, promoter, and multiplier, which, in modern terms, makes the edition definitive and Cornelius the publisher; except that these words and most of our available vocabulary to do with the fixing and dissemination of any texts before the invention of printing are so apt to mislead.[8]

Poem 1, then, is an external 'seal'. The poem is intended to authenticate this particular collection, its particular arrangement, and Cornelius' *auctoritas* to promote its chances of surviving intact, by using this, if he judged it worthy,[9] as a master-copy, inasmuch as that could be guaranteed at all not only in the absence of any mechanical means of multiplication but also of any conception of legal copyright. Cornelius Nepos (*c.* 110–24 B.C.) seems from a passing allusion in Fronto to have later on had a hand in establishing some of the Ciceronian corpus, perhaps the letters to Atticus,[10] and maybe like Atticus he ran what might be called his own publishing business or contracted out; it matters little. On this view of poem 1, he is not just named as some establishment-figure marginally interested in light verse as a hobby, and certainly not with some sort of wink or sneer at the quality of his own literary work, as supposed by some recent critics. Lastly there is a certain sombre note to this, because, however lightly and wittily put, the poem amounts to a nuncupative will. Catullus was setting his affairs in order, and though we do not know the details, he does not seem to have

[8] See E. J. Kenney in *CHCL* 2.19–20. That Nepos was Catullus' 'publisher' is not a new suggestion, cf. e.g. F. Della Corte, *Due studi catulliani* (Genoa 1951), 15–18, H. Bardon, *Catulli carmina*. Collection Latomus 112 (Brussels, 1970), 15, but it seems to follow more directly from text (4) than from any of the others.

[9] The elderly Nepos certainly had a high opinion of Catullus, counting him in retrospect along with Lucretius as the best Latin poets of his own lifetime (Nepos, *Atticus* 12.4).

[10] Fronto in the Loeb edn, vol. 2, p. 168 (p. 20 N) . . . *quorum libri pretiosiores habentur . . . si sunt* . . . (with reference to Cicero) *a Tirone emendata aut a Domitio Balbo descripta aut ab Attico aut Nepote*; L. R. Taylor, 'Cornelius Nepos and the publication of Cicero's letters to Atticus', *Hommages à Jean Bayet*. Collection Latomus 70 (Brussels, 1964), 678–81, took this to refer to the letters to Atticus. In context, Fronto is leading up to the shallow boast that he will be the proud possessor of a priceless work written by the hand of the emperor himself. It is, of course, beyond belief that there was ever a collection of Cicero's letters to Atticus or of anything else by Cicero written out by Nepos in his own hand, but since Nepos knew his *aequalis* Atticus well, and since Atticus died in 32 B.C., an original collected edition with a brief authenticating preface or subscription by the aged Nepos, who lived on to 24 B.C., is at least circumstantially possible; and something must lie behind Fronto's allusion. It is a pity that we cannot consult Suetonius, who is the most likely intermediary for such information.

survived to middle age. Cornelius Nepos, though considerably his senior, certainly long outlived him, and must have been aware of the obligation, though exactly what he did about it must remain obscure.

II

Line 9 as transmitted in the MSS does not scan. Except for Goold (1983),[11] editors have agreed with those of earlier centuries in printing (1) as the most economical solution. Recent commentators and critics divide between a large majority[12] who go along with that and a minority,[13] who advocate (2a), (2b), or (3).

Of these, (3) may be ruled out, since *qualecumque quod est* is unsatisfactory Latin.[14] It will not work with trajected *quod* taken as a connective replacing *id*, equivalent to the normal and well-attested forms of expression *qualecumque (id) est*, lit. as 'of whatever sort which thing is, may it . . .', that is, 'may which thing of whatever sort it is . . .'. For in duplicating the relative stem *qu-* in the same clause with reference to the same thing this is, not surprisingly, without parallel, because it is at odds with the normal form of expression, which requires either *quidquid . . . qualecumque est* with no further pronoun, or *quidquid . . . qualecumque id (hoc, illud, istud) est*, as the parallels show.[15] Nor may *quod est* be taken as an unsupported noun-clause in asyndeton, *qualecumque (est) quod est* 'may what it is, of whatever quality . . .', because that too would need an explicit *id* to do the donkey-work, as in *qualecumque id (est) quod est*.[16] So *qualecumque quod est*, if it were possible Latin, would be intrinsically ambiguous and imprecise, because there would be two distinct ways of construing and interpreting it, each gratuitously awkward in its own way.

The issue as it stands is therefore between (1) and (2a) or (2b). Three related

[11] Goold (n. 6, 1983).

[12] E. Baehrens, *Catulli Veronensis liber* (Leipzig, 1876), 73; F. O. Copley, 'Catullus c. 1', *TAPhA* 82 (1951), 200–6; E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford, 1957), 232 and in his review of C. J. Fordyce's *Catullus: A Commentary* (Oxford, 1961), *Gnomon* 34 (1962), 259–60; M. Zicàri, 'Sul primo carme di Catullo', *Maia* 17 (1965), 237; J. P. Elder, 'Catullus 1: his poetic creed, and Nepos', *HSCP* 71 (1966), 143–9; F. Cairns, 'Catullus 1', *Mnemosyne* 22 (1969), 153–8; P. Levine, 'Catullus c. 1: a prayerful dedication', *CSCA* 2 (1969), 209–16; B. Latta, 'Zu Catulls Carmen 1', *MH* 29 (1972), 201–13; Cassata (n. 7), 211–12; W. Clausen, 'Catulli Veronensis Liber', *CP* 71 (1976), 37–43, 38, n. 2; M. Monbrun, 'Quelques remarques sur le c. 1 de Catulle', *Pallas* 23 (1976), 31–8, 35, n. 18; Wiseman (n. 7) , 167; B. Arkins, 'Further thoughts on Catullus 1', *LCM* 8 (1983), 18; H. P. Syndikus, *Catull: Eine Interpretation* 1 (Darmstadt 1984), 78, n. 45; H. Dettmer, 'A fresh look at Catullus 1.9', *LCM* 9 (1984), 74–5 and in her *Love by the Numbers: Form and Meaning in the Poetry of Catullus* (New York, 1997), 17–20. This is not an exhaustive listing.

[13] Bergk (n. 3); Munro (n. 5); Fordyce (n. 12) on 1.9; D. Singleton, 'A note on Catullus' first poem', *CP* 67 (1972), 192–6; Goold (n. 6); G. N. Sandy, 'Indebtedness, *scurrilitas*, and composition in Catullus (Cat. 1, 44, 68)', *Phoenix* 32 (1978), 76; O. Skutsch, 'Catullus 1. 9 and Vergil *Aen.* 6. 394', *LCM* 7 (1982), 90; B. J. Gibson, 'Catullus 1', *CQ* 45 (1995), 569–73, esp. 572; W. J. Tatum, 'Friendship, politics, and literature in Catullus', *CQ* 47 (1997), 482–500, esp. 485–8 (with hesitation).

[14] *Pace* Wiseman (n. 7), 172, n. 40: 'The proposed connecting relative is no problem . . . and though there is no precise parallel for its positioning inside a subordinate clause the word-order is perfectly intelligible . . .'. But the connecting relative *is* a problem, and not only because of the word-order.

[15] *quisquis . . . qualiscumque* add up in Tac. *A.* 14.55 *quidquid illud et qualecumque tribuisset* and Pliny *Ep.* 8.22.4 *quisquis ille qualiscumque sileatur*; but are divided in Cic. *Div.* 2.60 *quicquid enim oritur, qualecumque est*; *Att.* 11.19.1 *uerum tamen uelim <quic>quid erit, qualecumque erit, scribas*; Quintilian, *Decl.* 259.21 *quidquid est istud, ego feci, qualecumque istud est, meum consilium est.*

[16] cf. Cic. *Brut.* 193 *illud quod est qualecumque est probat.*

questions are raised, one concerning the invocation *patrona uirgo*, the others the mid-line wording and punctuation. Should *quidquid . . . qualecumque* add up as in (1) and (2a), or should they be separated as in (2b) and (3)? What is to be made of the suspension *qd*, which, in itself, could as easily represent a *quidem* as a *quod*, or even a *quid*?[17] Answers to these questions will emerge in the course of a wider review and reassessment leading to (4) as follows.

(i) Fordyce[18] objected to *quod* in (1) that it gives an enjambment (*quod . . ./. . . maneat*) 'which is extremely harsh in a poem where otherwise syntactical colon and metrical unit coincide'. Yes, indeed; and besides, the strong punctuation required by *qualecumque; quod* splits a metrical element in a way that makes a particularly hard and improbable case.[19]

(ii) For while Catullus readily allows strong punctuation before or after the double-short of the choriamb in his hendecasyllables, there are only a couple of other examples in which he splits it with any kind of punctuation. Neither of these makes as strong a break;[20] nor do we find anything similar in Varro, Martial, or others who tried their hands at hendecasyllables. Besides, the vocative phrase in (1) gives an ungainly prominence to *quod*, whether one takes the following comma seriously, or reads *o patrona uirgo* as sentence-enclitic; either way, *quod* emerges with an accent that only emphasizes the strength and awkwardness of the prosodical split. The result is a line that conforms to neither of the regular ways of dividing hendecasyllabic lines, nor to any of the legitimate patterns in which a midline-break is masked or dispensed with altogether. The vulgate text assumes a particularly strong mid-line break at the very place where that is generally avoided.

This formal consideration strongly implies that the *textus receptus* is wrong, but it does not impugn *patrona uirgo*: on the face of it, as supporters of (1) point out, an appeal to a Muse to preserve the work for ever is a literary commonplace which would obviously be at home in a prefatory poem, and in a Roman context it would be natural

[17] There is no doubt that the scribes of *O* and of *X* found *some* abbreviated form in *V* which we may represent as *qd*, because *O* and *R* have one form of abbreviation for *q(uo)d* and *G* has another, both in common and unambiguous use in northern Italy in the late fourteenth century. However, it is another question whether the Carolingian suspension in *V* which the scribes were interpreting as a *q(uo)d* was meant as a *quod*, or a *quid*, or a *quidem*, or even whether the scribe of *V* had any idea which of these he might mean, because the various forms of abbreviation used from late antiquity onwards for all of these forms are so easily confused; for examples of the abbreviations used for these various forms, see A. Cappelli, *Dizionario di abbreviature latine ed italiane*[2] (Milan, 1949), 302–7, and A. Pelzer, *Abbréviations latines médiévales* (Louvain and Paris, 1964), 67–9. For the scribes of *O* and *X*, *q(uo)d* can only have been the most obvious way of eliciting any sense.

[18] Fordyce (n. 12), ad loc. [19] Cassata (n. 7), 211–12.

[20] Although he sometimes deliberately defeats the expectation of a bipartite division (*nouem continuas fututiones*) or blends line-halves by elision (*hanc ad munditiem adde mundiorem*), Catullus normally divides the hendecasyllabic line either before or after the double-short which occupies the fourth metrical place, either way very often with punctuation (*Corneli, tibi: namque tu solebas, Aureli. ueniam peto pudentem, cenabis bene: nam tui Catulli*), so that the double-short of the bridging choriamb ⏑‒‒⏑ is broken either before or after the pair of short syllables; cases like . . . *desissemque truces / uibrare iambos* and *iam tum cum ausus es / unus Italorum* . . . conform to the primary patterns of bipartition, but ugly lines like *decoctoris amica Formiani* do not. There are in all about two dozen cases of any kind of such splitting in Catullus' 552 hendecasyllablic lines, among which only three even speciously involve punctuation: 50.16 *hoc, iucunde, tibi poema feci*, an exception only on paper, and the refrain at 45.8 and 17 *hoc ut dixit, Amor sinistra ut ante* . . ., the text of which is problematic on other grounds (cf. A. S. Gratwick, 'Those sneezes: Catullus 45.8–9, 17–18', *CP* 87 [1992], 234–40, proposing *hoc ut dixit ut ante Amor sinistra* . . ., which would perhaps incidentally lessen or even remove the break).

enough in to address her as *patrona*.[21] But those who have objected to the vocative phrase *patrona uirgo* with or without <*o*> have a good case. Their main points are as follows:

(iii) A truly divine third party makes a crowd in such a very short piece.[22] The prayer to the *patrona uirgo* is perfunctory in comparison with the attention given to Cornelius' earlier advocacy and to his prestige as an established author. *Iuppiter* in line 7 is of course an ejaculation, in effect meaning 'as anyone can see';[23] but there is no way that *patrona uirgo* with or without <*o*> can be reduced to an *utinam*, 'I only hope that'. The juxtaposition of such invocations, one virtually an expletive, the other earnest and elaborate, is in questionable style and taste.

(iv) Indeed, other things being equal, we should rather expect any form of the *patronus*-word in line 9 to refer back to the encouragement given *iam tum* by Cornelius and perhaps being sought again. This is the basic reason why Hand (1849), then Bergk (1857), and after him Munro (1878) and Goold (1981, 1983)[24] have wanted with others such as Fordyce[25] to change the gender of *patrona*.

(v) *Patrona uirgo* 'tutelary maiden' is a curiously vague way of invoking a Muse or any goddess, and makes a combination of Latin words which is odd in the same degree as 'maiden mistress' or 'mistress maiden' would be in English. As Munro asked, why not just *patrona Musa*?[26] *Patrona uirgo* 'looks like an emendation',[27] and has a suspiciously mediaeval air (patron saints, Our Lady).

(vi) The divinity's identity and province are a problem anyway, for 'what "tutelary maiden" concerns herself with the preservation of ephemera, however prettily wrapped up?'[28]

(vii) The switch of addressee and the change in tone from the mundane (*quidquid hoc libelli, qualecumque)* to the earnest (*quod* <*o*> . . .) at the point where the *patrona uirgo* is introduced in line 9 are abrupt, and it is not immediately obvious without <*o*> that *patrona uirgo* is meant to be a vocative rather than a nominative. This awkwardness of expression arises exactly where the formal problems defined in (i) and (ii) also arise. Thus the same focus of difficulty in the middle of the line is identified by three quite different sorts of criteria.

(viii) 'Dopo aver finto così poca stima per l'opera poetica propria, il poeta, *un po' illogicamente se si vuole* (my italics), invoca per essa l'immortalità.'[29]

Point (viii) needs to be considered further. Given the obvious disparity between Nepos' and Catullus' literary achievements, any concluding appeal to a divinity to ensure the survival of Catullus' book has potentially quite awkward consequences. For

[21] The commentators cite [Sulpicia] 11 *precibus descende clientis et audi*, Suet. *Gram.* 6 *quia scriptores ac poetae sub clientela sunt Musarum* ; cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4 pr. 4 *quod si nemo miratur poetas maximos saepe fecisse, ut non solum initiis operum suorum Musas inuocarent sed prouecti quoque longius, cum ad aliquem grauiorem uenissent locum, repeterent uota et ueluti noua precatione uterentur, mihi quoque profecto poterit ignosci si . . .*

[22] This is, of course, no general principle. Hor. *Carm.* 2.1 (adduced by Cairns [n. 12]) is different, for it is a more discursive introductory poem addressed to Pollio, with a final stanza addressed to a '*Musa procax*', making a different sort of *ad hoc* request.

[23] The appeal to *Iuppiter* in line 7 emphasizing *doctis . . . laboriosis* is virtually an emphatic expletive, 'astonishingly learned and painstaking'; the various gradations of the invocation (*pro*) (*bone*) *Iuppiter* in exclamations all express the idea that something is as plain as daylight.

[24] Hand (n. 4), 4; Bergk (n. 3), 581; Munro (n. 5), 1–5; Goold (n. 6, 1981, 1983).

[25] Fordyce (n. 12). [26] Munro (n. 5).

[27] R. Mayer, 'On Catullus 1. 9, again', *LCM* 7 (1982), 73.

[28] Goold (n. 6, 1981).

[29] M. Lenchantin de Gubernatis, *Il libro di Catullo* (Turin, 1933), ad loc.

it will signal rather too obviously that the preceding authorial humility was in some sense ironical[30] ('my attractively presented slim volume actually has corresponding inner virtues and therefore more than merely ephemeral value'). That, however, prompts the question whether the reverence expressed for Cornelius' historical work is also ironical and, if so, how far. Goold finds wit in the mildly impudent parasitism implied by his interpretation: 'I choose to give this nicely-produced booklet to you, Cornelius, because a good while ago you gave me a modestly favourable mention in your authoritative three-volume *Chronica*';[31] 'so accept this trifle for what it is worth, so that thanks to its patron it may survive many an age', sc. alongside the said Great Work: 'Cornelius is evidently having his leg pulled at least a bit.'

The trouble with this is that if Catullus' evaluation of the 'Great Work' is intended to come across as anything other than straightforward, then we are on a slippery slope; for there is nothing to prevent a thoroughly snide interpretation: 'my stuff is better than your pretentious and pedantic work, and you underestimated my talent, you patronizing bastard',[32] a degree of ambiguity which, when pointed out by some enemy of Catullus, would be disastrously embarrassing: 'Gee, Cornelius, I didn't really mean . . .'. So if Goold were right, Catullus would be at fault for failing to exclude a gross misreading which would be as offensive to the recipient as discreditable to the author. Irony can be a difficult horse to ride.

On the other hand, if the praise of Cornelius' work is straightforward and Catullus is also showing himself humbly diffident about the quality and future of his own, then any wish that it may long survive by virtue of its association with Cornelius really is sycophantic : 'my admittedly unworthy stuff stands a better chance of survival by being associated with yours'; and equally, any prayer to a superior power to ensure the survival of Catullus' stuff without reference to Cornelius' as well seems either tactless or even more ingratiating ('it goes without saying that the future of the *Chronica* is safe'). We seem to be in something of a fork; either way, the obvious contrast of genres and respective achievements is a problem that needs to be resolved in any overall interpretation.

III

What are the defects and merits of Bergk's conjecture? If *patrona uirgo* is wrong, then it must be seen as an emendation, probably Carolingian, suggested by the wish expressed in line 10, and supplemented hundreds of years later with the metrical stopgap <*o*> when it was noticed that the line did not scan. The phrase cannot just be the immediate result of some mechanical inadvertence in copying. In that case, it is

[30] It is often claimed that Catullus is attributing to Nepos' *Chronica* what happen to be well-known Callimachean poetical values and virtues, namely learning, labour, distillation, originality (Cairns [n. 12], 154; Levine [n. 12], 212; Arkins [n. 12], 19), and by picking on these supposed qualities in Nepos' work (but what about veracity, accuracy, balance, utility, etc.?), he insinuates what he thought besides elegance and smartness to be the cardinal literary values of his own sort of poetry. However, the forms in which these virtues could possibly show themselves in poetry and historiography seem so intrinsically different as to be quite misleading; the idea therefore that Nepos really did write 'neoteric' history (Cairns [n. 12] and others) remains to my mind highly speculative (cf. Clausen [n. 12], 38, n. 2) and confusing, because it diverts attention from what really matters, the obvious contrasts between Cornelius' and Catullus' work in scale, theme, and unity.

[31] Goold (n. 6, 1973), 11 and id. (n. 6, 1981) following Bergk (n. 3), 251; see below, p. 314.

[32] A extreme way of putting it, of course. For the rest I think it is just a modern mistake to take *doctis Iuppiter et laboriosis* as in any way ironical.

unlikely that the corrupt reading which it replaced, let alone the true reading behind the corruption, may now be recovered simply by palaeographical considerations. It is the thought and the context that should guide us. *Pace* Goold,[33] the palaeographical economy of Bergk's conjecture is anything but decisively in its favour. Bergk's *ut ergo* was devised on the assumption that the monk who gave us *patrona uirgo* would himself have been playing by the rules of the palaeographical game as worked out in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Besides, there is a stylistic objection to *ergo* which has seemed quite decisive to many. According to the doctrine of our dictionaries, which is drawn from the ancient grammarians, *ergo* following a genitive is just a synonym for *gratia* or *causa* likewise following a genitive case, meaning 'for the sake of', 'on account of', in effect just another way of saying *ob* or *propter*. However, it is clear from the distribution of the *ergo*-idiom that it was a specialized expression belonging to the formulaic language of the law, public documents, and ritual. In verse-texts, it only turns up a couple times in the hexameters of Lucretius and once each in Virgil and Silius Italicus. So what would such an expression be doing at all in a poem otherwise expressed in the simplest and most direct language and syntax, more comparable with the styles of Terence and of Cicero's letters than any form of self-consciously 'poetic' diction? This led Fraenkel to dismiss Bergk's conjecture as 'ghastly';[34] and so it would be, if the only excuse for *ergo* were that unlike *causa* it begins with a vowel enabling the elision of *patroni*. However, we should suspend judgement on this, for the meaning and use of *ergo* following a genitive is more precise and fits the context better than either Bergk or his critics appreciated, but only in a way that is definitely incompatible with *patroni*; see (x) below.

On the other hand, his conjecture has the merit of meeting rather than ignoring the problems (i)–(vii) which go with the vulgate text; and some of the other objections which have been raised in turn against his proposal miss their target. Some have argued that Catullus, being of the same social standing as Cornelius, could not possibly have used any form of the *patronus*-word to indicate Cornelius' relationship to Catullus, or rather, what is a different thing, to Catullus' work; see below, p. 314. There is nothing wrong with the envisaged elision *patron(i) ut*; cf. 57. 6 . . . *gemelli utrique* in the same position,[35] and the assumed tmesis with *ut* dividing *patroni* and *ergo* is perfectly idiomatic. With Bergk's punctuation, it comes second in its clause, the natural place for an enclitic particle, especially since a certain emphasis has on any view to fall on the leading word *patroni*.[36] On the other hand the objection to the placing of *ut* does count against Monro's version (2b), in which the assumed trajection of *ut* to the fourth place in the clause in combination with the tmesis is indeed gratuitous and unnatural. This arises from the strong punctuation posited in (2b) between *quidquid hoc libelli* and *qualecumque*, and preferred by Monro and others because the depreciation of *quidquid hoc libelli qualecumque (quidem)* all taken together seemed to them unnecessary and curiously excessive.[37] That is in itself a good point; but in separating the phrases, (2b) introduces this fresh difficulty, and we have already seen that there are other objections to the Latinity of (3), which attempts to achieve the same sort of separation.

[33] Goold (n. 6, 1981). [34] Fraenkel, *Gnomon* 34 (1962), 259.

[35] *Contra* Monbrun (n. 12). 'Virtually', because in *gemelli* we have the nom. plu. issuing from older *gemellei*, whereas in *patroni*, the gen. sing. which had always had a pure long *-i*; Catullus will almost certainly have pronounced both with long *-i*; how he spelt them is another matter, cf. n. 48.

[36] *Iuppiter* in the second place in line 7, equivalent to an enclitic *pol* or *hercle* or *quidem*, likewise emphasizes the first word *doctis*.

[37] Cf. Skutsch (n. 13).

But there were two underlying flaws in the idea behind Bergk's and Monro's approaches anyway.

(ix) First, the clause *ut . . . maneat* strikes a false note: 'take the book *so that* it may last more than one generation thanks to its patron' oversimplifies things. With the *ut*-clause, Cornelius, merely by condescending to accept the book, is being credited in too facile a manner with the sort of powers to preserve it that really could only be ascribed to some interested deity. The problem of sycophancy is focused in Bergk's *ut*, which was only ever a palaeographically inspired expedient to account for the *u-* of *uirgo*, and makes a conceit that does not ring true.

(x) Second, decisive objections to Bergk's conjecture as a whole and to Monro's adaptation emerges from closer examination of the way that the *ergo*-idiom is actually used.[38] The assumption that *ergo* is just an all-purpose synonym for *causa*, *gratia*, *ob*, *propter* needs considerable qualification. In particular the word is never combined with a *nomen agentis* like *patronus*, and never means 'thanks to'; but both ought to be quite all right, if it really were such a synonym. On the one hand, the idiom occurs in inscriptions or in citations of inscriptions or in ritual formulae with a noun, usually abstract, like *uirtutis ergo*, in contexts where 'on account of' will always do, but where 'in token of', 'in witness of' is more precisely meant;[39] the idea of publicity and commemoration is always to the fore, not simply causality. Examples of this are attested from the XII Tables through Cato the Elder and inscriptions of the Sullan era, then in Cicero, then in Livy. *Ergo* was supposed (quite falsely of course) to be derived from ἔργωι,[40] and some Roman lawyers, if pressed, may perhaps have rationalized the 'true meaning' as something like 'in/by/for the realization, the manifesting of'. Some of the examples are translations of Greek or are explicitly bilingual and ἕνεκεν is the standard equivalent. On the other hand there is a handful of passages in Lucretius, Livy, and Virgil where the idiom is used in contexts where some purpose is implied;[41] again 'on account of' will always do, but more precisely 'for the sake of' in the sense 'to achieve such and such', 'in quest of' is meant. These are evidently extensions based on the equation genitive + *ergo* = genitive + ἕνεκεν, with the assistance of the occasional use of *ergo* with gerundive noun-phrases like *illius sacri coercendi ergo* (Cato *Agr.* 139). Thereafter the idiom disappears entirely from inscriptions and is only occasionally disinterred at all in literary texts.[42]

[38] See *TLL ergo* 1 col. 759.26–79.

[39] Cf. Lex XII tab. 10.4 *neue lessum funeris ergo habento*; *CIL* 1^2.718 *benefici ergo*, 727 *salutis ergo*, 730 *amicitiai et societatis ergo*; Quadrigarius, *Hist.* 41 *exempli et fidei ergo . . .*; Sisenna, *Hist.* 120 *uirtutis ergo ciuitate donari*; Nepos, *Paus.* 1.3 *eiusque uictoriae ergo Apollini donum dedisse*, Cic. *Opt. Gen.* 19 *uirtutis beneuolentiaeque ergo*; Cic. *Leg.* 3.9 *auxili ergo*; Livy 1.18.6 *honoris ergo*, 28.39.19 *muneris ergo*, cf. 31.15.17, 41.28.9.

[40] Such was the usual popular etymology, though Servius on V. *Aen.* 670–1 makes a point of contradicting it. The modern doctrine is that *ergo* comes from **e-rego* with the same stem as *rego*, *rectus* (so first E. Wölfflin, *ALL* 1884), meaning something like 'in line with'.

[41] Lucr. 3.78 *intereunt partim statuarum et nominis ergo* 'some of them perish in the quest for statues and fame', 5.1246 *hostibus intulerant ignem formidinis ergo* 'they had carried fire among the foe for panic's sake,' that is, 'to create panic' (same phrase, Livy 22.38.4); V. *Aen.* 6.670–1 *quae regio Anchisen, quis habet locus? illius ergo uenimus*, 'we have come in quest of him'; Livy 25.12.15 *haec est origo ludorum Apollinarium, uictoriae non ualetudinis ergo, ut plerique rentur, uotorum factorumque*, 'This is the origin of the Apollinaria, vowed and performed for the sake of (future) victory, not good health.' The passage from Virgil is the only one in which the idiom is made to refer to a person.

[42] For example, Silius Italicus, *Pun.* 6.134 *ille ensem nobis magnorum hunc instar honorum uirtutisque ergo dedit*, in line with the normal use.

Unlike *causa* and *gratia* following a genitive, which may readily do this, the *ergo*-expression never indicates pure instrumentality or agency; certainly not 'thanks to', 'by means of', equivalent to Hand's *per te*. In the standard legal formula, the nuance is that the thing or action noted is going on the record and being made manifest, and it is particularly used in the context of reward, recompense, or sometimes conversely of punishments: a word for use at prize-givings, as here, or in the verdicts of courts-martial. Cornelius Nepos himself has a typical example in *Paus.* 1. 3: . . . *eiusque uictoriae ergo Apollini donum dedisse* . . .

This should give us pause, because 'in witness of', 'in token of' is indeed the sense wanted in this context, following the quasi-legal expressions *habe tibi* (*OLD habeo* 1b), 'take the ownership of' and *quidquid hoc* 'all and sundry'. If the book survives, including this poem, there will *for all to see* be a lasting memorial of Cornelius' having spoken up for Catullus' early work; the ceremonial word is used as it would be on a public inscription, and the insubstantial *libellus* beginning with this poem, it is hoped, will survive as a memorial 'for more than a single generation'. The touch of formality which this would lend would therefore be quite appropriate, as long as the use of *ergo* conforms closely to the precise usage of the inscriptions and the prose-writers. This involves an abstract noun or a gerundive expression denoting a quality or something done, sometimes a concrete noun, *but never a nomen agentis*. Bergk's *patroni ut ergo* is therefore doubly faulty. If *ergo* is the right correction for *uirgo* in the MSS, then it ought to mean 'in witness of', 'in token of', and we need to look for an abstract noun in the transmitted letters *patronau-* , meaning 'help', 'protection', 'support', 'advocacy', 'patronage'.

For Cornelius should be acknowledged for having stuck up for Catullus' early work; *iam tum* must mean quite a while since. The verb *solebas* rules out Bergk's and Goold's quaint idea that Cornelius must have given a favourable mention to Catullus in a specific review of Latin poets supposed *ad hoc* to have been included in his *Chronica*,[43] as if that were the primary reason for referring to the work at all, rather than the contrast of its weight, utility, and unity with Catullus' efforts. The allusion to Cornelius' sustained favourable opinion could only communicate, then as now, that on various occasions Cornelius had responded encouragingly to Catullus' early stuff and as a then recently established man of letters himself had been prepared to say so in the right Roman literary circles. What this more precisely involved from either point of view is deliberately left as a private matter; it is the fact of Cornelius' advocacy that Catullus wishes to put on record. Besides, Cornelius is clearly being asked to do the same again, but now as the influential protector of a canonical collection of Catullus' minor poems.

This means that we need not *patroni ut ergo* but *patro<ci>ni ergo*, 'in witness of your advocacy'. *Patrocinium* is the protection given by the stronger to the weaker, the opposite, as it were, of *latrocinium*,[44] and in a very Roman way is itself a 'good thing', a species of *uirtus*. Of course, this does not mean that Catullus is signing the dotted line and becoming a member of Cornelius' *clientela*: there were no such contracts, and socially he would have regarded himself as on a par with him anyway. The Republic of Letters had its own hierarchies, and Catullus had his obvious literary enemies. The

[43] Goold (n. 6, 1973), 9–10; Bergk (n. 3).

[44] On denominative verbal formations in *-cinari* (*latrocinari, lenocinari, patrocinari, sermocinari, uaticinari*) and thence corresponding abstract nouns in *-cinium*, see M. Leumann, *Lateinische Laut- und Formenlehre* (Munich, 1977), 551.

word is often used figuratively of 'eloquent and effective advocacy' (*OLD patrocinium* 2b, Tac. *Dial.* 4. 1 *cotidianum hoc patrocinium defendendae . . . poeticae exerceor*).[45] 'Your' is easily supplied from the context; indeed, the parallels show that it was normal to omit possessives in expressions like *beneuolentiae ergo*, *honoris et uirtutis ergo*, *benefici ergo*, *muneris ergo*, *auxili ergo*, where English usage requires them. *Patrocini* is the regular contracted genitive case that we should expect in a Republican author for a noun in *-ium* or *-ius*, cf. *CIL* 1^2.718 *benefici ergo*, Cic. *Leg.* 3.9 *auxili ergo*;[46] these contracted forms elide like the correponding vocative-forms in *-i*[47] with which they are homophonous; cf. 57.7 *erudituli ambo* for a similarly placed elision in the cadence.[48] Everything fits.

As pointed out above, if *patrona uirgo* is wrong, it should be seen as an attempt to correct something that was already wrong. So one naturally cannot say what prior malformation of an original PATROCINIERGO faced the medieval scribe who, perhaps thinking of Our Lady, came up with *patrona uirgo*. But for what it is worth, it is probable that already from at least the second century A.D. the phrase would have commonly been spelt PATROCINIIERGO in MSS, given which, it is a small step from

[45] *patrocinium TLL* X 1 fasc. 5, col. 774.23–778.28; in verse, only at Ovid, *Tr.* 1. 1. 26 *causa patrocinio non bona peior erit*; *Pont.* 1.2.67–8 *suscipe, Romanae facundia, Maxime, linguae difficilis causae mite patrocinium.* The MSS preserve the contracted form of the genitive at Sen. *Con.* 7.1.13 *pudet me patrocini mei*; Pliny, *Ep.* 3.4.4 *adlegantes patrocini foedus*, cf. *CIL* 3.13750 D<E> CAPITULO LENOCINI (epist. imp. Commodi); it is transmitted in the later form *-ii* at Cic. *Off.* 2.50 *sed hoc quidem non est saepe faciendum neque umquam nisi aut rei publicae causa . . . aut ulciscendi gratia . . . aut patrocinii, ut nos pro Siculis*; Quint. *Inst.* 5.13.41 *patrocinii fides cogit*, 11.1.86 *fides patrocinii cogit*; Quint. *Decl.* 262.7 *hoc genere patrocinii*; *Inst.* 5.13.40 *patrocinii fides*; [Quint.] Decl. 12.21 *color iste patrocinii est.*

[46] R. Bentley *Terentii Comoediae* (Cambridge, 1726) on Ter. *An.* 1.2.20 states 'de plano affirmare ausim neminem ex ueteribus duplicem i in Genitivis illis usurpasse: non Virgilium, non Horatium, non priorum Poetarum quemquam; ne semel quidem; . . . Primus ex poetis qui hodie extant Propertius bis uel ter, Ovidius saepissime . . . Sub Augusti scilicet senescentis aetate mutatio ista facta est . . .', and this has come to be known as 'Bentley's canon'; but the statement that Propertius is the earliest poet occasionally to use the uncontracted *-ii* genitive is mistaken, as Catullus has a couple of certain instances overlooked by Fordyce in his note on Cat. 9.5 *o mihi nuntii beati*; 61.1–2 *collis o Heliconii/cultor* (bellicon iei *O* eliconei *X*); 80.6 *grandia te medii tenta uorare uiri*. Cf. Leumann (n. 44), 424–5, who refers to sporadic examples in Varro and Lucretius. This said, the contracted genitive is certainly the norm for Catullus: 26.2 and 64.282 *Fauoni*, 36.1 and 20 *Volusi*, 39.4 *fili*, 39.21 *loti*, 59.2 *Meneni*, 64.49 *conchyli*, 67.35 *Corneli*, 68.50 *Alli*, 90.1 *Gelli*; the elided form at 63.5 *deuolsit ili acuto sibi pondera silice* (ilei *Bergk*: iletas *V*) is doubtful.

[47] Pl. *Cas.* 561 *litigi inter*; *Men.* 901 *flagiti et*; *Mil.* 90 *periuri atque*; *Mos.* 688 *consili in*; *Poen.* 201 *infortuni intenta*, 1314 *ali ulpicique*; *Tru.* 612 *uiti et*, and by probable conjecture, *Mos.* 879, *hoc preti inde abstuli*; *Rud.* 883 *praesidi apparas*; Ter. *Eu.* 25 *Naeui et*; *Ad.* 707 *negoti hoc*; *Ph.* 578 *consili incertum*; Hor *Carm.* 3.4.65 *uis consili expers mole ruit sua*, cf. W. A. Merrill, 'On the contracted genitive in -i in Latin', *University of California Publications in Classical Philology* 2 (1910), 57–79; F. Leo, *Plautinische Forschungen*^{2} (Berlin, 1912), 338.

[48] This is really the elision of *eruditulei ambo* (nom. plu.). The correct spelling of the gen. sing. in Catullus' time, whether uncontracted or contracted, should as always have been *-i* not *-ei*; for though there are a few places in Catullus where the MSS have or imply an *-ei* spelling (28.15 *Romulei Remique*, 61.1–2 *collis o Heliconii/cultor* [bellicon iei *O*, eliconei *X*], 61.199 *pulueris Africei* [ericei *V*], 63.10 *taurei*, 63.88 *pelagei*, 63.91 *Dindymei*, 65.14 *Itylei*; cf. 63.5 quoted in n. 46), these are, as in some inscriptions dating from Catullus' time and perhaps earlier, hypercorrections. They are better taken as a sporadic feature of the transmission than as authorial. See Leumann (n. 44), 63 and Lucilius ap. Vel. Long. *GL* 7.56 = 364–6 Marx, 377–9 Warmington, stating what remained the spelling-rule until the later first century B.C., and implying that the coalescence of *ei* and long *i* in urbane pronunciation antedated Catullus. Goold (n. 6, 1981), 237 was therefore on shaky ground in assuming that Catullus would himself have written *patronei* as the gen. sing. of *patronus*, and in finding a palaeographical explanation of *patrona* in that.

IIERGO to VIRGO whether in capital or minuscule writing; alternatively, *patrocinii-* in Carolingian minuscule could easily be misread as *patroanu-*, prompting the obvious 'correction'. This shows that the problem of the middle of the line is separate and delimits it at the spot where a syllable is certainly missing.

IV

The good critic does not judge a book by its cover: Catullus is used to the idea that his and others' work is circulated *ut fit, in palimpseston relata* (22.5) or *in tabellis* (50.2)[49] and scorns the pretentious mismatch of fancy format and worthless contents, as when Suffenus dresses his interminable rubbish in *charta regia* (poem 22.5–8); and there is the converse case of Catullus' own *charta anus* in the future when old and wrinkled still speaking in witness of Allius' kindness (poem 68.46; cf. 77.9–10, 95.5–8). Here in the dedicatory poem, when we come from *lepidum nouum libellum arida modo pumice expolitum* to *quidquid hoc libelli qualecumque* . . ., the possible contrast between outward appearance and literary merit, as well the certain contrast between Catullus and Cornelius' genres, is evident. Whatever some have in modern times come to think of Cornelius Nepos in the light of what survives of his work,[50] there was no doubt some flattery, but surely no leg-pulling or irony, in Catullus' making him a versatile φιλόλογος, in the front rank of contemporary prose historians and of critics of poetry, an *eques* with literary interests, influence, and contacts; which is, in the Roman context, to be an eminently suitable sponsor and promoter, that is, in modern terms, his publisher.

To be sure, other things being equal, the most economical interpretation of the separate corruption in *qualecumque qd* would be as in versions (2a) and (2b) *qualecumque quidem*, in which *quidem* as an enclitic will not split the choriamb, so that a line . . . *qualecumque quidem* (or *<e>quidem) patro<ci>ni ergo* . . ., however punctuated, at least scans satisfactorily. However, it is unconvincing; a heavy-handed and expansive space-filler, overdoing the self-deprecation, and Monro was right about that. A more nicely calculated evaluation is available from the poem itself:

> quare habe tibi quidquid hoc libelli,
> qualecumque <ali>quid,

Therefore have as your own whatever (item by item) this (is/makes) of a book, (that is, to quote your own judgment) 'something', for what it is worth

in which *quidquid* refers to the sum of the parts, without losing sight of the parts,[51] a quantitative expression, perhaps drawn from accountancy, which differs in perspective from *quantum hoc (est / fit) libelli* 'as much as this (collectively is/makes).[52]

[49] Poem 95 welcomes the 'definitive' version of Cinna's *Smyrna*, whereas Caecilius' *Magna Mater* (poem 35) is still circulating privately in a draft version (*incohata*).

[50] He was dubbed an 'intellectual pygmy' by a contributor to *CHCL* 2 (1982); *sed non uidemus manticae quod in tergo est*. C. Dionisotti, 'Nepos and the generals', *JRS* 78 (1988), 35–49 is more balanced.

[51] This is related to the common accumulative-collective use of *quidquid* with a genitive plural as in 31.14 *quidquid est domi cachinnorum*, 37.4 *quidquid est puellarum*, cf. *OLD quisquis* 2b, as opposed to *quantum* + gen.; *quantum hoc libelli* would be purely collective, 'the totality of . . .', like e.g. 3.2 *quantum est hominum uenustiorum*.

[52] The commentators explain the basic grammar (see e.g. Fordyce [n. 12], ad loc.), but overlook the nuance and the closest parallels, Quint. *Inst.* 6 pr. 3 (referring to the death of his only

Catullus is not going so far as to suggest that the collection only doubtfully makes a book at all, as he might have with *siquid hoc (est / fit) libelli*, cf. Cic. *Arch.* 1.1. *Qualecumque aliquid* is appended to in complementary apposition, with a sly reference back to *aliquid* in line 4, meaning 'not nothing', with the ambiguity of litotes that goes with such expressions in Latin as readily as in English (cf. *OLD aliquis* A5, B11). The precision of the play on such humdrum words is striking and effective, but the phrasing is quite simple and natural; *qualecumque aliquid* is modelled directly on *tale aliquid* 'some such thing',[53] and it conforms to the way that *quisquis* and *qualiscumque* are regularly used in complement (cf. n. 7 above); so that the problems of idiom which attend solution (3) do not arise.

Here Catullus repeats the words *libellus* and *aliquid* from earlier in the poem, and exploits their ambiguity to make distinct quantitative and qualitative points. In line 1, *libellus* meant the same as it does in, say, Cinna's line *(carmina) . . . leuis in aridulo maluae descripta libello* (*Poet.* 11.3), a book of individual poems; here, it is used reductively from the accountant's point of view. The accountant's *libellus* is a collection of *rationes* which tally up to a whole; take away something, or add it, and the coherence is obviously damaged. *Quidquid hoc libelli* insinuates that the unity of a collection of short individual poems is problematic, especially if all or most of them were written piecemeal; what do they add up to, and where does one draw the line? How does one achieve a satisfactory unity?

There is an obvious contrast here with Cornelius' comprehensive subject-matter, *omne aeuom*, 'all recorded history', from mythical to modern times, for that naturally imposes a unity of subject matter and form. Besides, Catullus implies, it is a miracle of judicious and authoritative compression to have achieved this in *only* three books—'ancient', 'medieval', 'modern'—when one glances in any library at the scale of the works in both languages which must have been digested. In that perspective, Catullus' bits and pieces are nothing at all, a few odd snapshots of subjective experience.

Lucilius had not bothered much about aesthetic questions of selection and arrangement in deciding what went into his 'annuals', but Laevius, Varro, and the 'new' poets certainly did. As usual, they took their cue from the various ways that Hellenistic

surviving son at the time he was working on his now lost work *De causis corruptae eloquentiae*): 'unum igitur optimum fuit infaustum opus et quidquid hoc est in me infelicium litterarum super immaturum funus consumturis uiscera mea flammis inicere neque hanc impiam uiuacitatem nouis insuper curis fatigare' ('So the only honourable thing would have been to cast the inauspicious work and *the stock of blighted lucubration in me all and sundry* into flames devouring my vitals [that is, his capacity and motivation to write any others, cf. Ovid, *Tr.* 1.7.20] on top of his untimely corpse, and not to tire this impiously insistent life of mine with fresh commitments besides'); Tac. *Ann.* 14.43 'simul quidquid hoc in nobis auctoritatis crebris contradictionibus destruendum non existimabam, ut maneret integrum si quando res publica consiliis eguisset.' ('At the same time I did not reckon that *whatever the stock of credibility amounts to* in us [conservatively minded lawyers] should be whittled away by the continual raising of objections [to many recently passed *senatus decreta* incompatible with the *mores maiorum*], so that it should remain whole in case the day should come when the commonwealth really needed our counsel'.) In both these cases, as in Catullus, *quidquid hoc* indicates both the limited extent and the composite character of a total.

[53] *Tale aliquid* happens to occur generally about three times as frequently as the alternative word-order *aliquid tale*; so the chiasmus in *quidquid . . . aliquid* emerges naturally. The same word-order is normal in *maius aliquid* 'something bigger' (Cic. Att. 2.16.1, Liv. 44.43.7, Tac. Ann. 3.53), *unum aliquid* 'one particular thing' (Cic. Tusc. 4.10, Div. 1.125, Plin. *Ep.* 3.9.25), *aliud aliquid* 'something else'; cf. variously further Ter. *An.* 314 *interea fiet aliquid, spero* :: *id 'aliquid' nihil est*, Lucr. 1.433 *nam quodcumque erit esse aliquid debebit id ipsum*, Cic. *Brut.* 225 *quisquis est ille, si modo est aliquis, qui genuit in hac urbe dicendi copiam.*

poets had coped with the formal challenge of the 'little book' made up of more or less independent pieces, like pictures exhibited in a gallery. The 'Garland' of Meleager is the obvious example, but, as an anthology, is quite different from the case of Catullus' book. Thus *quidquid hoc libelli* alludes to the diverse authorial problems of content, theme, unity, scale, selection, and arrangement in properly preparing any sort of a *libellus* of poems *comme il faut*, which leads directly to the question of quality in the result, and the other half of the phrase, *qualecumque aliquid*.

Catullus exploits the ambiguity of the *aliquid esse* attributed to Cornelius as a verdict on Catullus' early work, then known to him and to others mainly *ut fit in palimpseston relata* and *in tabellis* as occasional pieces or inchoate collections (cf. 14b, 27?); nor can any clear distinction be drawn in a case like this between separate and overlapping editions private, provisional, revised, and definitive; our very vocabulary is apt to mislead, because one so easily forgets that the printing press did not exist, and all that that implies. However, that said, the whole point of the dedication of *this* collection to Cornelius was to give it a definitive status, superseding any others possibly overlapping with it. For it seems likely that it would have included at least some such familiar items, as well as new material. So Catullus could claim with the accountant's arithmetic that *this* collection should at least still add up to 'something' in Cornelius' estimation, and, exploiting the ambiguity of *qualecumque aliquid*, he obviously hoped that the quality of the whole might exceed the sum of the quality of its parts. For, after all, poems are not really like the accountant's *rationes*. So whatever Cornelius might make of the new stuff or of the the whole, the book was already at least worth 'something', and perhaps the pristine presentation was not merely meretricious and cosmetic.

As for the corruption, it is a case of haplography and the confusion of suspensions which could occur in either capital or minuscule hands,

qualecumque aliquid

becoming

qualecum$\bar{q}$d

whence what we seem to have had in *V*

qualecumq· $\bar{q}$d

in which it should be understood that I am using $\bar{q}d$ simply to indicate schematically a form of suspension which could be mistaken for any of the forms *quid*, *quod*, or for that matter *quidem*.[54] Although the scribes of *O*, *X*, and thence *GR* clearly *interpreted* what they found in *V* as indicating a 'quod', of course it does not follow that they were on the right track in doing so.

VIII

The poem as a whole comes out as:

To whom should I present this smart new book, the rough edges[55] freshly smoothed with dry pumice? Cornelius Nepos, to you, for you more than once reckoned my trifles to be something,

[54] Cf. n. 17.

[55] That is, the ends of the scroll wound on its umbilicus, cf. 22.8, but with obvious stylistic

away back when you alone among our Latin writers intrepidly unrolled all human history in three volumes, scholarly and painstaking, Heaven knows! Therefore have as your own whatever this book adds up to; something for what it is worth. In witness of your advocacy, may it endure year on year for more than one generation.

What does this tell us that we did not know already about the *libellus* of Catullus and the sequence of thought in the dedicatory poem? It more positively identifies Cornelius as proprietor and guardian of 'the' book, it seems to resolve the problem of the disparity between Catullus' and Cornelius' work defined in (viii) above, and, with that, to show that modern attempts to impose an ironical interpretation have been mistaken; but there certainly is a different and more delicate sort of irony in the way that *aliquid* in line 9 now picks up *aliquid* in line 4. Lastly it shows us a Catullus keenly aware of the problem of achieving thematic and aesthetic unity in any such collection of his kind of minor poetry, as well as of its probably ephemeral nature. He evidently foresaw the difficulty of establishing any collection of his minor output as canonical, for there were no laws about copyright, without which the control that could possibly be exercised by any ancient 'publisher' fell far short of what is now taken for granted, or of what interested higher powers might more mysteriously ensure. However, we learn hardly anything more about the actual content of the book, except that it was organized in *some* artistic way, neither just as a haphazard accumulation, nor by an externally imposed criterion, for example by metrical form, or by chronology.

There are, of course, vestigial signs of concern with thematic arrangement, juxtaposition, and contrast in the corpus of Catullus' work as it has come down to us, some more dubious and controversial than others, and by no means straightforwardly compatible;[56] but it is equally clear that at some stage someone, conceivably Cornelius Nepos himself, but more probably someone later, went beyond this, and has done for Catullus what Robert Bridges did for Gerald Manley Hopkins, collecting and uniting everything that could be found, including some *spuria* as well as 'duds' which the poet can scarcely have even considered for inclusion in any collection. The Cornelian *libellus* is lurking somewhere within, truncated, and more or less redistributed. For the artificial grouping by metre, in particular, of all the elegiac poems at the end, cannot be authorial, and is imposed externally, in the same rather bone-headed spirit as the ancient canonical arrangement of Lucilius' *Satires* by metrical form, with the result that his books in iambo-trochaic metres numbered 26–30 at the end were chronologically the first. This cuts across any of various themes in the Catullan corpus, in particular the 'Lesbia' theme which has since the Romantic period so appealed to popular taste. As has often been remarked, there is clearly no room at all for Poem 64, a *libellus* by itself, in the *libellus* that Catullus was addressing to Cornelius.

In conclusion it may be recalled that, if the collection proper began, as ours does, with the famous *passer*-poems, as seems likely, then it is probably identical with the

implications: plain in its neatness, it eschews the mannerist extravagance of word-formation that one finds in Laevius and in Varro's *Menippean Satires*, and follows stricter principles of prosody.

[56] Dettmer (n. 12) has shown how absurd speculation about this can become. O. Skutsch, 'Metrical variations and some textual problems in Catullus', *BICS* 16 (1969), 38–43, esp. 38, has noted the oddity that in the collection as it survives there is a block of twelve hendecasyllabic poems from 9 to 26 amounting to 190 lines, in which verses always open with spondees, followed by another block of nineteen poems from 27 to 54 amounting to 226 lines in which about one line in five has an iamb or a trochee instead; only four short poems in this section do not have examples. Both these sequences are of course interrupted by poems in other metres too. The situation before and after these blocks is more complicated. This cannot be just accidental, but it is not at all clear what it tells us.

collection known to Martial as the *Passer Catulli*; and if that was the title for the *lepidus libellus* which Catullus put in front or on its tag (*syllabus*), then there is a special point in the litotes of *perenne plus uno maneat saeclo* in the last line. For male *passeres* were assumed never to outlast a single year (Pliny *Nat.* 10.107, from Aristotle); their *saecla* are as transient and brief as the pristine freshness of the presentation copy. However, that point has been discussed in some detail elsewhere,[57] and has no bearing on the questions of text and interpretation that have been examined here.[58]

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[57] Cf. A. S. Gratwick, 'Catullus 1.10 and the title of his *libellus*', *G&R* 38(1991), 199–202.

[58] I am obliged to *CQ*'s anonymous reader for amplifying my information concerning the *q(uo)d*-readings in *OGR* and the status of *quidem* as a late humanist conjecture.